

WJEC GCSE English Language and Literature (Double Award Only)

Approved by Qualifications Wales

Non-Examination Assessment Handbook

Unit 5: Continuity and change (3750U5)

Teaching from 2025

First submission 2027



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Instructions for teachers

Along with the instructions in this handbook, teachers must read the relevant details in the specification for the Single and Double award of this qualification.

Teachers must also read the JCQ document, [Instructions for conducting non-examination assessments](#) for detailed advice relating to the administration of non-examination assessment.

Assessment will be based on two tasks. For Task A, learners will be required to write an essay based on a whole Shakespeare play.

For Task B, learners will be required to participate in a paired discussion. An audio-visual recording must be made for each pairing.

The assessment criteria for both tasks can be found at the end of this document.

Teachers must complete the Unit 5 Assessment Record Sheet for **all learners** (found on the WJEC GCSE English Language and Literature webpage) and submit to WJEC for those learners included in the moderation sample.

The submission deadline for Unit 5 samples of work is 24 March annually. The work must be uploaded for e-submission.

Assessment Overview

	TASK A	TASK B
Type of NEA	Shakespeare essay	Paired discussion
Suggested length	1000-1500 words	5-8 minutes
Research and planning	3 hours	2 hours
Task-taking	3 hours	5-8 minutes
Marks available	30	30

Task A

The task

The essay task will be chosen from a selection of tasks prescribed by WJEC. Tasks will be released in April the year before assessment. The same task will remain for two years. Centres are required to ensure they use the correct question for each series. Centres have the flexibility to decide when during the year learners undertake the task.

The essay will be linked to learners' understanding of **Continuity and Change** developed through a critical discussion of the Shakespeare play in the light of the question set. This could focus on areas such as character and relationships, plot and dramatic structure, specific elements of language, or differences and similarities in contemporary and twenty-first century attitudes.

Learners should:

- evidence engagement with the whole play
- show their understanding of the play and their understanding of continuity and change in context
- use linguistic and literary approaches
- use context to inform analysis of the play, examining their effect on meaning/audience responses
- select and evaluate relevant examples from the play
- have a clear and developing argument that addresses the question directly and a conclusion that draws the argument together.

Preparing for the assessment – Research and planning stage

It is important that centres have already read, studied and prepared the whole Shakespeare play with learners before they start this process.

Learners are allowed **3 hours** for the research and planning stage of this task. This does not include time taken reading, studying and preparing texts with the learners. They may make use of research materials, and teachers may give advice of a general kind.

The work of individual learners may be informed by working with others, but learners must then provide an individual response. Learners are not permitted to complete any of the research and planning work related to the NEA outside of the centre.

Resources

During the research and planning stage of this task:

- learners can have access to resources and/or preparatory notes. They should, however, be advised that all work must be their own – copying and pasting from internet sources, using comments from critics without acknowledgement and/or reproducing someone else's essay is plagiarism
- the use of AI to generate responses is prohibited and will be treated as malpractice
- learners may have access to dictionaries and thesauri
- learners' work must remain within the centre at all times and must be stored securely between timetabled sessions.

If learners are provided with worksheets/scaffolding for their assessment, copies of the assistance they have been given must be included with the moderation sample. Such worksheets are not permitted as part of the notes for task-taking. Comments as to the nature and amount of help given should be made on the Unit 5 Assessment Record Sheet.

Supervision

For the research and planning stage of this task, learners must be indirectly supervised.

Centres must ensure that:

- all learners participate in the assessment
- there is sufficient supervision to ensure that work can be authenticated
- the work an individual learner submits for assessment is their own.

Task taking – Essay writing

Following the completion of the preparation stage, the task must be completed under direct supervision.

Learners are allowed a total of **3 hours** to complete this task. This time allowance may be split up into shorter periods to suit the centre and may include redrafting if required.

If the assessment session is broken up into shorter periods of time, all learners' work must be collected and kept securely within the centre.

Learners are not permitted to use notes during task taking. Copies of the plays must be checked for notes/essay plans to prevent any incidents of malpractice. Work may be handwritten or digitally produced. Learners are not permitted access to dictionaries or thesauri during task-taking, and digital grammar and spell check programmes must be disabled. Once the work is completed by the learner in this three-hour period, it may not be revised.

Resources

During the task taking stage, learners may have an unannotated copy of the Shakespeare play they have studied, but the use of other notes/resources is not allowed. This also prohibits the use of extracts from the play rather than a whole copy.

Supervision

For task taking stage, learners must be directly supervised.

Centres must ensure that:

- all learners are within direct sight of the supervisor throughout the session(s)
- display materials which might provide assistance are removed or covered
- there is no access to email, the internet or mobile phones
- learners complete their work independently
- interaction with other learners does not occur
- no assistance of any description is provided.
- candidates' work must remain within the centre at all times and must be stored securely between timetabled sessions.

Task B

The task

The task will be selected from a list prescribed by WJEC, which will offer two themes from the Poetry Anthology as foci leading to a discussion of **Continuity and Change** in two or more poems from different periods. Paired learners should discuss the same poems.

The task will be released in April the year before assessment. The same task will remain for two years. Centres are required to ensure they use the correct task for each series. Centres have the flexibility to decide when during the course learners undertake the task.

The discussion must be based on one prescribed 1600-1900 poem from the WJEC Poetry Anthology, and one further poem(s) chosen by the learner either from the anthology or a self-selected poem. Learners may include a third poem to the discussion if they wish.

The paired discussion will be linked to learners' appreciation of **Continuity and Change** in the content, context, ideas and attitudes, and/or language and style of the poems they have selected. Learners should engage with the unit concept and the designated theme, expressing personal opinions and feelings, and exploring similarities and differences over time. Their discussion should be supported by relevant examples, and they should use linguistic and literary approaches to communicate their ideas clearly. They do not, however, need to give a literary analysis of each poem.

Areas that could be considered include, but are not limited to:

- how poets across time express different attitudes to the designated themes
- how the chosen poems are linked by content, ideas or language/form
- how individual readers respond to each poet's experiences and attitudes
- how contextual factors shape meaning.

Preparing for the assessment – research and planning

Learners are allowed **2 hours** for the research and planning stage of this task. This does not include time taken reading, studying and preparing poems with the learners.

While in the research and planning stage for this task, learners must work under indirect supervision. They may make use of research materials, and teachers may give advice of a general kind. The work of individual learners may be informed by working with their partner, but learners must then provide an individual oral response in the paired discussion.

Learners are not permitted to complete any of the research and planning work related to the NEA outside of the centre.

Resources

During the planning stage of this task:

- learners may have access to resources and/or preparatory notes. They should, however, be advised that all work must be their own – copying and pasting from internet sources, using comments from critics without acknowledgement and/or reproducing someone else's essay is plagiarism
- the use of AI to generate responses is prohibited and will be treated as malpractice
- learners may have access to dictionaries and thesauri
- learners' work must remain within the centre at all times and must be stored securely between timetabled sessions.

If learners are provided with worksheets/scaffolding for the preparation of the assessment, copies of the assistance they have been given must be included with the moderation sample. Such worksheets or scaffolding are not permitted as part of the learner's notes for task-taking. Comments as to the nature and amount of help given should be made on the Unit 5 Assessment Record Sheet.

Supervision

For the research and planning stage of this task, learners must be indirectly supervised.

Centres must ensure that:

- all learners participate in the assessment
- there is sufficient supervision to ensure that work can be authenticated
- the work an individual learner submits for assessment is their own.

Task taking – Oracy

The paired discussion is expected to last between **5 and 8 minutes**. Contributions that significantly exceed or fall short of these times will be self-penalising.

To ensure fair assessment of all learners, teachers **must** intervene and draw the task to a close if the suggested time is exceeded. During the task, it is permissible to warn learners that their time is coming to an end.

Where it is seen to be appropriate, a teacher could take the role of partner for an individual candidate.

During the discussion, the teacher may:

- stimulate discussion
- encourage a change of direction
- ask a learner to provide evidence to corroborate ideas or to develop an argument
- ensure that both learners have the opportunity to engage in the discussion.

Resources

During the task taking stage, learners can have an annotated copy of the poems they have studied, and/or brief notes using bullet points (not full sentences).

Supervision

For the task taking stage, learners must be directly supervised.

Centres must ensure that:

- all learners are within direct sight of the supervisor throughout the session(s)
- display materials which might provide assistance are removed or covered
- there is no access to email, the internet or mobile phones
- learners complete their work independently
- no assistance of any description is provided
- learners' work must remain within the centre at all times and must be stored securely between timetabled sessions.

Marking Instructions

Both Task A and Task B will be marked by the centre and moderated by WJEC. Teachers must use the assessment criteria provided by WJEC (see page 13). Relevant comments justifying the mark awarded should be completed on the Assessment Record Sheet.

The assessment of Task A (Shakespeare essay) must contain **both in-text annotations and a summative comment**. When assessing the final draft, it is important that only the learner's own work is rewarded.

The assessment of Task B (paired discussion of poems) can be carried out either directly at the time of the response or by listening to the audio-visual recording at a later time. Teachers should make notes on the assessment including references to any teacher intervention – for example, to prompt a learner. This should be noted and taken into consideration when the assessment is made.

The work for this unit should be marked by teachers according to the marking criteria using a 'best fit' approach. Teachers select the band descriptors that most closely describe the quality of the work being marked.

- Where the candidate's work convincingly meets the descriptors, the highest mark should be awarded.
- Where the candidate's work adequately meets the descriptors, the mark in the middle range should be awarded where appropriate.
- Where the candidate's work just meets the descriptors, the lowest mark should be awarded.

Marking should be positive, rewarding achievement rather than penalising failure or omissions. The award of marks must be directly related to the assessment criteria.

Moderation

Moderation will take place at two levels:

- within the centre to ensure that a consistent standard has been applied across teaching groups – this must be done in good time so that marks and samples can be submitted by the WJEC deadline
- through moderation of a sample of work by WJEC.

All learners are required to sign an authentication form to confirm that the work submitted is their own. Teachers are required to confirm that the work assessed is solely that of the learner concerned and was conducted under the required conditions.

Malpractice discovered prior to the learner signing the declaration of authentication need not be reported to WJEC but must be dealt with in accordance with the centre's internal procedures.

Teacher Guidance

The level of guidance teachers may give throughout the assessment of this unit are as follows:

Review candidates' work and provide oral and written advice at a general level in order to secure a functional outcome	✓
Evaluate progress to date and propose broad approaches for improvement.	✓
Provide detailed specific advice on how to improve drafts to meet assessment criteria.	✗
Give detailed feedback on errors and omissions which leave candidates with no opportunity to show initiative themselves.	✗
Intervene personally to improve the presentation or content of work	✗

N.B. In all levels of guidance, teachers are permitted to intervene/advise on issues of safety or wellbeing.

Collaboration during the tasks

For Task A, collaboration is partially permitted. Learners are not permitted to work in groups but are permitted to comment on each other's work in controlled conditions during the research and planning stage, for example, as part of teacher-sanctioned peer feedback. All work produced must be the learner's own.

For Task B, collaboration is partially permitted. During the preparation for the discussion, learners are permitted to work in pairs.

However:

- each learner must annotate their own poems and write up their own notes. It is acceptable for both learners to use the same research, but each learner must use their own words to present their ideas and draw their own conclusions
- the preparation time should not be used to rehearse the discussion.

The work of each learner in the paired discussion must be individually assessed and therefore will not necessarily receive the same mark. The teacher's record must describe individual learner's contributions.



GCSE English Language and Literature

Unit 5: Continuity and Change (3750U5)

Learner Assessment Pack

This assessment pack is for learners completing GCSE English Language and Literature Unit 5: Continuity and Change

In this pack you will find information that tells you about things you must and must not do when completing the assessments.

Task A

There are **6 hours** in total to complete this assessment. You should spend:

- 3 hours completing the research and planning stage
- 3 hours to complete the final assessment.

Task B:

You will have **just over 2 hours** to complete this assessment. You should spend:

- 2 hour completing the research and planning
- 5-8 minutes completing the final assessment

For both tasks, you will be supervised throughout the two stages of the assessment. For the research and planning stage, you will be indirectly supervised. This means that your teacher is allowed to help you to understand the assessment requirements and the task, but there are rules about the kind of help and how much help they can give you.

You should speak to your teacher if you have any questions about what you are and are not allowed to do as you are completing the tasks, as they will know how much help they are allowed to give you.

It is important that you work independently and that the work produced should be your own work. You and your teacher will be required to sign a declaration that all the work presented is your own work.

You are advised to check your work carefully to make sure that it is accurate and correct.

The following information has been taken from the [JCQ Information for candidates – nonexamination assessments](#) and the [JCQ Artificial Intelligence \(AI\) Use in Assessments: Protecting the Integrity of Qualifications](#).

This tells you about things that you must and must not do when you are completing your assessment. If there is anything that you do not understand, you must ask your teacher.

INFORMATION FOR CANDIDATES

- When you submit your work and sign your candidate declaration form, you are signing to say that the work has been produced in line with the controls and guidance set out for this assessment.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR CANDIDATES

- If you receive help and guidance from someone other than your teacher, you **must** tell your teacher who will then record the nature of the assistance given to you.
- Where group work is permitted, you **must** each write up your own account of the assessment.
- You **must** always keep your work secure and confidential whilst you are preparing it; **do not** share it with anyone other than your teacher.
- Where research is required, ensure that you credit your sources (including AI) by referencing your work.
- Do not** copy anyone's work and try to pass it off as your own.
- Do not** use pre-prepared online solutions (such as those produced by AI tools and chatbots).
- You **must not** write inappropriate, offensive or obscene material.

If it is discovered that you have broken the regulations, you will be referred to a malpractice panel who might impose a penalty.

Mark schemes

Task A

Unit 5 Task A		Total marks available: 30
Band	AO1	
5	<p>Candidates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• show a convincing and perceptive understanding, considering a wide range of different aspects of content; responses are sustained, detailed and critical in their engagement and may include offering some reasoned judgements or considered personal response• offer a sustained and convincing selection of relevant points, along with detailed and interesting development of ideas. A sophisticated evaluation of relevant points is given to demonstrate how they illustrate and support interpretations• make developed and sustained comparisons and/or links with detailed and persuasive explanations• offer well-reasoned explanations of how a comprehensive range of examples of the impact of language, structure and form contribute to the presentation of information, ideas and themes• give well-reasoned and persuasive explanations of a comprehensive range of examples of the impact of language, structure and form• show a comprehensive and sophisticated understanding of contexts, making convincing explanations about their impact• show a full and thorough understanding of how contexts may inform viewpoints and perspectives, drawing confidently on well-chosen evidence from the text.	18-22 marks

	14-17 marks
4	<p>Candidates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • show a secure understanding, demonstrating that they have considered a range of aspects of content; responses develop points to engage critically with a range of ideas and may begin to offer a personal response • offer a competent selection of points offered, and meaningful development of ideas. Secure evaluation of relevant points to demonstrate how they illustrate and support interpretations • make appropriate and meaningful comparisons and/or links with clear explanations • offer detailed explanations of how a range of relevant aspects of language, structure and form contribute to the presentation of information, ideas and themes • give secure explanations of a range of relevant examples of the impact of language, structure and form • show a secure understanding of contexts, making appropriate observations about their impact • show a secure understanding of how contexts may inform viewpoints and perspectives, supporting their views with relevant evidence from the text.
3	10-13 marks
	<p>Candidates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • show some understanding of the main features of the content; responses focus on the main points with some development of ideas • select a broad range of appropriate points with clear development of ideas. Some appropriate evaluation is made of how the points illustrate and support interpretations • make appropriate comparisons and/or links with some explanations • offer straightforward explanations of how different aspects of language, structure and form contribute to the presentation of information, ideas and themes • give straightforward explanations of a range of relevant examples of the impact of language, structure and form • show a clear understanding of contexts, with emerging awareness of their impact • show a clear understanding of how contexts may inform viewpoints and perspectives, and select some appropriate material from the text to support their views.

	6-9 marks
2	<p>Candidates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • show a basic understanding with some weaknesses in interpreting content; responses are likely to be undeveloped and take a descriptive approach • select some points with some basic evidence of development of ideas. Simple explanation is given of how the points illustrate and support the interpretations • make basic comparisons and/ or links with little explanation • comment on some basic examples of how language, structure and form contribute to the presentation of information, ideas and themes • make basic comments on the impact of language, structure and form, although not all will be clear or relevant • show basic understanding of contexts, making undeveloped comments that may not be relevant to the text • show basic understanding of how contexts may inform different viewpoints and perspectives.
1	1-5 marks
0	0 marks Nothing worthy of credit.

Unit 5 Task A

AO2: Learners are assessed for the quality of their written communication, including the accuracy of their language.

Band	AO2
4	<p style="text-align: center;">7-8 marks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Communication is consistently clear, purposefully organised with a wide variety of sophisticated linguistic and structural features.• Candidates consistently and purposefully use appropriate grammar and syntax.• A wide range of punctuation is used confidently and accurately. Spelling is almost always correct, including that of complex/irregular words.
3	<p style="text-align: center;">5-6 marks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Communication is mostly coherent, effectively organised with a variety of well-chosen linguistic and structural features.• Candidates mainly use appropriate grammar and syntax.• A range of punctuation is used accurately, and spelling is secure.
2	<p style="text-align: center;">3-4 marks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Communication is generally coherent, organised with some use of linguistic and structural devices.• Candidates sometimes use appropriate grammar and syntax.• Punctuation and spelling have frequent errors but meaning is largely clear.
1	<p style="text-align: center;">1-2 marks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Communication shows occasional coherence, but this may be limited by the lack of organisation. Linguistic and structural features are limited and may be inaccurate.• Candidates rarely use appropriate grammar and syntax and errors may impede meaning.• Errors in punctuation and spelling are likely to impede communication.
0	<p style="text-align: center;">0 marks</p> <p>Nothing worthy of credit.</p>

Task B

Unit 5 Task B		Total marks available: 30
Band	AO2	
5	18-22 marks <ul style="list-style-type: none">Communication is consistently clear, with confident and persuasive use of language for effect, and evidence of originality of imagination.Candidates make well-considered choices of forms, vocabulary and/or techniques, showing sophisticated awareness of audience engagement.Candidates consistently and creatively adapt communication, purposefully selecting appropriate register, vocabulary and techniques.Communication is consistently coherent, purposefully organised with a wide variety of sophisticated linguistic and structural features.Candidates confidently use a wide range of sentence structures, that thoughtfully enhance clarity, and successfully support purpose and create effect.Candidates consistently and purposefully use appropriate grammar and syntax.	
4	14-17 marks <ul style="list-style-type: none">Communication is mostly clear, with secure use of language for effect and evidence of sustained and interesting imagination.Candidates use a broad range of well-chosen forms, vocabulary and/or techniques, with secure awareness of audience engagement.Candidates adapt communication securely, and show some confidence in selecting appropriate register, vocabulary and techniques.Communication is mostly coherent, effectively organised with a variety of well-chosen linguistic and structural features.Candidates use a range of sentence structures, that enhance clarity, and are deliberately used for purpose and effect.Candidates use appropriate grammar and syntax.	

3	<p style="text-align: center;">10-13 marks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication is generally clear, with appropriate use of language for effect and evidence of engaging imagination. • Candidates use a range of appropriate forms, vocabulary and/or techniques, with clear awareness of audience engagement. • Candidates adapt communication, showing some evidence of selecting appropriate register, vocabulary and techniques. • Communication is generally coherent, organised with some use of linguistic and/or structural features. • Candidates use varied sentence structures, which sometimes enhance clarity, and may be used for specific purpose or effect. • Candidates generally use appropriate grammar and syntax.
2	<p style="text-align: center;">6-9 marks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication shows basic clarity, with some effective use of language and some evidence of imagination emerging. • Candidates use some appropriate forms, vocabulary and/or techniques, which demonstrate some awareness of audience engagement. • Candidates begin to adapt communication, with some basic attempts to select appropriate register, vocabulary and techniques. • Communication shows some coherence with occasional use of basic linguistic and/or structural features. • Candidates use basic sentence structures which do not always enhance clarity, purpose and/or effect. • Candidates occasionally use appropriate grammar and syntax, but it is inconsistent in accuracy.
1	<p style="text-align: center;">1-3 marks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication shows limited clarity, with limited effectiveness in use of language and little evidence of imagination. • Forms, vocabulary and/or techniques are often inappropriate, ineffective and inconsistent, and show limited awareness of audience. • Candidates rarely adapt communication; register, vocabulary or techniques may not be appropriate. • Communication shows occasional coherence, but this may be limited by the lack of organisation. Linguistic and structural features are limited and may be inaccurate. • Candidates show limited ability to vary sentence structures. • Candidates rarely use appropriate grammar and syntax and errors may impede meaning.
0	<p style="text-align: center;">0 marks</p> <p>Nothing worthy of credit.</p>

Unit 5 Task B

AO1: Learners make appropriate comparisons and links to Continuity and Change in the poems discussed.

Band	AO1
4	<p>7-8 marks</p> <p>Candidates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">make appropriate and meaningful comparisons and/or links with clear explanationsgive secure explanations of a range of relevant examples of the impact of language, structure and formshow secure understanding of how contexts may inform different viewpoints and perspectives (where relevant to the task).
3	<p>5-6 marks</p> <p>Candidates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">make appropriate comparisons and/or links with some explanationgive straightforward explanations about the impact of language, structure and formshow clear understanding of how contexts may inform different viewpoints and perspectives (where relevant to the task).
2	<p>3-4 marks</p> <p>Candidates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">make some basic comparisons and/or links with little explanationmake basic comments on the impact of language, structure and formshow a clear understanding of how contexts may inform different viewpoints and perspectives (where relevant to the task).
1	<p>1-2 marks</p> <p>Candidates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">make a limited number of basic comparisons and/or links often without explanationmake basic comments on the impact of language, structure and formshow limited understanding of contexts, making only brief, generalised comments (where relevant to the tasks)
0	<p>0 marks</p> <p>Nothing worthy of credit.</p>