

English Syllabus

There are two papers:

1. English Language
2. Literature in English

Each of these papers is of two hours duration.

Paper I - English Language

Four questions are set, all of which are compulsory.

Question 1

You are required to write a **composition** from a choice of subjects which will test your ability to organise, describe, narrate, report, explain, persuade or argue, present ideas coherently, compare and contrast ideas and arrive at conclusions, present relevant arguments and use correct style and format. The subjects are varied and may be suggested by language or by other stimuli such as pictures. The subjects are so chosen so as to allow you to draw on first hand experience or to stimulate your imagination.

With one subject, a number of suggestions about the content of the composition is given, but the use of the suggestions is optional and you are free to treat the subject in any way that you choose.

The organisation of subject matter, syntax, punctuation, correctness of grammatical constructions and spelling are expected to be appropriate to the mode of treatment required by the subject.

Question 2

You have to write a **letter** from a choice of two subjects requiring either a formal or an informal mode of treatment. Suggestions regarding the content of the letter may be given. The layout of the letter with address, introduction, conclusion, etc., forms part of the assessment.

You are expected to be familiar with the use of appropriate salutation, format and style for letters.

Question 3

An **unseen passage** of prose of about 500 words is given. Uncommon items of vocabulary, or structure is avoided. One question is set to test vocabulary. You are required to show that you understand the words/phrases in the context in which they have been used.

A number of questions requiring short answers are also asked on the passage. These questions test your ability to understand the explicit content and organisation of the passage and to infer information, intentions and attitudes from it.

The last question consist of a summary that will test your ability to distinguish main ideas from supporting details and to extract salient points to re-express them in the form of a summary. You are given clear indications of what you are to summarize and of the length of the summary.

Question 4

There are a number of short answer questions to test your knowledge of **functional grammar**, structure and usage of the language. All the items in this question are compulsory. They consist of sentence completion, multiple choice or other short answer type of questions.

Paper II - Literature in English

You are required to answer five questions from at least three of the prescribed textbooks, one of which must be drama, one prose and one poetry.

Prose and Drama

Questions set are central to the text. You are required to show that you have understood the passage and are able to clearly give their interpretation of the questions set, which should be in your own words and relevant to the text.

Excerpts may be given from the prose and drama texts leading to questions on the specific book.

Poetry

A poem, or passages from poems, is given and questions are set to test your response to the poem. The questions focus on the content, understanding and the personal response to the poem as a whole.