

MODERN LANGUAGES - SPANISH - A LEVEL

Course introduction

"A different language is a different vision of life" – Federico Fellini.

"If you talk to a man in a language he understands, that goes to his head. If you talk to him in his own language, that goes to his heart"
– Nelson Mandela.

The ability to speak a foreign language is more important than ever in our globalised society and can enrich your life both socially and economically. Spanish is a global language, with over 400 million native speakers. As well as being the official language of Spain and most of Latin America, it is also the second language of the United States. If you enjoy using language creatively, communicating opinions and ideas on social, moral and ethical issues, and learning about other cultures and ways of life then Spanish A-Level is for you.



Entrance requirements

Students who wish to study Spanish must have achieved at least a 6 in Spanish GCSE.

How the course is taught

This is a two-year course which is mainly classroom based, with some trips to Tyneside Cinema in Newcastle to view Hispanic films. You will follow the new AQA specification. The topics taught build on the foundations laid at GCSE and develop the four core skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening to a higher degree of proficiency. You will also develop new skills such as translation and analysis of a work of literature or a film.

Areas covered by the course

1) Social issues and trends

- Aspects of Hispanic society (modern and traditional values, the internet, equal rights)
- Multiculturalism in Hispanic society (immigration, integration, racism)

2) Political and artistic culture

- Artistic culture in the Hispanic world (modern day idols, Spanish regional identity, cultural heritage)
- Aspects of political life in the Spanish speaking world (today's youth, monarchies and dictatorships, popular movements)

3) Grammar

4) Literary texts and films

- You will study two literacy texts or one film and one literacy text. Teachers and students can discuss choices. For a full list of texts and films, please see the AQA website.

5) Individual research project

- You will identify a subject or a key question which is of interest to you and which relates to a country or countries where Spanish is spoken.

How the course is assessed

Paper 1:

(2 hours 30 mins, 50% of A level) Listening, reading and writing

- Listening, reading and responding to texts/recordings (you will have control of the recordings)
- Translation from Spanish to English and from English to Spanish

The texts, recordings and translations will all be based on the first two topic areas (social issues and trends and political and artistic culture).

Paper 2:

(2 hours 20% of A level) Writing

- A critical appreciation of the text(s) and film studied

Paper 3:

(21-23 mins, 30% of A level) Speaking

- Presentation and discussion of individual research project

No dictionaries or electronic devices are allowed in the exams.

Career opportunities

An A-level in Spanish leads to an exciting range of options in higher education and is highly prized by employers. There are a range of University courses on offer, from traditional language degrees (many allow you to start another language from scratch) to combined honours degrees, which allow you to combine a language with another subject, for example, Biology, History or Law. These courses usually offer the chance to spend a year abroad. Past Byron students have gone on to study Spanish with other languages and subjects at Sheffield and Liverpool Universities. Whatever your future career plans, your language skills and culture knowledge will be an invaluable asset to you.