



Belonging • Experiences • Aspirations • Teamwork • Honesty

The Sir Ian Rankin English Faculty

How to Pass Higher English Guide

The English Faculty have designed this guide to give you information about the English Course so that you can help your child with the key skills that he / she will have to master to be successful in the final exam.

The English Portfolio

- This is worth 30% of the final grade (30 marks).
- One piece of writing must be submitted and will be sent to the SQA for grading purposes and should be 1,300 words in length.
- Your child can submit either one piece of broadly creative writing (a personal, reflective or creative piece) OR one piece of broadly discursive writing (an argumentative or persuasive piece).
- Young people are not allowed to use AI and the essay has to be written independently and without sufficient help from a parent, teacher or tutor.
- The final draft should be typed and on the SQA Portfolio Template – this can be accessed on our class TEAM page.

The final deadline for this is 17th February 2025. Without an English Portfolio, your young person will be withdrawn from the course.

Examination Papers

Paper 1 – Reading for Understanding, Analysis and Evaluation

- This paper is worth 30% of the final grade (30 marks).
- This paper is 1.5 hours long – some candidates may have additional support in place for this paper.
- In response to a series of questions, candidates are required to demonstrate their ability to understand, analyse and evaluate a passage.
- These passages normally come from quality newspapers.

To help prepare for the final examination, your young person should:

- Read good quality newspaper articles on a regular basis.
- Revise how to structure the different RUAЕ questions (create mind maps/cue cards).
- Complete questions for the question types that they find challenging.
- Complete SQA Past Papers under timed conditions and submit these to their class teacher for marking and further feedback.
- Attend RUAЕ Study Support for further help.



Paper 2 – Critical Reading

- This paper is worth 40% of the final grade (40 marks).
- This paper is 1 hour and 30 minutes long – some candidates may have additional support in place for this paper.
- Selecting from a range of questions candidates are required to do two tasks: 1. write one Critical Essay and 2. answer a range of questions on a section of text from their pre-studied Scottish set text.
- Each task must focus on a different genre (drama, poetry or prose). Within their responses, candidates are required to demonstrate their ability to understand, analyse and evaluate previously studied texts. However, candidates are not allowed to take notes or books into the exam.

To help prepare for the final examination, your young person should:

- Re-read/watch both of their Paper Two texts.
- Create notes/key quotations and analysis for each text which focus on the different characters, themes, setting, relationships, start/ending and the key messages. They can create cue cards and mind maps to help.
- Attempt Past Papers from the SQA website and complete these under timed conditions. They should submit these to their class teacher for further support and feedback.
- Attend Study Support.

It is essential that your son/daughter keeps up to date with homework and deadlines set by his/her English teacher. All assignments can be found on their class TEAM page.

Study Support

- Encourage your child to attend Study Support – this is a valuable resource.
- Study Support is held every Monday-Thursday within the English Faculty – no sign up is required.

Useful websites

- www.sqa.org.uk - there is a section for learners
- <http://www.bbc.co.uk/scotland/learning/bitesize/higher/english/> - lots of practical help and exercises.
- <http://www.readbookonline.net/> - recommended reads for personal reading.
- <http://www.guardian.co.uk> - quality newspaper articles.
- <https://letsachieve.co.uk> – learning and study guides plus quizzes to aid revision.

Further Help

If you wish to discuss your young person's performance or if you have any questions, then please do not hesitate to get in touch with myself.

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