



Reflecting on the Edexcel Summer 26 Language Exams

22nd September 2026



Trent & Tame
Language Network

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Grand Union
Language Network

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National Consortium
for Languages Education

Swanswell
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Funded by:



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**% of each cohort achieving a Grade 4+**

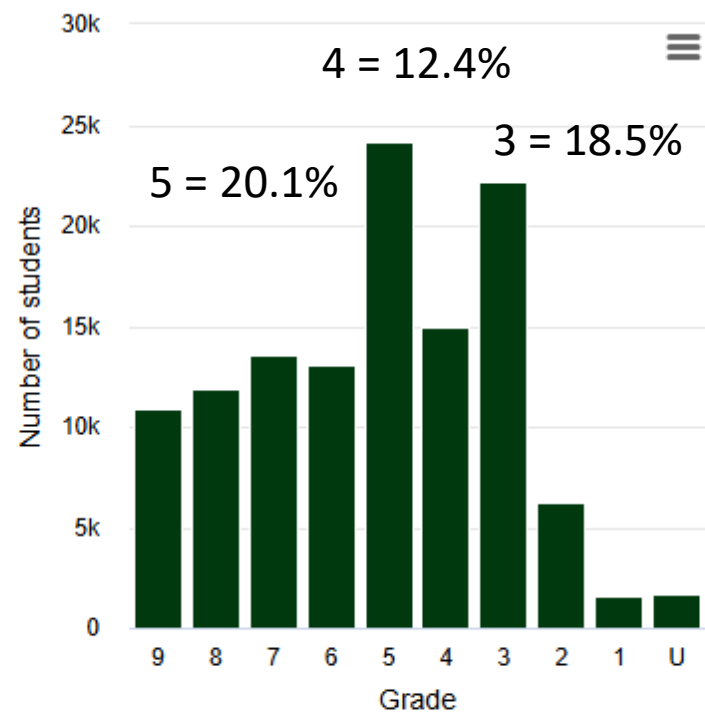
	2026	2025	2024	2023
French	73.6%	72.9%	71.2%	70.5%
German	80.2%	79.6%	77.4%	76.9%
Spanish	71.9%	70.6%	69.7%	69.2%

% of each cohort achieving a Grade 7+

	2026	2025	2024	2023
French	30.2%	29.7%	28%	26%
German	34.8%	34%	32%	27.6%
Spanish	28.9%	27.1%	26.7%	26.1%

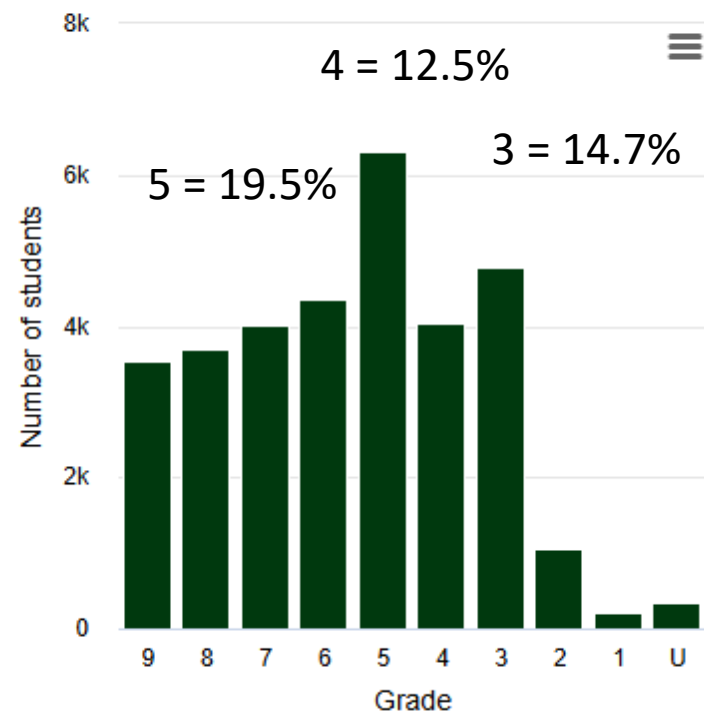


120,025 students received results in French



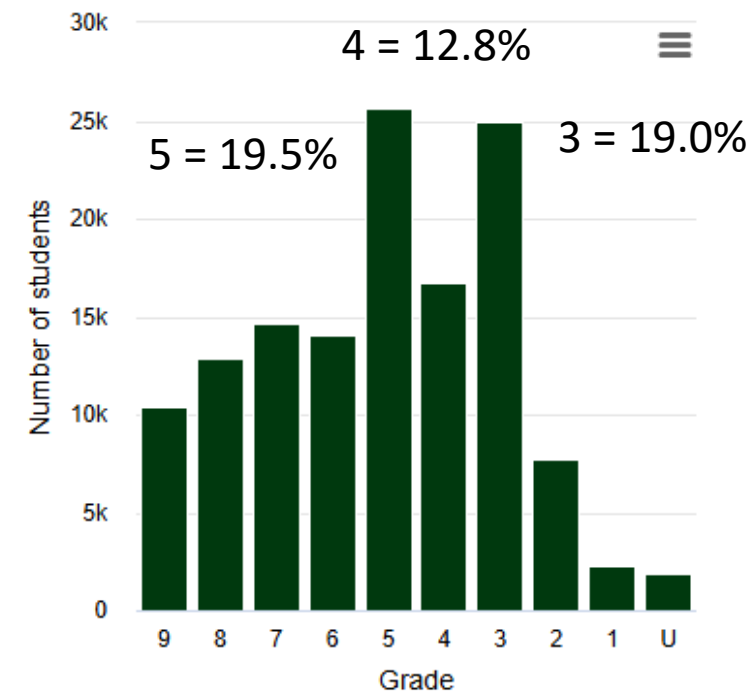
Grade distribution for French in summer 2026.

32,350 students received results in German



Grade distribution for German in summer 2026.

131,310 students received results in Spanish



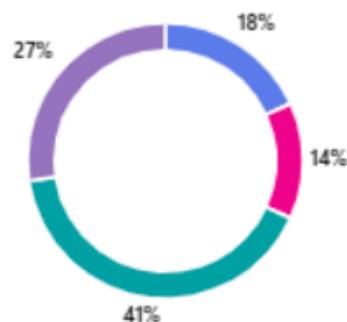


4. In which of the four papers did your foundation students perform best?

[More details](#)

● Listening	4
● Speaking	3
● Reading	9
● Writing	6

Foundation = Reading

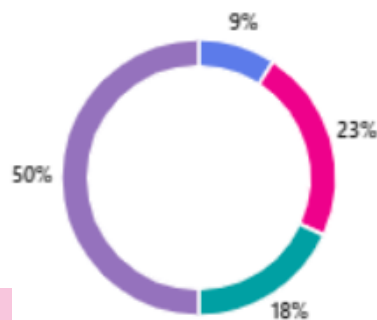


5. In which of the four papers did your higher students perform best?

[More details](#)

● Listening	2
● Speaking	5
● Reading	4
● Writing	11

Higher = Writing



Comments specific to Edexcel:

Foundation German scored highly on speaking but foundation French did not. Yet it was a stronger cohort in French and the same teachers.

Higher grades in all papers were lower than expected. We feel we should have put more pupils in for foundation tier.

The question does not always suggest the detail required- they need to develop answer not just answer the question.

Our Results.

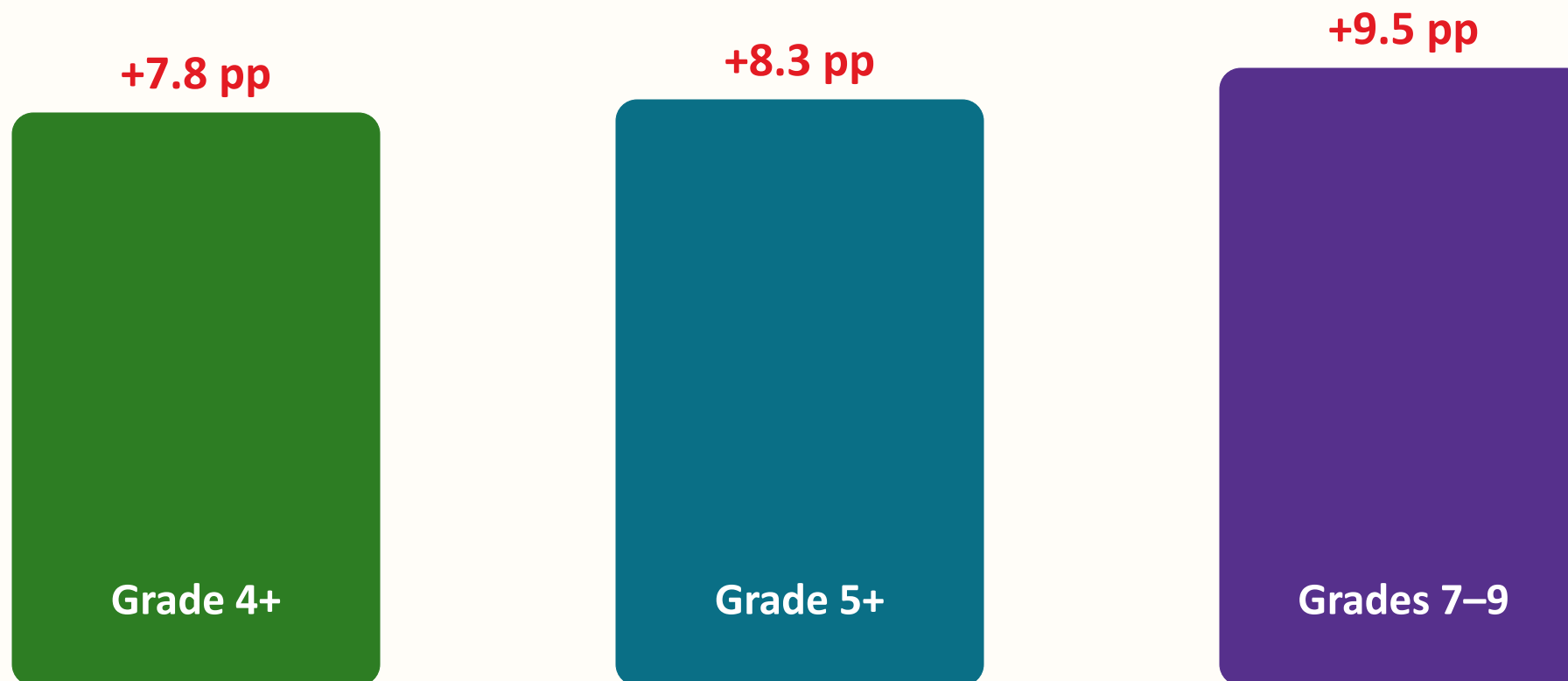
Our Next Steps.

- ✓ Honest reflection.
- ✓ Clear priorities.
- ✓ Stronger outcomes for every student.



2026 was harder: the bar rose at every grade

Compared with 2025, students needed a larger share of the available marks to achieve the same grade.



Every student had to work harder to achieve the same grade. Ofqual are still grading MFL roughly 1 grade lower than other Ebacc subjects

What the QLA is saying in plain English

The pattern is more useful than any single question: productive language is the clearest curriculum priority.

Area	School	Edexcel	Gap
Speaking: role-play prompt 2	39%	71.5%	-32.5 pp
Speaking: conversation response	22%	53.2%	-31.2 pp
Speaking: conversation accuracy	33%	59.3%	-26.2 pp
Writing F: language accuracy	38%	60.2%	-22.2 pp

Quick wins

- Better role play preparation. This will come with teachers having more experience of the exam and starting lower down the school
- Create sentences with more than 2 ideas in them. Focus on generating longer compound sentences rather than simple answers. Pupils who stuck to this did poorly.

School Interpretation

- Students need more frequent spontaneous speaking, not only prepared answers.
- Vocabulary must be retrievable under pressure — across speaking, listening, reading and writing.
- Writing needs explicit work on developing an answer while maintaining accurate core grammar.
- Reading/listening practice should teach how to handle unfamiliar language and distractors.

QLA: the gaps that now need deliberate practice

Based on question-level analysis against Edexcel

-  **Speaking**
Develop extended responses with more ideas, detail and spontaneity.
-  **Listening**
Build stamina with longer texts and higher-order inference questions.
-  **Reading**
Improve translation into accurate, natural English.
-  **Writing**
Increase accuracy and confidence with complex, Higher-tier structures.
-  **Consistency**
Reduce variation between classes through shared routines.

Paper	Question / trait (plain English)	Skill tested	Max mark	School %	Edexcel %	Gap (pp)	RAG
1F SPEAKING (F)	Conversation – language knowledge & accuracy	Vocabulary, grammar and accuracy	4	33.0%	59.3%	-26.2 pp	RED
1F SPEAKING (F)	Conversation – response & development	Conversation response and development	12	22.0%	53.2%	-31.2 pp	RED
1F SPEAKING (F)	Follow-on questions – response	Follow-on questions	4	32.0%	49.5%	-17.5 pp	RED



What have you introduced / continued using in your KS4 provision which has worked well and supported your learners?



Padlet

tracywilliams6 • 1h

Reflecting on the Edexcel Summer 26 GCSE MFL Exams

Listening Speaking Reading Writing Other reflections Add section

Listening

Takeaways from the Examiners Report

- Students often understood the general gist of a passage but didn't give enough detail to communicate the entire message.
 - Get students to ask themselves "what exactly is this question asking me? Train them to include the whole idea in their answers, rather than just a word they recognise.
- Are higher numbers secure? Build this into regular retrieval practice. Easy marks if students know them!

Speaking

Intentional teacher – student interaction

"How much have a discussion with the names of students in our class and each term we are to have some individual 'talk time' with all of them. You speak to them whilst pupils are working on a task, it's 2 mins max and we will then 2 questions linked to the work we are doing. The don't mark or grade the interaction, just tick off that we have spoken to them and then by a requirement can identify common themes which are missing up multiple times, pronunciation, grammar problems, questions they can't answer."

A great strategy to make sure all of your students get regular 1:1 time with you and feedback on their speaking.

Reading

What are the most important words for Year 10 / 11 to focus on learning?

Now is the time to focus on high frequency words which might appear several times on a reading or listening paper regardless of topic. Frequency words, time indicators, prepositions and other non-topic-specific words. All of them! They are called these star words, because they turn your students into super star linguists. They are words like same, other, like, until, too. The words that don't fit mostly into topic words but change the meaning of a sentence.

Which are the most important words from the vocab lists. In my opinion - the star words! Make sure your students know these words well and draw attention to them wherever you see them!

Writing

What are the most important verbs for Year 11 to focus on learning now?

Focus on a small number of key verbs which can be used in all topic areas. Make sure students are confident using these structures in the past, the present and the future tense. Provides lots of practice opportunities moving from receptive to productive with new vocabulary work and turn talk opportunities.

Being able to use the high frequency verbs accurately is key at all grades. Build a verb fluency routine into your regular retrieval practice. You could also modify it so you identify the 5 most important verbs for each topic area and practise conjugating those verbs regularly. 1st person for a grade 4. 1st and 3rd person for a grade 5. Multiple persons for a grade 7 +

Other reflections

Jonathon free pro October in French looks an up to take challenge Full info Post | Li

1. Take a snip / screen shot of the resource you want to share. Save it to your computer.
2. Click on the + button in the section your idea relates to.
3. Upload the screen shot.
4. Then add some detail.
5. Before you click publish, check it's going into the section you want it to go into! You can see this at the very bottom of the post.



Breakout rooms:

1. Choose a breakout room which matches the main area you want to work on.
2. Ideally, there will be 3-4 people in each room.
3. What are the specific challenges in this area? What are the potential solutions?
4. Explore any ideas on the padlet that would also support you in this area.
5. Please upload a summary of your conversation onto the padlet at the end of the time available.
6. Try to stay focused on the task in hand!



Breakout rooms:

1. Listening / reading / learning vocab.
2. Accurate verbs
3. Asking and understanding questions
4. Read aloud and tricky phonemes
5. Describing a photo
6. Responding to unseen questions
7. Aiming for Grade 7 – 9 Developing variety and complexity



Foundation Speaking: Follow up questions – read aloud and after the photo

- On the short response question, less is more.
- 2 words is enough, as long as it fully answers the question - ¿Qué piensas de los videojuegos? - Me gustan = 2 marks.
- It doesn't even need a verb - ¿Con quién pasas tu tiempo libre? - mi madre = 2 marks
- Students are underprepared for these questions, but the marks can really add up in a positive way.
- If the students says something to get two marks, and then adds additional information which wasn't necessary or was inaccurate, the mark is reduced as the whole answer is marked holistically.

Part 2 – Short interaction (4 marks)

Mark (Question 1)	AO1: Response to spoken language	Marks awarded	 / 2
2	Response fully communicated.		
1	Response partially communicated, some ambiguity.		
0	No rewardable communication.		
Mark (Question 2)	AO1: Response to spoken language	Marks awarded	 / 2
2	Response fully communicated.		
1	Response partially communicated, some ambiguity.		
0	No rewardable communication.		
Comments:			

Part 2 – Questions relating to the picture (4 marks)

Mark (Question 1)	AO1: Response to spoken language	Marks awarded	 / 2
2	Response fully communicated.		
1	Response partially communicated, some ambiguity.		
0	No rewardable communication.		
Mark (Question 2)	AO1: Response to spoken language	Marks awarded	 / 2
2	Response fully communicated.		
1	Response partially communicated, some ambiguity.		
0	No rewardable communication.		



What comes next?

**How can you develop a clear action plan
for your setting?**

Key priorities for 26-27

Three connected priorities, applied differently at KS3, Year 10 and Year 11.

1 Speak more, earlier

Build routine spoken retrieval into every year group.

Develop answers beyond a first sentence.

Increase role-play, read-aloud and follow-on question practice.

2 Secure the core language

High-frequency verbs and structures become non-negotiable.

Cumulative vocabulary retrieval.

Accuracy routines: verb, tense, adjective, word order, negatives.

3 Diagnose → reteach → revisit

Use short common assessments to find gaps.

Reteach the precise skill, not the whole topic.

Revisit after 2–4 weeks to check that learning has stuck.

The aim is not “more exam practice”. It is stronger language knowledge and more automatic use of it.

Our action plan: small actions, every lesson

1

Embed speaking routines weekly

Short, frequent and challenging.

2

Sharpen comprehension skills

Inference, detail, purpose and attitudes.

3

Make translation routine

Regular practice with explicit exam technique.

4

Improve writing quality

Accuracy, complexity and structure.

5

Track, feedback and adapt

Use data to inform every decision.

SMALL ACTIONS

Every lesson.
Big difference.
For every
student.



NCLE Webinar. Wednesday 14th October 4.00pm – 5.00pm

Join colleagues from across the country and representatives from both exam boards for an evidence-based discussion on the potential for the new GCSE to reverse declining participation and inspire more young people to opt for languages.

[Webinar Registration - Zoom](#)





NPP's on Language Educators Online

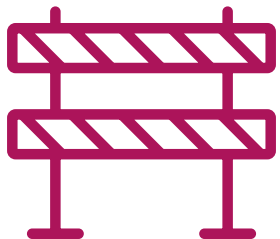


Using AI

Beeleigh: Enhancing self-efficacy through formative assessment and feedback in MFL

Etherow: Innovating the language curriculum to increase student motivation and engagement

Kinder: Sing to Speak: Using Music to Empower Vulnerable Learners for the GCSE Speaking Exam



Reducing Barriers to Learning

Derwent: Combining careers, culture, authentic resources and a real-world focus to continue learning German beyond GCSE.

Kinder: Sing to Speak: Using Music to Empower Vulnerable Learners for the GCSE Speaking Exam

Wells: Every Learner a Language Learner



NPP's on Language Educators Online



Celebrating Multilingualism

Adur: Home, heritage and community languages, and intercultural cohesion across schools

Solent: Connecting, collaborating and celebrating – civic engagement and employability across the Solent Language Network

Swanswell: Celebrating multilingualism in Coventry



Transition across all key stages

Brayford: Languages and your future: making explicit links between language learning and careers

Isbourne: Harnessing Parent Power

Lakes: Talking Classrooms: Stepping Away from the Textbook

Thames West: Building Strong Foundations at KS2 MFL

Trent and Tame: Transition: Developing a Compelling Narrative About the Value of Language Learning in KS2 and KS3





Examiners Reports

The links below for each language will take you to the Examiner's reports. They are under Exam materials, June 2026. If you scroll down, the examiner reports are at the bottom.

[Pearson Edexcel GCSE Spanish \(2024\) | Pearson qualifications](#)

[Pearson Edexcel GCSE German \(2024\) | Pearson qualifications](#)

[Pearson Edexcel GCSE French \(2024\) | Pearson qualifications](#)



Mock service. Our mock service will be opening shortly for MFL using the June 2026 paper.

[Mocks Service Guidance | Pearson qualifications](#)



You can contact Edexcel's Subject Advisor - Rebecca Waker by e-mail

teachinglanguages@pearson.com or book a 15 minute meeting
<https://outlook.office365.com/owa/calendar/PearsonLanguagesBookings@pearsoneducationinc.onmicrosoft.com/bookings/>



The GCSE Exam Insights training is 29th Sep for French, 30th Sep for Spanish and 1st October for German. Due to high demand, there will also be another session coming for French and Spanish on 13th and 14th October

[Professional Development Academy | Online CPD courses | Pearson UK](#)



Session Evaluation:

West Midlands Regional Language
Network CPD Reflecting on the
summer 2026 language exams.



[West Midlands Regional Language Network CPD Reflecting on the summer 2026 language exams. – Fill out form](#)