**Higher Modern Languages**

**Candidate Guide**

In Higher French, Spanish and Mandarin you will build upon your existing knowledge of the language to achieve greater flexibility of expression and a considerably more sophisticated level. By the end of the course you will be able to understand complex written and spoken language and communicate successfully with others on a wide range of topics relevant to everyday life. You will also have the opportunity to explore and understand the culture of the country/countries where the language is spoken, for example by studying a foreign-language film.

The topics studied fall into four broad themes:

* Society (e.g. relationships, social problems, media & technology, prejudice)
* Learning (e.g. importance of education, experience up until now, university, lifelong learning)
* Employability (e.g. working life, gap year, future aspirations)
* Culture (e.g. travel, living/working abroad, importance of languages, foreign cinema & literature)

**In class:**

Learning a language at this level will be varied and interesting but also challenging - you must be committed, enthusiastic and take responsibility for your own work. Your time in class will be divided between the skills you need to develop:

* Reading (journalistic articles, past papers, websites etc.)
* Listening (monologues, dialogues, native speakers, your teacher and other pupils)
* Writing (preparing answers for personal responses to topics and working on techniques for Directed Writing)
* Talking (practising with partners, recording and listening back, practising with your teacher)

You will also work on grammar at least once a week in the first term to develop the knowledge and understanding you need to talk and write accurately at Higher level.

**At home:**

You will have weekly Reading and Listening homework to complete. In addition, you must learn the responses you prepare for Talking regularly. These will form the content of your Talking exam in February. Keeping on top of this is vitally important, as you will quickly build up a large volume of material and it is hard to catch up if you fall behind.

Investing consistent time and effort to learn new vocabulary at home on an ongoing basis is also important and you will need to pass a core vocabulary test for each topic area.

Other homework tasks may be set by your teacher at times. For larger pieces of work such as essays you will normally have a week to complete the task, but your teacher may occasionally set small tasks from day to day. If you are having difficulty keeping up with homework deadlines it is important to let your teacher know in plenty of time. Turning up without homework on the day it is due is not acceptable.

**Assessment**

You will complete an assignment which is a piece of writing of approx. 250 words in the modern language based upon one of the themes: society, learning, employability, culture.

**(12.5% of total mark)**

**In February** you will sit a Talking exam. This will be a discussion lasting approx. 10 minutes with your teacher on topics of your choice. **(25% of total mark)**.

**At the end of S5** you will sit the external Higher exams.

You will sit two papers on the day of your exams:

**Paper 1: Reading (25% of total mark)**

**Directed Writing (12.5% of total mark)**

**Paper 2: Listening (25% of total mark)**

Although the exams may seem far away, all your work during S5 contributes to the final outcome and every lesson and homework exercise counts. Your teacher will ensure that your classes provide you with everything you need to do well, and more; the extent to which you take advantage of the teaching, resources and advice given is equally important if you want to succeed.

The pace at Higher is fast and the course is very full. You must take a mature approach to your studies and communicate with your teacher. If you are absent, you are expected to take the initiative in finding out what work you have missed and asking for any resources or help you need to catch up.

Your teacher wants you to succeed and will try to support you as much as possible; your job is to **give it all you’ve got!**

**Above all, remember that in Higher French/Spanish/Mandarin you are learning a real life skill.** If you are going to watch a film at the weekend, why not watch one in French, Spanish or Mandarin on Netflix? This is good for your language skills and you learn more about culture at the same time.

*‘Learning a new language enables learners to make connections with different people and their cultures and to play a fuller part as global citizens. The ability to use language lies at the centre of thinking and learning. Candidates reflect, communicate and develop ideas through language.’*

***Scottish Qualifications Authority, 2018***

*‘Young people considering their future subject choices should be made more aware of the benefits to their careers that can come from studying a foreign language… With the EU still our largest export market it is no surprise to see French, German and Spanish skills so highly prized by companies.’*

***CBI Education & Skills Survey 2014***