

A Student's Guide to the AS and Advanced GCE in

Modern Foreign Languages: Arabic, Chinese, Japanese, Modern Greek

What do I need to know or be able to do before taking this course?

You will need to have attained a certain level of proficiency in the language before taking this course. You could have achieved this proficiency in any of the following ways: GCSE (at least Grade C), International O level (at least grade C) or through knowledge of the language as a native speaker. You will need to feel confident in the two language skills of Reading and Writing. You must also have some knowledge and understanding of the culture and way of life of the target-language country and be interested in exploring these areas in much more depth.

What will I learn on this Advanced GCE course?

The course will help you to develop your general study skills, but most of all you will learn to communicate at a higher level in the language that you have chosen. You will also learn much more about a wide range of aspects of the society or societies in which the language is spoken.

Reading

You will be able to read, understand and extract information from written passages in the target language taken from authentic sources, such as magazines and newspapers, reports or books.

Writing

You will learn how to write essays or longer pieces in the target language. You will learn all the appropriate grammar, words and phrases that will help you to:

- ◆ present information in the target language
- ◆ provide opinions
- ◆ organise your arguments
- ◆ analyse your ideas.



What kind of student is this course suitable for?

If you are interested in languages and communication, and you enjoy learning about other cultures and ways of life, then this modern foreign languages course could be suitable for you. Similarly, if you are interested in the business world, in travel or tourism, in literature, or in journalism and the media, then you are also likely to find this course appropriate. There are a number of options in the course where you can choose your topic or question to suit your interests. Whether you want to use language for work, for further study, training, or for leisure, this course will equip you with the necessary skills and knowledge.

What examinations will I have to take to get my qualification?

AS — AS is short for Advanced Subsidiary. This is the first half of the Advanced GCE course. It is a stepping-stone to the full Advanced GCE qualification. You can take just the AS on its own, if you and your teacher agree that this is best for you. You can even decide at the end of the AS course whether to continue to take the full Advanced GCE qualification.

Unit 1: Reading and Writing (3 hours)

The examination consists of three sections described below.

Section 1

You will have to read three passages in the target language, and then answer questions on them in the target language.

Section 2

You will have to read a passage in the target language and translate it into English.

Section 3

You will be expected to read a short printed target-language ‘stimulus’ for a task, such as writing a letter, report or article in the target language. Your work should be around 200 words/250 characters for Japanese/180 characters for Chinese.

Advanced GCE — the full Advanced GCE qualification is made up of the AS unit plus one more unit which is studied at a higher level. You don't necessarily have to take the full Advanced GCE qualification; you can still get a certificate just for the AS, and your teacher will advise you on what is best. If you do decide to take the second half of the course it will cover the unit described below.

Unit 2: Reading and Writing; Topics and Texts (3 hours)

The examination consists of two sections detailed below.

Section 1

You will be required to read a text in the target language and answer questions in the target language. You will also have to translate a piece of contemporary text from English into the target language.

Section 2

In advance of the examination, you will have chosen two topics, two texts, or a topic and a text from a list of suggestions. The topics will include such things as history, media, and culture; the texts will be a range of contemporary and classical books, poetry and short stories. In this section, there will be a choice of two questions on the selected topics or texts. You can choose to answer either question, and your answer should be at least 250 words/300 characters for Japanese/220 characters for Chinese.

How can I develop my full range of skills by doing this course?

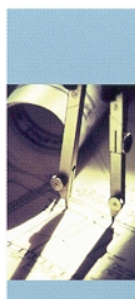
As well as covering advanced level study of modern foreign languages, this course will enable you to develop some Key Skills, which will be essential to you whatever you go on to do afterwards. The Key Skills you can develop during this course are listed in the table below.

Key Skill	Typical Activities
Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presenting your chosen topic for Unit 2 Section 2 and expressing opinions and ideas Writing a letter to an environmental organisation seeking information.
Information Technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Producing a newsletter or poster Using the internet and CD ROMS.
Working With Others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working on an exchange project/work experience abroad.
Improving Own Learning and Performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Setting targets with the teacher for essay writing/receiving feedback on work and taking forward suggestions on how to improve it.

NB The Key Skill of Communication has to be assessed in English, Irish or Welsh, so you would not be able to use work in the target language for your portfolio of evidence for Communication.

What could I go on to do at the end of my course?

There will be a range of opportunities open to you, where you can continue to use and further develop your language skills and knowledge of contemporary society. Some students choose to do degree courses in languages; others choose to pursue a higher education course in another subject, but choose a language option alongside it. Having a language at AS or Advanced GCE will improve your employability, in particular with companies which have international branches. Whether you are interested in continuing your studies or working at home or abroad, a language course at AS or Advanced GCE is an excellent step towards achieving your goals.



For more information on Edexcel qualifications please contact our Customer Response Centre on 020 7393 4500 or e-mail: enquiries@edexcel.org.uk or visit our website: www.edexcel.org.uk

Edexcel Foundation is a Registered Charity and a Company Limited by Guarantee Registered in England No. 1686164