



Assessment of spelling, punctuation and grammar

GCSE English Literature; GCSE Religious Studies; GCSE History;
GCSE Geography

For examinations from January 2013 in Wales, England and Northern Ireland, additional marks will be awarded for spelling, punctuation and grammar (SPaG) in GCSE English literature, geography, history and religious studies, across all awarding bodies.

Assessment

Overall 5% of the total allocation of marks for each subject will be given for spelling, punctuation and grammar; actual mark allocations will vary from subject to subject.

0 marks

Candidates do not reach the threshold performance outlined in the performance description below.

Threshold performance

Candidates spell, punctuate and use the rules of grammar with reasonable accuracy in the context of the demands of the question. Any errors do not hinder meaning in the response. Where required, they use a limited range of specialist terms appropriately.

Intermediate performance

Candidates spell, punctuate and use the rules of grammar with considerable accuracy and general control of meaning in the context of the demands of the question. Where required, they use a good range of specialist terms with facility.

High performance

Candidates spell, punctuate and use the rules of grammar with consistent accuracy and effective control of meaning in the context of the demands of the question. Where required, they use a wide range of specialist terms adeptly and with precision

Credit for SPaG will only be given where candidates clearly attempt to answer the question.

SPaG subject by subject

additional marks for SPaG are shown in red

GCSE Geography A

Additional SPaG marks have been added to the extended writing questions at the end of each option in Unit 2. (Each candidate attempts 3 of these extended writing questions.)

	%	Raw marks	UMS
Unit 2	35	72 (60 +4+4+4)	70

GCSE Geography B

Additional SPaG marks have been added to the extended writing questions in Unit 1 and Unit 2 (three questions in total).

	%	Raw marks	UMS
Unit 1	30	66 (60 +3+3)	60
Unit 2	45	94 (90 +4)	90

GCSE History

Additional SPaG marks have been added to the extended writing questions in Unit 1 , Unit 2, and Unit 3 (three questions in total).

	%	Raw marks	UMS
Unit 1	25	53 (50 +3)	50
Unit 2	25	53 (50 +3)	50
Unit 3	25	53 (50 +3)	50

Each of the targeted questions will be allocated additional SPaG marks as follows:

Unit 1 – 3 marks to question 3 (compulsory)

Unit 2 – 3 marks to question 3 (compulsory)

Unit 3 – 3 marks to questions 4, 5 or 6 (candidates to choose one of these)

GCSE Religious Studies A

Additional SPaG marks have been added to the extended writing question (question 1e) in Unit 1 and Unit 2 (two questions in total).

	%	Raw marks	UMS
Unit 1	50	101 (96 +5)	100
Unit 2	50	101 (96 +5)	100

GCSE Religious Studies B

Additional SPaG marks have been added to the extended writing question (question 1e) in Unit 1 and Unit 2 (two questions in total).

	%	Raw marks	UMS
Unit 1	50	101 (96 +5)	100
Unit 2	50	101 (96 +5)	100

GCSE English Literature

Additional SPaG marks have been added to the extended writing (20 mark) questions in Unit 2 (a and b) (candidates attempt two of these questions in total).

	%	Raw marks	UMS
Unit 2 (a and b)	40	68 (60 +4+4)	80

Frequently asked questions

1. How will candidates know which questions involve the assessment of SPaG?

The questions where SPaG is assessed will be indicated on the cover of the examination paper and beneath the question itself.

2. Will the Quality of Written Communication continue to be assessed?

Yes, QWC will continue to be part of the overall assessment.

3. Will the new requirements for SPaG apply to candidates with special educational needs, dyslexia, or disabilities such as a visual or hearing impairment?

Yes, the new requirements apply to all candidates.

4. What happens if a candidate has a scribe?

Candidates using a scribe can access some, or all, of the marks available for Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar (SPaG). The completed scribe cover sheet must be attached to the front cover of the script. This must indicate the extent to which the scribe has been used. Marks will be awarded as follows:

- Candidates who dictate their response are eligible for $\frac{1}{3}$ of SPaG marks, i.e. those for grammar.
- Candidates who dictate their response and indicate punctuation are eligible for $\frac{2}{3}$ of SPaG marks, i.e. those for punctuation and grammar. However, to access these marks, the cover sheet must indicate that both punctuation and grammar have been dictated. If not, the candidate will only be able to access $\frac{1}{3}$ of the SPaG marks - those for grammar.
- Candidates who dictate their response, indicate punctuation and spell out every word to the scribe, are eligible for all the marks for SPaG.

However, it is anticipated that most candidates will be eligible for either $\frac{1}{3}$ or $\frac{2}{3}$ of the SPaG marks. **For candidates to access 100% of the SPaG marks, the circumstances must be very clearly documented on the cover sheet.**

These rules only apply to candidates using a scribe. If candidates, as an alternative, are able to use a word processor with the spell check turned off, they will be able to access all SPaG marks.

5. Are there any specific accommodation arrangements for English as an Additional Language learners?

No, EAL learners will not be offered additional accommodation arrangements.

6. How much terminology are candidates expected to use?

Candidates are expected to use subject-specific terminology where it is appropriate or required within the context of the question.

7. Will the accuracy of all spelling be assessed, or just subject-specific terms?

The accuracy of all spelling will be assessed.

8. Will assessment be affected if candidates write their whole answer using bullet points?

Not necessarily, but their SPaG mark will be affected if they fail to structure their answer in a grammatically coherent way.

9. Are unit results from 2012 (where SPaG was not assessed) still valid for cash-in?

Yes.

10. When might a candidate be awarded 0 marks for SPaG for a particular question?

- The candidate writes nothing;
- The candidate's response bears no relation to the question;
- Errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar severely hinder meaning;
- Candidate's achievement in spelling, punctuation and grammar does not reach the threshold level of attainment.

Further information

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to get in touch with us at WJEC:

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GCSE History
GCSE Geography
GCSE Religious Studies

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