

English National 4

Why take this course?

English is compulsory until you finish fourth year. You might choose to take it at National 4 level if you are not yet confident in your reading and writing skills and would like to consolidate these before moving on to more challenging texts and tasks.

To succeed in this course you need to be working at level 3 by the end of S3, across all three course components (Reading, Writing, Talking & Listening)

Course Structure and Content:

N4 English requires you to study a wide range of texts, some literary, and some functional. These may be written, spoken, or audio-visual. You will be expected to extract information and meaning from the texts, as well as to comment on some of the language use. You will be asked to produce a variety of texts, including creative and informative writing, speaking as an individual or in a group, or preparing audio-visual presentations. A key part of the National 4 course is the Added Value Unit, in which you conduct an investigation into texts of your own choice, preparing a written or spoken report on the analytical work you have done, and responding to questions on your project in an oral assessment.

Course Assessment

National 4 English consists of four units:

Analysis and Evaluation

This unit is designed to develop listening and reading skills in the contexts of literature, language and media. You will develop the skills needed to understand, analyse and make judgements about straightforward texts.

Creation and Production

This unit provides the opportunity to develop talking and writing skills in familiar contexts. You will learn to create and produce straightforward written and spoken texts.

Literacy

This unit is designed to develop your reading, writing, listening and talking skills in a variety of forms relevant for life, for work, or for further learning. The focus is on understanding and communication. Technical accuracy in writing and speaking will be important.

Added Value Unit

This unit gives you the chance to apply your language skills in the investigation and reporting of a topic of your choice.

National 4 is assessed within the school; there are no external exams for this course. To pass National 4, you must pass all elements of each of the four units.

National 4 candidates are usually offered the chance to attempt some National 5 units during their S4 course. These are not essential to achieve the National 4 qualification, but can be helpful for candidates hoping to progress to National 5 the following year.

Where might this course take me?

You can progress from National 4 to National 5 within Stromness Academy. If you decide to leave school, a National 4 in English will demonstrate to employers, or to colleges, that you are proficient in the key English and Literacy skills that they are looking for. The core skills you learn in English are ones you will use throughout your life: at work, during leisure activities, and at home. They are the skills which underpin success in all your other studies, and they are key to maintaining your social relationships as well.

English National 5

English is compulsory until you finish fourth year. You might choose to take it at National 5 level if you are confident in your reading and writing skills and feel ready to move on to more challenging texts and tasks.

To succeed in this course you need to be working at level 4 by the end of S3, across all three course components (Reading, Writing, Talking & Listening)

Course Content:

This qualification requires you to study a number of literary texts, and to write analytically about them. In addition to the classroom-based study of texts, you are expected to work independently on both creative writing and discursive writing to prepare a folio for assessment. The course also requires that you develop and demonstrate your skills in spoken English, individually and in groups. You will be expected to develop analytical skills in reading, watching and listening, and to put these into practice in a variety of contexts.

Course Structure

National 5 English consists of two units:

Analysis and Evaluation

This unit is designed to develop your listening and reading skills in the contexts of literature, language and media. You will develop the skills needed to understand, analyse and make judgements about detailed texts. There is a compulsory element involving the study of Scottish texts.

Creation and Production

This unit provides the opportunity to develop your talking and writing skills in a range of familiar and unfamiliar contexts. You will learn to create and produce detailed written texts and prepared talk, in groups and individually.

Course Assessment

National 5 is assessed by external and internal assessment. Your teacher will assess you for Talking and Listening by means of a variety of tasks throughout fourth year. Your final grade is determined by the quality of your folio, and by your performance in two external examinations: one in Reading for Understanding, Analysis and Evaluation, and another in Critical Reading of texts studied in class.

Where might this course take me?

A good pass at National 5 English is the entrance requirement for Higher English at Stromness Academy. If you decide to leave school, a National 5 in English will demonstrate to employers, or to colleges, that you have achieved a good standard in the key Literacy skills that they are looking for, and that you possess some analytical and evaluative skills as well. The core skills you learn in English are ones you will use throughout your life: at work, during leisure activities, and at home. They are the skills which underpin success in all your other studies, and they are key to maintaining your social relationships as well.