

AS/A2 SPANISH

Head of Department - Mrs B. Perrett

EXAMINATION BOARD: OCR

SYLLABUS TITLE: SPANISH

ENTRANCE REQUIREMENT

The minimum requirement is a grade A at GCSE, but we expect the majority of students to have a grade A*, as this is a demanding course. After sitting the AS examinations at the end of Year 12, students are required to have obtained a C grade at AS in order to continue on to A2, although a high D grade may carry on, with agreement of staff and monthly monitoring.

THE COURSE CONTENT

A Level courses in Foreign Languages are designed to follow on naturally from GCSE, which means equal importance continues to be given to the four skill areas of *Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing*. At A Level, a fifth area is assessed, that of *Content*. This refers to your knowledge about particular aspects of the background of the country whose language you are studying.

In addition to your timetabled classes, you will be timetabled for and required to attend weekly sessions with the foreign language assistant.

All lessons will normally be conducted in Spanish, as this is the best way to develop your skills for the A Level exam. You will need to take a major responsibility (under the guidance of staff) for research into topic areas, and for your own study – including learning vocabulary and revising and practising grammatical structures.

The topics for AS are: Daily life, Media, Leisure and Education. For A2, topics are: Society, Environment, Science & Technology, Culture.

Therefore you will be expected to take an interest in the current affairs of the countries whose language you are studying, read newspapers and magazines available in the school and online, and try to listen regularly to Spanish radio and/or watch TV or listen to Spanish online.

Resources are available from the Modern Languages department and from the Library, such as up-to-date magazines and grammar workbooks, DVDs and music CDs and CDRoms to enable students to explore and develop a deeper understanding of contemporary society and cultural background.

Staff will expect you to try to visit the country whose language you are studying at least once during the two-year course. This could be on a course in Spain or a work placement and staff will be pleased to advise you of opportunities. Visits to plays, films and language conferences may also be arranged.

ASSESSMENT

The syllabus allows two units to be examined at the end of Year 12 via a Speaking examination and a combined Reading, Listening and Writing exam, and the remaining two, in the same format at the end of Year 13. The weighting at AS is 60 marks Speaking, 140 marks combined paper, and the same at A2.

The Speaking exam at AS consists of 5-6 minutes 'role-play' (explaining a leaflet to a Spanish speaker) and 10 minutes prepared topic (eg. 'The successes of Real Madrid' or 'The problem of smoking amongst young people in Spain'). At A2, the Speaking exam is 5-6 minutes discussion of a previously unseen text in the target language and 12 minutes prepared topic.

The Listening, Reading and Writing exam is weighted:

At AS - Listening 55 marks, Reading 35, Writing 50; At A2 – Listening 35, Reading (including translation) 60, Writing 45.

HIGHER EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES AND RELATED CAREERS

An A Level or a degree in Modern Language(s), as in all arts subjects, is evidence of ability and broadening of horizons. It is valuable in its own right and employers appreciate a language qualification even when the jobs they seek to fill require no special language ability. The skills you acquire as a linguist are obvious: to communicate effectively; to listen; to evaluate; to explain; to analyse linguistically; and to understand a foreign country and its people.

If you choose to do a degree in Modern Languages, an increasing number of universities have abandoned the traditional concentration on literature in favour of stronger emphasis on economics, marketing and business studies. Courses are also available in which subjects such as science, engineering or business management are taken with a language.

Linguists can find employment opportunities in broadcasting, purchasing, commerce and industry, international organisations, interpreting, translating, teaching and the Civil Service. You can improve your career prospects with a modern language in such fields as law, accountancy, journalism and insurance. Competence in one foreign language can be a stepping stone to others. After having learnt Spanish you might go on to study Chinese, Japanese, Arabic, Eastern European or Scandinavian language.

