

A level English Literature

Why study English Literature?

- It is an enjoyable, intellectually engaging and rewarding subject, which offers you the opportunity to study wonderful texts from different periods of time.
- English Literature has long been acknowledged as a valuable and prestigious A level.
- Studying English Literature will enable you to develop transferable skills including the ability to take an analytical approach, to communicate clearly and concisely, to be an independent critical thinker, to construct a persuasive argument and to collaborate effectively with others. Such skills will be relevant to a wide range of degree courses and valuable to many different employers.

Why study English Literature at Solihull Sixth Form College?

- You will be taught by a team of experienced subject specialists who are passionate about English Literature and dedicated to helping learners reach their potential.
- We provide fantastic resources to support learners in their studies, including access to emagazine and The English Review, which are specialist magazines for students of A level English, MASSOLIT, which provides access to courses of mini-lectures by leading academics, and Digital Theatre+, which provides access to theatrical productions.
- We offer enrichment opportunities to extend your studies. Our Creative Writing enrichment gives learners who pursue it the opportunity to develop their creative writing skills and to share their work with other likeminded enthusiasts. Our English Academy supports learners to complete an Extended Project Qualification. As well as widening their study beyond the A Level curriculum, learners in the English Academy have worked with academics from leading universities, including the University of Birmingham and the University of Oxford. Our Student Magazine enrichment features engaging sessions with industry professionals and the opportunity to be part of the editorial and writing team.



Case Study

Among the recent successful learners to have taken this course is **Kate Holmes**. She came to the College from King Edward VI Handsworth School for Girls and achieved an A* grade in English Literature, as well as A and B grades in Philosophy and Politics. This earned her a place at the University of Leeds to study English and Comparative Literature.



"I loved how we could work independently and were treated as adults, but there was also a great network of support whenever you need it. The teachers were all lovely and easy to talk to, which definitely made me feel more inclined to ask for help, and I was always met with great information and advice."

- student Kate Holmes



Course Outline

Learners follow the AQA English Literature B specification. There are two examination papers for which students will prepare. They account for 80% of the total A level.

Paper 1: Aspects of Tragedy

The first paper is two and a half hours long and requires learners to answer questions on texts which illustrate *Aspects of Tragedy*. You will study two drama texts, *Othello* by William Shakespeare and *Death of a Salesman* by Arthur Miller, and a poetry text, comprising four poems by John Keats (*Isabella*, or *The Pot of Basil*, *La Belle Dame Sans Merci*, *Lamia* and *The Eve of St Agnes*).

Paper 2: Elements of Crime Writing / Elements of Political and Social Protest Writing

The second paper is three hours long and for this learners will study texts which illustrate either Elements of Crime Writing or Elements of Political and Social Protest Writing. If you focus on Elements of Crime Writing, you will study two prose texts, *Atonement* by Ian McEwan and *Brighton Rock* by Graham Greene, and a poetry text, *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* by Samuel Taylor Coleridge. If you focus on Elements of Political and Social Protest Writing, you will study a prose text, *The Kite Runner* by Khaled Hosseini, a poetry text, *The Songs of Innocence and of Experience* by William Blake, and a drama text, *A Doll's House* by Henrik Ibsen. This paper will also require students to respond analytically to an unseen text.

Non-exam Assessment: Theory and Independence

The coursework is entitled 'Theory and Independence'. It accounts for 20% of the total A level. There are two tasks, each one requiring an essay of 1,250 – 1,500 words in length. For the first task you will study a prose text (for example, *Heart of Darkness* by Joseph Conrad, *Regeneration* by Pat Barker or *The Collector* by John Fowles). For the second task you will study a poetry text (for example, the poetry of Carol Ann Duffy).

Assessment

Examination (80%)

Coursework (20%)

Examining Board – AQA (English Literature B).

Special Entry Requirements

GCSE English Literature at grade 5 or above is essential. In addition, standard A level entry requirements apply - www.solihullsf.ac.uk/courses/entry-requirements.

Prohibited Options

Learners are not normally permitted to take more than one English course. However, if you are intending to study English at university and have grade 7 or above in both English Language and English Literature at GCSE, you may be permitted to take both English Language and English Literature, but only as part of a four A level programme.

What do our learners go on to do?

English Literature is one of the most popular courses at university and success in this subject will also allow you to access all sorts of degrees and career pathways. Those learners considering English at university will find that English Literature is often required for the most competitive courses.

Cost Implications

There are no cost implications.

Complementary Subjects or Enrichment Courses

English Literature is perennially popular as a subject for A level study at Solihull Sixth Form College and is an excellent companion subject for History, Law and many other A level subjects which require analysis of texts and data sources in order to create arguments and present interpretations supported by evidence.

Examination Results

In the past two years, this course has seen high levels of achievement:

Year	Pass Rate A*-E%	A*-C%
2022	99%	86%
2023	99%	86%

Contact

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