

French A-level

Exam board: AQA

Where do I start?

You must meet the minimum entry requirements of Wootton Park VI. For this subject you must have obtained at least **Grade 7** at GCSE French.

French – about the subject:

French is the fifth mostly widely spoken language in the world and the fourth most widely spoken in Europe. It is the official language of the European Union, one of the Official Languages of The United Nations, NATO and the WHO. It is an official diplomatic language and is the second language in aviation, engineering and international law. It is also the official language in 29 different countries.

It is one of the ‘Romance’ family of languages and is spoken in large parts of Africa, in the Caribbean, Quebec (Canada), several island nations and central Europe (including France, Belgium, Monaco, Andorra and Switzerland). There are also a number of former and current overseas territories and island nations where French is also spoken – including Martinique, French Guyana, Guadeloupe, Monserrat and Senegal. French is also often a second language in parts of Asia – including Vietnam – and is a well-respected international language.

The study of French at A-level encompasses the language, history, geography, culture and literature of France and the Francophonie – the French-speaking world. We look at literature, film, theatre, art and architecture, as well as exploring the history, geography and socio-economic/socio-political of countries where French is the native language.

Just like at GCSE we will cover Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing. We will study topics such as the heritage of France, the development of French society, the Francophonie, issues of integration and immigration, and the media and technology in French life. We will also study a book – currently likely to be a classic piece of French literature – either Voltaire’s ‘Candide’ or Molière’s ‘Tartuffe’, examining the work of the author, the literary techniques employed and the importance of the work in French culture. In addition we will study a film – currently the 1995 classic ‘La Haine’, looking at the production and the societal commentary behind the film. Learners will also complete an independent research project on an aspect of French culture which will form the basis of a significant section of their speaking examination.



Why study French?

If you are an enthusiastic learner with an interest in how languages work, and the study of other cultures, studying French can offer you an interesting and challenging course of further study – which really explores a huge range of cultural topics.

Learners study French because they want to:

- Consider working and/or studying abroad in the future;
- Explore the world, different cultures and takes on modern life;
- Investigate international trade, business, politics and law;
- Considering engineering, aviation, international medicine or charity work;
- Expand their horizons and be able to communicate with people in their own language, or expand their communication abilities into the second most widely studied language in the world – French is rated the third most useful language for business.

What type of learner chooses French?

Learners who choose to study one, or more language at A-level, need to be self-motivated, independent learners who like to work with a high level of accuracy. They must be analytical and determined to succeed in all areas of language learning.

A-level languages courses link well to a number of other subject areas and can be considered alongside other languages, with arts and creative subjects, or as an additional tool to those studying for Medicine, Law or Economics. Studying Languages A-level requires an inquiring mind, and a mature outlook, as topics covered can be complex and advanced in nature – including the role of women in society; political systems and the history of the French Republics; secularism in society; what constitutes culture...

What are the career/higher education prospects?

French combines well with almost any other subject. Here are some careers that studying A-level French can lead to:

- The Diplomatic Service
- The Armed Forces
- Translation & Interpreting
- International Law
- Retail Buying & Fashion
- Marketing
- International Medicine
- Politics
- International Journalism
- Language Teaching & Academia
- Travel & Tourism

What co-curricular opportunities are there within this subject?

French offers many opportunities for learning outside the classroom and, subject to suitable numbers and interest, there should be opportunities for trips and visits, including trips abroad to immerse learners in the language they are studying. We will also arrange film showings, theatre visits, cooking and food-tasting opportunities alongside the chance to read, research and investigate topics independently. Learners are encouraged to read French newspapers, watch French TV, access French radio and will have one 1-2-1 or small group speaking session per week with a native speaker. Learners will be encouraged to use French as a means of communication with their languages teachers and other learners in the class groups, and to prepare and engage in debates on a range of complex topics.

The A-level will be assessed in the following way:

A-level Examinations

Paper 1 – Listening, Reading & Writing Paper 2 – Written Exam Paper 3 - Speaking

2 hours 30 minutes

2 hours

23 minutes

100 marks (50%)

80 marks (20%)

60 marks (30%)

All examinations are in the second year of the course.

We will follow the AQA 7652 Specification - <https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/languages/as-and-a-level/french-7652>