



Independent Schools
Examinations Board

COMMON ENTRANCE EXAMINATION AT 13+
COMMON ACADEMIC SCHOLARSHIP EXAMINATION AT 13+

MODERN LANGUAGES SYLLABUS

(Revised Spring 2009 for first examination in Spring 2010)

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N.B. Any change from the current syllabus, published in Summer 2006, is indicated by a heavy line in the margin.

INTRODUCTION

This syllabus covers French, German and Spanish. It has been devised in accordance with the requirements of the National Curriculum for modern languages and aligns with National Curriculum levels 1–6. There is a single examination to be taken by all candidates. Exercises in the Speaking and Writing components offer open-ended tasks which allow all candidates to show knowledge of a range of tenses, should they choose to use them. Senior schools should give clear advice to preparatory schools if they have particular requirements in this respect. All exercises in the Listening and Reading components can be completed without the use of past tenses and none of the questions will specifically target details in which the use of past tenses is vital.

AIMS

A course leading to this examination should:

- (i) develop the skills which will enable candidates to understand the written and spoken language and use the language effectively for purposes of practical communication;
- (ii) give candidates opportunities to take part in a broad range of linguistic activities such as those set out in the National Curriculum for modern languages;
- (iii) provide a basis for continuing study of the language and encourage independent learning, including the use of dictionaries, glossaries and ICT;
- (iv) give candidates opportunities to work with authentic language materials;
- (v) encourage interest in the target countries;
- (vi) provide enjoyment and stimulation;
- (vii) encourage positive attitudes towards the use of foreign languages and towards speakers of foreign languages.

ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVES

The examination will test candidates' ability to:

- AO1 show an understanding of the spoken language dealing with a range of familiar topics, and identify and note main points and specific details, including opinions;
- AO2 take part in short conversations, giving and obtaining information and opinions;
- AO3 show an understanding of a number of printed items, ranging from short, simple phrases to longer, more complex texts and identify and note main points and specific details, including opinions;
- AO4 produce pieces of writing, ranging from short phrases to longer passages in which they seek and convey information and opinions.

SYLLABUS CONTENT

INTRODUCTION

- (i) The examination is based on the sixteen topics set out below.
- (ii) The grammar section lists all the material which candidates for the examination should cover.

TOPICS

- language of the classroom, including basic ICT
- house, home, daily routine and chores
- life and work at school
- time, dates, numbers and prices
- personal description
- family, friends and pets
- meeting people
- free-time activities
- describing holiday activities
- visiting a café or restaurant
- simple health problems
- description of a town or region
- finding the way and using transport
- understanding tourist information
- shopping (e.g. for food, clothes, presents) and pocket money
- weather

FRENCH GRAMMAR (* for recognition only)

| | All candidates | Where appropriate to candidate's ability / senior school requirements |
|--|--|---|
| verbs | present tense: (i) regular and common irregular (ii) common reflexive in the singular future tense with <i>aller</i> conditional: only <i>je voudrais</i> , <i>j'aimerais</i> *imperative forms infinitive after <i>aller, aimer</i> , <i>détester, préférer, vouloir</i> , <i>pouvoir, devoir, il faut</i> interrogative forms + <i>est-ce que</i> negative expressions: <i>ne ... pas</i> , <i>ne ... jamais, ne ... plus, ne ...</i> <i>rien</i> idiomatic expressions: e.g. <i>avoir</i> <i>chaud / froid / faim / soif / mal</i> , <i>faire</i> + weather | <i>passé composé</i> with <i>avoir / être</i> common reflexive verbs in the plural imperfect tense: all verbs at least for recognition |
| nouns | genders and plurals of common nouns definite and indefinite article partitive article (and <i>de / d'</i> with quantity / negatives) | |
| adjectives | agreement and position of regular and irregular adjectives comparison possessive: <i>mon, ton, son, notre</i> , <i>votre, leur</i> demonstrative | superlative |
| adverbs | *adverbs ending in <i>-ment</i> common adverbs | |
| pronouns | subject personal pronouns, including <i>on</i> relative pronoun <i>qui</i> reflexive pronouns: <i>me, te, se</i> *disjunctive pronouns: <i>moi, toi</i> , <i>lui, elle, nous, vous, eux, elles</i> | relative pronouns: <i>que / qu'</i> all reflexive pronouns direct and indirect object pronouns |
| prepositions and conjunctions | common prepositions and conjunctions, * <i>depuis</i> | |
| numerals | cardinal numbers: 0–100 ordinal numbers: 1–10 dates and time: 12-hour and 24-hour clock | cardinal numbers: 101–1000 |

GERMAN GRAMMAR (* for recognition only)

| | All candidates | Where appropriate to candidate's ability / senior school requirements |
|--------------------------------------|--|--|
| verbs | present tense: (i) weak (ii) strong (iii) separable / inseparable (iv) reflexive (v) modal future tense with <i>werden</i> *imperatives negative <i>es gibt, es ist</i> word order in simple sentences inversion interrogatives conditional: only <i>ich möchte, ich hätte gern</i> | perfect tense with <i>haben</i> and <i>sein</i> imperfect tense: only <i>ich / er war, hatte, konnte, musste, wollte, sollte</i> and <i>es gab</i> imperatives |
| nouns | genders and plurals of common nouns cases and their use: nominative, accusative, dative definite article, singular and plural indefinite article and <i>kein</i> *common adjectival and weak nouns | |
| adjectives | possessive: <i>mein, dein, sein, ihr</i> *comparison *agreement | possessive: <i>unser, euer, Ihr, ihr</i> comparison agreement |
| adverbs | common adverbs of place, manner and degree | |
| pronouns | subject pronouns *direct and indirect object pronouns: <i>mich, mir, dich, dir</i> | direct and indirect object pronouns: <i>mich, mir, dich, dir</i> other object pronouns relative pronouns |
| prepositions and conjunctions | prepositions which govern: the dative, the accusative, the dative or the accusative co-ordinating conjunctions <i>um ... zu</i> + infinitive *common subordinating conjunctions: <i>dass, weil, wenn</i> | common subordinating conjunctions: <i>dass, weil, wenn</i> |
| numerals | time, days, dates cardinal numbers: 0–100 ordinal numbers: 1–31 | cardinal numbers: 101–1000 |

SPANISH GRAMMAR (* for recognition only)

| | All candidates | Where appropriate to candidate's ability / senior school requirements |
|--------------------------------------|--|---|
| verbs | present tense: (i) regular verbs (ii) decir, estar, hacer, ir, poder, querer, saber, ser, tener (iii) common radical-changing verbs (iv) common reflexive verbs introduction to the uses of <i>ser</i> and <i>estar</i> future tense with <i>ir</i> negatives: <i>nada, nadie, nunca, jamás, ya ... no</i> questions and question words <i>gustar: me gusta, te gusta, le gusta</i> <i>hay</i> and <i>hay que</i> <i>tener que</i> <i>se puede</i> <i>doler</i> idiomatic expressions with <i>tener</i> (e.g. <i>frío, calor, hambre, sed</i>) weather expressions with <i>hacer</i> | preterite tense imperfect tense: only <i>era, estaba, había, hacía, tenía, iba</i> + other verbs for recognition gerund and the present continuous tense |
| nouns | genders and plurals of common nouns definite and indefinite articles <i>del</i> and <i>al</i> use of the personal <i>a</i> | |
| adjectives and adverbs | agreement of adjectives possessive adjectives <i>este / ese / aquel</i> comparison of adjectives: <i>más ... que, menos ... que, tan ... como</i> | adverbs |
| prepositions and conjunctions | common prepositions and conjunctions | |
| pronouns | subject pronouns | direct and indirect object pronouns |
| numerals | cardinal numbers: 0–100 dates and time | cardinal numbers: 101–1000 |

SCHEME OF ASSESSMENT

LISTENING (25%; about 25 minutes)

- | This will be based on recorded material. Instructions will be given in English. There will be 25 questions on a number of short passages (usually arranged in five or six sections).
- | There will be a range of test-types in English: these might include multiple choice, true / false, table or grid completion, putting symbols on a map or plan, box-ticking, matching the recording with visual or verbal options, completing sentences or pictures, linking opinions with speakers, correcting a passage where the mistakes are highlighted, choosing correct answers from a list or answering questions in English.

SPEAKING (25%; about 6 minutes)

The teacher-examiner will assess the candidate's performance and will submit a recording of a good, an average and a weak candidate for moderation. Instructions will be printed in English. A bilingual dictionary may be used by the candidate during the allowed preparation time for the speaking component only. The examination will consist of three elements: a role-play situation and discussion on two prepared topics.

Role-play situation (about 2 minutes; 9 marks)

The examiner will give each candidate, at random, one situation from the three which are set, ensuring that all the situations are used to an equal extent. The candidate will be required to carry out six tasks in the target language which have been given in English. Past tenses will not be required in this exercise. One of the tasks will be unpredictable and will require the candidate to respond, unprepared, to the examiner's question. The role plays may be based on any area of the syllabus. The examiner will give a mark (maximum 6) for completion of the tasks and a mark (maximum 3) for quality of language (*see Appendix I*).

Prepared topics

Part A (1–2 minutes; 8 marks)

The candidate will choose any topic covered by the syllabus (*see list on page 2*) or a topic in connection with a country where the target language is spoken, e.g.:

- a town or region
- a regional or national celebration
- an artist (painter, sculptor, writer, composer etc.)
- an historical figure
- a sportsman / sportswoman

The candidate should introduce his / her topic, with the teacher-examiner intervening after about 30 seconds to ask at least four questions during the course of the two minutes. Credit will be given for communication of information, pronunciation and intonation, range of vocabulary, range of grammar as set out in the syllabus, accuracy, fluency and readiness of response (*see Appendix II*).

Part B (1–2 minutes; 8 marks)

The candidate will be required to speak about one of the following topic areas:

- house, home, daily routine and chores
- free-time and holiday activities
- life and work at school
- personal description, family, friends and pets

The teacher-examiner will choose the topic for each candidate and give him / her the title at the beginning of the preparation time. The examiner must make equal use of the topics in random order, ensuring, however, that no candidate receives the same topic for Part B as that chosen for Part A. The examiner will ask the candidate to introduce the topic in the target language. After about 30 seconds the examiner will intervene to ask at least four questions during the course of the two minutes. Credit will be given for relevant communication, appropriate response to the questions and quality of language, including pronunciation (*see Appendix II*).

READING AND WRITING (50%; 60 minutes)

Section A: Reading (25%)

- Instructions will be given in English. There will be 25 questions on a number of short passages (usually arranged in five or six sections). There will be several exercises of differing length, covering a range of different approaches to the development of reading skills, e.g. gap-filling, multiple choice, matching headlines to texts, matching pictures to descriptions, matching two halves of a sentence, matching questions and answers, matching people and opinions, choosing a number of correct answers from a list, answering questions in the target language (marked for communication only). There will be one section with questions and answers in English.

Section B: Writing (25%)

- Instructions will be given in English. There will be two written exercises.

Question 1 (8 marks)

This question will require the writing of five simple sentences in the target language, each based on a visual or written stimulus. Candidates should write five to ten words on each stimulus. Marks will be awarded for content, accuracy and quality of language (*see Appendix III*).

Question 2 (17 marks)

This question will require 80–130 words of continuous writing in the form of a letter based on a written stimulus in the target language. Candidates will be expected to demonstrate the full range of their knowledge of the linguistic features contained in the syllabus. Marks will be awarded for content, accuracy and quality of language (*see Appendix IV*).

SCHOLARSHIP

Scholarship papers are based on this syllabus. All candidates will be required to show knowledge of all the tenses listed on pages 3–5, including the imperfect tense, and a wide range of vocabulary.

The Common Academic Scholarship Examination papers will comprise exercises in Listening (approximately 30 minutes) and in Reading and Writing (60 minutes). Senior schools will conduct their own Speaking tests. It is recommended that such tests include conversations covering the topics set out on page 2 which allow candidates to show the full extent of their knowledge. The listening / reading exercises may include multiple choice, box-ticking, table or grid completion, choosing correct answers from a list, true / false, gap-filling, linking opinions with speakers and answering questions in the target language.

APPENDIX I

ASSESSMENT

SPEAKING: ROLE PLAY

| Mark (per task) | Completion of tasks |
|----------------------------|--|
| 1 | Full communication. |
| $\frac{1}{2}$ | Task partly carried out; there may be considerable hesitation. |
| 0 | Failure to communicate. |

| Mark (overall impression) | Quality of language |
|--|---|
| 3 | High level of accuracy with no significant errors. |
| 2 | Level of language generally good but with a number of errors. |
| 1 | Marked weaknesses in the use of language. |
| 0 | Little or no effective use of the target language. |

APPENDIX II

ASSESSMENT

SPEAKING: PREPARED TOPICS

In both Part A and Part B the following grid should be used.

| Mark | Descriptors |
|-------------|--|
| 8 | Excellent: a lot of information communicated; good pronunciation and at least a reasonable attempt at intonation; a high level of accuracy; a range of tenses attempted; opinions and justification offered. |
| 7 | Very good communication: ready responses, mainly accurate; a wide range of vocabulary; good pronunciation. |
| 6 | Good communication: generally ready responses, though with some hesitation and a number of errors; a good range of vocabulary; a reasonable attempt at pronunciation. |
| 4–5 | Satisfactory communication: adequate responses; some hesitation; some significant errors. |
| 3 | Limited communication: hesitant and probably with serious errors; prompting required. |
| 2 | Very limited communication: very hesitant, with prompting needed; relatively little accurate usage. |
| 0–1 | Very weak: little or no communication; not easily understood; much prompting needed. |

APPENDIX III

ASSESSMENT

WRITING: QUESTION 1

| Mark | Content |
|-------------|--|
| 3 | Meets all the requirements of the tasks set. |
| 2 | Some omissions in fulfilling the tasks. |
| 1 | Only partial response to the tasks. |
| 0 | No relevant information communicated. |

| Mark | Accuracy |
|-------------|--|
| 3 | Full sentences with a high level of accuracy. |
| 2 | Reasonably accurate with minor errors. |
| 1 | Increased errors, but some examples of accurate usage. |
| 0 | Little or no accurate use of language. |

| Mark | Quality of language |
|-------------|---|
| 2 | A good range of idiom, vocabulary and structures. |
| 1 | A fair range of idiom, vocabulary and structures. |
| 0 | Poor range of idiom, vocabulary and structures. |

APPENDIX IV

ASSESSMENT

WRITING: QUESTION 2

| Mark | Content and communication |
|-------------|---|
| 7 | All four points covered with some elaboration. |
| 6 | Four points covered but not all with detail. |
| 4–5 | Reasonable content but either one point not covered or the general coverage of the points lacking detail. |
| 2–3 | Limited coverage of the required points; little or no attempt to elaborate or only two of the points covered. |
| 1 | Very little relevant information communicated. |
| 0 | No relevant information communicated. |

| Mark | Accuracy |
|-------------|--|
| 5 | Very accurate: a sound application of grammar, vocabulary and structures; reads well. |
| 4 | A good level of accuracy: a generally sound application of grammar, vocabulary and structures. |
| 3 | Fairly accurate: satisfactory application of grammar, vocabulary and structures. |
| 2 | Lacking in accuracy: difficulty in communicating the relevant information; marked weaknesses in application of grammar, vocabulary and structures. |
| 0–1 | Substantially inaccurate: very limited knowledge of the language. |

| Mark | Quality of language |
|-------------|---|
| 5 | Excellent range of idiom, vocabulary and structures. |
| 4 | Good range of idiom, vocabulary and structures. |
| 3 | Adequate range of idiom, vocabulary and structures. |
| 2 | Some range and variety of idiom, vocabulary and structures. |
| 0–1 | Frequent repetition of identical words and structures. |