



GCSE French/Spanish

Introduction / Why Study a Modern Foreign Language?

Speaking another language is a skill that will stay with you into your adult life and one that many adults wished they had, for both holiday and business purposes. Larger companies are increasingly aware that people who can use a foreign language have a very valuable skill, and a GCSE in a modern foreign language shows that you are a good communicator and have an outlook on life that is appropriate for the increasingly international world of business and commerce that we live in. Research locally has shown that a surprising number of local businesses have links with suppliers or customers abroad, and many have said that they would give preference to people with a language skill when looking to appoint new staff.

Exam Board

The exam board we are presently using is found at <http://www.edexcel.com/quals/gcse/gcse09> where the full specification can be found, along with past questions.

What Will I Study / What Skills Will I Develop?

The GCSE will build upon the topics and grammar covered in the Years 7 – 9 but in greater depth and reflecting the pupil's maturity and individual interests. Topics range from Media and Culture, Travel and Tourism to the World of Work. Reading will include more authentic texts and you will be able to listen to and pick out details from conversations between native speakers. You will be able to write about a variety of topics both informally and formally, such as job applications and letters of complaint. Spoken work plays an important part in most lessons and you will have plenty of opportunity to talk with the Foreign Language Assistant.

How Will I Be Assessed?

The reading and listening skills are assessed at the end of the course with a variety of questions in different formats. Each of these papers is worth 20% of the final grade.

The writing and speaking components are assessed when the candidate is ready throughout the course and each skill is worth 30%. The speaking section may be a role play, a presentation or a picture based discussion on a topic of interest to the pupil and will last between 4-6 minutes. The best two marks are submitted. Written work assessment is ongoing and two samples are needed, which could include a letter, a brochure or a straightforward essay.

Points to Consider When Selecting This Option

Participation in all class activities and completing homework and assessment preparation tasks thoroughly is expected. You will need to show commitment and dedication.

What Might a GCSE in a Modern Foreign Language Lead To?

Obviously you may like to continue with the language to A Level. It may lead to increased chances of getting into university, a higher salary and wider employment opportunities later on. A person with a language degree is the second most employable after medicine.

Other Information

There are usually trips to Europe to allow you to use your language in an authentic setting. Previous destinations include Christmas Markets, Brussels and Léon.

GCSE topics

- Personal information (interests, family, friends)
- Out and about (town, directions, accommodation, public transport)
- School and future plans
- Jobs, money and work experience
- Holidays and tourism
- Healthy Lifestyles and addictions
- World issues and environment problems

GCSE mark scheme for Unit 2 (speaking)

Content and response

- Communicates comprehensive and detailed information related to chosen visual/topic/stimulus.
- Interacts very well.
- Speaks very confidently and with clear spontaneity.
- Frequently takes initiative and develops elaborate responses.
- No difficulty in expressing and explaining a range of ideas and points of view.
- Very little or no hesitation
- Able to deal with unpredictable elements without difficulty.

Range of language

- Uses wide range of appropriate vocabulary and structures, including some complex lexical items.
- Consistently competent use of different tenses.

Accuracy

- Very accurate, with only isolated and usually insignificant errors.
- Consistently good pronunciation and intonation.

GCSE mark scheme for Unit 4 (writing)

Communication and Contact

- Very detailed and fully relevant response to the stimulus.
- Shows a clear ability to narrate, describe, express opinions and expand, as appropriate to the task.
- Communicates with no ambiguity.
- Excellent linking of the piece into a whole.
- Coherent and pleasant to read.

Knowledge and application of language

- Wide range of vocabulary and structures, fully appropriate to the task and used effectively.
- Little or no repetition.
- Confident use of more complex structures, such as object pronouns, negatives, superlatives and range of tenses, with very few lapses.
- Clear ability

Accuracy

- High level of accuracy, though not necessarily faultless.
- Spellings, genders, agreements, verb forms mastered with the odd slip.
- Secure when using more complex language with only a few minor errors.

Useful websites

www.edexcel.com (for the specification and past papers)

www.wordreference.com (on line dictionaries)

www.verbconjugator.com (helps with all the different tenses for verbs)

www.linguascope.com (needs school password)

www.pearsonActiveLearn.com (own username and password)

www.bitesize.com

www.bbc.languages.com

www.quia.com

www.languagesonline.org.uk/

www.zut.com (free after 4pm)

www.espanol-extra.co.uk (needs school password)

www.20minutes.fr and www.20minutos.es French and Spanish news

www.listenlive.eu/france.html (French radio stations)

www.french.about.com/.../French_News_Radio_TV_Newspapers_Magazines.htm

www.frenchrevision.co.uk

www.revisioncentre.co.uk/gcse/french/

www.what2learn.com/examgames/french

www.gcse.com/french/

www.revisiontime.com/aFre.htm

www.voki.com