

## A student's guide to the GCSE in

# MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES



### What are modern foreign language GCSEs all about?

- Thanks to new technology and improved travel and communications, the world has become a much smaller place. It is crucial, therefore, that we learn to speak and understand each other. This can only be done effectively by learning other languages and appreciating associated cultures.
- A GCSE in another language rewards practical communication skills and adds a European and/or International dimension to your studies.
- Learning another language can enhance your employment and mobility prospects whether you want a career in business, engineering, fashion or world class football!
- This is a multi-skill GCSE (speaking, listening, reading and writing) and each skill attracts 25% of the total marks – it is not just writing!
- It encourages you to express yourself, your likes, dislikes, ideas and opinions and develops self-confidence.

### Will I enjoy this course?

You will enjoy this course if you want to study a subject that offers:

- a range of skills and a variety of activities with topics that include media, entertainment & youth culture, education, training & employment and social activities, fitness and health
- a personalised, student-centred approach to study. The Edexcel GCSE lets you make key choices. In consultation with your teacher, you choose one of the assessed speaking topics and have a choice of questions in the writing paper. If you do the coursework option, you choose assignments that reflect your interests.
- potential for linking work to ICT - 'surfing the net', sending e-mails, using multi-media facilities and other practical ICT applications will be actively encouraged.

It will appeal to all types of students including those interested in travel, culture and people from different countries, as well as those who always have something to say!

### How does it follow on from what I have learned before?

You have developed important language skills and knowledge at key stage 3 (Years 7-9). The GCSE course will build on this and introduce you to a wider range of language structures and vocabulary. You will learn to recognise these and to apply your new knowledge to different contexts.

If you enjoy language learning, consider taking more than one language GCSE if available at your centre. In addition to French, German, and Spanish, there are many modern foreign language GCSEs to choose from. The Edexcel range includes French, German, Italian, Spanish, Urdu, Russian, Arabic, Chinese, Japanese and Modern Greek.

## What about exams?

You will take one paper in each of the four skills. This includes a speaking test that your teacher will carry out with you. Marks will be awarded positively and are mostly allocated for 'communication' in the foreign language. You will also need to provide some answers in English (Listening and Reading papers).

## What about my results?

As with all GCSE examinations, your performance will be graded from G-A\* according to your performance across all papers.

## Is there any coursework?

Your centre may offer a coursework option (Writing). This will involve undertaking three units of coursework (two units for the Short Course) which feature different topic areas. It offers you the opportunity to submit your best and most interesting pieces of work and rewards you for language progress made throughout key stage 4.

## What other skills might I develop?

Learning a language will help you to develop skills that will be extremely useful to you. It can help you to develop key skills in Communication, Information and Communication Technology, Working with Others and Improving own Learning and Performance. It will also develop your confidence and ability to communicate with people from other countries and cultures.

## What could I do next with a GCSE in a modern foreign language?

The MFL GCSE offers a progression route to further study of a foreign language at AS, A level or as an option within Vocational A levels, BTEC First or National awards. A GCSE confirms your ability to learn a foreign language and facilitates the learning of other languages.

Employers are always asking for candidates with language skills and a GCSE in a modern foreign language will place you in a strong position for interesting employment with plenty of career opportunities. Examples of employment where language skills are particularly valued include journalism and media, law, engineering, business and marketing, ICT, sport and leisure, travel and tourism, customer service, civil service (Immigration, Customs and Excise, Diplomatic Service) and teaching (UK and abroad).