

**Ministry of Education**

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

**Program: - BA in English Language and Literature**

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**Table of Contents**

**Content…………………………………………………….Page**

1. Introduction…………………………………….………3
2. Expected profile of graduates ……………….…………4
3. Competencies and learning outcomes……….…………4
4. Courses to be included in the exam………………...…..5
5. Categorizing courses in to themes………………6
6. Conclusion…………………………………………..….7
7. **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 articles and research reports have been published on the issue and one among this 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 some fields of study in 2015 and extend that to all disciplines offered by institutions of higher education in the country in four years. 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 construct 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 as a preliminary starting point for discussion and necessary amendments.

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.

1. **Competencies and learning outcomes**

* Oral proficiency (speaking and listening)
* Listening effectively and speaking fluently
* Reading and writing fluently and accurately
* Analyzing language
* 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 reporting outputs

1. **Courses to be included in the 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 institution. 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

## Listening Skills (EnLa 205) – 3 credit hrs

1. Spoken English I (EnLa 203) – 3 credit hrs

### Advanced Speech (EnLa 307) – 3 credit hrs

1. Reading Skills (EnLa 211) – 3 credit hrs
2. Sophomore English (EnLa 202) – 3 credit hrs
3. Advanced Writing II (En La 304) – 3 credit hrs
4. Translation and Interpretation (EnLa 402) – 3 credit hrs
5. Editing (EnLa 413) – 3 credit hrs
6. Discourse Analysis (EnLa 407) – 3 credit hrs
7. Grammar in Use (EnLa 201) – 3 credit hrs
8. Morphology and Syntax (EnLa 303) – 3 credit hrs
9. Semantics and Pragmatics (EnLa 308) – 3 credit hrs
10. Fundamentals of Literature (EnLa 209) – 3 credit hrs
11. Introduction to Literary Theory and Criticism (EnLa 307) – 3 credit hrs
12. Public Relations (EnLa 405) – 3 credit hrs
13. Research and Report Writing (EnLa 311) – 4 credit hrs
14. Senior Essay (EnLa 410) – 3 credit hrs
15. **Categorizing courses in to themes**

**Theme 1. Courses Related to Major Language Skills and Associated Proficiency**

## Listening Skills (EnLa 205) – 3 credit hrs

## Spoken English I (EnLa 203) – 3 credit hrs

## Advanced Speech (EnLa 307) – 3 credit hrs

## Reading Skills (EnLa 211) – 3 credit hrs

## Sophomore English (EnLa 202) – 3 credit hrs

## Advanced Writing II (En La 304) – 3 credit hrs

## Translation and Interpretation (EnLa 402) – 3 credit hrs

## Editing (EnLa 413) – 3 credit hrs

**Theme 2. Course Related to Language Analysis**

1. Discourse Analysis (EnLa 407) – 3 credit hrs

**Theme 3. Courses Related to Grammar in Use and Structure of English**

1. Grammar in Use (EnLa 201) – 3 credit hrs
2. Morphology and Syntax (EnLa 303) – 3 credit hrs
3. Semantics and Pragmatics (EnLa 308) – 3 credit hrs

**Theme 4. Courses Related to Literature**

1. Fundamentals of Literature (EnLa 209) – 3 credit hrs
2. Introduction to Literary Theory and Criticism (EnLa 307) – 3 credit hrs

**Theme 5. Course Related to Journalism** – 3 credit hrs

1. Public Relations (EnLa 405) – 3 credit hrs

**Theme 6. Courses Related to Research and Report Writing**

1. Research and Report Writing (EnLa 311) – 4 credit hrs
2. Senior Essay (EnLa 410) – 3 credit hrs
3. **Conclusion**

In this piece of work, an attempt has been made to draft a list of courses that could be used as a possible content for in the upcoming 2015 exit exam to be nationally administered to university graduates in English Language and Literature. As indicated above, this is only a draft and it is expected that thorough discussions are undertaken by relevant professionals from the various institutions and amendments are made before the actual exam is prepared. The rest of the technicalities such as preparation of the test, the schedule of administration and other relevant matters are left to the concerned experts and authorities.