

A LEVEL FRENCH FAQs

Q: What grade do I need to study French / German / Spanish?

You will need a 6 at GCSE in the relevant subject.

Q: How different is A Level from GCSE?

The A Level course builds on everything that you've done at GCSE but aims to increase your spontaneity and your ability to 'think French / German / Spanish'. The exams are slightly different: the first exam is a speaking exam, the second tests your listening, reading and translation skills (and you have complete control over the listening file, so no more of everybody doing each listening question at the same time), and the final exam tests your written skills.

Q: Is there any coursework?

No, the qualification is entirely assessed by the three exams at the end of the two year course.

Q: Which exam board do you follow?

We follow the Eduqas specification as we have consistently achieved good results with this board over the past ten years.

Q: Is the exchange compulsory?

The exchange is not compulsory, but it's really recommended in order to improve both comprehension and communication skills.

Q: What do you do on the exchange?

For all the exchanges, you will be matched up with a partner from our partner school. You will stay in their house, with their family, for the week (and your partner will stay with you too). For three days you will be on a work experience placement, one day you will spend shadowing your partner in school, and there are also sightseeing and social events.

Q: How many students are in the class?

MFL classes have a maximum of 24 students in them. In practice, most MFL classes have around 16 students.

Q: Does it matter if I haven't done much grammar at school?

No! We go over the basics because we understand that some schools teach lots of grammar and some not very much.

Q: I'm not very confident in speaking. Is that a problem?

Absolutely not. The key thing is to be prepared to have a go, even if you make lots of mistakes. Every week you will have a small group session with a native speaking language assistant so you will get lots of practice to improve your fluency and accuracy.

Q: How many lessons per week will I have?

As with all subjects at Bilborough, you will have 3 90 minute lessons per week, but you will also benefit from a 20 minute session with the language assistant to help your speaking skills.

Q: Will I get confused if I do more than one language?

Doing more than one language can help to reinforce important skills and also help you to understand both languages better as you notice similarities and differences. Some students even do all three!

Q: How much homework is there?

We set homework in most lessons because the key to success in languages is little and often. It doesn't work if you leave everything to the end of the course and then try to learn it in one go.

Q: What do I do if I'm struggling?

We have a team of year 13 mentors who help year 12s and all subject staff offer 1:1 or small group support every week.

Q: Is there extension work available?

Yes! There are always suggestions available if you feel you need stretching. Just talk to your teacher.

Q: How is the speaking exam assessed?

The speaking exam has an external examiner and you will know a long time in advance the date and time of your exam. You will prepare a cue card on one of the topics that we have studied and you will also present and discuss some research on a topic of your choice (the only limitation is that it has to have some kind of link to the target language culture). We've had all kinds of topics in the past, from the success of the German Bundesliga to the relevance of Prussia!

Q: Do I have to study literature?

There is a small part of the course which involves study of a literary text. For German this is a very accessible play – *Der Besuch der alten Dame* – about greed and revenge, for French it is a novella called *Le Silence de la Mer* about life under Nazi Occupation, and for Spanish it is a short play called *Las Bicicletas son para el Verano* about the effects of the Spanish Civil War on a family in Madrid.

Q: Are there any costs associated with the MFL courses?

For each language there is a set of grammar workbooks to buy in year 12 (around £10 for a set of two). You will use these for both years of the course. There is also a literary text to buy in year 13, and the cost depends on the language concerned, but is usually no more than £10. Bursary students have all of these costs paid for them.