



Advanced Higher
Coursework
Assessment Task



Advanced Higher English

Project–dissertation

Assessment task

This document provides information for teachers and lecturers about the coursework component of this course in terms of the skills, knowledge and understanding that are assessed. It must be read in conjunction with the course specification.

Valid from session 2019-20 and until further notice.

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Introduction

This document contains instructions for candidates for the Advanced Higher English project–dissertation. It must be read in conjunction with the course specification.

The project–dissertation is worth 30 marks. This is 30% of the overall marks for the course assessment.

This is one of four course assessment components. The other components are a Literary Study question paper, Textual Analysis question paper, and a portfolio–writing.

Marking instructions

The marking instructions for the Advanced Higher English project–dissertation are in the course specification.

Instructions for candidates

This assessment applies to the project–dissertation for Advanced Higher English.

The project–dissertation is worth 30 marks. This is 30% of the overall marks for the course assessment.

It assesses the following skills, knowledge and understanding:

- ◆ conducting independent reading, planning and research
- ◆ writing a piece of extended critical investigation on an aspect of literature

Your teacher or lecturer will let you know if there are any specific conditions for doing this assessment.

In this assessment, you have to write a dissertation of between 2,500 and 3,500 words on an aspect or aspects of literature. The word count includes quotations but excludes footnotes and bibliography.

You must include the word count with the submitted dissertation. If the word count exceeds the maximum by more than 10%, a penalty is applied.

Your writing must have consistent technical accuracy. This means that paragraphs, sentences and punctuation are accurate and organised so that your writing is clearly and readily understood, and spelling errors are infrequent. Carefully proofread your work so that there are few errors.

General guidance

There is no time limit for the project–dissertation. You should start your dissertation as early in the course as possible. This is an extensive project that requires you to work independently, and adhere to deadlines. The first stages of the process alone (selecting and reading texts, and identifying a task) will take considerable time.

There are no restrictions on the resources that you may access while producing your dissertation.

Your teacher or lecturer may provide reasonable assistance. This may include guidance in terms of finding suitable texts, a task, an outline plan, secondary critical sources, and summary feedback on one dissertation draft.

Your submitted pieces of writing must not carry any comments, marks or grades from your teacher or lecturer.

You should produce several rounds of draft material. During this, you should:

- ◆ reflect on feedback from your teacher or lecturer
- ◆ identify your own areas for improvement and make subsequent changes
- ◆ carefully proofread your work

Before you begin work on your project—dissertation, it is important that you read SQA’s booklet *Your Coursework*. This provides you with information about the rules around coursework, including authenticity and plagiarism. Examples of plagiarism include:

- ◆ using material from the internet without citing the source
- ◆ using material from a print publication without citing the source

You must write your dissertation in your own words, unless you are quoting from a referenced source.

You must acknowledge any sources consulted in footnotes, or in a reference list at the end of your dissertation. You must give specific details of the sources consulted. There is guidance on referencing below.

When there is doubt over the authenticity of a dissertation, it will not be accepted for submission.

Process

The project—dissertation has three stages:

- ◆ **planning:** you should choose appropriate texts and formulate a precise and focused dissertation task on an aspect of literature
- ◆ **research and development:** you should investigate and research relevant materials and record all sources consulted
- ◆ **writing:** you should write your dissertation, reflecting, redrafting and proofreading before final submission

Selection of texts and task

Your teacher or lecturer can support you to choose appropriate texts, and the focus of the dissertation task. The texts you choose should have sufficient depth and complexity to allow you to demonstrate the level of critical analysis required for Advanced Higher English.

Your dissertation should explore a limited area of literary technique, applying complex critical analysis with appropriate supporting evidence. The formulation of a suitable task is of crucial importance, as it informs the line of argument that you develop and explore in your dissertation.

There is a list of suggested authors in appendix 1 of the *Advanced Higher English Course Specification*. This list might be a good starting point when you begin thinking about which text(s) to focus on.

Your chosen texts for the dissertation must be literary, and must be untaught. You cannot use writers or texts studied in the dissertation in the Literary Study question paper.

Approach

You should:

- ◆ select suitable literary text(s)
- ◆ select a suitable task which focuses on an aspect of literary technique
- ◆ adopt a personal stance towards the topic
- ◆ devise, structure and sustain an argument
- ◆ select evidence from primary and, where appropriate, secondary sources to support an argument
- ◆ analyse a range of literary techniques and/or features appropriate to the task

You might choose one of the following as the basis of a dissertation:

- ◆ two texts by the same novelist
- ◆ two texts written by different novelists
- ◆ a single, substantial text
- ◆ two texts by the same dramatist
- ◆ texts written by two or more dramatists
- ◆ a wide range (perhaps seven or more) of poems by one poet
- ◆ a narrow range (six or fewer) of poems by one poet
- ◆ texts written by two or more poets
- ◆ short stories (three or more)
- ◆ literary non-fiction

In producing the dissertation, you should engage in a range of activities including:

- ◆ negotiating a study programme
- ◆ meeting deadlines for the submission of work
- ◆ studying the text(s) to locate appropriate selections for analysis
- ◆ comparing aspects of the texts, where appropriate
- ◆ applying a knowledge of appropriate critical and analytical approaches and terminology
- ◆ deploying evidence from secondary sources, as appropriate
- ◆ drafting, editing and proofreading

Referencing

It is recommended practice to:

- ◆ use italics or underlining to indicate the titles of texts
- ◆ set in from the margin all quotations of more than one line so that they are clearly distinguishable from the text of the dissertation
- ◆ use footnotes and page references where appropriate to identify quotations from, and references to, primary sources
- ◆ use footnotes and page references at all times to identify and acknowledge quotations from, references to, and information or ideas from secondary sources
- ◆ provide an accurate bibliography
- ◆ give footnote and bibliography references in the following form:
D. Gifford and D. McMillan, *A History of Scottish Women's Writing*, EUP, 1997.

Administrative information

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History of changes

Version	Description of change	Date

Note: you are advised to check SQA's website to ensure you are using the most up-to-date version of this document.

Security and confidentiality

This document can be used by SQA approved centres for the assessment of National Courses and not for any other purpose.

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