

**French, German and Spanish
at SQA Higher Grade
Uptake and Centres 2000-13*
Uptake and Attainment 2008-13***

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*2013 data are pre-appeal

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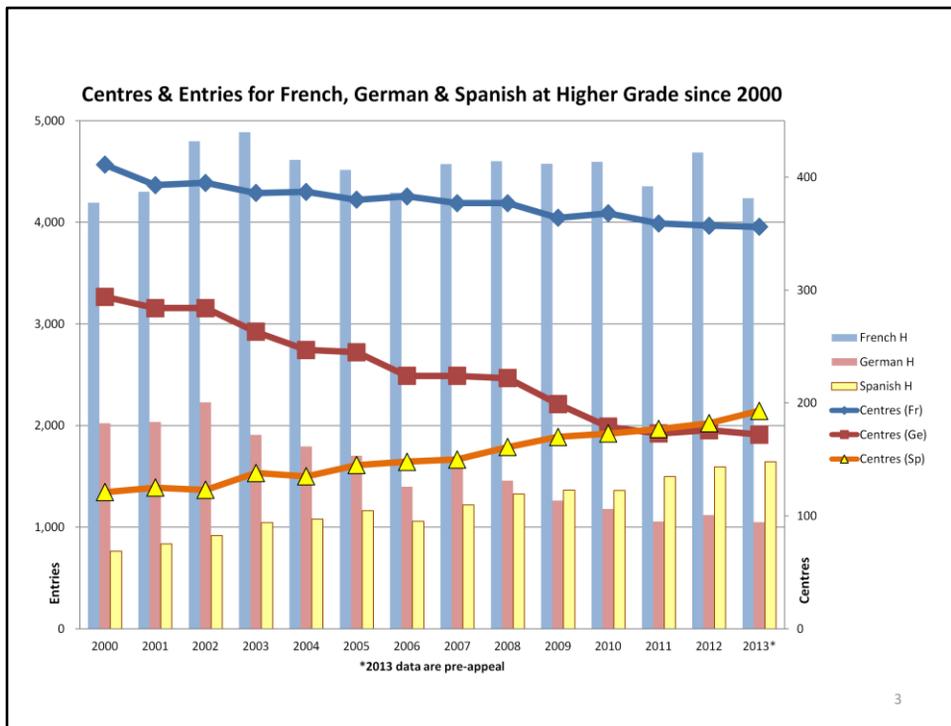
Slide 06: Entries and Attainment 2008-2013 for Higher German

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On **Slide 3** we look at the trend of entries in French, German and Spanish at Higher grade since 2000, and the associated number of centres offering the award.

On **Slides 4-6** we examine entries and attainment trends at Higher grade in French, German and Spanish between 2008 and 2013.

On **Slide 7** we compare pre-appeal entries and attainment in 2013 for French, German and Spanish at Higher grade.

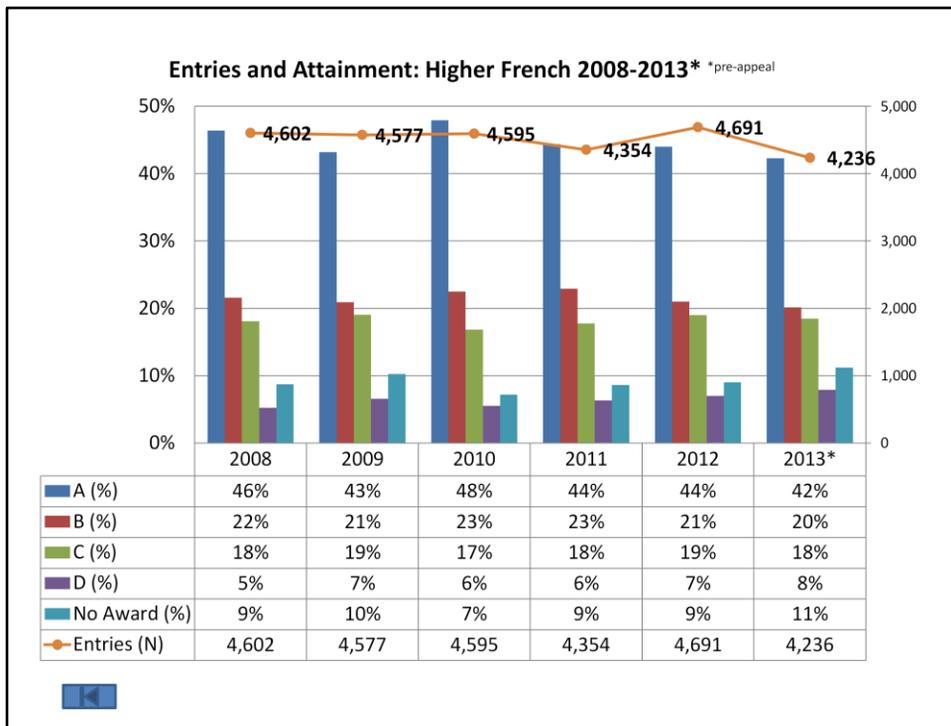


In this slide we examine long-term trend of uptake (2000-2013) in the three main languages offered at Higher grade in Scotland’s schools: **French, German and Spanish**. We look at both the number of candidates studying and the number of centres offering each language in turn.

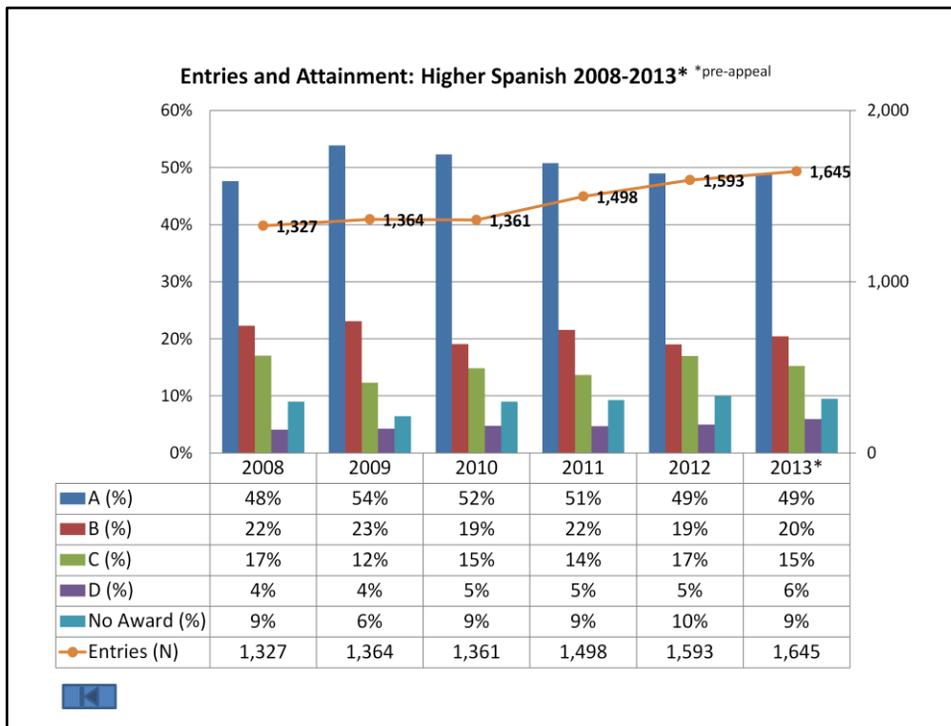
The graph shows that **French** continues to be the dominant language, although uptake at Higher has been variable. There was a 10% decrease in entries compared 2012, but entries for 2013 are actually 1% above entries in 2000 (4,236 vs. 4,194). At the same time however, the number of centres *offering* French has decreased by 13% from 411 in 2000 to 356 in 2013.

German was the second most common language studied at Higher grade up until 2008, and was briefly on an upward trend between 2000 and 2002. However, entries for Higher Spanish have overtaken those for German from 2009 onwards. Overall uptake of German has been on a downward trend (-48%, from 2,021 entries in 2000 to 1,050 entries in 2013), and the number of centres offering German has also diminished during that time (-41%, from 294 centres in 2000 to 172 centres in 2013). The steepest period of decline in the number of centres happened between 2008-09 and 2009-10 (10% on both occasions). Since 2011, there have also been more centres offering Spanish at Higher grade.

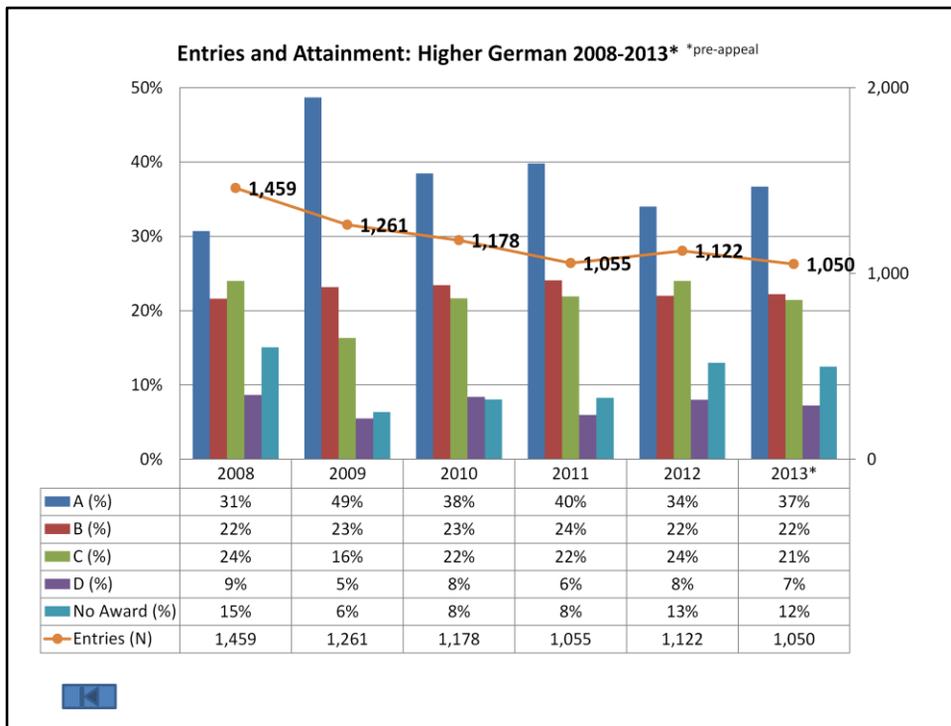
Spanish has been on an upward trend, both in terms of the number of entries and the number of centres offering the language. Compared to 2000, the number of entries is up by 115% (from 764 entries in 2000 to 1,593 entries in 2013), and the number of centres offering Spanish has increased by 60% (from 121 in 2000 to 193 in 2013). Whilst the increase in entries from 2012 to 2013 is only minimal (3%), there was a 6% increase in the number of centres.



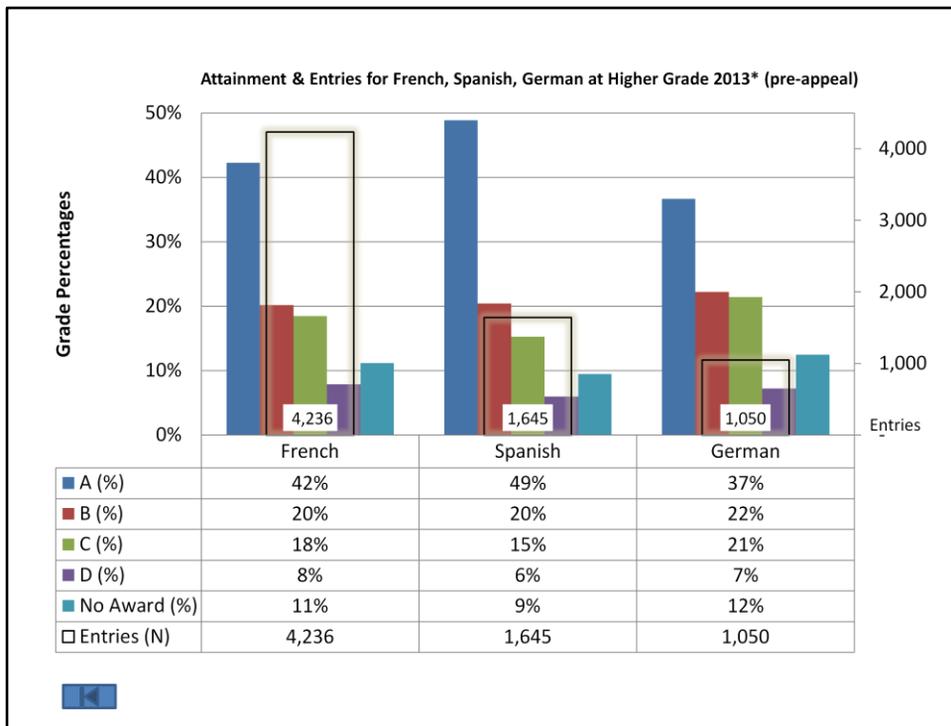
- Entries for French at Higher grade over the last five years have been on a downward trend overall although in 2012 rose above entries for 2008.
- However, the downward trend has continued with a 10% drop in the 2013 entries from the previous year.
- During this time attainment percentages at A grade have not changed significantly, ranging between 42% - 48% (6% differential).
- The 2013 pre-appeal figures show a 2% fall in the number of candidates achieving an A grade compared to 2012, which is below the average of 45% for the period.



- Entries for Spanish at Higher grade have been on an upward trend, although quantitatively speaking they are still considerably below those of French.
- However, attainment percentages at A grade have been equal to or above those of French, ranging between 48%-54% (6% differential).
- The 2013 pre-appeal figures show that the same percentage of candidates achieved an A grade as in 2012 (just below the average of 50% for the period).



- Entries for German at Higher grade have been on a downward trend, although they recovered slightly in 2012.
- Entries for Spanish at Higher grade overtook German in 2009.
- Attainment percentages at A grade have varied more significantly than in French or Spanish, ranging between 31%-49% (18% differential).
- The 2013 pre-appeal figures show a 3% increase in the number of candidates achieving an A grade compared to 2012, which is just below the average of 38% for the period.



- The 2013 pre-appeal data for French, Spanish and German at Higher Grade show that Spanish attainment at A grade is significantly above that of both French and German.
- We make the assumption that Spanish will in many cases be the second foreign language pupils study after French, and since both of these are Romance languages learners will find many similarities. Spanish is also a very phonetic language so will present pupils with fewer spelling challenges than in French.
- German has the lowest attainment percentage at A grade of the three languages, being 5% below that of French, and 12% below that of Spanish.
- We make the assumption that although both English and German are classified as Germanic languages, German presents additional challenges to Anglophone learners because it is an inflecting language i.e. nouns, pronouns, articles and adjective change according to their number and the grammatical function they serve in the sentence.
- On the other hand, English and German share many similarities in certain areas of vocabulary, and like Spanish German is a very phonetic language. This may help to explain why the overall pass rate for German (i.e. attainment at A, B or C grade combined) is roughly equivalent to that of French, and just below that of Spanish.