

Post-16 Curriculum - French

Subject Curriculum Overview

Subject	French
Qualification / Specification	AQA Advanced Level
Awarding Body	AQA
Level	3
Curriculum Lead	Matt Thorne
Teaching Staff	Hannah Brear
Guided Learning Hours	5 hours of class time + 1 skills builder +0.5 FLA session 1-to-1
Year(s) Delivered	12 & 13 in the same class
Last Review Date	June 2026
Next Review Date	June 2027

1. Curriculum Intent

The purpose of A Level French is to develop students into confident, independent linguists who can communicate effectively in French and engage critically with the language, culture, society, and history of French-speaking countries and develop critical thinking and analytical skills when approaching set literary and cinematic works. The development of transferable skills such as listening, communication and presentation skills, together with researching skills, group work and problem-solving make up an essential part of the A level course. The course promotes high levels of linguistic competence while fostering intercultural awareness, analytical thinking and an appreciation of global, political and social perspectives. Students develop the ability to understand authentic spoken and written French, express complex ideas accurately, and respond critically to not only literary works and films but also to develop their own justified opinions on a range of contemporary social and political issues.

The curriculum is carefully sequenced to build on GCSE knowledge and develop advanced skills in listening, speaking, reading, writing, translation, and independent research. Students progress from discussing familiar topics to analysing complex social, political, and cultural issues in the Francophone world. The Independent Research Project develops academic research, presentation, and evaluation skills that prepare students for higher education and similar to an EPQ, the right choice of topic can have a hugely positive impact on UCAS statements, or during interviews for apprenticeships or other employment avenues. A Level French supports progression to university courses in

languages, international relations, politics, law, business, journalism, education, translation, linguistics, liberal arts, management, tourism, history, philosophy, performing arts and cultural studies, as well as apprenticeships and employment in international sectors. Increasingly, there is a need for language skills in medicine, pharmaceuticals and advertising given the increasingly diverse population in the UK and the globalised nature of branding.

Employers and universities increasingly value graduates who possess strong communication skills, problem-solving abilities, cultural awareness, critical thinking, adaptability, and resilience. A Level French develops these transferable skills through authentic language use, problem-solving, independent learning, and analytical study. Students gain experience of researching, synthesising information, presenting arguments, and communicating with accuracy and confidence. These competencies are highly valued in sectors such as international business, diplomacy, tourism, media, marketing, law, education, government, and global commerce, where multilingualism and intercultural understanding provide a significant advantage.

Successful learners demonstrate increasing fluency, accuracy, and confidence when communicating in French. They remain undaunted by and enjoy linguistic challenges and can understand and analyse complex authentic texts and spoken materials, express sophisticated viewpoints, justify opinions, and engage critically with cultural and social issues. They show independence in research and learning, develop curiosity about the wider world, and apply advanced linguistic and analytical skills across different contexts. By the end of the course, students are equipped to progress successfully to higher education - we have a strong history of successful Oxbridge applications for languages here - employment, or further training and to participate confidently in an increasingly interconnected global society.

2. Foundational Knowledge

Area	Essential Knowledge / Skills	Why It Matters
Grammar and Language Structures	Secure understanding of tenses, moods (including subjunctive), sentence structure, agreement, pronouns, complex syntax, and accurate written and spoken French.	Provides the foundation for effective communication and enables students to express sophisticated ideas with accuracy and confidence.
Vocabulary Development	Extensive topic-based and general vocabulary linked to social issues, political life, culture, literature, film, and current affairs.	Allows students to understand authentic materials and communicate on a wide range of complex topics.
Listening Skills	Understanding authentic spoken French from a variety of speakers, accents, and contexts.	Develops real-world communication skills and prepares students for study, travel, and employment in international settings.
Reading Skills	Interpreting and analysing authentic texts, articles, literary extracts, and contemporary media.	Supports language acquisition while developing critical thinking and cultural understanding.
Speaking and Interaction	Presenting ideas, debating issues, expressing opinions, and responding spontaneously in French.	Builds confidence, fluency, and the ability to communicate effectively in academic, professional, and social contexts.
Translation Skills	Translating accurately between French and English while understanding nuances of meaning and style.	Enhances linguistic precision and deepens understanding of both languages.

Writing Skills	Producing extended written responses, essays, summaries, and analytical writing using accurate language.	Develops academic literacy, organisation of ideas, and the ability to construct well-supported arguments.
French-speaking Society & Culture	Knowledge of social issues, trends, multiculturalism, diversity, politics, and contemporary life in Francophone countries.	Promotes cultural awareness and enables students to engage critically with global issues and confidently refer to case-studies in written and speaking work.
Literature (Bonjour Tristesse, Sagan (1954)) & Film (Les 400 Coups, Truffaut (1959))	Study and analysis of the two set works (one novel, one film), including themes, characters, social/historical/cultural context, and techniques.	Develops analytical skills and deeper understanding of Francophone culture and perspectives.
Independent Research Project (IRP)	Researching a topic of personal interest related to the French-speaking world and presenting findings orally.	Encourages independence, academic research skills, critical evaluation, and confident presentation. Will usually be used/referred to in the UCAS/ interview process.
Intercultural Understanding	Understanding cultural differences, perspectives, values, and traditions across the Francophone world.	Prepares students to engage effectively in diverse and international environments and understand the rationale underlying perspectives that may be different to their own.
Critical Thinking & Analysis	Evaluating arguments, interpreting evidence, comparing viewpoints, and forming reasoned judgements. Analysing own performance and understanding personal metacognitive knowledge and executive functioning.	Supports success in higher education and develops transferable skills valued by employers.

3. Powerful Knowledge

There are THREE overarching areas of powerful knowledge in French A level (AQA). HOWEVER, in languages, a set of overarching powerful SKILLS (listening, reading, writing and reading) are required to demonstrate advanced knowledge and understanding and these are seen as equally important.

These can be summarised as follows:

- **Mastery of advanced linguistic knowledge**
- **Understanding of French and Francophone society, culture and identity**
- **Critical analysis and independent thinking through authentic texts, film and research**

These areas can be broken down into the following components.

Powerful Knowledge Area	Why It Matters	Evidence of Understanding
Advanced French grammar and syntax	Enables students to communicate accurately and precisely, moving beyond transactional language to sophisticated expression. Develops understanding of how to manipulate language with fluency, idiom and sophistication and how language works as a system.	Students use a wide range of complex structures and idiomatic language accurately in speaking and writing, adapting language and syntax to different contexts and purposes.
Rich and specialised vocabulary	Gives students access to authentic French-speaking cultures, current affairs and academic discussion. Expands their ability to express nuanced opinions.	Students confidently use topic-specific vocabulary and idiomatic expressions in one-to-one and class discussions with our FLA, essays, presentations and translations.
Translation as a tool for nuanced linguistic understanding	Develops awareness of linguistic structures, cultural nuances, word-play and the relationship between languages. Strengthens precision and analytical thinking.	Students accurately translate between English and French, justifying linguistic choices and recognising subtleties of meaning using meta-language with confidence and competence.
Knowledge of contemporary French-speaking society and application of case-studies to prove/disprove arguments	Provides insight into social, political and cultural issues affecting France and the Francophone world. Develops informed global citizens.	Students discuss and evaluate issues such as immigration, diversity, politics and social change using evidence and informed viewpoints in a range of historical, cultural, social, religious and geographical contexts..
Understanding of tangible and intangible cultural products and practices relating to the francophone world	Helps students appreciate how language reflects identity, values and traditions across the French-speaking world.	Students analyse cultural phenomena, making links between language, history, politics and society.
In-depth literary and film analysis and ability to relate key concepts to the socio, cultural and historical context of the set work.	Introduces students to significant cultural works (Les 400 Coups by Truffaut and Bonjour Tristesse by Sagan) and develops critical and interpretative skills. Encourages engagement with different perspectives and experiences.	Students construct analytical essays and discussions using textual or cinematic evidence to support interpretations. Students can confidently and competently provide definitions of key concepts related to the set works e.g. La Nouvelle Vague, Existentialism, Feminism, Les Trente Glorieuses, consumer society of the 1950s, women's contraceptive rights etc.
Strong independent research skills (IRP)	Develops intellectual curiosity, academic independence and the ability to investigate authentic French-language sources from printed works, to video clips to articles and podcasts online..	Students conduct sustained research, synthesise information from multiple sources and present informed conclusions in French. Students are able to provide strong arguments based on statistics and facts and strong counter arguments. They are able to confidently oppose and correct inaccurate statements or misconceptions about their chosen area of study.

Intercultural understanding	Enables students to challenge assumptions, appreciate different perspectives and operate effectively in a globalised world.	Students compare cultures thoughtfully and demonstrate sensitivity to cultural context in communication, avoiding stereotypes and basing strong arguments on up-to-date, well-researched evidence.
Critical thinking and evaluation	Encourages students to analyse arguments, evaluate evidence and form reasoned judgements in French.	Students present balanced arguments, support opinions with evidence and respond critically to alternative viewpoints.
Communication and spontaneity	Develops confidence in real-world interaction and prepares students for higher education and employment.	Students engage in spontaneous discussion, ask questions, justify opinions and respond effectively to unfamiliar stimuli.

4. Curriculum Implementation

Term / Unit	Key Content	Foundational Knowledge	Powerful Knowledge	Assessment Opportunities
<u>Year ONE course:</u> Half Term 1: The 'cyber-society' (La « cyber-société ») Introduction to "Les 400 Coups"	• Qui sont les cybernautes ? • Comment la technologie facilite la vie quotidienne • Quels dangers la « cyber-société » pose-t-elle ? Les 400 Coups Synopsis, Truffaut - La Nouvelle Vague, Auteurisme, L'autobiographie de Truffaut - "Antoine Doinel - c'est moi!"	<u>Grammar</u> : Formation and revision of PRESENT, PERFECT, IMPERFECT, FUTURE, CONDITIONAL, PLUPERFECT for regular and irregular verbs. Key Vocabulary: • Qui sont les cybernautes ? https://quizlet.com/gb/690417735/qui-sont-les-cybernautes-flash-cards/ • Comment la technologie facilite la vie quotidienne https://quizlet.com/gb/707018264/comment-technologie-facilite-la-vie-quotidienne-flash-cards/	Grammar: Year 13: SUBJUNCTIVE revision and Stretch and challenge for Y12 - What are the advantages of the internet and new technologies, social media, mobile phones & AI ? - What are the disadvantages ? - What are the advantages/disadvantages of technology that are new/different for the french-speaking world e.g. cobalt mining "les mineurs qui sont mineurs" for mobile phone batteries/ electric car batteries in DRC? "L'illéctronisme" -computer-illiteracy increasing marginalisation for certain groups e.g. poor, elderly, rural populations with no internet	Presentations in class. Weekly Stimulus card assessments with FLA Essays on New Wave, Auteurisme and autobiographical nature of 400 Coups. Grammar checks in every lesson.

		Quels dangers la « cyber-société » pose-t-elle ? https://quizlet.com/gb/682369619/as-topic-2-la-cyber-societe-flash-cards/ + STIMULUS CARD-related phrases https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1xIVUhfOQ4yyoj_4hziZBiqAbMwWLT3bgQw6QUR02Mw/edit#slide=id.p1	provision, incl. om-line banking, death of high street thanks to on-line shopping etc - “Les Smombies” - addiction to smartphones and impact on psycho-social development of young people. Dangers of online content, bullying, fraud, cyber attacks and impact of working from home on socialising, environment, communication skills development...	
<u>Year 1: Half Term 2</u> The place of voluntary work (Le rôle du bénévolat) <u>Les 400 Coups</u> <u>Coups</u>: Characters	Qui sont et que font les bénévoles ? Le bénévolat – quelle valeur pour ceux qui sont aidés ? Le bénévolat – quelle valeur pour ceux qui aident ?	<u>Grammar</u> : Direct Object Pronouns and the PDO rule, Indirect Object Pronouns, Translation Practice on Mixed Tense work and Key Vocab Qui sont et que font les bénévoles ? https://quizlet.com/gb/598495510/aqa-a-level-french-benevolat-flash-cards/ Le bénévolat – quelle valeur pour ceux qui sont aidés ? https://quizlet.com/gb/636438416/32-le-benevolat-quelle-valeur-pour-ceux-qui-sont-aides-flash-cards/	- What are the benefits of volunteering in today’s society? - Why do we need volunteering/ volunteers and how is their role different here and overseas? - Who is it that does voluntary work and who benefits? - What are the disadvantages of volunteering - e.g. children in orphanages who suffer from attachment disorder due to high volunteer turnover, charities who can’t rely on workers or spend time/money training them, depriving people from paid work e.g. in the care sector, is the government aware of the extent of poverty/hunger if people are relying on	Presentations in class. Weekly Stimulus card assessments with FLA Essays on characters incl: Mme Doinel, les hommes faibles, Antoine, les professeurs in 400 Coups. Grammar checks in every lesson. Paper One Listening, reading and writing assmts from Exampro on topics covered so far.

		Le bénévolat – quelle valeur pour ceux qui aident ? https://quizlet.com/gb/709790379/33-le-benevolat-quelle-valeur-pour-ceux-qui-aident-flash-cards/ General Volunteering Vocabulary: https://quizlet.com/533726248/mot-a-mot-le-role-du-benevolat-flash-cards/	voluntary support, charities and unmonitored foodbanks? - Case studies of key charities and voluntary organisations and the role they play in society e.g. La Croix Rouge, Les Restos du Coeur... - In which French-speaking countries is volunteering most/least popular and why? - How is the popularity of volunteering in France linked to high unemployment figures and “les surplomés”? - What can the government do/what should they do to protect the most vulnerable and avoid the need for voluntary services.	
Year 1: Half Term 3: A culture proud of its heritage (Une culture fière de son patrimoine) <u>Les 400 Coups:</u> Themes	Le patrimoine sur le plan national, régional et local Comment le patrimoine reflète la culture Le patrimoine et le tourisme <u>Grammar</u> : The Subjunctive, Adjectival agreements and Résumés including subjunctive conjunction phrases e.g. bien que, pour que,	Le patrimoine sur le plan national, régional et local https://quizlet.com/gb/706880711/41-le-patrimoine-sur-le-plan-national-regional-et-local-flash-cards/ Comment le patrimoine reflète la culture https://quizlet.com/gb/471098329/comment-le-patrimoine-reflete-la-culture-flash-cards/ Le patrimoine et le tourisme https://quizlet.com/gb/595255084/le-patrimoine-et-le-tourisme-flash-cards/	-What is heritage and what forms does it take? -Why preserve it in all its forms? How do heritage sites market themselves and what are the issues with becoming over-popular/ surfréquentés? - How does heritage reflect, impact and guide culture in the french speaking world? -What are the advantages and disadvantages of becoming a Unesco world heritage site or being on Unesco’s list of intangible heritage protection? -How have heritage sites been damaged by and safeguarded from tourism? -Case studies of heritage protection including les	Presentations in class. Weekly Stimulus card assessments with FLA Essays on themes incl: love/friendship, freedom, childhood, authorities, education, escape, writing, cinema in 400 Coups. Grammar checks in every lesson. Paper One Listening, reading and writing assmts from Exampro on topics covered so far.

	avant que, pour que...		grottes Lascaux, Mt Saint Michel and Pont du Gard Case study of Notre Dame - surely the 600 million euros it cost in restoration could have been better spent to reduce social inequalities, e.g. hunger, homelessness? -Was it worth it? -How can technology be used to promote and protect cultural heritage sites, artefacts etc?	
Year 1: Half Term 4 Contemporary francophone music (La musique francophone contemporaine) <u>Les 400 Coups: Cinematic Techniques</u> and Sample Essays	La diversité de la musique francophone contemporaine Qui écoute et apprécie cette musique ? Comment sauvegarder cette musique ? <u>Grammar</u> : The Passive Voice, Infinitive constructions, Impersonal verbs and revision of Reflexive verbs & recognition of the Past Historic Tense. Key Knowledge	La diversité de la musique francophone contemporaine https://quizlet.com/gb/600882633/la-diversite-de-la-musique-francophone-contemporaine-flash-cards/ Qui écoute et apprécie cette musique ? https://quizlet.com/695214966/52-qui-ecoute-et-apprecie-cette-musique-flash-cards/ Comment sauvegarder cette musique ? https://quizlet.com/gb/690637383/comment-sauvegarder-cette-musique-flash-cards/	How popular is contemporary francophone music? Which genres and styles exist in contemporary french music - who are the rising stars? How do people listen to contemporary French music - live? streaming? on-line? talent shows? festivals? CDs? What are the threats to contemporary francophone music? How might contemporary francophone music be safeguarded? Artistes/ chansons engagé(e)s - protest songs and songs with social/ political messages.	Presentations in class. Weekly Stimulus card assessments with FLA Essays on cinematic techniques in 400 Coups. Grammar checks in every lesson. Paper One Listening, reading and writing assmts from Exampro on topics covered so far. The creation of your own rap based on social issues in your local area.

	• How popular is contemporary francophone music? • Which genres and styles exist in contemporary french music - who are the rising stars? • How do people listen to contemporary French music - live? streaming? on-line? talent shows? festivals? CDs? • What are the threats to contemporary francophone music? • How might contemporary francophone music be safeguarded?		The origins and impact of french rap music The Quota system and whether the government should be involved in music laws to protect/ preserve artists.	
Year 1: Half Term 5 Cinema: the 7th art form (Cinéma : le septième art) <u>Les 400 Cents Coups</u> : Influences, Quotations, Exam	Pourquoi le septième art ? Le cinéma – une passion nationale ? Evolution du cinéma – les grandes lignes Grammar : Tricky Translations,	Pourquoi le septième art ? https://quizlet.com/gb/706880768/pourquoi-le-septieme-art-flash-cards/ Le cinéma – une passion nationale ? https://quizlet.com/gb/548844456/cinema-une-passion-nationale-flash-cards/	The origins of French cinema - the role of Freres Lumiere and Melies. The evolution of films from silent movies to films where the actors talked - the consequences of this - some actors lost their jobs as they had a German accent and the French founders of cinema	Essays on influences on Truffaut/ Les 400 Coups - who influenced him and who did he influence (with théorie d’auteur). Grammar checks in every lesson. Paper One Listening, reading and writing assmts from Exampro on topics covered so far.

Technique and revision of definitions for auteurisme and nouvelle vague. Revision of key dates in history around that time linked to women's rights.	Emphatic Pronouns, Pronoun word order, y,en, dont, ce qui, ce que, faire+INF, il se peut que, IMP vs PERF	Evolution du cinéma – les grandes lignes https://quizlet.com/gb/698931899/evolution-du-cinema-les-grandes-lignes-flash-cards/	thought they had already perfected the art form. French film directors and their impact on the francophone film industry - Jeunet and Amélie, Kassowitz and La Haine and other directors and actors incl. Agnes Varda, Truffaut... how are french films different to american blockbusters. Why are French films not as popular as anglophone films/ american blockbusters? (or are they?) What role does Cinema play in people's lives today and how has it changed over the years? Will cinema disappear faced with competition from illegal downloading and streaming platforms like Netflix? What are the qualities of a good film (with examples)? What are the qualities of a good actor/actress? How is cinema adapting/evolving to survive? With giant screens and surround sound in home cinemas and Netflix, is there really a future for cinema? Do films reflect real life or does real life reflect what we see in films? What is the role of film festivals and prizes for directors/ actors?	Analysis of award-winning french films that can be used as case-studies - La Haine, Le Fabuleux Destin d'Amélie Poulain, Welcome...
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			Consider the issues above in a range of french-speaking countries in both Europe and Africa.	
Year 1: Half Term 6 Revision and exam-style questions taken from Year 1 and 2 Topics and BOTH Bonjour Tristesse & Les 400 Coups timed essay questions throughout study leave. Year 12: Focus on IRP (Independent Research Project), grammar review, skills gaps and practice questions on Year 2 topics.	The Speaking Exam (Unit 3) will now have taken place for Y13 students and students will be required to attend during study leave as French is usually one of the last exams to be taken (Paper 1 and 2) so it is important to keep up exposure to the language.	Vocabulary testing in context of exam style questions on all Quizlet Vocab linked on this curriculum map. Mot à Mot sophisticated structures to agree/disagree with controversial statements linked to IRP and stimulus cards. Revision of subjunctive conjunction phrases to use in speech and in written form for boosting Résumé scores. Advanced literary terms with examples from the text for use in the Bonjour Tristesse/ 400 Coups essays.	- What are common translation traps? - What strategies do I need to employ when breaking down an essay title, a résumé, or a stimulus card? - How do I achieve the top band of marks in my Paper 2 essays? - What am I interested in and passionate about that relates to France or the French-speaking world? - Is there enough material (spoken, printed, on-line) to support my research in this area? - With regards to my IRP question or title, what are the FIVE headings your topic can be broken into? - What content do I need for approx. 3 minutes discussion on each of these five areas? - How could my IRP chosen topic be useful for university/UCAS applications or other subjects I am studying at A level – e.g. History, Music? - How can I agree with or disagree with a statement in an interesting way? What knowledge do I need to use my initiative to extend the point and ask an additional question in return?	Controlled-conditions essays on a range of Truffaut/ Les 400 Coups topics. Y13: Revision of Bonjour Tristesse. Grammar checks in every lesson. Paper One Listening, reading and writing assmts from Exampro on topics covered so far. Y12 students: Assessment on preparation of IRP and finalising Introduction and 5-7 key topic-related areas. Discussion practice and assessment.

			- What is the definition of <i>auteurisme</i> and the <i>nouvelle vague</i> ? How does Sagan/Truffaut paint a dark portrait of French society during <i>the Trente Glorieuses</i> - mention <i>authorities, women's rights, treatment/marginalisation of children</i> ? - What are FIVE subjunctive conjunction phrases that I can competently and confidently use in speech, writing and exam <i>Résumés</i> ?	
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5. Assessment Strategy

The AQA French A level Strategy at Island VI Form monitors student progress, develops confidence in all four language skills, prepares students for AQA examination requirements, and provides regular opportunities for feedback and improvement. Assessments measure students' ability to understand and respond to French, communicate accurately, and analyse cultural and social topics. All assessments are marked according to the most recent grade boundaries which are currently sitting as follows (2005-2026):

A*=93%+ A=83 - 92% B=73-82% C=63-72% D=53-62% E=43-52%

Assessment Type	Purpose	Frequency
Listening Assessments	To assess students' ability to understand spoken French from a range of contexts, including extracting key information, identifying opinions, and responding accurately. This develops skills required for AQA Paper 1.	Exam-style listening activities are completed weekly as part of lessons towards Paper 1, using past exam questions on topics we are currently studying. At the end of the year and prior to mocks/actual exams, mixed listening papers will be practised and assessed which monitor student progress across a whole range of topics.
Reading Comprehension Assessments	To evaluate students' ability to understand authentic and adapted French texts, identify meaning, infer ideas, and respond using accurate language. This supports preparation for AQA Paper 1.	Regular reading tasks completed during lessons and for homework. At the end of the year and prior to mocks/actual exams, mixed reading papers will be practised and assessed which monitor student progress across a whole range of topics.
Translation Assessments (French to English, English to French)	To develop accuracy in grammar, vocabulary, sentence structure and awareness of meaning. These assessments identify gaps in linguistic knowledge and	Translating and interpreting activities, alternating direction of translation, are practised with the grammar starters each lesson

	prepare students for translation elements of the written examination.	but also in the weekly practice of Paper 1 tasks, marked according to exam criteria on the current topics. At the end of the year and prior to mocks/actual exams, mixed topic translation papers will be practised and assessed which monitor student progress across a whole range of topics.
Essay Writing Assessments	To assess students' ability to develop arguments, analyse themes, use evidence, and demonstrate knowledge of French-speaking society, literature (Y2) and film (Y1). This supports AQA Paper 2 requirements.	Essays are set fortnightly and weekly/ twice-weekly during examination preparation periods. A controlled conditions essay or two essays will be set each half term as students need to practise planning and writing two essays in two hours with no resources at hand.
Speaking Assessments	To develop students' confidence in spontaneous communication, discussion skills, pronunciation and ability to justify opinions. This prepares students for AQA Paper 3, including discussion and individual research project elements.	One presentation to class per half-term, with shorter speaking practice activities every week with the FLA and in class. IRP practice discussions are regularly assessed with the FLA according to the exam criteria and pair work/ paired presentations are also assessed at least once a fortnight.
Vocabulary and Grammar Tests	To check students' understanding and retention of key vocabulary, grammatical structures and complex language needed for accurate communication. These assessments support A03 development.	Each lesson from starter activities to exam-style questions, depending on topic coverage.
Mock Examinations	To replicate AQA examination conditions, identify strengths and weaknesses, and provide evidence for predicted grades and intervention planning.	Twice per academic year (typically December/January and March/April).