

GCSE/AS Italian

In addition to French, Spanish and German, Italian is offered from scratch in the Sixth Form. In the Lower Sixth a fast-track course is studied, leading to the GCSE exam at the end of the year. Students learn to express themselves in a range of tenses, acquiring vocabulary for a variety of situations. Those who pursue the subject into the Upper Sixth follow the AS course, furthering their knowledge of the advanced structures of the language and increasing their fluency in spoken and written Italian.

The close relationship of Italian to other European languages makes it a natural complement not only to French, Spanish and German, but also to English, Latin and Greek. Students who opt for this course are motivated linguists who are able to cope with the demands of learning a new language intensively from scratch. This involves a large amount of independent study and practice outside the lessons.

A European language adds an extra dimension to any student's profile in today's world, when applying for university courses as well as jobs. The course is intensive – it is often taken as an extra subject in addition to the student's four AS subjects – but lively and extremely rewarding. The study of Italian provides a strong foundation not only for Language degrees at university, but also courses in the Arts, Business, Law and other academic disciplines.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

To which languages is Italian similar?

Italian is grammatically similar to French and Spanish. In terms of vocabulary, a large proportion of words are recognisable from French, Spanish or Latin. In fact, it is often said that Italian is one of the easiest languages for English speakers to learn.

Will I find it confusing if I am already studying another modern language?

Not usually – studying another modern language helps, as you are familiar with the mechanics of learning languages. Furthermore, there is a good deal of crossover in the structures of French, Spanish and Italian; having learnt, say, the perfect tense in French, you will find it much simpler in Italian.

It has taken us up to five years to study for a GCSE in other modern languages – how will we cope in only one year of Italian?

As mentioned, learning one modern language makes it easier to study another. Having already attained a GCSE in at least one language, you will be aware of the structure of the course and the tasks you must accomplish. It is therefore much more straightforward to take on a new language, having already put in the hard work elsewhere.

How many lessons will we have?

There are normally three lessons per week and the language lab is used frequently.

Exam board: AQA