



Bhutan Council for School Examinations and Assessment

English Assessment Syllabus

Key stage 3

2026- 2030

Contact Us

Bhutan Council for School Examinations and Assessment
Kawajangsa, Thimphu
Post Box No. 156
Email: bcsea@bcsea.bt

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1. Why Choose This Syllabus?

This syllabus is designed to meet the learning needs of Bhutanese students while aligning with internationally benchmarked standards, particularly the Cambridge Lower Secondary English as a Second Language (0876). It offers a balanced and progressive approach to developing the core language skills of listening, speaking, writing, reading, and use of English, ensuring that learners build strong foundational competencies. It focuses on enhancing learners' ability to understand, interpret, and communicate effectively in a variety of contexts. The syllabus is thoughtfully structured to reflect the national vision for education while preparing students to engage meaningfully with global academic standards.

Assessment Focus Areas

This syllabus is guided by essential language learning principles and the core values of Gross National Happiness (GNH). It identifies the key areas through which learners' language development is observed and assessed, promoting both academic growth and personal wellbeing.

The following focus areas represent the broad competencies that the syllabus aims to develop and that the teachers can observe and assess in students' work:

- **Communication** – Using spoken and written English to express ideas clearly, confidently, and respectfully.
- **Comprehension** – Understanding and interpreting texts, ideas, and perspectives, demonstrating empathy and awareness of diverse cultures and values.
- **Accuracy** – Applying grammatical structures, vocabulary, and language conventions correctly and appropriately to ensure clear communication.
- **Creativity** – Expressing ideas imaginatively and originally, while valuing cultural identity and personal expression.
- **Critical Thinking** – Analysing, evaluating, and responding thoughtfully to texts, language use, and ideas.
- **Reflection** – Demonstrating self-awareness and emotional intelligence through engagement with texts, ideas, and communication experiences.

Assessment Outcome

Students completing this syllabus will have developed a range of language skills that will support their academic progress and everyday communication. Specifically, learners will be able to:

- understand, main ideas, analyse details, evaluate arguments, and distinguish opinions in spoken texts, strengthening their listening, critical thinking, and effective communication skills across contexts.
- understand and respond to written texts in English, identifying both explicit information and implied meaning.
- communicate effectively in writing, using appropriate vocabulary, grammar, and structure for a range of purposes and audiences.
- express ideas clearly and confidently in speech, participating in discussions, presentations, and conversations on familiar and less familiar topics.

- demonstrate critical thinking by analysing information, comparing viewpoints, and constructing logical arguments in both spoken and written forms.
- use English creatively and appropriately in a variety of contexts, showing awareness of tone, audience, and purpose.
- apply strategies for independent learning, including self-assessment and reflection, to improve their language skills continuously.
- be better prepared for higher levels of English learning, national assessments, and possible future engagement with international curricula and examinations.

Assessment Support for Teachers

Quality education relies on alignment between the curriculum, teaching practices, learning experiences, and assessment. The BCSEA ensures that assessment practices are closely aligned with the intended learning outcomes of the curriculum. Such alignment enhances the overall quality of learning and ensures that students are assessed on the knowledge, skills, and understanding envisioned in the curriculum framework.

To ensure the effective delivery of the syllabus, BCSEA provides structured and ongoing support to teachers, including:

- specimen papers, mark schemes, and past papers to help teachers guide students in meeting curriculum expectations.
- professional development workshops and training sessions that focus on key areas such as assessment design and mark schemes.
- collaboration through teacher networks, online forums, and school clusters where teachers can share best practices, resources, and experiences.

These support systems aim to empower teachers with the knowledge, skills, and confidence needed to deliver the syllabus effectively, assess students fairly, and nurture their holistic development in alignment with Bhutan's national education goals and values.

2. Syllabus Overview

The Key Stage 3 English syllabus designed to build learners' ability to communicate effectively across a variety of spoken and written contexts, developing their confidence and fluency in English as a second language. It integrates the holistic values of GNH, promoting not only linguistic competence but also ethical awareness, empathy, and respect for cultural diversity. Students engage with diverse text types and genres to refine their skills in listening, speaking, writing, reading, and language use, fostering creativity, critical thinking, and reflection.

Designed for learners aged 12-13, the syllabus broadly corresponds to Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) B1, enabling students to become thoughtful communicators who can express ideas clearly, understand diverse perspectives, and participate meaningfully in their communities and beyond.

Aims

The syllabus aims to enable students to:

- communicate confidently and accurately in English for a range of purposes and audiences.
- develop independent writing skills by planning, drafting, and editing extended texts across different genres.
- read and comprehend a wide variety of texts, identifying key points, arguments, and implied meanings.
- use grammar and vocabulary effectively to enhance clarity and expression.
- reflect ethical values such as empathy, respect, and responsibility in their use of language, aligned with the principles of Gross National Happiness.
- foster critical thinking through analysis of language and text, encouraging students to appreciate diverse viewpoints and cultural contexts.

3. Content Overview

The syllabus is organised into five main strands that reflect an integrated approach to English language learning:

i. Writing

Learners plan, draft, and revise their work through the writing process, while developing control over spelling, tone, structure, and genre. They are encouraged to express their own ideas, write creatively, and support opinions with reasons and evidence. Organisation, paragraphing, and coherence are taught explicitly.

ii. Use of English

This strand builds learners' grammatical knowledge, vocabulary range, and sentence structure. Students learn how to use a variety of tenses, modal verbs, conditionals, prepositions, and relative clauses accurately. Sentence-level work focuses on cohesion, clarity, and effective communication in context.

iii. Reading and Literature

This strand develops learners' ability to comprehend a range of short and extended texts (seen and unseen). It focuses on identifying key ideas, understanding specific information and details, and following the development of ideas within a text. They build fluency, interpret both explicit and implicit information, and begin analysing how language and structure contribute to meaning. They also explore idiomatic and figurative language and learn to identify authorial viewpoints.

Each strand promotes critical thinking, ethical communication, and learner independence, contributing to both academic progress and personal development in line with Bhutan's holistic education goals.

iv. Listening

Learners identify main ideas, details, and specific information with minimal support. They infer meaning, understand implied messages and opinions, and evaluate spoken content through

reasoned responses. Varied listening tasks build skills for accurate comprehension and critical engagement in academic and real-life contexts.

v. Speaking

Learners develop the ability to describe events, express opinions with supporting arguments, and engage listeners using appropriate language and tone. They practise sustaining conversations, asking and answering questions, and organising ideas clearly, enabling them to communicate confidently and effectively in both academic and everyday situations.

4. Assessment Overview

Structured for Classes VII and VIII, the assessment focusses on Writing, Reading and Literature and Use of English, while Listening and Speaking are taught and internally assessed as school-based coursework. The coursework marks earned by class VIII students in Listening and Speaking are included in their board examination result.

Paper 1	Coursework
English Section A Candidates complete two unstructured writing tasks: an Essay or Story worth 15 marks and a Formal or Informal Letter worth 8 marks. Section B Focuses on the Use of English and consists of four very structured questions totalling 15 marks, which include multiple-choice, sentence completion, transformations, and correction of a text. Section C Covers Reading and Literature through three distinct parts totalling 42 marks: Part 1 is a Seen Story (16 marks), Part 2 is an Unseen text/passage (16 marks), and Part 3 is an Unseen Poem (10 marks). All parts in this section utilise a mix of multiple-choice and short-response questions (very structured and structured questions). 2 hours 80 marks Externally assessed Weightage 80% Questions are based on Writing, Use of Language and Reading and Literature	- Listening (20 marks) - Speaking (20 marks) Total 40 Marks Internally assessed and externally moderated Weightage 20%

5. Assessment Objectives

Assessment Objectives (AOs) are:

AO1 Writing

Candidates will be assessed on their ability to:

- W1 communicate ideas and opinions clearly, using a suitable tone and style for the task and reader.
- W2 organise writing in a clear way, using paragraphs and linking ideas.
- W3 develop ideas with relevant details and examples, including giving reasons for opinions.
- W4 use correct spelling, punctuation, and grammar to make writing easy to understand.

AO2 Use of English

Candidates will be assessed on their ability to:

- U1 use grammatical forms accurately to convey meaning.
- U2 select and use vocabulary appropriately for context.
- U3 structure sentences and link ideas clearly.
- U4 apply language rules to change and adapt sentences.

AO3 Reading and Literature

Candidates will be assessed on their ability to:

- R1 understand and interpret the main points and key ideas in a wide variety of texts, including fiction and non-fiction.
- R2 identify, analyse, and evaluate specific details, events, and arguments in texts, including inconsistencies.
- R3 recognise, interpret, and evaluate opinions, viewpoints, implied meanings, and bias in texts.
- R4 analyse and evaluate the use of language, narrative techniques, and literary devices, and explain their effect on meaning, tone, and purpose.

AO4 Listening

Candidates will be assessed on their ability to:

- L1 listen to short and extended talks to understand main ideas, key details, and important points in arguments.
- L2 infer meaning from context and comprehend implied ideas independently or with minimal support.
- L3 identify inconsistencies, recognize speakers' points of view, and draw logical conclusions from the listening texts.
- L4 identify facts versus opinions and recognize when a speaker shows bias.

AO5 Speaking

Candidates will be assessed on their ability to:

- S1 describe events or ideas clearly, using appropriate intonation, mostly accurate grammar and vocabulary, and support main points with relevant details.
- S2 ask relevant questions, clarify meaning, and respond thoughtfully, expressing personal views with reasons while respecting others' opinions.
- S3 link ideas and arguments smoothly using a range of connectives to create coherent and logical speech.
- S4 summarise information effectively and connect their ideas to others' contributions during discussions.

DRAFT

Weighting for Assessment Objectives in the Board Examination

The approximate weightings for each Assessment Objectives (AOs) are detailed below.

Assessment Objective	Weighting in Key Stage 3 (%)
AO1 Writing	19
AO2 Use of English	12
AO3 Reading and Literature	35
AO4 Listening	17
AO5 Speaking	17
Total	100

Assessment Objectives as a percentage of each component

Assessment objective	Weighting in Components (%)	
	Paper 1	Coursework
AO1 Writing	29	
AO2 Use of English	18	
AO3 Reading and Literature	53	
AO4 Listening		50
AO5 Speaking		50
Total	100	100

6. Subject Content

Subject Content	Examples
Writing	
Write extended fiction and non-fiction texts independently, describing people, places, and events with detail. Express opinions logically using reasons, examples, and evidence. Use punctuation accurately and organise ideas clearly using paragraphs, connectives, and suitable layouts for different text types.	Writing a narrative essay about a memorable event, presenting arguments on environmental protection. Writing a story using connectives such as “however” and “therefore”.
Spell familiar and high-frequency words correctly and apply the writing process independently, including planning, drafting, revising, and editing. Adapt style and tone for different genres and audiences.	Writing a formal/informal letter. Creating a newspaper article for different audiences.

Use of English	
Use a wide range of grammatical structures accurately, including different tenses, active and passive voice, reported speech, conditionals, modal verbs, and phrasal verbs.	Writing sentences such as “The project had been completed before the deadline.”
Use a broad range of vocabulary, including dependent prepositions, abstract and compound nouns, comparative adverbs, and complex noun phrases.	Using phrases such as “capable of,” “far more carefully,” and “a well-organised community event.”
Construct varied and complex sentences using conjunctions, relative clauses, infinitives, gerunds, and other sentence structures.	Writing sentences such as “The student who won the competition was congratulated by the principal.
Reading & Literature	
Understand the main ideas and purposes of short and extended fiction and non-fiction texts, reading fluently and confidently.	Summarising the main ideas of an article, reading a short story aloud with expression.
Identify specific information, infer implied meaning from context, and analyse arguments, inconsistencies, and language techniques in texts.	Identifying bias in a persuasive article, explaining how imagery creates mood in poetry.
Distinguish between facts and opinions and identify writers’ viewpoints and bias in a range of texts.	Analysing opinions in an editorial, recognising one-sided arguments in media texts.
Listening	
Listen to short and extended talks to understand main ideas, details, arguments, and speakers’ viewpoints with little or no support.	Listening to a discussion and identifying the speaker’s main argument and supporting details.
Infer implied meaning from tone, context, and word choice, and identify inconsistencies or bias in spoken arguments.	Recognising when a speaker exaggerates information to support one side of an argument.
Evaluate spoken information by distinguishing between facts and opinions and drawing logical conclusions.	Listening to a debate on social media use and deciding which arguments are more convincing.
Speaking	
Describe and narrate events, experiences, and ideas clearly and confidently using relevant details and examples.	Giving a presentation about a cultural festival and explaining its importance.
Ask relevant questions to clarify meaning and express opinions respectfully using reasons and evidence.	Saying, “I believe public transport should be improved because it reduces pollution. What evidence supports your view?”

Use appropriate intonation, stress, vocabulary, and connectives to organise ideas and communicate effectively.	Participating in a debate using phrases such as “on the other hand,” “in addition,” and “therefore.”
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7. Details of the assessment

Component 1 – Writing, Use of Language, and Reading and Literature

Marks: 80

Duration: 2 hours

Assessment Objectives:

AO1: Writing

AO2: Use of English

AO3: Reading and Literature

This paper is divided into three sections and candidates are required to answer all questions.

Section A: Writing

Section B: Use of English

Section C: Reading and Literature.

The Writing section consists of two tasks: an imaginative story or narrative essay of approximately 200 - 250 words, and a formal or informal letter (150 – 200 words). Marks are awarded based on content (task completion and idea development), organisation (correct genre-specific layouts and paragraphing), and language (vocabulary range and grammatical accuracy).

The Use of English section consists of a grammar exercise designed to test structural recognition, functional mechanics, and sentence transformation. It includes multiple-choice questions, sentence completion, rewriting of sentences, and word re-arrangement tasks.

The Reading and Literature section features three distinct text types: a seen story, an unseen text/passage (350–400 words), and an unseen poem (100 – 150 words). Assessment includes multiple-choice questions and short written responses focusing on literal comprehension, the ability to distinguish between fact and opinion, and the analysis of how an author uses language to create effects.

Candidates write their answers directly on the question paper.

Dictionaries may not be used.

Description of questions

Section A: Writing (23 Marks)

There are two questions in this section.

Section A: Writing (15 Marks)	
Question 1 requires candidates to compose a piece of continuous prose, taking the form of either a narrative essay or realistic fiction story. Candidates should develop ideas and events coherently, showing awareness of audience and purpose, and use appropriate language, structure, and tone throughout.	
Section A: Question 1	
Assessment Objectives	W1, W2, W3, W4
Task	Candidates will write a piece of continuous prose or a story of approximately 200 - 250 words, ensuring they address all prompts provided in the task. Narrative essay: a type of writing that talks about a story or recounts an experience, usually from the writer's own perspective. Its main purpose is to engage the reader by describing events, actions, and feelings in a structured and coherent way. Realistic fiction story: a type of story that tells about events that could actually happen in real life, even though the story and characters are made up. Unlike fantasy or science fiction, everything in a realistic fiction story is plausible and believable. Example: Write a narrative essay or realistic fiction of about 200-250 words on any ONE of the topics given below. "It is not how much we give, but how much love we put into giving." - Mother Teresa Think of a time when you helped someone who needed support. Narrate about what you did to help him or her and how it made you feel. - Write a story that begins with..... "Every year, I stood on the sidelines, cheering for the winners, and wishing I could be one of them"
Type of response	A narrative essay or a realistic fiction story
Total marks	15

Mark Scheme

Level	Marks	W1, W2, W3, W4
5	13-15	- Produces highly detailed and engaging content, clearly communicating ideas and opinions with an appropriate tone and style. - Applies all components of the essay format; includes a clear title, well-structured introduction, coherent body paragraphs, and a strong conclusion. - Uses spelling, punctuation, and grammar accurately; errors, if any, are rare and do not affect meaning.
4	10-12	- Produces clear and relevant content with good descriptions, expressing ideas and opinions mostly appropriately. - Applies all major components correctly; overall structure is clear and logical, with only minor weaknesses in one part. - Minor spelling, punctuation, or grammatical errors may occur but meaning is clear.
3	7-9	- Content is relevant but lacks depth; ideas and opinions are present but only partially developed. - Applies most components of the essay format; structure is evident but may be inconsistent or uneven in places. - Spelling, punctuation, and grammar errors are noticeable but do not fully obscure meaning.
2	4-6	- Content is thin, repetitive, or loosely connected to the prompt; ideas and opinions are minimal or unclear. - Applies some components; organization is weak, and key elements (e.g., introduction or conclusion) are incomplete or unclear. - Frequent spelling, punctuation, and grammar errors make some sentences difficult to understand.
1	1-3	- Content is mostly irrelevant, off-topic, or too brief to assess; few or no ideas or opinions. - Shows little understanding of essay format; most components are missing or incorrectly presented. - Language errors interfere with meaning.
0	No Credit	No relevant content or the response is too short to be assessed.

Section A: Writing (8 Marks)	
Question 2 requires candidates to write a letter, which may be formal or informal depending on the specific prompt provided.	
Section A: Question 2	
Assessment Objective	W1, W2, W3, W4
Task	Candidates produce a formal or informal letter of approximately 150–200 words, ensuring they address all prompts provided. Example: You are Sangay, a class VIII student of Meto Lower Secondary School, Haa. Write a letter approximately 150-200 words on any ONE of the situations given below. - Write a letter to the Manager, Phuensum Hotel, Haa, requesting for a temporary job during the winter vacation. State your preferred field of work and provide TWO reasons for seeking this job. - Bhutan Super Star will be hosting a singing contest during Thimphu Tshechu. Write a letter to your parents seeking their permission to participate in the contest. Mention ONE reason why you are interested.
Type of response	A formal or an informal letter writing
Total marks	8

Mark Scheme

Level	Marks	W1, W2, W3, W4
4	7-8	- Communicates ideas, requests, or information clearly and appropriately for the audience and purpose, using a suitable formal or informal tone. - Organises content logically with clear paragraphs and smooth links. - Applies all components of the letter format correctly and in the proper order; no errors. - Uses spelling, punctuation, and grammar accurately; errors, if any, are rare and do not affect meaning.
3	5-6	- Communicates ideas and requests clearly, mostly using an appropriate tone. - Organisation is clear; paragraphs and linking words are mostly effective.

		• Applies most components correctly; minor errors or one element may be missing. • Minor spelling, punctuation, or grammar errors occur but meaning remains clear.
2	3-4	• Communicates ideas, but content may be simple or partially developed. • Organisation is basic; paragraphing or links may be inconsistent. • Applies some components correctly; several elements are missing or incorrectly formatted. • Spelling, punctuation, or grammar errors are noticeable but do not prevent understanding.
1	1-2	• Communicates very basic ideas; content is loosely connected to the task or lacks development. • Organisation is weak; paragraphs or links are unclear. • Shows minimal understanding of letter format; most components are missing or incorrect. • Frequent spelling, punctuation, or grammar errors sometimes make sentences difficult to understand.
0	No Credit	No relevant content or the response is too short to be assessed.

Section B: Use of English (15 marks)

There are four questions in this section.

Section B: Use of English	
Question 1 requires candidates to demonstrate structural recognition by selecting the correct grammatical forms and vocabulary types through multiple-choice questions.	
Assessment Objective	U1, U2
Task	Five MCQs worth 1 mark each
Type of response	MCQ
Total marks	5
Question 2 requires candidates to apply functional mechanics by completing sentences with the the correct words or phrases, including correlative conjunctions, relative pronouns, and correct subjects to fix sentence errors.	
Assessment Objective	U1, U2, U3
Task	Three Sentence completion (fill in the blanks) worth 1 mark each
Type of response	Sentence completion
Total marks	3

Question 3 requires candidates to demonstrate sentence control by transforming sentences between different grammatical structures, such as active/passive voice and direct/indirect speech, and compound sentences, as well as correcting vocabulary errors like homophones (not there in the revised framework).	
Assessment Objective	U2, U3, U4
Task	Four written responses (rewrite of sentence) worth 1 mark each
Type of response	Written response in the form of rewriting of sentence
Total marks	4
Question 4 requires candidates to apply syntax and logic by producing a short paragraph or 3 sentences that contain deliberate errors in grammar, vocabulary, or sentence structure. Candidates must identify and correct these errors, demonstrating their ability to apply language rules to create clear and accurate writing.	
Assessment Objective	U1, U2, U3
Task	One short paragraph or 3 sentences containing deliberate errors in grammar, vocabulary, or sentence structure. There will be three errors worth 1 mark each.
Type of response	Written response in the form of correction of paragraph
Total marks	3
Grand Total Marks	15

Section C: Reading and Literature (42 marks)

There are three parts in this section.

Part 1: Short Story (Seen Text) – 16 Marks

Candidates demonstrate comprehension of one or two texts from the following.

1. The Fun They Had – *Issac Asimov*
2. The Nest – *Robert Zacks*
3. The Red Sweater – *Mark Hager*
4. The Night Train to Deoli – *Ruskin Bond*

Section C: Part 1 (Short Story)	
Question 1 requires candidates to identify the key details and the main idea of the text.	
Assessment Objective	R1, R2
Task	Four MCQ worth 1 mark each
Type of response	MCQ
Total marks	4

Question 2 requires candidates to focus on explaining character motivations, events, and reasoning behind actions in the text.	
Assessment Objective	R2, R3
Task	Two short response questions worth 2 marks each
Type of response	Short response questions
Total marks	4
Question 3 requires candidates to infer meaning, explain cause and effect of events, and describe relationships or consequences within the text.	
Assessment Objective	R2, R3, R4
Task	Two short response questions worth 4 marks each
Type of response	Short response questions
Total marks	8

Part 2: Passage (Unseen Text) – 16 Marks

Candidates apply analytical skills to an unseen non-fiction passage of around 350–400 words.

Section C: Part 2 (Passage)	
Question 1 requires candidates to identify main ideas and key details.	
Assessment Objective	R1, R2
Task	Four MCQ worth 1 mark each
Type of response	MCQ
Total marks	4
Question 2 requires candidates to explain specific details, events, or arguments	
Assessment Objective	R1, R2
Task	Two short response questions worth 2 marks each
Type of response	Short response questions
Total marks	4

Question 3 requires candidates to evaluate the writer's arguments, viewpoint, and attitude.	
Assessment Objective	R2, R3
Task	Two short response questions worth 4 marks each
Type of response	Short response questions
Total marks	8

Part 3: Poem (Unseen Text) – 10 Marks

Candidates explore how the poet employs language in an unseen poem.

Section C: Part 3 (Poem)	
Question 1 requires candidates to identify figurative language and poetic devices.	
Assessment Objective	R4
Task	Two MCQ worth 1 mark each
Type of response	MCQ
Total marks	2
Question 2 requires candidates to explain the meaning of certain phrases and how the poem makes the reader feel.	
Assessment Objective	R3, R4
Task	Two short response questions worth 2 marks each
Type of response	Short response questions
Total marks	4
Question 3 requires candidates to justify the speaker's actions or choices with supporting reasons.	
Assessment Objective	R2, R3, R4
Task	One short response question worth 4 marks
Type of response	Short response question
Total marks	4

8. Command words

Command words are the words in assessment tasks that tell candidates what they need to do. Understanding these words is essential, as they guide the depth, detail, and type of response expected. BCSEA uses command words consistently across its syllabuses and assessments to ensure clarity and fairness. These command words can be used when designing both formative classroom tasks and summative assessment items and should be clearly understood by both teachers and learners to ensure consistency and clarity in assessment expectations.

Command word	Meaning
Analyse	Break information into parts to examine and understand relationships, patterns, or key ideas.
Choose	Select the correct or most appropriate option(s) from a given list.
Circle	Mark the correct answer or word(s) in a multiple-choice or gap-fill activity.
Compare	Show the similarities or differences between two or more items.
Complete	Fill in blanks or missing information in a sentence, table, or paragraph.
Contrast	Show the differences between two or more items.
Correct	Identify and fix errors in grammar, spelling, punctuation, or usage.
Create	Produce original content based on given instructions, such as a story, dialogue, or poem.
Define	Give the exact meaning of a word or term, usually in a clear and concise sentence. It may also require an example to support the definition, depending on the task.
Describe	Use detailed language to explain what something is like, including features or characteristics.
Differentiate	Recognise and explain how two or more items are different.
Evaluate	Make a judgement about something by considering evidence, strengths, and weaknesses.
Explain	Give reasons or justify an answer with evidence or examples.
Give	Provide the required information or answer without needing to explain or justify it.
Identify	Recognise and name or list specific information or features in a text or sentence.
Justify	Provide reasons or evidence to support an answer, opinion, or choice.
List	Write down key points, features, or examples without needing full sentences.
Mention	State or refer to specific information, facts, or examples briefly, without giving detailed explanation or development.
Match	Connect items that correspond, such as linking words to definitions or questions to answers
Rewrite	Express something in a different way, such as changing verb tenses or sentence structures.
Select	Pick the most suitable word, phrase, or option for the context

State	Give the required fact, answer, or information clearly and concisely, without detailed explanation or justification.
Summarise	Provide a brief statement of the main points or ideas from a longer text.
Underline	Highlight or mark specific parts of a sentence or passage, such as verbs or key ideas.
Write	Produce a piece of writing such as a story, report, letter, or summary.

9. Glossary of Text Types

Learners should be encouraged to engage with a variety of text types through reading, writing, and listening. The commonly encountered text types include:

Text Type	Meaning
Story	A fictional narrative written to entertain or convey a message, often featuring characters, plot, and setting.
Debate Script	A prepared written text for a formal discussion where speakers argue for or against a motion, with evidence and rebuttals.
Descriptive text	A text that paints a picture with words, focusing on sensory details to describe a person, place, object, or event.
Essay	A structured piece of writing that presents a point of view or argument on a particular topic, supported by reasoning or evidence.
Narrative recount	A personal or third-person account of a series of events, usually in chronological order, describing what happened.
Report	A factual text that provides information about a topic, often organized with headings and facts.
Letter	A written message addressed to a person or organization, which can be formal or informal.
Book Review	A text that gives an opinion and summary of a book, discussing what the reader liked or disliked.
Fantasy Writing	A type of creative writing that involves imaginative and magical elements beyond reality.
Summary	A brief statement that presents the main points or ideas from a longer text.
Speech	A formal or informal spoken text prepared to inform, persuade, or express an opinion, delivered to an audience.

Poem	A text written in verse, often using rhythm, rhyme, and figurative language to express feelings.
Dialogue/Text Talk	A written conversation between two or more characters, showing spoken interaction.
Advertisement	A text designed to persuade or inform readers about products, services, or events.
Instructional Text	A text that gives directions or steps on how to do something, such as recipes or manuals.
Journal/diary entry	A personal written record of thoughts, experiences, or events, often written informally in the first person.

Component 2 – Coursework

Assessment Objectives:

AO4: Listening

20 Marks

AO5: Speaking

20 Marks

The BCSEA has not previously assessed the Listening and Speaking strands as part of board examinations. Introducing these components centrally for the first time presents significant practical challenges, particularly the need for equipment, appropriate testing conditions, and trained personnel. Given the current resource limitations and teacher capacity constraints across schools, as well as within BCSEA, centralised implementation at this stage is not feasible.

Such an initiative would require extensive training of EAOs, along with the development of comprehensive guidelines to ensure standardised and reliable assessment practices nationwide. Building this capacity will require time and sustained investment.

Considering these limitations, the Listening and Speaking strands will be assessed internally at the school level until such time as the necessary capacity and resources are established for centralised implementation. During this period, schools will use task types aligned with AO4 (L1–L4) and AO5 (S1–S4), guided by the performance expectations outlined in the curriculum framework.

To ensure quality and consistency, BCSEA will implement a phased capacity-building approach, including structured training programmes for language teachers in primary and lower secondary schools. In addition, BCSEA will conduct external moderation of a sample of student work annually. This will include reviewing audio recordings, teacher assessment records, and grading decisions to ensure alignment with national standards and grade descriptors.

This approach balances the need to uphold assessment quality and fairness with the current realities of school resources, while laying the foundation for potential centralised assessment in the future.

10. What else you need to know

This section outlines important details regarding the syllabus and administrative processes. It is intended to help teachers, candidates, and centres understand how to manage entries, assessments, and access arrangements effectively. More information is available on the BCSEA portal (www.bcsea.bt) and in the official guidance documents.

Previous study

Learners beginning this course are recommended to have studied English as a Second Language curriculum in the earlier key stages of learning.

Combining with other syllabuses

Candidates must take this syllabus alongside other BCSEA syllabuses in a single exam series.

Making entries

Centres are responsible for submitting candidate entries and must ensure that candidates are registered for the correct syllabus components. Detailed entry instructions can be found in the Operation Guidelines for Examination and Assessment (OGEA), available at www.bcsea.bt.

Retakes

Candidates may retake the paper and coursework as many times as they want to; but they may not resubmit, in whole or in part, coursework from a previous series.

Language

This syllabus and the related assessment materials are available in English only.

11. Accessibility and equality

Syllabus and assessment design

- BCSEA aims to avoid discrimination and maximise inclusivity for all candidates, including those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEN), religion, gender, or other protected characteristics.
- Materials are designed to be accessible, using clear language and design principles.

Access arrangements

- BCSEA provides access arrangements to minimise barriers for candidates with SEN, disability, illness, or injury.
- Arrangements should reflect a candidate's normal way of working. Approval must ensure that adjustments are reasonable, cost-effective, and do not compromise assessment integrity.
- Centres should confirm access arrangements at the start of the course. For special arrangements not included in standard lists as per OGEA, contact BCSEA for guidance.

- Candidates unable to access all components may receive an award based on completed components.

12. After the exam

Assessment and Grading

Students' performance will be assessed against standards set by the BCSEA, a process referred to as grading. The grading system is structured as follows: however, BCSEA is still in the process of finalising the grading document for the 2026 academic year. The final document will be communicated to school and stakeholders before the Mid-Term Exam 2026.

- Grades A – G, with 'A' representing the highest level of achievement and 'G' the lowest.
- Grade U (Ungraded), is assigned to candidates who do not meet the minimum passing criteria.

Grade Descriptors

Grade descriptors provide a general indication of the level of performance typically expected at Grades A, C, E, and G; they are not mark schemes and should be interpreted in relation to the syllabus content, assessment objectives, and task contexts. These descriptors support teachers in lesson planning and curriculum development and help students understand what is required to achieve different grades.