

GCSE German

Examination Board: AQA



What is a GCSE in German all about?

At Sandbach School we offer both German and Spanish at GCSE. In Y7 and Y8 you will have studied German and now you have the choice to continue this language at GCSE to expand your knowledge and improve your fluency OR you can also choose to pick up a new language in our beginners GCSE Spanish class.

You will study a variety of topics throughout the course which will develop your vocabulary and enable you to learn new linguistic structures to communicate independently, confidently and effectively in another language. The GCSE course also provides the opportunity to explore different cultures within the German speaking world to gain global views and intercultural understanding.

Why study German?

There is a huge shortage of British people who speak German: With employer demand for languages significantly up in recent years, the Confederation of British Industry (CBI) has highlighted that language skills are *“critical to increasing the UK’s global competitiveness and to ensuring young people have the high level of cultural awareness that supports a successful career”*

German develops highly valued transferable skills: Employers look for the analytical, communication and critical thinking skills gained through language learning. They also value the cultural awareness and global perspective that students of German bring to the workplace.

German combines with a wide range of degree subjects: German can be studied alongside over 60 non-linguistic disciplines at degree level, including accountancy, sciences, business, law, economics, humanities and creative subjects, making it a highly versatile option.

Gaining a university place is easier with German. Due to the smaller numbers of applicants with German skills, they are more likely to be successful with their first choice, including at the UK’s top universities. Universities also look for A-level languages in applicants for all subjects, so that they can take part in undergraduate exchange programmes; many of these are with German universities.

Germany is the UK’s second largest trading partner: The key measure of the usefulness of any language is not the total number of speakers it has, but the economic significance of the countries where it is spoken. The UK’s top 10 trading partners include both Germany, but also Switzerland, where more than 60% of the population speak German. Trade doesn’t just happen; linguists are required to sustain it.

2,500 German companies employ some 450,000 people in the UK. Famous German brands with a UK presence include the likes of like Adidas, Aldi, Audi, BMW, Bosch, Deutsche Bank, Haribo, Lidl, Mercedes, Persil, Porsche, Siemens or Volkswagen. However, business connections between the UK and Germany extend well beyond these high-profile names and include UK companies with interests or subsidiaries in Germany. For instance, Rolls-Royce Holdings has a German subsidiary making aircraft engines, and BP operates Europe’s second largest refinery system in Germany.

Germany is the world’s third largest economy: These companies are multinational, but a knowledge of German, the country and its people, will help to gain promotion to higher employment levels, even though this may not be mentioned in the job description. For instance, for many roles at Bentley (part of the VW Group) and Rolls-Royce Motor Cars (BMW), you’ll need to know or learn at least some German. Language skills are also a key element in successfully managing international teams.

What does the course look like?

We follow the new AQA German (8662) specification. Through this exciting and engaging syllabus, you will study a variety of contemporary topics which are relevant to you and your life as well as learn about the cultures of different German-speaking countries and gain a deeper understanding of the world around you. During the GCSE course there will also be the opportunity to visit a German-speaking country and experience the language and culture first hand.

Theme 1 – People and lifestyle

- talking about yourself and the people around you
- healthy living and lifestyle
- school and work

Theme 2 – Popular culture

- free time activities
- festival and celebrations (e.g. Oktoberfest, Tag der Deutschen Einheit, Karneval)
- celebrity culture

Theme 3 – Communication and the world around you

- travel and places of interest
- media and technology
- the environment and where people live

How will you be assessed?

At the end of the course, you will sit an exam in listening, reading, writing and speaking which will test your knowledge of each of the topics listed above.

Languages are accessible to all abilities as there is the option to sit a foundation paper (maximum grade 5) or a higher paper (maximum grade 9).

Exam	Requirements	Duration
Listening 25%	Listen to texts in German and answer comprehension questions in English. You will also be required to dictate sentences which you have heard.	Foundation = 35 minutes Higher = 45 minutes
Reading 25%	Understand texts in German and answer comprehension questions in English. You will also be required to translate a short text from German to English.	Foundation = 45 minutes Higher = 1 hour
Writing 25%	Write short text and an extended piece of writing in German as well as translate a selection of sentences into German.	Foundation = 1 hour 10 minutes Higher = 1 hour 15 minutes
Speaking 25%	Read a short paragraph aloud with accurate pronunciation, participate in a role play scenario, as well as describe two photographs and then hold a conversation with your teacher on a variety of topics	Foundation = 7-9 minutes Higher = 10-12 minutes

For more information about the specification, visit <https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/languages/gcse/german-8662>

If you have any further questions regarding the course, please email ahoward@sandbachschool.org