

English at ACE

INTENT:

What is the curriculum aim / vision for this subject?

The English curriculum is designed around 5 key principles or aims:

- The curriculum should give students the opportunity to become highly literate, articulate, critical thinkers who are able to access, analyse and question the world around them.
- The curriculum should give students access to traditional cultural capital through the delivery of more culturally broad, diverse and contemporary material.
- The curriculum should lay the groundwork for further study at GCSE in particular, through the explicit teaching of GCSE skills and through the use of GCSE-style assessments.
- The curriculum should encourage students to enjoy English, to appreciate the beauty, power and value of language and literature.
- The curriculum should encourage students to develop a love of reading. This will be at the forefront of teaching and learning, embedded into all lessons, to develop overall literacy skills.

We aim to do this by:

- Stimulating an interest in, and enjoyment of, English.
- Providing the opportunities and challenge for all to achieve their full potential.
- Encouraging a culture of questioning and feeding the natural inquisitiveness of students.
- Providing the best possible standard of teaching and opportunities for learning including cross curricular links.
- Educational visits
- Reading Development – Giving students regular opportunities to read in lessons across the curriculum.

What should ACE students gain from this subject?

- Students should enjoy and achieve in English.
- They should be challenged and engaged.
- They should be supported to develop key, transferable skills which prepare them, not only for public examinations, but for making a positive contribution in society.
- Ensure they leave feeling more confident and happier as individuals from when they first started.
- They are encouraged to develop a love of reading whilst improving literacy skills.

How is our curriculum sequenced?

KS3:

We aim to build on KS2 prior knowledge and skills and provide building blocks to access the KS4 national curriculum, allowing students to achieve their potential and move on successfully to post-16 provision.

The objectives are supported by expert knowledge on objective sequencing from the National Curriculum. However, due to the nature of our service lesson objective sequencing can be flexible and adapted to meet the learning needs and support learning gaps.

KS3:

In KS3 we focus on building knowledge and skills in reading and writing. We study a range of novels and poetry from Victorian to contemporary and at least two Shakespeare plays. Students are fully immersed in language and creativity from year 7, which challenges and informs the students about social and cultural concepts, as well as encouraging debates and diverse thinking. As they move through to year 9 students will take a more analytical approach to reading and dive into the writer's intentions and craft, considering character, theme and context. Speaking and listening skills are honed through discussion, debate and presentations.

Reading is an integral part of English at ACE but is not limited to English lessons and is actively promoted across subjects. We read full texts in class, as well as study texts that cover a wide range of topics and enhance cultural knowledge. Reading for pleasure is promoted and encouraged with a range of books available for students to read at breaks or take home. Individual reading time is built into lessons.

KS4:

In KS4, some students will be entered for Language and Literature and some just Language. We tailor individual students' needs and provide as much support throughout. Students who cover a two-year language course will cover key elements throughout Year 10 and develop on these skills in Year 11.

Students who wish to complete both Literature and Language GCSE's cover the Literature content in Year 10 and Language in Year 11, while recapping on exam techniques for Literature at home. This is structured in this way as it gives our students the best way of managing to complete two GCSE's on a part-time timetable whilst still being able to succeed in both GCSE's.

Integration and Transition

Students can start at any point and could have missed various amounts of time in their main stream setting. Therefore we make it our aim to ensure the students' needs are put first and ensure their needs are met. Our aim is to ensure the student feels comfortable and safe through:

- Use of school data
- Setting high expectations
- Pupil passport
- Opportunities to identify strengths and areas of development
- Constructive feedback

IMPLEMENTATION:

How does learning develop over the five years?

At ACE the curriculum for Years 7 to 9 now reflects the structure and challenges of the National Curriculum.

- Reading and writing assessments linked to reading material.
- High challenge content: Victorian Literature, unseen prose, unseen poetry, two Shakespeare texts, engaging and challenging texts.
- Vocabulary- High order and challenging vocabulary linked to lessons

What principles have guided our decision making in developing this curriculum? What is distinctive about our curriculum?

- The text choices are very distinctive and broad in the offer. They are fairly contemporary texts but include new, more challenging genres including: fantasy, romance, bildungsroman etc. Students we feel will enjoy these contemporary texts.
- Deep questioning, magenta principles, innovative teaching and learning approaches and developing thinking skills in Students are the overriding principles behind our curriculum.
- We set high expectations of all students regardless of their medical background (physical or mental health). Students are challenged to attain Literacy knowledge and skills from the moment they join ACE.

In what ways does our curriculum help to develop...?

- Cultural diversity and identity: Texts by diverse authors or with identity as a key theme. We explore cultural diversity through texts studied in our schemes work.
- Creativity and critical thinking: We encourage critical thinking and creativity through developing analytical skills, and providing opportunities to nurture creative flair within lessons.

IMPACT:

What forms do assessments take? What is the purpose of assessment?

All pupils complete an online baseline diagnostic Reading assessment on entry to ACE to establish their reading age. This will be re-assessed later in the academic year.

KS3:

- In Years 7 to 9, progress tasks are completed 3 times a year based on prior knowledge and work they have covered in their recent lessons.

In Key stage 3 we follow the National Curriculum. This curriculum has been designed to identify gaps in pupil knowledge and address them in line with curriculum expectations.

The introduction of more challenging texts and a focus on retaining key information on character, plot and themes and will help prepare students to experience a rich and broad curriculum, despite being on a reduced timetable.

Assessment:

Progress through the Curriculum involves 3 summative assessments throughout the year. This has been designed to check prior knowledge, new learning and knowledge application in unfamiliar contexts. Teachers will identify appropriate points in the National Curriculum to assess pupil knowledge and understanding in order to progress confidently with the next stage. These assessments will also indicate if a pupil requires intervention as a form of subject support.

The assessment system has been designed alongside our schemes of learning to ensure regular assessment of reading, writing and spoken language across a range of different genres and contexts. The assessment will be used to identify students ability and ensure they are secure in their understanding of key concepts before they move on and to target intervention swiftly and effectively where it is needed. We will assess students' progress in reading, writing and spoken language through classwork and homework.

How do we know if we have a successful curriculum?

- Pupil voice, staff voice, parental voice.
- Learning walks and lesson observations.
- Scrutiny of student work.
- Self-evaluation and external moderation via links with other mainstream schools in the authority.
- Successful post 16 transition
- Adapt teaching to enable access to all SEN students

Reading:

At ACE we are passionate and dedicated to promoting the importance of literacy. We aim to facilitate student's success to expand and enrich subject knowledge and opportunities in life.

In order to introduce, embed and master vocabulary we at ACE will:

- Collaborate to share common vocabulary amongst subjects
- use literacy learning mats
- widen student's vocabulary and deepen learning to apply the language in different contexts.
- provide opportunities through cross-curricular vocabulary through a common theme to support and develop exposure to new language and exam terminology to increase confidence.
- give students' the opportunity to read for pleasure on a regular basis.

CURRICULUM CONTENT

KEY STAGE 3 – Curriculum Maps have been developed in line with the National Curriculum and are available to view on the school website.

KEY STAGE 4

GCSE English Language

Section A (20%) – Reading (40 marks)

This section will test through structured questions the reading of an unseen extract from one 20th century literary prose text (about 60-100 lines). This section assesses AO1, AO2 and AO4.

Section B (20%) – Prose Writing (40 marks)

This section will test creative prose writing through one 40-mark task. Candidates will be offered a choice of four titles giving opportunities for writing to describe and narrate, and imaginative and creative use of language. This response should be a narrative / recount. Candidates who write purely descriptively, or use a form other than that specified, such as poetry or drama, will not be able to access the full mark range as shown in the assessment criteria. This section assesses AO5 and AO6.

Section A (30%) – Reading (40 marks)

This section will test through structured questions the reading of two high-quality unseen non-fiction texts (about 900-1200 words in total), one from the 19th century, the other from the 21st century. Non-fiction texts may include, but will not be limited to: letters, extracts from autobiographies or biographies, diaries, reports, articles and digital and multi-modal texts of various kinds from newspapers and magazines, and the internet. This section assesses AO1 (and 2), AO2, AO3 and AO4.

Section B (30%) – Writing (40 marks)

This section will test transactional, persuasive and/or discursive writing through two equally weighted compulsory tasks (20 marks each). Across the two tasks candidates will be offered opportunities to write for a range of audiences and purposes, adapting style to form and to real-life contexts in, for example, letters, articles, reviews, speeches, etc. This section assesses AO5 and AO6.

GCSE English Literature is available to a small number of ACE students who feel confident, and have covered all content in this subject.

Paper 1

Section A (20%) Shakespeare

Macbeth

Section B (20%) Poetry from 1789 to the present day

Two questions based on poems from the WJEC Eduqas Poetry Anthology, one of which involves comparison.

Paper 2

Section A (20%) Post-1914 Prose/Drama

Blood Brothers (Russell)

One source-based question on a post 1914 prose/drama text from the above prescribed list.

Learners are not permitted to take copies of the set texts into the examination.

Section B (20%) 19th Century Prose

A Christmas Carol (Dickens)

Section C (20%) Unseen Poetry from the 20th/21st Century

Two questions on unseen poems, one of which involves comparison.