

## A Level English Language

Congratulations for achieving a place on A Levels here at Bury College and welcome to A Level English Language!

You've probably been wondering how studying A Levels will compare to your previous studies so we have put together a quick guide and some activities to help you get ready for starting in September.

### **How does English Language at A Level compare to GCSE?**

When you attend your first lesson, you might find that A Level English Language is very different to what you are used to. Lots of the skills you have learnt so far will come in really useful and we will be building upon these at a more advanced level to help us to analyse non-fiction texts. We will also be exploring language from a more *sociolinguistic* perspective (which is just a fancy way of saying that you are going to be exploring real language in society!)

Here are some topics you can expect to study on the course:

- Analysing how writers and speakers use language to create meanings and representations.
- Investigating language diversity: how our language is affected by different factors including where we are from, our gender, our jobs, our social groups, age, sexuality, ethnicity and even interests!
- Examining how children's language develops, from those early cooing and babbling noises and beyond.
- Studying the history of the English language, exploring how it has changed and continues to change and how it has spread across the world.

### **What you will need to bring to your lessons:**

- Yourself: on time and to every lesson. A high level of attendance and punctuality is key to success. If you need to be absent for an unavoidable reason, you'll need to notify us and catch up with the work you missed.
- A black pen, some highlighters/coloured pens and a notepad.
- You will also need a folder to store and organise your work. Some people like to get different folders for the different topics but start off with one folder and you can decide on an effective organisation system when your work starts to build up.
- You will be provided with different topic and revision booklets so make sure you bring these with you when they are needed along with any homework that is due in that day.

### **Taking ownership of your learning:**

English Language is a challenging but exciting and ever-changing subject that allows you to explore something that we all use everyday in order to communicate.

To be successful on this course, it is important to become more aware of the language that you use and hear every day and are able to apply the linguistic theory that we will be learning. You also need to practise your writing skills by completing at least two independent written activities set by your teacher per week.

With this in mind, it is really important that you take ownership of your own learning and we would expect you to use your allocated independent study to:

- Review your notes by creating revision resources to assist your learning of the material. It is essential that you do this from the very beginning and do not leave all of your revision until the end of the year before exams.
- Complete all of the homework set by your subject teachers.
- Read widely on each topic and use MyVLE for extra resources.

### **Are there exams and coursework?**

The exam board for English Language is AQA and you will be studying specification number 7702.

You will sit two exams at the end of your second year.

- Paper 1 (7702/1) – Language, the individual and society
  - Section A – Meanings and Representations – Text Analysis
  - Section B – Child Language Development
- Paper 2 (7702/2) – Language Diversity and Change
  - Section A – Diversity and change
  - Section B – Language Discourses (questions that explore ideas and attitudes about language)

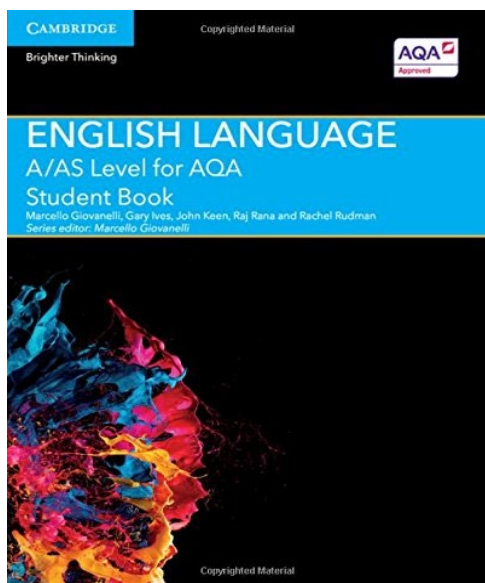
You will also be producing a coursework folder over the two years. This folder will include:

- A piece of original writing
- A language investigation on a topic of your choice

### **Recommended Textbooks**

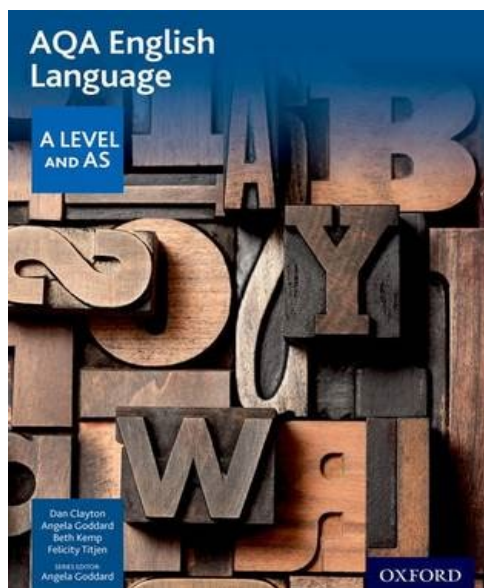
**The Learning Resource Centre (LRC) on campus stocks a range of study guides and textbooks to aid your studies. We also have subscriptions to online resources like the English and Media Centre where you will find lots of interesting and relevant articles and up to date research.**

**There are lots of very useful textbooks that you can use for English Language but to get you started, here are some of the main books that are suitable and have been endorsed by the AQA exam board.**



### A/AS Level English Language for AQA Student Book

By Marcello Giovanelli



### AQA English Language: A Level and AS

By [Dan Clayton](#), [Angela Goddard](#), [Beth Kemp](#) and [Felicity Titjen](#)

### Useful links to read and explore

The internet is bursting with lots of English language research and information and there are lots of places for you to keep up to date with the changing views of language. We will be exploring lots of these links together during the course but here is a selection of some of the favourites:

A good place to start for lots of information about the course is the AQA website:

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

<http://englishlangsfx.blogspot.com/>

A blog for A Level students by Dan Clayton.

<https://www.manchestervoices.org/>

This is a research project that explores the accents, dialects and identities of people in Greater Manchester.

<https://accentism.org/>

Did you know that people haven't been able to get jobs because of their accent? The Accentism Project uncovers and challenges a type of discrimination people face depending on how people speak, write and communicate.

Lots of different news websites have opinion columns where writers express their own ideas and views about language. Here are a few examples to browse.

<https://www.theguardian.com/education/linguistics>

<https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/Linguistics>

[https://www.vice.com/en\\_uk/topic/linguistics](https://www.vice.com/en_uk/topic/linguistics)

### **Podcasts and interesting things to listen to:**

<https://lingthusiasm.com/>

A free podcast that is enthusiastic about linguistics by Gretchen McCulloch and Lauren Gawne



<https://vocalfriespod.com/>

Have you ever been made fun of because of the way you speak? This podcast explores the issues surrounding language discrimination.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b006qtnz>

This is a link to a BBC Radio 4 programme called 'Word of Mouth'

### **Social Media**

Twitter is also a treasure trove of language researchers. Here are a few Twitter handles for you to follow to get you started:

@EngLangBlog

@Babelzine

@GretchenAMcC

@Lingthusiasm

@superlinguo

@Exploring Eng Ed

@RobDrummond

@AccentismProj

## Activities and Tasks

### Task 1

Before we start, you must revise some key terms. Knowing the following key terms will enable you to be able to analyse a text confidently. Make sure you know the following basic definitions, as these will be built upon across the course and in your independent study grammar booklet (you'll get one of these on your first week).

<b>Task 1: Basic Word Classes</b>		
<b>Term</b>	<b>Basic Definition</b>	<b>Examples</b>
adjective		
adverb		
auxiliary/modal verb		
collective noun		
common/concrete noun		
conjunction		
definite article		
dynamic verb		
indefinite article		
noun		
preposition		
pronoun		
proper noun		
stative verb		
verb		

### Your Task: Your Language Footprint

Our language is influenced by many factors within our lives. Here are a few examples:

- Where you were born or where you live may have an influence on your **accent** and **dialect** (e.g. dialect words like what you might call a roll of bread... a muffin? A cob? A barm?)

- Who you associate with: your friends, your peers at school, your family, colleagues at work, etc.
- Your job
- Your gender identity
- Your age
- Your interests
- How you communicate: face-to-face, over social media (e.g. using hashtags!)

### **Task 1**

Your first task is to think about the language that you currently use and what might have influenced it. Use the list above to help you make a list of influencing factors and some examples of words and phrases you use that have been influenced by these.

### **Task 2**

1. Decide what **accent** and **dialect** you have. Is it a local Bury accent? More Bolton? Rochdale? Or further afield?
2. Research your accent/dialect and write down some features. For example, what does it sound like? Are there any words that are only used by your accent/dialect?
3. Are there any **stereotypes** for your accent/dialect? For example, posh? Broad?

### **Task 3**

Create a **mood board** that expresses the language that you use and include any factors you feel have influenced it..

*A mood board is a visual tool that communicates different ideas. So, in short, it is an arrangement of images, materials and pieces of text that is intended to project your ideas and express yourself.*

There are lots of different ways you can create a mood board and they can either be

- A physical mood board where you cut and stick (or even draw!) images or patterns onto paper or card and handwrite your ideas.
- An electronic mood board where you add your images and text to a PowerPoint, Prezi, Photoshop or other program you are familiar with.

You can be as creative as you like with this and have fun with it!

**For example mood boards and to get some ideas, you can search for them online by typing ‘Mood Boards’ or ‘English Language Mood Boards’ into a search engine. Your teacher will remind you to bring these in during your first week.**

**We look forward to welcoming you to the department!**