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England

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# International Benchmarking of the South African National Senior Certificate (NSC) Subject Findings Appendix: English (FAL)

Kenya

Australia (NSW)

Zimbabwe

South Africa



Two Decades of Education Guardianship  
2002 - 2022



International Benchmarking of the  
South African National Senior Certificate (NSC)  
Subject Findings  
Appendix: English (FAL)

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# Introduction

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## Overview of NSC English (FAL)

The NSC English FAL (“First Additional Language level”) course is designed to enable students to “use their additional language at a high level of proficiency to prepare them for further or higher education or the world of work”.<sup>1</sup> To successfully obtain the NSC, students are required to study both a first additional language and home language subject, where one of the languages offered must be either Afrikaans or English. The NSC English FAL syllabus defines first additional language as “the language learnt in addition to one’s Home Language”, referring “to the level and not the language itself”.<sup>2</sup> NSC documentation defines FAL as “the language proficiency level that reflects the basic intercultural and interpersonal communication skills needed in social situations and the cognitive academic skills essential for learning across the curriculum. The First Additional Language level can be used as the language of teaching and learning from the Intermediate Phase onwards.”<sup>3</sup>

## Structure of Appendix

This subject comparison appendix addresses the relationship between NSC English (FAL) and subjects which fulfil similar roles in five alternative programmes. This appendix is structured to first demonstrate points of comparability and contrasts between the subjects (under the subheading Comparison) and then to synthesise this into Key Findings with a focus on skill development. This analysis examines all comparison subjects against NSC English (FAL) simultaneously to enable stakeholders to see the range of similarities and differences across the international contexts in a single place. The analysis is based on the review of the NSC English curriculum and assessment documentation for grades 10 to 12, and more specifically on the 2011 Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement for English FAL, and the 2017 Examination Guidelines for Official Languages FAL.

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<sup>1</sup> National Curriculum Statement (NCS) (2011), *Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement Grades 10-12 English First Additional Language*, p. 8.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Department of Basic Education (2021), *National Policy Pertaining to the Programme and Promotion Requirements of the National Curriculum Statement, Grades R – 12*, p. ix.

# Comparison

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## Subjects in Context

Similar to the NSC, the IB DP and NSW HSC programmes offer English on a primary and secondary language basis, whilst including a mandatory language component. For the IB DP, students can take Language *ab initio*, Language B and / or Classical Languages (Latin or Classical Greek).<sup>4</sup> These subjects constitute the Group Two: Language Acquisition cluster and “it is a requirement of the programme that students study at least one subject from group 2”.<sup>5</sup> The KCSE programme requires students to enrol on the English and Kiswahili languages subjects, both of which are included in the compulsory cluster Group 1.<sup>6</sup> To obtain the NSW HSC, students are required to “complete at least 12 units of Preliminary courses and 10 units of HSC courses, including English”.<sup>7</sup> To meet the compulsory English requirements of the programme, four English courses are offered: English Studies, English Standard, English Advanced, and English as an Additional Language or Dialect (EAL/D). The English Studies course is oriented towards students pursuing vocational progression routes, whilst English Advanced students may further enrol in an English Extension course.

The Cambridge International AS/A Level in English Language is a stand-alone qualification and does not constitute a mandatory component of a broader programme of study. Cambridge International offer English Language, English Language and Literature (International AS Level only) and English Literature International A Level.<sup>8</sup> The Zimbabwean ZIMSEC Communication Skills subject is taken across Forms 5-6 (the upper secondary cycle), where students study at least two subjects for the award of the Zimbabwe General Certificate of Education at advanced Level.

## Entry Requirements, Prior Learning, Duration, and Progression Routes

The table below summarises any entry requirements for each subject, the duration of study within the programme, the mode of study, and any notable facts about progression routes which study of each subject enables either nationally or internationally.

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<sup>4</sup> International Baccalaureate (2020), *Diploma Programme: English B Higher and Standard Level Specimen Papers and Mark Schemes*, pp. 6-7.

<sup>5</sup> International Baccalaureate (2021), *Language Acquisition*. Available from: Diploma language acquisition | International Baccalaureate® - International Baccalaureate® (ibo.org) [Accessed 17/08/2021].

<sup>6</sup> Kenya National Examinations Council (2014), *Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education: Examination Regulations and Syllabuses*, p. 5.

<sup>7</sup> NSW Education Standards Authority (2021), *HSC Courses: Choosing your Compulsory English Course*. Available from: HSC courses | NSW Education Standards [Accessed 17/08/2021].

<sup>8</sup> Cambridge Assessment International Education (2021), *Cambridge International AS and A Level Subjects*. Available from: Cambridge International AS and A Level subjects [Accessed 17/08/2021].



**Table 1: Comparison of subject specific entry requirements, expected prior learning, duration of study and recommended progression routes**

NSC English (FAL) <sup>9</sup>	Subject-Specific Entry Requirements	Expected Prior Learning	Duration of Study	Recommended Progression Routes
	<p>The following requirements are not subject-specific but are relevant here as they include specifications around student language-learning background.</p> <p>"The minimum entrance requirements for Grade 10 are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) an official Grade 9 school report which indicates that a learner has met the requirements for promotion to Grade 10 or that the learner was progressed in the Senior Phase</li> <li>(b) a General Education and Training Certificate (GETC) for Adult Basic Education and Training (ABET); or</li> <li>(c) a NQF Level 1 Certificate which requires two languages; or (d) a recognised equivalent qualification obtained at NQF Level 1 which requires two official languages.</li> <li>(e) an official document of approval from the relevant Head of Education confirming that a learner who has received home education prior to Grade 10 has reached the required level in Grade 9.</li> </ul> <p>(2) For Entrance into Grades 11 and 12, an appropriate statement of achievement at the appropriate levels is issued by an approved or recognised assessment body".</p>	<p>"By the time learners enter Grade 10, they should be reasonably proficient in their First Additional Language with regard to both interpersonal and cognitive academic skills. However, the reality is that many learners still cannot communicate well in their Additional Language at this stage."</p>	<p>NSC English FAL is based on a time allocation of 4.5 instructional hours per week at the senior level. The syllabus recommends the following fortnightly time allocation: 1 hour (10%) listening and speaking, 4 hours (45%) reading and viewing, 3 hours (35%) writing and presenting, and 1 hour (10%) language structures and conventions.</p> <p>Three academic years of study (Grades 10-12) are usually required to obtain the NSC.</p>	<p>The general aims of the National Curriculum Statement Grades R-12 in the NSC English FAL syllabus are to serve "the purpose of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• providing access to higher education</li> <li>• facilitating the transition of learners from education institutions to the workplace; and</li> <li>• providing employers with a sufficient profile of a learner's competences".</li> </ul> <p>The NSC English FAL syllabus further states that: "The challenge in Grades 10-12, therefore, is to provide support for these learners at the same time as providing a curriculum that enables learners to meet the standards required in Grade 12. These standards must be such that learners can use their additional language at a high level of proficiency to prepare them for further or higher education or the world of work".</p>

<sup>9</sup> Department of Basic Education (2011), *Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement Grades 10-12*, pp. 4.7,8,9,17.

IB DP Language B (HL/SL) <sup>10</sup>	Subject-Specific Entry Requirements	Expected Prior Learning	Duration of Study	Recommended Progression Routes
	<p>One of the questions that schools should address on a student-by-student basis is: "Which language B and/or ab initio subjects and levels will be most appropriate based on the students' previous language study?"</p>	<p>A previous study into IB DP language subjects found that "students already at CEFR A2 or B1 in the target language can comfortably take language B SL. Students already at CEFR B1 or B2 can comfortably take language B HL".</p> <p>"Language B SL is designed for students with some previous experience in the target language who already have the ability to communicate in the language in familiar contexts".</p>	<p>"The recommended teaching time to complete the course is 150 hours for SL and 240 hours for HL" extending over the two years of the programme</p>	<p>The language acquisition aims of the IB DP Language B syllabus are to: "Provide students with a basis for further study, work and leisure through the use of an additional language".</p> <p>The broader orientation of the IB DP is as a: "demanding course of study designed to prepare students effectively for university entrance".</p>

<sup>10</sup> International Baccalaureate, Diploma Programme: From Principles into Practice, p. 58; International Baccalaureate (2020), DP: English B Higher and Standard Level Specimen Papers and Mark Schemes, pp. 2, 11-13.; DP, Language B Teacher Support Material. p. 4.; International Baccalaureate (2021), Language B (SL and HL). Available from: Developing in a language - International Baccalaureate® (ibo.org) [Accessed 30/07/2021]; International Baccalaureate (2020), Diploma Programme 2020: English B Higher and Standard Level Specimen Papers and Mark Schemes, p.13.

IB DP Language B (HL/SL) <sup>10</sup> continued	Subject-Specific Entry Requirements	Expected Prior Learning	Duration of Study	Recommended Progression Routes
		<p>"Language B HL is designed for students with previous experience in the target language who have the ability to communicate in that language in a variety of contexts and for a variety of purposes".</p>		
<b>Cambridge International AS/A Level English Language<sup>11</sup></b>	<p>Schools will engage with students' educational backgrounds on an individual basis.</p>	<p>The Cambridge International AS/A Level English Language syllabus recommends that: "candidates who are beginning this course should have previously completed a Cambridge O Level or Cambridge IGCSE course in English Language, or Literature in English and should have a level of English equivalent to First Language English at IGCSE".</p>	<p>The Cambridge International AS/A Level English Language recommends: "around 180 guided learning hours for Cambridge International AS Level, and around 360 guided learning hours for Cambridge International A Level".</p> <p>The A Level qualification is typically taken over a two-year period of study.</p>	<p>The Cambridge International AS/A Level English Language syllabus states that the: "Cambridge International A Level English Language provides a suitable foundation for the study of English Language or related courses in higher education. Equally it is suitable for candidates intending to pursue careers or further study, or as part of a course of general education".</p>

<sup>11</sup> Cambridge International Examinations (2016), *English Language 9093: Literature in English 9695; Language and Literature in English 8695*, p. 9; Cambridge Assessment International Education (2020), *Cambridge International AS & A-Level: A Guide for Universities*, p.1.

KCSE English <sup>12</sup>	Subject-Specific Entry Requirements	Expected Prior Learning	Duration of Study	Recommended Progression Routes
	N/A	<p>The KCSE syllabus states that prospective students are required to “be holders of KCPE Certificate or its equivalent”. Additionally, English is taken as a mandatory subject for the KCSE qualification, comprising one of a minimum of seven subjects that students take.</p> <p>Students enrolling at the upper secondary level (Form 5) will have typically completed the four year lower secondary cycle and obtained the Zimbabwe General Certificate of Education at Ordinary Level qualification.</p> <p>Additionally, “it is assumed that the learner: is able to independently read and communicate views on a text, is aware of the rules governing language use, has ICT skills, is aware of cross cutting issues such as HIV and AIDS, climate change, corruption and gender”.</p>	<p>KCSE English is usually four years in length, taken over the four-year period of secondary education.</p>	<p>Students who scored an aggregate of C+ grade and above will be selected for the degree placement procedure, in both private and public universities, and their degree will be sponsored by the government.</p>
<b>ZIMSEC Forms 5-6 Communication Skills<sup>13</sup></b>	N/A		<p>The ZIMSEC Communication Skills syllabus recommends a time allocation of “two (2) eighty (80) minute periods per week” across a two year period (Forms 5 and 6).</p>	<p>The ZIMSEC Communication Skills “syllabus seeks to equip the learners with life-long communication skills, further develop Unhu / Ubuntu / Vumunhu and assist them to cope with the demands of tertiary education”.</p>

<sup>12</sup> Kenya National Examinations Council (2014), Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education: Examination Regulations and Syllabuses; <https://kenyadmission.com/kcse-university-entry-points/>

<sup>13</sup> Zimbabwe Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education (2015), Communication Skills Syllabus Forms 5-6 2015-2022, pp.1, 2.

NSW HSC EAL/D <sup>14</sup>	Subject-Specific Entry Requirements	Expected Prior Learning	Duration of Study	Recommended Progression Routes
	<p>NSW Education Standards Authority states that the "English EAL/D course may be studied by any student who has been educated overseas or in an Australian educational institution with English as the language of instruction for five years or less prior to commencing the Year 11 course" with the proviso that "a student who has had a substantially interrupted education, approval may be sought to extend the period of instruction in English to six years" .</p> <p>Entry onto the HSC English EAL/D course Year 11 is conditional upon successful completion of Stage 4-5 English K-10. The Year 12 entry requirements are that students complete the Year 11 EAL/D course and take module A first, followed by modules B and C during the same year (Year 12).</p>	<p>The English EAL/D course is for students who have been educated in English for five years or less, either in Australia or overseas.</p>	<p>The HSC English EAL/D course is designed to be taken across two academic years (Years 11 and 12) at the Stage 6 level of the HSC qualification.</p>	<p>The indicated progression routes following completion of the HSC English as an Additional Language or Dialect course are "Community, other education and learning and workplace pathways". The English EAL/D syllabus states that the "English EAL/D course is designed for students to become proficient in English to enhance their personal, educational, social and vocational lives".</p>

<sup>14</sup> NSW Education Standards Authority (2021), *Eligibility for Stage 6 English Courses*. Available from: <https://educationstandards.nsw.edu.au/wps/portal/nesa/11-12/stage-6-learning-areas/stage-6-english/eligibility-for-courses> [Accessed 14/06/2021]; NSW Education Standards Authority (2017). *English EAL/D Stage 6 Syllabus*. pp. 19-20.

The three academic years of study typically required for NSC English FAL situates it between the KCSE English qualification, which is based on a period of four academic years, and the IB DP Language B (HL/SL), Cambridge International AS/A Level English Language, ZIMSEC Communication Skills and NSW HSC EAL/D, which are usually two years in duration. NSC English FAL concludes a senior secondary phase of schooling and usually requires student participation in the previous cycle of education as a precondition to enrolment. In this respect, it is similar to the KCSE English, HSC EAL/D and ZIMSEC Communication Skills.

Time allocation of the NSC English FAL differs from the international comparators in that it explicitly apportions varying amounts of time to covering different skills and content. Based on a fortnightly teaching cycle, reading and viewing proportionately receive the most amount of time (45%), followed by writing and presenting (35%). In contrast, IB DP Language B differentiates its

allocation of time according to the higher and standard levels of the subject (150 hours for SL and 240 hours for HL), whilst the NSW HSC EAL/D, ZIMSEC Communication Skills, and Cambridge International AS/A Level English Language qualifications simply distribute time equally over the two academic years.

## Subject Aims

The following table lists the stated aims of each subject according to each programme's documentation. Where curriculum documentation does not explicitly articulate aims with, for example, a subheading titled "Aims", Ecctis have selected passages or extracts which most closely resemble a brief overview of the subject's purpose. This is intended to enable comparison between the different curricula as effectively as possible. Where something not labelled "aims" has been used to stand-in for curriculum aims, this is explained in the descriptive analysis underneath the table.

**Table 2: Comparison of subject aims**

	Subject Aims
<b>NSC English (FAL)<sup>15</sup></b>	<p>The "specific aims of learning Additional Languages Learning a First Additional Language should enable learners to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• acquire the language skills necessary to communicate accurately and appropriately taking into account audience, purpose and context</li> <li>• use their Additional Language for academic learning across the curriculum</li> <li>• listen, speak, read / view and write / present the language with confidence and enjoyment. These skills and attitudes form the basis for lifelong learning</li> <li>• express and justify, orally and in writing, their own ideas, views and emotions confidently in order to become independent and analytical thinkers</li> <li>• use their Additional Language and their imagination to find out more about themselves and the world around them. This will enable them to express their experiences and findings about the world orally and in writing</li> <li>• use their Additional Language to access and manage information for learning across the curriculum and in a wide range of other contexts. Information literacy is a vital skill in the 'information age' and forms the basis for lifelong learning</li> <li>• use their Additional Language as a means of critical and creative thinking: for expressing their opinions on ethical issues and values; for interacting critically with a wide range of texts; for challenging the perspectives, values and power relations embedded in texts; and for reading texts for various purposes, such as enjoyment, research, critique".</li> </ul>

<sup>15</sup> National Curriculum Statement (NCS) (2011), *Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement Grades 10-12 English First Additional Language*, p. 9.

	<b>Subject Aims</b>
<b>IB DP Language B (HL/SL)<sup>16</sup></b>	<p>The subject aims for the ID DP Language B are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Develop international-mindedness through the study of languages, cultures, and ideas and issues of global significance</li> <li>• Enable students to communicate in the language they have studied in a range of contexts and for a variety of purposes</li> <li>• Encourage, through the study of texts and through social interaction, an awareness and appreciation of a variety of perspectives of people from diverse cultures</li> <li>• Develop students' understanding of the relationship between the languages and cultures with which they are familiar</li> <li>• Develop students' awareness of the importance of language in relation to other areas of knowledge</li> <li>• Provide students, through language learning and the process of inquiry, with opportunities for intellectual engagement and the development of critical- and creative-thinking skills</li> <li>• Provide students with a basis for further study, work and leisure through the use of an additional language</li> <li>• Foster curiosity, creativity and a lifelong enjoyment of language learning”.</li> </ul>
<b>Cambridge International AS/A Level English Language<sup>17</sup></b>	<p>The Cambridge International AS / A-Level English Language “syllabus aims to develop:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a critical and informed response to texts in a range of forms, styles, contexts and audiences</li> <li>• the interdependent skills of reading, analysis and research</li> <li>• effective, creative, accurate and appropriate communication</li> <li>• a firm foundation for further study of language and linguistics”.</li> </ul>
<b>KCSE English<sup>18</sup></b>	<p>The aims of the KCSE English subject are that upon completion, students will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Listen attentively for comprehension and respond appropriately</li> <li>• Use listening skills to infer and interpret meaning correctly from spoken discourse</li> <li>• Listen and process information from a variety of sources</li> <li>• Speak accurately, fluently, confidently and appropriately in a variety of contexts</li> <li>• Use non-verbal cues effectively in speaking</li> <li>• Read fluently and efficiently</li> <li>• Appreciate the importance of reading for a variety of purposes</li> <li>• Develop a life-long interest in reading on a wide range of subjects</li> <li>• Read and comprehend literary materials</li> <li>• Read and analyse literary works from Kenya, East Africa, Africa and the rest of the world, and relate to the experiences in these works</li> <li>• Appreciate and respect own as well as other people's culture</li> <li>• Make an efficient use of a range of sources of information including libraries, dictionaries, encyclopaedias and the internet</li> <li>• Use correct spelling, punctuation and paragraphing</li> <li>• Use a variety of sentence structures and vocabulary correctly</li> <li>• Communicate appropriately in functional and creative writing</li> <li>• Write neatly, legibly and effectively</li> <li>• Use correct grammatical and idiomatic forms of English</li> <li>• Think creatively and critically</li> </ul>

<sup>16</sup> International Baccalaureate (2020), *Diploma Programme: Language B Guide*, p. 13

<sup>17</sup> Cambridge International Examinations (2016), *Syllabus: Cambridge International AS & A-Level English Language*. p. 15.

<sup>18</sup> Kenya National Examinations Council (2014), *Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education: Examination Regulations and Syllabuses*, p. 29.



	Subject Aims
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appreciate the special way literary writers use language</li> <li>• Appreciate the universal human values contained in literary works".</li> </ul>
<b>ZIMSEC Forms 5-6 Communication Skills<sup>19</sup></b>	<p>The Zimbabwean Communication Skills "syllabus aims to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• equip learners with the communication skills essential for life and academic work at Forms 5, 6 and beyond</li> <li>• promote Unhu/Ubuntu/Vumunhu through careful selection of texts and topics for discussion</li> <li>• help learners develop independent critical reading and thinking skills</li> <li>• develop learners` listening skills</li> <li>• develop the skills of coherent topic development and sustenance in both oral and written discourse</li> <li>• encourage broad exploration and appraisal of cultural, economic, environmental, political and technological issues".</li> </ul>
<b>NSW HSC EAL/D<sup>20</sup></b>	<p>The aims of the HSC EAL/D course are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enable students to understand and use language effectively</li> <li>• Cultivate an appreciation and enjoyment of the English language</li> <li>• Make meaning in ways that are imaginative, creative, interpretive, critical and powerful</li> <li>• Encourage students to value the English language in its various textual forms and become thoughtful and effective communicators in a diverse global world.</li> </ul> <p>Additionally, the HSC EAL/D course aims to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide students with the opportunity to analyse, study and enjoy a variety of English texts</li> <li>• Allow students to become confident and effective communicators</li> <li>• Offer a rich language experience that is reflected through the integrated modes of reading, writing, speaking, listening, viewing and representing</li> <li>• Explore language forms and structures in a range of academic, personal, social, historical, cultural and workplace contexts.</li> </ul>

The content of this table was drawn from:

- NSC curriculum aims were drawn from the "aims" subsection of the subject curriculum guide.
- IB DP curriculum aims were drawn from the "aims" subsection of the subject curriculum guide.
- Cambridge International AS/A Level curriculum aims were drawn from the "aims" subsection of the subject curriculum guide.
- KCSE aims were drawn from the "General Objectives" bullet point list in the curriculum guide, as there is no specific "aims" or "purpose" subsections.
- Zimbabwe Forms 5-6 aims were drawn from the "aims" subsection of the subject curriculum guide.
- NSW curriculum aims were drawn from the "Rationale" and "Aim" subsections of the subject curriculum guide.

A similarity between the NSC English FAL, IB DP Language B, Cambridge International AS/A Level English Language, and KCSE English subject aims is that they consider language in relation to audience, purpose, and context. For example, one of the NSC English FAL subject aims is for students to "acquire the language

<sup>19</sup> Zimbabwe Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education (2015), *Communication Skills Syllabus Forms 5-6 2015-2022*, p. 2.

<sup>20</sup> NSW Education Standards Authority (2017), *English EAL/D Stage 6 Syllabus*, pp. 11, 14.



skills necessary to communicate accurately and appropriately taking into account audience, purpose and context”<sup>21</sup>, which closely correlates with a listed IB DP Language B subject aim, to “Enable students to communicate in the language they have studied in a range of contexts and for a variety of purposes”<sup>22</sup>, whilst the Cambridge International AS/A Level English Language curriculum aims to develop “a critical and informed response to texts in a range of forms, styles, contexts and audiences”.<sup>23</sup>

The NSC English FAL and IB DP Language B subject aims are similar in their consideration of the role of language in relation to the broader acquisition of knowledge. The IB DP Language B subject aims take a more interdisciplinary approach to this theme, focusing on the “importance of language in relation to other areas of knowledge”, rather than “learning across the curriculum” in general, as per NSC English FAL.<sup>24</sup> A further similarity between the NSC English FAL and IB DP Language B subject aims is that they both include a global perspectives component, encouraging students to “find out more about themselves and the world around them” (NSC English FAL) and “Develop international-mindedness” (IB DP Language B).<sup>25</sup>

The issues and topics of the NSC English FAL subject aims differ from those listed for the ZIMSEC Communication Skills and NSW HSC EAL/D courses. Whilst the NSC English FAL subject aims include a component that engages students with ethical issues and critical reading, the ZIMSEC Communication Skills and NSW HSC EAL/D courses tend to centre on exploring

political-economic and cultural matters. An additional difference between the NSC English FAL and ZIMSEC Communication Skills subject aims is that the latter includes content that explores indigenous African philosophy (Unhu / Ubuntu / Vumunhu) as a topic.<sup>26</sup>

The NSC English FAL subject aims include a productive / receptive language skills component, in this respect resembling the subject aims of the KCSE English, ZIMSEC Communication Skills, and NSW HSC EAL/D courses. Where the NSC English FAL subject aims differ is in their consideration of these skills in relation to visually impaired students. For example, reading is listed with viewing, whilst writing is paired with presenting the language. This suggests an inclusive perspective in the NSC English FAL subject aims. Comparatively, the NSC English FAL qualification bases its subject aims to a lesser extent on productive / receptive abilities than KCSE English. Conversely, the IB DP Language B and Cambridge International AS/A Level English Language subject aims reference the four language modalities less than NSC English FAL.

## Learning Outcomes

The following table lists the learning outcomes named in each programme’s subject documentation. Where curriculum documentation does not explicitly articulate learning outcomes with, for example, a subheading titled “Learning Outcomes”, Ecctis have selected lists or extracts which most closely resemble the expected knowledge, skills and

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<sup>21</sup> National Curriculum Statement (NCS) (2011), *Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement Grades 10-12 English First Additional Language*, p. 9.

<sup>22</sup> International Baccalaureate (2020), *DP: Language B Guide*, p. 13.

<sup>23</sup> Cambridge International Examinations (2016), *Syllabus: Cambridge International AS & A-Level English Language*, p. 15.

<sup>24</sup> International Baccalaureate (2020), *DP: Language B Guide*, p. 13; National Curriculum Statement (NCS) (2011), *Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement Grades 10-12 English First Additional Language*, p. 9.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

<sup>26</sup> Viriri, M. & Viriri, N. E. (2018), The Teaching of Unhu / Ubuntu Through Shona Novels in Zimbabwean Secondary Schools: A Case for Masvingo Urban District. *Journal of African Studies and Development*, 10 (8), pp. 101-114.

competencies that students should have on completion of a programme of study. This is intended to enable comparison between the different curricula as effectively as possible.

Where something not labelled “Learning Outcomes” has been used, this is explained in the descriptive analysis underneath the table.

**Table 3: Comparison of learning outcomes**

	Learning Outcomes
<p><b>NSC English (FAL)<sup>27</sup></b></p>	<p>“Listening and Speaking</p> <p>Listening</p> <p>Listening process</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pre-listening: strategies to prepare learners for listening, e.g. activating background knowledge, predicting, getting physically prepared</li> <li>• During listening:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Listening for specific information and comprehension</li> <li>• Listening for critical analysis and evaluation</li> <li>• Listening for interaction</li> <li>• Listening for appreciation</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Post-listening: answering questions, reviewing notes, using information (e.g. to label a diagram), summarising, drawing inference and conclusions, evaluating, responding critically</li> </ul> <p>Speaking</p> <p>The speaking process</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planning, researching and organising ideas and information</li> <li>• Practising and presenting: showing awareness of audience, purpose, and context; using appropriate and accurate language structures and conventions; clear delivery, using appropriate verbal and non-verbal techniques Features and conventions of oral communication texts</li> <li>• Informal speaking and group work: discussion, conversation, dialogue, group work, unprepared reading aloud</li> <li>• Formal speaking and presenting: prepared speech, unprepared speech, reading aloud and interview</li> <li>• Argument and viewpoint: panel discussion and debate</li> <li>• Speaking for specific purposes/contexts: giving directions, instructions, introducing a speaker, offering a vote of thanks Examples of expressions used in conversational English</li> </ul> <p>Reading and Viewing</p> <p>Reading process:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pre-reading: strategies to prepare learners for reading, e.g. activating background knowledge, predicting, skimming headings</li> <li>• Reading: close reading of text supported by teacher's questions; development of strategies, e.g. inferencing; focus on word choice, use of language, imagery, etc.</li> <li>• Post-reading: interpreting the text as a whole using strategies such as synthesising, summarising, comparing and contrasting, inferencing, evaluating, drawing conclusions, expressing opinions Intensive reading of literary and non-literary text Extended independent reading and viewing</li> </ul>

<sup>27</sup> National Curriculum Statement (NCS) 2011: *Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement Grades 10-12 English First Additional Language*, pp.10-11.

	Learning Outcomes
	<p>Writing and Presenting</p> <p>Process writing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planning/Pre-writing-analysing the structure and language features of the text type</li> <li>• Drafting, revising, editing, proof-reading, presenting</li> </ul> <p>Language structures and conventions during the writing process</p> <p>Text types – structures and language features</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cognitive academic: information report, procedures, explanation, persuasion/argumentative, reflective/discussion/ discursive, review</li> <li>• Creative: narrative, descriptive • Personal/interpersonal: diary/journal, personal letter, personal recount, invitation, obituary</li> <li>• Business: business letter, pamphlet, CV, form-filling, agenda, minutes, flyer, advertisement</li> </ul> <p>Language structures and conventions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Language structures and conventions are taught in the context of the above skills and also as part of a systematic language development programme. This should include word choice, spelling, sentence construction, punctuation, paragraph writing, revision of grammatical structures taught in earlier grades, and the introduction of new language structures".</li> </ul>
<b>IB DP Language B (HL/SL)<sup>28</sup></b>	<p>"1. Communicate clearly and effectively in a range of contexts and for a variety of purposes.</p> <p>2. Understand and use language appropriate to a range of interpersonal and/or intercultural contexts and audiences.</p> <p>3. Understand and use language to express and respond to a range of ideas with fluency and accuracy.</p> <p>4. Identify, organize and present ideas on a range of topics.</p> <p>5. Understand, analyse and reflect upon a range of written, audio, visual and audio-visual texts".</p>
<b>Cambridge International AS/A Level English Language<sup>29</sup></b>	<p>"AO1: read with understanding and analyse texts in a variety of forms</p> <p>AO2: demonstrate a knowledge and understanding of English language (including, at A Level, spoken language) and its use in a variety of contexts</p> <p>AO3: write clearly, accurately, creatively and effectively for different purposes/audiences, using different forms".</p>
<b>KCSE English<sup>30</sup></b>	<p>The general outcomes of KCSE English are that upon completion, students will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "Listen attentively for comprehension and respond appropriately</li> <li>• Use listening skills to infer and interpret meaning correctly from spoken discourse</li> <li>• Listen and process information from a variety of sources</li> <li>• Speak accurately, fluently, confidently and appropriately in a variety of contexts</li> <li>• Use non-verbal cues effectively in speaking</li> <li>• Read fluently and efficiently</li> <li>• Appreciate the importance of reading for a variety of purposes</li> <li>• Develop a life-long interest in reading on a wide range of subjects</li> <li>• Read and comprehend literary materials</li> </ul>

<sup>28</sup> International Baccalaureate (2020), DP: Language B Guide, p. 14.

<sup>29</sup> Cambridge International Examinations (2016), *Syllabus: Cambridge International AS & A-Level English Language*, p. 15.

<sup>30</sup> Kenya National Examinations Council (2014), *Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education: Examination Regulations and Syllabuses*, p. 29.

	Learning Outcomes
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read and analyse literary works from Kenya, East Africa, Africa and the rest of the world, and relate to the experiences in these works</li> <li>• Appreciate and respect own as well as other people's culture</li> <li>• Make an efficient use of a range of sources of information including libraries, dictionaries, encyclopaedias and the internet</li> <li>• Use correct spelling, punctuation and paragraphing</li> <li>• Use a variety of sentence structures and vocabulary correctly</li> <li>• Communicate appropriately in functional and creative writing</li> <li>• Write neatly, legibly and effectively</li> <li>• Use correct grammatical and idiomatic forms of English</li> <li>• Think creatively and critically</li> <li>• Appreciate the special way literary writers use language</li> <li>• Appreciate the universal human values contained in literary works".</li> </ul> <p>In addition, the KCSE curriculum details a number of specific outcomes that are arranged into four categories: listening and speaking, grammar, reading, and writing. Each category specifies between 11-16 associated outcomes. For example, two of the listed listening and speaking outcomes are that students: "a) demonstrate awareness that spelling in English may or may not be related to pronunciation" and "b) pronounce correctly sounds they find problematic".</p>
<b>ZIMSEC Forms 5-6 Communication Skills<sup>31</sup></b>	<p>"By the end of Forms 5 and 6, learners should be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• write with clarity, accuracy, relevance and in a logical manner for various purposes</li> <li>• communicate orally with confidence in various academic, social, professional and other situations</li> <li>• use language accurately and appropriately for different purposes</li> <li>• read intensively and extensively</li> <li>• respond critically to questions on various texts</li> <li>• demonstrate the values of Unhu/Ubuntu/Vumunhu and good citizenry</li> <li>• distinguish between fact and opinion</li> <li>• summarise oral and written texts</li> <li>• evaluate various texts orally or in written responses</li> <li>• participate actively in discussions, debates and other oral activities</li> <li>• develop academic and professional writing skills in order to present reasoned and mature arguments".</li> </ul>
<b>NSW HSC EAL/D<sup>32</sup></b>	<p>The learning outcomes of the NSW HSC EAL/D course are divided into two categories:</p> <p><b>Knowledge, Understanding, and Skills</b></p> <p>"Through responding to and composing a wide range of texts and through the close study of texts, students develop knowledge, understanding and skills in order to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communicate through speaking, listening, reading, writing, viewing, and representing</li> <li>• Use language to shape and make meaning according to purpose, audience, and context</li> <li>• Think in ways that are imaginative, creative, interpretive, and critical</li> <li>• Express themselves and their relationships with others and their world</li> <li>• Learn and reflect on their learning through their study of English".</li> </ul>

<sup>31</sup> Zimbabwe Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education (2015), *Communication Skills Syllabus Forms 5-6 2015-2022*, p. 2.

<sup>32</sup> NSW Education Standards Authority (2017), *English EAL/D Stage 6 Syllabus*, p. 15.

	Learning Outcomes
	<p><b>Values and Attitudes</b></p> <p>“Students value and appreciate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The importance of the English language as a key to learning</li> <li>• The personal enrichment to be gained from a love of English, literature and learning</li> <li>• The power of language to explore and express views of themselves as well as the social, cultural, ethical, moral, spiritual, and aesthetic dimensions of human experiences</li> <li>• The power of effective communication using the language modes of speaking, listening, reading, writing, viewing, and representing</li> <li>• The role of language in developing positive interaction and cooperation with others</li> <li>• The diversity and aesthetics of language through literary and other texts</li> <li>• The independence gained from thinking imaginatively, creatively, interpretively and critically”.</li> </ul>

Where learning outcomes were drawn from:

- NSC curriculum learning outcomes were drawn from the “overview of the language curriculum” subsection of the subject curriculum guide.
- IB DP curriculum learning outcomes were drawn from the “assessment objectives” subsection of the subject curriculum guide.
- Cambridge International AS/A Level curriculum learning outcomes were drawn from the “assessment objectives” subsection of the subject curriculum guide.
- KCSE learning outcomes were drawn from the “General Objectives” bullet point list in the curriculum guide, as there is no specific “learning outcomes” subsections.
- Zimbabwe Forms 5-6 learning outcomes were drawn from the “syllabus objectives” subsections of the subject curriculum guide.
- NSW HSC curriculum learning outcomes were drawn from “Objectives” subsections of the subject curriculum guide.

The NSC English FAL, IB DP Language B, Cambridge International AS/A Level English Language, and KCSE English syllabi do not contain sections explicitly labelled as learning outcomes. As such, the information included in the above table is sourced from the sections of each syllabus that outline the skills and knowledge expected upon completion of the programmes of study.

The NSC English FAL language skills are outlined more extensively than those listed in the syllabi of the international comparators. The skills listed in the NSC English FAL syllabus are structured on the four language modalities, in this respect resembling the competencies listed in the Cambridge International AS/A Level English Language, ZIMSEC Communication Skills, KCSE English and NSW HSC EAL/D syllabi. Where the NSC English FAL language skills differ is that they are arranged into categories based on the different phases of a communicative circuit: for example, pre-listening, during listening, and post-listening. The NSC FAL competencies further differ from the international comparators in that the wording of the outlined language skills (for example, “activating background knowledge”) suggests an element of constructivist / Vygotskian theoretical underpinning.<sup>33</sup>

The listed NSC English FAL language skills contrast with the outlined IB DP Language B competencies: where the former details different components of productive / receptive abilities, the latter tends to adopt a more holistic perspective focusing on language use. To the extent that the IB DP Language B skills reference productive and receptive modalities, these are related to “written, audio, visual and audio-visual texts”, rather than specific student competencies.<sup>34</sup> The NSC FAL competencies

<sup>33</sup> National Curriculum Statement (NCS) (2011), *Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement Grades 10-12 English First Additional Language*, pp. 10-11.

<sup>34</sup> International Baccalaureate (2020), *DP: Language B Guide*, p. 14.

further differ from the IB DP Language B, Cambridge International AS/A Level English Language, and NSW HSC EAL/D language skills in their inclusion of a grammar component. In this respect, the NSC English FAL language skills bear a closer resemblance to the outlined KCSE English competencies, which also focus on grammar.

A similarity between the NSC English FAL, Cambridge International AS/A Level English Language, KCSE English and NSW HSC EAL/D competencies is that they include a creative language skills component. Where the NSC English FAL creative language skills differ is in their focus on the structural features of creative texts; creativity is included in the Cambridge

International AS/A Level English Language competencies in the form of creative writing, KCSE English creative skills centre on creative thinking and writing, whilst the NSW HSC EAL/D creativity component involves creative thinking.

## **Content Areas**

The following table summarises the different content areas included within each of the comparison subjects. For ease of comparison, content areas have been grouped by Ecctis. The groups in the table below are labels assigned by Ecctis according to analysis of subject documentation and they do not necessarily reflect the groupings or labels used in the subject documentation for each programme.

**Table 4: Comparison of content areas**

NSC English (FAL) <sup>35</sup>	Productive Skills	Receptive Skills	Grammar	Other
<p><b>Speaking</b> The speaking process Informal speaking and group work Formal speaking and presenting Planning, researching and organising Practicing and presenting Features and conventions of oral communication texts Argument and viewpoint Speaking for specific purposes and contexts Expressions</p> <p><b>Writing and Presenting</b> Planning / pre-writing Drafting Revising, editing, proofreading and presenting</p> <p><b>Language structures and conventions during the writing process</b> Register, style and voice Word choice Paragraph writing</p> <p><b>Essays, Longer and Shorter Transactional Texts</b> Longer and shorter transactional texts Transactional texts</p>	<p><b>Listening</b> Pre-listening During listening Listening for specific information Listen for critical analysis and evaluation Listen for interaction Listen for appreciation Post-listening</p> <p><b>Reading and Viewing</b> Pre-reading Reading Post-reading Intensive reading of literary and non-literary texts Intensive reading of shorter written texts for comprehension at a word level Intensive reading of shorter written texts for comprehension at a sentence and paragraph level Intensive reading of shorter written texts for comprehension at a whole text level Intensive reading of shorter written texts for summary and note taking Intensive reading of shorter written texts for critical language awareness Intensive reading of multimodal and visual texts Intensive reading focusing on the formal study of literature Extended independent reading and viewing</p>	<p>Sentence construction Language conventions</p> <p><b>Language Structures and Conventions</b> Nouns Determiners Pronouns Adjectives Adverbs Prepositions Verbs Verb tenses Concord Modals Conditional sentences Passive voice Reported speech Punctuation Spelling</p>	<p><b>Critical Language Awareness</b></p>	

<sup>35</sup> National Curriculum Statement (NCS) (2011). *Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement Grades 10-12 English First Additional Language*. pp. 19-48.



IB DP Language B (HL/SL) <sup>36</sup>	Productive Skills	Receptive Skills	Grammar	Other
	<p><b>Language</b> "Communication is evidenced through productive and interactive communicative skills across a range of contexts and purposes".</p> <p><b>Texts</b> "Students must be able to understand and produce a variety of text types". These include personal, professional / transactional and media texts. The "study of at least two literary texts (originally written in the target language) is compulsory for language B at HL".</p>	<p><b>Language</b> "Communication is evidenced through receptive, productive and interactive communicative skills across a range of contexts and purposes".</p> <p><b>Texts</b> "Students must be able to understand and produce a variety of text types". These include personal, professional / transactional and media texts. The "study of at least two literary texts (originally written in the target language) is compulsory for language B at HL".</p>	<p>"Teaching grammar should not be an aim in itself. In order for the students to achieve the objectives as stated in the curriculum, and be able to demonstrate proficiency of the assessment criteria, grammar should always be taught in context".</p>	<p><b>Themes</b> There are five prescriptive themes which are used to provide a framework for language acquisition:</p> <p><b>Identities</b> "The guiding principle of this theme is to explore the nature of the self and what it is to be human".</p> <p><b>Experiences</b> "The guiding principle of this theme is to explore and tell the stories of the events, experiences and journeys that shape our lives".</p> <p><b>Human Ingenuity</b> "The guiding principle of this theme is to explore the ways in which human creativity and innovation affect our world".</p>



	Productive Skills	Receptive Skills	Grammar	Other
<b>IB DP Language B (HL/SL)<sup>36</sup> continued</b>				<p><b>Social Organisation</b> “The guiding principle of this theme is to explore the ways in which groups of people organize themselves, or are organized, through common systems or interests”.</p> <p><b>Sharing the Planet</b> “The guiding principle of this theme is to explore the challenges and opportunities faced by individuals and communities in the modern world.”</p>
<b>Cambridge International AS/A Level English Language<sup>37</sup></b>	<p>“write for a specific purpose and/or audience using appropriate vocabulary, tone, and style”.</p> <p>“write imaginatively, using language to create deliberate effects, e.g. in conveying a mood or describing a character”.</p> <p>“present a view clearly, construct an argument carefully, and write coherently and persuasively”.</p>	<p>“identify distinguishing features of the texts, relate them to the function and context of the writing, and organise information”.</p>	<p>“comment on aspects such as vocabulary, figurative language (e.g. use of metaphor and simile), word ordering and sentence structure, formality/informality of tone”.</p>	<p>“communication of attitudes, bias or prejudice, structure”</p> <p>“compare style and language of the texts”.</p> <p><b>Spoken Language and Social Groups</b></p> <p><b>English as a Global Language</b></p> <p><b>Language Acquisition by Children and Teenagers</b></p>

<sup>37</sup> Cambridge International Examinations (2016), *Syllabus: Cambridge International AS & A-Level English Language*, pp. 16-18.

	Productive Skills	Receptive Skills	Grammar	Other
<b>KCSE English<sup>38</sup></b>	<p><b>Pronunciation</b></p> <p><b>Writing</b> Handwriting Commonly misspelt words Sentence building skills and paragraphing Punctuation Personal writing Social writing Public writing Study writing Creative writing Institutional writing</p>	<p><b>Listening Comprehension and Note Taking</b></p> <p><b>Reading</b> Reading skills Intensive reading Extensive reading Comprehension skills</p>	<p><b>Grammar</b> Nouns Pronouns Verbs Adjectives Adverbs Prepositions Conjunctions Phrases Simple sentences Clauses Direct and indirect speech</p>	<p><b>Etiquette</b></p> <p><b>Non-verbal cues</b></p>
<b>ZIMSEC Forms 5-6 Communication Skills<sup>39</sup></b>	<p><b>Speaking / Signing</b> Registers Speeches Debates Discussions</p> <p><b>Writing / Brailing</b> Basics of essay writing Free essay writing Guided writing Informal writing</p>	<p><b>Listening and Observing</b> Listening comprehension Oral Communication Conversations Critical listening</p> <p><b>Reading / Signing</b> Intensive reading Extensive reading Skimming and scanning</p>		Use of ICT

<sup>38</sup> Kenya National Examinations Council (2014), Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education: Examination Regulations and Syllabuses, pp. 30-37.

<sup>39</sup> Zimbabwe Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education (2015), Communication Skills Syllabus Forms 5-6 2015-2022, p. 12.

	Productive Skills	Receptive Skills	Grammar	Other
<p><b>HSC English as an Additional Language or Dialect<sup>40</sup></b></p>	<p><b>Focus on Writing (Year 12)</b></p> <p>Communicate information, ideas and opinions in familiar personal, social and academic contexts</p> <p>Respond to and compose increasingly complex texts for, interpretation, critical analysis and imaginative expression</p> <p>Use and evaluate processes, skills and knowledge necessary for responding to and composing a range of texts in different media</p> <p>Use, evaluate and justify processes, skills and knowledge necessary for responding to and composing a range of texts in different media</p>	<p><b>Language and Texts in Context (Year 11)</b></p> <p><b>Close Study of Text (Year 11)</b></p> <p><b>Texts and Human Experiences (Year 12)</b></p> <p><b>Close Study of Text (Year 12)</b></p> <p>Think creatively, interpretively and critically to respond to and represent complex ideas, information and arguments in a range of texts</p> <p>Understand and assess the ways texts can represent personal and public worlds</p> <p>Integrate understanding of the ways texts can represent personal and public worlds</p> <p>Identify, explain and reflect on cultural references and perspectives in texts and examine their effects on meaning</p>	<p>Identify and use language forms, features and structures of texts appropriate to a range of purposes, audiences and contexts, analysing their effect on meaning</p>	<p><b>Texts and Society (Year 11)</b></p> <p><b>Language, Identity and Culture (Year 12)</b></p> <p>Apply knowledge, skills and understanding of literary devices, language concepts and mechanics into different contexts</p> <p>Investigate and explain the relationships between texts</p> <p><b>Optional teacher-developed module (Year 11)</b></p> <p>Reflect on, assess and monitor own learning and develop processes to become an independent learner</p>

<sup>40</sup> NSW Education Standards Authority (2017), *English EAL/D Stage 6 Syllabus*, pp. 34-74.

In the above table, the text written in bold refers to the top-level content categories that are listed in the qualification syllabi. The productive and receptive language skills categories used to sort the qualification content were selected due to the centrality of these abilities to second or additional language English curricula. Grammar is included as a category as it also constitutes a core component of language teaching and is approached in various ways with a varying degree of emphasis by the selected qualification providers.

NSC English FAL content is primarily based on material covering productive and receptive skills, whilst including a smaller amount of grammar focused units. In this respect, NSC English FAL content is similar to that of the NSW HSC EAL/D qualification. Where the NSW HSC EAL/D productive and receptive content tends to centre on texts, the NSC English FAL productive and receptive units structure these skills in relation to the different phases of a communicative circuit (for example, "Pre-reading, Reading, Post-reading").<sup>41</sup>

Similar to NSC English FAL, the KCSE English subject content includes a substantial productive, receptive, and grammatical skills component. The KCSE English content differs in that its productive content focuses primarily on writing, whilst the receptive content is principally based on reading; the NSC English FAL content is distributed more evenly across the four language modalities. KCSE English also includes a comparatively smaller amount of receptive skills-based content than the NSC English FAL qualification. Similarly, the Cambridge International AS/A Level English Language productive skills content differs from that of the NSC English FAL curriculum in

that it predominantly focuses on writing. The NSC English FAL content further differs from the Cambridge International AS/A Level English Language material through the latter's inclusion of linguistics and psycholinguistics teaching units (for example, "Spoken Language and Social Groups" and "Language Acquisition by Children and Teenagers").<sup>42</sup>

Like the NSC English FAL, the ZIMSEC Communication Skills content is principally based on productive and receptive skills. A difference between the two qualifications is that the ZIMSEC Communication Skills productive and receptive skills content includes equivalent communicative modalities for visually impaired students, for example: speaking / signing and writing / braille.<sup>43</sup> Furthermore, the content of the two qualifications differs in that no grammar units are listed for the ZIMSEC Communication Skills. The NSC English FAL productive, receptive, and grammatical skills content also contrasts markedly with the teaching material used for IB DP Language B. Where the NSC English FAL productive and receptive skills content is based on the separate components associated with these modalities, the IB DP Language B content covers these abilities holistically by integrating them around certain themes and tasks. For example, five prescriptive themes "are used to provide a framework for language acquisition", whilst grammar "should not be an aim in itself", rather it "should always be taught in context".<sup>44</sup>

In summary, the content of NSC English FAL primarily covers material based on productive and receptive skills. In this respect, it is broadly similar to the content covered in the NSW HSC EAL/D, KCSE English, and ZIMSEC Communication Skills qualifications. The content of these curricula tends to differ from the NSC

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<sup>41</sup> National Curriculum Statement (NCS) (2011), *Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement Grades 10-12 English First Additional Language*, pp. 19-48.

<sup>42</sup> Cambridge International Examinations (2016), *Syllabus: Cambridge International AS & A-Level English Language*, pp. 16-18.

<sup>43</sup> Zimbabwe Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education (2015), *Communication Skills Syllabus Forms 5-6 2015-2022*, p. 12.

<sup>44</sup> International Baccalaureate (2018), *DP: Language B Teacher Support Material*, pp. 6-8.

English FAL teaching material to the extent that it covers the different language modalities to varying degrees. The NSC English FAL content also differs from the IB DP Language B material: the former covering individualised components of productive and receptive skills and the latter taking a more holistic approach.

## Assessment Objectives

The table below provides a list of the subject-specific assessment objectives for each subject. Where curriculum documentation does not

explicitly articulate assessment objectives with, for example, a subheading titled “Assessment Objectives”, Ecctis have selected lists or extracts which most closely resemble the knowledge, skills and competencies that students are assessed on. This is intended to enable comparison between the different curricula as effectively as possible. Where something not labelled “Assessment Objectives” has been used to stand-in for assessment objectives, this is explained in the descriptive analysis underneath the table.

**Table 5: Comparison of assessment objectives**

	Assessment Objectives
<b>NSC English (FAL)<sup>45</sup></b>	<p>The CAPS document provides a tabulated list of the requirements of the grade 12 programme of assessment. The cognitive levels used to structure this table (alongside activities listed and percentages of the assessment task) are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Literal (level 1) and Reorganisation (level 2) – 40%</li> <li>• Inference (level 3) – 40%</li> <li>• Evaluation (level 4) and Appreciation (level 5) – 20%.</li> </ul> <p>In addition to this, the Learning Outcomes of NSC English are:</p> <p>“Listening and Speaking</p> <p>Listening</p> <p>Listening process</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pre-listening: strategies to prepare learners for listening, e.g. activating background knowledge, predicting, getting physically prepared</li> <li>• During listening: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Listening for specific information and comprehension</li> <li>• Listening for critical analysis and evaluation</li> <li>• Listening for interaction</li> <li>• Listening for appreciation</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Post-listening: answering questions, reviewing notes, using information (e.g. to label a diagram), summarising, drawing inference and conclusions, evaluating, responding critically</li> </ul> <p>Speaking</p> <p>The speaking process</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planning, researching and organising ideas and information</li> <li>• Practising and presenting: showing awareness of audience, purpose, and context; using appropriate and accurate language structures and conventions; clear delivery, using appropriate verbal and non-verbal techniques</li> <li>• Features and conventions of oral communication texts</li> <li>• Informal speaking and group work: discussion, conversation, dialogue, group work, unprepared reading aloud</li> </ul>

<sup>45</sup> National Curriculum Statement (NCS) (2011), *Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement Grades 10-12 English First Additional Language*, pp. 10-11.

	Assessment Objectives
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Formal speaking and presenting: prepared speech, unprepared speech, reading aloud and interview</li> <li>• Argument and viewpoint: panel discussion and debate</li> <li>• Speaking for specific purposes/contexts: giving directions, instructions, introducing a speaker, offering a vote of thanks Examples of expressions used in conversational English</li> </ul> <p>Reading and Viewing</p> <p>Reading process:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pre-reading: strategies to prepare learners for reading, e.g. activating background knowledge, predicting, skimming headings</li> <li>• Reading: close reading of text supported by teacher's questions; development of strategies, e.g. inferencing; focus on word choice, use of language, imagery, etc.</li> <li>• Post-reading: interpreting the text as a whole using strategies such as synthesising, summarising, comparing and contrasting, inferencing, evaluating, drawing conclusions, expressing opinions</li> <li>• Intensive reading of literary and non-literary text</li> <li>• Extended independent reading and viewing</li> </ul> <p>Writing and Presenting</p> <p>Process writing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planning/Pre-writing-analysing the structure and language features of the text type</li> <li>• Drafting, revising, editing, proof-reading, presenting</li> </ul> <p>Language structures and conventions during the writing process</p> <p>Text types – structures and language features</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cognitive academic: information report, procedures, explanation, persuasion/argumentative, reflective/discussion/ discursive, review</li> <li>• Creative: narrative, descriptive • Personal/interpersonal: diary/journal, personal letter, personal recount, invitation, obituary</li> <li>• Business: business letter, pamphlet, CV, form-filling, agenda, minutes, flyer, advertisement</li> </ul> <p>Language structures and conventions</p> <p>Language structures and conventions are taught in the context of the above skills and also as part of a systematic language development programme. This should include word choice, spelling, sentence construction, punctuation, paragraph writing, revision of grammatical structures taught in earlier grades, and the introduction of new language structures".</p>
<p><b>IB DP Language B (HL/SL)<sup>46</sup></b></p>	<p>The assessment objectives for the IB DP Language B are that students will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Communicate clearly and effectively in a range of contexts and for a variety of purposes</li> <li>• Understand and use language appropriate to a range of interpersonal and/or intercultural contexts and audiences</li> <li>• Understand and use language to express and respond to a range of ideas with fluency and accuracy</li> <li>• Identify, organize and present ideas on a range of topics</li> <li>• Understand, analyse and reflect upon a range of written, audio, visual and audio-visual texts”.</li> </ul>

<sup>46</sup> International Baccalaureate (2020), *DP: Language B Guide*. p. 14.

	Assessment Objectives
<b>Cambridge International AS/A Level English Language</b> <sup>47</sup>	<p>“Candidates are assessed on their ability to:</p> <p>AO1: read with understanding and analyse texts in a variety of forms</p> <p>AO2: demonstrate a knowledge and understanding of English language (including, at A Level, spoken language) and its use in a variety of contexts</p> <p>AO3: write clearly, accurately, creatively and effectively for different purposes/ audiences, using different forms”.</p>
<b>KCSE English</b> <sup>48</sup>	<p>The general objectives of KCSE English are that upon completion, students will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Listen attentively for comprehension and respond appropriately</li> <li>• Use listening skills to infer and interpret meaning correctly from spoken discourse</li> <li>• Listen and process information from a variety of sources</li> <li>• Speak accurately, fluently, confidently and appropriately in a variety of contexts</li> <li>• Use non-verbal cues effectively in speaking</li> <li>• Read fluently and efficiently</li> <li>• Appreciate the importance of reading for a variety of purposes</li> <li>• Develop a life-long interest in reading on a wide range of subjects</li> <li>• Read and comprehend literary materials</li> <li>• Read and analyse literary works from Kenya, East Africa, Africa and the rest of the world, and relate to the experiences in these works</li> <li>• Appreciate and respect own as well as other people’s culture</li> <li>• Make an efficient use of a range of sources of information including libraries, dictionaries, encyclopaedias and the internet</li> <li>• Use correct spelling, punctuation and paragraphing</li> <li>• Use a variety of sentence structures and vocabulary correctly</li> <li>• Communicate appropriately in functional and creative writing</li> <li>• Write neatly, legibly and effectively</li> <li>• Use correct grammatical and idiomatic forms of English</li> <li>• Think creatively and critically</li> <li>• Appreciate the special way literary writers use language</li> <li>• Appreciate the universal human values contained in literary works”.</li> </ul> <p>The KCSE curriculum also details a number of specific objectives that are arranged into four categories: listening and speaking, grammar, reading, and writing. Each category specifies between 11-16 associated objectives. For example, two of the listed listening and speaking objectives are that students: “a) demonstrate awareness that spelling in English may or may not be related to pronunciation” and “b) pronounce correctly sounds they find problematic”.</p> <p>In addition, KCSE English includes three written examination papers. Paper one lists the assessed functional skills as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Functional writing</li> <li>• Cloze test</li> <li>• Oral skills</li> </ul> <p>Paper two is designed to assess reading comprehension, literary skills and grammar. The final paper is based on imaginative composition and essay writing.</p>

<sup>47</sup> Cambridge International Examinations (2016), *Syllabus: Cambridge International AS & A-Level English Language*, p. 15.

<sup>48</sup> Kenya National Examinations Council (2014), *Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education: Examination Regulations and Syllabuses*, p. 29-36.

	Assessment Objectives
<p><b>ZIMSEC Forms 5-6 Communication Skills<sup>49</sup></b></p>	<p>“The following assessment objectives outline the skills which will be assessed during and at the end of the two-year programme:</p> <p>Writing Skills</p> <p>During and at the end of the two-year programme, learners should be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• write persuasive (argumentative), balanced (discursive) and informative (factual/expository) essays</li> <li>• write interview scripts, project proposals, research projects, curriculum vitae, letters, speeches, reports, articles and memoranda from notes, texts, diagrams, statistical data, and graphs</li> <li>• amplify given information</li> <li>• write with grammatical accuracy</li> <li>• use discourse markers correctly to create a sense of cohesion and coherence within and among paragraphs</li> <li>• write in a style and register appropriate to the subject matter</li> <li>• cite sources correctly in their written work</li> </ul> <p>Reading/Signing</p> <p>Learners should be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• follow the development of ideas in texts</li> <li>• recognise how language is used in texts to indicate relationships of ideas</li> <li>• distinguish main propositions from exemplifying or qualifying details</li> <li>• deduce information that is implied in texts</li> <li>• infer the contextual meanings of words and phrases</li> <li>• paraphrase ideas from texts</li> <li>• analyse the feelings, qualities and motives of characters and authors in texts</li> <li>• compare, contrast and classify information</li> <li>• summarise specific aspects of texts</li> <li>• read proficiently</li> </ul> <p>Speaking/Signing and Listening/Observing</p> <p>Speaking and listening complement each other and are therefore usually taught together.</p> <p>Speaking/Signing</p> <p>Learners should be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• communicate ideas clearly, accurately and confidently on a variety of topics</li> <li>• debate confidently on topical, cross-cutting and emerging issues</li> <li>• use appropriate tone, intonation and gestures to emphasise points</li> <li>• use appropriate register depending on social situation, audience, subject matter or area being discussed</li> </ul> <p>Listening/Observing</p> <p>Learners should be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• listen with concentration</li> <li>• listen selectively</li> <li>• react appropriately to different oral text types</li> <li>• summarise oral texts”.</li> </ul> <p>The following skills and weightings are identified as a specification grid for paper 2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Simple Recall – 10%</li> <li>• Comprehension – 60%</li> <li>• Analysis, synthesis and evaluation – 30%.</li> </ul>

<sup>49</sup> Zimbabwe Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education (2015), *Communication Skills Syllabus Forms 5-6 2015-2022*, pp. 20-21.



	Assessment Objectives
NSW HSC EAL/D <sup>50</sup>	<p><b>Knowledge and understanding of course content (50%)</b></p> <p><b>Skills in responding to texts and communication of ideas appropriate to audience, purpose and context across all modes (50%)</b></p> <p><b>Knowledge, Understanding, and Skills</b>            “Through responding to and composing a wide range of texts and through the close study of texts, students develop knowledge, understanding and skills in order to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communicate through speaking, listening, reading, writing, viewing, and representing</li> <li>• Use language to shape and make meaning according to purpose, audience, and context</li> <li>• Think in ways that are imaginative, creative, interpretive, and critical</li> <li>• Express themselves and their relationships with others and their world</li> <li>• Learn and reflect on their learning through their study of English”.</li> </ul> <p><b>Values and Attitudes</b>            “Students value and appreciate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The importance of the English language as a key to learning</li> <li>• The personal enrichment to be gained from a love of English, literature and learning</li> <li>• The power of language to explore and express views of themselves as well as the social, cultural, ethical, moral, spiritual, and aesthetic dimensions of human experiences</li> <li>• The power of effective communication using the language modes of speaking, listening, reading, writing, viewing, and representing</li> <li>• The role of language in developing positive interaction and cooperation with others</li> <li>• The diversity and aesthetics of language through literary and other texts</li> <li>• The independence gained from thinking imaginatively, creatively, interpretively and critically”.</li> </ul> <p>Additionally, the assessment objectives of the English EAL/D course aim to develop students’ “knowledge, understanding and skills in order to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communicate through speaking, listening, reading, writing, viewing, and representing</li> <li>• Use language to shape and make meaning according to purpose, audience, and context</li> <li>• Think in ways that are imaginative, creative, interpretive, and critical</li> <li>• Express themselves and their relationships with others and their world</li> <li>• Learn and reflect on their learning through their study of English”.</li> </ul>

Some programmes do not specifically name “assessment objectives”. The content of this table was drawn from:

- NSC curriculum assessment objectives were drawn from the “cognitive levels” information in the subject curriculum guide.
- IB DP curriculum assessment objectives were drawn from the assessment objectives subsections of the subject curriculum guide.
- Cambridge International AS/A Level

curriculum assessment objectives were drawn from the assessment objectives subsection of the subject curriculum guide.

- KCSE assessment objectives were drawn from the “General Objectives” bullet point list in the curriculum guide, as there is no specific “assessment objectives” subsection.
- Zimbabwe Forms 5-6 assessment objectives were drawn from the assessment objectives subsections of the subject curriculum guide.

<sup>50</sup> NSW Education Standards Authority (2017), *English EAL/D Stage 6 Syllabus*, pp. 15-18.

- NSW curricula assessment objectives were drawn from “Objectives” and “Outcomes” subsections of the subject curriculum guide.

The cognitive skills that the NSC English FAL assessments aim to cover are informed by Barrett's Taxonomy. This assessment framework comprises five cognitive levels which are primarily weighted towards Levels One and Two (40% jointly) and Three (40%): these are based on literal, reorganisation, and inferential abilities, respectively. Assessment of the ZIMSEC Communications Skills programme is also informed by a learning taxonomy; however, the classifications in Bloom's Taxonomy, rather

than Barrett's, form the target cognitive skills. These are predominantly weighted towards comprehension (60%), as well as analysis, synthesis and evaluation (30%). In contrast, the NSW HSC EAL assessment objectives allocate an equal weighting between knowledge and understanding of course content (50%), and skills based on responding to texts, communication of ideas appropriate to audience, purpose, and context across all modalities (50%).

## Assessment Methods

The table below demonstrates some key features of the methods used to assess each subject.<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>51</sup> Short answer, open questions are defined as those that typically require an open response, usually consisting of one or two sentences, and are awarded comparatively fewer marks. Assessment items referred to as extended answer, essay-based questions are those that solicit a response in the form of an extended text, essay, or creative piece of writing.

**Table 6: Comparison of assessment methods**

	Assessment Method (External) and Weighting	Assessment Method (Internal) and Weighting	Use of Question Types
<p><b>NSC English (FAL)<sup>52</sup></b></p>	<p>Grade 12 (75% weighting of the external assessment component):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Written examination papers (62.5% weighting)</li> <li>• Paper 1 (2 hours, 20% weighting)–Language in Context</li> <li>• Paper 2 (2 hours, 17.5% weighting)- literature</li> <li>• Paper 3 (2.5 hours, 25% weighting)-Writing</li> <li>• Oral assessment tasks (12.5% weighting)</li> <li>• Comprising: listening, prepared speech, prepared reading aloud, unprepared speech, informal speaking in group (oral tasks conducted over the academic year constitute the external assessment).</li> </ul>	<p>Grades 10-11 (100% weighting of the internal assessment component) where the school-based assessment tasks consist of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Two tests</li> <li>• Seven tasks</li> <li>• One mid-year examination.</li> <li>• The formal examination papers comprise:</li> <li>• Written examination papers (62.5% weighting)</li> <li>• Paper 1 (2 hours)–Language in Context</li> <li>• Paper 2 (2 hours)- literature</li> <li>• Paper 3 (2 hours Grade 10, 2.5 hours Grade 11)-Writing</li> <li>• Oral assessment tasks (12.5% weighting)</li> <li>• Comprising: listening, prepared speech, prepared reading aloud, unprepared speech, informal speaking in group (oral tasks conducted over the academic year constitute the internal assessment)</li> </ul> <p>Grade 12 (25% weighting of the internal assessment component):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Two tests</li> <li>• Seven tasks</li> <li>• Two examinations (mid-year and trial).</li> </ul>	<p>The assessment tasks are structured on a varying range of cognitive levels comprising:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 40% literal and reorganisation skills</li> <li>• 40% inferential skills</li> <li>• 20% evaluative and appreciative abilities.</li> </ul> <p>Examination paper one includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Multipart, multiple-choice, short answer questions based on comprehension</li> <li>• A summarising exercise that involves condensing a textual extract</li> <li>• Short answer / open questions based on language structures and imagery.</li> <li>• Short answer questions based on editing / correcting text.</li> </ul> <p>Examination paper 2 includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Two extended answer / essay-based questions based on literary genres (novels, novellas, dramas and poetry).</li> </ul> <p>Examination paper 3 includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One essay-based question (250-300 words)</li> <li>• An extended answer (120-150 words) by on transactional writing</li> <li>• A mid-length question (80-100 words) based on transactional writing.</li> </ul>

<sup>52</sup> Department of Basic Education Republic of South Africa (2017), *Official Languages: First Additional Language Examination Guidelines Grade 12 2017*; National Curriculum Statement (NCS) (2011). *Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement Grades 10-12 English First Additional Language*, pp. 78-86.

	Assessment Method (External) and Weighting	Assessment Method (Internal) and Weighting	Use of Question Types
<b>NSC English (FAL)<sup>52</sup> continued</b>			<p>The oral assessment includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prepared speech</li> <li>• Prepared reading aloud / unprepared speech / informal speaking in group</li> <li>• Listening questions</li> </ul>
<b>IB DP Language B (HL/SL)<sup>53</sup></b>	<p>At the standard level, external assessment (75% weighting) comprises:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Examination paper 1 (1 hour 15 mins, 25% weighting) – Productive Skills (writing)</li> <li>• Examination paper 2 (1 hour 45 mins, 50% weighting) – Receptive Skills</li> <li>• Consisting of listening comprehension (45 mins, 25% weighting) and reading comprehension (1 hour, 25% weighting).</li> </ul> <p>At the higher level, external assessment (75% weighting) comprises:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Examination paper 1 (1 hour 30 mins, 25% weighting) – Productive Skills (writing)</li> <li>• Examination paper 2 (2 hours, 50% weighting) – Receptive Skills</li> <li>• Consisting of listening comprehension (1 hour, 25% weighting) and reading comprehension (1 hour, 25% weighting).</li> </ul>	<p>At the standard level, internal assessment is weighted at 25% and consists of an individual oral assessment. This involves a conversation with a teacher, based on a visual stimulus, followed by a discussion on an additional theme.</p> <p>At the higher level, internal assessment is weighted at 25% and consists of an individual oral assessment.</p> <p>This involves a conversation with a teacher, based on a previously studied literary extract, followed by a discussion on an additional theme from the syllabus.</p>	<p>Examination paper 1 includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One extended answer (450–600 words) question.</li> </ul> <p>Examination paper 2 includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Multiple-choice audio questions, gap fill questions, short answer questions.</li> </ul>

Cambridge International AS/ A-Level English Language <sup>54</sup>	Assessment Method (External) and Weighting	Assessment Method (Internal) and Weighting	Use of Question Types
	<p>At the AS Level, assessment comprises:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Examination paper 1 (2 hours 15 mins, 25% weighting) – Passages</li> <li>Examination paper 2 (2 hours, 25% weighting) – Writing.</li> </ul> <p>At the A Level, assessment comprises:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Examination paper 3 (2 hours 15 mins, 25% weighting) – Text Analysis</li> <li>Examination paper 4 (2 hours 15 mins, 25% weighting) – Language Topics.</li> </ul>	<p>No internal component is indicated in the Cambridge International AS / A Level English Language syllabus.</p>	<p>Examination paper 1 includes three questions in total. Students are required to selected and answer two. Each question:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consists of two parts</li> <li>The first part requires an extended response and solicits commentary on the writing style of an excerpt</li> <li>The second part is a directed writing task requiring an extended answer of 120-150 words.</li> </ul> <p>Examination paper 2 contains two sections, each with three questions. Students are required to answer one question from each section. Each question:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Requires either one extended answer of between 600-900 words or two linked answers of 300-450 words</li> <li>The tasks are based on narrative or descriptive writing.</li> </ul> <p>Examination paper 3 comprises two questions. Each question:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contains two parts</li> <li>The first section requires an extended answer (120-150 words for the first question, 300-400 words for the second)</li> <li>The second part is based on a comparative analysis of text.</li> </ul> <p>Examination paper 4 contains three essay-based questions; students are required to select and answer two.</p>

<sup>54</sup> Cambridge International Examinations (2016), *Syllabus: Cambridge International AS & A-Level English Language*, pp. 12-19.

	Assessment Method (External) and Weighting	Assessment Method (Internal) and Weighting	Use of Question Types
<b>KCSE English</b> <sup>55</sup>	<p>Examination paper 1 (60 marks, 2 hours).</p> <p>Weighting (according to function skills):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Functional writing - 20 marks</li> <li>• Cloze test - 10 marks</li> <li>• Oral skills - 30 marks.</li> </ul> <p>Examination paper 2 (80 marks, 2.5 hours).</p> <p>Examination paper 3 (60 marks, 2.5 hours)</p> <p>Weighting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Question 1 – imaginative composition 20 marks</li> <li>• Question 2 – essay based question 20 marks</li> <li>• Question 3 – essay based question 20 marks.</li> </ul>	<p>The is no indicated internally assessed component of KCSE English.</p>	<p>Examination paper 1 consists of three questions which include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Functional writing questions (20 marks)</li> <li>• Gap-fill questions (10 marks)</li> <li>• Oral questions (30 marks).</li> </ul> <p>Examination paper 2 consists of four questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The first two questions are based on textual excerpts, one from a prescriptive text, the other from an unseen text</li> <li>• Question three is based on poetry</li> <li>• Question four assesses grammatical skills.</li> </ul> <p>Examination paper 3 consists of three questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The first question is based on creative writing (20 marks)</li> <li>• The second and third questions are essay-based questions (20 marks each).</li> </ul>
<b>ZIMSEC Forms 5-6 Communication Skills</b> <sup>56</sup>	<p>The externally assessed component is weighted at 70% and consists of two examination papers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Paper 1 (2 hours, 35% weighting) – Essay Writing</li> <li>• Paper 2 (2 hours, 35% weighting) – Comprehension and Summary Writing.</li> </ul>	<p>The internally assessed component is weighted at 30%. It consists of a speaking, reading and writing assessment task conducted once per academic year over Forms 5 and 6. These assessment tasks carry a weighting of 15% in each of the two Forms.</p>	<p>Examination paper 1 comprises two sections:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Section A (20 marks) – is based on one essay writing question</li> <li>• Section B (30 marks) – Students select and answer one of eight questions.</li> </ul> <p>Examination paper 2 comprises two sections:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Section A (20 marks) – is based on one summary question linked to an excerpt</li> </ul>

<sup>55</sup> Kenya National Examinations Council (2014). Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education: Examination Regulations and Syllabuses, p. 16.

<sup>56</sup> Zimbabwe Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education (2015). Communication Skills Syllabus Forms 5-6 2015-2022, pp. 21-24.

	Assessment Method (External) and Weighting	Assessment Method (Internal) and Weighting	Use of Question Types
<b>ZIMSEC Forms 5-6 Communication Skills<sup>56</sup> continued</b>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Section B (30 marks) – includes a number of comprehension questions based on an extract of text</li> <li>The paper is based on a skill weighting of 10% recall, 60% comprehension and 30% analysis, synthesis and evaluation.</li> </ul>
<b>NSW HSC EAL/D<sup>57</sup></b>	<p>Examination paper 1 (45 marks, 1.5 hours + 10 mins reading time): module A and Focus on Writing.</p> <p>Weighting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Section 1 -module A and Texts and Human experiences 30 marks</li> <li>Section 2 – Focus on Writing 15 marks.</li> </ul> <p>Examination paper 2 (40 marks, 1 hour + 5 mins reading time): modules B and C.</p> <p>Weighting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Section 1 – module B (Language Identity and Culture) 20 marks</li> <li>Section 2 – module C (Close Study of Texts) 20 marks.</li> </ul> <p>Listening paper (15 marks, 30 mins including listening time).</p>	<p>For “each course, the final HSC mark is a 50:50 combination of the HSC examination and school-based assessment work”.</p> <p>Year 11 EAL/D school-based assessments are weighted 50% towards “Knowledge and understanding of course content”, 50% towards “Skills in responding to texts and communication of ideas appropriate to audience, purpose and context across all modes”.</p> <p>The Year 11 school-based assessment requirements are that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There are three assessment tasks</li> <li>The minimum weighting for an individual task is 20%</li> <li>The maximum weighting for an individual task is 40%</li> </ul>	<p>Examination paper 1 consists of two sections:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Section 1 (30 marks):</li> <li>Part A (15 marks): 3-4 short and mid-length questions based on stimulus and / or unseen texts</li> <li>Part B (15 marks): one extended answer question based on a prescriptive text.</li> <li>Section 2 (15 marks): one extended answer question which may be structured into different parts.</li> </ul> <p>Examination paper 2 contains two parts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Section 1 (20 marks): one extended answer question based on a prescriptive text</li> <li>Section 2 (20 marks): one extended answer question based on a prescriptive text.</li> </ul>

<sup>57</sup> NSW Education Standards Authority (2017), *English EAL/D Stage 6 Syllabus*, pp. 6-10.; NSW Education Standards Authority (2018), *New Stage 6 Syllabuses and Assessment from 2018: Parent Guide*, p. 3.; NSW Education Standards Authority (2017), *Assessment and Reporting in English EAL/D Stage 6*, pp. 9-10; NSW Education Standards Authority (2020), *English EAL/D Paper 1*. Available from: 2020 HSC English (EALD) Paper 1 (educationstandards.nsw.edu.au) [Accessed 30/06/2021]; NSW Education Standards Authority (2020), *English EAL/D Paper 2*. Available from: 2020 HSC English (EALD) Paper 2 (educationstandards.nsw.edu.au) [Accessed 30/06/2021]; NSW Education Standards Authority (2020), *English EAL/D Listening Paper*. Available from: 2020 HSC English (EALD) Listening (educationstandards.nsw.edu.au) [Accessed 30/06/2021].

NSW HSC EAL/D <sup>57</sup> continued	Assessment Method (External) and Weighting	Assessment Method (Internal) and Weighting	Use of Question Types
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Only one task may be a formal written examination</li> <li>• One task must be a multimodal presentation.</li> </ul> <p>Year 12 English EAL/D school-based assessments are weighted 50% towards “Knowledge and understanding of course content”, 50% towards “Skills in responding to texts and communication of ideas appropriate to audience, purpose and context across all modes”.</p> <p>The Year 12 school-based assessment requirements are that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are a maximum of four assessment tasks</li> <li>• The minimum weighting for an individual task is 10%</li> <li>• The maximum weighting for an individual task is 40%</li> <li>• Only one task may be a formal written examination with a maximum weighting of 30%</li> <li>• One task must be a multimodal presentation</li> </ul> <p>One task must focus on the concurrent module, module D (Focus on Writing) with a minimum weighting of 25%.</p>	<p>The listening examination paper includes four to six questions (15 marks):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ranging from short answer to mid-length response questions</li> <li>• Based on students’ responses to a range of verbal cues</li> </ul> <p>Ramping of question difficulty.</p>



The NSC English FAL Grade 12 weighting of 75:25 externally / internally assessed material is the same ratio used by IB DP Language B. The assessment material used by the ZIMSEC Communication Skills qualification operates on a not dissimilar weighting of 70:30 externally / internally assessed components, whilst the NSW HSC EAL/D course balances the two elements at a 50:50 weighting. The NSC English FAL Grade 12 75:25 weighting differs from the approach to assessment taken by the Cambridge International AS/A Level English Language and KCSE English qualifications, which are based entirely on external assessment.

For NSC English FAL, assessment of oral and aural modalities comprises an external component weighted at 12.5% in Grade 12: the lowest weighted external section of the NSC FAL qualification. This is similar to the structuring of the NSW HSC EAL/D assessment, which incorporates a listening paper into its externally assessed material and proportionately allocates it the lowest weighting: 15% of the total external component. In contrast, the oral / aural assessment components of IB DP Language B constitute the internally assessed material, proportionately carrying a higher weighting of 25%. Similarly, speaking skills form part of the internal assessment for ZIMSEC Communication Skills, weighted at 30% (split 15% over Forms 5 and 6 respectively).

The externally assessed NSC English FAL examination papers are assigned a different weighting; the writing skills examination (paper 3) is weighted the highest (25%) and the oral assessment is weighted the lowest (12.5%). This weighting structure does not quite correspond to the fortnightly time allocation of the NSC English FAL curricula, which designates the least amount of time to listening and speaking skills (1 hour - 10%) and the most amount of time to reading and viewing (4 hours - 45%), as opposed to writing and presenting (3 hours - 35%).<sup>58</sup>

Similar to the NSC English FAL examination papers, the IB DP Language B, KCSE English and NSW HSC EAL/D courses all vary the weighting of their respective external assessments. Also similar to the NSC English FAL assessment methods, the NSW HSC EAL/D paper focusing on writing skills (paper 1) constitutes the highest weighted component (45%) of the total available external marks. IB DP Language B differs in that its writing and productive skills assessment (paper 1) is assigned a lower weighting (25%) than the receptive skills examination paper (paper 2 weighted at 50%). A further difference between the NSC English FAL and IB DP Language B assessment methods is that the latter examinations can be sat at either a standard level or higher level.

In addition to its assessments being differentially weighted, the NSC English FAL examination papers vary in the use of question type. For example, paper 1 is based more on short response questions and includes a broader range of question types, whilst papers 2 and 3 focus on extended answer and essay-based questions. This format is similar to how the IB DP Language B, KCSE English and NSW HSC EAL/D assessment papers are structured. The Cambridge International AS/A Level English Language examination papers differ as they are assigned an equal weighting and consistently centre on extended answer and essay-based questions. The ZIMSEC Communication Skills assessments are also equally weighted.

In summary, the NSC English FAL, IB DP Language B and ZIMSEC Communication Skills assessment methods incorporate a similar ratio of internally and externally assessed material. Assessment of the Cambridge International AS/A Level English Language and KCSE English qualifications differs in that they do not include an internally assessed component. The NSC English FAL and NSW HSC EAL/D assessment methods are similar to the extent that both include an oral / aural

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<sup>58</sup> National Curriculum Statement (NCS) (2011), *Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement Grades 10-12 English First Additional Language*, p. 17.

assessment as an external component with a lower weighting. These two curricula also vary the weighting of their examination papers, as do the IB DP Language B and KCSE English. The varying of the types of questions used for assessing NSC English FAL resembles the format used by the IB DP Language B, KCSE English and

NSW HSC EAL/D qualifications. The Cambridge International AS/A Level English Language examination papers differ in that they are equally weighted and primarily focus on extended answer and essay-based questions.

# Key Findings

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## Learning Outcomes and Assessment Objectives

### Scope

The NSC English FAL language skills and content section extends across the four language modalities. Some similar material is included in the outcomes and objectives of the Cambridge International AS/A Level English Language, ZIMSEC Communication Skills, the KCSE English and NSW HSC EAL/D qualifications. The NSC English FAL skills and content are explicitly categorised under productive / receptive skills-based subheadings, where the components associated with each modality are listed. The scope of the ZIMSEC Communication Skills assessment objectives is similar to the extent that different items corresponding to productive and receptive skills-based categories are specified.

The listed NSC English FAL language skills contrast with the IB DP Language B assessment objectives. Where the NSC English FAL skills and content are separated into different components constituting productive and receptive abilities, the IB DP Language B objectives approach this area holistically through the study of “a range of written, audio, visual and audio-visual texts”.<sup>59</sup> The scope of the NSC FAL language skills includes grammar and “language structures and conventions”.<sup>60</sup> This differs from the outcomes and objectives of the IB DP Language B, Cambridge International AS/A Level English Language and NSW HSC EAL/D courses which do not include this focus. In this respect, the NSC English FAL language skills are closer to the KCSE English outcomes.

### Skills Coverage

To the extent that the outlined NSC English FAL skills include a productive / receptive abilities component, it is similar to the outcomes and objectives of the Cambridge International AS/A Level English Language, ZIMSEC Communication Skills, the KCSE English and NSW HSC EAL/D courses. NSC English FAL differs from the international comparators in that the language skills associated with the different modalities are structured on different communicative phases. For example, some of the skills connected to reading and viewing texts are listed as: “Pre-reading: strategies to prepare learners for reading” and “Post-reading: interpreting the text as a whole”.<sup>61</sup>

A further difference between the NSC English FAL language skills and those outlined by the international comparators is that the wording of the former is suggestive of a constructivist / Vygotskian theoretical underpinning. For example, “activating background knowledge” is listed as a skill corresponding to reading and listening.<sup>62</sup> By way of contrast, the wording of the ZIMSEC Communication Skills objectives suggests a more analytical approach. For example, the objectives list the ability to write with “accuracy, relevance and in a logical manner for various purposes”, as well as to consider objectivity through the capacity to “distinguish between fact and opinion”.<sup>63</sup>

A creative language skills component is included in the NSC English FAL, Cambridge International AS/A Level English Language, KCSE English and NSW HSC EAL/D courses. The outcomes

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<sup>59</sup> International Baccalaureate (2020), *Diploma Programme: Language B Guide*, p. 14.

<sup>60</sup> National Curriculum Statement (NCS) (2011), *Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement Grades 10-12 English First Additional Language*, pp. 10-11.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid.

<sup>63</sup> Zimbabwe Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education (2015), *Communication Skills Syllabus Forms 5-6 2015-2022*, p. 2.

and objectives of these qualifications consider different aspects of creative language skills. Where NSC English FAL focuses on the structural and language features of creative texts, creativity is included in the Cambridge International AS/A Level English Language competencies in the form of creative writing (“write clearly, accurately, creatively and effectively”).<sup>64</sup> KCSE English focuses on creative thinking and writing (“Communicate appropriately in functional and creative writing” “Think creatively and critically”), whilst the NSW HSC EAL/D creativity component involves creative thinking (“Think in ways that are imaginative, creative, interpretive, and critical”).<sup>65</sup>

## Content and Structure

### Scope

The NSC English FAL, ZIMSEC Communication Skills, KCSE English, and NSW HSC EAL/D courses are all structured into the language programmes of the upper secondary phase of education in their respective national education systems. The NSC, HSC and IB DP language programmes offer English subjects on a primary and additional language basis. There is a mandatory English component to the NSC, HSC and KCSE qualifications.

NSC English FAL includes a significant amount of productive and receptive skills units. In this respect, its scope is broadly similar to that of the NSW HSC EAL/D, KCSE English and ZIMSEC Communication Skills qualifications. NSC English

FAL content also includes a substantial amount of material focusing on grammar, similar to the KCSE English qualification. NSC English FAL subject content includes a fairly even distribution of material covering the four language modalities, similar to the ZIMSEC Communication Skills content. The content of the two qualifications differs as the ZIMSEC Communication Skills productive and receptive skills material includes equivalent communicative modalities for visually impaired students, for example: speaking / signing and writing / braille.<sup>66</sup> The content of ZIMSEC Communication Skills further differs through its absence of grammar units.

The structure of the NSC English FAL productive, receptive and grammatical skills content is dissimilar to the arrangement of IB DP Language B material. The NSC English FAL productive and receptive skills content centres on the constituent abilities associated with these modalities.<sup>67</sup> In contrast, the IB DP Language B content integrates the study of productive and receptive language skills to particular tasks and core themes. For example, five prescriptive themes “are used to provide a framework for language acquisition”, whilst grammar “should not be an aim in itself”, rather it “should always be taught in context”.<sup>68</sup>

Similarly, NSC English FAL and the NSW HSC EAL/D course content differs through the latter’s inclusion of teaching units that cover themes relating to language, society and identity, such as “Texts and Society” and “Language, Identity and Culture”.<sup>69</sup> A further difference between

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<sup>64</sup> National Curriculum Statement (NCS) (2011), *Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement Grades 10-12 English First Additional Language*, pp. 10-11.; Cambridge International Examinations (2016), *Syllabus: Cambridge International AS & A-Level English Language*, p. 15.

<sup>65</sup> Kenya National Examinations Council (2014), *Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education: Examination Regulations and Syllabuses*, p. 29; NSW Education Standards Authority (2017), *English EAL/D Stage 6 Syllabus*, p. 15.

<sup>66</sup> Zimbabwe Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education (2015), *Communication Skills Syllabus Forms 5-6 2015-2022*, p. 12.

<sup>67</sup> This observation refers solely to the comparative differences in how course content is explicitly structured; it is not a suggestion that themes and / or texts are omitted in the NSC programme.

<sup>68</sup> International Baccalaureate (2018), *DP: Language B Teacher Support Material*, pp. 6-7.

<sup>69</sup> NSW Education Standards Authority (2017), *English EAL/D Stage 6 Syllabus*, pp. 34-74.

the content of these two qualifications is that the NSW HSC EAL/D course includes material with a metacognitive component, encouraging students to “Reflect on, assess and monitor own learning and develop processes to become an independent learner”.<sup>70</sup>

## Sequencing

Similar to the NSC English FAL sequencing of curriculum content, the ZIMSEC Communication Skills teaching units are structured on productive / receptive skills and subskills which are distributed across the two Forms (5 and 6). The ZIMSEC Communication Skills content is sequenced in a linear manner, rather than following a cyclical pattern as per NSC English FAL.<sup>71</sup>

Like NSC English FAL, the content of the IB DP Language B qualification includes the option of being sequenced cyclically (as well as linearly). The IB DP Language B documents indicate that an element of institutional discretion is involved in the sequencing of content as there “is no prescribed order in which to teach the components of the course, nor is there a required text”.<sup>72</sup> The sequencing of the IB DP Language B content differs from the NSC English FAL in that it is structured thematically, as opposed to being ordered on a productive, receptive and grammatical skills basis.

The NSC English FAL's cyclical content sequencing differs from the NSW HSC EAL/D approach as the latter operates on a modular basis.<sup>73</sup> Where the NSC English FAL content is structured into fortnightly cycles and follows Grade 10-12 teaching plans, the NSW HSC EAL/D content is arranged into eight modules which are delivered across Years 11-12. Four modules are taught per academic year, the

syllabus recommending 30-40 hours for each Year 11 module and 30 hours for each Year 12 module. The NSW HSC EAL/D teaching modules are thematic rather than skills based.

A difference between the content sequencing of the NSC English FAL and Cambridge International AS/A Level English Language qualification is that the latter varies according to the pathway selected by students.<sup>74</sup> International AS Level students are only required to sit examination papers 1 and 2. A Level students are permitted to take examination papers 1,2,3, and 4 in either one or two assessment series (two examination papers per series for the latter). As the Cambridge International AS/A Level English Language content is structured on the basis of assessment and assessment objectives, International AS Level students cover less material than International A Level students.

## Skills Coverage

The content of both the NSC English FAL and KCSE English curricula includes productive, receptive and grammatical skills material. The two subjects differ to the extent that the four language modality skills are covered to varying degrees. KCSE English focuses its productive skills content on writing and its receptive skills material on reading. In contrast, the NSC English FAL content is distributed fairly evenly across the four language modalities. The NSC English FAL content similarly differs from the Cambridge International AS/A Level English Language material: the latter's productive skills content centring on writing. A further difference between the NSC English FAL and the Cambridge International AS/A Level English Language content is that the latter covers linguistics and psycholinguistics material. For example, the

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<sup>70</sup> Ibid.

<sup>71</sup> Zimbabwe Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education (2015), *Communication Skills Syllabus Forms 5-6 2015-2022*, pp. 3-6.

<sup>72</sup> International Baccalaureate (2018), *DP: Language B Teacher Support Material*, pp. 10-11.

<sup>73</sup> NSW Education Standards Authority (2017), *English EAL/D Stage 6 Syllabus*, pp. 19-20.

<sup>74</sup> Cambridge International Examinations (2016), *Syllabus: Cambridge International AS & A-Level English Language*, pp. 12-19.

Cambridge International AS/A Level English Language syllabus lists content such as “Spoken Language and Social Groups” and “Language Acquisition by Children and Teenagers”.<sup>75</sup>

The content of the NSC English FAL covers critical language skills. In this respect, the skills coverage of the NSC English FAL subject is similar to the ZIMSEC Communication Skills, NSW HSC EAL/D and Cambridge International AS/A Level English Language qualifications. NSC English FAL focuses on critical language skills in relation to aural and reading modalities, listing content such as: “Listen for critical analysis and evaluation” and “Intensive reading of shorter written texts for critical language awareness”.<sup>76</sup> In contrast, the ZIMSEC Communication Skills content centres on “critical listening”, whilst the critical skills component of the NSW HSC EAL/D course is directed towards the analysis of text (“Respond to and compose increasingly complex texts for, interpretation, critical analysis”).<sup>77</sup> The outlined Cambridge International AS/A Level English Language content does not connect critical language skills to any particular modality, listing material such as “communication of attitudes, bias or prejudice, structure”.<sup>78</sup>

The NSC English FAL content includes a literary skills component, similar to the IB DP Language B and NSW HSC EAL/D curricula. The literary content of both the NSC English FAL and IB DP Language B curricula is based on the study of literary texts. For example, “Intensive reading focusing on the formal study of literature” is listed as teaching material for NSC English FAL,

whilst the IB DP Language B includes the “study of at least two literary texts”.<sup>79</sup> The content of NSW HSC EAL/D course differs by concentrating on the application of literary devices (“Apply knowledge, skills and understanding of literary devices, language concepts and mechanics into different contexts”).<sup>80</sup>

## Assessment

### Structure

The Grade 12 NSC English FAL assessment structure is based on a weighting of 75:25 externally / internally assessed components. Assessment of IB DP Language B differs from NSC English FAL as students can sit examinations at a higher or standard level. At both levels, the same ratio of 75:25 externally / internally assessed material is used on IB DP Language B. The assessment structure of the ZIMSEC Communication Skills qualification operates on similar weighting of 70:30 externally / internally assessed components. The ratio of assessment components of ZIMSEC Communication Skills differs from the NSC English FAL qualification in its consistency across the academic years of study. Where NSC English FAL varies the weighting of the internal / external components across Grades 10-12 (100% internal Grades 10-11, 75:25 external / internal Grade 12), the ZIMSEC Communication Skills 30% internal component is distributed equally across Forms 5 and 6 (15% in each of the two Forms). The NSC English FAL 75:25 external / internal assessment component weighting differs from the NSW HSC EAL/D,

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<sup>75</sup> Cambridge International Examinations (2016), *Syllabus: Cambridge International AS & A-Level English Language*, pp.16-18.

<sup>76</sup> National Curriculum Statement (NCS) (2011), *Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement Grades 10-12 English First Additional Language*, pp. 19-48.

<sup>77</sup> Zimbabwe Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education (2015), *Communication Skills Syllabus Forms 5-6 2015-2022*, p. 12; NSW Education Standards Authority (2017), *English EAL/D Stage 6 Syllabus*, pp. 34-74.

<sup>78</sup> Cambridge International Examinations (2016), *Syllabus: Cambridge International AS & A-Level English Language*, p. 16.

<sup>79</sup> National Curriculum Statement (NCS) (2011), *Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement Grades 10-12 English First Additional Language*, pp. 19-48; International Baccalaureate (2018), *DP: Language B Teacher Support Material*, pp. 10-11.

<sup>80</sup> NSW Education Standards Authority (2017), *English EAL/D Stage 6 Syllabus*, pp. 34-74.



Cambridge International AS/A Level English Language and KCSE English qualifications. The NSW HSC EAL/D assessment structure is based on a 50:50 ratio of the two components, whilst the Cambridge International AS/A Level English Language and KCSE English qualifications operate on an 100% external assessment basis.

The NSC English FAL examination papers employ a similar question type format to the IB DP Language B, KCSE English and NSW HSC EAL/D assessment papers. This consists of an alternation between examination papers which are based more on short response questions and include a broader range of question types (such as the NSC English FAL paper 1), and examination papers that focus more on extended answer and essay-based questions (such as NSC English FAL papers 2 and 3). The NSC English FAL examination papers each carry a different weighting, similar to the structure of NSW HSC EAL/D, KCSE English and IB DP Language B written assessments. The NSC English FAL written assessments differ from the Cambridge International AS/A Level English Language and ZIMSEC Communication Skills examination papers as the latter are all weighted equally. The Cambridge International AS/A Level English Language examination papers further differ as they alternate question types less, centring on extended answer and essay-based questions.

### Skills Coverage

NSC English FAL assesses oral and aural modalities in Grade 12 as an external component with a weighting of 12.5%: the lowest weighted skills of the externally assessed material. This resembles the structuring of the NSW HSC EAL/D assessment which includes a listening paper as an externally assessed component carrying the lowest weighting (15% of the externally assessed material). In contrast, the oral/aural components of the IB DP Language B curricula are internally

assessed and carry a proportionately higher weighting of 25%. Speaking, reading and writing tasks also constitute the internally assessed component of ZIMSEC Communication Skills, weighted at 30%.

The weighting of the externally assessed NSC English FAL examination papers allocates the highest percentage to the writing skills examination (paper 3), weighted at 25%, whilst the oral assessment is apportioned the lowest percentage, weighted at 12.5%. This assessment weighting structure does not quite correspond to the fortnightly time allocation of NSC English FAL, which designates the least amount of time to listening and speaking skills (1 hour - 10%) and the most amount of time to reading and viewing (4 hours - 45%), rather than writing and presenting (3 hours - 35%).<sup>81</sup> Similar to the weighting of NSC English FAL's assessments, the NSW HSC EAL/D writing skills paper (paper 1) is the highest weighted component (45% of the total available external marks). The IB DP Language B weighting of skills differs as the writing and productive skills assessment (paper 1) carries a lower weighting (25%) than the receptive skills examination paper (paper 2 weighted at 50%).

Both the NSC English FAL and ZIMSEC Communication Skills syllabi indicate that their respective assessments are structured on taxonomic models of cognitive skills. The NSC English FAL Grade 12 assessment model incorporates categories informed by Barrett's Taxonomy of comprehension, basing the "programme of assessment requirements" on Literal and Reorganisation Skills (40%), Inference (40%) and Evaluation and Appreciation (20%).<sup>82</sup> In contrast, the ZIMSEC Communication Skills Forms 5 and 6 examination paper 2 uses a number of categories informed by Bloom's Taxonomy which are weighted at: Simple Recall 10%, Comprehension 60%, and Analysis, Synthesis and Evaluation 30%.<sup>83</sup> NSC English FAL

<sup>81</sup> National Curriculum Statement (NCS) (2011), *Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement Grades 10-12 English First Additional Language*, p. 17.

<sup>82</sup> Ibid. p. 79.

<sup>83</sup> Zimbabwe Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education (2015), *Communication Skills Syllabus Forms 5-6 2015-2022*, p. 23.

differs from the NSW HSC EAL/D qualification in that the latter does not explicitly base its assessments on a particular taxonomic model of cognitive skills. The HSC EAL/D course weights its Year 11 and 12 internal assessments 50% towards “Knowledge and understanding of course content” and 50% towards “Skills in responding to texts and communication of ideas appropriate to audience, purpose and context across all modes”.<sup>84</sup>

## Marking

Where the NSC English FAL marking scheme focuses on comprehension, “incorrect spelling and language errors in responses” are “not [to] be penalised” and the use of “words from a language other than the one being examined” are not penalised “if the answer still makes sense”.<sup>85</sup> Dialectical variation, in addition to language interference, is also permitted in the NSC English FAL marking scheme provided that this does not semantically alter the candidate’s response. This approach differs from the KCSE English marking scheme which incurs penalties for “Spelling errors” and “Mother tongue interference”.<sup>86</sup> The NSC English FAL marking guidelines differ from IB DP Language B and Cambridge International AS/A Level English Language mark schemes as the latter two

qualifications include broader marking criteria. For example, the IB DP Language B examination papers are marked against level descriptors that are sorted into three general categories:<sup>87</sup>

- Language - How successfully does the candidate command written language?
- Message - To what extent does the candidate fulfil the task?
- Conceptual Understanding - To what extent does the candidate demonstrate conceptual understanding?

The Cambridge International AS/A Level English Language mark schemes list six Generic Marking Principles that are “applied by all examiners when marking candidate answers”.<sup>88</sup> These include principles such as: “marks awarded are always whole marks (not half marks, or other fractions)” and “marks are awarded when candidates clearly demonstrate what they know and can do”.<sup>89</sup>

## Documentation

For details of the subject guides, assessment materials, and mark schemes used throughout this appendix (including years of publication), see **7. Bibliography** in the body of the report.

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<sup>84</sup> NSW Education Standards Authority (2017), *English EAL/D Stage 6 Syllabus*, pp. 6-7.

<sup>85</sup> Department of Basic Education (2020), *English First Additional Language P1 November 2020 Marking Guidelines*, p. 2.

<sup>86</sup> Kenya National Examinations Council (2021), *English Paper 1 Marking Scheme*, pp. 2-3.

<sup>87</sup> International Baccalaureate (2020), *DP Language B Guide*, pp. 33-35.

<sup>88</sup> Cambridge Assessment International Education (2019), *English Language Paper 1 Passages Mark Scheme*, p. 2.

<sup>89</sup> Ibid.











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