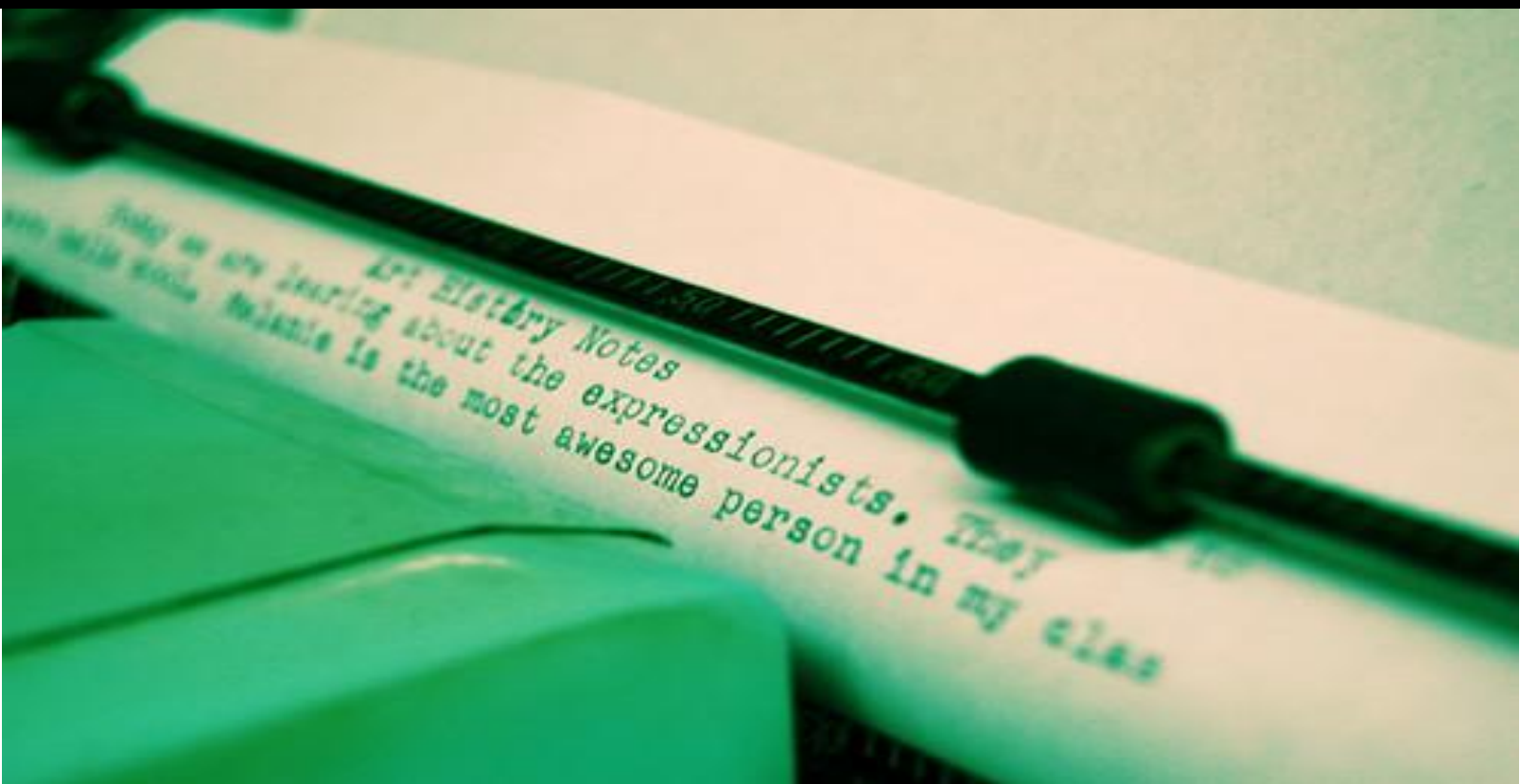# Apprentice of Fine Arts (AFA)

Creative Writing

the Writers' Examination Board (WEB)

for examination in May 2027 – May 2029

Support

The Writers' Examination Board (WEB) provides support for this specification, which includes recommended resource lists, specimen exam papers and example candidate responses. Teachers can access these support materials at https://writersexaminationboard.com/

Examiners are also happy to meet and discuss the course with prospective centres, and to provide training for teachers and Centres new to the discipline of Creative Writing.

A new specification

Centres are advised that this specification replaces the one for 2024 and 2025, and to read the whole of this specification before planning your teaching programme.

If there are any changes to this specification, WEB will write to Centres to inform them. This specification is also on the WEB website:

https://writersexaminationboard.com/

The version of the specification on the website should always be considered as the definitive version.

Copies of this WEB AFA specification can be downloaded from our website:

https://writersexaminationboard.com/

If you need specialist advice, guidance or support, get in touch as follows:

0117 933 9648 ask for David Briggs

or write to:

dbriggs@bgs.bristol.sch.uk

David is the Chair of WEB.
Principal Moderator for WRITE-1: Portfolio is Maria O'Brien
Principal Examiner for WRITE-2: Commissioned Writing is Andrew Jamison.
Principal Examiner for WRITE-3: Responsive Writing is Maria O'Brien.

Contents

Summary of changes to the specification

This new version of the specification includes the following changes, which are highlighted in yellow on the pages listed:

- new guidance on number of lines for poetry responses in the WRITE-2 examination (p. 24)
- a new list of stimulus texts for WRITE-3 for examination from May 2027 onwards (p. 27)
- new timings for the WRITE-3 examination from May 2027 onwards (pp. 12, 13, 26 and 28)
- WRITE-3 to be an open-book examination from May 2027 onwards (pp. 12 and 26)

Centres are also reminded of changes made in the last edition of the specification (2024-2025), specifically:

- Confirmation of the requirement for early drafts of creative writing submitted for WRITE-1 Portfolio (pp. 16, 19 and 32)
- Guidance for the authentication of creative writing submitted for WRITE-1 Portfolio and use of Artificial Intelligence (pp. 32-33)
- Guidance to centres concerning the use of texts studied for other qualifications (such as GCSE or A-Level English Literature) in the critical commentaries for WRITE-1 Portfolio (p. 33)

1 Introduction

This linear AFA syllabus makes Creative Writing available as a programme in the Post-16 curriculum, and is intended to stand at an equivalent level to other GCE qualifications. It is designed to encourage aspiring writers to develop their skills in a way that will prepare them for further study at university level and, potentially, as professional writers within a wide range of fields and industries. While it is not at present on the UCAS tariff, UCAS do publish a profile of the programme on their website (the EIP), and there is anecdotal experience of the AFA acting in support of students' applications for undergraduate English and Creative Writing programmes in the UK. Students who found creative writing to be one of their favoured aspects of English at GCSE level may now continue to study writing as part of their further education, whether or not they take it any further afterwards.

This course complements GCE courses in English Language and/or English Literature, but is a separate discipline, with its own history, traditions and pedagogical practice, and it can therefore be studied alongside these related disciplines. But it is also accessible to students pursuing courses in sciences, humanities, or any other combination of subject areas. The Assessment Objectives are modelled on the AS/A2 qualification in Creative Writing devised by AQA, and which expired in 2018, and on models used to assess achievement in other creative arts at GCE Level, but is also a distinctive programme in its own right.

Students will be required to read, study and write a range of texts, defined here as different forms. In this course, there are four forms

prose fiction; prose non-fiction; poetry; script.

any of which may be conceived and written for five distinct media:

page, performance, radio, screen, digital.

The following definitions may be helpful to an understanding of this specification:

form: a type of writing characterised by distinct structural features; for example: poetry; prose fiction; prose non-fiction; script

genre: a specific sub-style of one of the four forms of writing: for example, bildungsroman is a genre of prose fiction; confessional poetry is a genre of poetry; the essay is a genre of prose non-fiction

medium: the method of production via which writing is received by readers: for example, tragedy is a genre of script which may be written for the medium of performance on stage; horror is a genre of script that can be written for the medium of the screen; travel writing is a genre of non-fiction that may be intended for publication on the medium of the page or on digital media.

The course makes a virtue of the drafting process, of the fact that professional writing evolves through many stages, all of which involve close attention to aspects of craft, accuracy and precision. It is underpinned by an understanding that in seeking to express what is thought and felt writers engage in rigorous processes of reflection and editing, so as to match the word precisely to the thought.

This process of discovery will be experienced primarily through regular participation in the **critical workshop**, a pedagogical technique that is essential to delivery of the specification. By examining and referring to both their own writing, and that of their peers, as well as published examples, students will develop their critical and analytical skills, and this should inform all the work they produce.

This AFA in Creative Writing expects that students will:

- **write** regularly and often, exploring a range of forms and genres and developing increasingly skilful technical control

- **read** widely and perceptively in a way that informs and shapes their own writing

- **share** their own writing, and their opinions of the writing of others, with their peers, learning to give and receive constructive criticism and developing their editorial skills

2 Delivering the course

Creative Writing at university level in the UK is now almost as firmly established as it is in America. From the earliest courses at UEA, some of whose first graduates are now household names among readers of fiction it has grown and evolved. Taught primarily by practising writers, Creative Writing departments have strong links with publishers, editors of journals and a host of arts organisations. It is hoped that teachers of Creative Writing in secondary schools and colleges will embrace the spirit of this tradition by considering themselves as writers working in tandem with their students. This includes presenting works-in-progress for discussion and critique at the **critical workshop.**

Other than those listed as STIMULUS TEXTS in the pre-release material for WRITE-3, there are no set texts, so there is plenty of scope for teachers and students to explore their own interests in writing. Nonetheless, there are some general principles and guidelines to assist teachers in making appropriate choices of published writing for study.

Texts for study and independent reading

There is ample flexibility for students to explore their own areas of interest in writing but, if they are to write well, they will need to do so from an informed position. This means they will need to have studied and considered a range of published texts in a range of forms. The idea that reading informs writing should be emphasised from the beginning, and students should be encouraged to pursue their independent reading, as well as their reading in lessons, with vigour and enthusiasm.

Fundamentally, students must be guided to engage with the best contemporary writing in a range of forms. To write effectively in any form or genre, writers must be aware of current trends in their specialist form and should familiarise themselves with what is happening in that form or genre *now*. For this reason, we recommend that texts used for study or listed on recommended reading lists were published post-1945, and in many cases, post-2000.

Approaches to texts

In most other English-related subjects, the approach taken with texts in lessons is designed to generate literary critical responses to those texts. While there is clearly some crossover, the approach taken in Creative Writing will be distinctly different. The point of the reading for this course is not primarily to generate writing about reading, but original writing. So, lessons and workshops should encourage students to think about aspects of craft in texts and to ask questions about authorial decision-making. Consideration of the ways in which a text subverts generic conventions, or how a writer creates and sustains a distinctive narrative voice, or plays with narrative perspective, or employs particular strategies in characterisation, will be more productive than, say, considering the possible ways of interpreting a particular simile or metaphor. That's not to say that consideration of figurative language in texts won't be a feature of the course, merely that the purpose of such consideration will be to inform students' own attempts to *employ* figurative language, rather than to take an interpretive stance towards it.

The writer's journal

Another aspect of good practice in this subject at undergraduate level that needs to be encouraged is the keeping of a **writer's journal**. Regular writing in response to regular reading is strongly advised. Creative Writing students should use their journal to record what they are reading, their responses to their reading, notes and ideas for writing, and first drafts of new writing in much the same way that Fine Art students keep a sketchbook. The journal may also provide evidence of how students' writing has evolved. Students should certainly be encouraged to keep all drafts, including those covered in annotation during the critical workshop.

Writing to deadlines

Students should be regularly encouraged to write to deadlines and under timed conditions.

Technical accuracy

Central to the philosophy of the programme is a belief in writing as a professional art form requiring high standards of technical accuracy and precision. This should inform all aspects of teaching, including the critical workshop. Invention, ideas and originality are important, but so is technical skill.

Producing perfectly lucid, technically adept, sophisticated writing doesn't come easily to anyone. Sometimes it will be necessary to take a whole-class approach to the revision of sentence structures, spelling, punctuation, verb tenses, etc. But on the whole, the improvement of technical know-how will come through comment on the work of individual students, and through the agency of the critical workshop.

Visiting writers

It can be inspiring for students to have meaningful engagement with professional writers. Novelists, poets, playwrights, journalists – use the connections you have, and some of your budget, to set up workshops and readings with such writers. Nearly all writers enjoy making visits to schools. It provides an opportunity for them to engage with new readers. So, don't be bashful about approaching them via either their publishers, their agent, or their website.

Recommended reading

There are now many helpful books for teachers and students of Creative Writing. The list in the appendices to this specification is by no means exhaustive, but it provides some helpful starting points.

Pedagogical principles

By way of summary, the expectations underlying this specification are as follows. Students should be encouraged to:

- practise writing in a wide range of forms and genres
- engage in wide, relevant and extensive personal reading
- write on a regular basis, even when the muse seems to have gone AWOL
- keep an ongoing record of their work in a writer's journal
- become more adept at manipulating the technical features of writing
- submit works-in-progress for scrutiny in the critical workshop
- participate constructively in the critical workshop

- view their teachers and themselves as writers
- have meaningful encounters with professional writers
- write to deadlines and under timed conditions

3 The critical workshop

In addition to lessons in which teachers and students consider published writing, and engage in writing activities, some curriculum time should be set aside each week for the critical workshop. It is a central feature of what makes Creative Writing so distinctive as a subject, and it will be important to persevere in finding a way to make it work effectively in your centre.

Each centre is different, and there will be different demands on teachers arising from policies concerning class size and curriculum time. Whether teachers opt to work as a whole class, or to establish small critical groups, will depend to a degree on their circumstances as much as their preferences. But the general principle is that every member of the class should receive regular critical feedback from the group on their works-in-progress.

The giving and receiving of constructive criticism helps to build maturity and confidence, as well as to enable all students to become more adept in their editorial skills. Such skills will be especially important in constructing the commentaries on their creative work for the portfolio component.

Teachers should participate in the workshops on a similar footing to the students. This includes the sharing of works-in-progress with the group. The principle that every reader in the group begins from a position of parity when it comes to their response to the text is a central tenet of the course. It is of great benefit to students to see their teachers engaging with the same processes of writing, criticism, editorial emendation, and development. And it provides teachers with an insight into the challenges facing new writers.

The *recommended* model for the critical workshop is as follows:

- teachers and students meet regularly, at least once a week, and take it in turns to present their writing to the group, according to a pre-arranged rota
- the writer presenting his or her work in any given session provides a photocopy of the piece they are presenting for each member of the group
- the writer reads his or her work aloud to the group without disclaimer, apology or explanation
- the group take time to re-read in silence, adding annotations and critical observations to their copy of the piece
- the group discuss the piece; the writer is not permitted to participate in the discussion: he or she must sit and listen, like a fly on the wall
- at the end of the discussion the writer is permitted to reply: e.g. "I was thinking of switching to third-person narrative in the final paragraph. What do you think?" Or, perhaps, "It's interesting that you all thought the narrator was a man. I intended her to be a woman."
- the writer collects in, and keeps, all the annotated photocopies of the piece.

It is advisable to have the group agree some ground rules before writers begin to present their work to each other, such as

- trying to keep criticism respectful, constructive and specific
- drawing up a rota by which students and teachers will present works-in-progress to the group

- using a variety of strategies, such as anonymous editing of works-in-progress, and small groups, to build confidence before launching into the recommended model for the critical workshop
- offering alternatives rather than merely pointing out perceived weaknesses
- asking questions
- encouraging discussion of technical and formal qualities in the writing
- putting a word-limit on works-in-progress submitted to the critical workshop: e.g. one poem (up to, say, 42 lines), or no more than 750 words of prose
- keeping good time, so that students receive a similar amount of time in the benevolent critical glare of the group: say, 15-20 minutes per writer per session
- trying to ensure that every member of the class submits work for the group's consideration approximately 3-5 times per term.

In the early stages of the course the teacher(s) will need to model such behaviour, to a certain extent. It is to be expected that as students gain familiarity with, and confidence in, the critical workshop they will begin to take the reins of the discussion themselves.

As groups become more familiar with the procedures of the critical workshop, it should be easier to let them run themselves in small groups. This may be especially helpful for larger centres.

4a Specification at a glance

Component 1 – WRITE-1 Portfolio
60% of AFA [120 marks] A portfolio of work (internally assessed; moderated by WEB)
Section A: Exploration [40] Students submit writing in three of the four different forms: poetry, prose fiction, prose non-fiction, script, and a short commentary on their writing. The total number of words for creative writing in three forms for Section A: Exploration is 2,000. The total number of words for commentary in Section A: Exploration is 1,000 words. Candidates must include one early draft of a piece of creative writing from Section A. AO1, AO2, AO3 and AO4
Section B: Specialism [40] Students submit an additional body of work in their specialist form. This must be in one of the three forms they submitted for Section A: Exploration. The total number of words for Section B: Specialism is 3,000. Candidates must include 2 pages of early drafts of the creative writing submitted for Section B. AO1 and AO2
Section C: Critical Commentary [40] Students submit a critical commentary on the piece submitted for Section B: Specialism. The total number of words for the Critical Commentary is 1,500. There is no requirement to submit early drafts of commentaries. AO3 and AO4

Component 2 – WRITE-2 Commissioned Writing
15% of AFA [40 marks] 2 hour examination (externally marked)
Students will be given a choice of five writing commissions. Three of the five commissions will specify the required form; the other two will invite responses in any form. They produce writing in response to two commissions. AO1 and AO2

Component 3 – WRITE-3 Responsive Writing
25% of AFA [40 marks] 2 hour 30 minutes open-book examination (externally marked)
Students will be given pre-release material comprising four reading suggestions, one for each of the four forms. For example, the suggested poetry text might be *My Family and Other Superheroes* by Jonathan Edwards, or *Division Street* by Helen Mort. The prose non-fiction suggestion might comprise a selection of essays by Jonathan Franzen, such as *How to be Alone*. Prose fiction might be represented by a collection of short stories, such as *Lying Under the Apple Tree* by Alice Munro. Each suggestion will require students to read the equivalent of one published text. Students select one reading suggestion and begin to study the given text, looking for ideas, influences, inspiration and aspects of craft that they can use in their own writing. They may select a text in the same form as that they chose to specialise in for Component 1 Section B, but they don't have to. In the examination, students will be given a choice of five, open-ended writing prompts. They choose one, and produce a piece of creative writing. They may write in the same form as the text studied from the pre-release material, but they don't have to. Whether they write in the same form or not, they should try to make use of influences, inspiration and aspects of craft from the text they studied. It is intended that such influences can be as loose, as creative and as personal as necessary. Having produced a creative response, students write a critical commentary that examines their own writing processes, and which also explores the relationships between their creative piece and the text they studied from the pre-release material. Thus: i. They must produce creative writing in response to one prompt. ii. They must produce a critical commentary on their writing, exploring connections between their own writing and the text they studied from the pre-release booklet. AO1, AO2, AO3 and AO4

4b Specification overview

For WEB AFA Creative Writing, candidates take all three components.

Component	Component name	Duration	Weighting (%)	Type of assessment
WRITE-1	Portfolio	n/a	60	Internally monitored and marked coursework externally moderated [120 marks]
WRITE-2	Commissioned Writing	2 hours	15	Externally set and marked examination [40 marks]
WRITE-3	Responsive Writing	2 hours 30 minutes	25	Externally set and marked examination [40 marks]

Availability

This syllabus is examined in the May examination series.
This syllabus is available to private candidates.

Combining this with other courses

Candidates can combine this specification in a series with any other GCE and/or BTEC courses.

4c Assessment objectives

AO1: Communicate and develop ideas through an imaginative use of language and an effective use of formal and structural devices	**AO2: Communicate lucidly in fluent, cogent writing, with professional standards of technical accuracy and precision**
AO3: Demonstrate a critical relationship with one's own writing processes, including reflection on editorial decision making	**AO4: Demonstrate critical awareness of the relationship between existing published work and one's own writing**

5 Scheme of assessment

AO1: Communicate and develop ideas through an imaginative use of language and an effective use of formal and structural devices	AO2: Communicate lucidly in fluent, cogent writing, with professional standards of technical accuracy and precision
AO3: Demonstrate a critical relationship with one's own writing processes, including reflection on editorial decision making	AO4: Demonstrate critical awareness of the relationship between existing published work and one's own writing

	AO1	AO2	AO3	AO4	Total
Unit 1 Portfolio					
Exploration	15 marks (7.5%)	15 marks (7.5%)	5 marks (2.5%)	5 marks (2.5%)	40 marks (20%)
Specialism	20 marks (10%)	20 marks (10%)	–	–	40 marks (20%)
Critical Reflection	–	–	20 marks (10%)	20 marks (10%)	40 marks (20%)
Unit 1 Total	**35 marks (17.5%)**	**35 marks (17.5%)**	**25 marks (12.5%)**	**25 marks (12.5%)**	**120 marks (60%)**
Unit 2 Commissioned Writing					
First Commission	10 marks (3.75%)	10 marks (3.75%)	–	–	20 marks (7.5%)
Second Commission	10 marks (3.75%)	10 marks (3.75%)	–	–	20 marks (7.5%)
Unit 2 Total	**20 marks (7.5%)**	**20 marks (7.5%)**	–	–	**40 marks (15%)**
Unit 3 Responsive Writing					
Creative Writing	10 marks (6.25%)	10 marks (6.25%)	–	–	20 marks (12.5%)
Critical Commentary	–	–	10 marks (6.25%)	10 marks (6.25%)	20 marks (12.5%)
Unit 3 Total	**10 marks (6.25%)**	**10 marks (6.25%)**	**10 marks (6.25%)**	**10 marks (6.25%)**	**40 marks (25%)**
AFA Total	65 marks (32.5%)	65 marks (32.5%)	35 marks (17.5%)	35 marks (17.5%)	200 marks (100%)

6a Component 1
WRITE-1: Portfolio

Introduction

This internally assessed unit is designed to enable students to show the development in their craft and skill as writers through the keeping of a writer's journal, the exploration of writing in a range of forms, the opportunity to specialise in one preferred form, and to reflect critically on both their own processes and development as writers as well as the ways in which their own writing has been shaped by their reading of published texts.

In this course, there are four forms

prose fiction; prose non-fiction; poetry; script

any of which may be conceived and written for five distinct media:

page, performance, radio, screen, digital.

To prepare for this unit, students must have experience of reading and writing in all four forms. Regular personal reading and engagement with writing tasks will enable students to develop as writers. They should be encouraged to keep a record of the writing process in their writer's journal, from initial notes and ideas to early drafts to polished pieces.

Section A: Exploration [40 marks]

Students must choose three forms in which to submit creative writing for this section of their portfolio. Students should be positively encouraged to explore their own interests. As they receive responses to their writing through the critical workshop, they will re-draft and refine particular pieces. Here are some examples of genres in which they may endeavour to produce creative writing:

prose fiction: short stories, novellas, flash fiction[1]
prose non-fiction: essays, travel writing, memoir, sports writing, music/film reviews
poetry: sonnet, prose-poem, confessional poetry
script: radio play, screenplay, stage play

A mark out of 15 will be awarded for AO1 across the three pieces as a whole.
A mark out of 15 will be awarded for AO2 across the three pieces as a whole.
The three pieces taken together should not exceed 2,000 words.

Work submitted for each one of the three forms should be about 600-700 words. A submission of poetry may be as short as 350 words, Given that a poem is likely to have, on average, about 7-9 words per line, that is equivalent to 40-50 lines of poetry. This is likely to be comprised of 2-3 lyric poems of about 14-24 lines each.

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[1] The overlap between flash fiction and prose-poetry is potentially confusing. So long as creative work is clearly identified, and candidates can discuss aspects of form in their commentary, it is potentially acceptable to submit short prose pieces for either form, either as prose-poems or as flash fiction.

The work submitted for each form may be made up of shorter pieces: e.g. a collection of poems or flash fiction. While this can be successful for poetry and flash fiction, it is less likely to be successful for other prose or script submissions, given that candidates only have a maximum of about 900 words, and that they are therefore unlikely to be able to demonstrate development of theme or coherence of structure if they employ those 900 words across, say, more than one example of script.

Students must also produce a commentary of no more than 1,000 words on their creative writing for this section of the portfolio.

To assist with authentication of candidates' work in the era of Artificial Intelligence, candidates must provide one early draft of a piece of creative writing from Section A. The draft must be markedly different from the final version and should contain editorial annotations, preferably by the candidate as well as by their teacher(s) and peers. It is not necessary to submit drafts of commentaries.

Centres are also reminded to ensure that the PCS-1 has been signed by both teacher and candidate to confirm authentication of the work submitted. Please see the section on **Artificial Intelligence** in the appendices.

A mark out of 5 will be awarded for AO3 for the commentary.
A mark out of 5 will be awarded for AO4 for the commentary.
The work will be assessed internally by centres and externally moderated by WEB.

Assessment Criteria: Component 1 WRITE-1 Portfolio
Section A: Exploration/Creative
15 marks for AO1; 15 marks for AO2

	AO1: Communicate and develop ideas through an imaginative use of language and an effective use of formal and structural devices		AO2: Communicate lucidly in fluent, cogent writing, with professional standards of technical accuracy and precision Consider: • organisation and coherence • technical skill and control • accuracy of spelling and punctuation
Band 5 **13-15**	**Professional** development of ideas through playful and inventive use of language **Richly developed and sustained** use of appropriate forms, structures and conventions, leading to a **professional** overall affect … …all contributing to **publishable** writing which fully communicates aims and ideas	**Band 5** **13-15**	**Richly developed, highly-crafted** writing **Professional and effective** technical control **Near faultless** accuracy of spelling and punctuation
Band 4 **10-12**	**Accomplished** development of ideas through confident and thoughtful use of language **Convincing** use of appropriate forms, structures and conventions, leading to a confident overall effect … …all contributing to **accomplished** writing which convincingly communicates aims and ideas	**Band 4** **10–12**	**Convincing, crafted** writing **Accomplished** technical control A **high level** of accuracy with spelling and punctuation
Band 3 **7-9**	**Developed** ideas are communicated through clear, sometimes skilful, use of language Some **effective** use of appropriate forms, structures and conventions … …all leading to **fluent** writing that achieves some its intentions, even if it has uneven moments	**Band 3** **7-9**	**Fluent, controlled** writing **Capable** control of technical features **Developed** use of spelling and punctuation
Band 2 **4-6**	Ideas are conveyed through **adequate** use of language **Developing** use of appropriate forms, structures and conventions … …all leading to **adequate** writing that is sometimes unconvincing in its aims and intentions	**Band 2** **4–6**	**Adequate** writing **Developing** technical control **Uneven** spelling and punctuation
Band 1 **1–3**	**Limited** development of ideas and **basic** use of language **Basic** use of forms, structures and conventions … …all leading to **unconvincing** writing	**Band 1** **1–3**	**Unconvincing** writing **Unsatisfactory** technical control Spelling and punctuation can impede meaning and communication
0 **Marks**	No writing, or no relevant writing, produced	**0** **Marks**	No writing, or no relevant writing, produced

Assessment Criteria: Component 1 WRITE-1 Portfolio
Section A: Exploration/Commentary
5 marks for AO3; 5 marks for AO4

	AO3: Demonstrate a critical relationship with one's own writing processes, including reflection on editorial decision making		AO4: Demonstrate critical awareness of the relationship between existing published work and one's own writing
Band 5 **5**	**Professional** critical awareness of one's own writing processes **Richly developed** consideration of relationships between ideas, aims and techniques **Highly effective** editorial decision making	**Band 5** **5**	**Professional** critical reflection on the relationship between the reading of published works and the development of one's own writing **Richly developed** consideration of techniques gleaned from one's reading of other writers
Band 4 **4**	**Accomplished and convincing** awareness of one's own writing processes **Convincing** consideration of relationships between ideas, aims and techniques **Accomplished** editorial decision making	**Band 4** **4**	**Accomplished and convincing** reflection on the relationship between the reading of published works and the development of one's own writing **Accomplished and convincing** consideration of techniques gleaned from one's reading of other writers
Band 3 **3**	**Developed** awareness of one's own writing processes Some **effective** consideration of relationships between ideas, aims and techniques Some **effective** editorial decision making	**Band 3** **3**	**Developed** reflection on the relationship between the reading of published works and the development of one's own writing Some **developed and effective** consideration of techniques gleaned from one's reading of other writers
Band 2 **2**	**Developing** awareness of one's own writing processes **Developing, mostly descriptive** consideration of relationships between ideas, aims and techniques **Developing** editorial decision making	**Band 2** **2**	**Developing** reflection on the relationship between the reading of published works and the development of one's own writing **Developing** consideration of techniques gleaned from one's reading of other writers
Band 1 **1**	**Limited** awareness of one's own writing processes **Basic** consideration of relationships between ideas, aims and techniques **Limited** editorial decision making	**Band 1** **1**	**Limited** reflection on the relationship between the reading of published works and the development of one's own writing **Basic** consideration of techniques gleaned from one's reading of other writers
0 **Marks**	No writing, or no relevant writing, produced	**0** **Marks**	No writing, or no relevant writing, produced

Section B: Specialism [40 marks]

Students must choose one of the three forms they submitted for Section A: Exploration in which to specialise for this section of their portfolio. This provides an opportunity to deepen and enrich their craft and skill as writers through the focused study of one form. Here are some examples of genres in which they may endeavour to produce creative writing once they have chosen their specialist form:

prose fiction: short stories, novellas, flash fiction
prose non-fiction: essays, travel writing, memoir, sports writing, music/film reviews
poetry: sonnet, prose-poem, confessional poetry
script: radio play, screenplay, stage play

A mark out of 20 will be awarded for AO1.
A mark out of 20 will be awarded for AO2.

The work submitted for this section of the portfolio should not exceed 3,000 words.
The work submitted may be made up of shorter pieces: e.g. a collection of poetry or flash fiction, but centres are advised that while this can be successful for poetry and flash fiction, it is less likely to be successful for other prose or script submissions. Given that candidates only have a maximum of about 3,000 words, they are unlikely to be able to demonstrate a sustained development of theme or coherence of structure if they employ those words across, say, more than two examples of script or prose fiction.

For submissions of poetry, there is a suggested word count of approximately 1,500 words. Line lengths will vary from poem to poem and from poet to poet, but on the basis that a pentameter line might contain on average 7-9 words, this is roughly equivalent to 180-210 lines of poetry. This may be comprised of one long poem, or 10-12 shorter lyric poems.

To assist with authentication of creative writing in the era of artificial intelligence, candidates are required to submit an early draft of approximately 1,000 words (two A4 pages) of the writing they submit for Section B. This early draft should be markedly different from the final version and should contain editorial annotations.

The work will be assessed internally by centres and externally moderated by WEB.

Assessment Criteria: Component 1 WRITE-1 Portfolio
Section B Specialism
20 marks for AO1; 20 marks for AO2

	AO1: Communicate and develop ideas through an imaginative use of language and an effective use of formal and structural devices		AO2: Communicate lucidly in fluent, cogent writing, with professional standards of technical accuracy and precision Consider: • organisation and coherence • technical skill and control • accuracy of spelling and punctuation
Band 5 **17-20**	**Professional** development of ideas through playful and inventive use of language **Richly developed and sustained** use of appropriate forms, structures and conventions, leading to a **professional** overall affect … …all contributing to **publishable** writing which fully communicates aims and ideas	**Band 5** **17-20**	**Richly developed, highly-crafted** writing **Professional and effective** technical control **Near faultless** accuracy of spelling and punctuation
Band 4 **13-16**	**Accomplished** development of ideas through confident and thoughtful use of language **Convincing** use of appropriate forms, structures and conventions, leading to a confident overall affect … …all contributing to **accomplished** writing which convincingly communicates aims and ideas	**Band 4** **13–16**	**Convincing, crafted** writing **Accomplished** technical control A **high level** of accuracy with spelling and punctuation
Band 3 **9-12**	**Developed** ideas are communicated through clear, sometimes skilful, use of language Some **effective** use of appropriate forms, structures and conventions … …all leading to **fluent** writing that achieves some its intentions, even if it has uneven moments	**Band 3** **9-12**	**Fluent, controlled** writing **Capable** control of technical features **Developed** use of spelling and punctuation
Band 2 **5-8**	Ideas are conveyed through **adequate** use of language **Developing** use of appropriate forms, structures and conventions … …all leading to **adequate** writing that is sometimes unconvincing in its aims and intentions	**Band 2** **5–8**	**Adequate** writing **Developing** technical control **Uneven** spelling and punctuation
Band 1 **1–4**	**Limited** development of ideas and **basic** use of language **Basic** use of forms, structures and conventions … …all leading to **unconvincing** writing	**Band 1** **1–4**	**Unconvincing** writing **Unsatisfactory** technical control Spelling and punctuation can impede meaning and communication
0 Marks	No writing, or no relevant writing, produced	**0 Marks**	No writing, or no relevant writing, produced

Section C: Critical Reflection [40 marks]

Students are encouraged to keep a writer's journal over the two years of the course. It does not need to be submitted as part of this section of the portfolio, but students who keep a detailed writer's journal, including any annotated copies of their own writing which they have harvested from the critical workshop, will find the process of writing their critical commentary significantly more straightforward and productive than those who don't. For this reason, teachers are encouraged to keep a weather eye on how their students' journals are developing through the course.

While there is no suggested word limit for the writer's journal, it ought to reflect two years' independent study of creative writing. It should include initial thoughts, observations, and plans; reference to the student's own writing processes, including specific mention of critical workshops; and reflection and critical comment on the influence of their independent reading on their own writing. It probably should include a bibliography of their reading. It might also include reviews of poetry readings, gigs, theatrical performances and films, or prose non-fiction accounts of sporting events, and other styles of journalism, or detailed studies of particular writers.

It may be comprised of one or more actual notebooks, and could also include a folder, sketchbook or blog. The physical presentation of the writer's journal can be a matter of student preference, and will probably reflect each student's identity as a writer.

Students should certainly keep every copy of the works-in-progress annotated by their fellows in the critical workshops. These drafts and marginalia will be invaluable in endeavouring to fulfil the criteria for AO3.

Working from their journals, students must submit a critical commentary that demonstrates critical awareness of their own writing process and influences with specific regard to Section B: Specialism. This should include: inspiration and aims; influences; choice of form; creative problem solving; responding to feedback and editorial suggestions. Word guidance for the commentary is 1,500 words.

It is not necessary to include early drafts of critical commentaries, either for Section C or for Section A.

A mark out of 20 will be awarded for AO3 for the Critical Commentary.
A mark out of 20 will be awarded for AO4 for the Critical Commentary.

The work will be assessed internally by centres and externally moderated by WEB.

Assessment Criteria: Component 1 WRITE-1 Portfolio
Section C Critical Reflection
20 marks for AO3; 20 marks for AO4

	AO3: Demonstrate a critical relationship with one's own writing processes, including reflection on editorial decision making		AO4: Demonstrate critical awareness of the relationship between existing published work and one's own writing
Band 5 17-20	**Professional** critical awareness of one's own writing processes **Richly developed** consideration of relationships between ideas, aims and techniques **Highly effective** editorial decision making	Band 5 17-20	**Professional** critical reflection on the relationship between the reading of published works and the development of one's own writing **Richly developed** consideration of techniques gleaned from one's reading of other writers
Band 4 13-16	**Accomplished and convincing** awareness of one's own writing processes **Convincing** consideration of relationships between ideas, aims and techniques **Accomplished** editorial decision making	Band 4 13-16	**Accomplished and convincing** reflection on the relationship between the reading of published works and the development of one's own writing **Accomplished and convincing** consideration of techniques gleaned from one's reading of other writers
Band 3 9-12	**Developed** awareness of one's own writing processes Some **effective** consideration of relationships between ideas, aims and techniques Some **effective** editorial decision making	Band 3 9-12	**Developed** reflection on the relationship between the reading of published works and the development of one's own writing Some **developed and effective** consideration of techniques gleaned from one's reading of other writers
Band 2 5-8	**Developing** awareness of one's own writing processes **Developing**, **mostly descriptive** consideration of relationships between ideas, aims and techniques **Developing** editorial decision making	Band 2 5-8	**Developing** reflection on the relationship between the reading of published works and the development of one's own writing **Developing** consideration of techniques gleaned from one's reading of other writers
Band 1 1-4	**Limited** awareness of one's own writing processes **Basic** consideration of relationships between ideas, aims and techniques **Limited** editorial decision making	Band 1 1-4	**Limited** reflection on the relationship between the reading of published works and the development of one's own writing **Basic** consideration of techniques gleaned from one's reading of other writers
0 Marks	No writing, or no relevant writing, produced	0 Marks	No writing, or no relevant writing, produced

Unit 1: Portfolio assesses all AOs. See section 5 for Assessment Objectives in full and a table showing the percentage weightings of each of the AOs in this unit and in the specification as a whole.

Internal marking and moderation: advice for Centres

Marking should be positive, rewarding achievement rather than penalising failure or omissions. The awarding of marks must be directly related to the assessment criteria. Teachers should use their professional judgement to select the best-fit level descriptor that describes the student's work and use the full range of marks available.

If a candidate begins to meet some (if not all) of the criteria in a particular level their work may be awarded a mark in that level. Work that meets all the criteria in a level should be awarded a mark at the top of that level. Such work may even be beginning to meet criteria in the next level above.

A response will not be specifically penalised for being outside the suggested number of words. But a response that differs significantly from the word count (i.e. by more than 20% each way) will be self-penalising, either by not demonstrating the AOs to the required level or by lacking coherence and concision.

Final submission

Centres must carry out internal standardisation to ensure that marks awarded by different teachers are accurate and consistent across all candidates entered. In order to help set the standard of marking, centres should use exemplar material provided by WEB, and, where available, work in the centre from the previous year.

Where work for the portfolio has been marked by more than one teacher in a centre, standardisation of marking should normally be carried out according to one of the following procedures:

- **either** a sample of work that has been marked by each teacher is re-marked by the teacher who is in charge of internal standardisation

- **or** all the teachers responsible for marking portfolios exchange some marked work (preferably at a meeting led by the teacher in charge of internal standardisation) and compare their marking standards.

Where standards are found to be inconsistent, the relevant teacher(s) should make adjustment to their marks or re-mark all learners' work for which they were responsible.

Teachers must clearly show how the marks have been awarded in relation to the marking criteria. A combination of the following approaches should be adopted:

- summary comments either on the work (usually at the end) or on the Portfolio Cover Sheet (PCS-1)
- key pieces of evidence flagged throughout the work by annotation either in the margin or in the text
- marginalia should indicate where AOs have been met, but also employ words that indicate the level at which those AOs have been demonstrated
- all assessment should enable the moderator to check the application of the assessment criteria to the marking.

Once the final draft is submitted it must not be revised. Adding or removing any material to or from the work after it has been presented for final assessment would constitute malpractice.

6b Component 2
WRITE-2 Commissioned Writing

Introduction

Professional writers are often invited to respond to commissions, writing to inflexible deadlines with a tightly-focused brief. The purpose of this examined unit is to provide students with an opportunity to work in this way, and to experience the unexpected innovations and creativity that can arise from trying to meet a commissioned brief.

Preparation for this unit should include a range of reading and writing tasks with a specific focus or brief, to be completed under timed conditions. Commissions come in a wide and wonderful range of types, so there is no one particular way of preparing for this unit. The emphasis should be on developing skills, strategies and confidence as writers, so that students can be flexible in their responses come what may. Nonetheless, the types of things students might be expected to produce include:

- journalism, such as articles and columns
- poetry on topical affairs or political issues
- reviews
- travel writing
- autobiographical writing
- prose fiction on a given theme

Assessment of students' work will be by means of a 2-hour examination.

Students will choose to write in response to two commissions from a choice of five. Three commissions will specify the required form. The other two will invite responses in any form. Students must respond to two commissions. While they don't have to respond in two different forms, three commissions do specify a form, so students with the ability to write successfully in more than one form will have an advantage when it comes to navigating the paper.

The response to each commission is marked out of 20, giving an overall mark for the paper of 40. Both questions will involve the production of texts based on professional writing scenarios. Students will be given a professional writing brief with some specific aims and/or contexts. Students will be expected to address closely all elements of the brief. Students will always be able to select from a choice of five commissions, and examiners will always seek to set tasks that allow students to make use of their own experiences, in reading and in life, and to convey their own ideas and opinions. Students should be encouraged to read the terms of the commission carefully, so as to ensure that they meet the brief. Creativity and invention will be rewarded, but only where it is harnessed to a clear commitment to fulfil the requirements of the commission. As in every component of Creative Writing, high levels of technical control and accuracy with spelling and punctuation are expected.

Commissions will give guidance on word counts, typically asking for about 500 words of prose. The equivalent guidance for poetry is approximately 24-28 lines. A reasonable tolerance of up to 20% either side of the word-count will be applied. Decisions about the length of a piece of creative writing should always be governed primarily by a concern for the structural cohesion of the text.

Students should spend approximately one hour on each commission. It is recommended that *at least* 15 minutes, per commission, is given over to thinking, planning, drafting and editing.

Assessment Criteria: Component 2 WRITE-2
Commissioned Writing
Each commission is marked out of 20: 10 marks for AO1; 10 marks for AO2

	AO1: Communicate and develop ideas through an imaginative use of language and an effective use of formal and structural devices		**AO2: Communicate lucidly in fluent, cogent writing, with professional standards of technical accuracy and precision** Consider: • organisation and coherence • technical skill and control • accuracy of spelling and punctuation
Band 5 **9-10**	**Professional** development of ideas through playful and inventive use of language **Richly developed and sustained** use of appropriate forms, structures and conventions, leading to a **professional** overall affect … …all contributing to **publishable** writing which fully communicates aims and ideas	**Band 5** **9-10**	**Richly developed, highly-crafted** writing **Professional and effective** technical control **Near faultless** accuracy of spelling and punctuation
Band 4 **7-8**	**Accomplished** development of ideas through confident and thoughtful use of language **Convincing** use of appropriate forms, structures and conventions, leading to a confident overall affect … …all contributing to **accomplished** writing which convincingly communicates aims and ideas	**Band 4** **7-8**	**Convincing, crafted** writing **Accomplished** technical control A **high level** of accuracy with spelling and punctuation
Band 3 **5-6**	**Developed** ideas are communicated through clear, sometimes skilful, use of language Some **effective** use of appropriate forms, structures and conventions … …all leading to **fluent** writing that achieves some its intentions, even if it has uneven moments	**Band 3** **5-6**	**Fluent, controlled** writing **Capable** control of technical features **Developed** use of spelling and punctuation
Band 2 **3-4**	Ideas are conveyed through **adequate** use of language **Developing** use of appropriate forms, structures and conventions … …all leading to **adequate** writing that is sometimes unconvincing in its aims and intentions	**Band 2** **3-4**	**Adequate** writing **Developing** technical control **Uneven** spelling and punctuation
Band 1 **1–2**	**Limited** development of ideas and **basic** use of language **Basic** use of forms, structures and conventions … …all leading to **unconvincing** writing	**Band 1** **1–2**	**Unconvincing** writing **Unsatisfactory** technical control Spelling and punctuation can impede meaning and communication
0 **Marks**	No writing, or no relevant writing, produced	**0** **Marks**	No writing, or no relevant writing, produced

This unit assesses AO1 and AO2 only. See section 5 for Assessment Objectives in full. The table shows the percentage weightings of each of the AOs in this unit and in the specification as a whole.

4c Component 3
WRITE-3: Responsive Writing

Introduction

All writers are influenced by, and respond to, the work of other writers. This unit provides opportunities to study a sample of work by a particular writer, to produce creative writing in a preferred form, and to reflect critically on how one's own writing has been shaped by the study of another writer.

Students will be given the list of STIMULUS TEXTS FOR RESPONSIVE WRITING, comprising four reading suggestions, one for each of the four forms. For example, the suggested poetry text might be *My Family and Other Superheroes* by Jonathan Edwards, *Division Street* by Helen Mort or *Jackself* by Jacob Polley. The prose non-fiction suggestion might comprise selections of essays by Jonathan Franzen, such as *How to be Alone*, or David Foster Wallace's *Consider the Lobster*, but it might list autobiographical nature writing such as Helen MacDonald's *H is for Hawk* or Robert MacFarlane's *Landmarks*. Prose fiction might be represented by a collection of short stories, such as *Lying Under the Apple Tree* by Alice Munro, *The Tenth of December* by George Saunders, or *The Beautiful Indifference* by Sarah Hall. Each suggestion will require students to read the equivalent of one published text.

Students select one reading suggestion and begin to study the given text, looking for ideas, influences, inspiration and aspects of craft and technique that they can use in their own writing. They may select a text in the same form as that they chose to specialise in for Component 1 Section B, but they don't have to.

In the examination, students will be given a choice of five, open-ended writing prompts. They choose one and produce a piece of creative writing. They may write in the same form as the text studied from the list of STIMULUS TEXTS, but they don't have to. Whether they write in the same form or not, they should try to make use of influences, inspiration and aspects of craft and technique from the text they studied. It is intended that such influences can be as loose, as creative and as personal as necessary. From May 2027 onwards STIMULUS texts may be taken into and consulted during the examination.

Having produced a creative response, students write a critical commentary that examines their own writing processes, and which also explores the relationships between their creative piece and the text they studied from the list of STIMULUS TEXTS. Thus:

i.   They must produce approximately 750 words of creative writing (or approximately 30 lines of poetry) in response to one prompt.
ii. They must produce a critical commentary on their writing, exploring connections between their own writing and the text they studied from the list of STIMULUS TEXTS.

Mode of Assessment

Assessment will be by one written paper of 2 hours 30 minutes.

Students will choose to produce creative writing in response to one prompt from a choice of five. They may respond in whatever form they choose. But it is to be expected that the writing

they produce will have been influenced in some ways by the writer they opted to study from the list of STIMULUS TEXTS.

Students must then write a critical commentary in which they explore the connections between their own creative piece and the writer they opted to study from the list of STIMULUS TEXTS.

The creative response (750 words or 30 lines of poetry) is awarded a mark out of 20:
10 marks for AO1 and 10 marks for AO2.

The critical commentary is marked out of 20:
10 marks for AO3 and 10 marks for AO4.

This provides an overall mark for the paper of 40. But it is worth pointing out that this paper is weighted more heavily than WRITE-2 Commissioned Writing in the overall scheme of assessment. Please refer to the specification overview on page 12 and the scheme of assessment on page 13 for more details.

There will always be a choice of four writers to study, one for each of the four forms. The texts for examination in May 2027 to May 2029 are:

POETRY

Gustav Parker Hibbert *High Jump as Icarus Story* **(Banshee Press, 2024)**

PROSE FICTION

Jeanette Winterson *Night Side of the River* **(Vintage, 2024)**

PROSE NON-FICTION

Laura Coffey *Enchanted Islands* **(Summersdale, 2024)**

SCRIPT

Hannah Khalil *My English Persian Kitchen* **(Methuen, 2024)**

These texts are for first examination in May 2027.

There will always be a choice of five prompts in the examination, and students may respond to their chosen prompt in whatever form they choose, regardless of the form they studied from the list of STIMULUS TEXTS. In this way, a student might, for example, study some short stories by Jeanette Winterson, but then choose to respond to one of the prompts by writing a screenplay. Alternatively, students may choose to respond in the same form as the one they studied. It is to be expected that the examination will provide opportunities for a wide variety of routes and approaches towards both creative writing and critical reflection, and on the relationship between creative writing and published writing.

Assessment Criteria: Component 3 WRITE-3
Responsive Writing / Creative Response
10 marks for AO1; 10 marks for AO2

	AO1: Communicate and develop ideas through an imaginative use of language and an effective use of formal and structural devices		AO2: Communicate lucidly in fluent, cogent writing, with professional standards of technical accuracy and precision Consider: • organisation and coherence • technical skill and control • accuracy of spelling and punctuation
Band 5 **9-10**	**Professional** development of ideas through playful and inventive use of language **Richly developed and sustained** use of appropriate forms, structures and conventions, leading to a **professional** overall affect … …all contributing to **publishable** writing which fully communicates aims and ideas	**Band 5** **9-10**	**Richly developed, highly-crafted** writing **Professional and effective** technical control **Near faultless** accuracy of spelling and punctuation
Band 4 **7-8**	**Accomplished** development of ideas through confident and thoughtful use of language **Convincing** use of appropriate forms, structures and conventions, leading to a confident overall affect … …all contributing to **accomplished** writing which convincingly communicates aims and ideas	**Band 4** **7–8**	**Convincing, crafted** writing **Accomplished** technical control A **high level** of accuracy with spelling and punctuation
Band 3 **5-6**	**Developed** ideas are communicated through clear, sometimes skilful, use of language Some **effective** use of appropriate forms, structures and conventions … …all leading to **fluent** writing that achieves some its intentions, even if it has uneven moments	**Band 3** **5-6**	**Fluent, controlled** writing **Capable** control of technical features **Developed** use of spelling and punctuation
Band 2 **3-4**	Ideas are conveyed through **adequate** use of language **Developing** use of appropriate forms, structures and conventions … …all leading to **adequate** writing that is sometimes unconvincing in its aims and intentions	**Band 2** **3–4**	**Adequate** writing **Developing** technical control **Uneven** spelling and punctuation
Band 1 **1–2**	**Limited** development of ideas and **basic** use of language **Basic** use of forms, structures and conventions … …all leading to **unconvincing** writing	**Band 1** **1–2**	**Unconvincing** writing **Unsatisfactory** technical control Spelling and punctuation can impede meaning and communication
0 **Marks**	No writing, or no relevant writing, produced	**0** **Marks**	No writing, or no relevant writing, produced

Assessment Criteria: Component 3 WRITE-3
Responsive Writing / Critical Commentary
10 marks for AO3; 10 marks for AO4

	AO3: Demonstrate a critical relationship with one's own writing processes, including reflection on editorial decision making		AO4: Demonstrate critical awareness of the relationship between existing published work and one's own writing
Band 5 **9-10**	**Professional** critical awareness of one's own writing processes **Richly developed** consideration of relationships between ideas, aims and techniques **Highly effective** editorial decision making	**Band 5** **9-10**	**Professional** critical reflection on the relationship between the reading of published works and the development of one's own writing **Richly developed** consideration of techniques gleaned from one's reading of other writers
Band 4 **7-8**	**Accomplished and convincing** awareness of one's own writing processes **Convincing** consideration of relationships between ideas, aims and techniques **Accomplished** editorial decision making	**Band 4** **7-8**	**Accomplished and convincing** reflection on the relationship between the reading of published works and the development of one's own writing **Accomplished and convincing** consideration of techniques gleaned from one's reading of other writers
Band 3 **5-6**	**Developed** awareness of one's own writing processes Some **effective** consideration of relationships between ideas, aims and techniques Some **effective** editorial decision making	**Band 3** **5-6**	**Developed** reflection on the relationship between the reading of published works and the development of one's own writing Some **developed and effective** consideration of techniques gleaned from one's reading of other writers
Band 2 **3-4**	**Developing** awareness of one's own writing processes **Developing**, **mostly descriptive** consideration of relationships between ideas, aims and techniques **Developing** editorial decision making	**Band 2** **3-4**	**Developing** reflection on the relationship between the reading of published works and the development of one's own writing **Developing** consideration of techniques gleaned from one's reading of other writers
Band 1 **1-2**	**Limited** awareness of one's own writing processes **Basic** consideration of relationships between ideas, aims and techniques **Limited** editorial decision making	**Band 1** **1-2**	**Limited** reflection on the relationship between the reading of published works and the development of one's own writing **Basic** consideration of techniques gleaned from one's reading of other writers
0 **Marks**	No writing, or no relevant writing, produced	**0** **Marks**	No writing, or no relevant writing, produced

This unit assesses all four assessment objectives. See section 5 for Assessment Objectives in full. The table shows the percentage weightings of each of the AOs in this unit and in the specification as a whole.

Appendices

Quality of Written Communication (QWC)

GCE level qualifications that require students to produce written work in English require students:

- to make sure that writing is clear and legible
- to make sure that spelling, punctuation and grammar are sufficiently well controlled to ensure that meaning is communicated
- to make effective decisions about the form and style of writing, matching language and tone to purpose and readership
- organise ideas in a clear and coherent manner.

While this recognised programme is not currently an Ofqual-regulated GCE, the quality of written communication is of central importance to this qualification, and it will be assessed by means of AO2.

Recommended teaching time

The time necessary to deliver this specification is equivalent to that required for any GCE Level qualification. This means that the WEB Creative Writing syllabus is designed on the assumption that candidates have about 360 guided learning hours per subject over the duration of the two-year linear course.

This figure is based on term times in the maintained sector. Some schools in the independent sector run shorter terms, and are therefore accustomed to delivering GCE syllabuses on less time than is generally advised.

For Ofqual approved syllabuses, *guided learning hours* include direct teaching and any other supervised or directed study time. They do not include private study by the candidate. However, these figures are for guidance only, and the number of hours required may vary according to local curricular practice and the candidates' prior experience of writing. In Creative Writing, the amount of independent reading and writing undertaken by students may well make a significant difference to achievement. It may also enable the course to run successfully even in centres where there are fewer *guided learning hours* available.

Pre-assessment

Initial Estimate of Entries

Estimated entries are your best projection of the number of learners who will be entered for the programme in a particular series. Initial estimate of entries should be submitted to WEB by email by 10 October in the *academic* year that those students will sit the examinations and certificate the qualification. Such estimates are free and do not commit your centre in any way.

Final Confirmation of Entries provides WEB with detailed data and enables planning for the appointment of examiners and portfolio moderators. Final Confirmation of Entries should be sent to WEB, by email by 21 February in the year those students will take the examinations and certificate the qualification. Form COE also requires centres to submit Forecast Grades and Dates of Birth for their candidates. Forecast Grades will be referred to as part of the assessment undertaken by Principal Examiners.

As the course is linear, and there is only one route through the specification, there is only one correct entry code. All students taking the AFA in Creative Writing must be entered for the following entry option:

Entry code	Title	Component code	Component title	Assessment type
CW19	Creative Writing	WRITE-1	Portfolio	Internally monitored and marked. Externally moderated.
		WRITE-2	Commissioned Writing	External Assessment
		WRITE-3	Responsive Writing	External Assessment

Students who wish to re-sit externally examined components may do so in the following year.

Students may not re-submit new work for Component 1 WRITE-1 Portfolio in the following year. Where they opt to re-sit externally examined components, they simply carry over the mark they were awarded for Component 1 WRITE-1 Portfolio.

The entry fee for the AFA in Creative Writing is £50 per candidate. This is to cover the costs of assessment and of the award of certificates. An invoice for entry fees will be sent shortly after the Final Confirmation of Entries in February.

Accessibility and special consideration

Reasonable adjustments and access arrangements allow learners with special educational needs, specific learning needs or temporary injuries to access the assessment and show what they know and can do, without changing the demands of the assessment. Applications for these should be made to WEB before the examination series. Detailed information about eligibility for access arrangements can be found in the JCQ publication *Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments*.

Special consideration is a post-assessment adjustment to marks or grades to reflect temporary injury, illness or other indisposition at the time the assessment was taken. Detailed information about eligibility for special consideration can be found in the JCQ publication *A guide to the special consideration process*.

Examination arrangements

WEB will publish the dates of examinations for WRITE-2 and WRITE-3 six months in advance of the April/May examination season, typically in early October.

Regulations governing examination arrangements are contained in the JCQ publication *Instructions for conducting examinations.*

Submission of marks awarded for Component 1 WRITE-1 Portfolio

The deadline for submission of marks for WRITE-1 Portfolio will always be 15 May. Marks should be submitted using the Portfolio Marksheet (PMS-1). Centres will also be required to submit the required sample of candidates' work to the Principal Moderator by the same date. Each portfolio should be accompanied by the WEB Portfolio coversheet (PCS-1), with both teacher and candidate having signed to authenticate the work.

Centres with up to ten candidates will be required to send all ten portfolios. Centres with ten to twenty candidates should send a sample of ten folders that reflects the full range of marks awarded, including the folder with the highest mark and the folder with the lowest mark. Centres with 20-30 candidates should send a similarly organised sample of fifteen portfolios.

Authentication of candidates' work for Component 1 WRITE-1 Portfolio

Students and centres must declare that the work is each student's own by signing the relevant sections of the Portfolio Cover Sheet (PCS-1). Every portfolio requested from a centre by the moderator should be accompanied by a fully completed PCS-1.

From May 2024 onwards, candidates must also include within their portfolios an early draft of creative work submitted for both Section A and Section B. These drafts should be markedly different from the final versions and should contain editorial annotations. For Section A, an early draft of one piece of writing is required. For Section B, an early draft of approximately 1,000 words (approximately two A4 pages) is required. It is not necessary to submit early drafts of critical commentaries for Section A or Section C.

Artificial Intelligence

Following the release of AI-based writing programmes such as Chat GPT, it feels timely to remind centres of the underlying principles for the AFA in Creative Writing, and especially those pertaining to the development of candidate work for the WRITE-1 Portfolio.

Centres are reminded that both the candidate and the teacher must sign the PCS-1 to authenticate the creative writing submitted by the candidate. From May 2024 onwards, candidates must also include within their portfolios an early draft of creative work submitted for both Section A and Section B. These drafts should be markedly different from the final versions and should contain editorial annotation. For Section A, an early draft of one piece of writing is required. For Section B, an early draft of approximately 1,000 words (two A4 pages) is required. It is not necessary to submit early drafts of critical commentaries for Section A or Section C.

Teachers will have been reading, assessing and reviewing their candidates' writing for the duration of the course, primarily through the critical workshop. This should enable teachers to be sufficiently familiar with the writing of their candidates to be confident when authenticating work, and capable of identifying work that may be uncharacteristic of specific candidates, and which may therefore give rise to suspicions about the use of AI to generate creative writing.

Where such suspicions arise, they must be investigated before the teacher can sign to authenticate the work. The critical workshop is therefore the primary means by which the centre can develop confidence in authenticating candidate work.

For AO3, candidates are also required to discuss the process behind the generation of their creative work in the critical commentary. This aspect of the portfolio should also help teachers to have confidence in their authentication of their candidates' work.

It is also possible to type text into some LLMs and ask the machine if it is the author of said text. This is a similar process to the way educators use search engines to detect plagiarism from published internet sources.

It is permissible to employ AI-based text-generators in the production of small amounts creative writing. For example, in the production of one poem, a candidate might invite ChatGPT to produce a list of "famous haiku by Basho" and then attempt to write their own versions of haibun, set in their own time and situation, but with each haibun ending with one of the Basho haiku. Or they might ask an LLM to write a description of a typical American diner from the 1950s, and then use that as an establishing set of screen directions for their own screenplay. This is no different to the use of "found material" in the generation of creative writing, so long as the nature of the process and the resulting material is clearly acknowledged in the accompanying commentary. On no account should writing produced by AI be submitted as though it is the authentic work of the candidate.

Approval of texts and tasks for Component 1 WRITE-1 Portfolio

Centres are encouraged to enable their students to pursue their own interests in creative writing. In this respect, centres should always be guided more by how successfully a student's writing meets its own aims and objectives, rather than by subjective ideas about the relevant literary merits of particular genres in which their students may opt to write. It is possible for a candidate to produce Level 5 prose fiction writing in the genres of say, Steampunk, or Fantasy. It is equally possible for a candidate to produce Level 1 work in the arguably more literary genre of the sonnet. Similarly, some candidates may well produce Level 5 critical commentaries by discussing with great insight and perception the influence on their work of non-literary writers, while others may produce less convincing commentaries of the extent to which they've taken influence from, say, James Joyce or T S Eliot. Clearly, some of the more literary genres can encourage the complexity, linguistic sophistication and formal control that characterises great writing. But great writing can take a variety of forms. It is also worth stating that it is always obvious to examiners when candidates have recycled texts encountered during their GCSE or A-Level English Literature studies, citing them as influences on their creative writing for AO4. Typically, this strategy is used in an attempt to mask or veil the fact that the candidate has not really engaged with independent reading of contemporary writers, and it is rarely convincing.

There is no need to seek official approval for stimulus texts and influences, but in cases of doubt, please feel free to contact WEB, by email or telephone (see page 2), to ask for guidance and advice.

Grading

This AFA level programme in Creative Writing is graded on the scale: A*, A, B, C, D, E, where A* is the highest. Candidates who fail to reach the minimum standard for E will be Unclassified (U).

Post-results services

A number of post-results services are available:

1. **Missing or incomplete results**

This service should be used if an individual result is missing, or the candidate has been omitted entirely from the results supplied. In such circumstances please contact David Briggs as soon as the problem has been identified. There is a fee of £10 for a clerical check of this nature.

2. **Reviews of marking**

If a centre believes there to have been an error with a candidate's result, they may request a review of marking. Candidates will have until the 14 September to request a review of marking for WRITE-2 and/or WRITE-3. A request for a review of marking will cost £30 per paper. Reviews of marking are *not* available for WRITE-1.

Where a review of marking is requested, the original mark awarded will be reviewed by both DLB and the Principal Examiner not responsible for the original mark: i.e. the Principal Examiner of the paper not under review.

Exams Officers will be informed of the outcome of a review of marking within two weeks of the request having been made.

3. **Appeals against procedure**

When a centre has submitted requests for reviews of marking, and also believes that WEB has not followed its own procedures, as outlined in this specification, they will have until the end of October in that year to submit an appeal against procedure. Provided both conditions have been met, an appeal against procedure may be submitted in the form of a letter explaining the perceived issue. An appeal against procedure will cost £150.

An appeal against procedure should be submitted in writing to the Headteacher of Bristol Grammar School, stating clearly the precise nature of the perceived failing. The Headteacher of Bristol Grammar School, or a person appointed for the purpose (which should be a member of his SLT), will investigate, and inform the relevant centre of his or her decision. All decisions of the Headteacher of Bristol Grammar School, and their appointed spokesperson in such matters, will be final.

4. **Access to scripts**

Centres can request access to marked scripts. There is an administrative charge of £10 per script.

Centres should note that there is a fee for all post-results services requested. In the case of a clerical check for **missing or incomplete marks** proving that an error was made by WEB, the £10 fee will be reimbursed. Similarly, in circumstances where a **review of marking** leads to a change of overall grade for that candidate, WEB will refund the £30 fee.

Suggested reading

While the emphasis in the Creative Writing AFA is on students' development as writers, if they are not reading exciting contemporary literature their writing will be neither exciting nor contemporary. Students are expected to read widely in order to develop their craft, style, voice and originality as writers. Here are some suggestions (a list that is by no means exhaustive):

Prose Fiction:
All the Pretty Horses, Cormac McCarthy (Picador)
History of the Rain, Niall Williams (Bloomsbury)
The Tenth of December, George Saunders (Bloomsbury)
Leaving the Atocha Station, Ben Lerner (Granta)
Middlesex, Jeffrey Eugenides (Bloomsbury)
Nocturnes, Kazuo Ishiguro (Faber)
Everything Ravaged, Everything Burned, Wells Tower (Granta)
Leaving the Sea, Ben Marcus (Granta)
Lying Under the Apple Tree, Alice Munro (Vintage)
The Beautiful Indifference, Sarah Hall (Faber)
The New York Trilogy, Paul Auster (Faber)
To Rise Again at a Decent Hour, Joshua Ferris (Viking)
We Are All Completely Beside Ourselves, Karen Joy Fowler (Serpent's Tail)
The Blazing World, Siri Hustvedt (Sceptre)
The Wake, Paul Kingsnorth (Unbound)
The Bone Clocks, David Mitchell (Sceptre)
The Lives of Others, Neel Mukherjee (Chatto & Windus)
The Dog, Joseph O'Neill (Fourth Estate)
Orfeo, Richard Powers (Atlantic Books)
How to be Both, Ali Smith (Hamish Hamilton)

Prose Non-Fiction:
The Iceberg: a Memoir, by Marion Coutts
H Is for Hawk, by Helen Macdonald
Do No Harm: Stories of Life, Death and Brain Surgery, by Henry Marsh
Ghettoside: A True Story of Murder in America, by Jill Leovy
White Bicycles, by Joe Boyd
Irritable Hearts: A PTSD Love Story, by Mac McClelland
Dead Wake: The Last Crossing of the Lusitania, by Erik Larson
So You've Been Publicly Shamed, by Jon Ronson
Selfish, Shallow, and Self-Absorbed, edited and with an introduction by Meghan Daum
The Brothers: The Road to an American Tragedy, by Masha Gessen
Spinster: Making a Life of One's Own, by Kate Bolick
After the Tall Timber: Collected Non-fiction, by Renata Adler
M Train, by Patti Smith
Strandings, Peter Riley, by Ian MacDonald
How to Be Alone, by Jonathan Franzen
Letters to a Young Contrarian, by Christopher Hitchens
Consider the Lobster and Other Essays, by David Foster Wallace
Landmarks, by Robert MacFarlane
The Hard Crowd: Essays 2000-2020, by Rachel Kushner

Poetry:
Niall Campbell, *Moontide*
Neil Rollinson, *Talking Dead*
Andrew McMillan, *Physical*
Fiona Benson *Bright Travellers*
John Burnside *All One Breath*
Louise Glück *Faithful and Virtuous Night*
Ruth Padel *Learning to Make an Oud in Nazareth*
Kevin Powers *Letter Composed During a Lull in the Fighting*
Arundhathi Subramaniam *When God is a Traveller*
Ahren Warner *Pretty*
Helen Mort *Division Street*
Sam Riviere *81 Austerities*
Mark Waldron *Meanwhile, Trees*
Matthew Caley *Rake*
Liz Berry *Black Country*
Ian Duhig *Pandorama*
Oli Hazzard *Between Two Windows*
Paul Farley *The Boy from the Chemist is Here to See You*
Jonathan Edwards *My Family and Other Superheroes*
Luke Kennard *Cain*
Dorothy Molloy *Hare Soup*
Daljit Nagra *Look We Have Coming to Dover!*
Alice Oswald *The Thing in the Gap-Stone Stile*
Jacob Polley *Jackself*
Robin Robertson *The Wrecking Light*
Don Paterson *Landing Light*
Charles Simic *Sixty Poems*
Brenda Shaughnessy *Human Dark With Sugar*
Paul Muldoon *Maggot*
Kei Miller *The Cartographer Tries to Map a Way to Zion*

Script:
Eight, by Ella Hickson
Jerusalem, by Jez Butterworth
Amadeus, by Peter Shaffer
Scaramouche Jones, by Justin Butcher
Rock 'n' Roll, by Tom Stoppard
Pulp Fiction, by Quentin Tarantino
Some Trace of Her, by Katie Mitchell
Ballyturk, by Enda Walsh
The Last of the Hausmans, by Stephen Beresford
Revolt. She said. Revolt again, by Alice Birch
Chewing Gum Dreams, by Michaela Cole
Pomona, by Alistair MacDowell
Each Slow Dusk, by Rory Mullarkey
Fleabag, by Phoebe Waller-Bridge
The Village Bike, by Penelope Skinner
Cockroach, by Sam Holcroft
Eden's Empire, by James Graham
Me as a Penguin, by Tom Wells
If There is I Haven't Found it Yet, by Nick Payne

Books on Creative Writing:

The Art of Fiction, by David Lodge

The Creative Writing Student's Handbook, by Cathie Hartigan

Adventures in Form, Tom Chivers

The Creative Writing Coursebook: Forty Authors …, by Julia Bell and Andrew Motion

Creative Writing: A Workbook with Readings, by Linda Anderson and Derek Neale

The Cambridge Introduction to Creative Writing, by David Morley

Don't Ask Me What I Mean: Poets In Their Own Words, by Don Paterson and Clare Brown

Strong Words: Modern Poets on Modern Poetry, by W. N. Herbert and Matthew Hollis

How to Write a Screenplay, by Mark Evan Schwartz

Screenplay: The Foundations of Screenwriting: A Step-by-Step Guide …, by Syd Field

Is There a Book in You? by Alison Baverstock.

The Anti-Racist Writing Workshop: How to Decolonize the Creative Classroom, by Felicia Rose Chavez

Reading Like a Writer, Francine Prose

A Swim in a Pond in the Rain, George Saunders

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Portfolio Marksheet (PMS-1)

Centre No.	Candidate No.	Surname	Forename	A: Exploration					B: Specialism			C: Critical Reflection			TOTAL
				AO1	AO2	AO3	AO4	Total	AO1	AO2	Total	AO3	AO4	Total	
e.g. 50419	2103	Saunders	George	15	15	5	5	**40**	20	20	**40**	20	20	**40**	**120**
								0			**0**			**0**	**0**
								0			**0**			**0**	**0**
								0			**0**			**0**	**0**
								0			**0**			**0**	**0**
								0			**0**			**0**	**0**
								0			**0**			**0**	**0**
								0			**0**			**0**	**0**
								0			**0**			**0**	**0**
								0			**0**			**0**	**0**
								0			**0**			**0**	**0**
								0			**0**			**0**	**0**
								0			**0**			**0**	**0**

This form is provided for illustrative purposes only. Please use the active Excel Worksheet version of the form which is available via the WEB GoogleDrive folder.

Please submit the PMS-1 to dbriggs@bgs.bristol.sch.uk or to your centre's GoogleDrive folder by 15 May in the year candidates will be submitting their work for WRITE-1.

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Portfolio Coversheet (PCS-1)

AFA IN CREATIVE WRITING (CREW-19)
Component 1 – Portfolio (WRITE-1)

Please attach this form to each candidate's work and send to the moderator by 15 May. The declarations should be signed by the teacher and candidate in the spaces indicated.

Centre number

Centre name

Candidate number

Candidate's full name

Work submitted for assessment must be the candidate's own writing. Copying, allowing others to copy, or engaging in any other forms of plagiarism or cheating, including use of AI, may lead to disqualification.

Candidate declaration

Have you received help, advice or information from anyone other than those in your critical workshop group while producing this work?

☐ No   ☐ Yes (give brief details below)

I have read and understood the guidance above on plagiarism and artificial intelligence. I confirm that I produced the attached work without assistance other than that which is acceptable under the scheme of assessment.

Candidate signature   Date

Teacher declaration

I confirm that the candidate's work was produced under the conditions laid out in the specification. I have authenticated the candidate's work and am satisfied (to the best of my knowledge) that the work produced is solely that of the candidate.

Teacher signature   Date

Candidate number

Candidate's full name

SECTION A: EXPLORATION [40 marks]

Exploration / Creative			
Creative piece 1 Title(s)			
Form		word / line count	
Creative piece 2 Title(s)			
Form		word / line count	
Creative piece 3 Title(s)			
Form		word / line count	
Assessment Criteria		Maximum mark	Mark awarded
AO1 Communicate and develop ideas through an imaginative use of language and an effective use of formal and structural devices		15	
AO2 Communicate lucidly in fluent, cogent writing, with professional standards of technical accuracy and precision		15	
Exploration / Commentary			
AO3 Demonstrate a critical relationship with one's own writing processes, including reflection on editorial decision making		5	
AO4 Demonstrate a critical awareness of the relationship between existing published work and one's own writing		5	
Total Mark		40	

TEACHER'S COMMENT

SECTION B: SPECIALISM [40 marks]

Title(s)			
Form		word / line count	
Assessment Criteria		Maximum mark	Mark awarded
AO1 Communicate and develop ideas through an imaginative use of language and an effective use of formal and structural devices		20	
AO2 Communicate lucidly in fluent, cogent writing, with professional standards of technical accuracy and precision		20	
Total Mark		40	

TEACHER'S COMMENT

SECTION C: CRITICAL REFLECTION [40 marks]

Assessment Criteria	Maximum mark	Mark awarded
AO3 Demonstrate a critical relationship with one's own writing processes, including reflection on editorial decision making	20	
AO4 Demonstrate a critical awareness of the relationship between existing published work and one's own writing	20	
Total Mark	40	

TEACHER'S COMMENT

Total mark for Component 1 WRITE-1 Portfolio	120	

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Estimate of Entries (EOE)

Number of entries	Centre No.	Candidate No.	Surname	Forename	Programme Title	Course Code
1	e.g. 50419	2103	Saunders	George	AFA in Creative Writing	CW19
TOT = 1						

Please email this form to dbriggs@bgs.bristol.sch.uk by 10 October in the academic year candidates will be sitting examinations.

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Confirmation of Entries (COE)

No. of entries	Centre No.	Candidate No.	Surname	Forename	Date of Birth	Course Code	Entry Fee	Forecast Grade
1	e.g. 50419	2103	Saunders	George	07/09/1966	CW19	Y	A*
TOT = 1							£	

Please email this form to David Briggs, Bristol Grammar School, University Road, Bristol, BS8 1SR, by 21 February in the year candidates will be sitting examinations. You will receive an invoice for these entries to enable payment of the entry fees.