

English Language Specification

OCR GCSE in English Language J355

April 2014

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1 Introduction to GCSE English Language

1.1 Overview of GCSE English Language

For GCSE English Language candidates must take units A651, A650, A680 and A640.

Unit A651	<i>Extended literary text and imaginative writing</i>
Controlled assessment 30% of GCSE English Language 60 marks Section A: 30 marks Section B: 30 marks (AO3: 15%, AO4: 15%)	Section A: Extended literary text Response to one text (prose, drama, poetry or literary non-fiction). Section B: Imaginative writing Two linked continuous writing responses from a choice of either Personal and Imaginative Writing or Prose Fiction.

Plus

Unit A650	<i>Spoken language</i>
Controlled assessment 10% of GCSE English Language 20 marks (AO2: 10%)	Spoken language (written assessment) One response based on the study of: Either Part A: Spoken Language of a Public Figure Or Part B: Language, Media and Technology Or Language and Society.

Plus

Unit A680	<i>Information and ideas</i>
Written exam 60% of GCSE English Language 80 marks: Section A: 40 marks Section B: 40 marks (AO3: 30%, AO4: 30%)	Section A: Non-fiction and media Responses to unseen authentic passages. Section B: Writing One continuous writing response: candidates choose one task from a choice of two tasks.

Plus

Unit A640	<i>Speaking and listening</i>
Controlled assessment This unit does not contribute to the GCSE grade, but entry is mandatory for GCSE certification. 40 marks (AO1)	Candidates respond to three activities : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a drama-focused activity • a group activity • an individual extended contribution. One of the three activities must be in a real-life context in and beyond the classroom.

1.2 Overview of texts

Drama

William Shakespeare:

- *Romeo and Juliet* (Literary Heritage)
- *Julius Caesar* (Literary Heritage)

Poetry

Selected Poems:

- Wilfred Owen (Literary Heritage)
- Simon Armitage (Contemporary)
- Carol Ann Duffy (Different Culture or Tradition/Contemporary)
- Benjamin Zephaniah (Different Culture or Tradition/Contemporary)

Prose

- *Pride and Prejudice* by Jane Austen (Literary Heritage)
- *The Withered Arm and other Wessex Tales* by Thomas Hardy (Literary Heritage)
- *Of Mice and Men* by John Steinbeck (Different Culture or Tradition/Contemporary)
- *Tsotsi* by Athol Fugard (Different Culture or Tradition/Contemporary)

Literary non-fiction

- *Notes from a Small Island* by Bill Bryson (Different Culture or Tradition/Contemporary)
- *The Kindness of Strangers* by Kate Adie (Different Culture or Tradition/Contemporary)

OCR will supply a free anthology which includes poetry selections for use in the controlled assessment Unit A651.

1.3 Guided learning hours

GCSE English Language requires 120–140 guided learning hours in total.

1.4 Aims and learning outcomes

This specification in English Language encourages candidates to be inspired, moved and changed by following a broad, coherent, satisfying and worthwhile course of study. It should prepare candidates to make informed decisions about further learning opportunities and career choices, and to use language to participate effectively in society and employment.

This specification in English Language enables candidates to:

- demonstrate skills in speaking, listening, reading and writing necessary to communicate with others confidently, effectively, precisely and appropriately
- express themselves creatively and imaginatively
- become critical readers of a range of texts, including multimodal texts
- use reading to develop their own skills as writers
- understand the patterns, structures and conventions of written and spoken English
- understand the impact of variations in spoken and written language and how they relate to identity and cultural diversity
- select and adapt speech and writing to different situations and audiences.

1.5 Prior learning

Candidates entering this course should have achieved a general educational level equivalent to National Curriculum Level 3, or an Entry 3 at Entry Level within the National Qualifications Framework.

2 Content of GCSE English Language

2.1 Unit A651: *Extended literary text and imaginative writing*

This controlled assessment unit consists of two sections: Section A is a response to an extended literary text and Section B is a response to imaginative writing.

Tasks will be set by OCR and will provide opportunities for candidates to demonstrate their ability to fulfil assessment objectives AO3 and AO4.

2.1.1 Section A: Extended literary text

Candidates are required to study and respond to **one** task from a choice of prose, drama, poetry or literary non-fiction tasks. The tasks require the candidate to study and respond to the texts in their entirety.

In this section, candidates should be able to:

- understand how meaning is constructed through words, sentences, and whole texts, including multimodal texts and at least one extended text, recognising the effects of language choices and patterns
- evaluate the ways in which texts may be interpreted differently according to the perspective of the reader
- explore language variation and how it varies according to audience and reader.

Choice of Texts

Centres can **either** choose from the prescribed texts listed on page 8 **or** they can choose their own text. The prescribed text list will be reviewed by OCR every two years.

Where centres choose their own text, they must ensure that the text studied is of length and quality comparable to other set texts in the GCSE suite of English specifications, and suitable for analysis by Key Stage 4 students with regards to:

- language and structure
- different interpretations
- culture and tradition.

Centres may refer to the OCR controlled assessment consultancy service for additional guidance.

Prescribed texts

Drama: William Shakespeare

- *Romeo and Juliet*
- *Julius Caesar*

Poetry: Selected Poems

- Simon Armitage
- Carol Ann Duffy
- Benjamin Zephaniah
- Wilfred Owen

Literary Non-Fiction

- *Notes from a Small Island* by Bill Bryson
- *The Kindness of Strangers* by Kate Adie

Prose

- *Of Mice and Men* by John Steinbeck
- *Pride and Prejudice* by Jane Austen
- *Tsotsi* by Athol Fugard
- *The Withered Arm and other Wessex Tales* by Thomas Hardy

There are 15 poems per poet in the OCR Anthology. Centres choose one poet to study.

2.1.2 Section B: Imaginative writing

Candidates are required to respond to **one** core task and **one** linked task from a choice of three linked tasks.

Candidates can choose from the following **two** areas:

- Personal and imaginative writing

OR

- Prose fiction.

Candidates should be able to write accurately and fluently:

- choosing content and adapting style and language to a wide range of forms, media, contexts, audiences and purposes
- adapting form to a range of styles and genres.

2.2 Unit A650: *Spoken language*

Candidates are required to respond to **one** task on **one** of the following areas: Spoken Language of a Public Figure, or Language, Media and Technology or Language and Society.

Tasks will be set by OCR and will provide opportunities for candidates to demonstrate their ability to fulfil the assessment objective for Study of spoken language – AO2.

Candidates should be able to:

- understand variations in spoken language, explaining why language changes in relation to contexts
- evaluate the impact of spoken language choices in their own and others' use.

Centres will choose **one** task from **either** Part A or Part B:

2.2.1 Part A: The study of the spoken language of a public figure

Candidates will study the spoken language of a particular speaker in a specific context or for a specific purpose and reflect on their own use of spoken language in the light of this study. Centres selecting this option may choose to link this study to a speaking and listening activity using, for instance, a similar context or purpose.

Candidates can choose from the following topics:

- study of a particular speaker
- study of a particular interviewer.

2.2.4 Part B: Language, media and technology **or** Language and society

Candidates will study how speech and interaction vary in relation to social and other contextual factors, how spoken language is influenced by such factors as different social groups, time, changing technologies and reflect on their own use of spoken language in the light of this study.

Centres selecting this option may choose to link this study to a speaking and listening activity based on what their candidates have learned about spoken language in the topic area they have studied.

Candidates can choose from the following topic areas:

- language, media and technology which includes the study of a TV programme
- language and society which may include the study of gender, change over time and language in social contexts.

2.3 Unit A680: *Information and ideas*

This is an examined unit consisting of two sections:

2.3.1 Section A: Non-fiction and media

The tasks will be based on the reading of previously unseen authentic materials. Candidates will be provided with stimulus material, **one** non-fiction piece and **one** media-based piece. Differentiated materials will be set at Foundation and Higher Tiers. Candidates answer **all** questions.

The tasks will require candidates to:

- show understanding of how meaning is constructed through words, sentences and whole texts, recognising the effects of language choices and patterns and of presentation
- evaluate the ways in which texts may be interpreted differently according to the perspective of the reader.

2.3.2 Section B: Writing

Candidates are required to produce **one** piece of continuous writing. There will be a choice of two tasks, one of which may be on a topic broadly linked to the reading material provided in Section A.

Candidates will be encouraged to develop their own ideas. They may draw on the reading materials in Section A if they wish; however, the task will not require specific reference to the reading materials.

Candidates should be able to write accurately and fluently:

- choosing content and adapting style and language to a range of forms, media, contexts, audiences and purposes
- adapting form to a range of styles and genres.

2.4 Unit A640: *Speaking and listening*

This is a controlled assessment unit. It does not contribute to the GCSE grade, but entry is mandatory for GCSE certification.

The focus of this unit is to develop candidates' speaking and listening skills.

During the course, candidates should engage in speaking and listening activities in a variety of formal and informal contexts. One activity must allow candidates to participate in a real-life context in and beyond the classroom.

Candidates are required to submit work in **three** assessment contexts:

- individual extended contribution
- group activity
- drama-focused activity.

OCR will allow centres to design their own tasks. OCR will also set exemplar tasks which can be adapted by the centre.

Tasks set will provide opportunities for candidates to demonstrate their ability to fulfil the assessment objective for speaking and listening – AO1.

Candidates should be able to:

- present and listen to information and ideas
- respond appropriately to the questions and views of others
- make a range of effective contributions, using creative approaches to exploring questions, solving problems and developing ideas
- reflect and comment critically on their own and others' uses of language
- participate in a range of real-life contexts in and beyond the classroom, adapting talk appropriately to situation and audience and using Standard English where appropriate
- select and use a range of dramatic techniques and creative approaches to explore ideas, texts and issues in scripted and improvised work.

3 Assessment of GCSE English Language

3.1 Overview of the assessment in GCSE English Language - J355

For GCSE English Language candidates must take **all four** units.

Unit A651		<i>Extended literary text and imaginative writing</i>
30% of the qualification 60 marks	Controlled assessment: internally assessed and externally moderated.	
15% of the qualification About 30 hours 30 marks (AO3: 15%)	Section A: Extended literary text Candidates respond to one task from a range of tasks provided by OCR. An analytical response to a prose, drama, poetry or literary non-fiction text.	
15% of the qualification About 20 hours 30 marks (AO4: 15%)	Section B: Imaginative Writing Two continuous linked writing responses from a choice of Personal and Imaginative Writing or Prose Fiction. Candidates respond to one core task and one linked task from tasks provided by OCR.	
Unit A650		<i>Spoken language</i>
10% of the qualification About 20 hours 20 marks (AO2: 10%)	Candidates respond to one task from tasks provided by OCR. Candidates produce written analytical response to one task from a choice of the study of Spoken Language of a public figure or Language, media and technology or Language and society.	
Unit A680		<i>Information and Ideas</i>
60% of the qualification 2 hour Written paper: Foundation and Higher Tier	Examination: externally assessed. Section A : Non-fiction and media Candidates answer all the questions. Responses to unseen authentic passages.	
80 marks: Section A: 40 marks (AO2: 30%) Section B: 40 marks (AO3: 30%)	Section B: Writing Candidates choose one task from a choice of two tasks. One continuous writing response.	

Unit A640	<i>Speaking, Listening</i>
<p>This unit does not contribute to the GCSE grade, but entry is mandatory for GCSE certification.</p> <p>About 20 hours</p> <p>40 marks</p> <p>(AO1)</p>	<p>Controlled assessment: internally assessed and externally moderated. Candidates choose three tasks from tasks designed by the centre according to defined parameters set by OCR.</p> <p>Three assessment contexts: individual extended contribution, group activity and drama-focused activity. One activity must be in a real-life context in and beyond the classroom.</p>

3.2 Tiers

For controlled assessment units A640, A650 and A652, the assessment is untiered.

For the examined unit A680, the assessment is tiered. Foundation tier targets grades G to C and Higher tier targets grades D to A*. An allowed grade E will be awarded on the Higher Tier component.

3.3 Assessment Objectives (AOs)

Candidates are expected to demonstrate the following in the context of the content described:

AO1	Speaking and listening <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Speak to communicate clearly and purposefully; structure and sustain talk, adapting it to different situations and audiences; use Standard English and a variety of techniques as appropriate.• Listen and respond to speakers' ideas and perspectives, and how they construct and express meanings.• Interact with others, shaping meanings through suggestions, comments and questions and drawing ideas together.• Create and sustain different roles.
AO2	Study of spoken language <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Understand variations in spoken language, explaining why language changes in relation to contexts.• Evaluate the impact of spoken language choices in their own and others' use.
AO3	Studying written language <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Read and understand texts, selecting material appropriate to purpose, collating from different sources and making comparisons and cross-references as appropriate.• Develop and sustain interpretations of writers' ideas and perspectives.• Explain and evaluate how writers use linguistic, grammatical, structural and presentational features to achieve effects and engage and influence the reader.
AO4	Writing <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Write to communicate clearly, effectively and imaginatively, using and adapting forms and selecting vocabulary appropriate to task and purpose in ways that engage the reader.• Organise information and ideas into structured and sequenced sentences, paragraphs and whole texts, using a variety of linguistic and structural features to support cohesion and overall coherence.• Use a range of sentence structures for clarity, purpose and effect, with accurate punctuation and spelling. (At least one third of available credit for AO4 should be awarded to the use of a range of sentence structures for clarity, purpose and effect, with accurate punctuation and spelling.)

3.3.1 AO weightings – GCSE English Language

The relationship between the units and the assessment objectives of the scheme of assessment is shown in the following grid:

Unit	% of GCSE				Total
	AO1	AO2	AO3	AO4	
Unit A651: <i>Extended literary text and imaginative writing</i>	-	-	15	15	30%
Unit A650: <i>Spoken language</i>	-	10	-	-	10%
Unit A680: <i>Information and ideas</i>	-	-	30	30	60%
Unit A640: <i>Speaking and listening</i>	0	-	-	-	0%
Total	0%	10%	45%	45%	100%

AO1 is assessed in unit A640 Speaking and listening which although required for GCSE English Language, does not contribute to the overall result calculation, and is therefore 0% of the GCSE.

3.4 Grading and awarding grades

GCSE results are awarded on the scale A* to G. Grades are indicated on certificates. However, results for candidates who fail to achieve the minimum grade (G) will be recorded as unclassified (U) and this is not certificated.

Units A651, A650 and A680 are awarded a* to g. Results for candidates who fail to achieve the minimum grade (G) will be recorded as unclassified (U).

For the non-contributory but mandatory unit A640: Speaking and listening, grades will range from 5 (the highest) to 1 (the lowest), and be displayed on a separate line on the candidate's GCSE certificate. Candidates who fail to achieve the minimum grade (1) will be recorded as unclassified (U) and this is not certificated.

Most GCSEs are unitised schemes. When working out candidates' overall grades OCR needs to be able to compare performance on the same unit in different series when different grade boundaries may have been set, and between different units. OCR uses a Uniform Mark Scale to enable this to be done.

A candidate's uniform mark for each unit is calculated from the candidate's raw mark on that unit. The raw mark boundary marks are converted to the equivalent uniform mark boundary. Marks between grade boundaries are converted on a pro rata basis.

When unit results are issued, the candidate's unit grade and uniform mark are given. The uniform mark is shown out of the maximum uniform mark for the unit, e.g. 40/50.

The specification is graded on a Uniform Mark Scale. The uniform mark thresholds for each of the assessments are shown below:

GCSE Unit	Unit Weighting	Maximum unit uniform mark	Unit Grade								
			a*	a	b	c	d	e	f	g	u
A651	30%	90	81	72	63	54	45	36	27	18	0
A650	10%	30	27	24	21	18	15	12	9	6	0
A680 Higher	60%	180	162	144	126	108	90	81	-	-	0
A680 Foundation	60%	125	-	-	-	108	90	72	54	36	0

Higher tier candidates who fail to gain a 'd' grade may achieve an "allowed e". Higher tier candidates who miss the allowed grade 'e' will be graded as 'u' in the examined unit

Unit A640 has a unit weighting of 0% as the result does not contribute to the overall GCSE calculation and so has a maximum unit uniform mark of 0.

A candidate's uniform marks for each unit are aggregated and grades for the specification are generated on the following scale:

Qualification	Max uniform mark	Qualification Grade								
		A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	U
GCSE	300	270	240	210	180	150	120	90	60	0

The written papers will have a total weighting of 60% and controlled assessment a weighting of 40%.

A candidate's uniform mark for each paper will be combined with the uniform mark for the controlled assessment to give a total uniform mark for the specification. The candidate's grade will be determined by the total uniform mark.

3.5 Grade descriptions

Grade descriptions are provided to give a general indication of the standards of achievement likely to have been shown by candidates awarded particular grades. The descriptions must be interpreted in relation to the content in the specification; they are not designed to define that content.

The grade awarded will depend in practice upon the extent to which the candidate has met the assessment objectives overall. Shortcomings in some aspects of the assessment may be balanced by better performance in others.

The grade descriptors have been produced by the regulatory authorities in collaboration with the awarding bodies.

Grade F

Candidates talk confidently in familiar situations, showing some awareness of purpose and of listeners' needs. They convey information, develop ideas and describe feelings clearly, using the main features of standard English as appropriate. They listen with concentration and make relevant responses to others' ideas and opinions. They show some awareness of how they and others use and adapt spoken language for specific purposes. In formal and creative activities, they attempt to meet the demands of different roles.

Candidates describe the main ideas, themes or argument in a range of texts and refer to specific aspects or details when justifying their views. They make simple comparisons and cross-references that show some awareness of how texts achieve their effects through writers' use of linguistic, grammatical, structural and presentational devices.

Candidates' writing shows some adaptation of form and style for different tasks and purposes. It communicates simply and clearly with the reader. Sentences sequence events or ideas logically; vocabulary is sometimes chosen for variety and interest. Paragraphing is straightforward but effective; the structure of sentences, including some that are complex, is usually correct. Spelling and basic punctuation are mostly accurate.

Grade C

Candidates adapt their talk to the demands of different situations and contexts. They recognise when standard English is required and use it confidently. They use different sentence structures and select vocabulary so that information, ideas and feelings are communicated clearly and the listener's interest is engaged. They explain and evaluate how they and others use and adapt spoken language for specific purposes. Through careful listening and by developing their own and others' ideas, they make significant contributions to discussion and participate effectively in creative activities.

Candidates understand and demonstrate how meaning and information are conveyed in a range of texts. They make personal and critical responses, referring to specific aspects of language, grammar, structure and presentational devices to justify their views. They successfully compare and cross-reference aspects of texts and explain convincingly how they may vary in purpose and how they achieve different effects.

Candidates' writing shows successful adaptation of form and style to different tasks and for various purposes. They use a range of sentence structures and varied vocabulary to create different effects and engage the reader's interest. Paragraphing is used effectively to make the sequence of events or development of ideas coherent and clear to the reader. Sentence structures are varied and sometimes bold; punctuation and spelling are accurate.

Grade A

Candidates select suitable styles and registers of spoken English for a range of situations and contexts, showing assured use of standard English where appropriate. They confidently vary sentence structures and choose from a broad repertoire of vocabulary to express information, ideas and feelings in an engaging manner. They explain expertly, and evaluate persuasively, how they and others use and adapt spoken language for specific purposes. They initiate conversations and demonstrate sensitive listening through contributions that sustain and develop discussion. They recognise and fulfil the demands of different roles, whether in formal settings or creative activities.

Candidates respond personally and persuasively to a variety of texts, developing interpretations and evaluating how details of language, grammar, structure and presentation engage and affect the reader. They identify and discuss writers' perspectives in narrative, argument, explanation or analysis. They choose apt quotations and make telling comparisons and cross-references that illuminate the purpose and meanings of texts.

Candidates' writing shows confident, assured control of a range of forms and styles appropriate to task and purpose. Texts engage and hold the reader's interest through logical argument, persuasive force or creative delight. Linguistic and structural features are used skilfully to sequence texts and achieve coherence. A wide range of accurate sentence structures ensures clarity; choices of vocabulary, punctuation and spelling are ambitious, imaginative and correct.

3.5.1 Grade descriptions for Unit A640: *Speaking and Listening*

Grade 1

Candidates talk confidently in familiar situations, showing some awareness of purpose and of listeners' needs. They convey information, develop ideas and describe feelings clearly, using the main features of standard English as appropriate. They listen with concentration and make relevant responses to others' ideas and opinions. They show some awareness of how they and others use and adapt spoken language for specific purposes. In formal and creative activities, they attempt to meet the demands of different roles.

Grade 3

Candidates adapt their talk to the demands of different situations and contexts. They recognise when standard English is required and use it confidently. They use different sentence structures and select vocabulary so that information, ideas and feelings are communicated clearly and the listener's interest is engaged. They explain and evaluate how they and others use and adapt spoken language for specific purposes. Through careful listening and by developing their own and others' ideas, they make significant contributions to discussion and participate effectively in creative activities.

Grade 5

Candidates select suitable styles and registers of spoken English for a range of situations and contexts, showing assured use of standard English where appropriate. They confidently vary sentence structures and choose from a broad repertoire of vocabulary to express information, ideas and feelings in an engaging manner. They explain expertly, and evaluate persuasively, how they and others use and adapt spoken language for specific purposes. They initiate conversations

and demonstrate sensitive listening through contributions that sustain and develop discussion. They recognise and fulfil the demands of different roles, whether in formal settings or creative activities.

3.5 Quality of written communication

Quality of written communication is assessed in Units A651 and A680. Tasks in these units require answers in continuous prose and therefore include the assessment of written communication. The writing tasks in Section B of each of these units include the assessment of written communication, which is assessed via the marking criteria for writing.

Candidates are expected to:

- present relevant information in a form that suits its purpose
- ensure that text is legible and that spelling, punctuation and grammar are accurate, so that meaning is clear
- use an appropriate style of writing and, where applicable, specialist terminology.

4 Controlled assessment in GCSE English Language

This section provides general guidance on controlled assessment: what controlled assessment tasks are, when and how they are available; how to plan and manage controlled assessment and what controls must be applied throughout the process. Detailed guidance relating to controlled assessment is given in the JCQ document 'Instructions for conducting controlled assessments'. More specific guidance and support is provided in the Guide to controlled assessment in GCSE English available on the [OCR website](#).

4.1 Controlled assessment tasks

Controlled assessment tasks will be available from OCR's secure server Interchange and will be replaced or reviewed as detailed below. Guidance on how to access controlled assessment tasks from Interchange is available on the [OCR website](#).

Centres must ensure that candidates undertake a task applicable to the correct year by checking carefully the dates of the tasks on Interchange.

All tasks can be contextualised by the centre.

4.1.1 Unit A651: *Extended literary text and imaginative writing*

Tasks set by OCR are replaced each year.

For Section A, a response to an extended literary text, candidates choose **one** task from two themed tasks, four prose tasks, two literary non-fiction tasks, two drama tasks and four poetry tasks.

For Section B, **two** continuous linked writing responses from a choice of Personal and Imaginative Writing or Prose Fiction.

Candidates respond to **one** core task and **one** linked task from a choice of tasks provided by OCR.

4.1.2 Unit A650: *Spoken language*

Candidates are required to respond to **one** task. Candidates have a choice of five tasks, two in part A and three in part B.

For part A, The study of the spoken language of a public figure, OCR will change the specific speakers and interviewers each year.

For part B, Language, media and technology or Language and society, OCR will change the specific areas of study each year.

4.1.3 Unit A640: *Speaking and listening*

OCR will allow centres to design their own tasks according to defined parameters set by OCR. Candidates are required to submit work in **three** assessment contexts. All centres will receive a visit from an external moderator about once every three years.

4.2 Planning and managing controlled assessment

Controlled assessment is designed to be an integral part of teaching and learning.

When all necessary teaching and learning has taken place and teachers feel that candidates are ready for assessment, candidates can undertake the appropriate controlled assessment task.

Controlled assessment tasks are available at an early stage to allow planning time. Candidates should be allowed sufficient time to complete the tasks.

Suggested steps and timings are included below with guidance on regulatory controls at each step of the process. Teachers must ensure that control requirements indicated are met throughout the process.

4.2.1 Preparation and research time

- Introduction to the task (teacher led) **1 hour to 1 hour 30 mins**

Includes choice of tasks, possible approaches and sources of evidence, time allocations, programmes of work and deadlines, methods of working, control requirements.

- Preparation/research/collection of evidence

Unit	Section	Preparation and Research time
A651	A	About 25 hours
A651	B	About 15 hours
A650	-	About 15 hours
A640	-	About 15 hours

In the preparation/research/collection of evidence stage, a low level of control is required, which means that candidates can undertake this part of the process without direct teacher supervision and outside the centre as required. Candidates are also able to work in collaboration during this stage. However, when producing their final piece of work, candidates must complete and/or evidence all work individually.

During the research phase candidates can be given support and guidance. Teachers can explain the task, advise on how the task could be approached, advise on resources and alert the candidate to key things that must be included in their final piece of work.

Research material can include fieldwork, internet or paper-based research, questionnaires, audio and video files. Candidates must be guided on the use of information from other sources to ensure that confidentiality and intellectual property rights are maintained at all times. It is essential that any material directly used from a source is appropriately and rigorously referenced.

4.2.2 Producing the final piece of work

Unit	Section	Production time	Final piece	Recommended word length
A651	A	Up to 4 hours	One response to a text	Up to 1600 words
A651	B	Up to 4 hours	Two linked writing responses	Up to 1200 words
A650	-	Up to 4 hours (written assessment)	One response to spoken language	Up to 1000 words (written assessment)
A640	-	Between 15 minutes to 1 hour	Three assessment contexts	N/A

During the production of the final piece of work, candidates are not allowed access to dictionaries or thesauri or to grammar and spell check programs, except for Unit A650 (Spoken language study). For A651 Section A, candidates can use clean copies of texts. The final piece of work is produced in the centre under controlled conditions, which means under direct teacher supervision: teachers must be able to authenticate the work and there must be acknowledgement and referencing of any sources used. If the final piece is carried out over several sessions, work must be collected in-between sessions.

When supervising tasks, teachers are expected to:

- exercise continuing supervision of work in order to monitor progress and to prevent plagiarism
- ensure that the work is completed in accordance with the specification requirements and can be assessed in accordance with the specified marking criteria and procedures.

Teachers must not provide templates, model answers or feedback on drafts. Candidates must work independently to produce their own final piece of work.

4.2.3 Presentation of the final piece of work

Candidates must observe the following procedures when producing their final piece of work for the controlled assessment tasks.

- Tables, graphs and spreadsheets may be produced using appropriate ICT. These should be inserted into the document at the appropriate place.
- Any copied material must be suitably acknowledged.
- Quotations must be clearly marked and a reference provided wherever possible.
- Work submitted for moderation or marking must be marked with the:
 - centre number
 - centre name
 - candidate number
 - candidate name
 - unit code and title
 - assignment title.

Also included should be:

- [centre authentication form CCS160](#)
- preparatory notes.

Work submitted on paper for moderation or marking must be secured by treasury tags. Work submitted in digital format (CD or online) must be in a suitable file structure as detailed in the Appendix.

4.3 Marking and moderating controlled assessment

All controlled assessed units are marked by the centre assessor(s) using OCR marking criteria and guidance and are moderated by the OCR-appointed moderator. External moderation is either postal moderation or e-moderation where evidence in a digital format is supplied.

4.3.1 Applying the marking criteria

The starting point for marking the tasks is the marking criteria (pages 25–40). These contain levels of criteria for the skills, knowledge and understanding that the candidate is required to demonstrate. Before the start of the course, and for use at INSET training events, OCR will provide exemplification through real or simulated candidate work which will help to clarify the level of achievement the assessors should be looking for when awarding marks.

4.3.2 Use of 'best fit' approach to marking criteria

The assessment task(s) for each unit should be marked by teachers according to the given marking criteria within the relevant unit using a 'best fit' approach. For each of the assessment criteria, teachers select one of the band descriptors provided in the marking grid that most closely describes the quality of the work being marked.

Marking should be positive, rewarding achievement rather than penalising failure or omissions. The award of marks must be directly related to the marking criteria.

Teachers use their professional judgement in selecting the band descriptor that best describes the work of the candidate.

To select the most appropriate mark within the band descriptor, teachers should use the following guidance:

- where the candidate's work *convincingly* meets the statement, the highest mark should be awarded
- where the candidate's work *adequately* meets the statement, the most appropriate mark in the middle range should be awarded
- where the candidate's work *just* meets the statement, the lowest mark should be awarded.

Teachers should use the full range of marks available to them and award full marks in any band for work which fully meets that descriptor. This is work which is 'the best one could expect from candidates working at that level'. Where there are only two marks within a band the choice will be between work which, in most respects, meets the statement and work which just meets the statement. For wider mark bands the marks on either side of the middle mark(s) for 'adequately met' should be used where the standard is lower or higher than 'adequate' but **not** the highest or lowest mark in the band.

There should be clear evidence that work has been attempted and some work produced. If a candidate submits no work for an internally assessed unit(s), then the candidate should be indicated as being absent from that unit. If a candidate completes any work at all for an internally assessed unit, then the work should be assessed according to the marking criteria. And the appropriate mark should be awarded, which may be zero. The final mark for the candidate for the controlled assessment units are detailed in the table below:

Unit	Overall mark	Generating the overall mark
A651	60	Section A: there is one task - award a mark out of 30. Section B: there are two tasks – mark each out of 30, add the marks together and divide by 2 to give an overall mark for Section B out of 30. Total the marks for Section A (out of 30 marks) and Section B (out of 30 marks) to give a final mark for A651 out of 60.
A650	20	There is one task – award a mark out of 20.
A640	40	There are three tasks. Mark each out of 40 and divide by three to give an overall mark out of 40.

4.3.3 A651 Section A: literary texts marking criteria

Candidates submit **one** task for assessment. The task is marked out of 30 marks using the marking criteria below.

Band	Marks	Descriptors AO3
1	30 29 28 27	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A cogent and explicitly relevant response. • Explores and evaluates a range of interpretations of language and structure as appropriate. • Analyses in detail the writer's perspective. • Precise quotations/comparisons enhance analysis of writer's intentions.
2	26 25 24 23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A personal and persuasive response. • Develops interpretations and evaluates language and structure as appropriate. • Identifies and discusses writer's perspective. • Appropriate quotations/comparisons are used to illuminate meaning.
3	22 21 20 19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A personal, well developed and critical response. • A clear understanding of how meaning is conveyed, evaluating language and structure as appropriate. • Well selected quotations/comparisons enhance analysis.
4	18 17 16 15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A personal and critical response. • Understands and demonstrates how meaning is conveyed. • Quotations/comparisons used to justify views.
5	14 13 12 11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begins to develop a personal and relevant response. • Understands some of the ways meaning is conveyed. • Uses quotations/simple comparisons to support views.

6	10 9 8 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Makes some comments relevant to task. • Some attempt to show how meaning is conveyed. • Quotations/comparisons used to make simple points.
7	6 5 4 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describes some of the main features of a text in attempting to address task. • Some awareness of how the writer achieves effects through simple comparison/quotations.
8	2 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some comments on text with very little or no relevance to task. • Struggles to develop a response.

0 marks = no response or no response worthy of credit

4.3.4 A651 Section B: Imaginative writing marking criteria

Candidates submit **one** task containing **two** parts for assessment. Each part is marked out of **30** marks using the marking criteria below (out of 20 marks for AO4i & AO4ii **and** out of 10 marks for AO4iii), giving a total of **60** marks. Divide the total by 2 to provide the overall mark out of **30** for this section.

Band	Marks	Descriptors AO4i & AO4ii	Marks	Descriptors AO4iii
1	20	<p><i>In this band a candidate's writing:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> shows sophisticated control of the material and makes effective use of linguistic devices demonstrates a sophisticated understanding of the task, addressing it with complete relevance and adapting form and style with flair to suit audience and purpose uses precise vocabulary which is fully suited to the purpose of the writing, conveying subtlety of thought and shades of meaning, and where appropriate is imaginative and ambitious in scope uses structure to produce deliberate effects, developing the writing coherently and skilfully from a confident opening which engages the reader to a very convincing and deliberate ending is organised into coherent paragraphs which are clearly varied for effect and used confidently to enhance the ideas and meaning. 	10	<p><i>In this band a candidate's writing:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses a wide range of sentence structures to ensure clarity and to achieve specific effects relevant to the task uses ambitious vocabulary with very few spelling errors uses punctuation consciously and securely to shape meaning, with very few errors.
	19		9	
	18			

Band	Marks	Descriptors AO4i & AO4ii	Marks	Descriptors AO4iii
2	17 16	<p><i>In this band a candidate's writing:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • shows full control of the material and makes some effective use of linguistic devices • demonstrates a confident understanding of the task, addressing it with consistent relevance and adapting form and style with assurance to suit audience and purpose • uses imaginative vocabulary which is appropriate to the purpose of the writing, conveying some subtlety of thought and shades of meaning, and where appropriate may show some ambition in scope • uses structure consciously for effect, developing the writing coherently from an opening which engages the reader to a convincing and deliberate ending • is organised into paragraphs which have unity, are varied for effect and are used to control the content and achieve overall coherence. 	8	<p><i>In this band a candidate's writing:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • uses a range of sentence structures to ensure clarity and to achieve specific effects relevant to the task • uses more complex and irregular vocabulary, almost always securely spelled • uses punctuation to shape meaning, mainly securely, with errors only in more complex, irregular structures.
3	15 14	<p><i>In this band a candidate's writing:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • shows generally competent control of the material but may not always convey meaning clearly when using more ambitious linguistic devices and structures • demonstrates a secure understanding of the task, addressing it in a relevant way and adapting form and style with confidence to suit audience and purpose • uses varied vocabulary to create different effects which are mainly appropriate to the purpose of the writing, conveying thought and meaning clearly • uses structure deliberately and with direction – a focused and interesting opening, events and ideas developed clearly and in some detail, an appropriate ending • uses paragraphs of varying length and structure for effect, which effectively organise and link ideas and create an overall sense of coherence. 	7	<p><i>In this band a candidate's writing:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • uses generally well controlled sentence structures which are varied in length and type and show evidence of being used deliberately to create specific effects appropriate to the task • shows secure spelling of complex regular words and generally secure spelling of irregular or more complex vocabulary • uses punctuation to enhance or clarify meaning – is accurate both within and between sentences, but may make some errors in complex sentence structures.

Band	Marks	Descriptors AO4i & AO4ii	Marks	Descriptors AO4iii
4	13 12	<p><i>In this band a candidate's writing:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • shows general control of the material; the response may be straightforward and controlled but linguistically unambitious or may lose some control in attempting something ambitious • demonstrates an understanding of the task, addressing it in a mainly relevant way with some evidence of adapting form and style to suit different audiences and purposes • uses some variety of vocabulary to create different effects and to suit the purpose of the writing, but which may be imprecise or fail to convey shades of meaning • uses structure with a sense of direction – a clear and focused opening, straightforward development of ideas, an attempt to achieve an appropriate ending • is organised into paragraphs which may be varied for effect and which are carefully linked together to make the sequence of events or development of ideas clear to the reader. 	6	<p><i>In this band a candidate's writing:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • uses sentence structures which show some variety. May tend to repeat sentence types, lose control of more ambitious structures, or make some syntactical errors • usually spells complex regular words securely; may make errors with irregular or more complex vocabulary • uses punctuation in an attempt to create some specific effects; is usually accurate for sentence separation and sometimes within sentences, but may make less secure use of speech marks, colons and semi colons.

Band	Marks	Descriptors AO4i & AO4ii	Marks	Descriptors AO4iii
5	11 10	<p><i>In this band a candidate's writing:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • may not always show control of the material; the response may be simple and controlled but linguistically unambitious, or may attempt something ambitious but tend to lose control • demonstrates some understanding of the task, addressing it in a sometimes relevant way and with some attempt to adapt form and style to suit audience and purpose • uses vocabulary to create some limited effects, which may however be too simple to convey shades of meaning, not fully understood or not appropriate and may contain some idiomatic errors • uses structure with some sense of direction – a generally clear and focused opening, some development of ideas, a limited attempt to achieve an appropriate ending • uses paragraphs which may occasionally be varied for effect and/or are linked together to make the sequence of events or development of ideas fairly clear to the reader. 	5	<p><i>In this band a candidate's writing:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • uses sentence structures which show a little variety; may tend to repeat sentence types, lose control of more ambitious structures, and/or include syntactical errors • usually spells simple regular vocabulary securely but may make errors with complex regular vocabulary • uses punctuation which sometimes helps clarify meaning, usually accurately for sentence separation and sometimes successfully within sentences.

Band	Marks	Descriptors AO4i & AO4ii	Marks	Descriptors AO4iii
6	9 8	<p><i>In this band a candidate's writing:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • does not always show control of the material; the response may have a level of linguistic error that distracts the reader from the merits of the content • demonstrates a limited understanding of the task and addresses it with some relevance, making a limited attempt to adapt form and style to suit audience and purpose • uses vocabulary which is sometimes chosen for variety and interest but likely to be limited in range, sometimes inappropriate and may contain some idiomatic errors • structures writing with some sense of direction which may not be sustained; a fairly clear opening, some limited development of ideas, some sense of an ending • uses paragraphs which create some sense of sequence for the events or the development of ideas but which may lack unity or have little or no evidence of links between them. 	4	<p><i>In this band a candidate's writing:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • uses repetitive sentence structures, which are mainly simple or compound, or lengthy with some sense of control • usually spells simple regular vocabulary accurately but may make a number of typical errors • sometimes uses punctuation accurately for sentence separation but has limited success with attempts to use it within sentences to clarify meaning.

Band	Marks	Descriptors AO4i & AO4ii	Marks	Descriptors AO4iii
7	7 6	<p><i>In this band a candidate's writing:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • shows limited control of the material; the level of linguistic error may require the reader to re-read some sentences before the meaning is clear • demonstrates a very limited understanding of the task, addressing it with occasional focus and making limited attempts to adapt form and style to suit audience and purpose • uses vocabulary to create occasional variety and interest but which is likely to be very limited in range and often inappropriate with some idiomatic errors • shows some signs of organisation and some sense of direction - a limited attempt to create an opening, very simple or rambling development of ideas, may come to a stop rather than achieving a deliberate ending • uses paragraphs which may signal only obvious development of events or ideas, or which may be haphazard and lack clear links or overall unity. 	3	<p><i>In this band a candidate's writing:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • uses simple repetitive sentence structures with little control of more complex ones and frequent syntactical faults • spells some simple regular vocabulary accurately but makes random errors • uses some basic punctuation with some success between sentences but, within sentences, usually misuses or omits it.

Band	Marks	Descriptors AO4i & AO4ii	Marks	Descriptors AO4iii
8	5	<p><i>In this band a candidate's writing:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> offers occasional relevant and comprehensible content, but density of linguistic error may require the reader to re-read and re-organise the text before meaning is clear demonstrates a little awareness of the task, addressing it with intermittent focus; form and style may occasionally be appropriate to audience and/or purpose, but this is unlikely to be deliberate uses vocabulary which is very occasionally chosen for variety and/or interest but which is very limited in range and often inappropriate, with obvious idiomatic errors shows occasional signs of organisation and a very limited – if any – sense of direction uses paragraphs occasionally to signal very obvious changes in the direction of events or ideas, but which may need to be re-read or re-organised before the meaning is clear. 	2	<p><i>In this band a candidate's writing:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses recognisable sentence structures, with some accuracy in the use of more simple ones uses erratic spelling which may be recognisable for most words but is accurate for only a limited number uses punctuation which is occasionally successful but is inconsistent and likely to be inaccurate.
	4			
Below band 8	3	<p><i>In this band a candidate's writing:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> is very short or communicates very little, with some sections making no sense at all; may gain some marks where there is occasional clarity shows almost no awareness of task, audience or purpose uses vocabulary which is seriously limited shows almost no signs of organisation or sense of direction uses paragraphs – if at all – in a haphazard way such that, in spite of re-reading and re-organising, very little sense emerges. 	1	<p><i>In this band a candidate's writing:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses spelling and punctuation so imprecisely that very little meaning is communicated.
	2			
	1			
			0	

0 marks = no response or no response worthy of credit

4.3.5 A650: Spoken language marking criteria

Candidates submit **one** task for assessment. This task is marked out of 20 using the marking criteria below.

Band/Marks	General Criteria	Section A	Section B	
		The Study of spoken language of a public figure	Language, media and technology	Language and society
Band 1 18-20	<p>Candidates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> show perception and originality show analytical understanding of language variation and language choices, supported by cogent and precise references to texts/data make subtle and discriminating comments on the detail of texts/data. 	<p>Candidates show perception and originality when analysing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> how they and others choose and adapt features and functions of spoken language to achieve specific outcomes in different situations how speech and interaction patterns vary with different groups and contexts. 	<p>Candidates show perception and originality when analysing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> how they and others choose and adapt features and functions of spoken language to achieve specific outcomes in different situations how specific characteristics of spoken language are influenced by changes in communities, societies and technologies. 	<p>Candidates show perception and originality when analysing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> how they and others choose and adapt features and functions of spoken language to achieve specific outcomes in different situations how speech and interaction patterns vary with different groups and contexts.
Band 2 15-17	<p>Candidates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> show insight and engagement show analytical understanding of language variation and language choices, supported by well-selected references to texts/data comment sensitively on the detail of texts/data. 	<p>Candidates show insight and engagement when analysing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> how they and others choose and adapt features and functions of spoken language to achieve specific outcomes in different situations how speech and interaction patterns vary with different groups and contexts 	<p>Candidates show insight and engagement when analysing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> how they and others choose and adapt features and functions of spoken language to achieve specific outcomes in different situations how specific characteristics of spoken language are influenced by changes in communities, societies and technologies. 	<p>Candidates show insight and engagement when analysing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> how they and others choose and adapt features and functions of spoken language to achieve specific outcomes in different situations how speech and interaction patterns vary with different groups and contexts.

Band/Marks	General Criteria	Section A	Section B	
		The Study of spoken language of a public figure	Language, media and technology	Language and society
Band 3 12-14	<p>Candidates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • make a clear and sustained response • show sound understanding of language variation and language choices, supported by careful and relevant reference to texts/ data • comment with some thoroughness on the detail of texts/data. 	<p>Candidates show sound understanding when analysing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how they and others choose and adapt features and functions of spoken language for specific purposes in a range of contexts • ways in which speech and interaction vary and how these relate to social and other contextual factors. 	<p>Candidates show sound understanding when analysing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how they and others choose and adapt features and functions of spoken language for specific purposes in a range of contexts • how particular characteristics of spoken language are influenced by changes in communities, societies and technologies. 	<p>Candidates show sound understanding when analysing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how they and others choose and adapt features and functions of spoken language for specific purposes in a range of contexts • ways in which speech and interaction vary and how these relate to social and other contextual factors.
Band 4 9-11	<p>Candidates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • make a reasonably developed response • show overall understanding of features of spoken language, including language variation and language choices, using appropriate support from texts/data. • make some comment on features of texts/data. 	<p>Candidates show overall understanding when discussing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how they and others choose and adapt features and functions of spoken language for specific purposes in a range of contexts • ways in which speech and interaction vary and how these relate to social and other contextual factors. 	<p>Candidates show overall understanding when discussing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how they and others choose and adapt features and functions of spoken language for specific purposes in a range of contexts • how particular characteristics of spoken language are influenced by changes in communities, societies and technologies. 	<p>Candidates show overall understanding when discussing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how they and others choose and adapt features and functions of spoken language for specific purposes in a range of contexts • ways in which speech and interaction vary and how these relate to social and other contextual factors.

Band/Marks	General Criteria	Section A	Section B	
		The Study of spoken language of a public figure	Language, media and technology	Language and society
Band 5 6-8	<p>Candidates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> begin to organise a response show some understanding of language variation and language choices give some support from texts/data. 	<p>Candidates show some understanding when discussing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> how they and others choose and adapt features and functions of spoken language for specific purposes in a range of contexts ways in which speech and interaction vary and how these relate to social and other contextual factors. 	<p>Candidates show some understanding when discussing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> how they and others choose and adapt features and functions of spoken language for specific purposes in a range of contexts ways in which speech and interaction vary and how these relate to social and other contextual factors. 	<p>Candidates show some understanding when discussing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> how they and others choose and adapt features and functions of spoken language for specific purposes in a range of contexts ways in which speech and interaction vary and how these relate to social and other contextual factors.
Band 6 4-5	<p>Candidates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> make some relevant comment show a little understanding of aspects of spoken language give a little support from texts/data. 	<p>Candidates show little understanding when describing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> how they and others choose and adapt features and functions of spoken language for specific purposes in different contexts some common influences on spoken language and how these contribute to changes in vocabulary and usage. 	<p>Candidates show little understanding when describing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> how they and others choose and adapt features and functions of spoken language for specific purposes in different contexts some common influences on spoken language and how these contribute to changes in vocabulary and usage. 	<p>Candidates show little understanding when describing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> how they and others choose and adapt features and functions of spoken language for specific purposes in different contexts some common influences on spoken language and how these contribute to changes in vocabulary and usage.

Band/Marks	General Criteria	Section A	Section B	
		The Study of spoken language of a public figure	Language, media and technology	Language and society
Band 7 3-2	<p>Candidates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • make a few straightforward comments about spoken language • occasionally refer to texts/data. 	<p>Candidates show some awareness when describing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how they and others choose and adapt features and functions of spoken language for specific purposes in different contexts • some common influences on spoken language and how these contribute to changes in vocabulary and usage. 	<p>Candidates show some awareness when describing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how they and others choose and adapt features and functions of spoken language for specific purposes in different contexts • some common influences on spoken language and how these contribute to changes in vocabulary and usage. 	<p>Candidates show some awareness when describing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how they and others choose and adapt features and functions of spoken language for specific purposes in different contexts • some common influences on spoken language and how these contribute to variety in vocabulary and usage.
Band 8 1	<p>Candidates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • show a little awareness of spoken language • make some general comments. 	<p>Candidates show a little awareness of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • features and functions of spoken texts • influences on spoken language. 	<p>Candidates show a little awareness of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • features and functions of spoken texts • influences on spoken language. 	<p>Candidates show a little awareness of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • features and functions of spoken texts • influences on spoken language.

0 marks = no response or no response worthy of credit

4.3.6 A640: Speaking and listening marking criteria

Candidates submit **three** tasks for assessment. Each task is marked out of **40** marks using the marking criteria below, giving a total out of 120 marks. Divide the total mark by 3 to provide the overall mark out of 40 for this section.

Band/Marks	Communicating and adapting language (Individual extended contribution)	Interacting and responding (Group activity)	Creating and sustaining roles (Drama-focused activity)
<p>Band 5 40-32</p>	<p>Candidates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • highlight priorities and essential detail when communicating complex and demanding subject matter • use a sophisticated repertoire of strategies to meet challenging contexts and purposes • show an assured choice and flexible use of standard English vocabulary and grammar in appropriate situations. 	<p>Candidates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • sustain concentrated listening, showing understanding of complex ideas through interrogating what is said • shape direction and content of talk, responding with flexibility to develop ideas and challenge assumptions • initiate, develop and sustain discussion through encouraging participation and interaction, resolving differences and achieving positive outcomes. 	<p>Candidates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • create complex characters and fulfil the demands of challenging roles through insightful choice of dramatic approaches • explore and respond to complex ideas issues and relationships in varied formal and informal scenarios.
<p>Band 4 24-31</p>	<p>Candidates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • confidently convey and interpret information, ideas and feelings, emphasising significant points and issues • adapt and shape talk and non-verbal features to meet the demands of different situations, contexts and purposes • make appropriate, controlled, effective use of standard English vocabulary and grammar. 	<p>Candidates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • challenge, develop and respond to what they hear in thoughtful and considerate ways, seeking clarification through apt questions • analyse and reflect on others' ideas to clarify issues and assumptions and develop the discussion • identify useful outcomes and help structure discussion through purposeful contributions. 	<p>Candidates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • create convincing characters and roles using a range of carefully selected verbal and non-verbal techniques • respond skilfully and sensitively in different situations and scenarios, to explore ideas and issues and relationships.

Band/Marks	Communicating and adapting language (Individual extended contribution)	Interacting and responding (Group activity)	Creating and sustaining roles (Drama- focused activity)
Band 3 16-23	<p>Candidates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • effectively communicate information, ideas and feelings, promote issues and points of view • adapt talk to a variety of situations and audiences, using non-verbal features to add to impact • use a range of well-judged vocabulary and sentence structures to achieve different purposes, including competent and appropriate use of standard English. 	<p>Candidates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • listen closely and attentively, engaging with what is heard through perceptive responses • make significant contributions that move discussions forward • engage with others' ideas and feelings, recognising obvious bias or prejudice and referring to precise detail. 	<p>Candidates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • develop and sustain roles and characters through appropriate language and effective gesture and movement • make contributions to the development of situations and ideas, showing understanding and insight into relationships and significant issues.
Band 2 8-15	<p>Candidates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • convey straightforward information and ideas, coherent accounts and narratives in extended turns • begin to adapt talk and non-verbal features to meet the needs of different audiences • use a variety of vocabulary and structures for different purposes, including appropriate features of standard English with reasonable accuracy. 	<p>Candidates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • respond positively to what they hear, including helpful requests for explanation and further detail • make specific, relevant contributions to discussion • allow others to express ideas or points of view that may differ from their own and respond appropriately. 	<p>Candidates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • show understanding of characters by creating straightforward roles using speech, gesture and movement • engage with situations and ideas, showing understanding of issues and relationships.

Band/Marks	Communicating and adapting language (Individual extended contribution)	Interacting and responding (Group activity)	Creating and sustaining roles (Drama- focused activity)
Band 1 1-7	Candidates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • briefly express points of view, ideas and feelings • sometimes develop detail to add interest to accounts, narratives and information, supported by appropriate non-verbal features. • Use straightforward vocabulary and grammar, showing awareness of some main features of standard English. 	Candidates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • respond to what they hear, showing some interest, including non-verbal reactions • make brief, occasional contributions and general statements in discussion • follow central ideas and possibilities in what they hear and raise straightforward questions. 	Candidates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • draw on obvious and sometimes stereotypical ideas to create simple characters • react to situations in predictable but appropriate ways, demonstrating some understanding of relationships and familiar ideas.

0 marks = no response or no response worthy of credit

4.3.7 Authentication of work

Teachers must be confident that the work they mark is the candidate's own. This does not mean that a candidate must be supervised throughout the completion of all work but the teacher must exercise sufficient supervision, or introduce sufficient checks, to be in a position to judge the authenticity of the candidate's work.

Candidates must not plagiarise. Plagiarism is the submission of another's work as one's own and/or failure to acknowledge the source correctly. Plagiarism is considered to be malpractice and could lead to the candidate being disqualified. Plagiarism sometimes occurs innocently when candidates are unaware of the need to reference or acknowledge their sources. It is therefore important that centres ensure that candidates understand that the work they submit must be their own and that they understand the meaning of plagiarism and what penalties may be applied. Candidates may refer to research, quotations or evidence but they must list their sources. The rewards from acknowledging sources, and the credit they will gain from doing so, should be emphasised to candidates as well as the potential risks of failing to acknowledge such material. Candidates may be asked to sign a declaration to this effect. Centres should reinforce this message to ensure candidates understand what is expected of them.

Please note: Centres must confirm to OCR that the evidence produced by candidates is authentic. The Centre Authentication Form includes a declaration for assessors to sign and is available from the [OCR website](#) and [OCR Interchange](#).

4.3.8 Internal standardisation

It is important that all internal assessors, working in the same subject area, work to common standards. Centres must ensure that the internal standardisation of marks across assessors and teaching groups takes place using an appropriate procedure.

This can be done in a number of ways. In the first year, reference material and OCR training meetings will provide a basis for centres' own standardisation. In subsequent years, this, or centres' own archive material, may be used. Centres are advised to hold preliminary meetings of staff involved to compare standards through cross-marking a small sample of work. After most marking has been completed, a further meeting at which work is exchanged and discussed will enable final adjustments to be made.

4.3.9 Moderation

All work for controlled assessment is marked by the teacher and internally standardised by the centre. Marks are then submitted to OCR, after which moderation takes place in accordance with OCR procedures: refer to the OCR website for submission dates of the marks to OCR. The purpose of moderation is to ensure that the standard of the award of marks for work is the same for each centre and that each teacher has applied the standards appropriately across the range of candidates within the centre.

The sample of work which is presented to the moderator for moderation must show how the marks have been awarded in relation to the marking criteria defined in the sample controlled assessment materials.

Each candidate's work should have a cover sheet attached to it with a summary of the marks awarded for the task. If the work is to be submitted in digital format, this cover sheet should also be submitted electronically within each candidate's files.

4.4 Submitting the moderation samples via the OCR Repository

The OCR Repository is a secure website for centres to upload candidate work and for assessors to access this work digitally. Centres can use the OCR Repository for uploading marked candidate work for moderation.

Centres can access the OCR Repository via OCR Interchange, find their candidate entries in their area of the Repository, and use the Repository to upload files (singly or in bulk) for access by their moderator.

The OCR Repository allows candidates to send evidence in electronic file types that would normally be difficult to submit through postal moderation, for example multimedia and other interactive unit submissions.

The OCR GCSE English Language units A651, A650 and A640 can be submitted electronically to the OCR Repository via Interchange: please check Section 7.4 page 47 for unit entry codes for the OCR Repository.

There are three ways to load files to the OCR Repository:

- 1 Centres can load multiple files against multiple candidates by clicking on 'Upload candidate files' in the Candidates tab of the Candidate Overview screen.
- 2 Centres can load multiple files against a specific candidate by clicking on 'Upload files' in the Candidate Details screen.
- 3 Centres can load multiple administration files by clicking on 'Upload admin files' in the Administration tab of the Candidate Overview screen.

The OCR Repository is seen as a faster, greener and more convenient means of providing work for assessment. It is part of a wider programme bringing digital technology to the assessment process, the aim of which is to provide simpler and easier administration for centres.

Instructions for how to upload files to OCR using the OCR Repository can be found on [OCR Interchange](#).

5 Support for GCSE English Language

5.1 Free resources available from the OCR Website

The following materials are available on the [GCSE English Language qualification page](#):

- GCSE English Language specification
- specimen assessment materials for each unit
- Speaking and listening DVD guidance notes
- guide to controlled assessment
- Teachers' Handbook
- sample schemes of Work and Lesson Plans for each unit.

Other resources:

- A Copy of OCR's Poetry Anthology, *Reflections*, for every candidate
- A CD-ROM of OCR's Poetry Anthology, *Reflections*, for every Centre
- DVD to accompany *Reflections* Poetry Anthology
- Spoken language transcripts, and Speaking and listening DVD.

5.2 Other resources

OCR offers centres a wealth of quality published support with a fantastic choice of 'Official Publisher Partner' and 'Approved Publication' resources, all endorsed by OCR for use with OCR specifications.

OCR works in close collaboration with three Publisher Partners; Hodder Education, Heinemann and Oxford University Press (OUP) to ensure centres have access to:

- better published support, available when you need it, tailored to OCR specifications;
- quality resources produced in consultation with OCR subject teams, which are linked to OCR's teacher support materials;
- more resources for specifications with lower candidate entries;
- materials which are subject to a thorough quality assurance process to achieve endorsement.

Oxford University Press (OUP) is the publisher partner for OCR GCSE English Language. OCR still endorses other publisher materials, which undergo a thorough quality assurance process to achieve endorsement. By offering a choice of endorsed materials, centres can be assured of quality support for all OCR qualifications.

5.3 Training

OCR will offer a range of support activities for all practitioners throughout the lifetime of the qualification to ensure they have the relevant knowledge and skills to deliver the qualification.

Please see www.cpdhub.ocr.org.uk for further information.

5.4 OCR Support Services

5.4.1 Active Results

Active Results is available to all centres offering OCR's GCSE English Language specification.



Active Results is a free results analysis service to help teachers review the performance of individual candidates or whole schools.

Devised specifically for the UK market, data can be analysed using filters on several categories such as gender and other demographic information, as well as providing breakdowns of results by question and topic.

Active Results allows you to look in greater detail at your results:

- Richer and more granular data will be made available to centres including question level data available from e-marking
- You can identify the strengths and weaknesses of individual candidates and your centre's cohort as a whole
- Our systems have been developed in close consultation with teachers so that the technology delivers what you need.

Further information on Active Results can be found on the [OCR website](#).

5.4.2 OCR Interchange

OCR Interchange has been developed to help you to carry out day to day administration functions online, quickly and easily. The site allows you to register and enter candidates online. In addition, you can gain immediate free access to candidate information at your convenience. Sign up on the [OCR website](#).

6 Access to GCSE English Language

6.1 Equality Act Information relating to GCSE English Language

GCSEs often require assessment of a broad range of competences. This is because they are general qualifications and, as such, prepare candidates for a wide range of occupations and higher level courses.

The revised GCSE qualification and subject criteria were reviewed to identify whether any of the competences required by the subject presented a potential barrier to any disabled candidates. If this was the case, the situation was reviewed again to ensure that such competences were included only where essential to the subject. The findings of this process were discussed with disability groups and with disabled people.

Reasonable adjustments are made for disabled candidates in order to enable them to access the assessments and to demonstrate what they know and can do. For this reason, very few candidates will have a complete barrier to the assessment. Information on reasonable adjustments is found in *Regulations and Guidance Relating to Candidates who are Eligible for Adjustments in Examinations* produced by the Joint Council www.jcq.org.uk.

Candidates who are unable to access part of the assessment, even after exploring all possibilities through reasonable adjustments, may still be able to receive an award based on the parts of the assessment they have taken.

The access arrangements permissible for use in this specification are in line with Ofqual GCSE subject criteria equalities review and are as follows:

	Yes/No	Type of assessment
Readers	Yes	AO1, 2, 4
	Yes	AO3 - Permitted for the prepared components of reading assessment.
	No	AO3 - Not permitted for unseen components of reading assessment where the independent scanning and decoding of texts is required.
Scribes	Yes	All assessments
Practical assistants	Yes	For written examinations only (eg to open and turn pages).
Word processors	Yes	All assessments
Transcripts	Yes	All assessments
Oral language modifiers	Yes	All written and practical assessments.
	No	Texts/source material or literary extracts must not be modified.
BSL signers	Yes	For communication of instructions and questions only.
	No	Texts/source material or literary extracts must not be signed.
Modified question papers	Yes	All assessments
Extra Time	Yes	All assessments

6.2 Arrangements for candidates with particular requirements (including Special Consideration)

All candidates with a demonstrable need may be eligible for access arrangements to enable them to show what they know and can do. The criteria for eligibility for access arrangements can be found in the JCQ document *Access Arrangements, Reasonable Adjustments and Special Consideration*.

Candidates who have been fully prepared for the assessment but who have been affected by adverse circumstances beyond their control at the time of the examination may be eligible for special consideration. As above, centres should consult the JCQ document *Access Arrangements, Reasonable Adjustments and Special Consideration*.

7 Administration of GCSE English Language

The sections below explain in more detail the rules that apply from the June 2014 examination series onwards.

7.1 Availability of assessment

There will be:

- one examination series available each year in June to **all** candidates;
- one re-take opportunity available in November each year for candidates who have already certificated in GCSE English or GCSE English Language with any awarding body. Candidates who have not previously certificated for GCSE English or GCSE English Language will not be permitted to enter for any unit or for certification in November.

	Unit A651	Unit A650	Unit A640	Unit A680	Certification availability
June 2014	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
November 2014	Re-take only	Re-take only	Re-take only	Re-take only	Re-take only
June 2015	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
November 2015	Re-take only	Re-take only	Re-take only	Re-take only	Re-take only

7.2 Certification rules

For GCSE English Language, a 100% terminal rule applies. Candidates must enter for all their units in the series in which the qualification is certificated.

7.3 Rules for re-taking a qualification

Candidates may enter for the qualification an unlimited number of times.

Where a candidate re-takes a qualification, **all** units must be re-entered and all externally assessed units must be re-taken in the same series as the qualification is re-certificated. The new results for these units will be used to calculate the new qualification grade. Any results previously achieved cannot be re-used.

For each of the controlled assessment units, candidates who are re-taking a qualification can choose either to re-take that controlled assessment unit or to carry forward the result for that unit that was used towards the previous certification of the same qualification.

- Where a candidate decides to re-take the controlled assessment, the new result will be the one used to calculate the new qualification grade. Any results previously achieved cannot be re-used.
- Where a candidate decides to carry forward a result for controlled assessment, they must be entered for the controlled assessment unit in the re-take series using the entry code for the carry forward option (see section 7.4).

For controlled assessment units which are retaken, portfolios must contain new work only. This means the task taking part of the process must be completed. All task preparation and research work and the original notes can be used again. The original response cannot be taken into the task taking session.

7.4 Making entries

7.4.1 Unit entries

Centres must be approved to offer OCR qualifications before they can make any entries, including estimated entries. It is recommended that centres apply to OCR to become an approved centre well in advance of making their first entries. Centres must have made an entry for a unit in order for OCR to supply the appropriate forms and administrative materials.

It is essential that correct unit entry codes are used when making unit entries.

For the externally assessed unit A680, candidates must be entered for either component 01 (Foundation Tier) or 02 (Higher Tier) using the appropriate unit entry code from the table below. It is not possible for a candidate to take both components for a particular unit within the same series; however, different units may be taken at different tiers.

For the controlled assessment units, centres can decide whether they want to submit candidates' work for moderation through the OCR Repository or by post. Centres must use the same submission method for all candidates for each unit, but can choose different methods for different units. Candidates submitting controlled assessment must be entered for the appropriate unit entry code from the table below. Candidates who are re-taking the qualification and who want to carry forward the controlled assessment should be entered using the unit entry code for the carry forward option.

Centres should note that controlled assessment tasks can still be completed at a time which is appropriate to the centre/candidate. However, where tasks change from year to year, centres would have to ensure that candidates had completed the correct task(s) for the year of entry.

Unit entry code	Component code	Assessment method	Unit titles
A651A	01	Moderated via OCR Repository	<i>Extended literary text and imaginative writing</i>
A651B	02	Moderated via Postal moderation	
A651C	80	Carried forward	
A650A	01	Moderated via OCR Repository	<i>Spoken language</i>
A650B	02	Moderated via Postal moderation	
A650C	80	Carried forward	
A680F	01	Foundation Tier Written Paper	<i>Information and ideas</i>
A680H	02	Higher Tier Written Paper	
A640A	01	Moderated via OCR Repository	<i>Speaking and listening</i>
A640B	02	Moderated via Postal moderation	
A640C	80	Carried forward	

7.4.2 Certification entries

Candidates must be entered for qualification certification separately from unit assessment(s). If a certification entry is not made, no overall grade can be awarded.

Centres must enter candidates for:

- GCSE English Language certification code J355.

7.5 Enquiries about results

Under certain circumstances, a centre may wish to query the result issued to one or more candidates. Enquiries about results for GCSE units must be made immediately following the series in which the relevant unit was taken and by the relevant enquiries about results deadline for that series.

Please refer to the JCQ Post-Results Services booklet and the OCR Admin Guide: 14–19 Qualifications for further guidance on enquiries about results and deadlines. Copies of the latest versions of these documents can be obtained from the [OCR website](#).

7.6 Prohibited qualifications and classification code

Every specification is assigned a national classification code indicating the subject area to which it belongs. The classification code for this specification is 5030.

In order to meet the statutory requirement of the Key Stage 4 Programme of Study for English, pre-16 candidates must be entered for GCSE English Language and GCSE English Literature combined. Alternatively candidates can be entered for GCSE English (except pre-16 in Wales).

Either GCSE English Language and GCSE English Literature combined or GCSE English will be counted for the purpose of the School and College Performance Tables as part of the 5 A*-C performance indicators, including English and Mathematics.

Centres may wish to advise candidates that, if they take two specifications with the same classification code, colleges are very likely to take the view that they have achieved only one of the two GCSEs. The same view may be taken if candidates take two GCSE specifications that have different classification codes but have significant overlap of content. Candidates who have any doubts about their subject combinations should seek advice, either from their centre or from the institution to which they wish to progress.

8 Other information about GCSE English Language

8.1 Overlap with other qualifications

There is significant overlap between the content of this specification and OCR's GCSE English Specification (J350) and overlap with OCR'S GCSE English Literature Specification (J360). Additionally, there is a significant overlap with OCR's Functional Skills for English.

8.2 Progression from this qualification

GCSE qualifications are general qualifications which enable candidates to progress either directly to employment, or to proceed to further qualifications.

Progression to further study from GCSE will depend upon the number and nature of the grades achieved. Broadly, candidates who are awarded mainly Grades D to G at GCSE could either strengthen their base through further study of qualifications at Level 1 within the National Qualifications Framework or could proceed to Level 2. Candidates who are awarded mainly Grades A* to C at GCSE would be well prepared for study at Level 3 within the National Qualifications Framework.

8.3 Avoidance of bias

OCR has taken great care in preparation of this specification and assessment materials to avoid bias of any kind. Special focus is given to the 9 strands of the Equality Act with the aim of ensuring both direct and indirect discrimination is avoided.

8.4 Regulatory requirements

This specification complies in all respects with the current: *General Conditions of Recognition; GCSE, GCE, Principal Learning and Project Code of Practice; GCSE Controlled Assessment regulations* and the *GCSE subject criteria for English Language*. All documents are available on the [Ofqual website](#).

8.5 Language

This specification and associated assessment materials are in English only. Only answers written in English will be assessed.

8.6 Spiritual, moral, ethical, social, legislative, economic and cultural issues

This specification offers opportunities for spoken and written activities which contribute to the development of candidates' understanding of spiritual, moral, ethical, social, legislative, economic and cultural issues, for example through the study of a range of literary and non-literary texts.

8.7 Sustainable development, health and safety considerations and European developments, consistent with international agreements

This specification supports these issues, consistent with current EU agreements.

8.8 Key Skills

This specification provides opportunities for the development of the Key Skills of *Communication*, *Application of Number*, *Information and Communication Technology*, *Working with Others*, *Improving Own Learning and Performance* and *Problem Solving* at Levels 1 and/or 2. However, the extent to which this evidence fulfils the Key Skills criteria at these levels will be totally dependent on the style of teaching and learning adopted for each unit.

The following table indicates where opportunities may exist for at least some coverage of the various Key Skills criteria at Levels 1 and/or 2 for each unit.

Unit	C		AoN		ICT		WwO		IoLP		PS	
	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2
A651	✓	✓	-	-	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
A650	✓	✓	-	-	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
A680	✓	✓	-	-	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
A640	✓	✓	-	-	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Appendix: Guidance for the production of electronic controlled assessment

Structure for evidence

A controlled assessment portfolio is a collection of folders and files containing the candidate's evidence. Folders should be organised in a structured way so that the evidence can be accessed easily by a teacher or moderator. This structure is commonly known as a folder tree. It would be helpful if the location of particular evidence is made clear by naming each file and folder appropriately and by use of an index called 'Home Page'.

There should be a top level folder detailing the candidate's centre number, candidate number, surname and forename, together with the unit code, so that the portfolio is clearly identified as the work of one candidate.

Each candidate produces an assignment for controlled assessment. The evidence should be contained within a separate folder within the portfolio. This folder may contain separate files.

Each candidate's controlled assessment portfolio should be stored in a secure area on the Centre's network. Prior to submitting the controlled assessment portfolio to OCR, the centre should add a folder to the folder tree containing controlled assessment and summary forms.

Data formats for evidence

In order to minimise software and hardware compatibility issues, it will be necessary to save candidates' work using an appropriate file format.

Candidates must use formats appropriate to the evidence that they are providing and appropriate to viewing for assessment and moderation. Open file formats or proprietary formats for which a downloadable reader or player is available are acceptable. Where this is not available, the file format is not acceptable.

Electronic controlled assessment is designed to give candidates an opportunity to demonstrate what they know, understand and can do using current technology. Candidates do not gain marks for using more sophisticated formats or for using a range of formats. A candidate who chooses to use only word documents will not be disadvantaged by that choice.

Evidence submitted is likely to be in the form of word processed documents, PowerPoint presentations, digital photos and digital video.

To ensure compatibility, all files submitted must be in the formats listed below. Where new formats become available that might be acceptable, OCR will provide further guidance. OCR advises against changing the file format that the document was originally created in. It is the centre's responsibility to ensure that the electronic portfolios submitted for moderation are accessible to the moderator and fully represent the evidence available for each candidate.

Accepted File Formats

Movie formats for digital video evidence
MPEG (*.mpg)
QuickTime movie (*.mov)
Macromedia Shockwave (*.aam)
Macromedia Shockwave (*.dcr)
Flash (*.swf)
Windows Media File (*.wmf)
MPEG Video Layer 4 (*.mp4)
Audio or sound formats
MPEG Audio Layer 3 (*.mp3)
Graphics formats including photographic evidence
JPEG (*.jpg)
Graphics file (*.pcx)
MS bitmap (*.bmp)
GIF images (*.gif)
Animation formats
Macromedia Flash (*.fla)
Structured markup formats
XML (*.xml)
Text formats
Comma Separated Values (.csv)
PDF (.pdf)
Rich text format (.rtf)
Text document (.txt)
Microsoft Office suite
PowerPoint (.ppt)
Word (.doc)
Excel (.xls)
Visio (.vsd)
Project (.mpp)