



GCSE Equivalency English Exams - How we created these exams

Overview

We have created 4 Exams and 1 sample paper for GCSE English Equivalency, based on the [AQA GCSE English Language Sample Papers and Past Papers](#) provided on their website, along with the content specified in the [AQA GCSE English Language \(8700\) Specification](#).

The table below summarises the key points relevant to your A Star GCSE English Equivalency Exam.

Format	Description
Exam type	Online or paper based
Exam location	Sat at home/work - invigilated online
Exam availability	All year round
Exam structure	1 paper
Exam timing	2 hours 10 minutes
Number of marks	100 marks, split into the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Section A - 60 marks • Section B - 40 marks
Tiers	None
Level	9-1
Exam specification based on	AQA GCSE English Language (8700) Specification
Exam content coverage	Questions cover AO1-AO6. There is no separate endorsement to this exam.
Question types	A mixture of question types, including long written response questions.
Additional equipment needed	n/a

Format and Marks

Our exams consist of only 1 paper, instead of 2. The paper is a total of 100 marks, meaning that the total marks has been reduced from 160 marks, as seen on the AQA GCSE English Language sample papers, to 100 marks.

Each paper is split into reading and writing sections, as follows:

- Section A - 60 marks
- Section B - 40 marks

Distribution of Topics and Skills

Each exam has been designed to match the breakdown of Assessment Objectives (AO) outlined below:

Question	Assessment objectives	Marks
Section A		
1	AO1 <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identify and interpret explicit and implicit information and ideas• select and synthesise evidence from different texts (NB same skills are also tested in Q1 paper 1).	4
2	AO1 <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identify and interpret explicit and implicit information and ideas• select and synthesise evidence from different texts (<i>NB same skills are also tested in Q1 paper 1</i>).	8
3	AO2 <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Explain, comment on, and analyse how writers use language and structure to achieve effects and influence readers, using relevant subject terminology to support your views. (<i>NB same skills are also tested in Q2 paper 1</i>).	12
4	AO3 <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Compare writers' ideas and perspectives, as well as how these are conveyed, across two or more texts	16
5	AO4 <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Evaluate texts critically and support this with appropriate textual references (<i>NB similar skills involving structure overlap with Q3 paper 1</i>)	20

Section B		
6	<p>Candidates have an option of either choosing to write the non-fiction transactional piece of writing (Paper 2 task) OR choosing to write the fictional piece of writing (Paper 1 task) ensuring they:</p> <p>AO5 Communicate clearly, effectively and imaginatively, selecting and adapting tone, style and register for different forms, purposes and audiences. Organise information and ideas, using structural and grammatical features to support coherence and cohesion of texts</p> <p>AO6 use a range of vocabulary and sentence structures for clarity, purpose and effect, with accurate spelling and punctuation.</p>	<p>40</p> <p>24 marks content and organisation /16 marks technical accuracy</p>
Total		100

There is no separate endorsement section to our exams, meaning AO7, AO8 and AO9 are not assessed.

Assessment Difficulty

We closely monitor all exam results, and how these change over time, to ensure our exams match the difficulties of the specifications they are benchmarked against and so the grade boundaries are set accordingly.

The current mark and grade boundaries are benchmarked to the June 2019 AQA grade boundaries for English Language for combined papers and marked out of 160. These have been converted to marks out of 100 and expressed as percentages with corresponding grades 1-9:

Level	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Mark	79	73	68	61	54	48	35	23	10