This subject guide relates to courses developed from the French Extension Senior Syllabus 2009.

Why study French Extension?

French Extension is designed for students in Year 12 who wish to advance their proficiency in French. The course is challenging and the standards are higher than those in the parent syllabus. Students should have considerable French language background already and well-developed communicative skills in French to enable them to undertake the in-depth work required. Students have either already completed, or are in the final year of, the Authority subject French, i.e. French Extension is additional to the Authority subject French, not an alternative.

Language learning is a means of developing communicative abilities to interpret, express and negotiate meaning through oral and written texts and contributes to an individual student’s intellectual, cognitive, social and affective development.

Proficiency in languages enables students to participate more fully in communities within Australia and globally, and to engage in artistic, commercial, diplomatic and industrial enterprises on an international scale. The study of French Extension enhances analytical, creative and critical thinking by challenging students to further develop their linguistic competence and their understanding and perception of present-day French society.

What is studied?

French Extension emphasises the importance of experiencing language in context. It focuses on developing students’ language proficiency through furthering linguistic development and enhancing sociocultural understandings. This is achieved through the use of a range of themes and text types.

The themes chosen provide a context for the study of linguistic structures and language forms, for sociocultural input and for dealing with issues in present-day society. Themes chosen might include literature, the arts, social sciences, media studies, science, technology and/or the environment, and business/commerce. Opportunity exists also for students to study areas of specialised interest, e.g. leisure activities or sport.

In their course of study, students will be exposed to a range of text types appropriate to the chosen themes. They will use a wide range of spoken, written and visual text types, both literary and non-literary. Through using a range of text types relevant to the themes, students’ familiarity with register and sociocultural knowledge and understanding will be enhanced.

How do students learn?

French Extension provides opportunities for students to interact at an advanced level of language with the teacher, class members, French-speaking exchange students, visitors and community members. Opportunity exists also for students to travel to France as exchange students or on a visit. There is a rich variety of communicative tasks designed to engage the student in using language purposefully to achieve the objective of developing an advanced level of proficiency in French.
Students will be exposed to activities in listening, speaking, reading and writing, incorporating a wide variety of text types. These activities may be supported by the use of current technologies, performances in French and contact with background speakers in their various areas of expertise.

Students might engage in learning experiences such as:

- interviewing French speakers about their literary interests, or using French poems as a stimulus for creative writing
- viewing a film, and analysing and discussing its social and/or historical setting
- rewriting an Australian legend in French for a children’s storybook
- attending a play performed by a French theatre group and discussing it with the class
- researching music listened to by French teenagers and comparing it with Australian tastes
- conducting a class debate on a controversial issue
- researching Australian–French relations today.

How are students assessed?

The achievement level awarded to each student on exit from the course will be based on the fullest and latest information about each student’s achievement of the exit standards of the course. The exit standards are described in terms of the four macroskills: Listening, Reading, Speaking and Writing.

Assessment tasks associated with the four macroskills assess students’ abilities to comprehend and convey meaning at an advanced level of proficiency in French, and across a range of text types. Assessment techniques include supervised written assessments, extended written responses (e.g. newspaper or journal articles, critiques of theatre performances or films, short stories, commentaries, scripts for plays, or formal and informal speeches), and responses to stimulus materials.

Non-written assessments, such as one-to-one interviews or conversations, small-group discussions, debates, formal speeches/presentations, datashow or multimedia presentations, seminar presentations, mock interviews and role plays, are also used.

How can parents help?

Parents can help students by providing a supportive environment in the home, by showing an interest in what students are doing daily, and by encouraging them in their studies.

Parents can encourage their children to reinforce their school language learning by daily practice at home, by taking an active interest in the cultural and current events associated with France, as presented in the media, and by encouraging their children to view and listen to French language programs on television and radio.

Parents and guardians might also consider:

- perusing the French Extension syllabus and discussing the school work program with the teacher
- discussing the student's progress with the student and relevant school personnel.

More information

If you would like more information, please email senior.syllabuses@qcaa.qld.edu.au. You can also visit the QCAA website www.qcaa.qld.edu.au and search for 'French Extension'.