

Studying a Modern Language at A Level at TWGGS - FAQs

Why study a modern language?

Languages are essential to live and work in a global community; and are crucial to increase your multicultural awareness: one cannot learn a language without exploring new cultures.

Languages are of paramount importance to stand out from the crowd in the job market. Languages help to enhance your employability opportunities and will open many doors, both in the UK and abroad. The study of Modern Languages beyond GCSE will enable you to foster transferable skills such as confidence, communication, problem solving and creativity.

What skills will I develop?

You will develop skills in speaking, listening, reading and writing in the modern foreign language. You will also further develop confidence in communicating and an awareness and understanding of other cultures.

What careers can I do?

Many of our students go on to study a language at university, often as a joint honours degree alongside other subjects, such as Politics, History or Linguistics.

Studying a modern foreign language can lead to many different careers that directly require the use of languages such as translating, interpreting and teaching. However, skills in a foreign language can also open the door to an array of career paths such as journalism, international aid/ development work, marketing, sales, IT and logistics.

How will I be assessed?

AS: There are three assessments

Component 1 is a speaking assessment with two tasks (two picture stimulus cards) lasting 12-14 minutes plus 15 minutes preparation time (accounting for 30% of the qualification). 60 marks.

Component 2 is a written paper assessing listening, reading and translation skills lasting 2 hours (accounting for 50% of the qualification). 100 marks.

Component 3 is written paper assessing a critical response in writing to a prescribed film or literary work studied during the course lasting 1 hour 15 minutes (accounting for 20% of the qualification). There is a choice of three films and three literary works at AS. 40 marks.

A Level: There are three assessments

Component 1 is a speaking assessment lasting 21-23 minutes involving two tasks: Task 1 is a presentation of an independent research project (chosen by you) and the ensuing discussion on the content of the research project in the language of study. Task 2 is a discussion based on a stimulus card relating to one of the themes studied (accounting for 30% of the qualification). 60 marks.

Component 2 is a written paper assessing listening, reading and translation skills lasting 2 hours 30 minutes (accounting for 50% of the qualification). 100 marks. Component 3 is a written paper assessing critical and analytical responses in writing. This involves writing two essays – one based on a literary work and the second on an additional literary work or film from the prescribed list of films and literary works studied during the course. The component lasts 2 hours (accounting for 20% of the qualification). There is a choice of six films and six literary works at A Level. 40 marks.

Are there trips abroad?

In German, there is the opportunity to undertake work experience in a German-speaking country in the summer term. This is arranged by Skinner School.

In Spanish, there is a bi-annual trip in February half-term to Andalucia (upper and lower).

In French in the past we have done a cultural long weekend trip to Paris.

(All trips are subject to Covid-19 restrictions).

What are the themes used for?

At AS level the theme of “Being a Young Person in French/German/Spanish society” and “Understanding the French/German/Spanish speaking world” will be tested in the Listening, Reading and Translation components. In the oral, you will be asked to discuss one sub-theme of both themes.

At A Level, as well as “Being a Young Person in French/German/Spanish society” and “Understanding the French/German/Spanish speaking world” which are studied in Year 1 (AS) you will also learn about “Diversity and Difference in France/Germany/Spain” and the History topic for each language (please see your options booklet). They will also be used to test your Listening, Reading and Translation skills. In the oral, as well as your IRP, you will have a card in which you will discuss any of these themes.