Programme specification

1. Overview/ factual information

Programme/award title(s)	BA (Hons)English Language and Literature
Teaching Institution	Arab Open University (AOU)
Awarding Institution	The Open University (OU)
Date of latest OU validation	May 2012
Next revalidation	2017
Credit points for the award	480 - 503
UCAS Code	NA
Programme start date	September 2018
Underpinning QAA subject benchmark(s)	QAA benchmarks for English
Other external and internal reference points used to inform programme outcomes	
Professional/statutory recognition	In designing the BA Programme in English Literature, the FLS Council has been guided by the following General Points of Reference**:** • **AOU** mission, objectives and strategies • **QAA:** Benchmarking BA Level Programmes • **QAA:** Code of Practice for the Assurance of Academic Quality and Standards in Higher Education • **OU:** BA Programme in Literature Learning Outcomes
Duration of the programme for each mode of study (P/T, FT,DL)	8 years
Dual accreditation (if applicable)	
Date of production/revision of this specification	April 2017

Please note: This specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the programme and the learning outcomes that a typical student might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate if s/he takes full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided.

More detailed information on the learning outcomes, content, and teaching, learning and assessment methods of each module can be found in student module guide(s) and the students' handbook.

The accuracy of the information contained in this document is reviewed by the University and may be verified by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education.

2.1 Educational aims and objectives

This programme will:
- Provide students with high quality instruction and training in English Language and Literature.
- Offer a programme of blended learning that addresses the academic and vocational needs of students in language communication and literary appreciation.
- Develop creative and critical thinking in students as well as appropriate communication skills in writing and speaking
- Prepare students for further and more advanced study.
- Prepare and qualify students for employment.
- Develop in the students a range of specific and transferable skills including literacy and communication skills.
- Relate and integrate both language and literature material they studied across the range of genres, time, and place.
- Provide a critical evaluation of both language and literature texts.

On successful completion of the programme students will be able to:

- Communicate in English with ease and confidence on everyday matters, as well as on matters relating to their university education.
- Read, understand, discuss, and evaluate literary works comprising essays, poems, novels, and plays.
- Express themselves orally and in writing on issues pertaining to different modes of language use and literary analysis.
- Read extended language and literature material, distinguish facts from opinions, and both analyze and evaluate different genres of literary works.
- Show a sound understanding of the structure of language, language variation, and language use.
- Show a solid knowledge of and familiarity with English prose, poetry, fiction, and drama and some knowledge of prominent non-western texts in literature and the arts.

2.2 Relationship to other programmes and awards
(Where the award is part of a hierarchy of awards/programmes, this section describes the articulation between them, opportunities for progression upon completion of the programme, and arrangements for bridging modules or induction)

Two points need to be stated here.

1. The English Language and Literature programme (ELL) is related to the BA (joint hons) English Language and Literature with Business Studies, which is running currently but which we are opting not to revalidate because it is not cost

effective. The latter programme employs modules from the former, in addition to those it employs from the Business Studies programme. The two programmes share the mandatory general university requirements along with the faculty requirements and university electives. Many of the OU-based and AOU-based modules are common to both programmes as well. These are:

- EL120: English Phonetics and Linguistics (AOU-based module)
- EL121: The Short Story and Essay writing (AOU-based module), which we are changing in this upcoming revalidation to EL121 Literary Appreciation and Critique.
- AA100A&B: Arts of Past and Present (I&II)
- U214A&B: Worlds of English (I&II)
- A300A: 20th Century Literature (I), which we are replacing with A335A Literature in Transition (I)
- EA300A: Children's Literature (I)
- E301A: The Art of English (I), which we are replacing with E302A Language and Creativity (I)
- E303A: English Grammar in Context (I), which we are replacing with E304A Exploring English Grammar (I)

2. The ELL programme is also related to the ELL and Translation (pathway), which we validated this past year. The latter pathway employs the following modules from the former:
- EL120 English Phonetics and Linguistics
- EL121: The Short Story and Essay writing (AOU-based module), which we are changing in this upcoming revalidation to EL121 Literary Appreciation and Critique.
- AA100T: Arts of Past and Present
- A150 Voices and Texts which we will be replacing with two 4-credit hour AOU-based modules: EL118 Reading and EL122 Writing Research
- A230A&B Reading and Studying Literature (I&II)
- U214A&B: Worlds of English (I&II)

3. Programme outcomes

Intended learning outcomes are listed below.

3A. Knowledge and understanding	
Learning outcomes:	**Learning and teaching strategy/ assessment methods**
On completion of the programme, you will have knowledge and understanding of: **A1**. A substantial number of authors and texts written in English or translated into English including some texts written outside the United Kingdom. **A2**. The character and conventions of the principal literary genres – poetry, fiction and drama – and of other kinds of writing and communication. **A3**. The history of English, its contemporary diversity, its role as a global language, and its use in a range of contexts in different parts of the world. **A4.** Debates surrounding the historical and contemporary position of English in relation to other languages and language varieties. **A5.** The nature of linguistic evidence and different methods used in the collection and analysis of language data. **A6.** How literature and language both reflect and impact upon	Knowledge and understanding are gained and developed through study of the course materials in different modules related to the study of language and literature. **Teaching**: The AOU learning/teaching strategy provides contact hours that are equal to 25% of what traditional universities require. Thus, AOU students enjoy the benefits of both the open and traditional university systems. The BA programme will be delivered through two complementary modes: 1. Face-to-face interactive tutorials, constituting 25% of course credit hours. 2. Interactive distance learning delivered through specially designed teaching and support materials that are conducive for self-learning, constituting 75% of course credit hours. Knowledge and understanding skills are acquired through blended-learning materials including specially written course material, study guides, readers, and audio-visuals.

3A. Knowledge and understanding	
cultural change and difference; and of the way texts are written and received within literary, cultural and socio-historical contexts. **A7.** How language and literature may be described and analysed. **A8.** The different theoretical approaches to the study of literature, language and literacy.	**Assessment**: Learning outcomes are assessed primarily by means of: 1. One TMA (20%) 2. One MTA (30%) 3. One Final Exam (50%)

3B. Cognitive skills	
Learning outcomes:	**Learning and teaching strategy/ assessment methods**
On completion of the degree, you will be able to: **B1.** Develop critical skills in the close reading and analysis of diverse texts. **B2.** Acquire information of diverse kinds from a variety of sources (such as academic libraries, the Internet, CD-ROMs, and corpora). **B3.** Learn and use appropriate linguistic and critical terminology to describe and analyse texts. **B4.** Synthesise information and ideas drawn from varied sources, and critically evaluate alternative explanations and arguments. **B5.** Engage with different interpretations of texts and relate abstract	**Teaching**: Cognitive skills are developed and practised through study of the course materials and class discussions. Students will also have the opportunity to learn and practise these through group or individual tutorial work, class presentations, in-class activities, and homework. **Assessment**: They are assessed in the following: 1. One TMA (20%) 2. One MTA (30%) 3. One Final Exam (50%)

3B. Cognitive skills	
concepts and theories to specific texts.	

3C. Practical and professional skills	
Learning outcomes:	**Learning and teaching strategy/ assessment methods**
On completion of the degree, you will be able to: **C1.** Use and present English material in written and spoken form in a clear and effective manner. **C2.** Edit general and specialised English texts. **C3.** Demonstrate accurate and effective note-taking and summarising skills. **C4.** Use reference material successfully, including bilingual and monolingual dictionaries. **C5.** Use communication tools, such as recordings, telephone-conferencing and ICT-based tools.	**Teaching**: Practical and professional skills are taught cumulatively throughout the programme. Students are exposed to a variety of introductory courses, which would lead to more advanced courses in language and literature. Students are taught this material through interactive classroom activities and presentations. In writing their TMA, students make use of different electronic resources such as the internet and the e-library. Students are assessed on these skills through: 1. One TMA (20%) 2. One MTA (30%) 3. One Final Exam (50%)

3D. Key/transferable skills	
Learning outcomes:	**Learning and teaching strategy/ assessment methods**
Communication: On completion of the degree**,** you will be able to: **D1.** Communicate effectively in English in everyday situations and semi-specialised contexts. **D2.** Identify relevant material from a variety of sources, including multimedia material. **D3.** Read, synthesise and evaluate the significance of substantial quantities of material. **D4.** Present sustained and persuasive arguments cogently and coherently. **D5.** Reference sources in an appropriate way. **Improving own learning and performance:** On completion of the degree**,** you will be able to: **D6.** Work independently, schedule tasks and manage time effectively. **D7.** Identify and use sources of support. **D8.** Make use of feedback from your tutor to improve performance.	**Teaching**: Key skills are taught by a combination of published teaching materials, textbooks, detailed tutor feedback on written work, and participation in tutorials. This happens throughout the programme. The interactive blended learning delivered through specially designed support material helps students to enhance their own independent learning skills. Tutors have progressively increasing expectations of students. **Assessment**: In-class MTAs and essay-type TMAs particularly assess students' ability to communicate effectively their knowledge and understanding of the subject matter. Tutors feedback is constructively written to help students improve their performance. The final exam allows students to consolidate many of the key skills they learn in the course.

3D. Key/transferable skills	
Information technology: On completion of the degree**,** you will be able to: **D9.** Use information technology skills to access, store, manage and present data effectively. **D10.** Use the relevant computational tools and software packages, where appropriate, for the analysis of data.	

4. Programme Structure:

Core courses: 96 credit hours - 360 credit points

Programme Structure - LEVEL 1				
Compulsory modules	**Credit hours**	**Credit points**	**Optional modules**	**Credit points**
EL 120: English Phonetics and Linguistics (AOU-Tailored)	4	15		
EL 121: Literary Appreciation and Critique (AOU-Tailored)	4	15		
EL122: Writing Research (AOU- Tailored)	4	15		
EL118: Reading (AOU-Tailored)	4	15		
AA100A: Art Past and Present (I) (OU module)	8	30		
AA100B: Art Past and Present (II) (OU module)	8	30		
Total	**32**	**120**		

Exit award: Certificate of Higher Education in English Language and Literature for students who have completed 120 credit points / 32 credit hours at level 1. (**Learning outcomes of this award are attached in Appendix 1)**
This exit award is developed by OU and delivered by AOU. It is validated through a process of external peer review by OU-UK as being of an appropriate standard and quality.

Programme Structure - LEVEL 2				
Compulsory modules	**Credit hours**	**Credit points**	**Optional modules**	**Credit points**
A230A: Reading and Studying Literature (I) (OU module)	8	30		
A230B: Reading and Studying Literature (II) (OU module)	8	30		
U214A: Worlds of English (I) (OU module)	8	30		
U214 B: Worlds of English (II) (OU module)	8	30		
Total	**32**	**120**		

Exit award: Diploma of Higher Education in English Language and Literature for students who have completed 240 credit points / 64 credit hours at level 1 and 2. **(Learning outcomes of this award are attached in Appendix 2)**
This exit award is developed by OU and delivered by AOU. It is validated through a process of external peer review by OU-UK as being of an appropriate standard and quality.

Programme Structure - LEVEL 3				
Compulsory modules	**Credit hours**	**Credit points**	**Optional modules**	**Credit points**
E302A: Language and Creativity (I) (OU module)	8	30		
E302B: Language and Creativity (II) (OU module)	8	30		
OR				
E304A: Exploring English Grammar (I) (OU module)	8	30		

Programme Structure - LEVEL 3				
E304B: Exploring English Grammar (II) (OU module)	8	30		
AND				
EA300A: Children's Literature (I) (OU module)	8	30		
EA300B: Children's Literature (II) (OU module)	8	30		
OR				
A335A: Literature in Transition (I) (OU module)	8	30		
A335B: Literature in Transition (II) (OU module)	8	30		
Total	32	120		

In addition to the above mentioned modules (96 credit hours) which constitute the ELL programme core modules, the programme includes other modules which fall in the following categories:

1. **Mandatory General University Requirements: (18 credit hours)**

2. **University Requirements/ Electives (3-7 credit hours)**

3. **Faculty Requirements/ Mandatory (8 credit hours)**

4. **Faculty Requirements/ Electives (4 credit hours)**

1. Mandatory General University Requirements: (18 credit hours)

The following courses comprise the Mandatory University Requirements:

Course Code	Course Title	Credit Hours	Prerequisites
AR111	Arabic Communication Skills (I)	3	-
AR112	Arabic Communication Skills (II)	3	AR111
EL111	English Communication Skills (I)	3	EL099
EL112	English Communication Skills (II)	3	EL111
GR101	Self-Learning Skills	3	-
TU170	Learning Online	3	EL098
Total		**18**	

2. University Requirements/ Electives (3-7 credit hours)

The following courses comprise the Electives University Requirements:

Course Code	Course Title	Credit Hours	Prerequisites
BE322/4	Entrepreneurship and Small Business Management	4	B120
GR111	Arabic-Islamic Civilization	3	--
GR112	Issues and Problems of Development in the Arab	3	-
GR115	Current International Issues and Problems	3	-
GR131	Branch Requirement	3	--

Course Code	Course Title	Credit Hours	Prerequisites
CH101	Chinese for Beginners (I)	3	--
CH102	Chinese for Beginners (II)	3	CH101
SL101	Spanish for Beginners (I)	3	--
SL102	Spanish for Beginners (II)	3	SL101
FR101	French for Beginners (I)	3	--
FR102	French for Beginners (II)	3	FR101
Total		**3-7**	

3. Faculty Requirements/ Mandatory (8 credit hours)

The following courses comprise the Mandatory Faculty Requirements:

Course Code	Course Title	Credit Hours	Prerequisites
EL 117	Writing	4	EL111
EL 119	Oral and Presentation Skills	4	EL111
Total		**8**	

4. Faculty Requirements/ Electives (4 credit hours)

The following courses comprise the Electives Faculty Requirements:

Course Code	Course Title	Credit Hours	Prerequisites
TR102	Introduction to Translation	4	EL121
EL123	Discourse Analysis	4	EL120
EL230	American Literature	4	EL121
EL240	Drama	4	EL121
EL350	Introduction to Literary Theory	4	EL121
ED256	Teaching Methods (Lebanon Branch)	4	EL112
Total		**4**	

The table below summarizes the different coponents of the programme with the number of credit hours of each component:

No.	Category	Credit Hours
1.	University Requirements/Mandatory	18
2.	University Requirements/Electives	3-7
3.	Faculty Requirements/Mandatory	8
4.	Faculty Requirements/Electives	4
Core courses		
5.	Specialization Requirements/Mandatory	64
6.	Specialization Requirements/Electives	32
Total		**129-133**

The main distinctive feature of the ELL programme is that it combines modules developed by AOU and other modules adopted from OU. FLS developed some modules to respond to the needs of our students, to prepare them for the challenges of OU courses and to increase the retention rate for first and second year students.

The following modules are developed by AOU:

Code	Title
EL117	Writing
EL118	Reading
EL119	Oral and Presentation Skills
EL120	English Phonetics and Linguistics
EL121	Literary Appreciation & Critique
EL122	Writing Research
EL123	Discourse Analysis
TR102	Introduction to Translation
EL230	American Literature
EL240	Drama
EL350	Introduction to Literary Theory
ED256	Teaching Methods (Lebanon Branch)

The following modules are adopted from OU:

Code	Title
AA100A	Art of Past and Present (I)
AA100B	Art of Past and Present (II)
U214A	Worlds of English (I)
U214B	Worlds of English (II)
A230A	Reading and Studying Literature (I)
A230B	Reading and Studying Literature (II)
E302A	Language and Creativity (I)
E302B	Language and Creativity (II)
E304A	Exploring English Grammar (I)
E304B	Exploring English Grammar (II)
EA300A	Children's Literature (I)
EA300B	Children's Literature (II)
A335A	Literature in Transition (I)
A335B	Literature in Transition (II)

The different components of the programme are integrated in the following study / advisory plan:

Advisory Plan for English Language and Literature (ELL)

	Code	Course Title	Credit Hrs	Pre-requisite	Type of course
First Year – First Semester					
1	AR111	Arabic Communication Skills (I)	3	-	Univ. Man.
2	EL111	Eng. Communication Skills (I)	3	EL099	Univ. Man.
3	GR101	Self Learning Skills	3	-	Univ. Man.
4	TU170	Learning Online	3	-	Univ. Man.
5	University elective	To be chosen from the list	3-4		Univ. Elective
Total	**15-16 Credit Hours**				
First Year – Second Semester					
1	AR 112	Arabic communication Skills (II)	3	AR111	Univ. Man.
2	EL112	Eng. Communication Skills (II)	3	EL111	Univ. Man.
3	EL117	Writing	4	EL111	Fac. Man
4	EL118	Reading	4	EL111	Core
5	EL119	Oral & Presentation Skills	4	EL111	Fac. Man
Total	**18 Credit Hours**				
Second Year – First Semester					
1	EL120	English Phonetics & Linguistics	4	EL111	Core
2	EL121	Literary Appreciation & Critique	4	EL117 & EL119	Core
3	AA100A	Arts of Past & Present (I)	8	EL117	Core
Total	**16 Credit Hours**				

		Second Year – Second Semester			
1	AA100B	Arts of Past & Present (II)	8	AA100A	Core
2	EL122	Writing Research	4	EL117	Core
3	Faculty Elective	To be Chosen from List	3-4		Fac. Elect.
Total	**15-16 Credit Hours**				

		Third Year – First Semester			
1	A230A	Reading and Studying Literature (I)	8	EL121	Core
2	U214 A	Worlds of English (I)	8	EL120	Core
Total	**16 Credit Hours**				

		Third Year – Second Semester			
1	A230B	Reading and Studying Literature (II)	8	A230A	Core
2	U214B	Worlds of English (II)	8	U214 A	Core
Total	**16 Credit Hours**				

		Fourth Year - First Semester			
1	E302A	Language and Creativity (I)	8	U214B	Core
	OR				
	E304A	Exploring English Grammar (I)	8	U214B	Core
	And				
2	A335A	Literature in Transition (I)	8	A230B	Core
	OR				

	EA300A	Children's Literature. (I)	8	A230B	Core
Total	**16 Credit Hours**				

		Fourth Year - Second Semester			
1	E302B	Language and Creativity (II)	8	E302A	Core
		OR			
	E304B	Exploring English Grammar (II)	8	E304A	Core
		And			
2	A335B	Literature in Transition (II)	8	A335A	Core
		OR			
	EA300B	Children's Literature. (II)	8	EA300A	Core
Total	**16 credit Hours**				

All incoming students must sit for an English Placement Test. On the basis of their results, they must enroll in EL097, EL098, EL099, EL111, EL112 consecutively, or are exempted from them. EL097, EL098 and EL099 are offered on a no-credit basis. EL111, EL112 are university requirements but students can be exempted from them depending on their placement test scores.

6. Support for students and their learning

Students at AOU, including FLS students, are offered various methods of student support. These include:

1. Study materials with guides and audio-visual aids. It is important to note that most of ELL materials for specialization courses are OU-based.

2. The university website www.arabou.edu.kw embodies a lot of guidance and support materials such as: updated Course Guides, Study Calendars, Specimen Exam papers, TMAs, TMA and MTA cover forms, as well as additional notes and information on courses

3. A two-hour weekly tutorial. Students meet their tutors on weekly basis for two

hours per class as part of the University's policy to adopt a system of blended learning.

4. Tutors hold weekly office hours. Students can have face-to-face contact with their tutors to seek their assistance, and ask them for clarifications. All part-time and full-time tutors are requested to hold two weekly office hours for each taught section.

5. Interaction with tutors through the LMS.
The LMS is an integral part of teaching and learning at AOU. It is the main channel of communication between tutors and their students. Students receive their assignments, their tutors' responses, and feedback through the LMS. The privacy of this channel allows students to discuss with their tutors some matters that they may be uncomfortable discussing publicly in the classroom.

6. There are also chat sessions online with tutors, and face-to-face feedback sessions. Additionally, emails are constant means by which tutors and students can discuss important ideas related to course material. Furthermore, tutors are available via phones, as well, to answer any urgent queries and offer support.

7. Computer and e-library facilities
Both AOU students and staff are given ample access to e-library resources. AOU continually updates its e-library subscriptions.

8. Educational Resource Centres.
These centres provide the needed resources, such as Internet and other facilities.

9. Student Information System (SIS).

10. There are orientation sessions that introduce students to the learning system which the AOU adopts.

11. AOU students also get rigorous academic advising.

12. In addition to all of this, there are numerous activities that the branches organize for their students, and the availability of these varies from one branch to another. Generally, however, the following can be found at several branches:

   i. Environment Awareness and Conservation.
   ii. Chess Club.
   iii. Arabic Calligraphy.
   iv. Arts & Folkloric Dance Club.
   v. Theatre Performing Arts Club.
   vi. Drawing and Painting Club.
   vii. Poetry and Speech Club.
   viii. English Language Club.
   ix. Holy Quran Club.
   x. Soccer Club.
   xi. Basketball Club.
   xii. University Chorus.
   xiii. Table Tennis.

13. Some of the on-campus facilities which offer support to students include:

Language Labs:

The physical resource base for the ELL programme at AOU branches is available and is put to effective use. All branches are fully equipped with language labs, which are effectively used in the ELU programme.

Student Counselling Support Unit:

The unit, available at some branches and being adopted for future implementation in many, provides a range of services and activities that help the student to achieve social and psychological adaptation. These services are as follows:

Individual Counselling
Individual sessions in which the student meets with the Educational and Psychological Counsellor. These sessions help the students to identify the problems facing them or the difficulties that prevent them from achieving their objectives. The Educational Counsellor helps them to develop skills and capabilities which can help them to handle all kinds of problems.

Training Courses
The students can attend the workshops and training courses on different educational and psychological topics which help them to acquire new concepts and essential skills.

Exit Interview
The Educational Counsellor interviews the student who wants to drop-out from the University or to withdraw his/her study for one or more semesters in order to identify the reasons behind the student's decision. The counsellor tries to find solutions which may help this student to continue studying at the university in cooperation with the concerned teaching staff.

Follow-up on Academic Achievement:
The counsellor tries to get information about the students who obtained low marks in many courses, to hold constant meetings with them to arrange for them the necessary academic support.

In addition to all of this, AOU has embarked, since the last revalidation, to film all tutorials and make them available to students online for furthering understanding and consolidation of learning, as well as for the students who miss the tutorial for extenuating circumstances.

---

7. Criteria for admission

AOU, based on its belief in equal-opportunity education and the two interconnected principles of lifelong learning and education for all, tries to reach out to as many learners as possible. This is why it tries – in those branch countries where there are interested learners – to open, in addition to the main branches themselves, centres in remote areas, making education available to those who may not have an opportunity otherwise. AOU's criteria for admission are among the most liberal in our region. The only requirement it has, for a student to apply and compete for a seat, is a high school diploma, a fundamental condition by all accrediting governmental agencies in the branch countries. Beyond this, admission – pending the availability of seats on the

basis of high-school grades – is open to people of all ages, gender, religious orientation, ethnic origins, etc. Only in Saudi Arabia, and on the basis of local-accreditation requirements for open education, is a student required to become 25 years of age and older. It has to be underscored also that the accrediting bodies in the branch countries put limits on how many students AOU can admit in each programme, and AOU has to abide by the specified numbers. Therefore, if more students apply than AOU is allowed to take, AOU ranks them and then admits them on the basis of their high-school grade averages.

8. Language of study

English

9. Information about assessment regulations

AOU's assessment strategy incorporates general principles and procedures aiming to regulate and monitor examinations in all its branches. AOU regulations include: anonymous and group marking, (pre-assessment moderation) of examination questions and answer keys by external examiners, monitoring tutors' marking, post-assessment moderation; and formation of different examination committees.

Below is a brief summary of major assessment principles, policies, and procedures adhered to by FLS which are congruent with the general precepts defined in Section 6 of the QAA Code of Practice.

1. General principles
AOU has explicit procedures for ensuring that student performance is properly judged and for evaluating how academic standards are maintained through assessment practice. The following are some of the procedures which FLS implements:

➢ Final examination questions and their answer keys are approved by external examiners. Similarly, all TMAs and MTAs and their answer keys are approved by external examiners.

➢ All final examination scripts, TMA and MTA samples are sent to AOU HQ from the University's branches for review by external examiners.

2. Contribution to student learning
The FLS encourages assessment practice that promotes effective learning. For example, in preparing TMAs and examination questions (MTAs and Final Exam questions), course chairs are asked to identify the learning outcomes which each question/task is designed to test.

3. Assessment committees
The AOU and the FLS implement effective, clear and consistent policies for forming assessment/examination committees/councils and for defining their roles and responsibilities. The structure, roles and powers of the following AOU assessment

committees are clearly spelled out in the FLS Assessment *Booklet*:

Course Assessment Committee (CAC)
Faculty Examination Committee (FEC)
Central Examination Committee (CEC)
Branch Examination Committees (BEC)

4. The preparation and administration of examinations
AOU ensures that assessment is conducted with rigour and fairness and with due regard to security:

a. To guarantee the security of examinations and safeguard against possible leakage, the FLS Dean takes full responsibility for receiving and delivering examination questions through the various stages of production;

b. Branch directors and branch programme coordinators supervise the administration of the examinations;

c. All stages of test administration, the marking of scripts, and the   recording of marks are regulated by explicit written instructions and monitored by concerned bodies (programme coordinators, course coordinators, examination committees);

d. To guarantee objectivity in marking, students' names and registration numbers do not appear on final examination scripts. Furthermore, in courses taught by more than one tutor, the principle of 'group marking' is applied in the marking of all scripts;

e. Tutors' marking of TMAs, MTAs and finals is monitored by Branch Course Coordinators and reports, together with samples, are sent to the FLS Dean every semester;

f. All TMAs, MTAs and final examination scripts are reviewed by external examiners;

g. The final results for each course are reviewed by the course assessment committee (CAC), then by the faculty examinations committee (FEC), and finally by the central examinations committee (CEC).

5. Marking, grading and staff training
The FLS adopts transparent and fair mechanisms for marking and for moderating marks. All tutors responsible for marking are provided with model answers (approved by external examiners) to the questions they will be marking. In addition, grades given by branch tutors are centrally processed and moderated by relevant committees to ensure objectivity.

AOU also ensures that faculty members involved in the assessment of students are competent to undertake their roles and responsibilities. This is done through training, directives and memos sent from AOU HQ as well as through posting relevant information on AOU website.

6. Assessment regulations
AOU reviews and amends assessment regulations periodically to ensure that the regulations remain fit for purpose. New measures were introduced to ensure that assessments are valid and are monitored by relevant bodies.

7. Documenting and disseminating assessment decisions
AOU requires that all assessment decisions be recorded and documented accurately

and systematically at each administrative level and that the decisions of relevant assessment panels and examination boards are communicated as quickly as possible.

Components of Module Assessment

Module assessment is based on three main types of written works:
 (i) Tutor-Marked Assignments (TMAs)
 (ii) Mid-Term Assessment (MTAs)
 (ii) Final Exams (FEs)

Assessment Components

Students' module results will depend upon their achievements across the different components of assessment:

(i) Continuous Assessment: This comprises:
- Course TMA(s), and
- Course MTA(s)

The two components represent 50% of the Overall Assessment Score (OAS), 20% and 30% respectively, **AND**

(ii) Final Assessment: This consists of:
- ONE FINAL EXAM

This component represents   50% of the Overall Assessment Score

How to Pass a Module

In order to pass a module, a student must obtain:
(i)   An average of at least 50% across the different components of assessment (i.e. Continuous Assessment and Final Assessment),
(ii)   A minimum average of 20/50 on the Final Assessment.
(iii)   A minimum average of 15/50 on Continuous Assessment comprising both TMA(s) and MTA(s).

In all these assessment components, students will be assessed according to criteria which are based on learning outcomes.

Components	Form of Assessment & Marks		%
CONTINUOUS ASSESSMENT	TMA	20	50%
	MTA	30	
FINAL ASSESSMENT	FINAL EXAM	50	50%
GRAND TOTAL		100	100%

Notes on TMAs, MTAs & Final Exams

(i)   Tutor-Marked Assignments (TMAs)
Students prepare one TMA for the whole semester. This assignment serves to invoke and develop the investigative and research skills of students. The TMA carries 20% of the overall grade of the course.

(ii)   Mid-Term Assessment (MTA)
MTAs are viewed to be another contributor to monitoring the progression of students' achievement. They carry 30% of the overall grade of the course.   Questions in MTAs typically require short notes/answers/comments: e.g. definitions; exemplification; completion; matching; writing one or two paragraphs, etc. In other words, they are not of the open-ended essay type.

(iii)   Final Exams (FEs)
Final exams are typically of the essay type and are divided into three Sections/Parts each covering one or two blocks/themes of the course as in the table below: Students will be required to answer 3 questions in 3 hours.

Part	Questions	Notes
A	1	- ONE compulsory question, but there might be some options within this question (e.g. defining seven key terms out of 10) - The question typically deals with a very important/central topic
B	2&3	- This part consists of 2 questions - Students answer one question only. - Each question is meant to test a certain block/theme
C	4&5	- This part consists of 2 questions - Students answer one question only. - Each question is meant to test a certain block/theme

---

10. Methods for evaluating and improving the quality and standards of teaching and learning.

As is well-known the Arab Open University follows the blended learning system: 25% face-to-face tutorials and 75% independent learning, which includes online learning.

Methods of improvement of the teaching and learning are ongoing. The first is continuous orientation and induction for both our tutors and our students. At this point in time, most of our tutors are amply familiar with the system and amply versed in the ways of handling tutorials and online learning. However, those few part-time tutors who join us once in a while and those tutors who get hired recently, both of whom know little about our system of teaching and learning, get – prior to starting the teaching – ample orientation and induction by our PCs, GCCs and BCCs, to make sure that they fully understand the system and the tasks entrusted to them.

The same kind of thorough orientation and induction is given to our newly-admitted students, most of whom come from traditional teaching/learning settings. The induction is ongoing; it happens at the start of the semester, but also throughout the year in the

form of orientation sessions, workshops, brochures, office hours, and email.

Also part of the face-to-face tutorials is devoted to induction on several aspects of the learning and the use of resources. In addition, our student advisors, counselors, and support staff meet with students periodically (at times on an individual basis) to help address some of the challenges they face. The student handbook and other publications that we prepare offer excellent guidance to students on how best to make use of tutorials and independent learning.

Several training workshops are also held for our tutors on aspects related to improving teaching and learning, such as workshops on how to conduct successful tutorials, how to maximize use of LMS in enhancing teaching and learning, how to help students in developing writing skills and referencing. Such workshops are conducted by both experienced staff from the AOU, as well as invited experts on specific subjects from outside the university.

The PCs in the branches, as part of their departmental meetings, continually raise and discuss with colleagues challenges which both students and tutors face, and they exchange views and experiences on how to address them.
The Dean of the Faculty, whose main mandate is the academic welfare of the program and the enhancement of teaching and learning, meets periodically with the PCs and tutors in the branches, both in person and via VC, to go over the challenges to the teaching and learning process and ways and means of addressing them.
The FLS is also good at exchanging good practices in teaching and learning from one module to another and one branch to another, in addition to good practices among deanships. At a higher level – the level of the University Council, which is attended by all those in charge of teaching and learning across the AOU branches – there is a segment of the meeting devoted to good practices in the branches and the deanships, which gets discussed and then circulated.

Regarding evaluation of the teaching and learning methods, a lot of useful feedback comes to the BCCs, PCs, GCCs and Dean from periodic meetings with students and staff, which are very direct and fundamental for understanding the problems the tutors and the students face, and fundamental in proposing solutions for them.

FLS also finds the External Examiner Reports, which we receive at the end of each semester, to be very helpful (especially since they come from an "external" perspective) enabling us to understand and address the problems that manifest themselves in the students' answers and the tutors' marking. These reports say a lot about the quality of teaching and learning, the quality of students' writing and analytical skills, etc. And as is well-known, whenever we receive a report – as explained in **Section 15 –** in the Background Document – we come up with an action plan to address the major issues raised. In addition, the EE reports take note also of positive trends, which we capitalize on and enhance.

The Questionnaires, which our Quality Assurance Department, forwards to students and tutors to fill at the end of each semester, in which they are asked to express their opinion on a variety of aspects pertaining to methods of teaching and learning, are an eye opener for us. The questionnaires get studied carefully and analysed, and we follow up on all issues raised in them.

It also goes without saying that we find the AMR – which is essentially a self-assessment report, with a lot said about the teaching and learning – very useful in understanding the challenges and in prescribing solutions to them.

Naturally, on the basis of the feedback we obtain from these and other channels, we take decisions at the Faculty Council, Deans' Group, Academic Committee, and University Council to amend our regulations and bylaws, as well as the various procedures through which we conduct work, for the purpose of improving the teaching and learning.

Annexe 1: Curriculum map

Annexe 2: Notes on completing the OU programme specification template

Annexe 1 - Curriculum map

This table indicates which study units assume responsibility for delivering (shaded) and assessing (✓) particular programme learning outcomes.

Level	Study module/unit	A1	A2	A3	A4	A5	A6	A7	A8	B1	B2	B3	B4	B5	C1	C2	C3	C4	C5	D1	D2	D3	D4	D5	D6	D7	D8	D9	D10		
1	EL120: English Phonectics and Linguistics			✓	✓			✓			✓	✓			✓		✓		✓	✓	✓				✓		✓	✓			
	EL121: Literary Appreciation & Critique	✓	✓				✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓			✓		✓		✓	✓		
	EL122: Writing Research					✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			
	EL118: Reading	✓								✓	✓		✓		✓		✓		✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓			
	AA100: The Art Past & Present	✓	✓				✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			

Level	Study module/unit	A1	A2	A3	A4	A5	A6	A7	A8	B1	B2	B3	B4	B5	C1	C2	C3	C4	C5	D1	D2	D3	D4	D5	D6	D7	D8	D9	D10		
2	A230: Reading and Studying Literature	✓	✓				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			
	U214: Worlds of Engliush			✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			

Level	Study module/unit	A1	A2	A3	A4	A5	A6	A7	A8	B1	B2	B3	B4	B5	C1	C2	C3	C4	C5	D1	D2	D3	D4	D5	D6	D7	D8	D9	D10		
3	E302: Language and Creativity			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
	E304: Exploring English Grammar			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
	EA300: Children's Literature	✓	✓				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			
	A335: Literature in Transition	✓	✓				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			

Appendix 1

Learning outcomes: Certificate of Higher Education in English Language and Literature

Knowledge and understanding

On completion of the Certificate of Higher Education in English Language and Literature, you will have knowledge and understanding of:

A1. A small and limited number of authors and texts written in English or translated into English including some texts written outside the United Kingdom.

A2. The character and conventions of the principal literary genres – poetry, short story and short dramatic texts.
A3. Basic approaches, methodologies and concerns covered by the different arts and humanities disciplines.
A4. How language and literature may be described and analysed.

Cognitive skills
On completion of the Certificate of Higher Education in English Language and Literature, you will be able to:

B1. Develop close reading skills and analysis of simple texts.
B2. Acquire information from sources such as academic libraries, the Internet, and CD-ROMs.
B3. Learn and use appropriate linguistic and literary terminology to describe and understand texts.

Practical and professional skills
On completion of the Certificate of Higher Education in English Language and Literature, you will be able to:

C1. Present English material in written and spoken form in a clear manner.
C2. Demonstrate ability to take notes and summarize simple texts.
C3. Use reference material successfully.

Key/transferable skills
On completion of the Certificate of Higher Education in English Language and Literature, you will be able to:

Communication
D1. Communicate effectively in English in everyday contexts.
D2. Read and understand the significance of literary and linguistic material.
D3. Reference sources in an appropriate way.

Improving own learning and performance:
D4. Work independently, schedule tasks and manage time effectively.
D5. Make use of feedback from your tutor to improve performance.

Information technology:
D6. Use information technology skills to access data effectively.

Appendix 2

Learning outcomes: Diploma of Higher Education in English Language and Literature

Knowledge and understanding

On completion of the Diploma of Higher Education in English Language and Literature, you will have knowledge and understanding of:

A1. A good number of authors and texts written in English or translated into English including some texts written outside the United Kingdom.
A2. The character and conventions of the principal literary genres – poetry, fiction and drama.
A3. Basic approaches, methodologies and concerns covered by the different arts and humanities disciplines.
A4. How language and literature may be described and analysed.
A5. The history of English and its role as a global language.
A6. The relevant theoretical approaches to the study of literature and language.

Cognitive skills

On completion of the Diploma of Higher Education in English Language and Literature, you will be able to:

B1. Develop close reading skills and analysis of texts.
B2. Acquire information from a variety of sources such as academic libraries, the Internet, and CD-ROMs.
B3. Learn and use appropriate linguistic and literary terminology to describe and analyse texts.
B4. Synthesise information and ideas drawn from varied sources.

Practical and professional skills

On completion of the Diploma of Higher Education in English Language and Literature, you will be able to:

C1. Present English material in written and spoken form in a clear manner.
C2. Edit general and specialised English texts.
C3. Demonstrate accurate and effective note-taking and summarising skills.
C4. Use reference material successfully, including bilingual and monolingual dictionaries.
C5. Use communication tools, such as recordings, telephone-conferencing, and ICT-based tools.

Key/transferable skills

On completion of the Diploma of Higher Education in English Language and Literature, you will be able to:

Communication:
D1. Communicate effectively in English in everyday situations and semi-specialised contexts.
D2. Identify relevant material from a variety of sources, including multimedia material.
D3. Read and synthesise substantial quantities of material.
D4. Present sustained and persuasive arguments cogently and coherently.
D5. Reference sources in an appropriate way.

Improving own learning and performance:

D6. Work independently, schedule tasks and manage time effectively.
D7. Identify and use sources of support.
D8. Make use of feedback from your tutor to improve performance.

Information technology: On completion of the diploma, you will be able to:
D9. Use information technology skills to access and store data effectively.