Gordon's School
English Department

Introduction

The English Department consists of nine members of staff, including the Head of Department and the Key Stage 3 & 4 Coordinators. The English Department teaches in its own building (Egypt Block), across six dedicated classrooms. All students are entered for English Language and English Literature at GCSE with many students opting to continue these subjects post-16.

GCSE/ A-level Courses

We use the exam board AQA at GCSE, teaching English Language (8700) and English Literature (8702). Our set texts for English Literature are: *Macbeth, Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde, An Inspector Calls* and 'Power and Conflict' Poetry.

At A-level, we follow AQA's Specification A (7712, Option A) for English Literature ('Love through the Ages' and 'Literature of the First World War'). Our set texts include: *Othello, Tess of the d'Urbervilles* and AQA's 'Pre-1900 Love Poetry' Anthology (Paper 1); *Regeneration, Up The Line To Death* and *The Wipers Times* (Paper 2). Students produce an 'Independent Study' for coursework, based on their own wider reading of two texts.

We teach AQA's A-level English Language specification (7702), and Media Studies (also AQA, 7572).

Examination results

Exam results in the English Department have been consistently high for a long period. In 2026, over 92% of GCSE English Language grades were 9-4 with over 40% of students being awarded grades 9-7, while 90% obtained grades 9-4 for GCSE English Literature with 33% of students being awarded grades 9-7.

In 2026, for A-level English Literature, 67% obtained A*-B grades (including 33% A* grades), with 40% also achieving A*-B grades in English Language (100% A*-C for A-level English Language). These results reflect the academic nature of the Department and the high expectations placed upon both our staff and students.

Extra-curricular activities

Each year, the English Department runs a wide range of enrichment activities.

Recently, the English Department organized for visiting theatre companies to perform *Macbeth* and *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* for our GCSE students and arranged a theatre trip for the Sixth Form to a well-received production of *Othello* in the West End, starring David Harewood and Toby Jones.

Over the past three years, we have arranged ten author visits to inspire the students (including: Matt Dickinson, an explorer/ Everest climber; Stuart Lawrence, the brother of Stephen Lawrence; a performance poet, Karl Nova; and an ex-footballer/ football-themed novelist, Seth Burkett). The English Department also runs a wide range of Key Stage 3 reading and writing competitions like our Year 9 'Moment of Terror' horror story competition and spelling bee competitions.

Members of the English Department are involved in a range of public speaking and debating activities, while the school participates in Mock Trial competitions and Model United Nations conferences, amongst numerous speaking events.

The English Department is an associate member of The Prince's Teaching Institute, and the department is currently working on various development objectives in collaboration with this body.

In the past, A-level English Literature students have participated in a residential trip to Dorset as part of their study of *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*, while GCSE students have taken part in a *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* literary trip to London.