

French A level Student Guide

Is this the right subject for me?

If you enjoy meeting and talking to people from other countries, finding out about their cultures and learning how language works, then studying A level French is an excellent choice for you!

Why should I study a language?

Learning languages encourages you to:

- Meet people from different countries and find out more about them
- Learn many skills which are useful in a wide range of careers, such as the ability to communicate clearly, be confident about speaking in public, use problem solving strategies and write coherently
- Develop critical thinking, creativity and independence
- Add an international dimension to your choice of A level subjects, which is something many employers and higher education providers want
- Have greater opportunities to work and/or study abroad, or work for companies in the UK with international links
- Discuss interests, ideas and opinions with other people who speak the language
- Learn more about countries where the language is spoken, and the people who speak it
- Read books and watch films in their original language
- Spend time abroad (e.g. at university or on a work placement).

What do I need to know, or be able to do, before taking this course?

If you already have knowledge of a variety of topics, and can express your opinions, you are ready to build on this at A level, though you can also start from scratch. You will learn about different aspects of French culture, literature and/or film, and be able to use more complex grammar and more vocabulary. This enables you to really develop an understanding of the language, the countries where it is spoken and the people who speak it.

What can I do after I've completed the course?

People with language skills and knowledge usually have an advantage over people without them. They stand out as talented and successful people, with broad and exciting horizons.

Success at A level French means you will:

- Add an extra international dimension to your personal skills profile which will impress people who read your CV
- Be in a stronger position to get a job in companies with international links
- Be able to work or study in a French-speaking country in later life
- Progress to study a degree in French, or French and another subject, to further your knowledge of the language and culture
- Find it easier to learn other languages later if you want to
- Add a useful skill if your main subjects are not languages: languages support careers in a range of areas including management, business, science and tourism.

What will I learn?

A level French helps you explore a wide range of topics, which will add to your understanding of the language and country. Topics are: evolving society in France; political and artistic culture in French-speaking countries; immigration and multiculturalism in France; the Occupation and Resistance. The books (or book and film) you study may link to the topics,

giving you further insight into French culture. You will also learn new grammar and vocabulary and you will be able to translate into and out of French. You will develop your critical thinking, creativity, independence and skills of analysis. You will also develop skills to be able to learn other languages.

How will I be assessed?

You will take three exams which make up the total available. Paper 1 is 40% of the total marks; Paper 2 is 30% and Paper 3 is 30%. You will be given a certificate with a grade between E and A* with A* being the highest.

Paper 1 Listening, reading and translation	Paper 2 Written response to works and translation	Paper 3 Speaking
In the listening section of this paper, you will answer multiple-choice and comprehension questions in French on a variety of recordings. In the reading section, you will also answer multiple-choice and comprehension questions in French, based on a variety of written texts. You will also translate a passage from French into English.	In this paper you will write about two books or one book and one film that you have studied throughout the year. There will also be a translation of a passage from English into French.	Before this exam you will have 5 minutes to prepare a discussion based on a stimulus card you are given. You will then discuss the topic of the card with your examiner, who is often your teacher. You will also give a presentation on an independent research project you will have conducted on a topic you will have chosen.

Example questions

An example of a multiple-choice question

Ses nouvelles camarades de classe ont l'âge de sa petite sœur. « Elles sont très sympas, et elles sont aussi douées que moi. Mais mes amis sont en fac et moi je suis encore au lycée », regrette Margaux, qui fait sa première rentrée en terminale au lycée parisien Jules-Ferry.

Question: Choisissez la bonne fin pour la phrase. Cochez [X] la phrase correcte.

En comparaison avec ses camarades de classe, Margaux est ...

<input type="checkbox"/>	A plus âgée.
<input type="checkbox"/>	B moins âgée.
<input type="checkbox"/>	C plus intelligente.
<input type="checkbox"/>	D moins intelligente.

Answer: A

An example of a comprehension question

Astérix est une série de bande dessinée franco-belge créée par l'écrivain René Goscinny et le dessinateur Albert Uderzo. *Astérix chez les Bretons*, qui présente des éléments spécifiques liés à la culture britannique, a particulièrement plu aux Anglais.

Question: Comment Goscinny et Uderzo ont-ils collaboré pour produire les albums d'Astérix?

Answer: Goscinny écrivait le texte, Uderzo faisait les dessins.

Next steps

Talk to your teacher about taking A level French.

Visit the Edexcel website (www.edexcel.com/alevel2016) for more information about what you will be studying and how you will be assessed.