

Exploring the results in the new GCSEs in French, German and Spanish



Exploring the results in the new GCSEs in
French, German and Spanish



GCSE languages webinar



Thursday
27 August 2026



7:00 – 8:00 pm
(GMT+1)



Online Event

Thursday 27th August 2026
Welcome

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Online Event

We will tend to use “ML GCSE” as shorthand for “French, German and Spanish GCSE”, but do note that it is only those languages which have a new specification

Thursday 27th August 2026
Welcome to this event!



Exploring the results in the new GCSEs in French, German and Spanish

Because of the large numbers attending, chat is not open on this occasion, but we invite you to ask further questions or ask for clarification using this Google form <https://tinyurl.com/newgcse>

If you cannot access Google, mail info@all-london.org.uk with the subject line 'New GCSEs- query from xxx (your name)'. State if you are a member of ALL..

A reminder of our terms and conditions relevant to this evening and to which you agreed when registering.

- Disclaimer: ALL London is very happy to host these events. It does not charge participants, speakers kindly offer their service without payment and volunteers run the events. Speakers and participants are responsible for what they say and display.
- The purpose of this webinar is for language professionals to share ideas and resources relating to teaching languages in a relaxed, friendly and supportive environment. The webinar is usually recorded.
- Participants must not share this address with others. It is a private event for registered participants.
- The presentations and spoken content are the intellectual property of the host and invited speakers. Participants agree not to record, transcribe, or use AI tools to capture or summarise the session. Anything the presenters choose to share will be made available afterwards on our website.

Thursday 27th August 2026
Welcome



Please see the link below for where this recording will be stored and a list of our future webinars:

<http://www.all-london.org.uk/site/index.php/webinars/>

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In addition, more work and preparation has been done than we can fit into 60 minutes, so Helen will be publishing this additional material in her blog in the coming days

<https://helenmyers.blogspot.com/>

Aware that there's a lot to take in with graphs, tables, etc, which is why it's recorded and slides will be made available to give opportunity to re-visit



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Introductions

- Helen Myers – ALL Invited Trustee, Chair of ALL London
- David Blow – ALL Fellow & Executive Head, SESSET
- Adam Lamb – ALL Council member; Director of MFL, United Learning
- Catherine Ames – ALL Council member; Head of Languages & Lead Practitioner

Let's begin with what actually happened, and then go back and see all the steps leading up to the exams and results

Overview – national

“no surprises”

- What happened in June and August (and what had ALL said would happen)
- Who decides what re new specifications (DfE, Ofqual, exam boards)
- Why was there a new specification + timeline (and not severe grading)
- Preparation for the new exams – Sample Assessment Materials, training etc
- Why was there expectation that raw marks would be higher?
- Impact on grade boundaries and grade outcomes
- How are grades calculated, comparable outcomes, severe grading
- Advice on “estimating grades” (summer Y10, webinar Dec 25)
- Provisional entry and tiering information (publ Jun 26)

“no surprises”

Overview – board level - post-exam

- **“Exam experience”**
- **Information available after the exam (papers, mark schemes, examiners’ reports, statistics from question level upwards)**
- **Looking at the papers in more detail, comparison with the specification and analysing the examiners’ reports and the statistics**
- **Results and marks in more detail (AQA, Pearson)**

What happened in June and August (and what had we said would happen)

National grades in June 2026

What we said at webinar in Dec 25

- We can therefore be confident that **NATIONALLY**,
% pupils at grade **4+**
in French = 73 - 75%, German 79 – 81%,
Spanish 69 – 71%
- % pupils at grade **7+**
in French = 28 - 30%, German 33 – 35%,
Spanish 25 – 27%

What actually happened in Jun 26

- **NATIONALLY in 2026** (2025 % in brackets),
% pupils at grade **4+**
in French = 73.2% (72.5%), German 79.8% (79.1%),
Spanish 71.4% (70.1%)
- % pupils at grade **7+**
in French = 29.4% (28.9%), German 33.4% (32.7%),
Spanish 27.8% (26.0%)

Note small increases,
esp in Spanish

Grading and tiering – comparable outcomes

- Whenever there is a change in qualifications, Ofqual and the exam boards take special steps using statistical methods to ensure that students have the same chance of getting each grade before and after the change, referred to as “comparable outcomes”
- This is what happened in 2017 and 2018 with the change to the new GCSEs then in all subjects.
- *“this means that if the national cohort for a subject is similar (in terms of past performance) to last year, then results should also be similar at a national level in that subject. So exam boards will control for the impact of the changes such that this year’s cohort is not unfairly disadvantaged. They will be relying heavily on the statistical evidence to do this, but also using senior examiners to check the grade boundaries that the statistics are pointing to.”*

Grading using previous years – 2024-25

- Our advice in * Dec 25 was to assume that the ability and likely outcomes of the pupils will be similar to previous years, and to use a similar distribution of grades to that obtained by Year 11 in Jun 2025 and Jun 2024.
- Pupils can be ranked on the assessments they have taken, and then allocated a grade using the likely distribution.
- This is because of comparable outcomes (which we go into in more detail later) but especially when there is a change of specification.

* Webinar 8/12/25: <https://all-london.org.uk/webinars/a-webinar-with-all-subject-leaders-practical-advice-on-grade-estimation-and-tiering-for-june-26-gcse-fgs-exam-board-faqs/>

Key concepts

- Painting a picture – “Mona Lisa” – what “average” can miss

- Must compare like-with-like
– beware of “apples and pears”



- Threshold(s) (e.g. %4+) v average
- pros and cons

- Relativity

- What has moved? Your train or the other train (or the station!)
- Is it your school? But has national picture also shifted?
And does an average movement conceal variation?
What is the relative movement?

- Goodhart’s Law: when a measure becomes a target, it ceases to be a good measure



Average of
The Mona Lisa

or



The Mona Lisa





French, German, Spanish and Computing

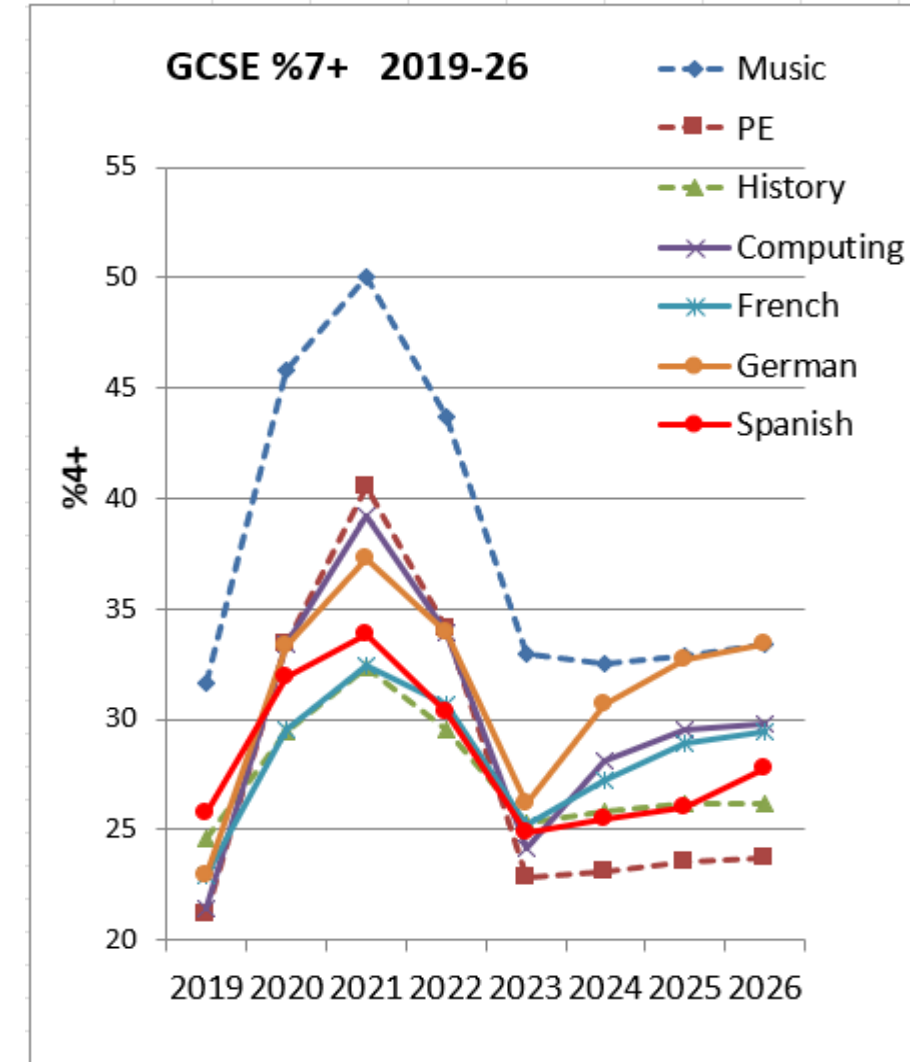
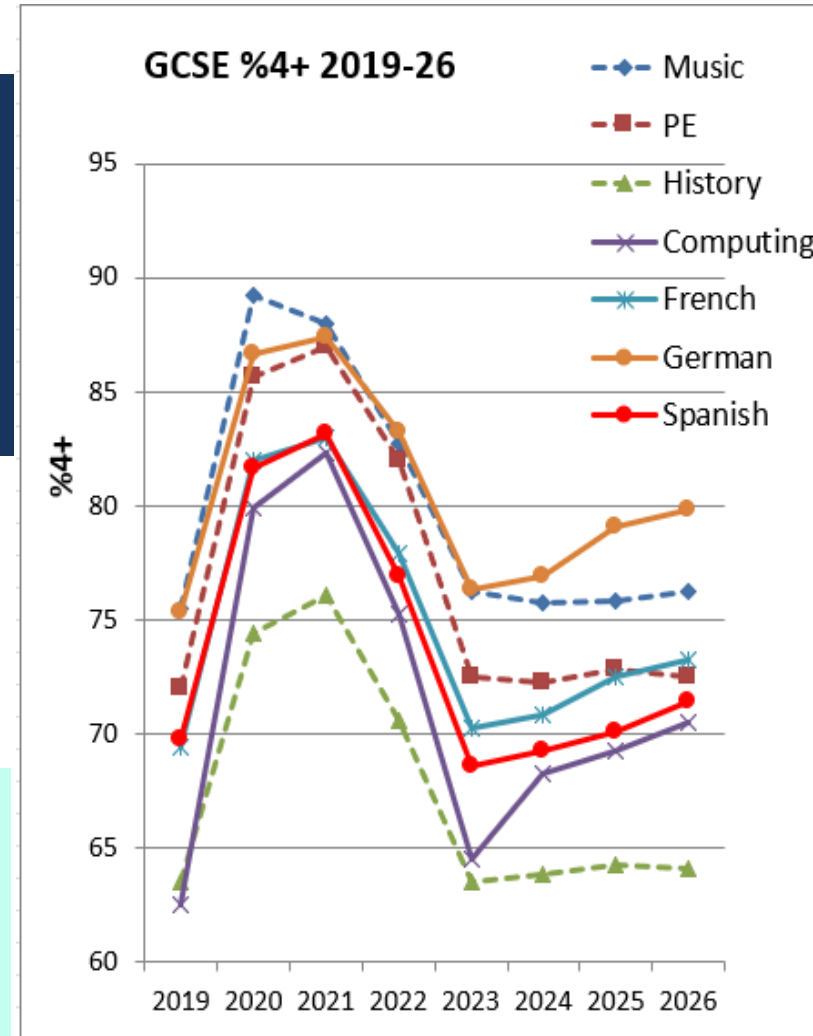
- Important to note the change in entry patterns, because “comparable outcomes” adjusts for this

We will see in the next section how French, German and Spanish have cohorts with different underlying attainment profiles, so the raw attainment will differ

GCSE French & German were brought into line with Spanish (taking profile into account) for 2020, but effect masked by TAGs and CAGs, so completed 2024 (and maintained into 2025)
Plus change in Computing

Note that French and German is a completion of the 2019 decision

Whereas the comparator subjects (dotted lines) have stayed similar 2023 to 2026, there has been a clear greater increase in French, German and Computing and Spanish in '26



Variation by Centre - Eng Lang %4+

- Essentially 2023, 2024 and 2025 are stable relative to all the change in 2020, 2021 and 2022

<https://analytics.ofqual.gov.uk/apps/GCSE/CentreVariability/>

Recall earlier slides

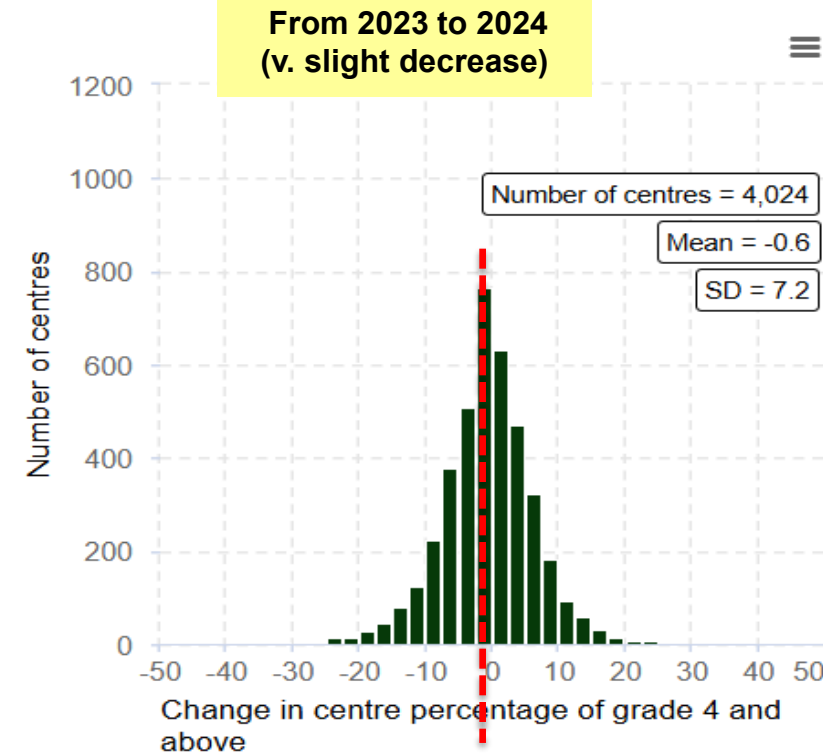
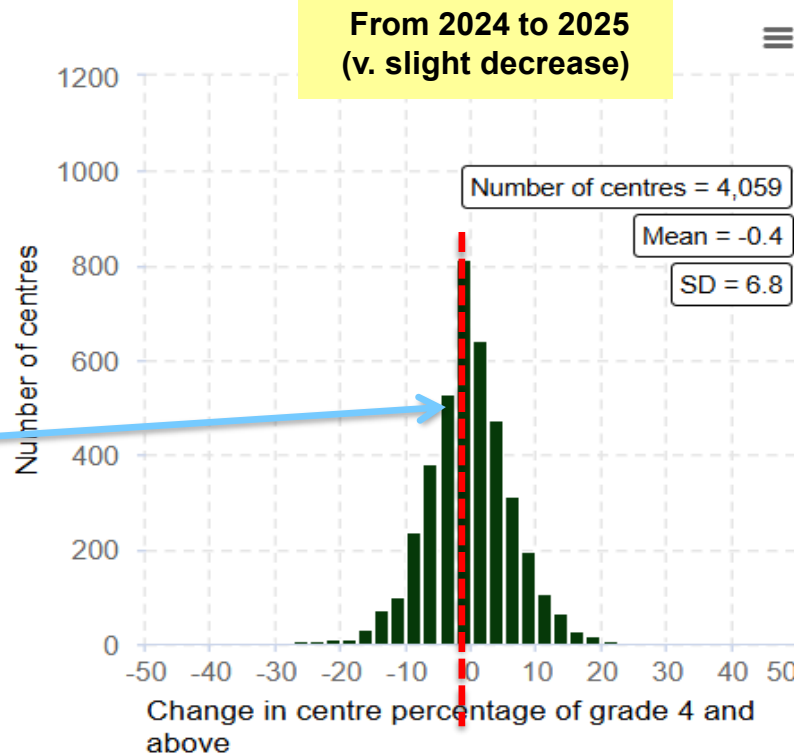
a) 2024 to 2025

compared with

b) 2023 to 2024

Mean drop in %4+ from 2024 to 2025 = -0.4%

e.g. about 500 centres saw a drop of 2.5 - 5%



Mean drop in %4+ from 2023 to 2024 = -0.6%

Important to remember how much annual variation, esp in threshold measures, is “normal” in ordinary years – easily have more than 5% (or 10%) in either direction (most less than 20%)!

Variation by Centre – French %4+

- Essentially 2024, 2025 and 2026 are stable

<https://analytics.ofqual.gov.uk/apps/GCSE/CentreVariability/>

a) 2025 to 2026

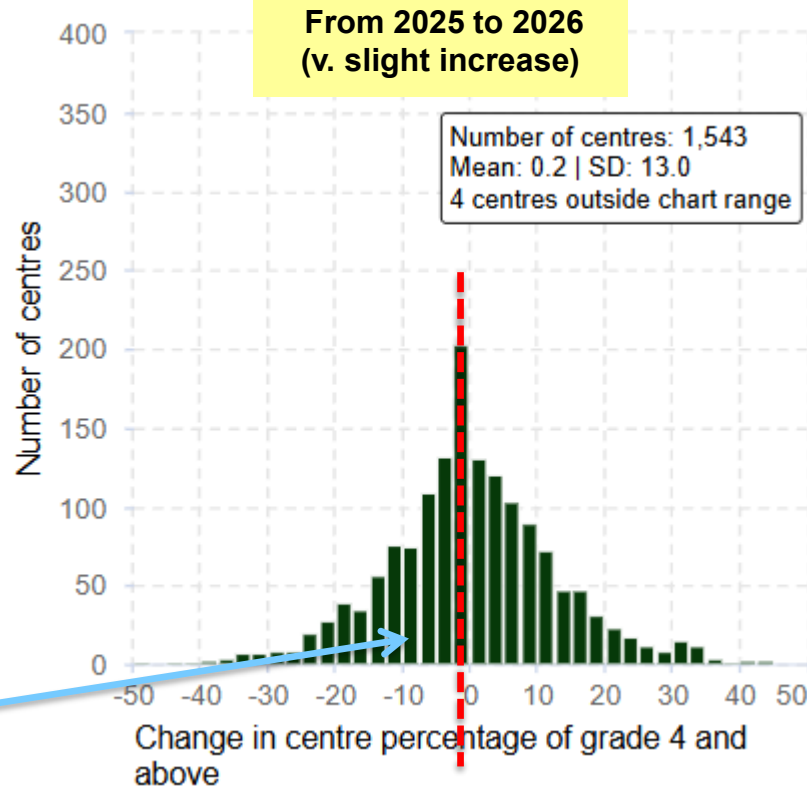
compared with

b) 2024 to 2025

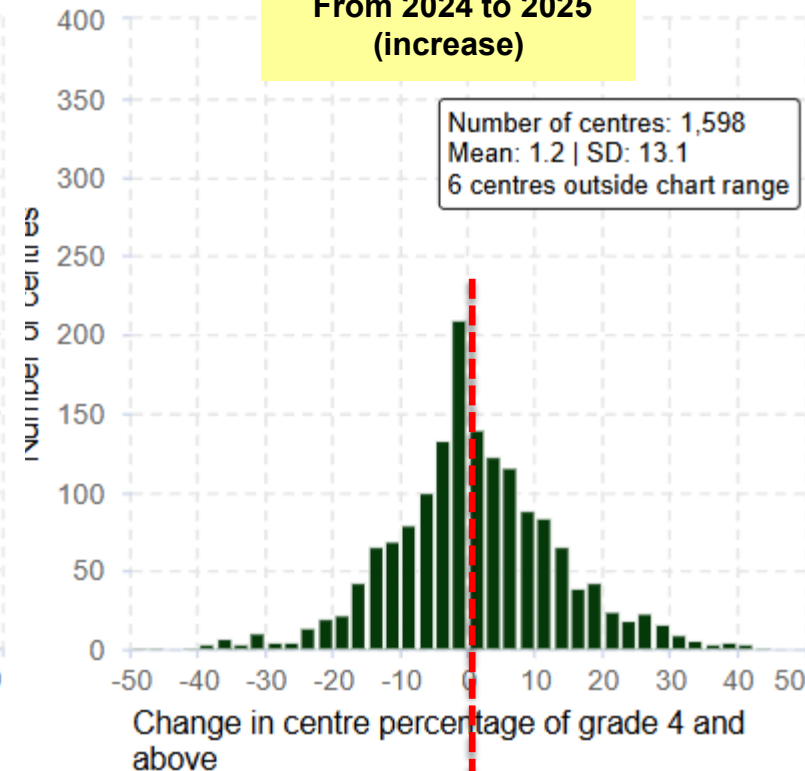
Mean drop in %4+ from 2025 to 2026 = 0.2%

Spread of change in %4+ from 2025 to 2026 = 13.0

e.g. about 70 centres saw a drop of 7.5 - 10%



From 2024 to 2025 (increase)



Mean increase in %4+ from 2024 to 2025 = 1.2%

Spread of change in %4+ from 2024 to 2025 = 13.1

SD is abbreviation for Standard Deviation, a measure of spread

Important to remember how much annual variation, esp in threshold measures, is “normal” in ordinary years – easily have more than 5% (or 10%) in either direction (most less than 20%)!

French (and other subjects such as History) wider (i.e. more spread than English) because French is an option subject and so the ability profile will change from year to year

Comparing the grades in French, German and Spanish taking into account the different ability profiles

- **Particularly for the exams in June 2025 and June 2026 where there is no KS2 prior attainment information, we must rely on concurrent attainment information to make comparisons**
- **Ofqual have produced an excellent section within Ofqual Analytics to help – screenshots on following slides, plus analysis of averages**

Selecting all the pupils Fr + En + Ma

- Produces graphs, and also you can download the data to calculate average grades etc

ofqual

GCSE subject combinations and outcomes

Display grade distributions for:

☒ A combination of 3 subjects ☐ A combination of 2 subjects ☐ One subject

Select first subject:	Select second subject:	Select third subject:
French	English language	Mathematics
Select first subject grade(s):	Select second subject grade(s):	Select summer series:
All grades	All grades	2026

☐ Filter for students aged 16 only.

Of the students taking French, English language and Mathematics in Summer 2026...

111,225 students received results in French

...and received results in English language

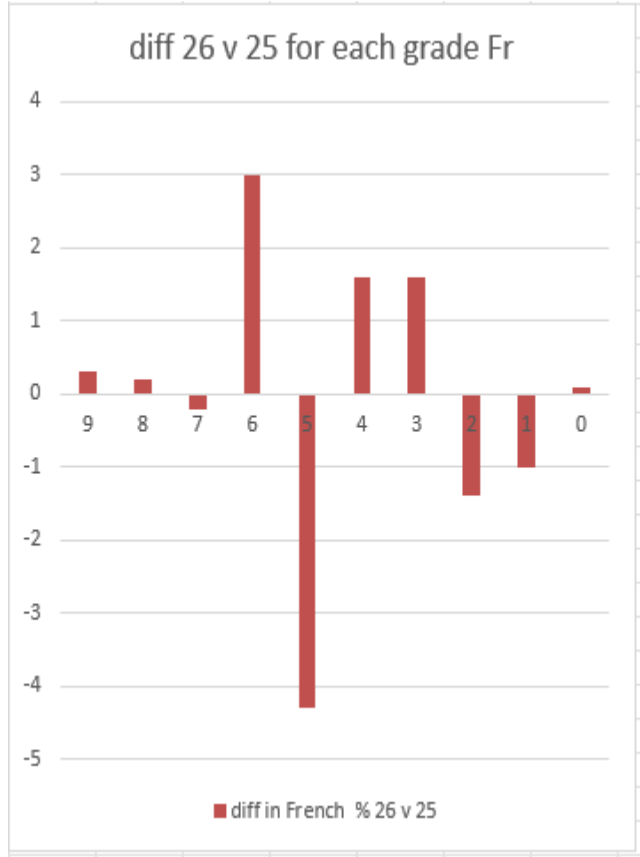
...and received results in Mathematics

Download this data

<https://analytics.ofqual.gov.uk/apps/GCSE/SubjectCombinations/>

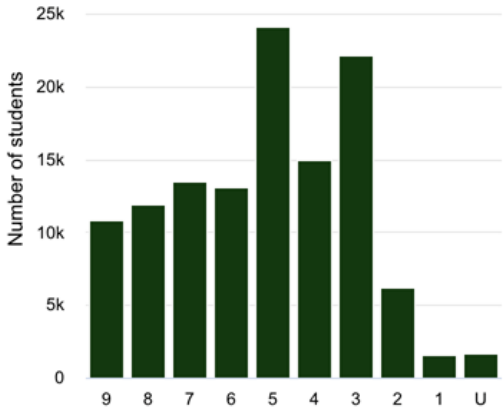
Grade distribution

French



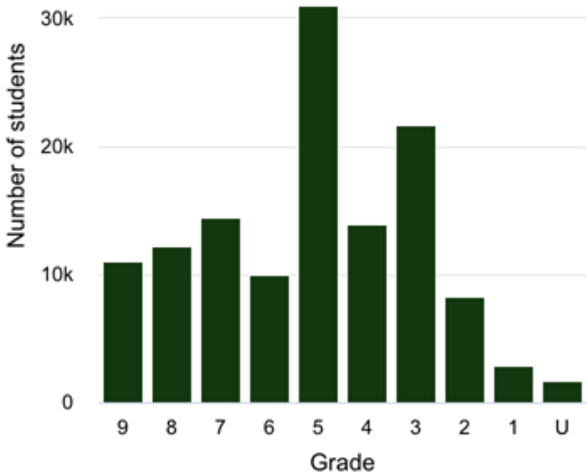
120,025 students received results in French

All French - 2026



126,975 students received results in French

All French - 2025



French

Select first subject grade(s):

All grades

English language

Select second subject grade(s):

All grades

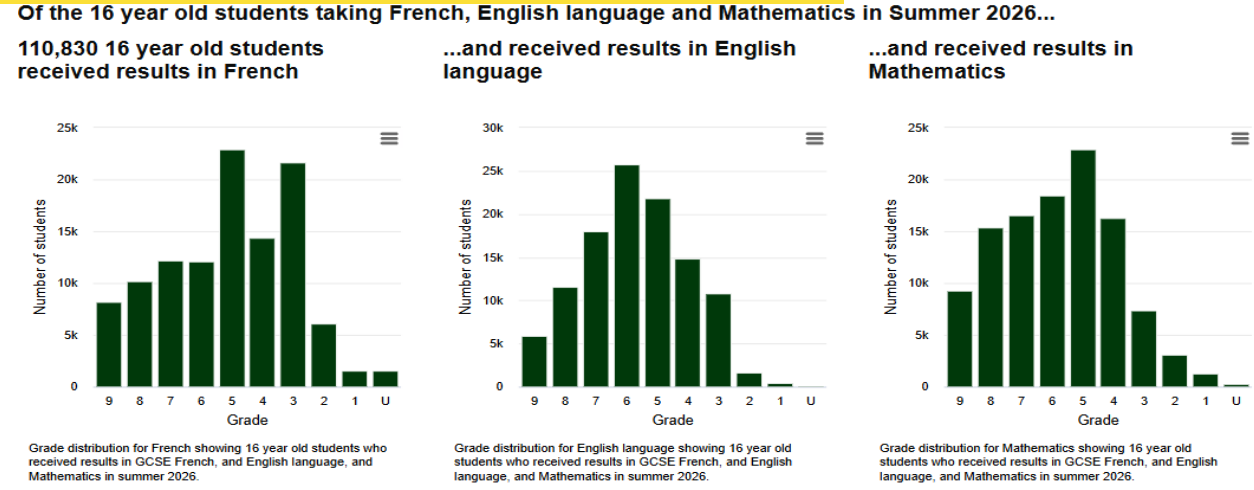
Mathematics

Select summer series:

2026

☒ Filter for students aged 16 only.

Doing French + Eng + Maths - 2026



French

Select first subject grade(s):

All grades

English language

Select second subject grade(s):

All grades

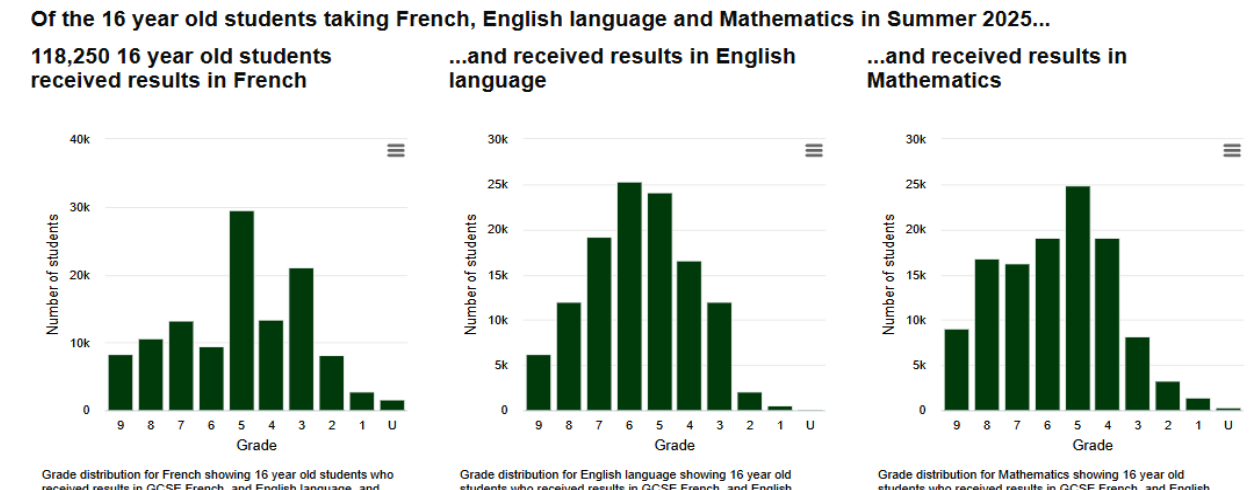
Mathematics

Select summer series:

2025

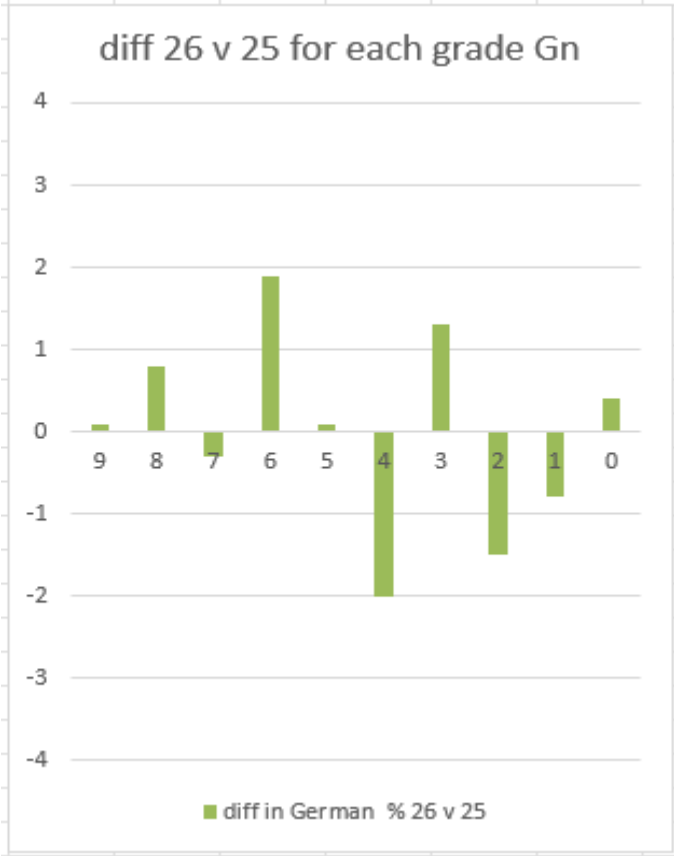
☐ Filter for students aged 16 only.

Doing French + Eng + Maths - 2025



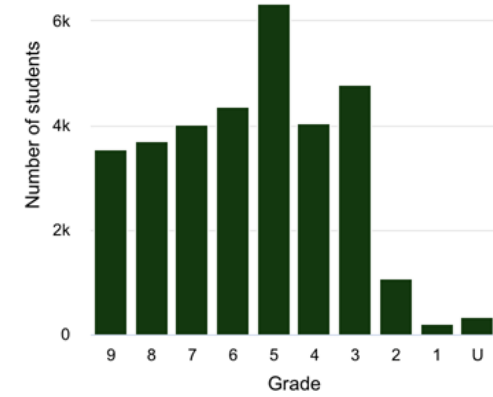
Grade distribution

German



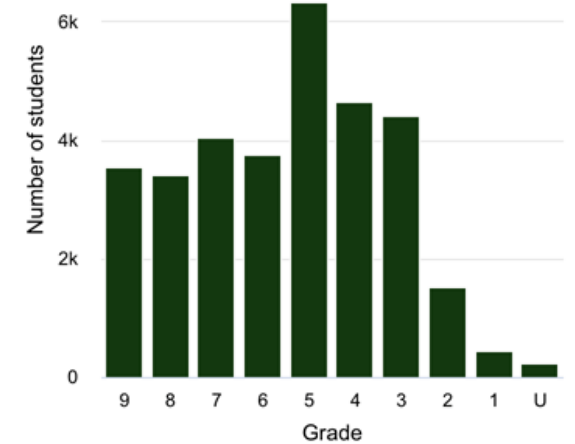
32,350 students received results in German

All German - 2026



32,295 students received results in German

All German - 2025



Select first subject:

German

Select second subject:

English language

Select third subject:

Mathematics

Select first subject grade(s):

All grades

Select second subject grade(s):

All grades

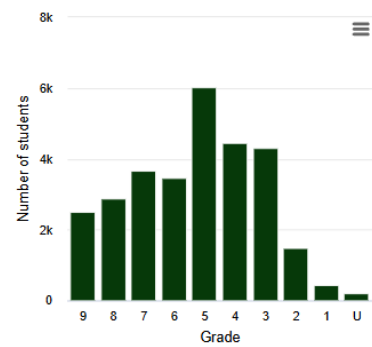
Select summer series:

2025

Doing German + Eng + Maths - 2026

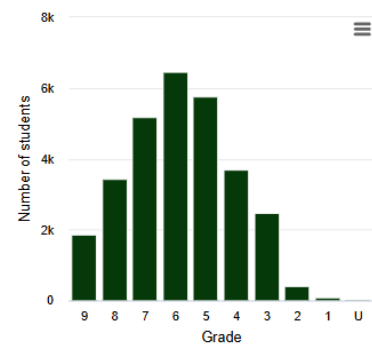
Of the 16 year old students taking German, English language and Mathematics in Summer 2025...

19,395 16 year old students received results in German



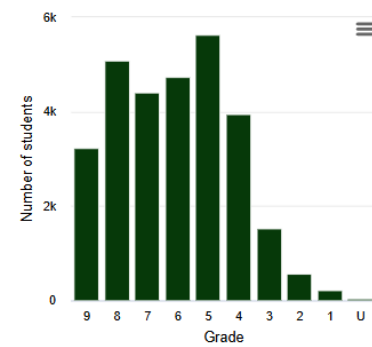
Grade distribution for German showing 16 year old students who received results in GCSE German, and English language, and Mathematics in summer 2025.

...and received results in English language



Grade distribution for English language showing 16 year old students who received results in GCSE German, and English language, and Mathematics in summer 2025.

...and received results in Mathematics

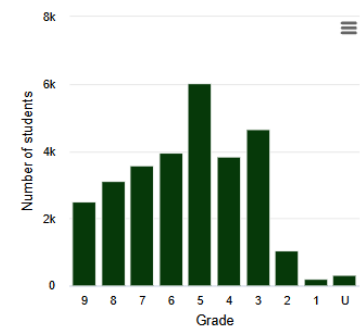


Grade distribution for Mathematics showing 16 year old students who received results in GCSE German, and English language, and Mathematics in summer 2025.

Doing German + Eng + Maths - 2025

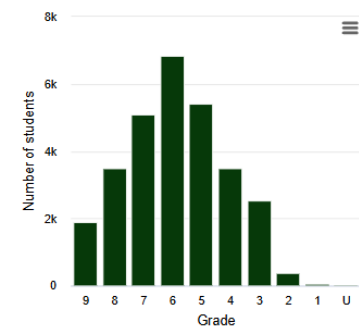
Of the 16 year old students taking German, English language and Mathematics in Summer 2026...

29,220 16 year old students received results in German



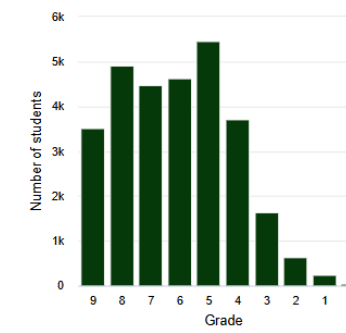
Grade distribution for German showing 16 year old students who received results in GCSE German, and English language, and Mathematics in summer 2026.

...and received results in English language



Grade distribution for English language showing 16 year old students who received results in GCSE German, and English language, and Mathematics in summer 2026.

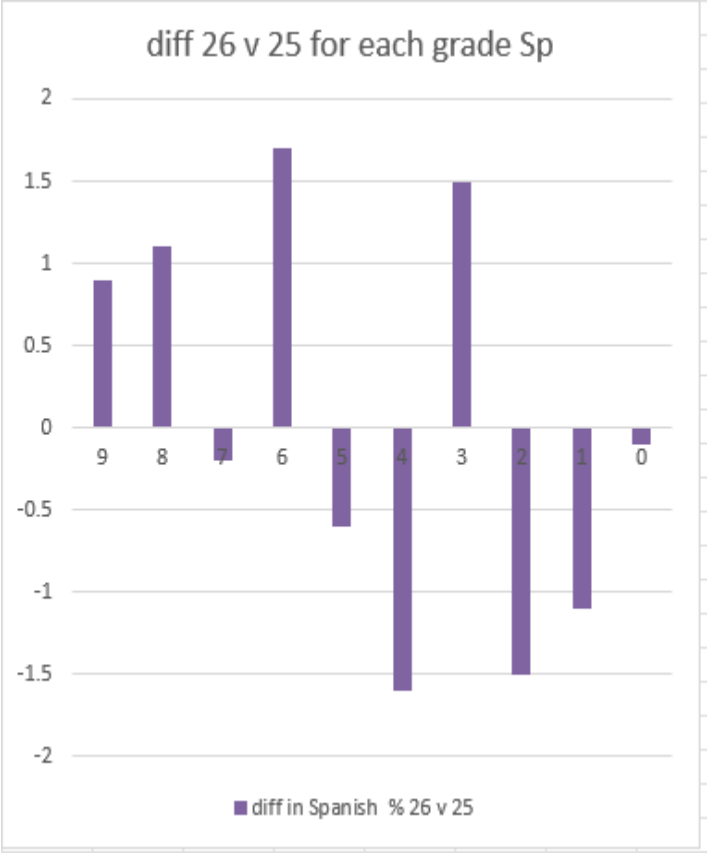
...and received results in Mathematics



Grade distribution for Mathematics showing 16 year old students who received results in GCSE German, and English language, and Mathematics in summer 2026.

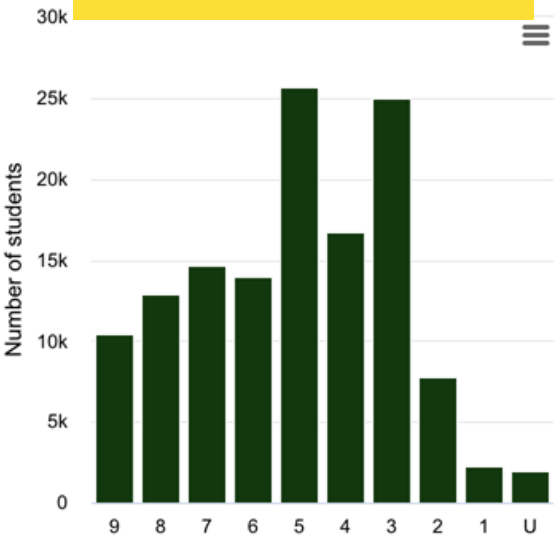
Grade distribution

Spanish



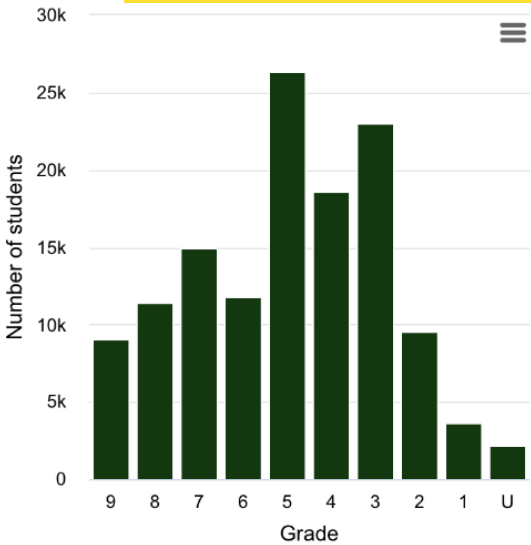
BACK TO DAVID

All Spanish - 2026



130,570 students received results in Spanish

All Spanish - 2025



Select first subject:

Spanish

Select first subject grade(s):

All grades

Select second subject:

English language

Select second subject grade(s):

All grades

Select third subject:

Mathematics

Select summer series:

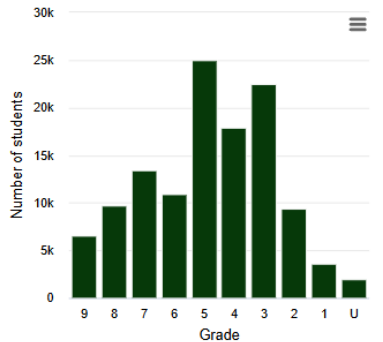
2025

☒ Filter for students aged 16 only.

Doing Spanish + Eng + Maths - 2026

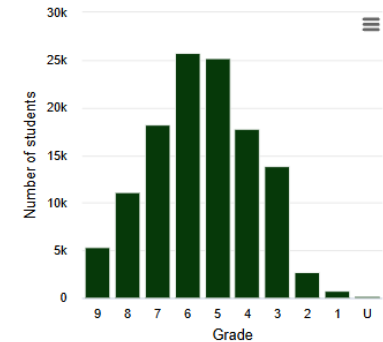
Of the 16 year old students taking Spanish, English language and Mathematics in Summer 2025...

120,940 16 year old students received results in Spanish



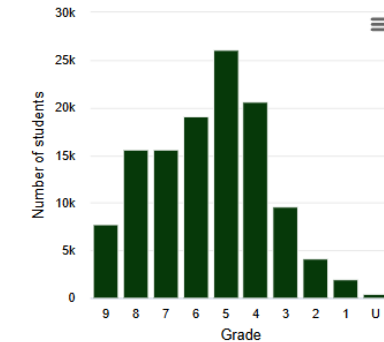
Grade distribution for Spanish showing 16 year old students who received results in GCSE Spanish, and English language, and Mathematics in summer 2025.

...and received results in English language



Grade distribution for English language showing 16 year old students who received results in GCSE Spanish, and English language, and Mathematics in summer 2025.

...and received results in Mathematics



Grade distribution for Mathematics showing 16 year old students who received results in GCSE Spanish, and English language, and Mathematics in summer 2025.

All grades

All grades

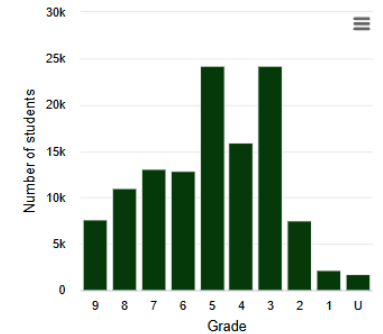
2026

Doing Spanish + Eng + Maths - 2025

ents aged 16 only.

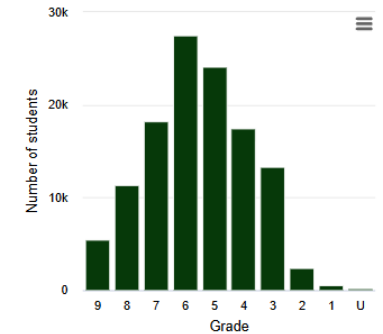
Of the 16 year old students taking Spanish, English language and Mathematics in Summer 2026...

120,545 16 year old students received results in Spanish



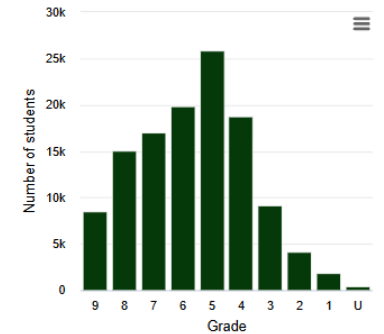
Grade distribution for Spanish showing 16 year old students who received results in GCSE Spanish, and English language, and Mathematics in summer 2026.

...and received results in English language



Grade distribution for English language showing 16 year old students who received results in GCSE Spanish, and English language, and Mathematics in summer 2026.

...and received results in Mathematics



Grade distribution for Mathematics showing 16 year old students who received results in GCSE Spanish, and English language, and Mathematics in summer 2026.

Outcomes and cohort ave

- By looking at the ave Maths (or Eng) grade of those doing Spanish, we can compare their ave score with that of those doing German (and similarly Spanish)
- We see that on average, the concurrent attainment of those doing German is highest, then French, then Spanish
- All have risen from 2025 to 2026

Differences in profile of those taking French,
German and Spanish in Jun **25**

– average Maths grade:
French = 5.7, German = 6.1, Spanish = 5.55

– average English grade:
French = 5.6, German = 5.8, Spanish = 5.49

– average subject grade:
French = 5.01, German = 5.31, Spanish = 4.81

Differences in profile of those taking French,
German and Spanish in Jun **26**

– average Maths grade:
French = 5.8, German = 6.1, Spanish = 5.62

– average English grade:
French = 5.7, German = 5.9, Spanish = 5.55

– average subject grade:
French = 5.08, German = 5.40, Spanish = 4.98

Language entries by region (Ofqual)

Note different scales
for colouring e.g.

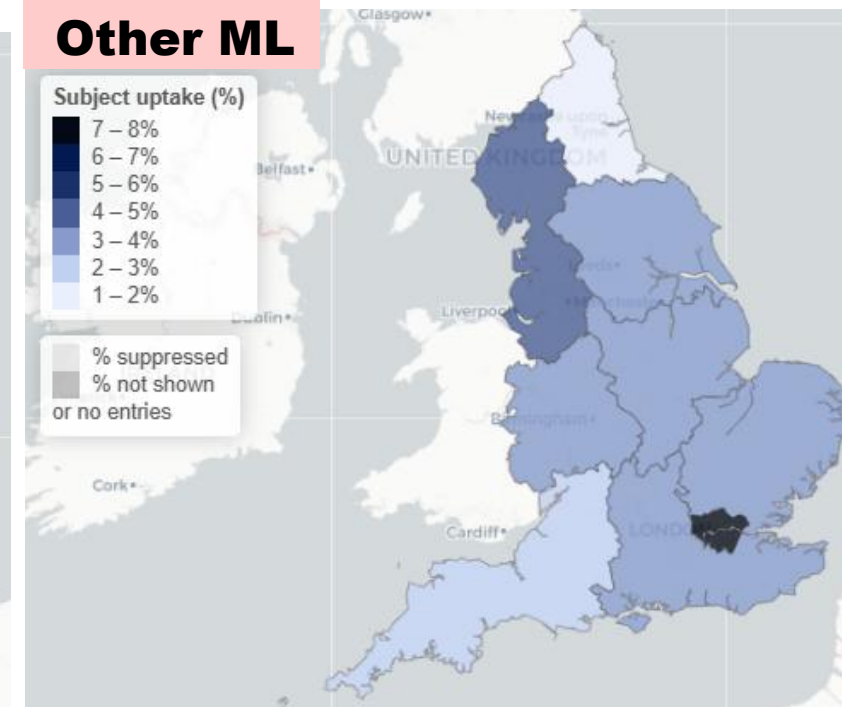
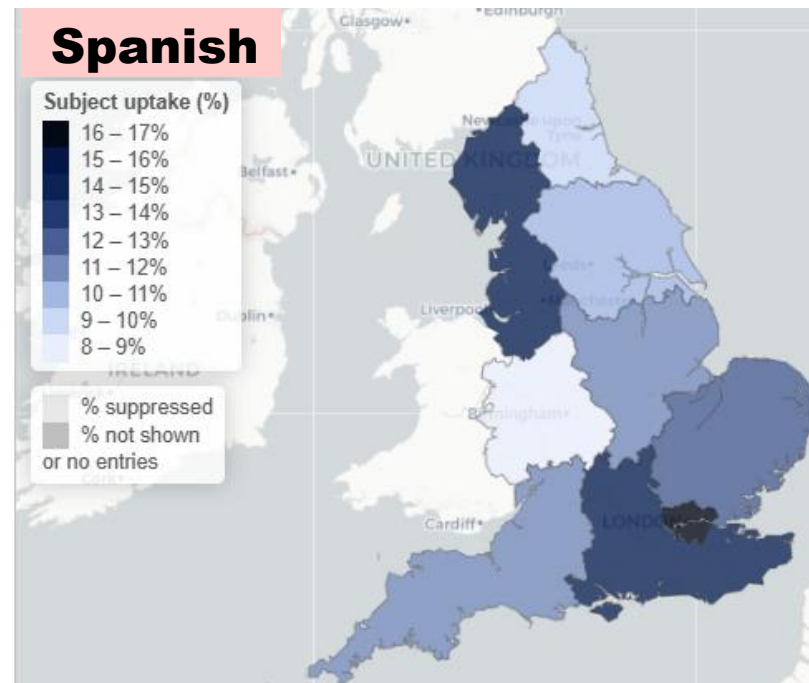
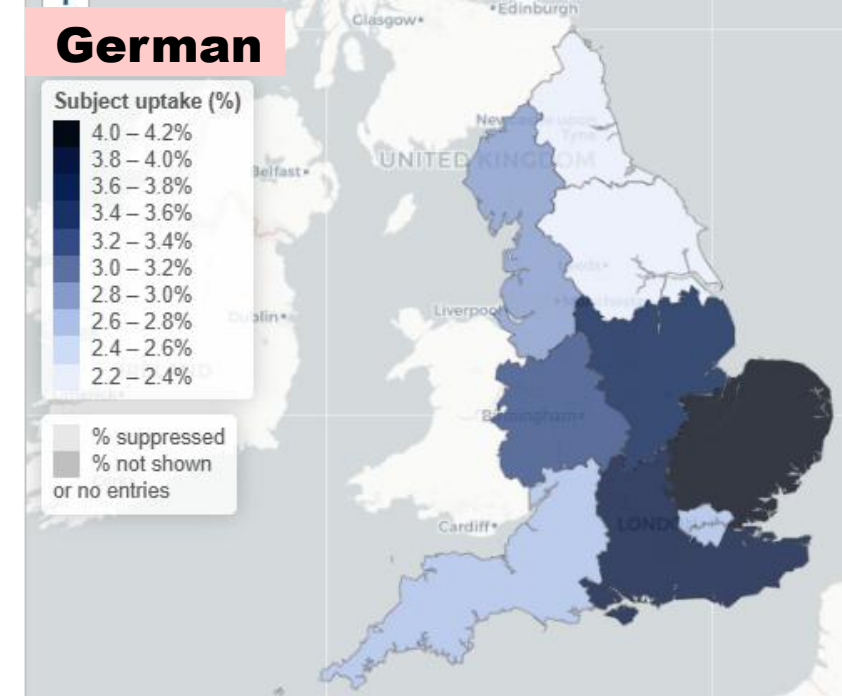
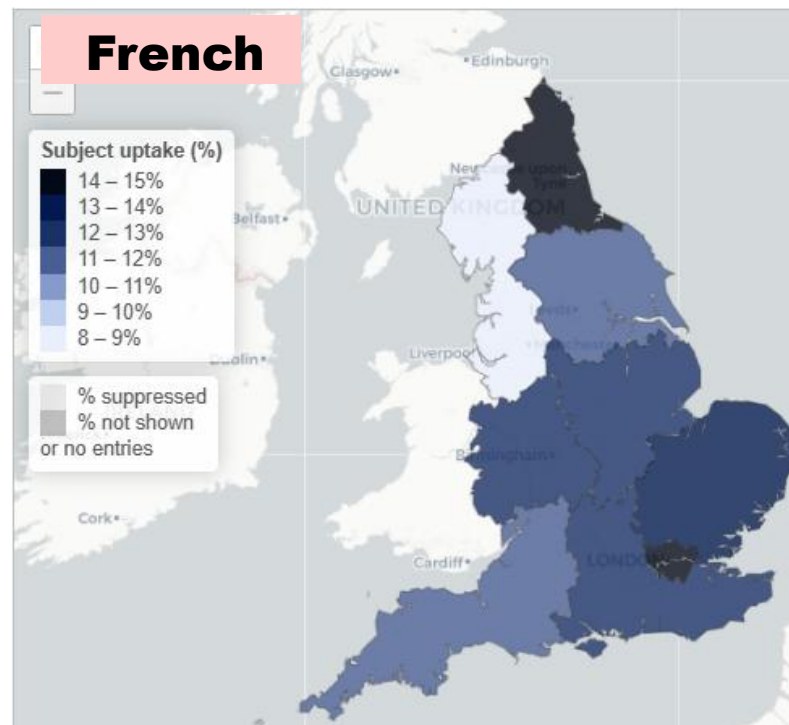
French 8% - 16%

German 2% - 4%

Spanish 8% - 17%

Other ML 1% - 8%

Note regional
variations



Who decides what re new specifications (DfE, Ofqual, exam boards)

So who determines what?



- **DfE** determine content
- **Ofqual** determines assessment process
- **Awarding organisations** (AOs / exam boards) propose specifications, set exams etc. to be approved by **Ofqual**
- **Ofqual** confirm standards and grades

**PROBLEM WHEN NOT AN
ITERATIVE PROCESS**

Why was there a new specification + timeline

and dealing with severe grading
was not one of the reasons....

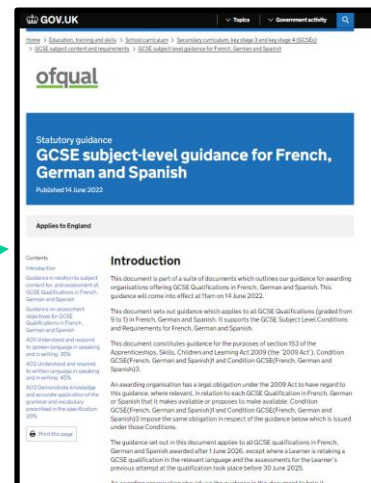
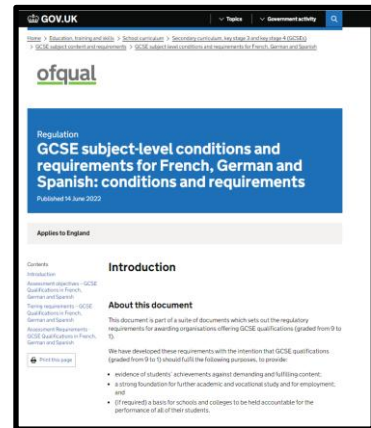
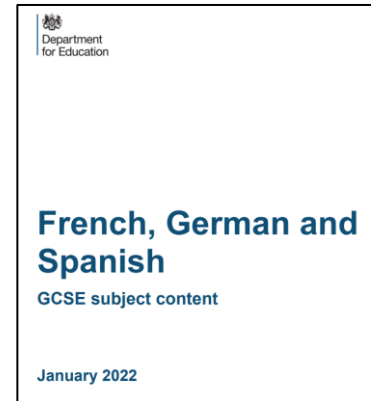
Broader political context

- **Focus on mastery, knowledge**
- **Nick Gibb as Minister for Schools**
- **2016 T&L Pedagogy review (Chair Ian Bauckham)**
- **Dec 2018 NCELP set up**
- **2019 Formation of group to review GCSE ML “DfE Subject content review”**
- **Postponed through pandemic**
- **Mar 2021 DfE Proposals**

Background to the new DfE GCSE Subject content (Jan 2022): Timeline

- March 2021: DfE Proposals for new GCSE MFL subject content + Ofqual on associated Assessment Arrangements open for consultation
- May 2021: consultation ended
- *[June 2021 Ofsted Curriculum Research Review]*
- January 2022: DfE and Ofqual response to consultation and final Subject Content and Assessment Objectives published (Renamed French German Spanish GCSE Subject Content). There were some changes to the original proposal). First teaching Sep 2024, first testing 2026. (One year delay from original proposal)
- March 2022: Ofqual consultation on Subject Conditions and Guidance.
- May 2022: **DfE** publishes minor amendments to **French German Spanish GCSE Subject Content 2022**
- June 2022: **Ofqual** publishes consultation outcome + GCSE regulatory requirements and guidance:

1. **GCSE subject-level conditions for French, German and Spanish 2022**
2. **GCSE subject-level guidance for French, German and Spanish 2022**



Overview

- Vocabulary

- 1200/1700 words – 85% from top 2000 in high frequency corpus + words regularly inflected + extras: 30 multiword short phrases + 20 geographical/cultural words

- Grammar

- Subject content appendix. Overall reduced from current requirements and quantified [e.g. definitions of verb groups rather than catch-all ‘irregular’]

- Phonics

- Subject content appendix [Note that these are not exhaustive and words in vocab list may require knowledge beyond phonics e.g. sept / neuf ans]

Dealing with severe grading was not one of the reasons....

Wednesday, 26 January 2022

Helen Myers blog Jan 2022

GCSE Subject Content Announcement: A Personal Response

<https://helenmyers.blogspot.com/2022/01/gcse-subject-content-announcement.html>

But the most important issue is that until severe grading is addressed, whatever pedagogy we use, whatever exam we have, there will be little incentive for more pupils to study GCSE MFL.

What hasn't changed!

ALL webinar July 2023

<https://helenmyers.blogspot.com/2022/01/gcse-subject-content-announcement.html>

- Grading determined by comparable outcomes by Ofqual [**Not** exam boards]
- Grading in French, German and Spanish is still severe relative to other EBacc subjects [FFT post + David Blow article – next 2 slides]
- National Curriculum KS3 – Ofsted still required to inspect according to the National Curriculum

Preparation for the new exams

- Sample Assessment Materials, training etc**

Summary

- **Exam boards provided enormous amounts of training materials, support sessions etc**
- **Schools were able to prepare, with support from ALL and others**

**Why was there an expectation
that raw marks would be
higher?**

Key Differences

We know that to give a focus on mastery and a better exam experience:

- the **subject content has been reduced** through the introduction of a specified vocabulary list, capping the amount of words students need to know to 1,200 or 1,700 words depending on tier
- the **grammar list** has also been **defined** and has reduced the amount of grammar students need to know for GCSE study
- the **questions** students will have to answer on the reading and listening papers, as well as the stimuli on the writing paper and prompts on the speaking paper, will be **in English**
- depending on exam board of choice, a **predictable paper structure** for reading and listening exams
- depending on exam board of choice, students hear listening tasks 3 times

Impact on grade boundaries and grade outcomes

Why we can't have grade boundaries determined in advance, both generally and now

**And why it would actually be wrong and unfair
on the pupils to do so**

Even though it sounds reasonable and fair.....

**Sometimes, the truth is elusive and complex, and even approximate,
but that does not mean we should accept the simplistic but false**

Comparing grade boundaries can be misleading

- **Grade boundaries are adjusted each year to keep approx. % same**
- **Don't look at grade boundaries in other subjects**
- **As far as any individual subject is concerned, because the national % getting each grade remains essentially constant, any change in grade boundaries will be a reflection of whether the pupils score more or fewer marks in the papers than in other years.**
- **It is tempting to want to talk about something which seems tangible (figures) but it can be unhelpful when in fact the raw marks and boundaries do not tell you anything about standards from year to year, from subject to subject, or paper to paper.**

And similarly, it is impossible to precisely define in a measurable way a “grade 4 student”, “grade 5 student”, etc

Grade boundaries – Ofqual statements

Grade boundaries change from year to year

- **If an exam is easier than in previous years, the grade boundaries for that paper will be higher. If it is harder, the grade boundaries will be lower.**
- **The difficulty of exam questions varies year to year, even though exam boards try to keep the level of demand consistent. That's because it is impossible to determine how difficult students will find a paper until it is taken.**
- **This is why new grade boundaries are set each year – to reflect the difficulty of that particular paper, and to ensure that it is no easier or harder to get a grade in any given year.**

The standard of work needed to get each grade remains comparable year on year

Grade boundaries are decided after students take exams and when marking is nearly complete

Ofqual on grade boundaries (in 2024) <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/guide-to-as-and-a-level-results-for-england-summer-2024>

Ofqual in 2025 <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/gcse-and-a-level-grading-what-you-need-to-know/gcse-and-a-level-grading-what-you-need-to-know>



Grade boundaries from Pearson....

Grade Boundaries for the new Pearson Edexcel French, German and Spanish GCSEs

Answering your frequently asked questions

<https://qualifications.pearson.com/content/dam/pdf/GCSE/Modern-Languages/grade-boundaries-faq-2026-pearson-edexcel-gcse-mfl.pdf>

What will the grade boundaries be for the MFL GCSE specifications in 2026?



Even when a qualification is not new, and has not changed its content or assessment model, grade boundaries are not set until after the assessments have been marked. This is the case for existing qualifications, as well as new ones, because until students have taken the assessments, we can't know how demanding they will find the questions and papers, compared to previous years. This is even more so the case when there is a qualification that is entirely new and the assessment model, content, number of marks, paper weightings, etc. have changed.

AQA have also produced guidance on tiering decisions

Recap...

- **Grade boundaries are determined to fit “comparable outcomes” generally, and especially when change of specification**
- **Their absolute value does not have intrinsic meaning**

~~Grade boundaries~~

**How are grades calculated,
comparable outcomes,
severe grading**

How are grade boundaries calculated

- AQA document on standard setting

<https://store.aqa.org.uk/admin/results-days/GUIDETOSTANDARDSETTING.PDF>

“Comparable outcomes: The approach to awarding promoted by Ofqual. It statistically maintains subject standards both between years and between awarding organisations by ensuring that a student achieving a certain grade in a subject in the current year could expect to have achieved the same grade in previous years”

Which grades does the awarding committee consider?

The awarding committee does not look at work at every grade of each paper, but scrutinises work and explicitly recommends grade boundaries for specific grades only. These are, consequently, called the **judgemental grades** in recognition of the fact that awarders’ judgements are directly involved in the boundary setting. The judgemental grades for the papers differ according to the examination (see table below).

Examination	Judgemental grades (in scrutiny order)
AS; A-level; Level 3 Certificates	E, A
Linear GCSE (untiered)	Grade 4, Grade 7, Grade 1
Linear GCSE (tiered)	Grade 4, Grade 1 (Foundation / Core); Grade 4, Grade 7 (Higher / Extended) ⁴

Any remaining grade boundaries are called **arithmetic boundaries** because they are determined by calculation, without any judgement involved. The arithmetic grades are either set evenly between the judgemental grades already proposed, or statistically (for example, GCSE grade 9 or A-level grade A*).



Mark distribution

In practice...

Centre:
Session: June 2026
GCSE FRENCH 8652

Mark distribution - GCSE FRENCH 8652H

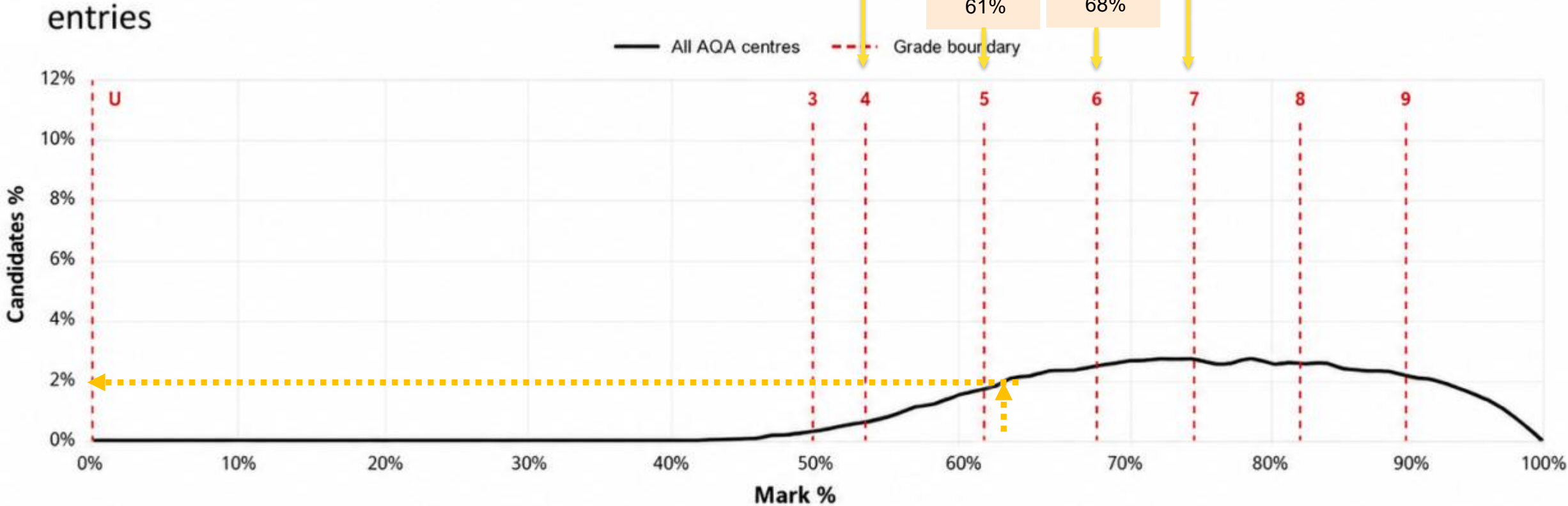
Judgemental grades and boundaries

Grade 4
54%

arithmetical

Grade 7
74.5%

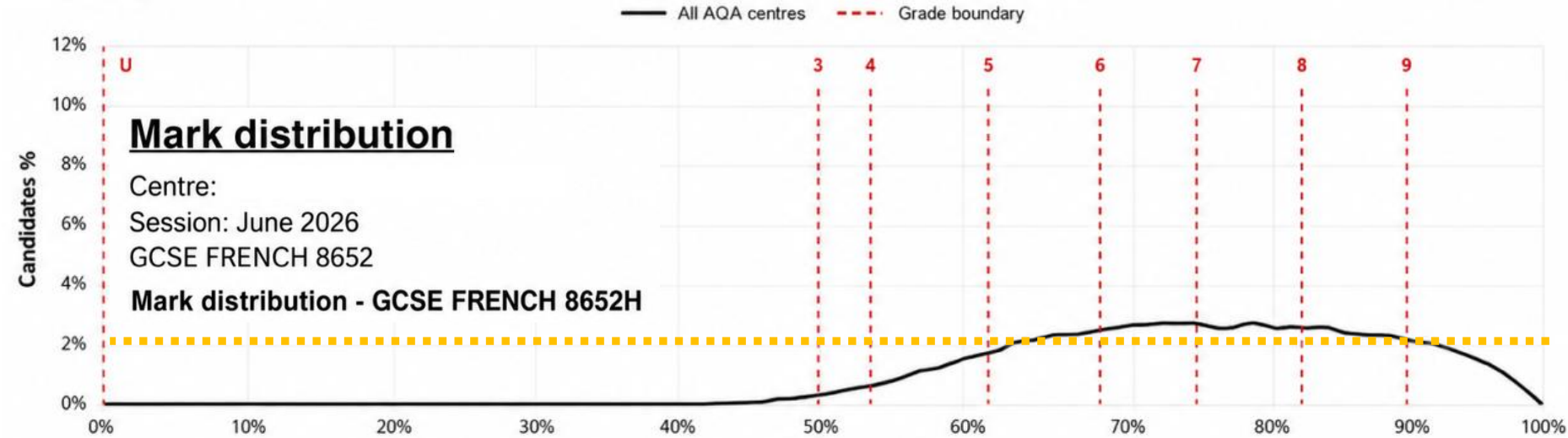
74.5% - 54% = 20.5%
Divide equally by 3 in whole marks out of 200
4-5 = 6.5%
5-6 = 7%
6-7 = 7%



This histogram shows the percentage of candidates at all AQA centres gaining each mark %, so 2% of candidates nationally scored 61%

Compare shape of histograms – Fr H – 25 v 26

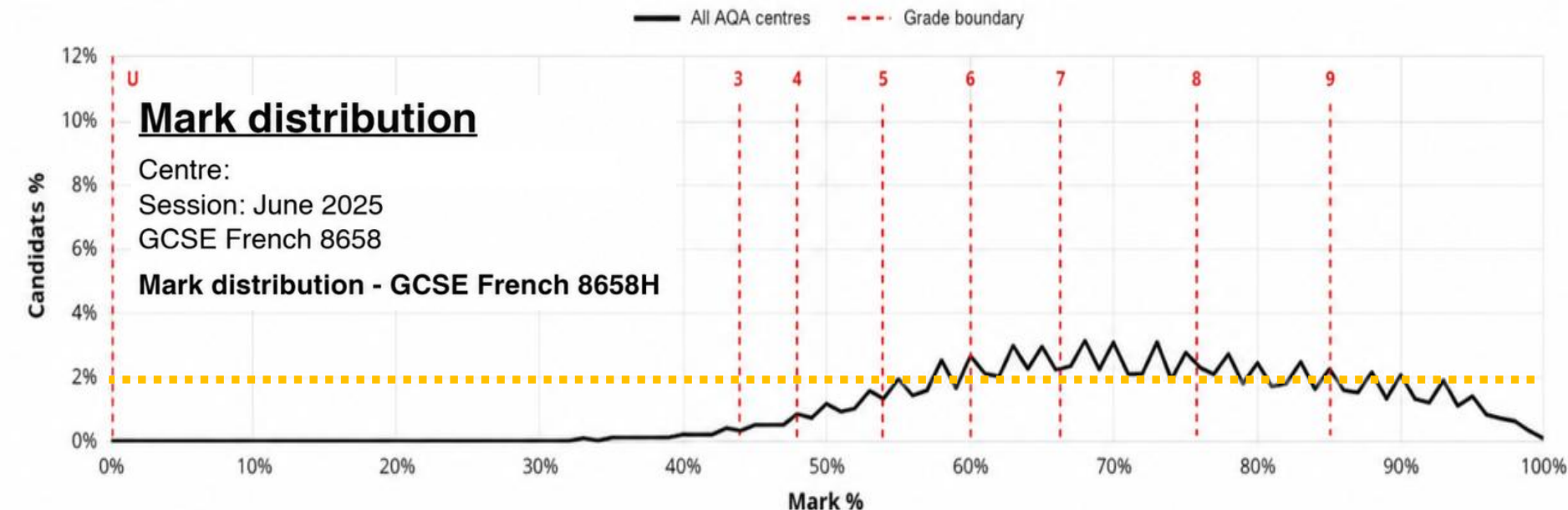
entries



Same broad shape, with most candidates scoring 50% or more, showing that they have had opportunity to show what they know

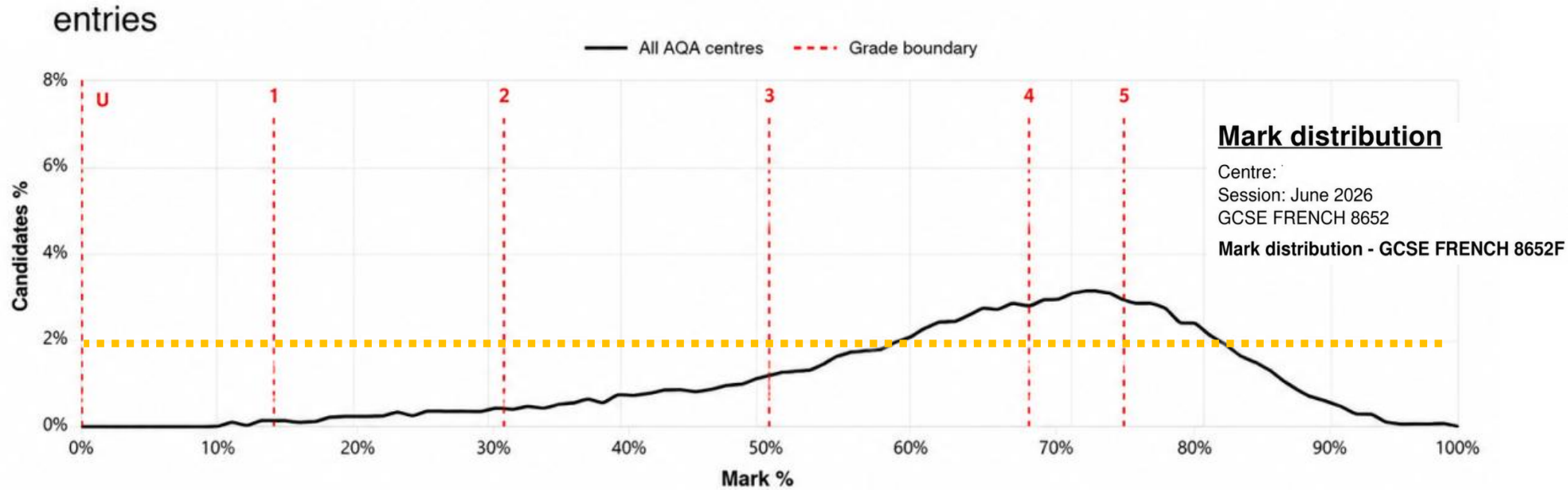
‘26 slightly to the right of ‘25, i.e. candidates scoring slightly higher raw marks
And so grade boundaries in ‘26 are to the right

entries

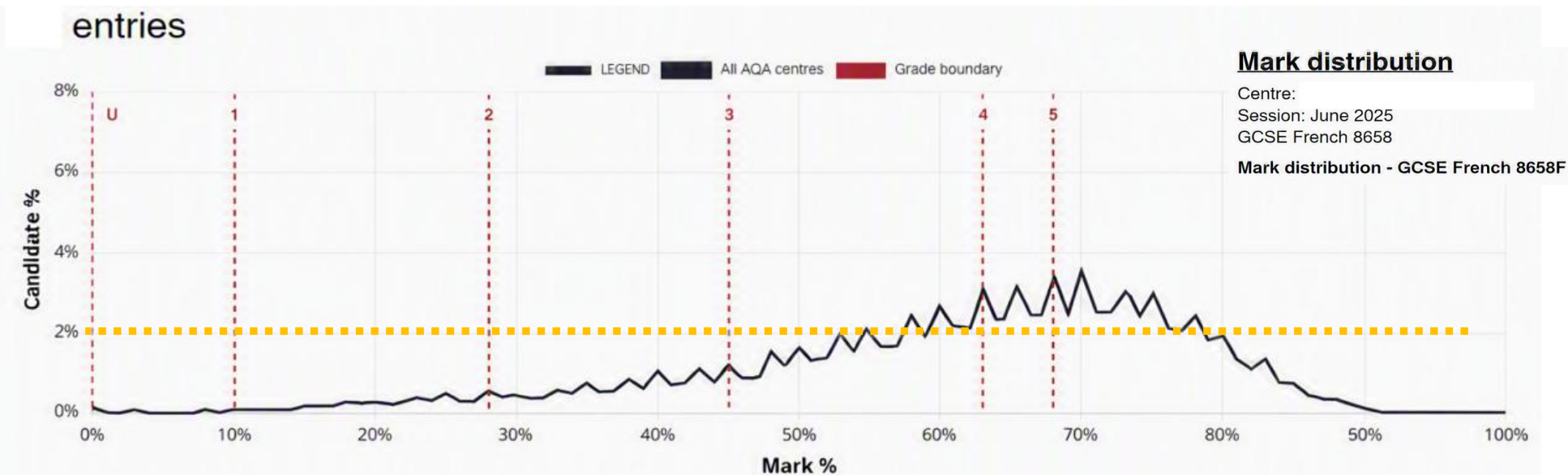


Remember these are board level and tier level, so comparable outcomes only applies to the overall national figures

AQA French F 25 v 26



Same broad shape, with most candidates scoring 50% or more (which gives grade 3), showing that they have had opportunity to show what they know

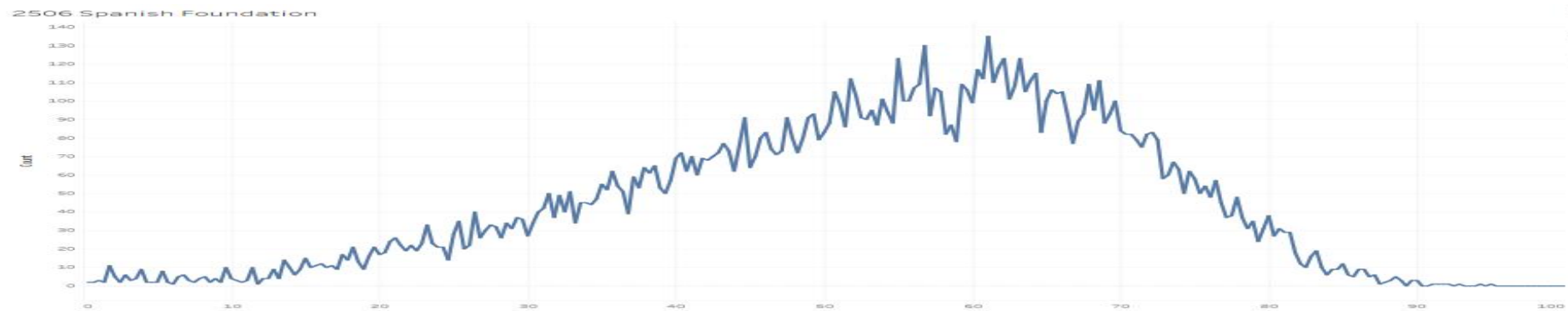
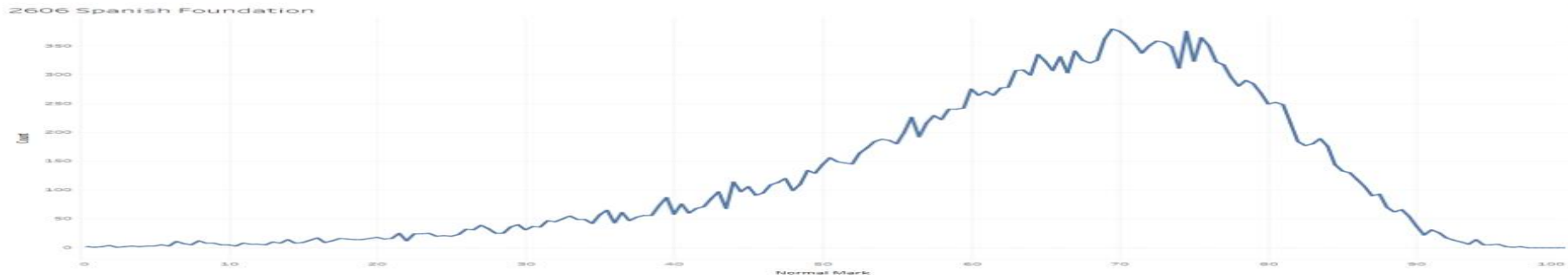


'26 slightly to the right of '25, i.e candidates scoring slightly higher raw marks

And so grade boundaries in '26 are to the right

Pearson Spanish Foundation – '25 v '26

- 2026 on top, 2025 below



'26 slightly to the right of '25, i.e. candidates scoring slightly higher raw marks

And so grade boundaries in '26 are to the right (not displayed here)

Severe Grading

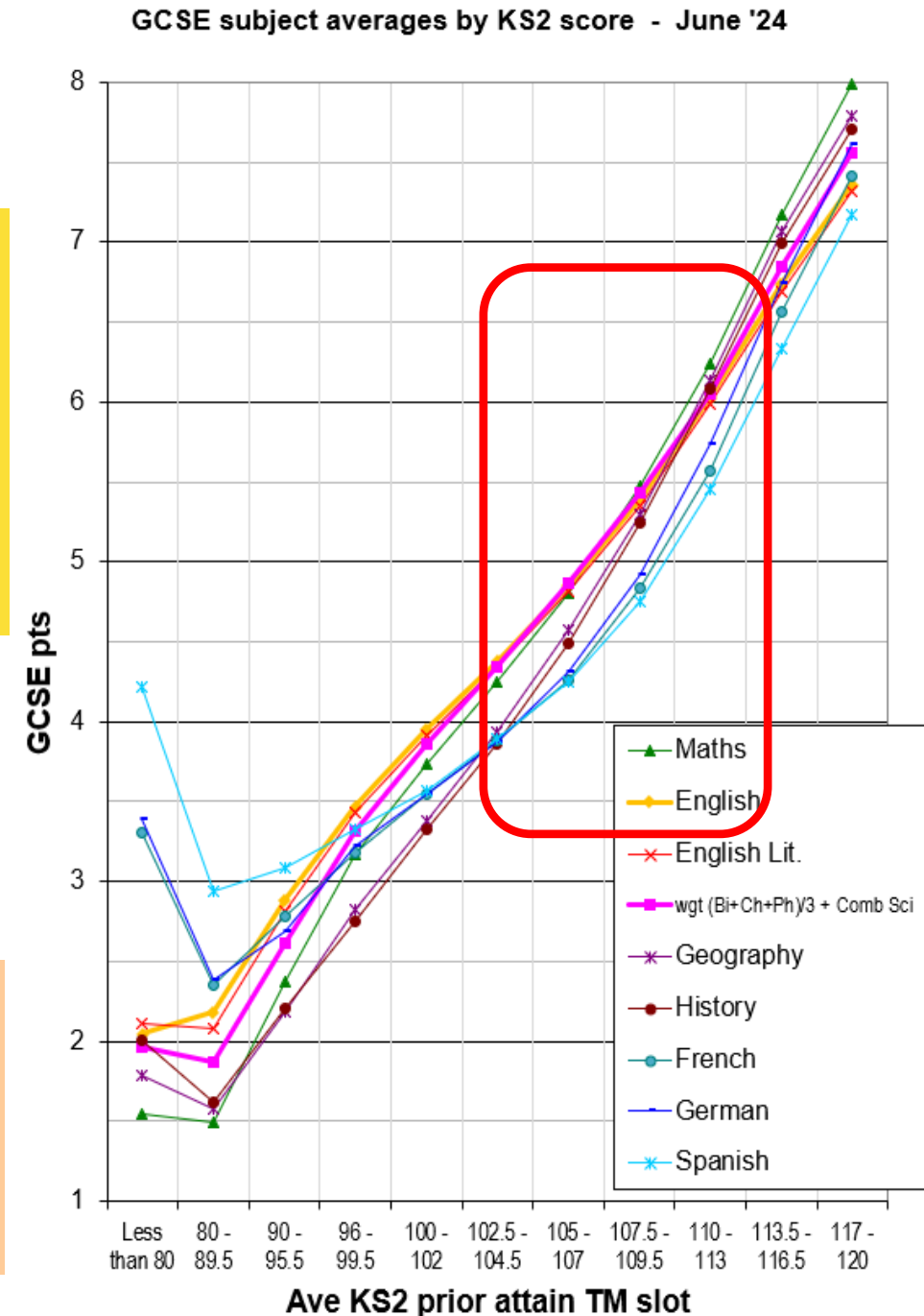
- This is a useful opportunity to remind people of the severe grading in GCSE ML which is a historic anomaly going back to O-level and first identified 50 years ago!
- A recent analysis by FFT Datalab is at <https://ffteducationdatalab.org.uk/2025/05/grading-severity-at-key-stage-4-in-2024/>
- Helen Myers maintains a page on the ALL London website full of useful information and links <https://all-london.org.uk/severe-grading/>

“EBacc” subjects: GCSE ave gde by KS2 prior

- For average to high prior attainment, all EBacc subjects have similar grading apart from Fr, Gn, Sp which are over half a grade below
- For low prior attainment, there are small entries for Fr, Gn, Sp - grades distorted by native speaker and EAL
- Engl. grading changed in 2012 to bring into line with Ma for most, but still above for low KS2, below for high KS2

Uses 2024 data, which incl. Ofqual changes; 2025 do not have KS2 prior attainment, but the national attainment figures for all subjects similar

So do NOT use the P8 EBacc coefficients to judge performance in different subjects



Advice of “estimating grades” (summer Y10, webinar Dec 25)

More information online (Dec 25)

- Detailed steps on how to do process in June 2025 for Y10 were published in blog <https://helenmyers.blogspot.com/2025/06/practical-suggestions-for-grading-your.html>
- And <https://helenmyers.blogspot.com/2025/08/why-grade-boundaries-can-be-misleading.html>
- A new blog was published in Dec 25 <https://helenmyers.blogspot.com/2025/12/practical-advice-on-grade-estimation.html>

It was updated to give additional information on how to do the calculations and do additional sense checks. Do share with your data manager or senior colleagues as they will have ready access to the information required and may well offer to do the calculations for you

Looking ahead

- **Sense check the Year 10 grades you gave in the summer / spring**
- **If you use the Jun 26 for a mock, think through.....**
- **Look at examiners' reports**

Provisional entry and tiering information (Ofqual publ. Jun 26)

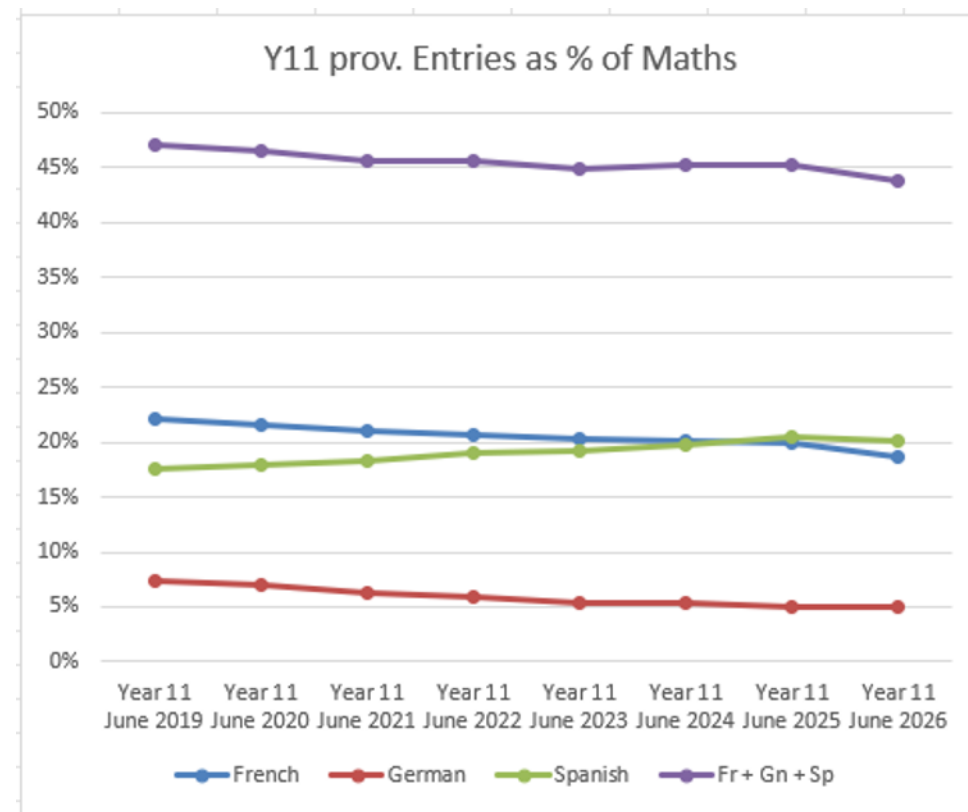
Key points

- Drop of 5% in GCSE French entries after stability since 2019 in overall % studying Fr, Gn , Sp
- Increase in % entered for Higher Tier

Table 7. Percentage of entries for higher tier from summer 2022 to summer 2026

Subject	Summer 2022	Summer 2023	Summer 2024	Summer 2025	Summer 2026
Biology	86%	85%	84%	84%	84%
Chemistry	86%	86%	85%	86%	87%
Combined science	40%	40%	37%	38%	39%
French	53%	52%	48%	49%	56%
German	62%	61%	57%	59%	67%
Mathematics	43%	43%	41%	40%	39%
Physics	88%	87%	85%	86%	86%
Spanish	53%	53%	49%	49%	55%
Statistics	58%	53%	48%	46%	47%

Note: The proportion of entries for higher tier in each subject also corresponds to the proportion of students entered, except for combined science, where students may enter more than one qualification in the same subject group.



<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/provisional-entries-for-gcse-as-and-a-level-summer-2026-exam-series/provisional-entries-for-gcse-as-and-a-level-summer-2026-exam-series>

“Exam experience”

Information available after the exam (papers, mark schemes, examiners' reports, statistics from question level upwards)

Pearson Results Plus

<https://www.resultsplusdirect.co.uk/ResultsPlus/Home.aspx>

- Login with usual Pearson email and password, but must have Pearson Authenticator app installed on phone
- Select Global Results Analysis; Select qualification (GCSE) and series (June 2026)
- Centre Groups

<https://www.resultsplusdirect.co.uk/Edexcel.ResultsPlus.RPA.Web/#/globalresultsanalysis/centreGroups>

ResultsPlus [Home](#) > Centre groups

Qualification: GCSE Session: June 2026 Show only: All

Group name ↓	Type ↓	Region ↓	Centres ↓	Country ↓		
All Edexcel	Edexcel		7535		View paper analysis	View grade analysis
South East	Region	South East	922	United Kingdom	View paper analysis	View grade analysis
Surrey	Local Education Authority	South East	127	United Kingdom	View paper analysis	View grade analysis
United Kingdom	National		5586	United Kingdom	View paper analysis	View grade analysis

- Questions Level Statistics
- Then export

ResultsPlus [Home](#) > Centre groups > Select reports > Centre grade reports > Centre paper analysis

All Edexcel
1FR1 GCSE Unit: FRENCH
June 2026

[Print](#) [Export](#)

Analysis Highlight report Skills map Exam documents

Paper: Paper 1F - SPEAKING (F)

Question ↑	Score ↓	Performance ↓	Edexcel Ave : ALL Edit ↓	Variance ↓	Skill tested
C-LKA	2.41/4		2.41/4	-	
C-RSL	6.80/12		6.8/12	-	
FO-RSL	2.13/4		2.13/4	-	
KAAV	6.02/8		6.02/8	-	

Examiners Reports, etc

<https://support.pearson.com/uk/s/article/EO-Support-Results-Days-Essential-Information>

<https://support.pearson.com/uk/s/article/Results-Examiner-Reports>

FAQ

▼ 1. Checklist - have you completed...?

- ▶ Mark Submission & Certificate Claims (Vocational Qualifications)
- ▶ Vocational Qualifications Learner Tracker
- ▶ Cash-in Codes
- ▶ Special Consideration Late Requests
- ▶ EDI/A2C Test Files
- ▶ A2C Application Settings
- ▶ Early Certification
- ▶ Diacritical Marks

▶ 2. A2C / BTEC EDI Results Files

▶ 3. Key Results Dates & Release Times

▶ 4. Edexcel Online (EOL) Access

▶ 5. Results Reports / Statement of Results (International Centres)

▶ 6. Grade Boundaries, Mark Schemes & Examiner Reports

▶ 7. ResultsPlus & ResultsPlus Direct

▶ 8. UCAS

▶ 9. Post-Results Services (PRS)

▶ 10. Appeals

▶ 11. Additional Support & Training

▶ 12. New information for 2026: Middle East support, Digital Credentials, Remote Invigilation, & AAQs

AQA Online Services



<https://onlineservices.aqa.org.uk/>

Pre-exams | Exams | Post-exams | **Resources** | Key information

Assessment and training

Administration

Art and Design >
Biology >
Business >
Chemistry >
Computer Science and I
Dance >
Design and Technology
Drama >
Economics >
English >
French >

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French assessment and training resources

Search resources



Newest first



Qualification

- ☐ Applied General (5)
- ☐ AQA Award (5)
- ☐ AQA Certificate Level 2 (2)
- ☐ AQA Certificate Level 3 (3)
- ☐ AS and A-level (681)
- ☐ Diploma - Advanced Principal Learning (1)
- ☐ ELC (5)

Showing 1-25 of 2061 results

[Reports on the exam | FCSE | 8958 French | FCSE/ | June 2026](#)
18 Aug 2026 | PDF | 127.1 KB |

[Report on the exam | GCSE | 8652/LH French Liste](#)
14 Aug 2026 | PDF | 195.47 KB |

[Report on the exam | GCSE | 8652/LF French Liste](#)
14 Aug 2026 | PDF | 188.05 KB |

[Report on the exam | GCSE | 8652/WH French Wri](#)

10 Aug 2026 | PDF | 238.09 KB |

[Mark Scheme | GCSE | 8652/WH French Writing Test Tier H | June 2026](#)
29 Jul 2026 | PDF | 351.85 KB |

[Mark Scheme | GCSE | 8652/WF French Writing Test Tier F | June 2026](#)
29 Jul 2026 | PDF | 341.67 KB |

[Mark Scheme | GCSE | 8652/SH French Writing Test Tier H | June 2026](#)
29 Jul 2026 | PDF | 663.73 KB |

[Mark Scheme | GCSE | 8652/SF French Writing Test Tier F | June 2026](#)
29 Jul 2026 | PDF | 628.82 KB |

[Mark Scheme | GCSE | 8652/RH French Writing Test Tier H | June 2026](#)
29 Jul 2026 | PDF | 224.06 KB |

[Teacher's Booklet - 8652 SH | GCSE | 8652/SH French Writing Test Tier H | June 2026](#)
28 Jul 2026 | PDF | 1.5 MB |

[Teacher's Booklet - 8652 SF | GCSE | 8652/SF French Writing Test Tier F | June 2026](#)
28 Jul 2026 | PDF | 1.5 MB |

[Modified 18A4 Question Paper | GCSE | 8652/WF French Writing Test Tier F | June 2026](#)
05 Jun 2026 | PDF | 1.26 MB |

[Modified 36A3 Question Paper | GCSE | 8652/WF French Writing Test Tier F | June 2026](#)
05 Jun 2026 | PDF | 1.56 MB |

[Modified 18A4 | GCSE | 8652/WH French Writing Test Tier H | June 2026](#)
05 Jun 2026 | PDF | 461.71 KB |

[Modified 36A3 Question Paper | GCSE | 8652/WH French Writing Test Tier H | June 2026](#)

AQA Grade boundaries and statistics

Grade boundaries for June 2026 exams

Raw mark grade boundary tables show how we assign grades, based on raw exam marks.

Qualifications that use uniform marks can't be used with these tables (the results slip will show the mark).

Results from 20 August



GCSE - Grade boundaries June 2026

PDF | 500.23 KB



[GCSE - Grade boundaries June 2026](#)

XLSX | 111.01 KB

Results statistics for June 2026

There are two versions of the documents below, PDF and Excel spreadsheet.

We've not published results statistics where there were fewer than ten students in a grade.

Please contact eos@aqa.org.uk if you need any further information about the results.

Results from 20 August



GCSE - Results statistics June 2026

PDF | 232.04 KB



GCSE - Results statistics June 2026

XLSX | 80.9 KB

8652F	FRENCH TIER F	200	-	-	-	-	146	134	98	62	27
8652H	FRENCH TIER H	200	179	164	149	135	121	108	101	-	-
8035	GEOGRAPHY	252	204	185	166	148	130	112	82	53	24
8662F	GERMAN TIER F	200	-	-	-	-	149	136	99	63	27
8662H	GERMAN TIER H	200	176	160	144	128	113	98	90	-	-

Component grade boundaries (p.10 in grade boundary document)

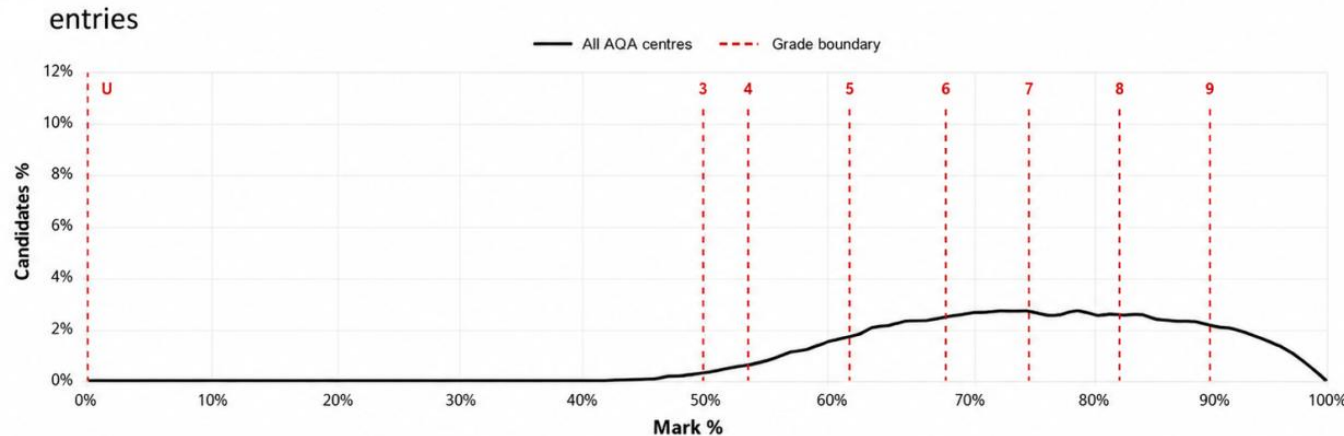
<https://www.aqa.org.uk/exams-administration/results-days/grade-boundaries>
<https://www.aqa.org.uk/exams-administration/results-days/results-statistics>
<https://www.aqa.org.uk/files/QHo9jKqPL0pZ5xdB09S2Ww/a8c1634eeced8e0ef79b2d179398dfd2414ee291.pdf>

AQA Data Insights

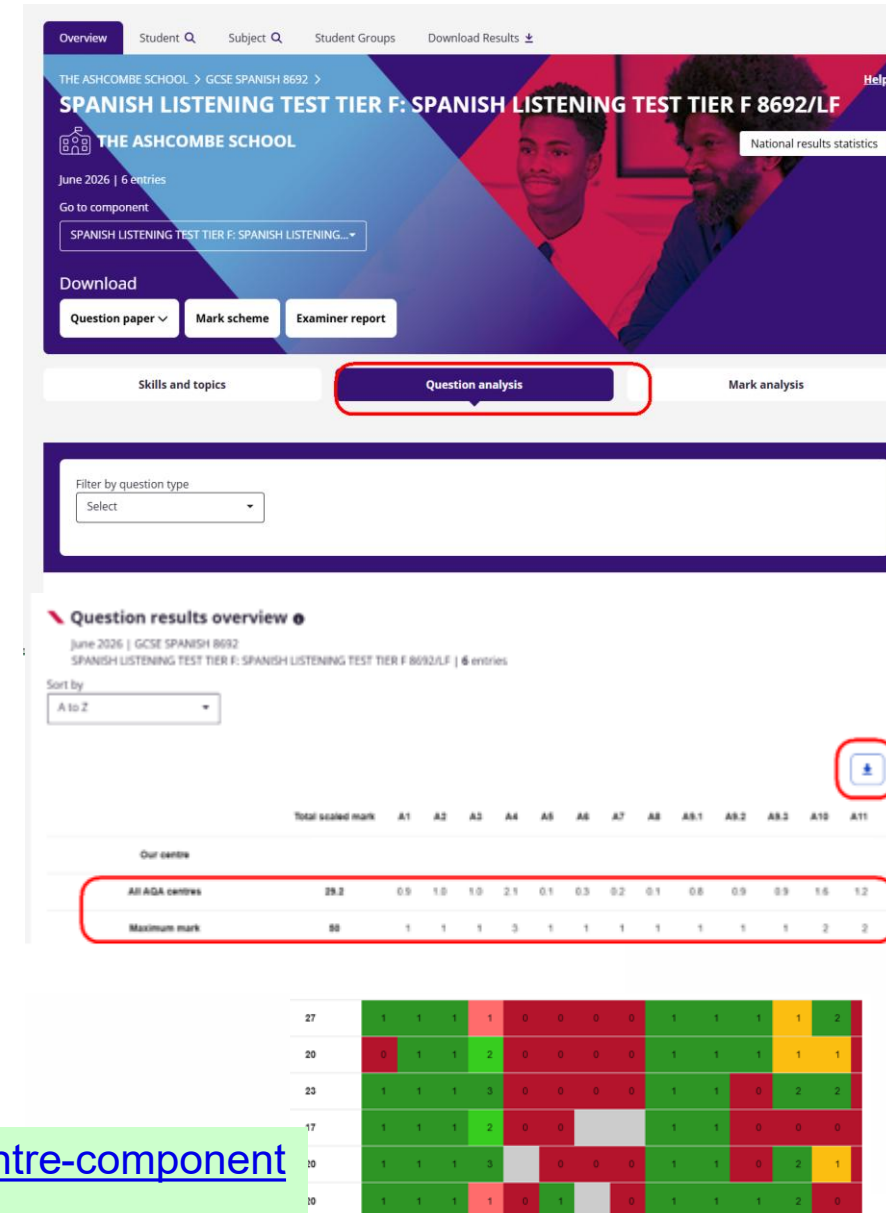
<https://datainsights.aqa.org.uk/centre-overview>

<https://datainsights.aqa.org.uk/centre-specification>

- Get histogram (as below) but with your own centre also plotted
- Get questions level analysis



<https://datainsights.aqa.org.uk/centre-component>



Looking at the exam papers in detail, comparison with the specification and analysing the examiners' reports

- Over to Helen, Adam and Catherine.....

SPEAKING EXAM BOARD INFORMATION

Example: AQA

Specification + SAMS + Commentaries

What did we know already?

Tasks – the same

- Role Play (unpredictable)
- Picture description
- Scripted unseen questions (*was with 5 with Picture card, now 4 with RA*)
- Conversation about predictable themes incl. teacher-generated questions

Tasks – different

- Read aloud
- Use of English for rubrics and instructions

Content :

- Themes / Topics re-named, reorganised
- Defined vocab, phonics and grammar

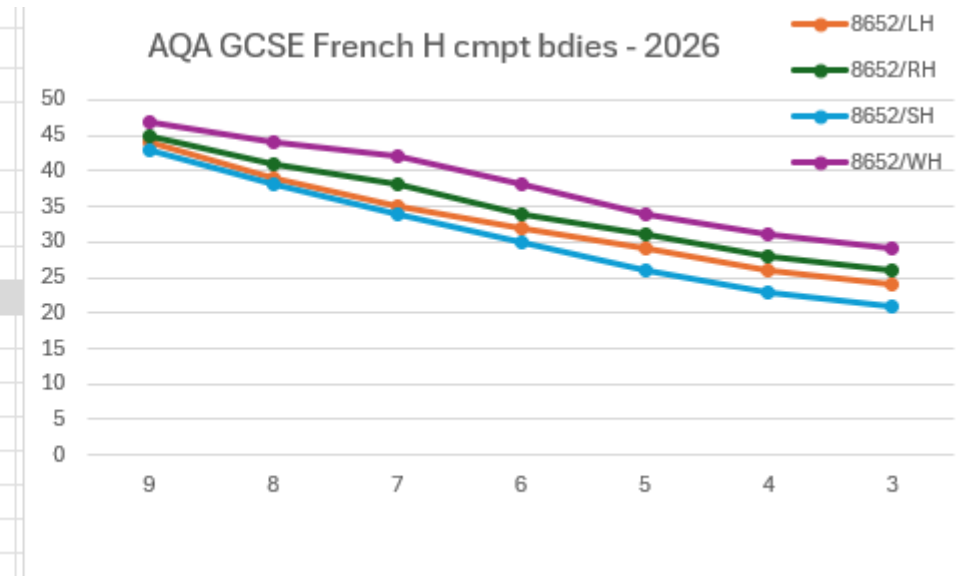
Mark schemes

- Very similar for same tasks
- New for new task (RA) – categorised as AO3 (so reduced gram, accuracy elements across all papers)

What can we learn now?

- **Results of component vs all elements** - can be compared with national mean to discover pattern – e.g. how papers compare at our centre with how papers compare nationally re: notional component boundaries

AQA component boundaries											
Comp/Unit Code	Comp/Unit Name	Max Mark	Grade Boundaries								
code			9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
8652/LF	FRENCH LISTENING TEST TIER F	40	-	-	-	-	29	26	19	12	5
8652/LF	FRENCH LISTENING TEST TIER F	50	-	-	-	-	36	33	24	15	6
8652/RF	FRENCH READING TEST TIER F	50	-	-	-	-	38	35	25	15	6
8652/SF	FRENCH SPEAKING TEST TIER F	50	-	-	-	-	35	32	23	15	7
8652/WF	FRENCH WRITING TEST TIER F	50	-	-	-	-	37	34	25	16	8
8652/LH	FRENCH LISTENING TEST TIER H	50	44	39	35	32	29	26	24	-	-
8652/RH	FRENCH READING TEST TIER H	50	45	41	38	34	31	28	26	-	-
8652/SH	FRENCH SPEAKING TEST TIER H	50	43	38	34	30	26	23	21	-	-
8652/WH	FRENCH WRITING TEST TIER H	50	47	44	42	38	34	31	29	-	-



French Higher Speaking = blue
- lowest apart from Grade 1

What can we learn now?

- **Results of question level** (can be compared with national mean to discover pattern)

	French Speaking F	
	All AQA centres	Maximum mark
Total scaled mark	28.4	50
P1_Role_Play Task_1	1.4	2
P1_Role_Play Task_2	1.4	2
P1_Role_Play Task_3	1.4	2
P1_Role_Play Task_4	1.3	2
P1_Role_Play Task_5	1.2	2
P2_Reading_Aloud R_T_AO3	3.7	5
P2_Reading_Aloud R_C_Q_AO1	4.2	10
P3_Discussion R_C_AO2	3	5
P3_Discussion U_C_AO1	8	15
P3_Discussion U_C_AO3	2.9	5
calc raw total	28.5	50

Reading aloud F mean = 3.7 /5

	French Speaking H	
	All AQA centres	Maximum mark
Total scaled mark	34.6	50
P1_Role_Play Task_1	1.8	2
P1_Role_Play Task_2	1.7	2
P1_Role_Play Task_3	1.7	2
P1_Role_Play Task_4	1.7	2
P1_Role_Play Task_5	1.6	2
P2_Reading_Aloud R_C_AO3	2.5	5
P2_Reading_Aloud R_C_Q_AO1	7.1	10
P3_Discussion R_C_AO2	3.4	5
P3_Discussion U_C_AO1	9.9	15
P3_Discussion U_C_AO3	3.1	5
calc raw total	34.5	50

Reading aloud H mean = 2.5 /5

Data Insights on AQA

Total scaled mark	P1_Role_Play Task_1	P1_Role_Play Task_2	P1_Role_Play Task_3	P1_Role_Play Task_4	P1_Role_Play Task_5	P2_Reading_Aloud R_C_AO3	P2_Reading_Aloud R_C_Q_AO1	P3_Discussion R_C_AO2	P3_Discussion U_C_AO1	P3_Discussion U_C_AO3
38.1	1.8	1.7	1.9	1.8	1.8	3	7.6	3.6	10.5	3.5
34.6	1.8	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.6	2.5	7.1	3.4	9.9	3.1
50	2	2	2	2	2	5	10	5	15	5
45	1	2	2	2	2	4	8	4	15	4
47	2	2	2	2	2	2	10	5	15	5
47	2	2	2	2	2	3	9	5	15	5
43	2	2	2	2	2	3	8	5	13	4
28	2	2	2	1	2	1	5	2	6	3
44	2	2	2	2	2	4	9	4	13	4
46	2	2	2	2	2	3	10	4	14	5
27	2	1	1	2	1	1	6	3	5	3
50	2	2	2	2	2	5	10	5	15	5
37	2	1	1	1	2	3	9	4	9	3
47	2	2	2	2	2	3	10	4	15	5
49	2	1	2	2	2	5	10	5	15	5
39	2	2	2	2	1	4	8	4	11	3
35	2	2	2	2	2	1	6	3	9	4
24	1	1	2	2	2	3	3	2	3	1
31	2	1	2	2	2	2	5	2	8	3

What can we learn now?

- **Question papers**
- **Mark schemes**
- **Examiner report**

All Downloadable

QP Read aloud: AQA Higher 2026

READING ALOUD TASK 7 (HIGHER TIER)
CANDIDATE'S CARD
When your teacher asks you, read aloud the following text in French. Je rencontre souvent mes copains en ville. Nous allons au cinéma pour voir un film. Si on a assez d'argent, on continue la soirée au restaurant. Normalement, je commande du poisson avec des frites. Je vais au stade dans mon temps libre. Mais, après, les devoirs m'attendent toujours. You will then be asked four questions in French that relate to the topic of Free-time activities. In order to score the highest marks, you must try to answer all four questions as fully as you can.

Any surprises?
Equal / unequal demand across
the cards?

Mark scheme: SAM - a working document

MARK SCHEME – GCSE FRENCH – 8652/SF+SH – SAMPLE ASSESSMENT MATERIALS

**Standardisation
process critical
for fairness –
expect
clarification /
exemplification**

**[120,020
candidates]**

**(as with all
previous specs)**

Mark schemes are prepared by the Lead Assessment Writer and considered, together with the relevant questions, by a panel of subject teachers. This mark scheme includes any amendments made at the standardisation events which all associates participate in and is the scheme which was used by them in this examination. The standardisation process ensures that the mark scheme covers the students' responses to questions and that every associate understands and applies it in the same correct way. As preparation for standardisation each associate analyses a number of students' tests. Alternative answers not already covered by the mark scheme are discussed and legislated for. If, after the standardisation process, associates encounter unusual answers which have not been raised they are required to refer these to the Lead Assessment Writer.

It must be stressed that a mark scheme is a working document, in many cases further developed and expanded on the basis of students' reactions to a particular paper. Assumptions about future mark schemes on the basis of one year's document should be avoided; whilst the guiding principles of assessment remain constant, details will change, depending on the content of a particular examination paper.

Further copies of this mark scheme are available from aqa.org.uk

Mark scheme - SAM

MARK SCHEME – GCSE FRENCH – 8652/SF+SH – SAMPLE ASSESSMENT MATERIALS

Part 2 – Reading aloud task

The Reading aloud task has two elements:

- reading aloud of a text
- answering four compulsory questions specified in the Teacher's role

Each student prepares one short text in the preparation time. After reading the text out loud, the student takes part in a short unprepared conversation on the topic of the text.

This part of the test is recommended to last between two and two and a half minutes at Foundation tier and between three and three and a half minutes at Higher tier, for both elements of the task combined.

Reading aloud of the text (5 marks AO3)

If students self-correct their pronunciation of a word or words, it is the final, corrected, version that is assessed. If students restart the reading aloud task, it is the final attempt which is marked.

Reading aloud of the text is marked according to the following criteria:

Foundation Tier

Level	Mark	AO3
5	5	There may be minor errors and a few major errors in pronunciation.
4	4	There are regular minor and some major errors in pronunciation.
3	3	There are frequent minor and frequent major errors in pronunciation.
2	2	Pronunciation is rarely accurate.
1	1	Pronunciation is very rarely accurate.
0	0	Does not meet the standard required for Level 1 at this tier.

Higher tier

Level	Mark	AO3
5	5	Pronunciation is always or nearly always accurate but there may be an occasional minor error.
4	4	There are a few minor errors in pronunciation.
3	3	There are some minor errors and very occasional major errors in pronunciation.
2	2	There are minor errors and a few major errors in pronunciation.
1	1	There are regular minor and some major errors in pronunciation.
0	0	Does not meet the standard required for Level 1 at this tier.

Notes

- A major error is one which adversely affects communication.
- A minor error is one which does not affect communication.

Marking guidance

These are examples of major errors of pronunciation that affect communication:

- pronunciation which changes the meaning of a word, eg *ville* rendered as *vie*
- third person plural endings of present tense verb forms pronounced eg *ils mangent*
- hard *c* produced for *ç* as in *garçon*
- *g* in *campagne* produced as in *bag*
- final letter of *et* pronounced
- *s* pronounced, or all letters pronounced, in *est*
- *je* produced as *j'ai* or vice versa
- *qu* rendered as *kw* eg. in *quand*
- *quinze* produced as *quins* (like *twins*)
- *seize* rendered as *six*
- *dix* rendered as *dicks*

Incl. 3rd person plural silent - ent

These are examples of more minor errors of pronunciation that **do not** affect communication:

- initial *i* in words such as *intéressant* produced as in the English word *in*
- aspirated *h*
- *r* produced as in English *very*

This is not a comprehensive list. It indicates common errors.

Note – for Higher, a major error caps mark at 3

2026 – Same criteria – same general guide

• Mark Scheme : Read aloud 2026

Part 2 – Reading aloud task

The Reading aloud task has two elements:

- reading aloud of a text
- answering four compulsory questions specified in the Teacher's role.

Each student prepares one short text in the preparation time. After reading the text out loud, the student takes part in a short unprepared conversation on the topic of the text.

This part of the test is recommended to last between **three and three and a half minutes at Higher Tier**, for both elements of the task combined.

Reading aloud of the text (5 marks AO3)

If students self-correct their pronunciation of a word or words, it is the final, corrected, version that is assessed. If students restart the Reading aloud task, it is the final attempt which is marked.

Reading aloud of the text is marked according to the following criteria:

Level	Mark	AO3
5	5	Pronunciation is always or nearly always accurate but there may be an occasional minor error.
4	4	There are a few minor errors in pronunciation.
3	3	There are some minor errors and very occasional major errors in pronunciation.
2	2	There are minor errors and a few major errors in pronunciation.
1	1	There are regular minor and some major errors in pronunciation.
0	0	Does not meet the standard required for Level 1 at this tier.

Notes

- A major error is one which adversely affects communication.
- A minor error is one which does not affect communication.

Marking guidance

These are examples of major errors of pronunciation that affect communication:

- pronunciation which changes the meaning of a word, eg *ville* rendered as *vie*
- third person plural endings of present tense verb forms pronounced eg *ils mangent*
- hard *c* produced for *ç* as in *garçon*
- *g* in *campagne* produced as in *bag*
- final letter of *et* pronounced
- *s* pronounced, or all letters pronounced, in *est*
- *je* produced as *j'ai* or vice versa
- *qu* rendered as *kw* eg in *quand*
- *quinze* produced as *quins* (like *twins*)
- *seize* rendered as *six*
- *dix* rendered as *dicks*.

These are examples of more minor errors of pronunciation that **do not** affect communication:

- initial *i* in words such as *intéressant* produced as in the English word *in*
- aspirated *h*
- *r* produced as in English *very*.

This is not a comprehensive list. It indicates common errors.

Expanded exemplification

Appendix E: Reading Aloud task – Sound symbol correspondences – exemplification

In the chart below, the first column contains the sound symbol correspondences (SSCs), as listed in the specification.

This is not an exhaustive list of sound-spelling correspondences in the French language since, for example, where a letter, or a combination of letters, is pronounced (or a sound spelt) in approximately the same way in French as in English, it is not listed.

A minor pronunciation error is one which does not affect communication.

A major pronunciation error is one which adversely affects communication. It occurs when a word becomes unrecognisable.

A major pronunciation error may result in a different meaning being conveyed. In the table below, two examples of this are indicated in the fourth column by *. It must be accepted that further examples may occur depending on the pronunciation error by the candidate.

SSC	Likely pronunciation errors	Example word(s)	Error type
silent final consonant	Pronunciation of final consonant	sommes effort avez	Major
a	Pronunciation as long 'a'	arriver avec	Major
i / y	Pronunciation as short English 'i' consonant	physique public	Minor
eu	Pronunciation as French 'ou' Pronunciation as French 'au'	deux jeune	Major *
e	Pronunciation as 'ee' in English Pronunciation as 'è'	le de	Major
au / eau / closed o / ô	Pronunciation as in English 'boo'	beau sauf	Major
ou	Pronunciation as in English reduced vowel sound 'euh'	toujours sous	Major
u	Pronunciation as French 'ou'	dur connu	Major
silent final e	Pronunciation of final 'e'	jeune chaque	Major
é (-er, -ez)	Not sounded at all (e) Pronunciation as short English 'e' Pronunciation as 'euh' (-er)	moitié région aller	Major
en / an / em / am	Pronunciation as in English capital 'N'	immédiatement grand	Minor
on / om	Pronunciation as in English name 'Tom'	tomber compétence	Minor
ain / in / aim / im	Pronunciation as short English 'i' Pronunciation as in English capital 'A'	matin faim	Major
è / é / ai	Pronunciation as short English 'i'	collège vrai	Minor
oi / oy	Pronunciation as in English 'boy' Pronunciation without 'w' sound	trois mois	Major

ch	Pronunciation as 'ch' in English 'chair'	chose marché	Major
ç (and soft 'c')	Pronunciation as in English 'k'	façon français	Major
qu	Insertion of 'w' sound	quand que	Major
j	Pronunciation as in English 'justice'	jusque jeunesse	Minor
-tion	Pronunciation as in English 'shone'	construction application	Minor
-ien	Failure to include the 'i' sound	ne...rien canadien	Major
s-liaison	Failure to make liaison when necessary	nos les	Minor
t-liaison	Failure to make liaison when necessary	tout petit	Minor
n-liaison	Failure to make liaison when necessary	bon mon	Minor
x-liaison	Failure to make liaison when necessary	faux nouveaux	Minor
h	Pronunciation of aspirate 'h'	homme hôpital	Minor
un	Pronunciation as in English 'moon'	lundi un	Major
-gn-	Pronunciation as separate 'g' and 'n' sounds Pronunciation of 'n' sound only	campagne gagner	Major
r	Weak 'r' sound, as in English	rester comprendre	Minor
open eu / œu	Pronunciation as in English 'or'	leur cœur	Major
open o	(Unlikely to be a problem for English speakers)	porte alors	Minor
-s-	Pronunciation as in English 'z'	chanson sensible	Minor
th	Pronunciation as in English 'think'	bibliothèque thème	Major
-ill- / -ille	Pronunciation of 'i' rather than a 'y' sound	brouillard famille	Major
-aill- / ail	Pronunciation of 'i' rather than a 'y' sound	taille travail	Major

**No surprises – major
errors =
unrecognisable
Or
* different meaning**

Marksheet used by examiners

Reading Aloud Text Nº:

Task	Errors (Tick)	
	Minor	Major
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		
7		

Max mark 5

Total:

Examiner report



GCSE French

8652/SF Paper 2 Speaking, Foundation tier

Report on the examination

Version: 1.0
June 2026



GCSE French

8652/SH Paper 2 Speaking, Higher tier

Report on the examination

Version: 1.0
June 2026

Foundation

Reading aloud task

Overall, learners were very well-prepared for the reading aloud task and it was clear that a great deal of effort had been made to train learners to enunciate clearly and at a good pace. Some learners pleasingly self-corrected when necessary and many scored well.

Some learners rushed through the task and read the text too quickly; this invariably led to more errors being made and made it challenging for the examiner to follow. Learners should be encouraged to read the text slowly and clearly.

Liaisons were sometimes omitted but they were often well known and produced.

Certain errors were very common and with further practice should be relatively straightforward to eliminate. For example, an aspirate /h/ sound and an é sound at the end of an -er verb that

did not end in é or er were frequently heard. The /ʃ/ sound, heard in the English pronunciation of 'pollution' and 'special', also appeared.

Learners struggled with third-person plural verb endings, often pronouncing -ent rather than leaving the ending silent. Other common errors were j'ai for je and vice versa; le, la and les were often confused and, similarly, de and des were treated as interchangeable. Famille and ville were often mispronounced, whilst words that were identical to or closely resembled a word in English were often poorly pronounced. Learners frequently pronounced silent final consonants.

It is also worth noting that many learners who, in the reading aloud of the text task, carefully enunciated sounds often demonstrated a quite different pronunciation elsewhere. Reinforcement of accuracy in this area could help increase marks across the test.

In addition to the error types specifically mentioned above, please see below for the words most commonly mispronounced in each text.

Reading aloud task 1

Agréable, vivre, loin, campagne, hiver, beaux, villages

Reading aloud task 2

Stars, leurs, salaires, belles, voitures, heureux, sans, prend

Reading aloud task 3

Journée, tôt, intéressants, reçois, trop, quel, rentre, manger

Reading aloud task 4

Petite, sœur, sort, quartier, voisins, sympas, religieux

Reading aloud task 5

Quelque chose, célèbre, quatorze, juillet, organise, beaux, défilés, pleins

Reading aloud task 6

Fille, passe, heures, jeux, intelligente soucis

Higher

Reading aloud task

Overall, learners were very well-prepared for the reading aloud task and it was clear that a great deal of effort had been made to train learners to enunciate clearly and at a good pace. Some learners pleasingly self-corrected when necessary and some superb performances were heard.

Some learners rushed through the task and read the text too quickly; this invariably led to more errors being made and made it challenging for the examiner to follow. Learners should be encouraged to read the text slowly and clearly.

The criteria of the mark scheme meant that any major error restricted the maximum mark available for award at Higher tier to three.

Liaisons were sometimes omitted but, often, they were well known and produced.

Certain errors were common and, with further practice, should be relatively straightforward to eliminate. For example, an aspirate /h/ sound and a é sound at the end of an -er verb that did not end in é or er were frequently heard. The /ʃ/ sound, heard in the English pronunciation of 'pollution' and 'special', also appeared.

Learners struggled with third-person plural verb endings, often pronouncing -ent rather than leaving the ending silent. Other common errors were j'ai for je and vice versa; le, la and les were often confused and, similarly, de and des were treated as interchangeable. Ville was often mispronounced, whilst words that were identical to or closely resembled a word in English were often poorly pronounced. Learners frequently sounded final consonants that should have been silent.

It is also worth noting that many learners who, in the reading aloud of the text task, carefully enunciated sounds often demonstrated a quite different pronunciation elsewhere. Reinforcement of accuracy in this area could help increase marks across the test.

In addition to the error types specifically mentioned above, please see below for the words most commonly mispronounced in each text.

Reading aloud 7

Rencontre, continue, frites, temps, attendent

Reading aloud 8

Roi, société, étaient, viennent, sociaux, suivent

Reading aloud 9

Essentielle, communication, choses, ligne, courses

Reading aloud 10

Vu, historiques, quartiers, souffrent, eau, nombreuses

Reading aloud 11

Seize, femme, s'entend, étaient, tâches, quotidiennes

Reading aloud 12

Veux, intention, beaucoup, tard, efforts, carrière, succès, essentiel

Lessons learnt (1)

Helen to Copilot ...!

Please write a checklist for future candidates to help them prepare for reading aloud tasks.

Reading aloud task Overall, learners were very well-prepared for the reading aloud task and it was clear that a great deal of effort had been made to train learners to enunciate clearly and at a good pace. Some learners pleasingly self-corrected when necessary and some superb performances were heard. Some learners rushed through the task and read the text too quickly; this invariably led to more errors being made and made it challenging for the examiner to follow. Learners should be encouraged to read the text slowly and clearly. The criteria of the mark scheme meant that any major error restricted the maximum mark available for award at Higher tier to three. Liaisons were sometimes omitted but, often, they were well known and produced. Certain errors were common and, with further practice, should be relatively straightforward to eliminate. For example, an aspirate /h/ sound and a é sound at the end of an -er verb that did not end in é or er were frequently heard. The /f/ sound, heard in the English pronunciation of 'pollution' and 'special', also appeared. Learners struggled with third-person plural verb endings, often pronouncing -ent rather than leaving the ending silent. Other common errors were j'ai for je and vice versa; le, la and les were often confused and, similarly, de and des were treated as interchangeable. Ville was often mispronounced, whilst words that were identical to or closely resembled a word in English were often poorly pronounced. Learners frequently sounded final consonants that should have been silent. It is also worth noting that many learners who, in the reading aloud of the text task, carefully enunciated sounds often demonstrated a quite different pronunciation elsewhere. Reinforcement of accuracy in this area could help increase marks across the test. In addition to the error types specifically mentioned

Here is a clear, practical checklist for future candidates preparing for the reading aloud task. It is written so teachers can hand it directly to learners.

Reading Aloud Task – Candidate Preparation Checklist

1. Pace and clarity

- Read slowly and clearly – never rush.
- Aim for a steady, controlled pace so the examiner can follow easily.
- Pause briefly at natural breaks (commas, full stops).

2. Enunciation

- Practise clear articulation of all sounds.
- Make sure every word is pronounced deliberately, not blurred together.
- If you notice a mistake, self-correct confidently – this is viewed positively.

3. Avoid major errors

- Remember: at Higher tier, any major pronunciation error limits the maximum mark to 3.
- Focus on accuracy over speed.

4. Liaisons

- Use liaisons where required (e.g., les amis un enfant).
- Practise spotting them in advance when reading the text.

5. Common pronunciation pitfalls

Check these carefully:

- Aspirate h – do not link before h words (e.g., le harcèlement).
- -er endings – do not add an é sound unless the word ends in é or er.
- English /f/ sound – avoid English-style pronunciation in words like pollution or spécial.
- Third-person plural endings – -ent is silent.
- j'ai / je – do not confuse them.
- le / la / les – practise distinguishing them clearly.
- de / des – avoid treating them as interchangeable.
- ville – practise correct pronunciation.
- Words similar to English – avoid English pronunciation (e.g., important, restaurant, animal).
- Final consonants – remember they are often silent (e.g., grand, petit, beaucoup).

6. Consistency

- Keep pronunciation accurate throughout the whole speaking test, not only in the reading aloud section.
- Aim for the same careful enunciation in conversation and role-play.

7. Practice strategies

- Read aloud daily, even short paragraphs.
- Record yourself and listen back for rushed sections or unclear sounds.
- Highlight tricky words in the text before the exam and practise them separately.
- Work with a partner or teacher to check liaisons and silent endings.

8. Confidence and control

- Take a breath before starting.
- Keep your pace steady even if you feel nervous.
- Remember: clear, accurate reading always scores better than fast reading.

If you'd like, Helen, I can also turn this into:

- a one-page printable classroom poster,
- a student self-assessment sheet,
- or a revision bookmark with the key pronunciation reminders.

Lessons learnt (2)

Please extract all info from this report to list (a) what successful teacher examiners do (b) what successful candidates do. Overall, learners were very well-prepared for the reading aloud task and it was clear that a great deal of effort had been made to train learners to enunciate clearly and at a good pace. Some learners pleasingly self-corrected when necessary and some superb performances were heard. Some learners rushed through the task and read the text too quickly; this invariably led to more errors being made and made it challenging for the examiner to follow. Learners should be encouraged to read the text slowly and clearly. The criteria of the mark scheme meant that any major error restricted the maximum mark available for award at Higher tier to three. Liaisons were sometimes omitted but, often, they were well known and produced. Certain errors were common and, with further practice, should be relatively straightforward to eliminate. For example, an aspirate /h/ sound and a é sound at the end of an -er verb that did not end in é or er were frequently heard. The /ʃ/ sound, heard in the English pronunciation of 'pollution' and 'special', also appeared. Learners struggled with third-person plural verb endings, often pronouncing -ent rather than leaving the ending silent. Other common errors were j'ai for je and vice versa; le, la and les were often confused and, similarly, de and des were treated as interchangeable. Ville was often mispronounced, whilst words that were identical to or closely resembled a word in English were often poorly pronounced. Learners frequently sounded final consonants that should have been silent. It is also worth noting that many learners who, in the reading aloud of the text task, carefully enunciated sounds often demonstrated a quite different pronunciation elsewhere. Reinforcement of accuracy in this area could help increase marks across the test. In addition to the error types specifically mentioned above, please see below for the words most commonly mispronounced in each text.

Teacher + candidate actions ..

AI Copilot:

Here is a **clean, structured extraction** of *everything* the report says about:

(a) what successful teacher-examiners do

(b) what successful candidates do

Only points explicitly stated or directly implied in the text are included.

(a) What successful teacher-examiners do

Prepare learners effectively

- Train learners to **enunciate clearly** and read at a good, controlled pace.
- Provide **extensive practice** so learners know common liaison patterns and typical pronunciation pitfalls.

Manage pace and clarity

- Encourage learners to **read slowly and clearly**, avoiding rushing.
- Ensure learners understand that reading too fast leads to errors and makes the text harder for the examiner to follow.

Support accuracy across the whole test

- Reinforce accurate pronunciation **not only in reading aloud**, but throughout the entire speaking test.
- Help learners practise eliminating common, predictable errors (aspirate *h*, incorrect *é* endings, sounding final consonants, etc.).

Focus learners on mark-scheme implications

- Make learners aware that **major errors cap the maximum mark** at Higher tier.
- Emphasise the importance of accuracy in pronunciation and detail.

Provide targeted pronunciation practice

- Work on:
 - Liaisons
 - Third-person plural silent endings
 - Distinguishing *j'ai* vs *je*
 - Correct use of *le / la / les* and *de / des*
 - Avoiding English-influenced sounds (e.g., /ʃ/ in *pollution*, *special*)
 - Correct pronunciation of *ville*
 - Avoiding pronunciation of final consonants

(b) What successful candidates do

Read clearly and at an appropriate pace

- Enunciate clearly.
- Maintain a good, steady pace.
- Avoid rushing, which leads to errors and reduces clarity.

Self-correct effectively

- Notice mistakes and **self-correct** promptly.
- Demonstrate control and awareness of accurate pronunciation.

Produce accurate pronunciation

- Use correct liaisons.
- Pronounce aspirate *h* correctly.
- Avoid adding an *é* sound to -er verbs that do not end in *é* or *er*.
- Avoid English /ʃ/ sounds in words like *pollution* or *special*.
- Keep third-person plural endings silent.
- Distinguish *j'ai* from *je* accurately.
- Use *le / la / les* and *de / des* correctly.
- Pronounce *ville* accurately.
- Avoid pronouncing final consonants that should be silent.
- Pronounce English-lookalike words correctly rather than defaulting to English phonetics.

Maintain consistency

- Apply accurate pronunciation **throughout the test**, not only in the reading-aloud section.

Avoid major errors

- Understand that major pronunciation errors **limit the maximum mark** at Higher tier.
- Aim for accuracy to maximise scoring potential.

WRITING EXAM BOARD INFORMATION

Example: Edexcel Writing

Specification + SAMS + Commentaries

What did we know already?

Tasks –very similar

- Photo description (F) 2108: 20-30 words; 2026: 4 sentences)
- 40/50 word (F)
- 80/90 word (overlap - F+H)
- 130/150 word (H)
- Translation

Tasks – different

- Use of English for rubrics and instructions
- Slight changes in no. of BP and words required (Q2 was 4 BP, now 3)
- Choice of 2 for 40/50 word

Content :

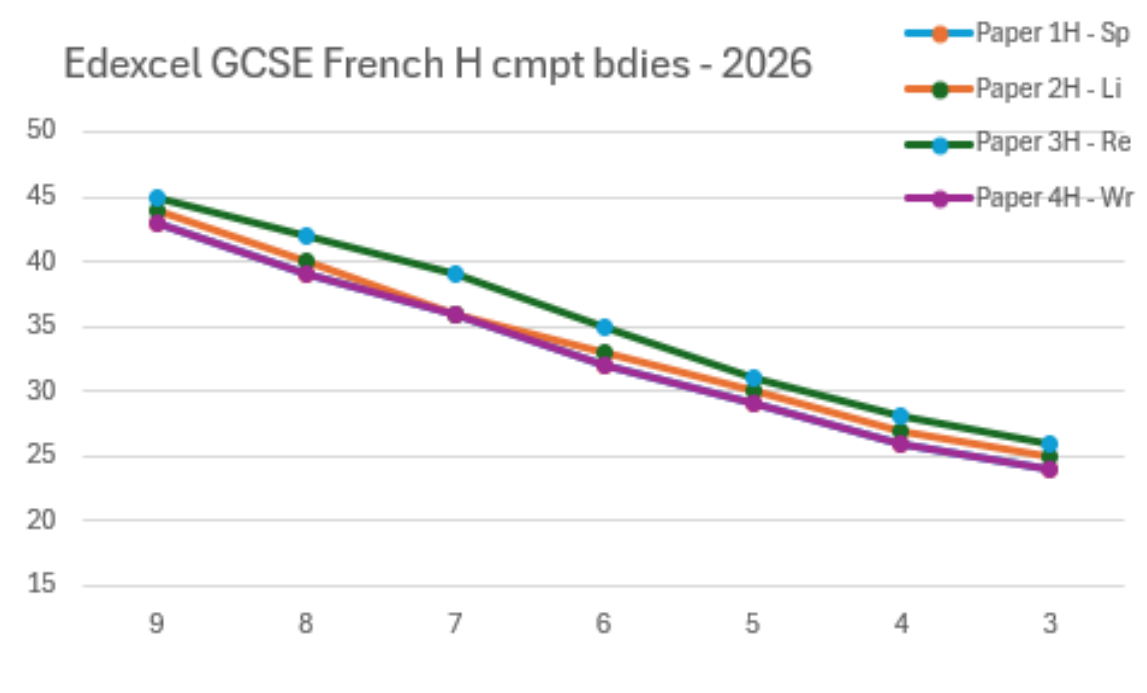
- Themes / Topics re-named, reorganised
- Defined vocab, phonics and grammar [esp relevant for translation]

Mark schemes

- Similar wording for criteria
- Less weighting for accuracy – AO2 (communication) : AO3 (grammar) = 36:14.)(2018 spec F 32:28; H 34:26)
- Requirement 9e for translation by DfE subject content regulations: **‘an appropriate and sufficient rendering of the meaning of the original language’**

What can we learn now?

- **Results of component vs all elements** - can be compared with national mean to discover pattern – e.g. how papers compare at our centre with how papers compare nationally re: notional component boundaries



What can we learn now?

- **Results of question level** (can be compared with national mean to discover pattern)
- **See Results Plus**

What can we learn now?

- Question papers
- Mark schemes
- Examiner report

All Downloadable from Results Plus

QP Writing: Edexcel Higher 2026

Q1: 80/90 words

- a – Friends family description, opinions, recent activity, future activity
- b – Eating – likes, opinions, recent, future

Q2: 13-150 words

- a – films – like / pros and cons / recent / next time
- b- school –description / pros and cons of uniform / recent event / plans

Q3: Translation – neighbourhood, environment – present / past / future

Any
surprises?
Equal /
unequal
demand
across the
options?

Mark scheme: SAM - Q1

2 examples
given in SAM of
15/18

and

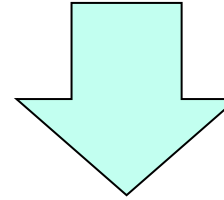
10/18

Note reference
to 'Additional
guidance –
Exemplification
of the mark
scheme' – live
scripts issued at
standardisation

Question 1 – Higher tier (18 marks)

There are two mark grids to be applied to this question:

- AO2: Response to stimulus
- AO3: Linguistic knowledge and accuracy.



This question contains four bullet points that form part of the task. Examiners **must** use the *Additional guidance*, the *Exemplification of the mark scheme*, exemplification of live scripts issued at standardisation and their professional judgement before deciding on a mark.

Students are expected to produce 80–90 words for this task. The suggested word count is designed to guide students and they will not be penalised for writing more or fewer words than recommended. All work produced must be marked.

AO2: Response to stimulus		AO3: Linguistic knowledge and accuracy	
Mark	Descriptor	Mark	Descriptor
11-13	• All four bullet points addressed • Frequent development of ideas • Response is comprehensible; an occasional message may be unclear.	5	• Some variety of vocabulary and grammatical structures, some extended sentences; occasional complex language • Generally successful use of three timeframes • Generally accurate language: some minor errors, there may be an occasional major error.
8-10	• Three or more bullet points addressed • Some development of ideas • Response is generally comprehensible; some messages may be unclear/difficult to understand immediately.	3-4	• Occasional variety of vocabulary and grammatical structures; occasionally extended sentences • Some successful use of at least two timeframes • Some accurate language; mostly minor errors with some major errors.
5-7	• Two or more bullet points addressed • Occasional, brief development of ideas • Some parts of response are comprehensible; the message sometimes breaks down.	1-2	• Limited variety of vocabulary and grammatical structures; short, simple sentences • Limited success with timeframes • Limited accuracy in the language; frequent errors both major and minor.
1-4	• One or more bullet point addressed • Little or no extra detail added to ideas • Limited parts of response are comprehensible; the message often breaks down.	0	• No rewardable material.
0	• No rewardable material.		

Mark scheme: SAM - Q2

Question 2 – Higher tier (22 marks)

There are two mark grids to be applied to this question:

- AO2: Response to stimulus
- AO3: Linguistic knowledge and accuracy.

This question contains four bullet points that form part of the task. Examiners **must** use the *Additional guidance*, the *Exemplification of the mark scheme*, exemplification of live scripts issued at standardisation and their professional judgement before deciding on a mark.

Students are expected to produce 130–150 words for this task. The suggested word count is designed to guide students and they will not be penalised for writing more or fewer words than recommended. All work produced must be marked.

No examples in SAM – but there were in training sessions

AO2: Response to stimulus		AO3: Linguistic knowledge and accuracy	
Mark	Descriptor	Mark	Descriptor
14-17	• All four bullet points addressed • Consistent development of ideas • Response is easily comprehensible; it is rare that the message is not immediately clear.	4-5	• A wide variety of vocabulary and grammatical structures, frequent extended sentences; frequent complex language • Consistently successful use of three timeframes • Consistently accurate language: any errors are minor.
11-13	• All four bullet points addressed • Frequent development of ideas • Response is comprehensible; the occasional message may be unclear.	2-3	• Some variety of vocabulary and grammatical structures, some extended sentences; some complex language • Generally successful use of at least two timeframes • Generally accurate language; mostly minor errors, occasional major errors.
8-10	• Three or more bullet points addressed • Some development of ideas • Response is generally comprehensible; some messages may be unclear/ difficult to understand immediately.	1	• Occasional variety of vocabulary and grammatical structures; occasionally extended sentences; there may be occasional use of complex language • Occasional success with timeframes • Some accurate language; frequent errors, some of them major.
5-7	• Two or more bullet points addressed • Occasional, brief development of ideas • Some parts of the response are comprehensible; the message sometimes breaks down.	0	• No rewardable material.
1-4	• One or more bullet point addressed • Limited development of ideas, any extra detail is likely to be very brief • Limited parts of the response are comprehensible; the message often breaks down.		
0	• No rewardable material.		

Mark scheme: SAM - Q3

Question 3 – Higher tier translation (10 marks)

For this question, students' work is marked by Pearson using assessment criteria given in two mark grids:

- AO2: Response to stimulus
- AO3: Linguistic knowledge and accuracy.

The Response to stimulus grid (AO2) assesses how appropriately the meaning of the original language is transferred. Any appropriate wording is rewarded. The linguistic knowledge and accuracy grid (AO3) assesses the accuracy of the target language. Examiners **must** use the *Additional guidance*, the *Exemplification of the mark scheme*, exemplification of live scripts issued at standardisation and their professional judgement before deciding on a mark.

AO2: Response to stimulus		AO3: Linguistic knowledge and accuracy	
Mark	Descriptor	Mark	Descriptor
5-6	The meaning of the original language is consistently and appropriately transferred; any lack of clarity is rare.	4	Vocabulary and grammatical structures are consistently accurate; any errors are minor.
3-4	The meaning of most of the original language is appropriately transferred; the occasional message may be unclear or incomplete.	3	Vocabulary and grammatical structures are generally accurate; minor errors occur, major errors are rare.
1-2	The meaning of some parts of the original language is appropriately transferred; the message sometimes breaks down or is incomplete.	2	Vocabulary and grammatical structures are sometimes accurate; errors include some major errors.
0	No rewardable material.	1	Vocabulary and grammatical structures are limited in accuracy; frequent errors occur, both major and minor.
		0	No rewardable material.

3 examples
(3/10, 7/10
and 8/10)

Marking Guidance - SAM

Sample responses to tasks:

Q1 – 2 examples (15/18 + 10/18)

Q2 – No examples

Q3 - 3 examples (3/10, 7/10 and 8/10)

Additional examples were given in training sessions.

Latest version of SAMs (July 2025) had additional guidance on definitions e.g. minor / major error.

Note reference to 'Additional guidance – Exemplification of the mark scheme' – live scripts issued at standardisation

Examiner report

59 pages - Report, Scripts and commentaries

- **A report on each question often including ‘tips for Candidates’**
- **3 marked scripts with commentaries for each question:**
 - Q1a (80-90 word) 15/18, 13/18, 11/18
 - Q1b (80-90 word) 16/18, 15/18, 10/18
 - Q2a (130-150 word) 16/22, 17/22, 11/22
 - Q2b (130-150 word) 22/22, 15/22, 11/22
 - Q3 (Translation) 10/10, 7/10, 4/10

 **Pearson**

**Examiners' Report
Summer 2026**

GCSE French 1FR1 4H

ResultsPlus

Lessons learnt - overall intro

Introduction

Pearson Edexcel GCSE French (1FR1/4H): Higher Tier Writing Paper Overview

This report evaluates candidate performance in the Pearson Edexcel GCSE French Higher Tier Writing Paper (1FR1/4H). As a linear assessment worth 50 marks, this component constitutes 25% of the total qualification and carries an examination duration of 1 hour 20 minutes. The paper is designed to target two principal Assessment Objectives (AO): AO2, understanding and responding to written language, and AO3, demonstrating knowledge and accurate application of grammar and vocabulary.

The paper features three distinct questions designed to progressively increase in cognitive and linguistic demand, with each question set within one of the specification's five core thematic contexts. All instruction rubrics and stimulus prompts are delivered in English, and candidates are prohibited from using dictionaries. Question (Q)01 and Q02 offer candidates an autonomous choice between two optional contextual prompts, while Q03 is a compulsory translation task.

The structure of the paper is defined by the following question parameters:

- Q01: Candidates write a text of 80–90 words, worth 18 marks. This serves as a crossover question, doubling as Q03 on the Foundation Tier paper. To access the top mark bands, candidates must answer all four bullet points and include three different timeframes generally successfully. They must also show frequent development and some variety of vocabulary and grammatical structures, with occasional complex language.
- Q02: Candidates produce a longer text of 130–150 words, worth 22 marks. To access the top mark bands, candidates need to address all four bullet points, offer a well-developed and wider-ranging response with assured use of language, and demonstrate a variety of vocabulary and complex grammatical structures alongside a competent use of multiple timeframes.
- Q03: A fixed-response translation of a short passage from English into the target language, worth 10 marks. This compulsory task evaluates accuracy across a range of timeframes, complex grammatical structures, and advanced vocabulary.

Most candidates accessed the paper successfully, managing to answer the majority of the bullet points across the tasks. There was a notable increase in completion rates compared with previous series', with far fewer blank or significantly brief scripts, indicating that the tasks were highly accessible to the cohort.

The vast majority of candidates produced a sufficient volume of writing for both extended responses. Many candidates chose to write more than the suggested word count.

Overall, the 90–word responses demonstrated greater linguistic control than the 150–word responses. While candidates achieved some success with tenses, particularly with the future tense, the past tense remained a primary area where consistency was lacking.

Inconsistent grammatical knowledge and application across the cohort often prevented candidates from accessing the highest mark bands, because minor errors in accents, word order, and gender agreement were frequent throughout.

However, the current assessment framework proved highly encouraging, rewarding positive communication effectively, despite these inaccuracies.

The ambition shown by candidates was noted positively. Many attempted a range of time frames, justified opinions, and complex structures.

A large number of candidates used *Quel dommage!* as a means of expressing an opinion. Although generally appropriate, greater variety in opinion phrases would have enabled candidates to demonstrate a broader range of language.

Overall, the strongest responses combined accurate grammar with a varied range of vocabulary and more complex structures from the vocabulary list.

Guidance for Teachers

While the present and future tenses are generally more secure, the formation of the past tense remains a primary area for grammatical development across the cohort. Candidates frequently compromised the clarity of their writing by omitting the auxiliary verb in the perfect tense or by confusing the simple future with the conditional.

Furthermore, candidates often attempted to integrate high-level, memorised complex language, but a lack of control over underlying basic vocabulary and core verb conjugations can create a mismatch in quality. Minor slips in word order, basic gender agreement, and accent placement remain frequent, and candidates are encouraged to build in time to check these thoroughly.

Reinforce Past Tense Mechanics: Focus targeted teaching on the structural requirements of the perfect tense, specifically the inclusion of auxiliary verbs and the accurate formation of irregular past participles.

Address High-Frequency Vocabulary Blends: Address common lexical confusions early, such as *cheveux* versus *chevaux*, *préféré* versus *préfère*, and proper terms for advantages and disadvantages.

Syntactical Drills: Practise the translation of relative clauses, prepositions, and modal verb pairings to ensure candidates feel secure when dealing with structures in the translation question.

Tiering Decisions: Carefully review candidate performance on extended tasks, ensuring candidates are entered for the tier that best matches their consistent level of grammatical accuracy.

Lessons learnt - overall intro – checklist

What successful teacher-examiners / teachers do

- Ensure secure tense teaching, especially past: Focus targeted teaching on the perfect tense, including use of auxiliary verbs and accurate irregular past participles.
- Strengthen core grammar before complex language: Reinforce basic verb conjugations, word order, gender agreement and accent placement so that high-level memorised language is properly controlled.
- Address common vocabulary confusions early: Work explicitly on high-frequency pairs such as cheveux / chevaux, préféré / préfère, and accurate terms for advantages / disadvantages.
- Practise key structures systematically: Use syntactical drills on relative clauses, prepositions and modal verb pairings, especially for the translation question.
- Train checking habits: Encourage candidates to build in time to check accents, gender, word order and tense formation thoroughly.
- Make careful tiering decisions: Review performance on extended tasks and enter candidates for the tier that matches their consistent level of grammatical accuracy.
- Promote ambition with control: Support candidates to attempt a range of time frames, justified opinions and complex structures, but with secure underlying grammar and vocabulary.

AI-generated

Read intro yourself for YOUR context

- The **formation of the past tense** remains a primary area for grammatical development across the cohort - omitting the auxiliary verb
- Confusion simple **future / conditional**
- **Basic** vocab and core conjugation **rather than high level memorised**
- Need to **get them to make time to check** word order, gender agreement, placement of accents
- Address common **lexical confusions** early : cheveux.aux, préféré, préfère
- **Drill Structures for translation** - e.g. relative clauses, prepositions, and modal verb pairings
- **Tiering** – note that grammatical accuracy key for decision.

Q1a Tips from the examiner:

Tips for Candidates:

- Revise the distinction between cheveux and chevaux carefully
- Apply French word order rules when expressing possession, avoiding English structures for birthdays
- Ensure adjectives agree in gender and number with the person being described
- Write a separate paragraph for each bullet point, to ensure all parts of the questionnaire addressed systematically

Q1b Tips from the examiner:

Tips for Candidates:

- Read every bullet point thoroughly, to ensure no part of the prompt is omitted
- Include both the companion and the food item when describing future dining plans
- Maintain the secure use of basic past tense formulas like j'ai mangé
- Review the correct use of partitive articles when discussing food and drink

BUT - if using the GCSE 26 asa mock – perhaps design generic tips ...

Lessons learnt - Q1 – ‘exam-safe’!

1. Structure your writing clearly

Write one paragraph per bullet point.

Avoid merging ideas (e.g., description + opinion).

Check that no bullet point is missed, especially those requiring a specific person or detail.

2. Use accurate verb forms

Use correct third-person forms when describing someone else.

Avoid switching to first-person plural when the bullet requires third-person.

Use secure past tense structures with correct auxiliary verbs.

3. Show control of multiple timeframes

Use:

Present

Past

Near future

Simple future

Imperfect (e.g., contrasting past and present habits)

Avoid errors such as uninflected past participles.

4. Maintain grammatical accuracy

Ensure:

Adjective agreement

Correct prepositions

Accurate accent placement

Correct word order

Secure use of articles, especially partitive forms

5. Use vocabulary precisely

Avoid confusing similar-looking words.

Distinguish clearly between subject pronouns and English possessive ideas.

Use appropriate vocabulary for descriptions, opinions, and food without relying on English-influenced guesses.

6. Provide developed, relevant content

Give clear preferences, opinions with reasons, and descriptions.

Describe a recent event using secure past tense.

When asked about future plans, include who you will be with, not just what you will do.

When describing someone else, ensure the actions and opinions relate to that person, not yourself.

7. For top-band AO3 performance

Show:

Consistent grammatical control across timeframes.

Accurate past participles.

Secure noun–adjective agreements.

Variety of complex structures used accurately.

Generic tips if using ‘26 for mock ...

Lessons learnt - Q2 – pick out issues from YOUR reading

e.g. Big problem = pushing them to artificial higher structures. Need to spend longer on basic. Really noticeable how over-ambition can reduce marks ... e.g. je dirais que often misused....

Report:

“To progress to the top mark band for AO3, candidates must ensure that structural complexity is supported by accurate execution. While it is excellent to attempt extended subordinate clauses, candidates should avoid major structural slips such as dropping relative pronouns (un film s'appelle) and making phonetically invented spelling errors (equitant instead of excitant).Careful checking of basic adjectival agreements (ils sont excitant) is also required to minimise error density.”

Q2a + Q2b Tips from examiners

- Practise the correct French terminology for advantages and disadvantages, avoiding literal anglicisms like ~~les~~-advantages
- Avoid over-extending sentences, focussing instead on clear, accurate verb conjugations
- Ensure the auxiliary verb is always included when forming the perfect tense
- Familiarise yourself with ~~film~~-genre vocabulary to ensure smooth descriptions
- Ensure you know how to give a 'pro' and a 'con' by using the correct vocabulary

- Elaborate on descriptions of events by stating exactly what actions you performed, using varied pronouns
- Learn specific topic vocabulary for ~~school~~-uniform-characteristics, avoiding English phonetic spellings like uncomfortable
- Focus future tense descriptions on ~~career~~-or-~~educational~~-paths to ensure maximum relevance
- Select a specific ~~school~~-event to describe, avoiding daily routine descriptions
- Ensure you know how to give a 'pro' and a 'con' by using the correct vocabulary

Adapt? Eg. 'Ensure you know specific key topic vocabulary' (And list per topic)

Lessons learnt - Q3

Overall, translation skills were average, with grammatical application acting as the primary barrier to higher marks.

Candidates must take care to include accents (*collège, dernière*) and to check noun genders (*une organisation*).

Q3 Tips from the examiner:

Tips for Candidates:

- Master the present and perfect tense conjugations of high-frequency irregular verbs like voir
- Do not leave blanks or use English words, if a specific word like **sauver** is forgotten, use a known alternative such as **aider** or **protéger**
- Pay close attention to whether an infinitive or a conjugated verb is required after prepositions or modal structures

Generic tips if using '26 for mock ... change the example to one which is not in the actual paper

	AO2: Response to stimulus		AO3: Linguistic knowledge and accuracy
	Descriptor	Mark	Descriptor
5-6	The meaning of the original language is consistently and appropriately transferred; any lack of clarity is rare.	4	Vocabulary and grammatical structures are consistently accurate; any errors are minor.
3-4	The meaning of most of the original language is appropriately transferred; the occasional message may be unclear or incomplete.	3	Vocabulary and grammatical structures are generally accurate; minor errors occur, major errors are rare.
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0	No rewardable material.	1	Vocabulary and grammatical structures are limited in accuracy; frequent errors occur, both major and minor.

TBC! [Next step - look at Foundation...]

- There was a notable **improvement in completion** rates this series, compared to final series of the legacy specification, with candidates engaging productively with the tasks.
- The vast majority produced a **sufficient volume** of writing, and many exceeded the suggested word limits.
- Whilst there were many highly successful responses, **grammatical accuracy remained the key differentiator**. Tense ambiguity, particularly regarding the perfect tense, and minor errors in word order, spelling, and agreements were common across the cohort.
- Nonetheless, the assessment framework rewards **positive communication** effectively, and candidates should be commended for their performance.

Results and marks in more detail (AQA, Pearson)

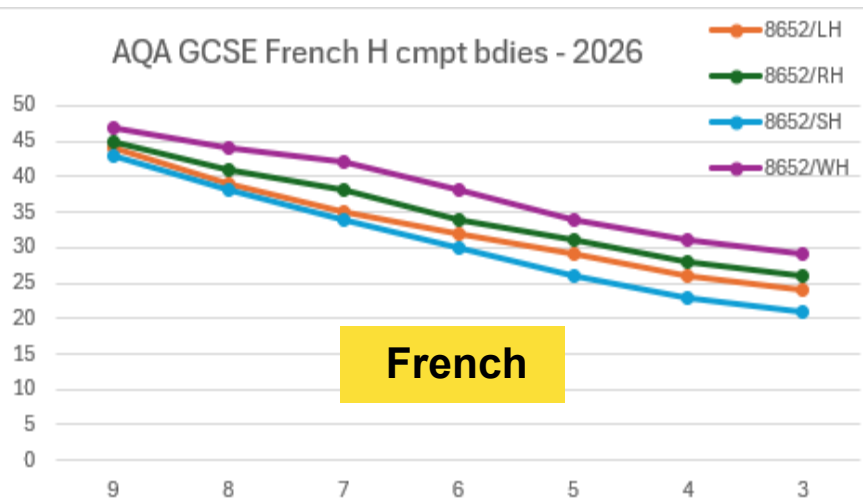
AQA notional component boundaries - H

- Note Speaking line (cyan) is similar across Fr, Gn, Sp, but the average mark varies because of different cohort / skill profile

French		Max	Grade boundaries						
Comp/Unit Code	Component	Max	9	8	7	6	5	4	3
8652/LH	FRENCH LISTENING TEST TIER H	50	44	39	35	32	29	26	24
8652/RH	FRENCH READING TEST TIER H	50	45	41	38	34	31	28	26
8652/SH	FRENCH SPEAKING TEST TIER H	50	43	38	34	30	26	23	21
8652/WH	FRENCH WRITING TEST TIER H	50	47	44	42	38	34	31	29

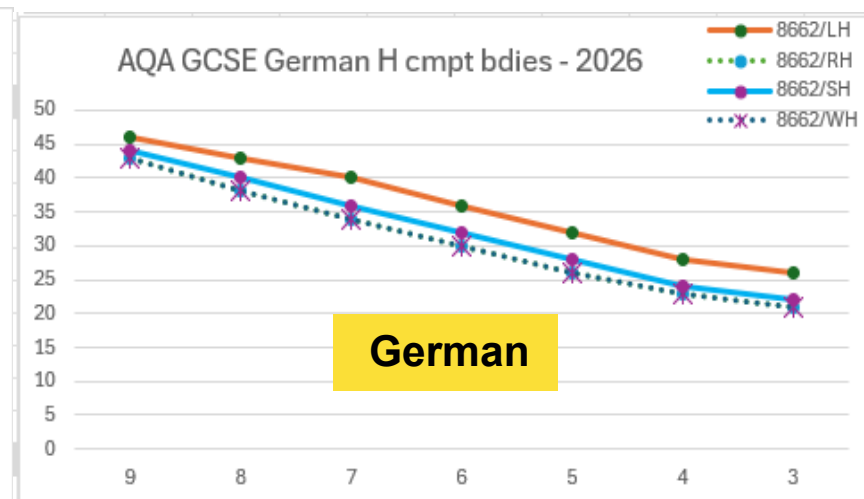
German		Max	Grade boundaries						
Comp/Unit Code	Component	Max	9	8	7	6	5	4	3
8662/LH	GERMAN LISTENING TEST TIER H	50	46	43	40	36	32	28	26
8662/RH	GERMAN READING TEST TIER H	50	43	38	34	30	26	23	21
8662/SH	GERMAN SPEAKING TEST TIER H	50	44	40	36	32	28	24	22
8662/WH	GERMAN WRITING TEST TIER H	50	43	38	34	30	26	23	21

Spanish		Max	Grade boundaries						
Comp/Unit Code	Component	Max	9	8	7	6	5	4	3
8692/LH	SPANISH LISTENING TEST TIER H	50	43	38	33	29	25	22	20
8692/RH	SPANISH READING TEST TIER H	50	43	37	32	28	25	22	20
8692/SH	SPANISH SPEAKING TEST TIER H	50	44	39	35	31	27	23	21
8692/WH	SPANISH WRITING TEST TIER H	50	44	39	35	31	27	23	21



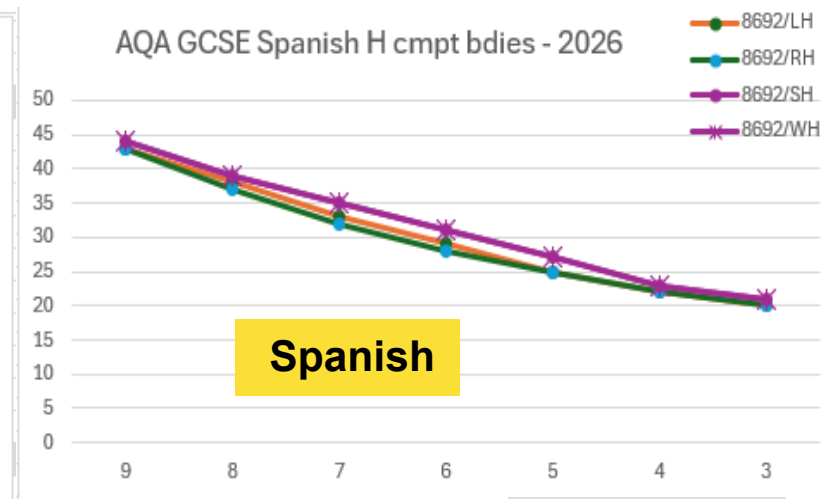
Ave mark / 50
 Listening: 36.1
 Reading: 39.6
 Speaking: 34.6
 Writing: 42.6

8652/LH
 8652/RH
 8652/SH
 8652/WH



Ave mark / 50
 Listening: 33.0
 Reading: 33.6
 Speaking: 33.7
 Writing: 30.9

8662/LH
 8662/RH
 8662/SH
 8662/WH



Ave mark / 50
 Listening: 35.6
 Reading: 31
 Speaking: 37.3
 Writing: 37.5

8692/LH
 8692/RH
 8692/SH
 8692/WH

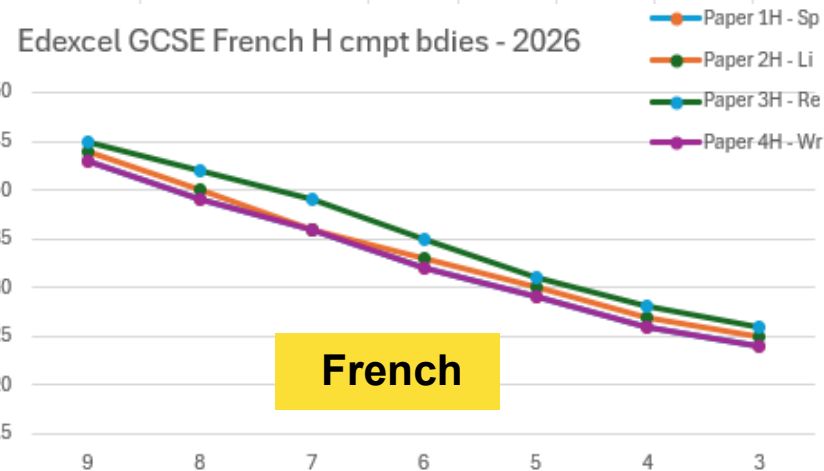
Pearson notional component boundaries - H

- Note Speaking line (cyan) is similar across Fr, Gn, Sp, but the average mark varies because of different cohort / skill profile

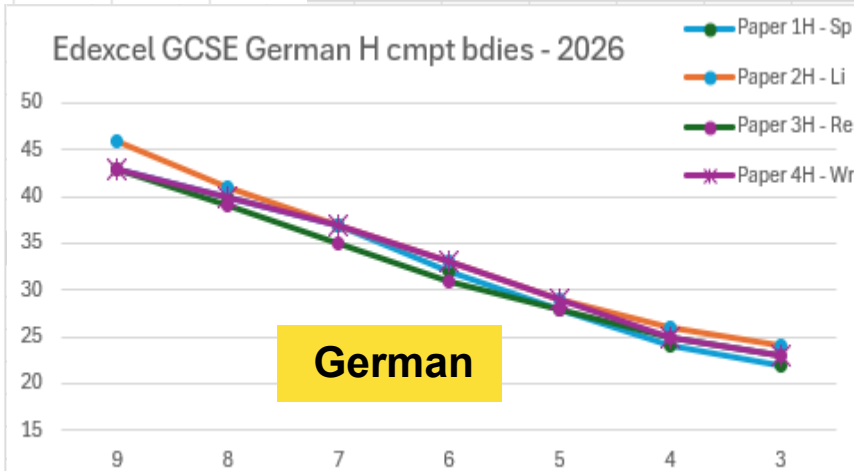
Comp/Unit Code	French	Max Mar	9	8	7	6	5	4	3
Paper 1H - Sp French (Higher)		50	43	39	36	32	29	26	24
Paper 2H - Li French (Higher)		50	44	40	36	33	30	27	25
Paper 3H - Re French (Higher)		50	45	42	39	35	31	28	26
Paper 4H - Wr French (Higher)		50	43	39	36	32	29	26	24

Comp/Unit Code	Spanish	Max Mar	9	8	7	6	5	4	3
Paper 1H - Sp Spanish (Higher)		50	44	40	37	33	29	26	24
Paper 2H - Li Spanish (Higher)		50	46	42	39	35	31	28	26
Paper 3H - Re Spanish (Higher)		50	46	42	39	35	31	27	25
Paper 4H - Wr Spanish (Higher)		50	43	40	37	33	30	27	25

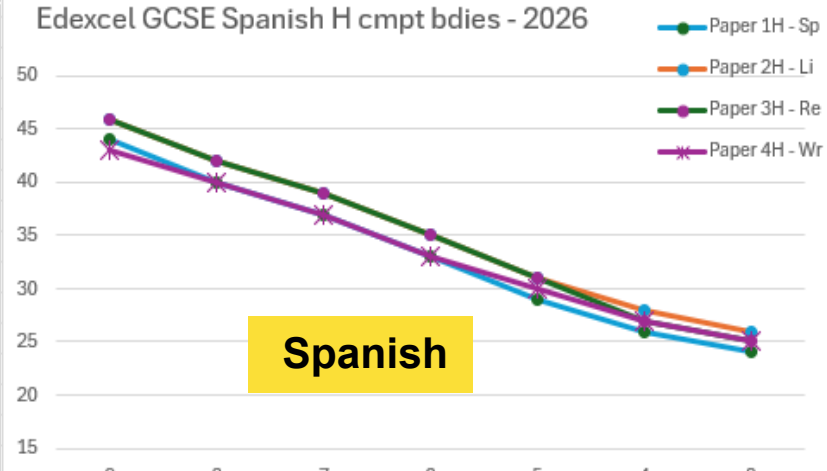
Comp/Unit Code	German	Max Mar	9	8	7	6	5	4	3
Paper 1H - Sp German (Higher)		50	43	40	37	32	28	24	22
Paper 2H - Li German (Higher)		50	46	41	37	33	29	26	24
Paper 3H - Re German (Higher)		50	43	39	35	31	28	25	23
Paper 4H - Wr German (Higher)		50	43	40	37	33	29	25	23



Ave mark / 50
 Speaking: 36.5
 Listening: 36.8
 Reading: 39.1
 Writing: 33.9



Ave mark / 50
 Speaking: 35.8
 Listening: 39.2
 Reading: 33.2
 Writing: 36.0



Ave mark / 50
 Speaking: 35.6
 Listening: 39.8
 Reading: 39.1
 Writing: 34.4

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