

WGSB6 A Level Options

French FAQ Information Sheet



Which exam board and courses are studied at A Level?

AQA

What skills will studying *French* equip me with?

Enhances cognitive and academic skills (critical thinking, analytical reasoning, long-term memory).

Opens doors to travel, study and work abroad (Skills: Independent learning, adaptability, cross-cultural understanding).

Intercultural understanding (cultural literacy, interpretation of media and texts, empathy and a global perspective).

Strong communication (fluent speaking pronunciation, grammatical accuracy, listening and comprehension).

Do I need a specific grade at GCSE to access A level?

Grade 5 and above in GCSE French.

How is the course structured and how will it be taught?

Listening, Reading, Writing and Translation (Paper 1) – This combined exam tests your understanding of spoken and written French and your ability to write in French. It usually includes a range of texts and audio clips related to the course themes.

Writing (Paper 2) – This exam focuses on written responses, including essays on one of the literary or film works studied during the course.

Speaking (Paper 3) – This includes two parts: a discussion based on a stimulus card related to one of the course themes, and an Independent Research Project (IRP), where you present and discuss a topic you've researched in French.

The course content is organised around broad themes such as social issues, politics, culture, and artistic life in the French-speaking world. The assessments take place at the end of the two-year course.

A Level French is taught using a range of engaging and interactive methods to build confidence and fluency. Lessons are often a mixture of shared departmental resources using the online Kerboodle platform, as well as discussions and debates in French. Teachers also aim to include group work, grammar games, as well as films, music, podcasts, and authentic news articles to bring the language and culture to life. Independent research, creative tasks, and regular speaking practice help students stay actively involved and develop a deeper understanding of the language and Francophone world.

Is there a coursework component?

The Independent Research Project (IRP) is a key part of the AQA French A-level speaking exam. You choose a topic related to French-speaking culture that interests you (such as a historical event, social issue, or cultural figure) and research it in detail. In the exam, you give a short presentation in French and then discuss your findings with the examiner. It's a chance to explore something you're passionate about and show off your language skills in a real-world context.



WGSB6 A Level Options French FAQ Information Sheet



Who teaches the course?

Mrs S Williams

Mrs E Nicholls

Mr J Hughes

How is the course resourced?

The French A-level course is resourced through a combination of textbooks, online platforms, and multimedia materials like podcasts, videos and news articles. Teachers also provide tailored worksheets, practice exams, and access to language apps to support vocabulary and grammar learning. For homework, students are provided with knowledge organizers to support the vocabulary learning, grammar practice, and exam skills for each module. Additionally, WGSB offer opportunities to engage with native speakers and cultural events to enhance real-world language experience.

How well do students achieve in *French*?

At WGSB6, students consistently achieve strong results in their French A-level, with the 4-year average of A*-C grades achieved being 75%. Students go on to study a wide range of competitive academic degrees at university, as well as degree-apprenticeships in areas such as Civil Service and Business Management.

Will I need to do a lot of independent study?

Yes, you will need to do a fair amount of independent study for French A level. This includes building vocabulary, practicing grammar, improving listening and reading skills, and engaging with French media such as films, articles, or podcasts. Independent study also helps you prepare for speaking exams and written work and is key to becoming more confident and fluent over time.

What are typical A level subject choices alongside *French*?

French is often studied alongside a wide range of A level subjects, including humanities like English, History, and Politics, as well as STEM subjects such as Maths, Biology, Chemistry, or Physics. Combining French with STEM is increasingly valued, as it demonstrates both analytical and communication skills, and opens up opportunities in global industries such as engineering, medicine, and scientific research where language skills are a strong asset.

Do I need to take another subject to support my study of *French*?

You don't need to take another subject to support your study of French, as it's a facilitating subject that complements a wide range of courses and pairs well with almost any other A level.

What subject-related extracurricular opportunities are offered at A level?

At A level, subject-related extracurricular opportunities often include; a trip to Paris every February for Y12 and 13 students, as well as visits to local universities to support exam preparation. Within schools, there are a plethora of departmental clubs and workshops to engage with, to encourage a deepening of subject knowledge and interest. Students can also take part in competitions like essay contests, debates, or language challenges, which help develop critical thinking and showcase academic ability beyond the classroom.



WGSB6 A Level Options French FAQ Information Sheet



How might French help me in my next steps/ university/ career planning?

Stronger university applications

Many universities value language students highly due to the academic rigour of language learning. Some courses (especially international relations, business, or linguistics) favour or require a language. A-level French can give you access to exchange programs in France, Belgium, Canada, or Switzerland.

More career pathways

International Business and Trade
Diplomacy / Government / Civil Service
Translation & Interpreting
Tourism & Hospitality
Journalism / Media
NGOs and Charities

*French is one of the official languages of the **UN, EU, NATO, World Bank, and Red Cross**, so it's extremely valuable in global careers.*

Transferrable skills for any career

Advanced communication
Problem solving and adaptability
Critical thinking and attention to detail
Cultural awareness

Global opportunities

Working abroad
Internships and volunteering

Long-term career benefits

Higher-earning potential
Job security and flexibility

Other helpful information about studying *French*

A-level French classes are typically smaller groups (between 6 and 12 students). Smaller class sizes at A level offer a more personalized and supportive learning experience. With fewer students, teachers can give more individual attention and tailored feedback, helping you make more progress. You're more likely to participate in discussions, build confidence, and develop deeper understanding of the subject. The close-knit environment also makes it easier to form strong relationships with both teachers and classmates, creating a positive atmosphere that encourages learning. This kind of setting also prepares you well for university-style seminars, where independent thinking and discussion are key.

