

German – GCSE Curriculum Overview (Years 10–11)

Curriculum Intent

At GCSE, German builds on the strong phonics-led and grammar-focused foundations established at Key Stage 3, enabling students to communicate with increasing accuracy, independence and sophistication. Across the two-year course, students develop secure control of vocabulary, grammar and sentence structure while applying language across a broad range of themes relevant to their own lives and the wider world. The curriculum is carefully sequenced to strengthen listening, speaking, reading and writing skills, deepen grammatical understanding across multiple time frames, and prepare students effectively for GCSE examinations through sustained practice, cultural engagement and exam-focused consolidation.

Structure of the GCSE German Course

GCSE German is taught as a coherent two-year programme, with clear progression from consolidation and extension in Year 10 to synthesis, fluency and exam readiness in Year 11.

Across both years, students develop:

- accurate pronunciation and listening skills through ongoing phonics revision
- secure control of present, perfect, imperfect and future time frames
- increasing grammatical sophistication, including word order, verb patterns and pronouns
- the ability to express opinions, justify ideas and narrate events
- cultural understanding of Germany and the wider German-speaking world

Themes are revisited and strengthened over time, allowing students to apply language more independently and confidently.

Year 10 – Extending Range and Building GCSE Foundations

In Year 10, students consolidate KS3 language while extending their ability to communicate across all GCSE themes.

Language and Grammar Development

Students strengthen control of present, perfect and future time frames, revisiting regular and irregular verb conjugations and applying negation accurately. They work extensively with modal verbs, separable verbs and infinitive constructions, and develop confidence with complex word order, including verb-second position, verb-final clauses and time–manner–place syntax.

Pronouns are introduced and developed, including direct and indirect object pronouns, reflexive forms and possessive adjectives. Students begin to work with more extended sentence structures, using conjunctions such as *weil*, *wenn* and *dass* to justify opinions and link ideas.

Themes and Application

Language is applied across themes such as my personal world, lifestyle and wellbeing, my neighbourhood, media and technology, studying and my future, travel and tourism school. Students describe daily life, experiences and ambitions, narrate past events and express plans for the future. Reading and listening activities include increasingly authentic texts, supporting comprehension for both gist and detail.

Cultural Understanding

Students explore cultural aspects of the German-speaking world, including education, social systems, environmental initiatives and historical contexts. Cultural learning supports vocabulary acquisition, comprehension and engagement with authentic perspectives.

Extended writing tasks and structured speaking practice are embedded throughout the year, preparing students for GCSE-style responses and controlled assessment tasks.

Year 11 – Accuracy, Independence and Examination Preparation

In Year 11, students apply and refine their language skills with greater independence, accuracy and fluency, while preparing directly for GCSE assessment at either foundation or higher.

Advanced Grammar and Sentence Control

Students consolidate all major time frames and develop confidence switching between present, perfect, imperfect and future tenses within extended responses. They work with conditional structures, imperatives, compound nouns and a wide range of prepositions. Word order is refined further, including complex clauses, relative constructions and prepositional verb patterns.

Pronoun use is extended, and students develop precision in adjective use and agreement. Grammar is revisited systematically to ensure accuracy and consistency across all skills.

Themes, Communication and Cultural Depth

Students revisit all GCSE themes, including personal world, neighbourhood, lifestyle and wellbeing, communication and technology, studying and future careers, and travel and tourism. They express and justify opinions, narrate events, give detailed descriptions and respond spontaneously to questions.

Cultural content is deepened through study of German history, politics and society, including topics such as the Berlin Wall, social welfare, energy policy and contemporary issues facing Germany and Europe. This supports both exam performance and broader cultural literacy.

Speaking, Listening, Reading and Writing

All four skills are developed in an integrated way. Students prepare for a read aloud, a role play, a photo card and general conversation task, practise translation in both directions and complete extended writing tasks with increasing fluency. Regular mock examinations and targeted feedback support progress and exam readiness.

Spring Term, Year 11 – Consolidation and Examination Readiness

In the Spring term of Year 11, curriculum time is deliberately structured for consolidation and preparation.

Students:

- revisit core grammar, phonics and vocabulary
- strengthen recall across all themes and time frames
- practise exam-style questions under timed conditions
- refine speaking responses and spontaneous communication
- address individual gaps through targeted revision

This ensures students enter the final examination period with confidence, accuracy and clear strategies for success.

Assessment and Progression

Assessment across KS4 includes regular retrieval practice, extended writing tasks, speaking assessments, translation exercises, mock examinations and exam-style listening and reading tasks. Assessment is used to inform teaching, identify gaps and support sustained progress.

By the end of Year 11, students can understand and produce extended spoken and written German, apply complex grammatical structures accurately, and communicate ideas clearly and confidently across a wide range of contexts. GCSE German provides a strong foundation for further language study and supports wider literacy, cultural understanding and communication skills.