

GCSE French and German

An introduction for students



Why GCSE French or German?



Studying any language is a vital asset in the modern world. Every industry is desperate for graduates who have the skills and qualities that learning a language grants you. It will set you apart from other job seekers, as well as increase your salary by up to 20%

As well as learning the language itself you will learn about the wider Francophone (countries that speak French) cultures and nuances to enable you to increase your understanding of the world we live in.

German offers a similar range of opportunities, with strong business links to science and technology.

The course aims to develop cultural appreciation, knowledge of grammar, vocabulary and the ability to manipulate language both verbally and in the written format.

Ultimately, we want our students to be able to hold conversations and write short pieces expressing their views on a range of interesting topics.



You should know

- This GCSE specification is new.
- It has been re-worked in order to make it more accessible to you and to help you enjoy your language GCSE experience even more.
- That means the GCSE exams you sit in French/Spanish/German will not be the same as any older friends or family members you know.
- The first exams for this GCSE are in 2026.
- This GCSE has a Higher Tier (Grades 4-9) and a Foundation Tier (Grades 1-5). You must take all papers at the same tier.




What will I learn about?

- The thematic contexts of this course are:

My personal world
Lifestyle and wellbeing
My neighbourhood
Media and technology
Studying and my future
Travel and tourism

- More specifically, you will be able to speak and write about a variety of subjects (see image).

family	friends	relationships	equality
physical well-being	mental well-being	food and drink	sports
places in town	shopping	transport	the natural world
environmental issues	social media and gaming	future opportunities (e.g. work, travel)	school
music	TV and film	accommodation	tourist attractions



What are the
papers?

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Paper 1 - Speaking

- Worth 25% of the overall grade
- Tasks include:
 - A reading aloud task
 - A transactional role play
 - A picture description and follow on conversation
- Important to know:
 - In addition to your silent preparation time in another room, you will have a minute before the exam starts to practice the reading out loud, if you would like to.
 - The role plays are all transactional like booking hotels, buying clothes, going to the doctors so they're useful in real life situations.
 - You will have a choice of two thematic contexts for your picture description and follow on conversation a few weeks in advance so you can be really prepared and confident.



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Paper 2 – Listening and Understanding

- Worth 25% of the overall grade
- 5 minutes reading time at the start of the paper.

Section A: Listening - multiple-choice, multiple-response and short-answer open response questions. All questions set in English.

Section B: Dictation

- Each extract will be played 3 times so that you can listen, respond and then check.
- The extract will be spoken at a moderate pace and there will be gaps built in to give you time to answer.



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Paper 3 – Reading and Understanding

- Worth 25% of the overall grade

Section A: Reading - multiple-choice, multiple-response and short-answer open response questions. All questions set in English.

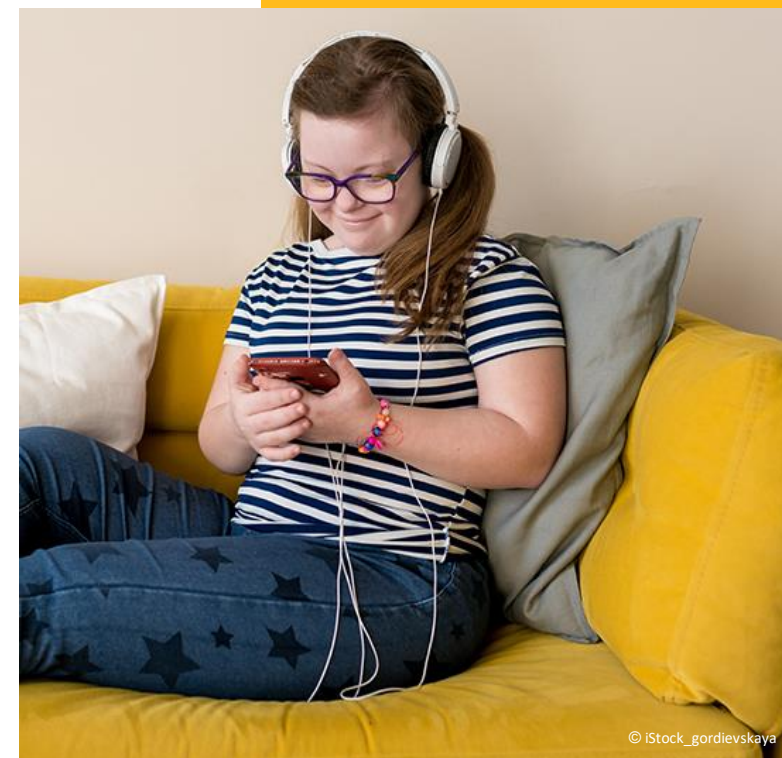
Section B: Translation into English

- There will be some **pictures** and **glossed words** (proper nouns like place names) to help you understand **cultural topics**.



Good to know about our reading and listening papers

- The **same question types** will be in the **same place** for the **same number of marks every year** – so once you're used to the past papers you know exactly how your exam will look.
- **Instructions are all in English**, so you'll always know what is expected of you.
- The reading texts and listening extracts have been broken down into **smaller chunks** so they are more **manageable** for you and not a burden on your **working memory**.
- The papers will only use names from a set list, so you aren't confused by a French/Spanish/German name you've never seen before.



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Paper 4 - Writing

- Worth 25% of the overall grade.

Picture description task (foundation only)

Two open response writings (Foundation = 40-50 words & 80-90 words. Higher = 80-90 words and 130-150 words) with a choice of two for each so you can pick the one you feel more confident with.

Translation into French/Spanish/German – 5 sentences for Foundation, a short paragraph for higher.

- We have guidance on **gender-neutral language** and you'll **gain equal credit** when using these pronouns and agreements as you would using the masculine/feminine.



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National
Language
Competition



Anthea Bell Prize
for Young Translators

What else do we offer at CCHS for French and German?

Stephen Spender Prize

The Stephen Spender Prize 2025 will open for entries in May. Read on for more details and to choose your category!

