

English Language A Level

Why choose English Language at A Level?

You are interested in language – for example:

- ▶ the ways in which people speak and write;
- ▶ how people's gender, age and social class affect their language;
- ▶ how the English language is changing and its place in the world.

You enjoy analysing conversations and texts, looking beneath the surface meaning.

You enjoy discussions and debating ideas with others.

It develops your skills of analysis, articulation and evaluation – skills prized by employers.

It helps you to become an independent thinker, able to engage at an academic level with developments in language and society.

Which exam board do we use?

AQA A Level English Language; please follow the link to look at the specification.

<https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/english/as-and-a-level/english-language-7701-7702/changes-for-2022>

Note that possible amendments (due to Covid) will be announced on or before 7 February 2022.

What do we study?

Year 12:

- ▶ Meanings and Representations – how language is used to represent people and institutions;
- ▶ Language and gender;
- ▶ Language and occupation;
- ▶ Language and social groups/ethnicities;
- ▶ Accents and dialects of the British Isles;
- ▶ Coursework: original writing.

Year 13:

- ▶ Language acquisition: how children learn to speak and write;
- ▶ Language change: how English has changed over the centuries and how it is changing now;
- ▶ Varieties of English around the world;
- ▶ Analysing and writing opinion articles on language issues
- ▶ Coursework: language investigation.

Coursework (NEA)

We begin this towards the end of Year 12.

It is worth 20% of your overall A level.

It is divided into two parts:

- ▶ 1: Original writing and accompanying commentary (750 words each), based on one of the following three areas: the power of storytelling; the power of persuasion; the power of information;
- ▶ 2: A language investigation (2000 words excluding data), exploring an area of language of your own choice – for example, the language of advertisements; the way in which a disabled child learns to speak; the language of sports commentaries – to name a few.
- ▶ You have wide scope to follow your own interests, whilst being guided and supported by your teachers.
- ▶ You will need to acknowledge sources and references in a bibliography.

What will we expect from you?

- ▶ A willingness to keep your eyes and ears open, to collect interesting examples of language for yourself, as well as engaging with examples provided in class;
- ▶ A readiness to participate in class discussion;
- ▶ An open mind - to engage with English in many different forms and dialects, and to assess social attitudes to language;
- ▶ Independent reading of articles and books on language;
- ▶ To complete all homework and coursework to the deadlines set;
- ▶ A commitment to the whole course;
- ▶ Honesty in communicating with your teachers.

What can we give you?

- ▶ Quality teaching by knowledgeable teachers;
- ▶ Support and guidance throughout the course;
- ▶ Access to resources, including books, articles, videos and exemplar material for coursework and exams;
- ▶ Extra curricular enrichment, such as language conferences and lectures.



The image is a promotional banner for a conference. At the top, it says 'Looking Into Language' in a large, white font on a dark blue background. Below that, it says 'A FREE Online Conference from the English & Media Centre'. The date and time are 'Wednesday November 24th 2021 2-3.30pm'. The description is 'An introduction to English Language A level and language study, aimed at Year 10 and 11 students'. At the bottom, there are four small portrait photos of the speakers: Lauren Hall-Lew, Emma Moore, Rob Drummond, and Helen Newsome, each with their name written below in a white box.

Where can an English Language A level take you?

- ▶ It is a valuable step on the way to a wide range of careers, including journalism, teaching, speech therapy, copy-writing, advertising, marketing, to name a few. Take a look at the careers wall in the English Department for more ideas and details.
- ▶ English Language is also useful when applying for a range of university courses. You can study English Language and/or Linguistics in its own right; it is also relevant to courses such as Law, History, Speech Therapy, Modern Languages and more.
- ▶ Don't think that English Language is necessarily irrelevant to a career in science or medicine; past students of English Language have gone on to degrees in STEM subjects (though obviously it is wise to check course requirements carefully).

Comments by past students

'One of the biggest benefits that I have found through studying English Language has been the extreme growth in my lateral and conceptual thinking.'

'Outside of school you will find that you apply the course to pretty much every aspect of your life.'

'Learning how children develop reading and writing is very useful if you want to go into Early Years teaching.'

'Good practice for referencing and report writing, through the use of an investigation, which linked in well to a science career.'