

A Guide to the Curriculum at Key Stage 4 (Years 10 & 11)

GCSE Languages

Key Stage 4 Curriculum

Studying a language at GCSE enables students to improve and practise their language skills in a variety of contexts and to gain a broad understanding of the culture of countries and communities where their chosen language is spoken. It encourages enjoyment of language learning and the recognition that language skills enable students to take their place in a multi-lingual, global society.

The AQA course that we follow is split into four units. Each unit requires students to develop their ability to write and speak in the foreign language and to understand it when it is written down or spoken, thus building on their knowledge from Key Stage 3.

The topic areas are as follows:

Theme 1: 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 communities

Theme 2: Local, National, International and Global Areas of Interest.

- Home, town, neighbourhood and region
- Social issues (charity and voluntary work, healthy lifestyles)
- Global Issues (The environment, homelessness)
- Travel and tourism

Theme 3: Current and Future Study and Employment

- My studies
- Life at school
- Post 16 education
- Jobs, career choices and ambitions

AQA GCSE Structure

The course is assessed by examinations at the end of Year 11. Each skill makes up 25% of the final grade. Students may be entered for either Foundation Tier or Higher Tier but they must enter at the same tier for all four skills. Access to dictionaries is not allowed at any point during any of the exams.

Listening Exam

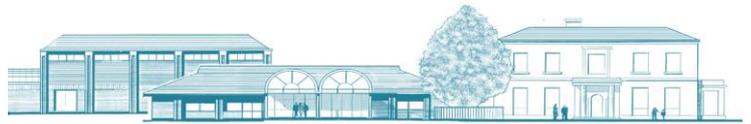
Students are required to answer questions in English in Section A and in the target language in Section B.

Speaking Exam

The speaking exam lasts approximately 10-15 minutes and consists of three parts, a role-play (15 marks), a photo card task (15 marks) and a conversation about 2 themes (30 marks).

Reading Exam

In Section A, students' understanding of written language is tested by a range of question types in English. In Section B, students' comprehension is tested by a range of question types in French/Spanish. In Section C, students need to translate a short text from the target language into English.



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Writing Exam

Students complete a range of writing tasks, writing up to 90 words at Foundation Tier and up to 150 words at Higher Tier. Both tiers include a translation task from English into the target language.

All students will be given a copy of the specification vocabulary, which they should use at home, to learn from regularly.

Follow the link to the AQA French Specification at a glance:

<http://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/languages/gcse/french-8658/specification-at-a-glance>

Follow the link to the AQA Spanish Specification at a glance:

<http://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/languages/gcse/spanish-8698/specification-at-a-glance>

Literacy / Numeracy Skills

Students will develop their literacy skills through the regular use of grammatical terminology, through understanding verb formations and learning to refer to different tenses in their work. They will also need to give and justify, their own opinions.

Promoting Reading for Pleasure / Independent Reading

There are a number of books in the Library, in both French and Spanish, for students to use to support their work and to increase their vocabulary. Reading plays an important role in helping students to internalise useful phrases and structures, which they can then adapt for use in their own work.

Support, Strategies and Interventions for students (SEN, Most Able, Students not making Expected Progress)

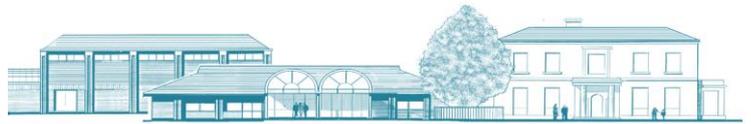
- Students are taught and encouraged to use the bilingual dictionaries and glossaries readily available in the classroom and are encouraged to purchase a pocket dictionary for their own use outside the classroom.
- All Year 10 students are provided with a full list of vocabulary from the exam board.
- When books are marked, errors are highlighted and questions asked to stretch students' thinking. Time is then provided for students to make these corrections/improvements.
- After an initial assessment, students not making expected progress are given additional strategies/support in order to encourage further progress

Useful Resources for Home

- It would be useful for all students to have access to a bilingual dictionary to support homework and revision
- It would also be helpful for students to have a copy of the AQA revision guide and / or workbook which is available to purchase through school.

How to help your child in Year 10 and 11

- Help them to revise vocabulary regularly and thoroughly, re-visiting previously learnt words
- Encourage them to go online to revise vocabulary and complete listening and reading tasks
- Discourage the use of Google translate
- Encourage completion of homework
- Help students to revise verb patterns and test them on these regularly



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- Encourage students to use familiar words / structures and not to over-complicate their work

Post 16 Progression

A good grade at GCSE will prepare students for entry onto an AS / A2 Level course. A pass grade at GCSE may support a university application, even if the course applied for is not related to a foreign language.

Glossary of terms

Accuracy	Producing language with few errors
Active Listening	A technique whereby the listener repeats (often in other words) what the speaker has said, to demonstrate his or her understanding. Active listening is an especially useful alternative to directly correcting a student error.
Authentic Texts	Natural or real teaching material; often this material is taken from newspapers, magazines, radio, TV or podcasts.
Context Clues	Clues used when guessing word meanings; clues that provide students with meaning or comprehension based on the environment in which a word is found.
Dictation	A technique in which the teacher reads a short passage out loud and students write down what the teacher reads; the teacher reads phrases slowly, giving students time to write what they hear; the technique is used for practice as well as testing.
Fluency	Natural, normal, native-like speech characterized by appropriate pauses, intonation, stress, register, word choice, interjections and interruptions
Idiom	A group of words whose meaning is different from the meanings of the individual words: "She let the cat out of the bag" or "He was caught red-handed."
Intonation	How we change the pitch and sound of our voice, when speaking.
Register	Level of formality in speech with others; register depends on the situation, location, topic discussed and other factors
Target Language	The foreign language that the student is learning

Hasland Hall Community School



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