



Ministry of Education

**Identified Competency-Focus Areas and Core Courses
for Ethiopian Higher Education Institutions' Exit
Examination**

Program: - BA Degree in English Language and Literature

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Table of Contents

Content.....	Page
1. Introduction.....	1
❖ Objectives of the Exit Examination.....	2
❖ Significance of the Document.....	2
2. Expected Profile of Graduates	2
3. Competencies and Learning Outcomes.....	3
3.1. Competencies.....	3
3.2. Learning Outcomes.....	4
4. Courses Identified for the Exit Exam.....	5
5. Conclusion.....	6
6. Appendices-I.....	7

Courses and Competencies Identified for Exit Exam 2015 (First Draft)

1. Introduction

Decades have lapsed since the quality of Ethiopian education in general and that of the English language in particular has been put to question. A number of articles and research reports have been published on the issue and one among them is the report by Stoddart (1986) in which he documented that not only the learners but even many of the teachers in the school system were not functioning at the level expected of them. The series of reports released by the Ethiopian National Learning Assessment (ENLA) on students' performance at the various levels of education in the country also shows clearly that situations are deteriorating.

One of the areas in which such a decline is reflected is in the quality of graduates that come out every year from the institutes of higher learning in the country. Prospective employers and stakeholders constantly complain that novice graduates from universities in the country are far below the standard expected of them and thus opt for training their own recruits who they think perform better with training of much less duration.

In order to curb this downside and at the same time identify graduates who can meet the minimum requirement of competency anticipated in the world of work, the Ministry of Education decided to introduce a curriculum-based exit exam in 2015 and extend that to all disciplines. One of the fields of training proposed for inclusion in the 2015 exit exam is English Language and Literature, BA programme. However, given the competencies listed in the current curriculum, it is unnecessary and impractical to include in the exam all the courses offered in the four years of training. It has thus become essential to identify courses that are closely related to the competencies listed in the programme and draw the exam from those courses. Based on this understanding, the graduate profile, competencies and courses that would help to set the anticipated test have been suggested below as a preliminary starting point for discussion and necessary amendments.

❖ Objectives of the Exit Examination

The national exit exam in English Language and Literature shall have the following objectives:

- To assess students' educational achievement in the areas of English Language and Literature;
- To ensure whether graduates from institutes of higher education in the country have achieved common standards of knowledge and practical skills;
- To encourage prospective graduates to revise the core learning outcomes of the courses covered by the programme;
- To create competitive spirit among graduates in the field with the view to encourage them to give due attention to the exit exam;
- To ensure all graduates from HEIs satisfy the requirements of the labor market and employability through the nationwide implementation of competency-based exit exam;
- To make available skilled and competent manpower for national and international market;
- To improve public trust and confidence in graduates in the field of study.

❖ Significance of the Document

It is important to set competency areas of the subject matter (program) in order to measure the knowledge, skills and attitudes graduates have gained. In line with this, the document will be of use to the Ministry of Education, professionals in the area and exam writers.

1. Expected Profile of Graduates

Upon completion of the English Language and Literature programme, graduates would have the ability to perform the following.

- Use English with high level of accuracy and fluency in the four skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing);
- Make critical analysis of English language texts and discourse;

- Prepare seminars, forums and facilitate discussions and meetings in English;
- Use appropriate English for business communications (writing memos, letters, minutes, reports, presentations, and notices);
- Interpret discourses and translate from and into the English language;
- Write, edit, and review various texts;
- Conduct a professional and critical analysis of literary works;
- Conduct research; and
- Facilitate and run public relations.

3. Competencies and Learning Outcomes

At the end of the programme, graduates are expected to have acquired the following competencies and learning outcomes.

3.1. Competencies

- Oral proficiency (speaking and listening)
- Reading and writing fluently and accurately
- Analyzing language and managing communications
- Linking organizations with the public
- Writing and analyzing literary works
- Interpreting discourse and translating to and from English
- Surveying, analyzing and critiquing literary discourse
- Editing, reporting, and analyzing media discourse
- Conducting research and writing technical reports



Knowledge, Skills and Attitudes Expected to Be Acquired

A. Knowledge

Graduates are believed to have gained knowledge about English Language skills and how the language works including its phonetics, phonology, morphology, syntax and discourse. Furthermore, they are expected to be familiar with basic principles of media and communication. Equally, they are required to be equipped with various elements of literature beginning with its

fundamental elements and extending to complex issues in the field. They are also acquainted with the concept of research, how data are gathered and analyzed and how reports are produced.

B. Skills

They are required to engage in practical communication in the four major skills of English language such as speaking, writing, reading and listening. In addition, they are expected to develop analytical skills of literary and non-literary texts including linguistic data. Moreover, they would be engaged in producing, organizing and managing communication events; doing public relations works; and developing written documents such as manuals, brochures, magazines and reports. In addition to conducting researches and producing reports, they are also expected to do editing and translation of materials written in the English language.

C. Attitudes

Graduates are expected to develop the interest to take up professions in their field of study. It is also anticipated that some of them take additional education courses and join the teaching profession. We further envisage that some would be engaged in media and public relations work and contribute to addressing the need for trained workforce in the country.

3.2. Learning Outcomes

- Communicating fluently using some or all of the English language skills as the need may arise
- Producing various types of texts such as manuals, guidelines, brochures, annual reports, magazines, performance evaluation reports, etc.
- Engaging in different translation works (e.g., translating scientific and literary works)
- Carrying out editing tasks of various documents
- Undertaking media and public relations works and engaging in related activities
- Conducting research and producing reports in language related areas
- Preparing memos, letters, minutes, and other business communication activities
- Making reviews of texts of various nature
- Creating and evaluating different kinds of literary works.

4. Courses Identified for the Exit Exam

It has now been a while since exit exams have been put to practice in Ethiopia. Cases in point are those administered to professionals in the fields of health and law in this country. Experiences from institutes training professionals in these areas and international trends reveal that only core courses related to the expected competencies are used as areas out of which the exit exams are drawn. Otherwise, it would be too vast and cumbersome to try to cover all the courses that the students have taken during their stay at their institutions. Accordingly, the following courses, based on themes, have been suggested for inclusion in the exit exam envisaged for graduates in BA in English Language and Literature.

List of Courses

Themes	Course	Credit Hours	Equivalent ECTS
Theme One Major Language Skills and Associated Proficiency	Listening Skills (EnLa 2025)	3	5
	Spoken English II (EnLa 2024)	3	5
	Advanced Speech (EnLa 4021)	3	5
	Reading Skills (EnLa 2041)	3	5
	Sophomore English (EnLa 2042)	3	5
	Advanced Writing II (EnLa 3044)	3	5
	English Grammar in Use (EnLa 2051)	3	5
Theme Two Language and Linguistics	Introduction to Language and Linguistics (EnLa 2031)	3	5
	Translation and Interpretation (EnLa 4083)	3	5
	Discourse Analysis (EnLa 4057)	3	5
Theme Three Literature	Fundamentals of Literature (EnLa 2061)	3	5
	Introduction to Literary Theory and Criticism (EnLa 3087)	3	5
Theme Four Journalism and Communication	Editing (EnLa 4098)	3	5
	English in Public Relations (EnLa 4095)	3	5
Theme Five Research and Report Writing	Fundamentals of Research and Report Writing (EnLa 3111)	4	7
Total		46	77

5. Conclusion

In this validation workshop that took place from 11 to 12 August 2022 at Addis Ababa Institute of Technology, Addis Ababa University, a draft document produced previously at the meeting held from 18 to 19 July 2022 in Bishoftu was presented to a validation team and deliberated upon at length. First, the procedures followed to produce the document that has six sub-sections were presented briefly by the writer of the draft document who comes from Addis Ababa University. Having the document as a starting point, members of the validation team examined the harmonized curriculum in the field and looked at all relevant parts and made necessary amendments. Changes were made to the ordering of the courses and a course **English Semantics and Pragmatics (EnLa 3058)** was also dropped from the draft list and replaced by **Introduction to Language and Linguistics (EnLa 2031)**. That left the team with a final list of 15 courses as seen in Section 5 above. The courses have also been grouped into five themes.

This being a condensed report of what has been done, one main concern that the team would finally like to air is related to the timing of the test administration. It would suggest that concerned individuals and bodies find the right time of administration so that key courses offered during the second semester of the last year are not left out from the exam due to mistiming. The rest of the technicalities such as preparation of the test and other relevant matters are left to the concerned experts and authorities.

Appendices-I

List of writer and evaluator/ validators

No	Name	Role	University
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