

REGULATIONS

Proposed GCSE Subject Level Conditions and Requirements for Modern Foreign Languages and Certificate Requirements (2021)

September 2020

ofqual

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Introduction

About this document

This document (highlighted in the figure below) is part of a suite of documents which sets out the regulatory requirements for awarding organisations offering GCSE qualifications (graded from 9 to 1) in 2021.

We have developed these requirements with the intention that GCSE qualifications (graded from 9 to 1) should fulfil the following purposes:

- To provide evidence of students' achievements against demanding and fulfilling content;
- To provide a strong foundation for further academic and vocational study and for employment; and
- To provide (if required) a basis for schools and colleges to be held accountable for the performance of all of their students.

Requirements set out in this document

This document sets out the GCSE Subject Level Conditions for Modern Foreign Languages for Learners completing the qualification in 2021, except where the GQCov Framework applies.

A 'Modern Foreign Language' is defined in Condition GCSE (Modern Foreign Languages) 8.1.

It also sets out our requirements in relation to:

- assessment objectives – awarding organisations must comply with these requirements under Condition GCSE (Modern Foreign Languages) 1.2;
- tiering of assessments – awarding organisations must comply with these requirements under Condition GCSE (Modern Foreign Languages) 2.1; and
- assessments (including the speaking assessment) – awarding organisations must comply with these requirements under Condition GCSE (Modern Foreign Languages) 3.1
- spoken language assessments – awarding organisations must comply with these requirements under Condition GCSE (Modern Foreign Languages) 4.2
- certificates for GCSE Modern Foreign Languages – awarding organisations must comply with these requirements under Condition I3.1 and Condition GCSE (Modern Foreign Languages) 7.3.

Appendix 1 reproduces the requirements in relation to subject content for GCSEs in modern foreign language subjects,¹ as published by the Department for Education. Awarding organisations must comply with these requirements under Condition GCSE (Modern Foreign Languages) 1.1.

With respect to all GCSE qualifications (graded from 9 to 1), awarding organisations must also comply with:

- our *General Conditions of Recognition*,² which apply to all awarding organisations and qualifications;
- our *GCSE Qualification Level Conditions*;³ and
- all relevant Regulatory Documents.⁴

With respect to GCSE qualifications in Modern Foreign Languages taken by Learners completing the qualification in 2022 and after, an awarding organisation must continue to comply with the *GCSE Subject Level Conditions and Requirements for Modern Foreign Languages*.⁵

¹ www.gov.uk/government/publications/gcse-modern-foreign-languages

² www.gov.uk/government/publications/general-conditions-of-recognition

³ www.gov.uk/government/publications/gcse-9-to-1-qualification-level-conditions

⁴ www.gov.uk/government/publications/regulatory-documents-list

⁵ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/gcse-9-to-1-subject-level-conditions-and-requirements-for-modern-foreign-languages>

Summary of requirements

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Assessment requirements

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Appendix 1 – Subject content (published by Department for Education)

[Modern languages: GCSE subject content](#)

Subject Level Conditions

GCSE Subject Level Conditions for Modern Foreign Languages

Condition GCSE (Modern Foreign Languages) 1	Compliance with content requirements
GCSE (Modern Foreign Languages) 1.1	<p>In respect of each GCSE Qualification in a Modern Foreign Language which it makes available, or proposes to make available, an awarding organisation must –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">(a) comply with the requirements relating to that qualification set out in the document published by the Secretary of State entitled ‘Modern foreign languages GCSE subject content⁵, document reference DFE-00348-2014,(b) have regard to any recommendations or guidelines relating to that qualification set out in that document, and(c) interpret that document in accordance with any requirements, and having regard to any guidance, which may be published by Ofqual and revised from time to time.
GCSE (Modern Foreign Languages) 1.2	<p>In respect of each GCSE Qualification in a Modern Foreign Language which it makes available, or proposes to make available, an awarding organisation must comply with any requirements, and have regard to any guidance, relating to the objectives to be met by any assessment for that qualification which may be published by Ofqual and revised from time to time.</p>

⁵ www.gov.uk/government/publications/gcse-modern-foreign-languages

Condition GCSE (Modern Foreign Languages) 2	Assessing the full range of abilities
GCSE (Modern Foreign Languages) 2.1	In respect of each GCSE Qualification in a Modern Foreign Language that an awarding organisation makes available, or proposes to make available – (a) Condition GCSE1.1 does not apply, and (b) the awarding organisation must ensure that the qualification, and each assessment for it, complies with any requirements which may be published by Ofqual and revised from time to time.

Condition GCSE (Modern Foreign Languages) 3	Assessment
GCSE (Modern Foreign Languages) 3.1	An awarding organisation must ensure that in respect of each assessment for a GCSE Qualification in a Modern Foreign Language which it makes available it complies with any requirements, and has regard to any guidance, which may be published by Ofqual and revised from time to time.

GCSE
(Modern Foreign
Languages) 4.1

In respect of a spoken language assessment for a GCSE Qualification in a Modern Foreign Language which an awarding organisation makes available, or proposes to make available, the following conditions do not apply –

- (a) Condition H2.
- (b) Condition GCSE4.1.
- (c) Condition GCSE6.1.

GCSE
(Modern Foreign
Languages) 4.2

An awarding organisation must ensure that in respect of each spoken language assessment for a GCSE Qualification in a Modern Foreign Language which it makes available it complies with any requirements, and has regard to any guidance, which may be published by Ofqual and revised from time to time.

GCSE
(Modern
Foreign
Languages) 4.3

In respect of each assessment cycle for a GCSE Qualification in Modern Foreign Languages which it makes available, an awarding organisation must –

- (a) require each Centre to provide a spoken language statement to the awarding organisation, and
- (b) treat any failure by a Centre to provide a spoken language statement to the awarding organisation in a timely manner as malpractice and/or maladministration (under General Condition A8 (Malpractice and maladministration)).

GCSE
(Modern Foreign
Languages) 4.4

For the purposes of this condition –

- (a) a 'spoken language assessment' is an assessment of a Learner's ability to speak the relevant Modern Foreign Language effectively, and
- (b) a 'spoken language statement' is a true and accurate written statement made by a Centre to an awarding organisation which confirms that it has taken reasonable steps to secure that each Learner to which that Centre has delivered the assessments to be taken in a particular assessment cycle for a GCSE Qualification in Modern Foreign Languages which the awarding organisation makes available has had the opportunity to take a spoken language assessment.

Condition GCSE (Modern Foreign Languages) 5	
	Access to dictionaries
GCSE (Modern Foreign Languages) 5.1	An awarding organisation must take reasonable steps to ensure that no Learner has access to a dictionary – (a) when taking any assessment for a GCSE Qualification in a Modern Foreign Language which it makes available, or (b) during any period of formal preparation time prior to such an assessment.
GCSE (Modern Foreign Languages) 5.2	For the purposes of this Condition 'formal preparation time' is a period of time immediately prior to the assessment during which the Learner is provided with previously unseen information relating to the assessment and is allowed to prepare for the assessment under conditions (including conditions as to supervision) which have been specified by the awarding organisation.

Condition GCSE (Modern Foreign Languages) 6	
	Titling
GCSE (Modern Foreign Languages) 6.1	An awarding organisation must ensure that, for the purposes of compliance with Condition E2.1(d), the title on the Register of each GCSE Qualification in Chinese which it makes available indicates the content of that qualification in the following manner, as appropriate – (a) Chinese (spoken Mandarin), or (b) Chinese (spoken Cantonese).

<p>Condition GCSE (Modern Foreign Languages) 7</p>	<p>Marking and results</p>
<p>GCSE (Modern Foreign Languages) 7.1</p>	<p>In respect of each GCSE Qualification in a Modern Foreign Language which it makes available an awarding organisation must calculate and publish the following two separate results for each Learner –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) a result for the Assessments by Examination to be taken for that qualification, and (b) a result for the spoken language assessment.
<p>GCSE (Modern Foreign Languages) 7.2</p>	<p>In respect of each GCSE Qualification in a Modern Foreign Language which it makes available, an awarding organisation must ensure that an Assessor does not have any regard to a Learner's -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) result for the spoken language assessment in calculating that Learner's final mark and result for the Assessments by Examination, and/or (c) final mark or result for the Assessments by Examination in determining that Learner's result for the spoken language assessment.
<p>GCSE (Modern Foreign Languages) 7.3</p>	<p>In respect of each spoken language assessment an awarding organisation must ensure that it complies with any Certificate Requirements which may be published by Ofqual and revised from time to time.</p>
<p>GCSE (Modern Foreign Languages) 7.4</p>	<p>For the purposes of this condition, a 'spoken language assessment' has the same meaning as in Condition GCSE (Modern Foreign Languages) 4.3.</p>

Condition GCSE (Modern Foreign Languages) 8	Interpretation and definitions
GCSE (Modern Foreign Languages) 8.1	<p>In these Conditions the following words shall have the meaning given to them below (and cognate expressions should be construed accordingly) –</p> <p>Modern Foreign Language</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">· A language, apart from English –(a) which is in everyday spoken use, and(b) with respect to which an awarding organisation is not required to comply with the <i>GCSE (9 to 1) Subject Level Conditions and Requirements for Ancient Languages</i>⁶ .

⁶ www.gov.uk/government/publications/gcse-9-to-1-subject-level-conditions-and-requirements-for-ancient-languages

Assessment objectives

Assessment objectives – GCSE Qualifications in Modern Foreign Languages

Condition GCSE (Modern Foreign Languages)1.2 allows us to specify requirements relating to the objectives to be met by any assessment for all GCSE Qualifications in a Modern Foreign Language.

The assessment objectives set out below constitute requirements for the purposes of Condition GCSE (Modern Foreign Languages)1.2. Awarding organisations must comply with these requirements in relation to each GCSE Qualification in a Modern Foreign Language they make available or propose to make available.

	Objective	Weighting
AO1	Listening – understand and respond to different types of spoken language.	<i>Equal weighting for each assessment objective</i>
AO2	Not used	
AO3	Reading – understand and respond to different types of written language.	
AO4	Writing – communicate in writing.	
<p>In AO4, at least 10 per cent of the marks available for that assessment objective must be allocated to knowledge of, and accurate application of, the grammar and structures of the language prescribed in the specification.</p>		

Tiering requirements

Tiering requirements – GCSE Qualifications in Modern Foreign Languages

Condition GCSE (Modern Foreign Languages) 2.1(b) allows us to specify requirements relating to assessing the full range of abilities for GCSE Qualifications (graded 9 to 1) in Modern Foreign Languages.

In accordance with Condition GCSE (Modern Foreign Languages) 2.1(b) an awarding organisation must design, deliver and award each GCSE Qualification in a Modern Foreign Language that it makes available, or proposes to make available, in accordance with the requirements set out below.

Use of the overlapping tiers model

1. Each GCSE Qualification in a Modern Foreign Language must be tiered. An awarding organisation must design and set the assessments for each GCSE Qualification in a Modern Foreign Language which it makes available, or proposes to make available, using an overlapping tiers model.
2. Such a model must use two tiers – a foundation tier and a higher tier – and each assessment must be designed and set in such a way as to fall within one of those two tiers only.

Preclusion of mixed tier entry

3. An awarding organisation must ensure that each Learner is permitted to take assessments in either the foundation tier or the higher tier only.

Grades available at each tier

4. The questions or tasks in foundation tier assessments must be targeted at the Level of Demand required for the award of grades 1 to 5. A Learner who takes foundation tier assessments must be awarded a grade within the range of 1 to 5 or be unclassified.
5. The questions or tasks in higher tier assessments must be targeted at the Level of Demand required for the award of grades 4 to 9. A Learner who takes higher tier assessments must be awarded a grade within the range of 4 to 9, or be unclassified. However, if the mark achieved by such a Learner is a small number of marks below the 4/3 grade boundary, that Learner may be awarded a grade 3.

Assessing the full range of abilities

6. An awarding organisation must ensure that the assessments within each tier allow each specified level of attainment available for that tier to be reached by a Learner who has attained the required level of knowledge, skills and understanding.
7. An awarding organisation must ensure that the assessments both within each tier, and taken together across both tiers –
 - a. ensure consistent and sufficient differentiation⁷ between Learners;
 - b. ensure consistent and sufficient discrimination⁸ between Learners; and
 - c. ensure the accurate and consistent setting of grades across the full range of attainments demonstrated by Learners.
8. In designing assessments, an awarding organisation must take all reasonable steps to ensure, at each tier, that Learners achieving the lowest targeted grade have demonstrated attainment with regard to a sufficient range of the subject requirements, in terms of the areas of content, content domains and the assessment objectives. Equally, an awarding organisation must take all reasonable steps to ensure, at each tier, that Learners achieving the higher targeted grades must have demonstrated attainment with regard to suitably stretching and challenging requirements, in terms of the areas of content, content domains and the assessment objectives.

The overlap at grades 4 and 5

9. An awarding organisation must take all reasonable steps in the design and delivery of the assessments and awarding processes to secure that the level of attainment indicated by grades 4 and 5 is comparable regardless of the tier for which a Learner is entered. Each awarding organisation must demonstrate in its assessment strategy the steps it has taken to secure such comparability between tiers, including on an ongoing basis. Such steps may include, but are not restricted to, the use of common questions/tasks between tiers.

⁷ For the purposes of these requirements, 'differentiation' means the provision of opportunities in an assessment for Learners to generate evidence demonstrating different levels of attainment according to their knowledge, skills and understanding.

⁸ For the purposes of these requirements, 'discrimination' means the rank ordering of Learners on the basis of the different levels of attainment they have demonstrated in an assessment or set of assessments.

Assessment requirements

Assessment Requirements - GCSE Qualifications in Modern Foreign Languages

Condition GCSE (Modern Foreign Languages) 3.1 allows us to specify requirements and guidance in relation to assessments for GCSE Qualifications in Modern Foreign Languages.

We set out our requirements for the purposes of Condition GCSE (Modern Foreign Languages) 3.1 below.

Grammar requirements

The subject content for GCSE Qualifications in Modern Foreign Languages is set out in the document published by the Secretary of State entitled 'Modern foreign languages GCSE subject content', document reference DFE-00348-2014 (the 'Content Document').

The Appendix to the Content Document sets out grammar requirements for GCSE Qualifications in French, German or Spanish. The Content Document goes on to say:

For other languages, all specifications must include appendices, developed by the awarding organisation(s), setting-out requirements for grammar which represent a level of challenge and breadth that is comparable to the requirements for French, German and Spanish.

In respect of each GCSE Qualification in a Modern Foreign Language (other than French, German or Spanish) which it makes available, or proposes to make available, an awarding organisation must–

- set out in the specification for the qualification the knowledge and understanding of grammar that will be expected of Learners at each of the foundation tier and higher tier (the 'Grammar Requirements'), and
- demonstrate to Ofqual's satisfaction in its assessment strategy that it has taken all reasonable steps to ensure that, as far as possible, the Level of Demand of the Grammar Requirements is comparable to that of the grammar requirements specified in the Content Document for GCSE Qualifications in French, German and Spanish.

Listening assessment

An awarding organisation must design and set each assessment of a Learner's ability to understand a spoken Modern Foreign Language effectively (which does not assess the Learner's ability to speak the language effectively) on the basis that the total amount of time spent by each Learner in taking such assessments shall be –

- for foundation tier assessments, 35 minutes (including five minutes reading time), and
- for higher tier assessments, 45 minutes (including five minutes reading time).

Requirements in relation to spoken language assessments

Condition GCSE (Modern Foreign Languages) 4.2 allows us to specify requirements and guidance in relation to spoken language assessments (as defined in Condition GCSE (Modern Foreign Languages)4.3) for GCSE Qualifications in Modern Foreign Languages.

We set out our requirements for the purposes of Condition GCSE (Modern Foreign) 4.3 below.

Spoken language assessments

Spoken language assessment should take place during normal teaching and learning rather than during a one-off performance. The criteria set out below are not intended to be used in a formal examination context and there is no requirement to set up Centre-devised speaking tests to arrive at an outcome unless this is a necessary arrangement for specific Learners, e.g. for private candidates.

Teachers should base their judgements on the accumulation of evidence of a Learner's language performance through everyday classroom activities over time. This means Teachers have scope for various opportunities for Learners to demonstrate competence against the criteria set out below.

Teachers can, if they wish, share the criteria with their Learners to enable them to discuss, monitor and assess their own progress and to identify strengths and areas for improvement.

Teachers should arrive at judgements taking into account a Learner's strengths and weaknesses in performance across a range of contexts, themes and activities with different purposes.

Themes are those broad themes which will be taught in order to cover the requirements for Listening, Reading and Writing as outlined in the awarding organisation's specification. Speaking activities can be integrated into the teaching and learning of these skills in order to develop the skill of speaking in its own right as well as supporting the development of the other skills.

Different purposes may cover for example, conversations, presentations, transactions, formal and informal settings, descriptions and narrations. These suggestions are neither prescriptive nor exhaustive. Learners can demonstrate their speaking skills in relation to different purposes in a whole class context, working in pairs and groups or in a one-to-one interaction with the Teacher.

Specified levels of attainment in spoken language assessments and their application

In relation to each spoken language assessment, an awarding organisation must ensure that –

- (a) the specified levels of attainment are Pass, Merit and Distinction,
- (b) the criteria used by Assessors to determine whether each Learner will be awarded a Pass, Merit or Distinction are those set out in Table 1 below, and
- (c) a Learner who does not meet the criteria to be awarded a Pass, Merit or Distinction, or who has not been exempted on grounds of disability from the assessment but who does not take it, is issued a result of 'not classified' .

To be awarded a Pass, Merit or Distinction a Learner must –

- (a) take part in different tasks that are varied across different themes,
- (b) use language for different purposes, and
- (c) meet all of the criteria at the level for the Communication and interaction aspect and all of the criteria at the same level for at least two of the three other aspects of assessment with one aspect permissible at the level below. This includes awarding a pass to Learners who fail to meet the criteria for one of Range of language, Accuracy or Pronunciation and intonation.

The criteria below are to be applied to Learners entering at either the foundation or higher tier.

The criteria are not intended to be a mark scheme but have been devised to provide an overall description of a Learner's performance covering different aspects at a particular level by the end of the course.

The criteria for Pass, Merit and Distinction do not relate to specific tasks, but are designed to be used across a range of contexts, purposes and teaching situations.

Applying the criteria for range of language should have regard for the grammar requirements set out in the awarding organisation's specification.

The application of the criteria enables a limited compensatory approach. The key focus is on competence in Communication and interaction which is mandatory at the level to be awarded. To be awarded that level the expectations for Communication and interaction and two of the other aspects must be met in full. One of the other aspects may be one below the level to allow for a range of performance.

The criteria allow a Learner to present a 'spiky profile' in performance. For example, some Learners are very accurate, but may have a more limited range of language; others use more adventurous language, but as a consequence make more mistakes; pronunciation can be an issue for Learners, who have strongly accented English or those from other language backgrounds and those with speech difficulties. A pass can be achieved by Learners who have a limited range but quite accurate language and those with a wider range and less accuracy. This assessment arrangement therefore allows for such Learners to achieve a level that is not dependent on absolute accuracy or very good pronunciation.

Under Condition H1.1, an awarding organisation must have in place arrangements to ensure that, as far as possible, the criteria set out in Table 1 are –

- (a) understood by Assessors and accurately applied, and
- (b) applied consistently by Assessors, regardless of the identity of the Assessor, Learner or Centre.

Table 1: The criteria for Pass, Merit and Distinction

Grade	Communication and interaction	Range of language	Accuracy	Pronunciation and intonation
Pass	To be awarded a pass, the Learner - <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • gives some relevant information in generally short responses. • conveys simple thoughts and opinions. • asks some straightforward questions. • gives responses to questions that are understood. • occasionally adapts language for different purposes. • demonstrates some level of interaction. 	To be awarded a pass, the Learner – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • uses mostly simple grammatical structures. • uses a limited range of familiar vocabulary and expressions. • makes reference to present and past and/or future events with occasional success. 	To be awarded a pass, the Learner – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • is mainly correct when using familiar vocabulary and simple grammatical structures. • is likely to make errors, which sometimes impede communication. 	To be awarded a pass, the Learner – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • uses pronunciation that is mostly understandable. • makes errors that sometimes impede communication. • there may be frequent native language interference.
Merit	To be awarded a merit, the Learner - <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • conveys mainly relevant information with some longer responses. • expresses opinions with some simple justification. • asks some varied questions to obtain information. • responds to questions and develops some answers. • adapts language for different purposes with some success. • demonstrates generally good interaction. 	To be awarded a merit, the Learner – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • manipulates straightforward grammatical structures with some variation and occasional complex structures. • uses relevant and some varied vocabulary and expressions. • is generally successful in making reference to past and future, as well as present, events. 	To be awarded a merit, the Learner – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • demonstrates a generally good level of accuracy when using straightforward vocabulary and grammatical structures. • will make errors, particularly when more complex language is attempted. They sometimes hinder clarity of communication. 	To be awarded a merit, the Learner – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • demonstrates generally good pronunciation and intonation but with some inconsistency. • makes some errors that sometimes hinder clarity of communication. • there may be some native language interference.
Distinction	To be awarded a distinction, the Learner – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • communicates detailed and 	To be awarded a distinction, the Learner – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • manipulates a variety of 	To be awarded a distinction, the Learner – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • produces predominantly 	To be awarded a distinction, the Learner – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • uses pronunciation and

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Grade	Communication and interaction	Range of language	Accuracy	Pronunciation and intonation
	<p>relevant information, including some extended responses.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • expresses a variety of opinions with justification. • asks a variety of questions using a range of question forms. • responds to a variety of questions, often developing their answers. • effectively adapts language for different purposes. • demonstrates mostly natural interaction. 	<p>grammatical structures including some complex structures.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • uses a range of relevant vocabulary and a variety of expressions. • is mostly successful in making references to past and future, as well as present, events. 	<p>accurate language using a range of relevant vocabulary and some complex grammatical structures.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • will make errors that are usually minor or occur when complex structures and/or less familiar vocabulary are attempted. They rarely hinder clarity of communication. 	<p>intonation that are overall accurate and intelligible.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • makes occasional errors which rarely hinder clarity of communication. • there may be occasional native language interference.

Certificate Requirements

Condition GCSE (Modern Foreign Languages) 7.3 allows us to specify Certificate Requirements in relation to the way in which a Learner's attainment in a spoken language assessment is reflected on that Learner's certificate for the qualification.

In addition, under Condition I3.1, an awarding organisation is required to ensure that the design of each certificate in relation to a qualification which it makes available complies with the Certificate Requirements which may be published by Ofqual and revised from time to time.

We set out our Certificate Requirements for the purposes of Condition GCSE (Modern Foreign Languages) 7.3 and Condition I3.1 below.

These requirements must be followed in addition to the *Additional Certificate Requirements*⁶ which apply to all qualifications.

Certificate requirements for spoken language assessments

A certificate will only be issued for a GCSE Qualification in Modern Foreign Languages where a Learner has been awarded a grade 9-1 in respect of the level of attainment, he or she has demonstrated in the Assessments by Examination to be taken for that qualification.

Where a Learner has not been awarded a grade 9-1 in respect of those Assessments by Examination, an awarding organisation must ensure that no certificate is issued in respect of that Learner's spoken language assessment, regardless of the result of that assessment.

For clarity, the result for that Learner's spoken language assessment must still be issued, together with the Learner's result in respect of the Assessments by Examination, under Condition H6.1.

Where a certificate will be issued to a Learner in respect of the Assessments by Examination, an awarding organisation must ensure that it meets the following requirements in recording the outcome of the spoken language assessment on that certificate –

⁶ https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/371129/2011-09-12-additional_certificate_requirements.pdf

(a) Where the Learner has been awarded a Pass, Merit or Distinction, that outcome must be recorded on the certificate.

(b) Where the Learner –

(i) has taken the spoken language assessment but has not been awarded a Pass, Merit or Distinction, or

(ii) has not been granted an exemption on grounds of disability from taking the spoken language assessment, but has not taken that assessment,

the outcome reported on the certificate must be 'not classified'.

(c) Where the Learner has been granted an exemption from taking the spoken language assessment under Condition G6, the outcome reported on the certificate must be in line with any requirements which may be published by Ofqual and revised from time to time.

(d) In all cases an awarding organisation must ensure that it is clear that the above outcomes are in relation to the spoken language assessment.

Appendix 1: Subject content (published by Department for Education)



Department
for Education

Modern foreign languages

GCSE subject content

December 2015

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The content for modern foreign languages GCSEs

Introduction

1. The GCSE subject content sets out the knowledge, understanding and skills common to all GCSE specifications in a given subject. Together with the assessment objectives it provides the framework within which the awarding organisations create the detail of their specifications, so ensuring progression from key stage 3 national curriculum requirements and the possibilities for development into A Level.

Subject aims and learning outcomes

2. Through studying a GCSE in a modern foreign language, students should develop their ability and ambition to communicate with native speakers in speech and writing. The study of a modern foreign language at GCSE should also broaden students' horizons and encourage them to step beyond familiar cultural boundaries and develop new ways of seeing the world.
3. GCSE specifications in a modern foreign language should enable students to:
 - develop their ability to communicate confidently and coherently with native speakers in speech and writing, conveying what they want to say with increasing accuracy
 - express and develop thoughts and ideas spontaneously and fluently
 - listen to and understand clearly articulated, standard speech at near normal speed
 - deepen their knowledge about how language works and enrich their vocabulary in order for them to increase their independent use and understanding of extended language in a wide range of contexts
 - acquire new knowledge, skills and ways of thinking through the ability to understand and respond to a rich range of authentic spoken and written material, adapted and abridged, as appropriate, including literary texts
 - develop awareness and understanding of the culture and identity of the countries and communities where the language is spoken
 - be encouraged to make appropriate links to other areas of the curriculum to enable bilingual and deeper learning, where the language may become a medium for constructing and applying knowledge
 - develop language learning skills both for immediate use and to prepare them for further language study and use in school, higher education or in employment
 - develop language strategies, including repair strategies

Subject content

4. This content sets out the full range of content for GCSE specifications in modern foreign languages. Awarding organisations may however use any flexibility to increase depth, breadth or context within the specified topics or to consolidate teaching of the subject content.
5. The content of the GCSE specifications in modern foreign languages must fully reflect the aims and learning outcomes.

Prior learning

6. GCSE specifications will be cumulative and progressive in content and language. They will take account of the matters, skills and processes specified in the national curriculum programmes of study for key stages 2 and 3. They will also build on the foundation of core grammar and vocabulary outlined in the programmes of study for key stages 2 and 3, increasing the level of linguistic and cognitive demand.

Context and purposes

- GCSE specifications will require students to understand and use language across a range of contexts, appropriate to their age, interests and maturity levels
- students will be expected to use language for a variety of purposes and with a variety of different audiences, including for personal, academic and employment-related use
- students will make use of appropriate social conventions, including informal and formal address and register, as relevant to the task and language studied
- students will be expected to understand different types of spoken language, including recorded input from one or more speakers in public and social settings and recorded material from authentic sources and the media, appropriate to this level
- students will be expected to understand different types of written language, including relevant personal communication, public information, factual and literary texts, appropriate to this level
- language contexts will be organised in a specified number of broad themes, addressing relevant matters relating to:
 - identity and culture
 - local, national, international and global areas of interest
 - current and future study and employment
- literary texts can include extracts and excerpts, adapted and abridged as appropriate, from poems, letters, short stories, essays, novels or plays from contemporary and historical sources, subject to copyright

- the content, contexts and purposes of a GCSE specification in a modern foreign language will provide an appropriate foundation for A level study and a suitable preparation for higher education or employment

Scope of study

7. GCSE specifications in modern foreign languages must require students to:

Listening: understand and respond to spoken language

- demonstrate general and specific understanding of different types of spoken language
- follow and understand clear standard speech using familiar language across a range of specified contexts
- identify the overall message, key points, details and opinions in a variety of short and longer spoken passages, involving some more complex language, recognising the relationship between past, present and future events
- deduce meaning from a variety of short and longer spoken texts, involving some complex language and more abstract material, including short narratives and authentic material addressing a wide range of relevant contemporary and cultural themes
- recognise and respond to key information, important themes and ideas in more extended spoken text, including authentic sources, adapted and abridged, as appropriate, by being able to answer questions, extract information, evaluate and draw conclusions.

Speaking: communicate and interact in speech

- communicate and interact effectively in speech for a variety of purposes across a range of specified contexts
- take part in a short conversation, asking and answering questions, and exchanging opinions
- convey information and narrate events coherently and confidently, using and adapting language for new purposes
- speak spontaneously, responding to unexpected questions, points of view or situations, sustaining communication by using rephrasing or repair strategies, as appropriate
- initiate and develop conversations and discussion, producing extended sequences of speech

- make appropriate and accurate use of a variety of vocabulary and grammatical structures, including some more complex forms, with reference to past, present and future events
- make creative and more complex use of the language, as appropriate, to express and justify their own thoughts and points of view
- use accurate pronunciation and intonation such as to be understood by a native speaker

Reading: understand and respond to written language

- understand and respond to different types of written language
- understand general and specific details within texts using high frequency familiar language across a range of contexts
- identify the overall message, key points, details and opinions in a variety of short and longer written passages, involving some more complex language, recognising the relationship between past, present and future events
- deduce meaning from a variety of short and longer written texts from a range of specified contexts, including authentic sources involving some complex language and unfamiliar material, as well as short narratives and authentic material addressing a wide range of relevant contemporary and cultural themes
- recognise and respond to key information, important themes and ideas in more extended written text and authentic sources, including some extracts from relevant abridged or adapted literary texts
- demonstrate understanding by being able to scan for particular information, organise and present relevant details, draw inferences in context and recognise implicit meaning where appropriate
- translate a short passage from the assessed language into English

Writing: communicate in writing

- communicate effectively in writing for a variety of purposes across a range of specified contexts
- write short texts, using simple sentences and familiar language accurately to convey meaning and exchange information
- produce clear and coherent text of extended length to present facts and express ideas and opinions appropriately for different purposes and in different settings

- make accurate use of a variety of vocabulary and grammatical structures, including some more complex forms, to describe and narrate with reference to past, present and future events
- manipulate the language, using and adapting a variety of structures and vocabulary with increasing accuracy and fluency for new purposes, including using appropriate style and register
- make independent, creative and more complex use of the language, as appropriate, to note down key points, express and justify individual thoughts and points of view, in order to interest, inform or convince
- translate sentences and short texts from English into the assessed language to convey key messages accurately and to apply grammatical knowledge of language and structures in context

Use of the assessed language in questions and rubrics

The overall rubrics containing instructions to students may continue to be in English, as at present. Questions for the majority of modern foreign languages may be set in the assessed language or English, as appropriate to the task. They should be set in the language in which the candidate is expected to respond.

In listening (AO1) 20 - 30% of the marks must be awarded for responses to questions set in the assessed language.

In speaking (AO2) students will be required to express themselves solely in the assessed language.

In reading (AO3) 30 - 40% of the marks must be awarded for responses to questions set in the assessed language.

In writing (AO4) students will be required to express themselves solely in the assessed language. Questions may be asked in English where translation into the assessed language is required or where the context of the questions is detailed or complex.

Languages using logographic systems such as Mandarin Chinese and Japanese must set all questions and task instructions in English, as the sole use of *hanzi* or *kanji* is deemed too challenging for this level.

Grammar requirements

GCSE students will be expected to develop and use their knowledge and understanding of grammar progressively throughout their course. The grammar requirements for GCSE are set out in two tiers: foundation and higher.

Students will be required to apply their knowledge and understanding of grammar, appropriate to the language studied and to the relevant tier of entry, drawing on the relevant lists.

Students entering higher tier assessments will be required to apply all grammar and structures listed for foundation tier in addition to the new grammar and structures listed for higher tier.

For French, German and Spanish, the lists are in the appendix to this document. The examples in brackets are indicative and are not exclusive. Structures marked (R) signify that only receptive knowledge is required.

For other languages, all specifications must include appendices, developed by the awarding organisation(s), setting-out requirements for grammar which represent a level of challenge and breadth that is comparable to the requirements for French, German and Spanish.

Appendix: Grammar requirements

French

GCSE students will be expected to have acquired knowledge and understanding of French grammar during their course. In the examination they will be required to apply their knowledge and understanding, drawing from the following lists. The examples in brackets are indicative, not exclusive. For structures marked (R), only receptive knowledge is required.

French (foundation tier)

Nouns:

- gender;
- singular and plural forms.

Articles:

- definite, indefinite and partitive, including use of *de* after negatives.

Adjectives:

- agreement;
- position;
- comparative and superlative: regular and *meilleur*;
- demonstrative (*ce, cet, cette, ces*);
- indefinite (*chaque, quelque*);
- possessive;
- interrogative (*quel, quelle*).

Adverbs:

- comparative and superlative;
- regular;
- interrogative (*comment, quand*);
- adverbs of time and place (*aujourd'hui, demain, ici, là-bas*);
- common adverbial phrases.

Quantifiers/Intensifiers:

- *très, assez, beaucoup, peu, trop.*

Pronouns:

- personal: all subjects, including *on*;
- reflexive;
- relative: *qui*;
- relative: *que* (R);
- object: direct (R) and indirect (R);
- position and order of object pronouns (R);
- disjunctive/emphatic;
- demonstrative (*ça, cela*);
- indefinite (*quelqu'un*);
- interrogative (*qui, que*);
- use of *y, en* (R).

Verbs:

- regular and irregular verbs, including reflexive verbs;
- all persons of the verb, singular and plural;
- negative forms;
- interrogative forms;
- modes of address: *tu, vous*;
- impersonal verbs (*il faut*);
- verbs followed by an infinitive, with or without a preposition;
- tenses;
- present;
- perfect;
- imperfect: *avoir, être* and *faire*;
- other common verbs in the imperfect tense (R);
- immediate future;
- future (R);
- conditional: *vouloir* and *aimer*;
- pluperfect (R);
- passive voice: present tense (R);
- imperative;
- present participle (R).

Prepositions

- common prepositions e.g. *à, au, à l', à la, aux; de, du, de l', de la, des; après; avant; avec; chez; contre; dans; depuis; derrière; devant; entre; pendant; pour; sans; sur; sous; vers.*
- common compound prepositions e.g. *à côté de; près de; en face de, à cause de; au lieu de*

Conjunctions

- common coordinating conjunctions e.g. *car; donc; ensuite; et; mais; ou; ou bien; puis*.
- common subordinating conjunctions e.g. *comme; lorsque; parce que; puisque; quand; que; si*.

Number, quantity, dates and time

- including use of *depuis* with present tense

French (higher tier)

All grammar and structures listed for foundation tier, as well as:

Adjectives:

- comparative and superlative, including *meilleur, pire*.

Adverbs:

- comparative and superlative, including *mieux, le mieux*.

Pronouns:

- use of *y, en*;
- relative: *que*;
- relative: *dont* (R);
- object: direct and indirect;
- position and order of object pronouns;
- demonstrative (*celui*) (R);
- possessive (*le mien*) (R).

Verbs:

- tenses;
- future;
- imperfect;
- conditional;
- pluperfect;
- passive voice: future, imperfect and perfect tenses (R);
- perfect infinitive;
- present participle, including use after *en*;
- subjunctive mood: present, in commonly used expressions (R).

Time:

- including use of *depuis* with imperfect tense.

German

GCSE students will be expected to have acquired knowledge and understanding of German grammar during their course. In the examination they will be required to apply their knowledge and understanding, drawing from the following lists. The examples in brackets are indicative, not exclusive. For structures marked (R), only receptive knowledge is required.

German (foundation tier)

The case system Nouns:

- gender;
- singular and plural forms, including genitive singular and dative plural;
- weak nouns: nominative and accusative singular (*Herr, Junge, Mensch, Name*) (R);
- adjectives used as nouns (*ein Deutscher*).

Articles:

- definite and indefinite;
- *kein*.

Adjectives:

- adjectival endings: predicative and attributive usage, singular and plural, used after definite and indefinite articles, demonstrative and possessive adjectives;
- adjectival endings after *etwas, nichts, viel, wenig, alles* (R);
- comparative and superlative, including common irregular forms (*besser, höher, näher*);
- demonstrative (*dieser, jeder*);
- possessive;
- interrogative (*welcher*).

Adverbs:

- comparative and superlative, including common irregular forms (*besser, lieber, mehr*);
- interrogative (*wann, warum, wo, wie, wie viel*);
- adverbs of time and place (*manchmal, oft, hier, dort*);
- common adverbial phrases (*ab und zu, dann und wann, letzte Woche, nächstes; Wochenende, so bald wie möglich*).

Quantifiers/intensifiers

- *sehr, zu, viel, ganz, ziemlich, ein wenig, ein bisschen.*

Pronouns:

- personal, including *man*;
- reflexive: accusative;
- reflexive: dative (R);
- relative: nominative;
- relative: other cases (R) and use of *was* (R);
- indefinite: *jemand, niemand*;
- interrogative: *wer, was, was für*;
- interrogative: *wen, wem* (R).

Verbs:

- regular and irregular verbs;
- reflexive;
- modes of address: *du, Sie*;
- mode of address: *ihr* (R);
- impersonal (most common only, eg *es gibt, es geht, es tutweh*);
- separable/inseparable;
- modal: present and imperfect tenses, imperfect subjunctive of *mögen*;
- infinitive constructions (*um ... zu ...*; verbs with *zu ...*) (R);
- negative forms;
- interrogative forms;
- tenses;
- present;
- perfect: excluding modals;
- imperfect/simple past: *haben, sein* and modals;
- imperfect/simple past: other common verbs (R);
- future; ⁿ pluperfect (R);
- imperative forms.

Prepositions:

- fixed case and dual case with accusative and/or dative;
- with genitive (R).

Clause structures:

- main clause word order;
- subordinate clauses, including relative clauses.

Conjunctions:

- coordinating (most common, *eg aber, oder, und*);
- subordinating (most common, *eg als, obwohl, weil, wenn*).

Number, quantity, dates and time

- including use of *seit* with present tense.

German (higher tier)

All grammar and structures listed for foundation tier, as well as:

Nouns:

- weak nouns.

Adjectives:

- adjectival endings after *etwas, nichts, viel, wenig, alles*.

Pronouns:

- reflexive: dative;
- relative: all cases, and use of *was*;
- interrogative: *wen, wem*.

Verbs:

- mode of address: *ihr*;
- impersonal;
- infinitive constructions (*ohne ... zu ...*; *um ... zu ...*; verbs with *zu ...*, eg *beginnen, hoffen, versuchen*;
- modal: imperfect subjunctive of *können, sollen*;
- tenses: imperfect/simple past of common verbs;
- future;
- conditional: *würde* with infinitive;
- pluperfect;
- imperfect subjunctive in conditional clauses: *haben* and *sein*.

Prepositions:

- with genitive (most common, eg *außerhalb, statt, trotz, während, wegen*).

Conjunctions:

- coordinating and subordinating.

Time:

- use of *seit* with imperfect tense.

Spanish

GCSE students will be expected to have acquired knowledge and understanding of Spanish grammar during their course. In the examination they will be required to apply their knowledge and understanding, drawing from the following lists. The examples in brackets are indicative, not exclusive. For structures marked (R), only receptive knowledge is required.

Spanish (foundation tier)

Nouns:

- gender;
- singular and plural forms.

Articles:

- definite and indefinite;
- *lo* plus adjective (R).

Adjectives:

- agreement;
- position;
- comparative and superlative: regular and *mayor, menor, mejor, peor*;
- demonstrative (*este, ese, aquel*);
- indefinite (*cada, otro, todo, mismo, alguno*);
- possessive, short form (*mi*);
- possessive, long form (*mío*) (R);
- interrogative (*cuánto, qué*).

Adverbs:

- formation;
- comparative and superlative: regular;
- interrogative (*cómo, cuándo, dónde*);
- adverbs of time and place (*aquí, allí, ahora, ya*);
- common adverbial phrases.

Quantifiers/intensifiers (*muy, bastante, demasiado, poco, mucho*)

Pronouns:

- subject;
- object (R);
- position and order of object pronouns (R);
- reflexive;
- relative: *que*;
- relative: *quien, lo que* (R);
- disjunctive (*conmigo, para mí*);
- demonstrative (*éste, ése, aquél, esto, eso, aquello*); indefinite (*algo, alguien*);
- interrogative (*cuál, qué, quién*).

Verbs:

- regular and irregular verbs, including reflexive verbs;
- all persons of the verb, singular and plural;
- modes of address: *tú* and *usted*;
- radical-changing verbs;

- negative forms;
- interrogative forms;
- reflexive constructions (*se puede, se necesita, se habla*);
- uses of *ser* and *estar*;
- tenses;
- present indicative;
- present continuous;
- preterite;
- imperfect: in weather expressions with *estar, hacer*;
- imperfect (R);
- immediate future;
- future (R);
- perfect: most common verbs only;
- conditional: *gustar* only in set phrases;
- pluperfect (R);
- gerund (R);
- imperative: common forms including negative;
- subjunctive, present: (R) in certain exclamatory phrases (*¡Viva! ¡Dígame!*);
- subjunctive, imperfect: *quisiera*;
- impersonal verbs: most common only.

Prepositions:

- common, including personal *a*;
- *por* and *para*.
- Conjunctions: common, including *y, pero, o, porque, como, cuando*

Number, quantity, dates

Time:

- use of *desde hace* with present tense (R).

Spanish (higher tier)

All grammar and structures listed for foundation tier, as well as:

Articles:

- lo plus adjective.

Adjectives:

- comparative and superlative;
- possessive, short and long forms (*mi, mío*); relative (*cuyo*).

Adverbs:

- comparative and superlative.

Pronouns:

- object;
- position and order of object pronouns;
- relative: all other uses including *quien, lo que, el que, cual*;
- possessive (*el mío, la mía*).

Verbs: tenses:

- future;
- imperfect;
- imperfect continuous;
- perfect;
- pluperfect;
- conditional;
- passive voice (R);
- gerund;
- present subjunctive: imperative, affirmation and negation, future after conjunctions of time;
- (*cuando*), after verbs of wishing, command, request, emotion, to express purpose (*para que*);
- imperfect subjunctive (R).

Time:

- use of *desde hace* with present tense;
- use of *desde hace* with imperfect tense (R).



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Appendix 2: Revisions to this document

The table below sets out when the *GCSE Subject Level Conditions and Requirements for Modern Foreign Languages* initially came into force and when they were subsequently revised.

Revisions	Date in force
n Tiering requirements paragraph 6 – “The 3/U grade boundary for higher tier assessments is provisionally set by subtracting half the mark interval between the 5/4 and 4/3 grade boundaries (rounding up half marks) from the 4/3 boundary.” (withdrawn)	16 February 2017
Republished as <i>GCSE Subject Level Conditions and Requirements for Modern Foreign Languages</i> n Extended applicability to include all GCSEs (graded 9 to 1) in modern foreign languages subjects n Condition GCSE(Modern Foreign Languages)6 – Titling (new) n Condition GCSE(Modern Foreign Languages)7 – Interpretation and Definitions (new) n Assessment requirements (amended)	18 April 2016
First edition (published as <i>GCSE Subject Level Conditions and Requirements for Modern Foreign Languages (French, German, Spanish)</i>)	6th February 2015

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