One language sets you in a corridor for life.

TWO LANGUAGES

OPEN EVERY DOOR ALONG THE WAY.

FRANK SMITH
Why choose Languages at Carmel?

At Carmel, languages are a popular A Level choice, appealing to a variety of students who wish to follow a career in languages or supplement their other A Levels with a highly regarded and respected A Level subject. Many UK and overseas universities offer combined degree courses where a language is studied alongside another subject, offering wider career options in the future.

What will I study?

During the course, you will be exposed to written and spoken articles covering a wide spectrum of topics. These include aspects of French/Spanish speaking society and artistic culture in France/Spain and other French/Spanish speaking countries.

For both languages, you will, with the help of your tutor, study a text and a film which you will analyse as part of a written exam. In addition, you will have the opportunity to select a topic, linked to a country/culture of the language you are studying and complete a short research project which you will discuss during the speaking exam. Guidance on suitable topics and on how to go about this task, will of course, be provided by tutors.

What skills will I develop?

Studying a language will help to improve your understanding and communication skills. Your tutors will offer regular support sessions but will also help and encourage you to develop independent study skills such as reading texts, using specific websites and accessing resources in our language lab to enable you to develop your skills and improve across all four areas.

How is the course examined?

Throughout the course, you will complete internal assessments to assess your progress in the language. Language students will complete three external examinations at the end of their second year as follows:

Component 1 - Speaking (30%) - Paper 3
Component 2 - Reading, Listening and Translation (50%) - Paper 1
Component 3 - Text / Film based essay writing (20%) - Paper 2

What qualities do I need to be a good A Level language student?

All students with a proven ability in a language can access the A Level course in French or Spanish and we find that our students work hard to achieve good grades. To enjoy and achieve in your chosen language, you should:

• Have a sound basic knowledge of the language you wish to study
• Feel happy about speaking in the language of study and have the desire to improve your oral communication skills
• Have a desire to learn more about the culture of the country
• Be positive about learning new vocabulary and grammar (essential for translating!)
• Enjoy working in small groups but also have the ability to work independently
• Have a desire to become a more confident linguist
• Want to succeed!

Do I need to have studied a language to GCSE to start A Level?

In the majority of cases, yes – but it is possible to take up a new language from scratch, provided that you have proven ability in another language. Many students have done this in the past and have achieved top grades after just two years of study. This could give you wider choices for your university study / career. If you are interested, speak to any of the language tutors who will be happy to advise you.

I would absolutely recommend Spanish to anyone considering it. There are so many reasons to learn a foreign language – a new world of communication, higher level of employability and general enjoyment, to name just a few – but I love this course too! The language itself and the culture that surrounds it are beautifully intertwined and there is plenty of help from tutors to develop your abilities in both written and spoken Spanish, as well as your understanding of the Spanish-speaking world.

The teachers I’ve had at Carmel go the extra mile to support their students, from extra weekly tutorials to one-to-one help. Your Personal Achievement Tutor also ensures you’re managing well with general college life and your plans for the future.

After leaving Carmel, I’m going to study Psychology at university. However, I’ll continue to practice and improve my Spanish in any way that I can! I hope to use this invaluable skill during a year abroad in a Spanish-speaking country whilst at university.

Paige Holt
St John Bosco
Studying: Spanish, Psychology, Biology

Work Experience in Rouen
What is the Modern Languages department like?
We are friendly and supportive! Our Modern Language department has a suite of rooms comprising teaching bases equipped with interactive boards, multi-media projectors and wireless internet connection. We also have a wide range of language resources and a digital Language Laboratory. All our resources are designed to help you to develop your language skills in a varied and exciting way.

What support will I receive?
All foreign language students attend a weekly conversation class in their chosen language(s) in order to develop their speaking skills and boost oral confidence. These sessions, which are compulsory and conducted in small groups by native speakers, form an integral part of preparation for the oral examinations. Further support in grammar and in improving reading, writing and comprehension skills is given in weekly tutorials some of which require compulsory attendance. A 'Stretch and Challenge', more advanced tutorial session is offered every week for more able linguists.

As exams approach, we try to organise regular additional revision sessions for all students.

How will I be assessed?
Homework is set and marked with a grade and targets for improvements given regularly. There is also weekly grammar and/or vocabulary test. This will give a good indication about your progress.

How successful are our language students?

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Student Voice

What is done well at Carmel:
“Engaging lessons. Have a mixture of activities and tasks so it’s never boring. Always support there if I need it.”
“There is a very supportive environment created, which makes learning the language a lot more appealing and the lessons more interesting.”
“There’s always extra help if you need it and extra articles or videos to study at home.”
“The intervention sessions really help to maintain my language skills eg keeping up with tenses and specific rules, which is very helpful.”
“I like the organisation of the lessons, and how much support there is.”

I enjoy the increased independent learning at Carmel and how, for the most part, we are treated as young adults rather than students.
I enjoy learning languages in more depth in terms of grammar and vocabulary and the interesting topics we study within the course.
I took part in the week long work experience trip to Rouen in February, which was a fantastic experience and benefited my speaking and listening skills greatly.
Carmel's language facilities, learning environment, as well as the support and teaching, has impressed me the most about the college. After Carmel, I am hoping to study languages further, with a university course involving French being a very high possibility. I may take a year abroad to a French speaking country, like Senegal, to gain work experience or to do volunteering work.

Brett Takemoto
Great Sankey
Studying: French, Spanish, Maths

Work Experience in Rouen

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What other activities will I get involved in?

Our trip to Rouen enabled our French students to complete 5 days of work experience in a range of fields such as catering, education, medicine, media and radio. The students found the experience very enjoyable and developed their linguistic skills and confidence in French.

The Spanish Department has organised many cultural trips to Barcelona as well as to Avila, near Madrid, where students stayed with a family, experienced the Spanish way of life and practised their language skills.

In June 2019, Spanish students visited Madrid where they explored the capital city and visit the Valle de Los Caidos, the controversial resting place of the Spanish dictator General Franco. In 2020, we are planning to organise a work experience in Spain.

Other activities include: language related careers advice sessions with former students and liaison officers from local universities; an annual taster day at the University of Manchester for all students interested in studying languages at degree level.

What are the entry requirements for these courses?

You will need GCSE grade 5 in your chosen language(s).

Where does a Modern Languages qualification lead?

Students in recent years have gone to university, studying languages by themselves or combined with other subjects, such as business, management, law, administration, ICT, engineering, international marketing and journalism. The choice is endless!

Can I study more than one language?

Yes – several students study two languages but many study just one.

Does it matter if I have only studied French or Spanish or just one or two years?

Not at all! When you begin the course you will find that we review a lot of the work done at GCSE and build on it.

What happens if I feel I am ‘weaker’ in one of the skill areas such as speaking?

This is not a problem as during the first few weeks of the course you have an opportunity to plan with your tutor what you can do to improve all your skill areas.

Remember - if you feel that you are experiencing difficulties with any part of the course there is always plenty of help on hand to support you.

I chose to continue studying French to a higher levels - as well as Mandarin as part of my Enrichment Programme – in order to enhance my career prospects and university applications, as I hope to study Business and Modern Languages at university.

The facilities and level of teaching within the languages department at Carmel are first class and there are always tutorials and support resources available if you need extra help. A key element of the course for me is speaking in the target language. Within the college day, there is dedicated time for extra speaking classes with a native tutor, which has helped to increase my confidence massively.

I have also had the amazing opportunity to spend a week working in Rouen, France in a Crèche. This has given me a real insight into the French culture and allowed me to develop and practice my linguistic and communication skills within a French-speaking environment.

Katie Drummond
St Gregory’s
Studying: French, Business Studies, Maths

MEET THE TUTORS

Yleana Morris
Head of MFL
Subject Leader French

Daniel Saunders
Subject Tutor Spanish

Sandra Gonzalez-Green
Spanish Assistant

More Information

Any member of the languages staff will be delighted to answer your questions either at the Open Events or at another time convenient to you.

Contact email: yleana@carmel.ac.uk