



Queen Mary's College



FAQs – Modern Languages

Q: *What grades with I need to be able to start the course?*

A: You will need a grade 6 or above at GCSE for the relevant language. If you are beginning Italian from scratch, you will need a grade 6 GCSE in any Modern Language. For native speakers of the language a GCSE is not required, but we will ask you to take a short test to verify the standard of your written language.

Q: *Which topics do we study?*

A: The range of topics studied for each language is broad and will cover all aspects of life in the countries where the language is spoken. At GCSE, you focus on talking about yourself and your interests and experiences. At A level the scope is wider. You will study contemporary social issues, history, film and literature. In addition, we will help you to develop your vocabulary, build your understanding of grammar and improve your spoken fluency and comprehension.

Q: *How will I bridge the gap between GCSE and A level?*

A: Obviously we do not expect you to be fluent at the beginning. We spend the first half-term preparing you for higher study, giving guidance on how to build your vocabulary, structure more complex sentences and gradually increasing your confidence in speaking. Everyone is in the same situation.

Q: *Are there native speakers in the class?*

A: Some students will have more experience of the language than others, but everyone will be given the support and encouragement they need. Students are very good at helping each other in classes and there is a positive approach to learning.

Q: *How big are the groups?*

A: We keep MFL classes small to make sure that everyone has the input they need, average class size is 10-12 students.

Q: *What would a typical lesson look like?*

A: Each lesson will be different, but we make sure that you have the opportunity to practise listening, speaking, reading and writing in every session. There will often be vocabulary or grammar tests to check understanding and on occasions

there will be speaking presentations, films and research sessions. The classes will be mainly taught in the language and this will increase as the course progresses. You have 5 one hour lessons a week.

Q: *Is there lots of homework?*

A: Homework is an important part of learning a language as you need to be regularly practising your skills in order to make progress. Tasks vary and could include research for a presentation, online listening activities, translation or longer pieces of writing. You are expected to watch news broadcasts and films to improve your comprehension and broaden your vocabulary.

Q: *Do you run trips?*

A: Yes. We run study visits to France, Germany and Spain every year. Students take part in planning the trips and can decide the places they would like to visit and the language experiences they would like to have. We can also help to arrange work experience in all European countries for those interested.

Q: *What can I do with a Modern Languages A level?*

A: Being able to communicate fluently in another language is a very marketable skill. Most of our students continue to study the language at university, either as a stand-alone subject or in combination with another. Modern Languages graduates have one of the highest rates of employment in the UK and pursue careers in a wide range of professions including international commerce and law.

Q: *How can I prepare before the course begins?*

A: Do a little every day to avoid becoming rusty post-GCSE. Listen to lots of music with lyrics in the language as this has an effect on vocabulary, comprehension and fluency. Read short online articles, noting new vocabulary and try to read or listen (Audible) to some short stories. If you get an opportunity to visit a country where the language is spoken before the course starts, make the most of it – chat to people and build your confidence. Most people are pleased to hear someone making an effort to speak their language and will be happy to engage with you.