

GCSE French, German and Spanish Revision

What is the exam like?

4 papers – each worth 25% of the GCSE

1. Paper 1: Listening

Foundation = a 35-minute exam with 40 marks available

Higher = a 45-minute exam with 50 marks available

The first section asks questions in English, which must be answered in English too. The second part will ask questions in Target Language, with answers to be given in TL.

2. Paper 2: Speaking

Foundation = the test will last around 7-9 minutes with 60 marks available

Higher = the test will 10-12 minutes with 60 marks available

There are three sections to this: role play, photo card and general conversation. This will take place with your teacher after the Easter Holiday.

3. Paper 3: Reading

Foundation = a 45-minute exam with 60 marks available

Higher = a 1-hour exam with 60 marks available

The first section asks question in English, which must be answered in English. The second section will ask questions in TL with answers to be in TL. The third section is a translation from TL to English.

4. Paper 4: Writing

Foundation = a 1-hour exam with 50 marks available (Q1: describe a photo; Q2: 40 word question, Q3: translation into TL, Q4: 90 word question)

Higher = a 1 hour 15 minute exam with 60 marks available (Q1: 90 word question, Q2: 150 word question, Q3: translation into TL)

Will I do Foundation or Higher?

Your teacher will talk to you about whether you do Foundation Higher, making sure you will get the best possible grade. If you do Foundation, you can achieve up to a Grade 5. If you do Higher, you can achieve up to a Grade 9. If you are working at a Grade 5, exam board advice is you do Foundation. We will use in school assessments and mock exams to decide which tier you should be entered for. We can change your tier up until February.

How can I revise for listening?

Grammar and vocabulary revision is key for success in the listening exam. Areas such as tenses (past, present, future) and topic-specific vocabulary will help you to answer the questions more easily, especially thinking about how tenses and key vocab sounds.

- Use the past papers on the AQA website. <https://www.aqa.org.uk/>
 - Read the title of the question and think about the topic in question before you start. Try making a list of words or phrases that may come up. This way you'll be more likely to pick up on the vocabulary when it's used in the paper. You'll also be more likely to identify any trickier words that may arise.
 - Numbers can easily be mistaken in listening exams, so listen to them carefully. You'll have two chances to listen to the recording, so use the second listen to clarify any hesitations you might have had the first-time round.
 - After listening and noting your answers, listen again while reading the audio transcript provided on the AQA website to go through the questions again, and to note anything you may have missed.
- Use the listening resources on share point in the KS3/4 Learning section, these are then found by clicking on the drop-down tab and selecting the appropriate language.
- Use ActiveLearn to revise topics from previous years. Work through listening activities.
- Use your revision guides.
- Listen to radio or podcasts, to get used to hearing the language. Recommended podcasts are:
 - <https://www.newsinslowgerman.com/>
 - <https://slowgerman.com/>
 - <https://www.newsinslowfrench.com/>
 - <https://www.thefrenchpodcast.com/beginner.php>

How can I revise for reading?

Grammar and vocabulary revision is key for success in the reading exam. Areas such as tenses (past, present, future) and topic-specific vocabulary will help you to answer the questions more easily, as will being familiar with different question types, i.e. what, why, when, who, how, etc.

- Use the AQA website to find past papers. <https://www.aqa.org.uk/>
- Use ActiveLearn to revise past and future topics, work through the reading activities
- Use your Grammar and Translation workbooks to complete translations
- Use your revision guide for both reading and translation
- Read authentic target language texts
- Read blogs in Target Language
- Read in English – it will improve your vocabulary and enable you to make links to foreign words, but it will also help your grammar for your translation. And if you pick a good book, it will help you revise

How can I revise for speaking?

Use friends and family to help you. If they speak the language, they are perfect for listening to you practice (make their day by getting in touch, they will usually be delighted to help). Even if they're a bit rusty, they can still listen to you. You never know, their language skills may come flooding back! And if they don't know any of the language, they can still listen, it'll sound impressive to them!

For the role play:

- Use the specimen paper on the AQA website <https://www.aqa.org.uk/> to practice answers to role plays

For the photo cards:

- Use the specimen paper on the AQA website <https://www.aqa.org.uk/> to prepare photo cards
- Find a photo online and write a description of it. Think what questions you could ask about it. Share it with a friend who is studying a language.

For the general conversation:

- Learn your speaking question and start now! - Your teacher will have given you a list of questions and you will have prepared a bank of answers to these questions. Ways to do this are:
 - make flash cards with the question on one side and the answer on the other
 - write them out repeatedly until you can do this from memory
 - write yourself a scaffold (miss out some of the words) see if you can fill in the blanks, repeat with more blanks until you can do this from memory
 - record your paragraphs onto your phone and listen to them whenever you can
 - make yourself a Memrise course with key phrases

How can I revise for writing?

Learning your speaking paragraphs will help you with all the questions on the writing paper - so it's two for one when you're revising for these!

- Take one of your speaking paragraphs and think of a similar question e.g. What is your opinion of technology? could change to What is your opinion of sport/holidays/school/teachers/recycling? Then change your paragraph to answer the new question. Ask someone to check it for you.
- Learn key verbs. For a Grade 4 or above you will need 3 tenses (past, present and future) but you can manage this by learning key verbs. If you're aiming for a 7 or above, practise more varied tenses e.g. imperfect, conditional, subjunctive, passive.
- List and learn phrases appropriate for the grade you are aiming to achieve.
- Make sure you know at least four examples of the following:
 - Connectives
 - Opinion phrases
 - Reasons
 - Time phrases
 - Intensifiers
 - Comparatives
- If you are aiming higher than a 5 you need to include more complexity – make sure you ask your teacher what this means for you.
- Use the specimen paper on the AQA website <https://www.aqa.org.uk/> to answer practice questions.
- Use your revision guides
- Use your Grammar and Translation work book.

General revision

For all of the papers you need to know your vocab. At the very least you should be doing this now.

- Read through your vocab booklet
- Use www.memrise.com to learn and create courses. Share courses you create with classmates - why not help each other?
- When you do a past paper, note down vocab from the paper which you don't know and then learn it. Get someone to test you.
- Use ActiveLearn
- Use www.quizlet.com
- Look at the specification for your language on the AQA website, there will be a list of vocab on there, read through it and see what you already know. <https://www.aqa.org.uk/>

Remember to be **realistic** with your revision.

You have **3 months before your speaking exam** and **4 months before the other papers**.

If you get really organised, work hard in class, do your homework and ask for any help/support, you can do this!

On your revision timetable, make sure you have revision for each part of the exam.

You should focus on speaking first. If you do well in the speaking exam you are likely to do well on the rest of the papers.

Please speak to your class teacher if you are unsure about anything or need more guidance.