

English Literature

Course overview

A Level

Level 3

OCR

This course is ideal for students who are passionate about literature and are prepared to read extensively. The course texts span over 400 years of English Literature and allow students to study texts in depth and place their production in a number of social and historical contexts. It will prepare you for the critical and theoretical frameworks of analysis typical of higher education.

Entry Requirements

You must have a minimum of 5 grades 9-4 (equivalent to A*-C) at GCSE, including English and Maths at grade 4, plus you must also meet the specific subject entry requirements.

Subject Specific Requirements

Grade 5 in English Language GCSE and grade 5 in English Literature GCSE.

Popular Subject Combinations

A Level: English Language, Philosophy, Classical Civilisation, History, Drama, Film/Media studies

BTEC: Performing Arts

Possible Enrichment Opportunities

Creative writing, 'Novel in a week', College play

What will I learn?

You will study a minimum of eight texts over two years. These texts will include examples of prose, poetry and drama. At least three of these texts must have been published before 1900 (one by Shakespeare), at least one work published after 2000 and one unseen text. In addition, you will consider the genre of Gothic Literature in depth.

The course requires you to consider the ways that writers shape meaning, the different ways these meanings are interpreted over time and the way that texts relate to one another and to literary traditions, movements and genres. You will also consider carefully the cultural and contextual influences of both the writer and the reader.

How will I be assessed?

Drama and Pre-1900 poetry, exam

Three essay questions on Shakespeare and a pre-1900 poet, for two hours and 30 minutes, worth 40% of the marks.

Close reading and comparative study – The Gothic A two hour and 30 minute exam, worth 40% of the marks.

Non-examined unit, worth 20% of the marks.

Where might it lead?

English Literature is considered a facilitating subject and as such is welcomed across a range of degree courses and not just English. English students often pursue careers in journalism, marketing, media and law.

Student name: Madison Beale (ex pupil of Windsor Girls' School)

"The lessons provoke me to think critically and to read around my subject area, I now enjoy it more than I ever though I would."

If you would like further information about this course please contact the admissions team at

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