

Languages at A-Level

Who should think about taking a language at A-Level?

Our courses will appeal to those students who

- Have achieved ideally an A or A* in the language they wish to study;
- Enjoy learning languages and are keen to communicate ideas in French/German/Spanish through the spoken and written word;
- Enjoy travelling to French/German/Spanish speaking countries and finding out about the people and places;
- Have an open mind to another culture and outlook on life;
- Are interested in wider European issues;
- Want to broaden their studies and gain a qualification that will be attractive to would-be employers

How will learning take place?

During the course you can expect to undertake the following types of activities:

- Take part in discussions in French/German/Spanish about topics relevant to the course, such as: the role of the family, health issues, fashion ...
- Do individual and group/pair oral work;
- Write essays and translations to enhance your written linguistic ability;
- Read and listen to spoken French/German/Spanish from a wide range of sources including newspapers, magazines, tapes and film or television;
- Work with native speakers of the language you study
- Research topics using books, newspapers and magazines and the internet;
- Take part in study visits or work experience abroad

What will you learn?

How to speak, read, write and understand spoken French/German/Spanish through the medium of the following topic areas:

AS Course

Topic Area 1	Media – TV, advertising and communication technology
Topic Area 2	Popular culture – cinema, music, and fashion trends
Topic Area 3	Healthy living/ lifestyle – sport and exercise, health and well-being, holidays
Topic Area 4	Family/relationships – relationships within the family, friendships, marriage, partnerships

A2 Course

Topic Area 5	Environment – pollution, energy, protecting the planet
Topic Area 6	Multi-cultural society – immigration, integration and racism
Topic Area 7	Contemporary social issues – wealth and poverty, law and order, the impact of scientific and technological progress
Topic Area 8	Cultural topic – the study of a target-language speaking region / community or the study of a period of 20 th century history from a target-language speaking country/community or the study of a novelist/dramatist/poet from a target-language speaking country/community or the study of a director/architect/musician/painter from a target-language speaking country/community.

How will you be assessed?

At AS-level there are two exams –

Listening, Reading and Writing (2 hours). This constitutes 70% of the total AS grade (and 35% of the overall two-year A level course grade).

Students will answer a range of questions based on approximately 5 minutes of heard material and on a selection of written stimulus texts. They will also respond in writing to a question based on one of the AS topics.

Speaking (35 minutes, including 20 minutes preparation time). This constitutes 30% of the total AS grade (and 15% of the overall two-year A level course grade).

Students will be given a target-language stimulus card based on one of the AS topics and will take part in a conversation covering three further AS topics.

At A2-level there are two exams –

Listening, Reading and Writing (2 hours 30 minutes). This constitutes 35% of the total A level course grade.

Students will answer a range of questions based on approximately 6 minutes of heard material and on a selection of written stimulus texts. They will also respond in writing to a question based on one of the four A2 topics.

Speaking (35 minutes, including 20 minutes preparation time). This constitutes 15% of the total A level course grade.

Students will present a point of view based on a target-language stimulus card from one of the two A2 topic areas and take part in a conversation covering three further A2 topics.

What to do with language A-Levels?

Even if you don't see a pure language degree in your future, many degrees nowadays have an optional language element and there are also many combined honours degrees, the most common combinations are languages with business studies, followed by linguistics, classics, social sciences, history and philosophy and law. A language as part of a degree course seriously improves your employability – employment figures for language graduates (specialist or as part of a combined honours degree) are amongst the highest of all subjects (right behind medics).

Language Graduates work in all sectors of the employment market and there are very few jobs where your chances of employment do not improve by your having studied a language for A-Level or better still at university.

As a language graduate you could be working in Business services, Central Government, Contact Centres, Engineering, Event management, Financial services, Local Government, Marketing, Media, Public services, Technology, Travel and tourism, Voluntary and charitable sector and of course Translation, Interpreting, Language teaching.

For more info on careers in languages see <http://www.languageswork.org.uk>