

FRENCH GCSE and SPANISH GCSE

Examination Board - AQA

5 periods per 2 weeks

Course Content

The topics studied at GCSE are organised into three categories. These are:

Identity and culture

Me, my family and friends – relationships with family and friends, marriage and partnership;
Technology in everyday life - social media, mobile technology;
Free-time activities - music, cinema and TV, food and eating out, sport;
Customs and festivals in French/Spanish speaking countries and communities.

Local, national, international and global areas of interest

Home, town, neighbourhood and region;
Social issues – charity/voluntary work, healthy/unhealthy lifestyle;
Global issues – the environment and poverty/homelessness;
Travel and tourism.

Current and future study and employment

My studies;
Life at school/college;
Education post-16;
Jobs, career choices and ambitions.

Our aim is to promote a lively, communicative approach to learning languages. Students will have the opportunity to speak and write the language for a wide range of purposes and to understand the spoken and written language in a wide range of contexts. They will also develop their cultural awareness. It is important that students also take the opportunity to work both with others in groups as well as independently, using appropriate reference materials and computers.

Examinations

In the GCSE examinations for French and Spanish each of the four skills involved in language learning – listening, reading, speaking and writing – is tested and the skills are equally weighted at 25% of the final GCSE grade.

GCSE French and Spanish have a foundation tier (grades 1–5) and a higher tier (grades 4–9). Students must take all four question papers at the **same** tier, either **foundation** or **higher**.

The listening, reading and writing skills are tested by three exams at the end of the course in year 11. Students will also attend a separate speaking exam, which will be conducted and recorded by the class teacher during April/May of year 11, and externally marked by the exam board.

Paper 1 – listening

Foundation tier – 35 minutes Higher tier – 45 minutes

Section A - questions and answers in English.

Section B – questions and answers in French/Spanish.

Paper 2 – speaking

Foundation tier - 7 to 9 minutes plus preparation time

Higher tier - 10 to 12 minutes plus preparation time

Role play - 2 minutes
Photo card - 2 minutes at foundation, 3 minutes at higher
General conversation - 3 to 5 minutes at foundation, 5 to 7 minutes at higher.

Paper 3 – reading

Foundation tier – 45 minutes Higher tier – 1 hour

Section A – questions in English, to be answered in English.

Section B – questions in French/Spanish, to be answered in French/Spanish.

Section C – translation from French/Spanish into English (35 words minimum at Foundation and 50 words minimum at Higher).

Paper 4 - writing

Foundation Tier – 1 hour Higher Tier – 1hour 15 minutes

Foundation

Question 1 – short written message, in response to a photo.

Question 2 – short written passage in response to four brief bullet points. Approximately 40 words.

Question 3 – translation from English to French/Spanish. Minimum of 35 words.

Question 4 – structured writing task. Approximately 90 words.

Higher

Question 1 – structured writing task. Approximately 90 words.

Question 2 – open-ended writing task. Approximately 150 words.

Question 3 – translation from English into French/Spanish. Minimum of 50 words.

In the writing examination, students will be tested on their grammatical, as well as content knowledge and accuracy. Students will be required to use and manipulate language confidently and independently, and to apply the linguistic structures and grammar points learned during the course. These skills will equally be tested during the speaking exam.

Homework

We aim to offer a wide range of homework activities. Vocabulary learning is a key part of students' progression. Students are expected to develop their skills and knowledge using the extensive materials available to them via the school's website.

Progression

Progression to AS/A2 and specialist languages occupations is only one of many routes forward from GCSE. There are also opportunities for vocational progression. Practically any job can involve using a language and GCSE provides an important foundation for work related language courses in further and adult education. It should be noted that skills in languages are the most prized by employers in the global economy.