

French

People are now pursuing their careers all over the world and thus the ability to communicate in a foreign language and to appreciate varying cultures is very important. At Reigate Grammar School, A Level French is studied by students of every discipline.

There is scope and choice for study in all areas of interest from European politics to French art, drama and literature, French media and environmental issues. Considerable emphasis is laid on speaking skills and understanding what is heard in French. The multi-media language learning centre ensures immediate access to worldwide sources, interactive communication and all the developing advantages of language laboratory teaching. There is weekly conversation practice with the Foreign Language assistant and the students have the opportunity to do work experience in France (generally during the first week of October half-term). They are also encouraged to attend the various cultural events that are offered.

The A Level course is a natural sequel to GCSE and is accessible to students who have gained a B grade and above. It comprises four units (2 at AS Level and 2 at A2 Level);

Unit 1: Listening, Reading and Writing

Students listen to approximately 5 minutes of material which is within their individual control. There will be a task involving transfer of meaning into English and 2 - 4 requiring short French or non-verbal responses.

The reading section requires French or non-verbal responses. There is also a cloze test in which a given noun, verb or adjective must be manipulated.

In the writing section students respond to one question from a choice of three, this comprises an essay of at least 200 words.

Unit 2: Speaking

Part 1: Discussion of a subject on a stimulus card (after 20 minutes preparation time). There are responses to the questions on the card and then to broader issues within the topic area of the stimulus.

Part 2: Conversation. The first topic is nominated by the student and the examiner will introduce two other topics.

Unit 3: Listening, Reading and Writing, Writing.

Students listen to approximately 6 minutes of material which is within their individual control. There will be 3 – 5 items requiring short French or non-verbal responses

The reading and writing section comprises 2 – 4 short French or non-verbal responses. There is also a task involving transfer of meaning from French into English and a task involving transfer of meaning into English from French.

In the writing section students compose a piece of writing responding to a selected question based on one of the Cultural Topic areas.

Unit 4: Speaking

Part 1: After 20 minutes preparation time students choose one of the two points of view expressed on the stimulus card, then they present, defend and justify this point of view.

Part 2: Conversation: this covers both Cultural Topics that they have studied.

Opportunities for university entrance are good and several students of French have been accepted at Cambridge in recent years. In addition to dedicated language

courses at university, there are many varied courses combining languages with other disciplines such as Law, Marketing, Management, Drama and Art. French at A Level is both challenging and rewarding, offering a wide range of experience and the invaluable development of social skills.

Exam board: AQA

www.aqa.org.uk/qual/gce/french_new.php