

Key Messages for your MFL Exams

GCSE

French/German/Spanish



The idea of today's session is to remind you of what each section of the exam is asking you to do. It will also give you some guidance on what you need to be doing independently to prepare for your exams.

You will need to listen carefully. There are spaces for you to record key information, highlight the keywords from the advice we are giving and complete activities to revise key skills and information.

You should keep this booklet safe and make sure that you use it in the lead up to your December mock exams and your final exams.

What are the dates of my GCSE exams?

Name of exam	Date
Listening & Reading (these 2 papers will be back to back in the same exam slot)	French 14th May Spanish 22nd May German 13th June
Writing	French 17th May Spanish 5th June German 17th June
Speaking	By appointment with your teacher between 15th April and 17th May.

MFL Assessment Objectives

Each objective is worth 25% of your GCSE

A01	Listening – understand and respond to different types of spoken language.
A02	Speaking – communicate and interact effectively in speech.
A03	Reading – understand and respond to different types of written language.
A04	Writing – communicate in writing.

MFL Content:


The questions will all come from the following 3 themes.

Theme 1	Identity and culture Topic 1: Me, my family and friends Relationships with family and friends Marriage/partnership Topic 2: Technology in everyday life Social media Mobile technology Topic 3: Free-time activities Music Cinema and TV Food and eating out Sport Topic 4: Customs and festivals in target language-speaking countries/communities
Theme 2	Local, national, international and global areas of interest Topic 1: Home, town, neighbourhood and region Topic 2: Social issues Charity/voluntary work Healthy/unhealthy living Topic 3: Global issues The environment Poverty/homelessness Topic 4: Travel and tourism
Theme 3	Current and future study and employment Topic 1: My studies Topic 2: Life at school/college Topic 3: Education post-16 Topic 4: Jobs, career choices and ambitions

Overview of Mock Paper 1: Listening

Foundation is 35 mins and is worth 40 marks Higher is 45 mins and is worth 50 marks	
Both tiers will have 5 minutes reading time before the audio begins. You will hear each audio file twice. Time spent on each question will be controlled by the audio.	
Section A	Questions in English, to be answered in English or non-verbally
Section B	Questions in target language, to be answered in target language or non-verbally

5 Minutes Reading Time & Pauses between Questions:

<p>What should I do in the 5 mins reading time?</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Read the questions carefully and <u>underline</u> the key words (don't forget the titles!)● Narrow down any multiple choice questions● Note down any key vocabulary you predict you will hear next to the relevant question.	<p>What does the examiner say about pauses between questions?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● After the question number is announced, there will be a pause to allow you to read the instructions and questions.● Listen carefully to the recording and read the questions again.● Listen to the recording again, and then answer the questions.● When the next question is about to start you will hear a bleep like this (*).
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Section A:

<p>What should I do?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Read the question carefully● Underline the question word● Use your logic● Listen out for time phrases● Listen globally - think beyond individual words● Listen out for negatives <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Only give the amount of info required by the task● Check the number of ticks/crosses● NEVER leave blanks	<p>What does the examiner say?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Read the questions before the recording starts● Re-read the question before you listen to each text● Answer after the 2nd play of the audio● Listen to the passage as a whole rather than focussing on individual words
	<p>What should I do to revise this?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Use kerboodle to relisten to listenings from class● Use the listening files in the revision guide and workbook● Use memrise/quizlet/vocab booklet to help you recognise as much vocab as possible

Section B:

<p>What should I do?</p> <p>As section A plus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Ensure written responses are in the target language● Rephrase to ensure you answer the question● Give a precise answer to the question asked● Proofread written responses	<p>What does the examiner say?</p> <p>As section A</p>
	<p>What should I do to revise this?</p> <p>As section A plus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Revise question words in target language● Revise target language rubrics (instructions)

Overview of Mock Paper 2: Reading (officially this is called paper 3)

Both tiers are worth 60 marks.	
Foundation is 45 mins (45 seconds per mark) Higher is 60 mins (1 minute per mark)	
Section A	Questions in English, to be answered in English or non-verbally
Section B	Questions in Target Language, to be answered in Target Language or non-verbally
Section C	Translation from Target Language into English Minimum 35 words for Foundation Tier Minimum 50 words for Higher Tier

Section A: Questions in English, to be answered in English or non-verbally

What should I do?

- Answer all questions
- Read the question carefully and underline the key words
- Highlight the evidence for your answer in the text
- Ensure what you have written answers the question

- Write clearly - this will be marked on screen
- NEVER leave blanks

What does the examiner say?

- Individual questions appear in chronological order within the text
- If there's only 1 mark then give 1 piece of information
- Pay attention to the actual content of the texts and do not make assumptions
- Keep your answer as concise as possible (irrelevant info can negate the mark)

What should I do to revise this?

- Use memrise/quizlet/vocab booklets to learn 25 words per week
- Use kerboodle to access reading material on all the topics
- Use the revision workbook for extra practice

Section B: Questions in Target Language, to be answered in Target Language or non-verbally

<p>What should I do?</p> <p>As section A plus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Ensure written responses are in the target language● Rephrase to ensure you answer the question	<p>What does the examiner say?</p> <p>As section A</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Give a precise answer to the question asked● Proofread written responses	<p>What should I do to revise this?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● As section A plus:● Revise question words in target language● Revise target language rubrics (instructions)

Section C: Translation from Target Language into English

<p>What should I do?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Translate the whole text closely● Ensure the meaning is as close as possible to the original● Watch out for tenses	<p>What does the examiner say?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● The text will be broken down into 9 chunks on the markscheme - in order to get all 9 marks you will have to accurately get across all the messages● Ensure your English text is as close to the meaning of the target language text as possible
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Ensure the word order makes sense in English● Proofread your finished translation	<p>What should I do to revise this?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Use memrise/quizlet/vocab booklets to learn 25 words per week● Translate any of our reading text or listening transcripts into English● Learn any vocabulary that you have to look up

Overview of Mock Paper 3: Higher Writing (officially this is called paper 4)

Higher is worth 60 marks and is 1hr 15 mins		Marks	Mins
Qn 1	Structured writing task (student responds to four compulsory detailed bullet points, producing approximately 90 words in total) – there is a choice from two questions.	16	Plan: 3 mins Write: 14 mins Check: 3 mins
Qn 2	Open-ended writing task (student responds to two compulsory detailed bullet points, producing approximately 150 words in total) – there is a choice from two questions.	32	Plan: 6 mins Write: 28 mins Check: 6 mins
Qn 3	Translation from English into Target Language (minimum 50 words)	12	Plan: 3 mins Write: 10 mins Check: 2 mins

Question 1: Structured writing task (4 bullet points / 90 words)

What should I do?

- Choose **one** question. You should choose the question that will best help you to showcase your strengths.
- Plan effectively before you write - aim for one paragraph per bullet point.
- Communicate clearly using at least 3 tenses.
- Think about your vocabulary choices and try to include more complex structures

What does the examiner say?

- Quality over quantity - aim for 3 sentences about each bullet point
- Variety is the key to success
- Avoid repetition
- Use simple and complex sentences
- Express and justify opinions regularly
- SPaG errors can affect your result- leave yourself enough time to check your work.

What should I do to revise this?

- Ensure you are learning genders and spellings of new words
- Ensure you can use three tenses confidently
- Practise writing under timed conditions

Question 2: Open-ended writing task (student responds to two compulsory detailed bullet points, producing approximately **150 words** in total) – **there is a choice from two questions.**

What should I do?

- Choose **one** question. You should choose the question that will best help you to showcase your strengths.
- Plan effectively before you write - aim for at least one paragraph per bullet point.
- Communicate clearly using at least 3 tenses.
- Think about your vocabulary choices and try to include more complex structures

What does the examiner say?

- Ensure you do what the question is asking you - e.g. do you have to make a comparison?
- Aim to write as close to 150 words as possible in order to be able to develop your answer fully
- Express and justify opinions regularly
- Use a variety of vocabulary and structures
- Proofread your work

What should I do to revise this?

- Ensure you are learning genders and spellings of new words
- Ensure you can use three tenses confidently
- Practise writing under timed conditions

Question 3: Translation from English into Target Language

(minimum 50 words)

What should I do?

- Analyse the text in English first. Ask yourself - what are they trying to test me on? You can annotate and highlight the texts.
- Don't leave any gaps or words in English.
- Check your word order - it will not be identical to the text you are given.
- If there is a word you don't know think about how you can still get the same message across.

What does the examiner say?

- Your translation will be marked as a whole text and not in sections
- Ensure you include every detail from the original text
- Think carefully about word order
- Proofread carefully for spellings and gender
- Umlauts and accents can be essential in defining the tense of a verb

What should I do to revise this?

- Ensure you are learning genders and spellings of new words
- Practise annotating texts in English so you get used to analysing the language used

Overview of Mock Paper 3: Foundation Writing (officially this is called paper 4)

Foundation is worth 50 marks and is 1 hour		Marks	Mins
Qn 1	Sentence level writing task (student responds to a picture, producing 4 sentences in the target language.)	8	Plan: 2 Write: 4 Check: 2
Qn 2	A short passage, responding to 4 bullet points. Students are expected to write approximately 40 words but, provided the tasks set are completed , the number of words is not important.	16	Plan: 4 Write: 10 Check: 4
Qn 3	A translation from English into German, requiring a minimum of 35 words. This demonstrates students' ability to convey key messages accurately and to apply grammatical knowledge of language and structures.	10	Plan: 2 Write: 7 Check: 3
Qn 4	Structured writing task (student responds to four compulsory detailed bullet points, producing approximately 90 words in total) – there is a choice from two questions.	16	Plan: 4 mins Write: 18 mins Check: 4 mins

Question 1: Sentence level writing task (student responds to a picture, producing 4 sentences in the target language.)

What should I do?

- Write 4 short and simple sentences
- Focus on accuracy
- Check spellings and genders carefully

What does the examiner say?

- You will get 2 marks for each sentence if your message is clearly communicated
- There is no benefit to trying to show off or use complex language on this question

What should I do to revise this?

- Ensure you are learning genders and spellings of new words
- Learn some simple phrases off by heart e.g. there is a / there is not a

Question 2: A short passage responding to 4 bullet points

<p>What should I do?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Plan effectively before you write - aim for one paragraph per bullet point.● Try to use at least 2 tenses	<p>What does the examiner say?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Write something about each of the bullet points in turn● You will be marked on content and language● Try to use a range of vocab and structures
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Think about your vocabulary choices and try to include more complex structures	<p>What should I do to revise this?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Ensure you can use two tenses confidently● Practise writing under timed conditions

Question 3: Translation from English into Target Language

(minimum 50 words)

What should I do?

- Analyse the text in English first. Ask yourself - what are they trying to test me on? You can annotate and highlight the texts.
- Don't leave any gaps or words in English.
- Check your word order - it will not be identical to the text you are given.
- If there is a word you don't know think about how you can still get the same message across.

What does the examiner say?

- Your translation will be marked as a whole and not as individual sentences
- Ensure you include every detail from the original text
- Think carefully about word order
- Half the marks (5) are given for getting the message across and the other half (5) for grammatical knowledge

What should I do to revise this?

- Ensure you are learning genders and spellings of new words
- Practise annotating texts in English so you get used to analysing the language used

Question 4: Structured writing task (4 bullet points / 90 words)

What should I do?

- Choose **one** question. You should choose the question that will best help you to showcase your strengths.
- Plan effectively before you write - aim for one paragraph per bullet point.
- Communicate clearly using at least 3 tenses.
- Think about your vocabulary choices and try to include more complex structures

What does the examiner say?

- Quality over quantity - aim for 3 sentences about each bullet point
- Variety is the key to success
- Avoid repetition
- Use simple and complex sentences
- Express and justify opinions regularly
- SPaG errors can affect your result- leave yourself enough time to check your work.

What should I do to revise this?

- Ensure you are learning genders and spellings of new words
- Ensure you can use three tenses confidently
- Practise writing under timed conditions

Overview of Mock Paper 4: Speaking (officially this is called paper 2)

Both tiers: 12 mins supervised preparation time Foundation 7-9 mins Higher 10-12 mins		Marks	Mins
Section 1	Role play card	15	F 2 H 2
Section 2	Photo card	15	F 2 H 3
Section 3	General conversation	30	F 3-5 H 5-7

What should I do in the 12 mins preparation time?

- You may make unlimited notes on the additional answer sheets which can be used in the photo and role-play card part of the test
- You may NOT write on the photo card or the role-play card
- For the role-play prepare only the number of details you are asked for
- For the photo card prepare developed answers to the printed questions in order to reach the higher mark bands
- Written notes can be read verbatim during the test

Part 1: Role-play card

What should I do?

- Write your answers/make notes about what you want to say for every bullet point
- ? means you have to ask a question
- Only give the amount of info you are asked for (no need to develop your answers)
- You can read directly from your notes

What does the examiner say?

- This could come from any of the 3 themes
- 10 of the 15 marks are for communication - keep your answers short and accurate
- If you don't understand a question but use repair strategies to get clarification you can still access all marks
- Be careful of pronunciation if you read from your notes

What should I do to revise this?

- Learn the question words e.g. who? why?
- Make sure you can ask a question
- Practise as many role-play cards as you can from all 3 themes

Part 2: Photo card

What should I do?

- Write your answers/make notes about what you want to say for every question
- Develop your answers for every question that is printed
- You must give and explain at least one opinion
- You can read directly from your notes

What does the examiner say?

- This will NOT be on the same theme as your chosen conversation theme
- You will ONLY be assessed on your communication

What should I do to revise this?

- Make sure you know how to say “In the photo/picture there is...”
- Practise describing pictures on the other 2 themes (NOT the one you have chosen for the general conversation)

Part 3: General conversation

You must hand in any notes before this part of the test.

<p>What should I do?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Choose 1 of the 3 themes in advance and learn your best possible answers● Be prepared to talk about either of the other 2 themes● Use at least 3 tenses across your answers● Regularly give and explain opinions● Ask at least one question to elicit information (and you? at an appropriate point would achieve this)	<p>What does the examiner say?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● You will spend an equal amount of time on the theme you have chosen and a 2nd theme● The 2nd theme will not be the same as your photo card● You will be assessed on communication, range and accuracy of language & pronunciation and intonation● Make sure you have some repair strategies
	<p>What should I do to revise this?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Prepare answers for all 3 themes● Make sure you know question words confidently