

GCSE English Literature

This GCSE course can only be taken as part of a package of GCSEs, including English Language.

The GCSE English Literature course offers students the opportunity to explore a rich variety of literary texts from different genres, periods and cultures. Through the study of prose, poetry and drama, students develop their critical reading, analytical writing and interpretation skills.

This course encourages students to engage thoughtfully with literature, considering themes, characters and literary techniques in depth. Students also explore the historical and social contexts of literary works, gaining insight into the ways in which literature reflects and shapes human experience.

- [Sector Overview](#)

GCSE stands for General Certificate of Secondary Education, and they are part of the national curriculum. Typically, GCSEs are studied between the ages of 14-16 in years 10 and 11.

Waltham Forest College's GCSE courses are studied as a package for those who are new to the country or those who achieved a Grade 3 in their English and maths GCSEs in Year 11.

- [Entry Requirements](#)

The entry requirements for this course are:

This GCSE course is open to those who are new to the country or those who achieved a Grade 3 in their English and maths GCSEs in Year 11.

No prior study of the subject is necessary.

For those new to the country, there will be an entrance assessment to complete. This is common to the GCSE programme and not for this subject individually.

- [What will I study?](#)

This course consists of the following:

Shakespeare: Study a Shakespeare play in depth, exploring themes, characters, and dramatic techniques. Analyse the language, structure, and context of the play and consider its relevance to contemporary audiences.

19th Century Novel: Investigate a 19th-century novel, examining its narrative structure, characterisation, and social commentary. Explore the historical and cultural context of the novel and consider its significance within the literary canon.

Modern Drama or Prose: Explore a modern drama or prose text, such as a play by a contemporary playwright or a novel from the 20th or 21st century. Analyse the themes, style, and impact of the text, considering its relevance to contemporary society.

Poetry Anthology: Study a selection of poetry from different poets and periods, exploring themes, poetic forms, and techniques. Analyse individual poems in depth and consider connections and contrasts between different poets and poems.

- [How will I be assessed?](#)

The assessment comprises two exam papers, each lasting 2 hours.

Paper 1 focuses on Shakespeare and the 19th-century novel, with questions requiring students to analyse an

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extract from the set Shakespeare play and respond to an essay question on the 19th-century novel. Paper 2 focuses on modern texts and poetry, with questions requiring students to respond to unseen poetry, compare two unseen poems, and write an essay on a modern prose or drama text studied in class.

- [Enrichment](#)

Our Student Common Room is a great place to unwind and relax during your breaks. It features pool tables, table tennis, a gaming corner and lots of comfy sofas so you can refresh before your next lesson.

Themed events are held in the Common Room so you can get the best experience of being a Waltham Forest College student.

- [Work Experience](#)

Work experience will be sourced for learners on this pathway at the end of their GCSE study. This is owing to the intense study and limited time ahead of externally assessed examinations.

- [Progression opportunities](#)

Completion of GCSE English Literature provides students with a strong foundation for further study and a range of career opportunities.

Students may choose to continue their education with A Levels in English Literature, Creative Writing or related subjects, or pursue vocational qualifications in fields such as journalism, publishing or media.

This qualification also prepares students for careers in fields such as teaching, advertising, marketing or public relations, where strong communication and analytical skills are valued.

Whether pursuing higher education or entering the workforce directly, students emerge from this course with a deep appreciation for literature, strong critical thinking skills, and the ability to communicate effectively through writing and analysis.

- [Alumni](#)

Waltham Forest College is a vibrant and aspirational college and will support you to reach your career aspirations. Last year 96% of learners progressed onto a positive destination either to higher levels of study, employment, or an Apprenticeship.

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