

German

Why study German?

German is the most widely spoken language in Europe, and Germany is the world's fourth largest economy, making this one of the most useful languages to learn for a number of careers, including business and engineering. As an English speaker, German is also relatively easy to learn, as it comes from the same language family as English. It is also famous for being the language of poets, musicians and thinkers – think of Beethoven, Mozart, Bach and Einstein to name but a few. Having a GCSE in a language is a huge advantage in our increasingly international world and it will make you a lot more employable. You will also develop amazing transferable skills that are applicable to almost everything you do. You will improve your memory, your creativity, your listening and communication skills and your self-confidence.

If you chose German as your language in Year 7, you will find that you have already covered a lot of the language you need for GCSE. The learning doesn't get more difficult in Years 10 and 11, and you will simply continue to build on that language, so that by the end of the course you will have developed a level of fluency that allows you to communicate with native speakers both in speech and in writing. Most of the grammar has been covered in Years 7-9, so you will just be consolidating what you already know.

If you chose German as your language in Year 9 and you are genuinely interested in languages, you could consider taking it as a second language at GCSE, either as a second modern language or instead of the language you began in Year 7. If you choose to take two modern languages at GCSE, this will put you in an extremely select élite who are very much in demand. Although you will initially feel less confident in German, keen pupils will find that they can quickly cope with the demands of the GCSE course. If German is your second modern language and you are considering taking it to GCSE, please speak to Mrs Lee first.

You will enjoy interactive lessons with games and activities designed to help you learn the vocabulary and improve your fluency. You will have time each week with a native speaker to concentrate on conversation in addition to your timetabled lessons. You will also have access to online support materials such as Kerboodle. On top of this, there are plenty of exciting activities on offer to help you to develop your skills even further, ranging from the ever-popular visits from the Onatti theatre company, to residential trips to Germany.

What does the course involve?

As part of the GCSE course, you will study a range of topics, and you will also learn about the culture of German-speaking countries, including the food they eat, festivals they celebrate etc. You will follow a GCSE textbook (and will also have online support materials) to cover the following topics:

Theme 1: People and lifestyle.

Theme 2: Popular culture.

Theme 3: Communication and the world around us.

How is the course assessed?

At the end of Year 11, you will take four exams, each worth 25% of the overall grade:

Paper 1: Listening (45 minutes, including 5 minutes reading time)

Paper 2: Speaking (15 minutes preparation time, then 10-12 minutes of exam)

Paper 3: Reading (1 hour)

Paper 4: Writing (1 hour 15 minutes)

What can a GCSE in German lead to?

A GCSE in German can open many doors to you. It is considered a facilitating subject, which means it is a subject that will be looked on favourably by universities no matter what course you wish to study, due to the transferable “soft” skills that you learn during the course. Having a language GCSE will also make you more employable and you could earn more money, whatever job you go on to do.

You will of course have the option to continue your study of German to A Level, and if you enjoy languages, you may wish to study them at university and perhaps even make them your career. There are a huge number of industries that use language skills, such as translation and interpreting, journalism and broadcasting, diplomatic services, international business and finance, tourism and hospitality, marketing and sales etc.

What skills does the German course develop?

First and foremost, you will develop your communication skills, as learning a language involves the skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing. You will also develop a number of other skills including: improving memory, problem-solving, creativity of expression and multitasking.

At a Glance

Exam Board

AQA (8662).

Assessment Type

Four exams, each worth 25% of the overall grade

Head of Department

Mrs A Lee

