

# St George's School



## GCSE Options Booklet

January 2025

# GCSE Courses from 2025

## An Introduction

Welcome to the GCSE Curriculum Options booklet. You are about to choose the subjects that you wish to study in Years 10 and 11 (Key Stage 4). St George's provides you with the opportunity to follow a well-balanced course.

Very few of you will already have chosen your career and some of you will remain in doubt for some time to come. This is perfectly normal and there is no need to take any career decisions yet. Employers usually provide training and prefer to see evidence of a good, all-round education backed up by qualities such as reliability, determination and a capacity to work hard.

If you do have a specific career or profession in mind at this point, then it is important that you do your research carefully and find out now if there are specific qualifications or courses you should take to help you pursue that career, get into a specific university, or onto a particular apprenticeship course. But remember to keep your 'options open' as you could change your mind on a career at a later date.

Where you have a choice, choose subjects which:

- Require a range of skills
- You enjoy
- Challenge your learning
- Provide breadth and depth
- Offer the best future options

Speak to people who may be able to give you advice. Your parents will be invited to a parents' consultation evening and your tutor and Head of House will help you. Listen to them carefully. Talk to students who have done their GCSEs. Make sure that your choices are the right ones for you. Whilst having a positive relationship and liking your teacher is important, you should not choose a subject option based on this. You may not have the same teacher as you have this year, or be taught by the one you think you might get.

Year 9 students will have received a session from Herts Youth services (Friday 5) about future pathways last term, to help you think about the possibilities. You can ask for more impartial advice and guidance from Herts Youth services through your tutor, who can ask for an interview to be arranged for you.

This booklet is intended to give you all the information you need to help you make an informed choice; read it carefully and check the specific GCSE course information on the exam boards websites.

## Year 10 Options 2025 – Key Dates

Date	What's happening?
Thursday 9 January 2025	GCSE Options Talk for parents, 7pm-8pm Chapel.
Friday 10 January 2025	Friday 5 talk for pupils - GCSE Options Launch
Friday 17 January 2025	Friday 5 talk for pupils – PE, Languages, Technology, Business & Economics
Tuesday 21 January 2025	Year 9 Parents Evening, online 5-8pm. Online choices form goes 'live' via email
Wednesday 29 January 2025	GCSE subject Fair for Year 9. 1.30-2pm in the Assembly Hall.
Friday 14 February 2025, noon	DEADLINE for returning online choices form

## The GCSE Curriculum

- In Key stage 4, you follow a core curriculum, making up over 60% of total teaching time, consisting of:
  - English GCSE (with most students taking both English Language & English Literature)
  - Mathematics GCSE
  - Combined Science (2 GCSEs)
  - Religious Studies (Full Course GCSE, studies commenced in Year 9)
  - Personal, Social and Health Education (not examined)
  - Physical Education (not examined)
- Students will choose four other GCSE option subjects. This must include at least one of these:
  - Computer Science
  - French
  - Geography
  - History
  - Spanish
  - Separate Sciences

The remaining three subjects are chosen from the above list and/or:

- Art & Design
  - Business or Economics
  - Computer Science
  - Design & Technology
  - Drama
  - Economics
  - Food Preparation & Nutrition
  - French
  - Geography
  - History
  - Music
  - Physical Education
  - Spanish
  - Separate Sciences
- When choosing, keep in mind:
    - Students can do more than one practical subject
    - Students can take both Geography and History
    - Students can take two foreign languages
    - Students can only do one of Business or Economics.
  - Some subjects involve controlled assessment (coursework – now referred to as NEA or non-examination assessment), and some of the work that you do in class will be submitted to an examiner. Details of the requirements for GCSE are given in the subject outlines on the following pages. You should consider these carefully in making your choices and be aware what the requirements are.
  - Whilst the vast majority of pupils are likely to be given all of their choices, the final decision about subject choice will be with the School. You will be informed of the final choices in the summer term.
  - Pupils need to select their options carefully. It will be increasingly challenging to change options over time. No change in the options selection is allowed beyond **Friday 19 September 2025**.

### Conclusion

Your decisions are important to us too. The final shape of the Key Stage 4 curriculum reflects our care and concern in aiming to provide an excellent education for all our pupils, within our available resources.

If subjects are oversubscribed or numbers are too low for a viable class, you may need to make a second choice. Although we will do our best to satisfy choices, in all cases, the school has the final decision about which courses will run from next September.

## Frequently asked questions

### How many options can students choose?

Students are asked to choose four options ranked in order of preference. One of the options must be either Computer Science, French, Geography, History, Spanish or Separate Sciences.

### Why are there two reserves on the options form?

As we do not use predefined option blocks, each year our timetable is designed to accommodate as many choices as possible. You will appreciate that sometimes not all four option choices for all students can be accommodated due to blocking, staffing, group size and subject clashes. In this case we may need to allocate a reserve choice. We request that students give us two reserve choices in order of preference.

### Can students take Business and Economics?

Although the Business and Economics courses are different, we have found that it is better for students to select a broad and balanced curriculum of option subjects. As such, if they wish, students should select either Business or Economics. Both Business and Economics can be studied at A-Level without having taken the subject at GCSE.

### Can any student take Separate Sciences?

The option to take Separate Sciences (sometimes called 'Triple Science') is open to all students. Science teachers will be speaking to Year 9s in their lessons about the course and it would be worth making an appointment with at least one Science teacher at parents' evening to get further information.

### What would a typical timetable look like in Year 10?

A typical timetable would look like this:

English	Maths	Re	PSHE	PE	Science Double	Opt A	Opt B	Opt C	Opt D
8	6	2	1	2	Science Triple	5	5	5	5

### How to submit the options form?

Students will receive an invite email on 21<sup>st</sup> January 2025 to their school email address, containing the link to submit their online GCSE option form. This needs to be completed by Friday 14<sup>th</sup> February at 12 noon. Students will receive a confirmation email of their option allocations in early May 2025.

### What if my child has more questions?

Please tell your child to speak to their tutor or subject teacher first. If the question cannot be answered by them and/or you have different questions, please do email [bcullis@stgeorges.herts.sch.uk](mailto:bcullis@stgeorges.herts.sch.uk).

## List of Subjects with Contact Names

For details on any of the subjects referred to in this booklet, students should speak to their current teacher (where applicable) or the following members of staff:

### **CORE SUBJECTS**

English Mrs L Holton-Gaus

Mathematics Mr R Glass

Physical Education Mr D Rees

PSHE and Careers Miss A Hartley

Religious Studies Mr S Williams

Combined Science Mrs M Evans

### **OPTIONS**

Art and Design Mrs C Turner

Business Mr K Reynolds

Computer Science Mr J O'Neil

Design & Technology Mr S Tweeddale

Drama Mr S Wallace

Economics Mr K Reynolds

Food Preparation & Nutrition Mr S Tweeddale

Geography Mr S Williams

History Mrs E Sabato / Mrs F Chalkley

Modern Foreign Languages Mrs J Mehta

Music Miss A Humphrey

Physical Education Mr D Rees

Separate Sciences Mrs M Evans

# GCSE English Language AQA 8700

Course Leader: Mrs L Holton-Gaus



## Written Examination 100%

→ Two papers worth 50% each, each lasting 1 hour 45 minutes

### PAPER ONE – Explorations in Creative Reading and Writing

#### Reading Section, 40 marks (25% of GCSE)

Students are provided with one single unseen Literature text extract. Students read the text extract and respond to questions about it. (Extract texts may be from the 19th, 20th or 21<sup>st</sup> centuries.)

- 1 short form question (1 x 4 marks)
- 2 longer form questions (2 x 8 marks)
- 1 extended question (1 x 20 marks)

#### Writing Section, 40 marks (25% of GCSE)

Students to select one question from a choice of two, linked in theme to the extract in the reading section.

- 1 extended writing question (24 marks for content, 16 marks for technical accuracy)

### PAPER TWO – Writers' Viewpoints and Perspectives

#### Reading Section, 40 marks (25% of GCSE)

Students provided with two linked unseen extracts. One Non-Fiction text and one Literary Non-Fiction text. (Extract texts may be from the 19th, 20th or 21<sup>st</sup> centuries.)

- 1 short form question (1 x 4 marks)
- 2 longer form questions (1 x 8, 1 x 12 marks)
- 1 extended question (1 x 16 marks)

#### Writing Section, 40 marks (25% of GCSE)

- 1 extended writing question (24 marks for content, 16 marks for technical accuracy)

#### **NON-EXAMINATION ASSESSMENT: Spoken Language (0% of GCSE)**

A selection of speaking and listening tasks that assess presenting, responding to questions and feedback as well as use of Standard English. Tasks are teacher set and marked throughout the course.

# GCSE English Literature AQA 8702

Course Leader: Mrs L Holton-Gaus



## Written Examination 100%

➔ Two papers: paper 1 worth 40%, lasting 1 hour 45 minutes and paper 2 worth 60%, lasting 2 hours 15 minutes.

### PAPER ONE - Shakespeare and the 19<sup>th</sup> Century Novel

**1 hour 45 minutes, 64 marks (40% of GCSE)**

#### **Section A Shakespeare:**

Students will answer one question on their play of choice. They will be required to write in detail about an extract from the play and then to write about the play as a whole.

#### **Section B The 19th-century novel:**

Students will answer one question on their novel of choice. They will be required to write in detail about an extract from the novel and then to write about the novel as a whole.

### PAPER TWO - Modern Texts and Poetry

**2 hour 15 minutes, 96 marks (60% of GCSE)**

#### **Section A - Modern texts:**

Students will answer one essay question from a choice of two on their studied modern prose or drama text.

#### **Section B - Poetry:**

Students will answer one comparative question on one named poem printed on the paper and one other poem from their chosen anthology cluster.

#### **Section C - Unseen poetry:**

Students will answer one question on one unseen poem and one question comparing this poem with a second unseen poem.

# GCSE Mathematics Edexcel 1MA1

Course Leader: Mrs R Glass



Mathematics will be examined at GCSE in one of two tiers: Foundation (grades 1 to 5) and Higher (grades 4 to 9). A final decision is made on levels of entry, in January of Year 11.

Each tier will be tested with three externally assessed written papers, one is a non-calculator paper and the other two require a calculator. Each paper has a duration of 90 minutes and 80 marks available. All papers have an equal weighting. The major topic areas covered will be:

- Number
- Algebra
- Ratio, proportion and rates of change
- Geometry and measures
- Probability
- Statistics

The weightings for these topic areas for each tier are illustrated below:

Tier	Topic area	Weighting
Foundation	Number	28%
	Algebra	23%
	Ratio, proportion and rates of change	28%
	Geometry and measures	18%
	Statistics and Probability	18%
Higher	Number	18%
	Algebra	33%
	Ratio, proportion and rates of change	23%
	Geometry and measures	23%
	Statistics and Probability	18%

Each paper will cover all assessment objectives according to the proportions indicated in the table below:

Assessment Objective	Foundation %	Higher %
Use and apply standard techniques	50	40
Reason, interpret and communicate mathematically	25	30
Solve problems within mathematics and in other contexts	25	30

Functional elements of Mathematics are assessed in this specification and, although students do not have to pass Functional Skills Mathematics at Level 2 to gain a Grade 5 or higher in GCSE Mathematics, they will be well placed to achieve a Functional Skills Mathematical Qualification should it be required.



## GCSE Combined Science AQA 8464

Course Leader: Mrs M Evans



All the GCSE Science courses that we teach follow the AQA specifications. This qualification is linear. Linear means that students will sit all their exams at the end of the course in year 11.

Biology Content	Chemistry Content	Physics Content
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Cell biology</li><li>• Organisation</li><li>• Infection and response</li><li>• Bioenergetics</li><li>• Homeostasis and response</li><li>• Inheritance, variation and evolution</li><li>• Ecology</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Atomic structure and the periodic table</li><li>• Bonding, structure, and the properties of matter</li><li>• Quantitative chemistry</li><li>• Chemical changes</li><li>• Energy changes</li><li>• The rate and extent of chemical change</li><li>• Organic chemistry</li><li>• Chemical analysis</li><li>• Chemistry of the atmosphere</li><li>• Using resources</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Energy</li><li>• Electricity</li><li>• Particle model of matter</li><li>• Atomic structure</li><li>• Forces</li><li>• Waves</li><li>• Magnetism and electromagnetism</li></ul>
<p><b>How the three sciences are assessed</b> The Combined Science course (known as 'Trilogy Science' with AQA) is worth two GCSEs and is assessed by six, 1 hour and 15-minute exams. There are two tiers of entry: Foundation and Higher. Each paper consists of 70 marks, and each paper is 16.7% of a GCSE. Students will receive two grades for their Combined Science award which are either the same grade or adjacent e.g. 55, 56, 66, 67, 77 etc. There are not separate grades for the three Science components.</p> <p><b>Type of exam questions</b> Multiple choice, structured, closed short answer, and open response.</p>		

Towards the end of year 10, students sit an end-of-year exam which we use as a tool to monitor progress, check the setting for year 11 and for guidance as to students' terminal tiers of entry. There are 16 required practicals, which will be delivered and performed by the students throughout years 10 and 11.

### What will Science do for me?

We believe that science has something to offer every student. Investigative dexterity (practicals), analytical prowess (graphs & conclusions), reflective proficiency (evaluations) and problem-solving techniques will all be further developed in years 10 & 11.

In Science we do a bit of everything: History, ICT, PSHE, Maths, English, RS, Technology (all of them), PE, Geography, (you name it, we do it), as did every great scientist from Galileo to Stephen Hawking and so can you!

# GCSE Religious Studies AQA 8062

Course Leader: Mr S Williams



Arguably the greatest influence on human thinking and greatest catalyst to moral (some would say immoral!) actions, can be attributed to religion and the belief in God. This is why at St George's we believe RS is central to students' education.

At St George's we start the Religious Studies (RS) GCSE course in year 9, so in year 10 students continue to build on the essential knowledge they have already gained during year 9 GCSE work. This is a full GCSE course and there is no coursework but a lot of knowledge which is why we start this GCSE early.

## Topics Studied:

**In Christianity:** Core Beliefs and Practices (25%)

E.g. nature of God, the Trinity, Salvation and Judgement, the afterlife, pilgrimage, the sacraments, mission and charity work.

**In Islam:** Core Beliefs and Practices (25%)

E.g. the Oneness of Allah, angels, pre-destination, prophethood, the 5 Pillars, the 10 Obligatory Acts, Eid and Ashura.

**In addition, the course will cover a range of ethical issues in Christianity, including:**

1. Relationships and Families
2. Religion and Life
3. Religion, peace and conflict
4. Crime and Punishment

## Exam Structure:

At the end of Year 11 students will sit two examinations each lasting 1hr and 45min.

- Paper 1 – The Study of Christianity and Islam
- Paper 2 – Thematic Studies

Each topic has five-part questions with marks allocated as follows: 1, 2, 4, 5 and 12.

## Skills:

The AQA RS full course gives students the chance to engage with the two most dominant religions in the world today, Christianity and Islam. To be equipped to engage with an increasingly small world where work colleagues are on the other side of the world or neighbours come from other cultures, an appreciation of cultures and religions is more crucial than ever before. Students will be challenged to consider views that they have not considered before and asked to debate thoughtfully about the merits of religious ideas and practices.

## Physical Education CORE

Course Leader: Mr D Rees **NON-EXAMINED**



Physical Education is a compulsory part of the National Curriculum throughout Key Stage 4.

The Key Stage 4 core programme is designed to give students a wide variety of sports to participate in as well as giving them the option to choose and select their own curriculum. The focus is to promote physical activity and life time sports as part of a healthy balanced lifestyle. Students will be given access to a range of sports through the Key Stage 4 PE options system. In this system students will choose a pathway containing four activities that they will take part in up until Easter. They will then select further activities to complete in the summer term. These activities include fitness, trampolining, gym games, table tennis and badminton as well as the variety of sports they have already experienced during Key Stage 3.

The emphasis at Key Stage 4 widens to include officiating, analysing, problem solving and leading as well as continuing to refine and develop existing practical skills. The programme is designed to not only improve performance, but also to allow students to enjoy actively participating in physical activity so that they may carry on even when PE ceases to become compulsory.

## PSHE and Careers

Course Leader: Miss A Hartley **NON-EXAMINED**



Education is not simply a matter of preparing people for GCSE or A Level examinations; it is also about preparing our young people for adult life. There are, therefore, many topics not included in examination subjects or other lessons that are important to consider. These have been collected together under the heading Personal, Social and Health Education and are all components of the compulsory curriculum for PSHE in years 7 - 11. PSHE aims to give pupils the opportunity to help understand themselves as individuals, look at the choices that they will be faced with, and the role that they can play in society. Some of these lessons are also dedicated specifically to exploring future career pathways.

For one period a fortnight throughout years 10 and 11, all pupils will follow the PSHE course which includes modules on:

Physical Health and Mental wellbeing	Drugs and Alcohol awareness
Personal Safety	Online and the Media
Sex and Relationships education	Citizenship (including British values)

Other aspects of Personal, Social, and Health Education are taught in subject areas. The programme of study is also supported through tutor-time sessions, and presentations on a wide variety of topics in 'Friday 5' sessions throughout years 10 and 11.

# GCSE Art and Design AQA 8202

Course Leader: Mrs C Turner



Above all else, we would like you to enjoy GCSE Art and gain inspiration from it.

We aim to make the Art and Design course as exciting and interesting as possible. We want you to acquire useful creative and artistic skills that will be of use beyond the Art rooms and helpful to you in the future.

Art results at St George's are outstanding. In 2023-24 49% gained a grade 8 or 9 and 64% a grade 7-9! This places the Art Department as one of the most successful in the country. We want you to gain a high-grade qualification for use in your educational journey. Art is now seen by universities and colleges as equally valid as all other option subjects, including humanities.

Many people worry about the amount of work expected in Art. In order to reduce the stress of work load, we have reduced the course work expectation by 40% over the last few years.

## **Component 1: Personal Portfolio (NEA – Non- Examined Assessment - Coursework) 60% of final grade**

This will comprise of three projects, each with a different theme. The first two may have themes such as: Landscape, Portraits, Animals and Sculpture. The third project will be a theme that you choose yourself. This last one will be your mock GCSE Exam completed in the autumn term of year 11.

Each project will comprise A2 Sheets, sketch book work and a final outcome.

In year 10 there will be a summer drawing exam which will fit into one of your two projects.

In year 11 you will have free choice to explore a theme for your mock exam. There will be two days in which you can produce an exciting outcome (your GCSE Mock exam).

## **Component 2: Externally set assignment (Exam) 40% of final grade**

This unit follows the same format as your other three projects in that you will produce preparatory work in the form of A2 Sheets, sketch book work and an outcome. The exam paper is issued in January of Year 11 and you will then produce your preparatory work on your chosen theme.

The two-day exam is normally in late April / early May.

Sketchbooks and independent research are an important part of the course, as is the study of the work of other artists. You will acquire numerous Art skills, as well as skills useful in all walks of life including: visual awareness, observation skills, artistic appreciation and the ability to develop an idea and design an outcome.

According to The Gov.UK Creative Industries website, the Creative Industries sector is one of the fastest growing in the UK. There are many careers for which Art GCSE is useful. These range from advertising, media, film, product design, engineering and architecture through to graphics, illustration, fashion, textiles and fine art.

We hope you enjoy Art GCSE.

# GCSE Business OCR J204

Course Leader: Mr K Reynolds



There has never been a more interesting time to learn about Business. Whether you are a budding entrepreneur wanting to set up your own company or are interested in working for a large international organisation - one day you are likely to work within a business of some kind. The Business GCSE course will give you an excellent understanding of how successful businesses operate and the decisions that they make.

**Studying real business examples such as Apple, Supreme and KFC, you will learn about the following topics:**

- Marketing - advertising, development of products, how to set the best price
- Recruitment - how businesses employ the right staff and keep them motivated
- Business structures - including the different ways to set up a business
- Finance - including how businesses source the money to set up and operate and how they make a profit
- Business operations - how businesses produce the things we buy
- Influences on businesses - including the environment and globalisation

**Aims of the course are to enable students to:**

- know and understand a range of business concepts
- apply knowledge and understanding to contemporary business issues and to different types and sizes of businesses in local, national and global contexts
- develop as enterprising individuals with the ability to think commercially and creatively, demonstrate business acumen and draw on evidence to make informed business decisions and solve business problems
- analyse and evaluate real business opportunities and issues to construct well-argued, well-evidenced, balanced and structured arguments, demonstrating their depth and breadth of understanding of business
- develop and apply quantitative skills relevant to business, including using and interpreting data

## Assessment

**Business 1 – Business activity, marketing and people** - 1 hour 30-minute exam – 50% of total marks

Section A – Multiple choice questions worth 15 marks

Section B – Short, medium and extended response style questions worth 65 marks, which use stimulus material based on real business contexts.

**Business 2 – Operations, finance and influences on business** - 1 hour 30 minutes exam – 50% of total marks

Section A – Multiple choice questions worth 15 marks

Section B – Short, medium and extended response style questions worth 65 marks, which use stimulus material based on real business contexts.

Students should not choose both Economics and Business!

# GCSE Computer Science OCR J277

Course Leader: Mrs J O'Neil



This course gives students a real, in-depth understanding of how computer technology works. It offers an insight into what goes on 'behind the scenes', including computer programming, which many students find absorbing.

## Through this qualification, students:

- Develop their understanding of current and emerging technologies and how they work
- Look at the use of algorithms in computer programs and become independent users of IT
- Acquire and apply creative and technical skills and understanding of IT in a range of contexts
- Develop computer programs to solve problems
- Evaluate the effectiveness of computer programs/solutions and the impact of computer technology in society

## Why choose GCSE Computer Science?

- It's a great way to develop critical thinking, analysis and problem-solving skills, which can be transferred to further learning and to everyday life
- Students who want to go on to higher study and employment in the field of computer science will find it provides a superb stepping stone.

<b>Component 1</b>	<b>Computer systems (Theory)</b>
1 hour 30 mins - 80 Marks - 50% of the grade. Question paper includes a mixture of short and long answer questions, some of which will require candidates to write simple algorithms.	
<b>Component 2</b>	<b>Computational thinking, algorithms and programming (Theory)</b>
1 hour 30 mins - 80 Marks - 50% of the grade. Question paper includes a mixture of short and long answer questions, some of which will require candidates to write or refine algorithms and find errors in program code.	
<b>Component 3</b>	<b>Programming project (assignment set in year 11 done under controlled conditions in lessons and externally monitored)</b>
Approximately 20 hours. <u>This does not count towards the overall GCSE grade but is a formal requirement, which consolidates learning across the specification through practical activity.</u> Candidates create solutions to computing tasks from a set of options supplied by OCR. Students will need to understand standard programming techniques by designing a coded solution to a problem, including the ability to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Develop suitable algorithms</li><li>• Design suitable input and output formats</li><li>• Identify suitable variables and structures</li><li>• Identify test procedures.</li></ul>	

# GCSE Design + Technology AQA 8552

Course Leader: Mr S Tweeddale

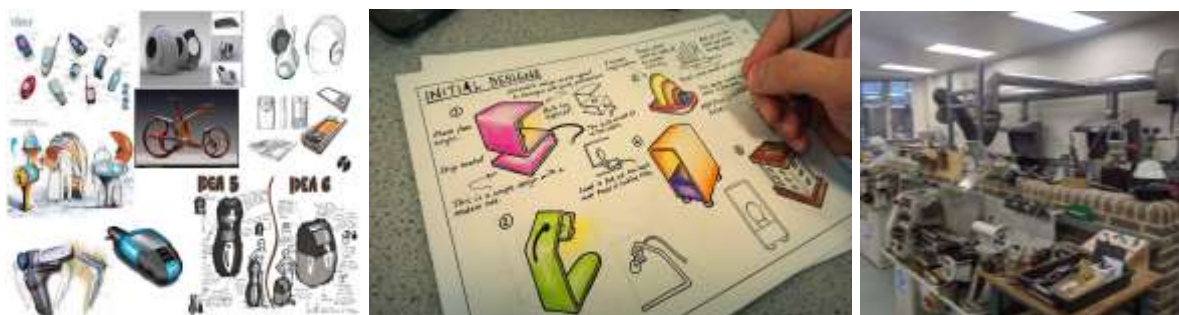


Are you interested in solving real-world and engaging problems? Would you like to learn how to use innovative technology and provide working solutions to real people in real communities globally? GCSE Design & Technology (D&T) is a modern and forward-thinking subject that aims to provide students with relevant design skills to be able to solve problems regardless of context.

Design & Technology is taught across all material areas, giving students a greater degree of choice in terms of the final prototype they design. A typical week in a D&T lesson could involve taking apart existing products to investigate how they are manufactured, interviewing clients and users on their needs and wants, designing and prototyping using a range of modern and smart materials, experimenting with 3D printing and laser cutting, investigating how industrial processes are used to mass produce products and how this affects our environment.

Design & Technology provides many transferable skills and complements other subjects highly. It fits extremely well within STEM subjects and most universities and employers are actively seeking students with qualifications in the subject for courses such as Architecture, Engineering and Design.

The Design & Technology department is extremely well resourced in terms of the range and amount of machinery across the department and we are lucky to have consistent access to a wide range of materials. Teachers are highly trained to work with a range of different materials and can support a vast range of different projects to help challenge and stretch students. In year 10 students will study a range of topics to cover the core content, specialist knowledge and designing and making principles. This is linked with Non-Examination Assessment (NEA) to prepare students at Year 11 for their real NEA.



## Non-Examination Assessment (50%):

At the end of Year 10, students will be introduced to the contextual challenge, the aim of which is to provide a solution to a real-world problem. The context is provided each year by AQA and students will be able to pick from three. Topics are challenging and deliberately vague as a starting point to encourage students to discover problems within the context. A design context could be “supporting developing countries” or “helping those with disabilities”. Students are expected to work independently and be proactive with research, designing and testing prototypes. Iterative design is an important process and students are marked higher for developing and learning from a range of prototypes rather than documenting one. There is an expectation that students will provide a small proportion of the cost towards materials, especially in the more complicated and costly individual NEA projects.

## The written examination (50%):

The subject is formally examined in the summer of year 11. The paper is two hours long and will test the students' knowledge and understanding through three areas: core content, specialist principles (of which students are expected to know at least one material area), and designing and making principles.



# GCSE Food Preparation and Nutrition AQA

8585

Course Leader: Mr S Tweeddale



## The GCSE Food Preparation and Nutrition

This is an exciting, creative and technical course which focuses on practical cooking skills to ensure students develop a thorough understanding of nutrition, food provenance and the working characteristics of food materials. At its heart, this qualification focuses on nurturing students' practical cookery skills to give them a strong understanding of nutrition.

To study this course, students need to have an interest in food preparation and be prepared to organize themselves in advance for practical sessions, which will bring to life the related food science and nutrition work.

Students develop and build upon the work covered in years 7, 8 and 9 in Food Technology. Students will be expected to provide their own ingredients for Food Preparation and Nutrition lessons as we will be making food products virtually every week during one of the lessons.

The practical work will support the subject content which covers:

- Food groups; Nutrition and health issues relating to our food intake;
- Food science and Food safety;
- Food choice (incl. the study of British & International cuisines, vegetarian types, religious influences etc);
- Food provenance (including the environmental impact and sustainability of food)

## Assessment

### Paper 1: Food Preparation and Nutrition (50% of GCSE) 1 hour 45-minute exam.

Theoretical knowledge of Food Preparation and Nutrition through a written exam at the end of the course.

### Non-exam assessment – NEA (50% of GCSE)

This is split into 2 tasks:

**Task 1** – a written report submitted electronically on a food investigation which will show the student's understanding of the working characteristics, functional and chemical properties of ingredients. The task will be the same for everyone and will be provided by the exam board in the September of year 11. It will take 4–6 weeks and be 1,500 –2,000 words in length. It will involve some practical food work

**Task 2** – Food preparation assessment. Students will prepare, cook and present a final menu of three dishes during a 3-hour practical exam. They will submit planning work which will have been completed in advance. The topic will be provided by the exam board in November of year 11.



# GCSE Drama AQA 8261

Course Leader: Mr S Wallace



“A drama education is excellent preparation for all kinds of employment, and it is now common knowledge that the skills taught through drama are much respected by employers in a range of fields.”

Phil King, A winter’s tale: don’t overlook the value of drama in school, The Guardian, Dec 2014

## Skills - Students learn how to:

- Communicate effectively to a variety of audiences, developing the ability to select vocabulary suitable for characters in specific situations.
- Develop collaborative group skills, presenting their own ideas and developing the ideas of others, being able to work with anyone.
- Organise their time, both individual preparation as well as group rehearsal, whilst still meeting the coursework deadlines for other subjects.
- Bring play texts to life using voice, characterisation, lighting, setting etc.
- Use lighting, sound, setting, costume, props and masks to enhance the impact of their work and so increase the effectiveness of their presentations.
- Analyse their enjoyment of a variety of productions seen during the course.

## Component 1: Understanding Drama (examination) 1 hour 45 minutes 85 marks 40% of grade.

Students will develop their knowledge and understanding of drama and theatre through the close study of one set play and through watching a range of plays in performance / live theatre (seen over the 2-year course)

- Students will respond to a series of questions based on extracts from their set play, as well as one question on the work of theatre makers in a single live theatre production.
- Students will have opportunities to explore aspects of technical theatre, alongside their study of performance.

## Component 2: Devising Drama (practical) 40% of Grade

Students have the opportunity to devise, develop and present their own short live theatre production based on a stimulus – song, quote, image etc. They can work as either performer or designer.

- Assessment is through their Final Live Performance and their Devising Log Book (kept throughout the devising process). Students will be able to work in small groups (4-6)
- There are opportunities for technical theatre to be assessed – lighting, sound, design, costume & make up.

## Component 3: Texts in Practice (practical) 20% of Grade.

As with Component 2, students will work in groups (from pairs to groups of six), or as a solo performer (monologue) to present a practical live theatre performance.

# GCSE Economics OCR J205

Course Leader: Mr K Reynolds



The course will:

- Introduce you to the economic problem of scarce resources
- Allow you to look at the world around you from an economic perspective
- Enable you to have a greater understanding of economic and business current events

GCSE Economics offers you the opportunity to find out about the UK and the World Economy. Many students continue with Economics at A Level but for those who do not, it gives you an informed understanding of the way in which the UK and the global economy works. The recent economic performance of the UK and changes in the European and global economy makes this a particularly interesting time to study Economics. The course is split into two units, a Micro Economics Unit (Introduction to Economics) and a Macro Economics Unit (National and International Economics).

Both units are externally assessed – you are set an exam for each unit. There is no assessed coursework.

Unit Title	Exam details
<b>Unit 1 - Introduction to Economics</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The basic economic problem</li><li>• Demand and supply</li><li>• How firms operate in markets</li></ul>	<b>1 hour 30 minutes exam, 80 marks, 50% of the total GCSE</b> Section A – Multiple choice questions worth 20 marks Section B – Short, medium and extended response style questions based on stimulus material.
<b>Unit 2 - National and International Economics</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Key economic objectives – economic growth, inflation and unemployment</li><li>• Government spending and revenue – including taxation</li><li>• Government policies including fiscal, monetary and supply side</li><li>• International trade and globalisation</li></ul>	<b>1 hour 30 minutes exam, 80 marks, 50% of the total GCSE</b> Section A – Multiple choice questions worth 20 marks Section B – Short, medium and extended response style questions based on stimulus material.

Economics GCSE is an excellent and recommended foundation for students considering further study in the area. Students should not choose both Economics and Business.

# GCSE Geography AQA 8585

Course Leader: Mr S Williams



*“The study of geography is about more than just memorizing places on a map. It’s about understanding the complexity of our world, appreciating the diversity of cultures that exists across continents. And in the end, it’s about using all that knowledge to help bridge divides and bring people together.”* Former US President, Barack Obama

Whether you think of yourself as a scientist, a mathematician or having creative and linguistic interests, Geography is a subject which bridges all of these and is enjoyed by pupils with a wide range of interests.

## Topics Studied:

1. Unit 1: Living with the physical environment:
  - The Challenge of Natural Hazards,
  - Physical Landscapes in the UK (rivers and glaciation)
  - The Living World (rainforests and cold environments)
2. Unit 2: Challenges in the human environment:
  - Urban Issues and Challenges,
  - The Changing Economic World
  - The Challenge of Resource Management (food).
3. Unit 3: Fieldwork/Issues Application

Fieldwork investigation completed on both a residential trip to the Lake District and a day trip to London (assessed through scenarios and questions in an exam and a pre-release issues evaluation).

## Exam Structure:

There are three exam papers taken at the end of year 11 (a physical paper, a human paper and a fieldwork/issues-based paper). All exam papers have a mixture of question styles and last 1 hour 30 minutes.

## Skills:

Pupils learn a range of skills which are useful to everyday life. By the end of year 11 pupils should be able to analyse data, draw conclusions and explain patterns and process at a range of scales. These skills are highly prized by employers. Pupils who excel at Geography have enquiring minds and are very aware of the environment in which they are living.

Students should be prepared to watch the news and stay up-to date with current events.

If you choose this option, you will be invited to participate in fieldwork visits to the Lake District for 4 days to carry out a rivers investigation and study the glacial landforms and a daytrip to Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park in London to investigate the social, economic and environmental impacts of regeneration. For both visits, the group will travel by coach. The trip is likely to be in the region of £400.

# GCSE History Pearson EdExcel 1HI0

Course Leader: Mr S Williams



## Topics Studied:

**Weimar and Nazi Germany** - A study in depth of the rise of Hitler and the life under the Nazi dictatorship.

**The Cold War** - The study of the causes and crises that shaped the Superpower relations in the twentieth century.

**Crime and Punishment** - A study over time of the nature of crime and the changing role of punishment in society. Whitechapel and Jack the Ripper are used as a local study into the social and political effects of crime and poverty.

**Elizabethan England** - A study of the early reign of Elizabeth I, her government and the age of exploration.

## Exam Structure:

**Paper 1: Thematic study and historic environment** - Crime and punishment in Britain, c1000–present and Whitechapel, c1870-c1900: crime, policing and the inner city.

Written examination: 1 hour and 20 minutes 30% of the qualification.

**Paper 2: Period study and British depth study** - Early Elizabethan England, 1558–88.

Written examination: 1 hour and 50 minutes 40%\* of the qualification.

**Paper 3: Modern depth study** - Weimar and Nazi Germany, 1918–39.

Written examination: 1 hour and 30 minutes 30%\* of the qualification.

## Skills:

History develops many skills that are important across a number of careers:

- The ability to analyse and evaluate a range of information in order to present a balanced argument.
- The ability to assess the reliability of information and to be able to form an opinion based on evidence.
- To be able to form a better understanding of the world that we live in.

## GCSE French and Spanish - Edexcel

Course Leader: Mrs J Mehta



*There are two disadvantages in global language arrangements: One of them is not knowing English; and the other one of them is only knowing English.*

When you study a language to GCSE level, you develop transferable skills such as the ability to communicate effectively, express and justify opinions and an understanding and appreciation of another culture and way of life. Through translation and understanding written and audio texts, you gain an understanding of how another language works and so learn to understand your own language better.

Language skills open doors both economically and socially. They are highly regarded by universities and future employers.

Whilst English remains a dominant language globally, broader language skills and awareness give young people a competitive edge in the job market, both within the UK and abroad.

The GCSE course focuses on learning to communicate well in your chosen language; it does not require you to become fluent so do not be put off!

### Exam Board and Specifications

**FRENCH:** Pearson Edexcel GCSE (9–1). French (1FR1) First teaching from September 2024

**SPANISH:** Pearson Edexcel GCSE (9–1). Spanish (1SP1) First teaching from September 2024

### Course Outline and Structure

The aim of both GCSE courses is to open students' eyes to other cultures and for them to learn how to communicate about subjects that interest them and foster a love of languages.

This new qualification is focused on the important ways that languages foster communication, broaden perspectives, introduce new cultures and develop students into global citizens.

The French and Spanish GCSE courses are structured around five broad thematic contexts, which are broken down into subtopics:

- My personal world
- Studying and my future
- My neighbourhood
- Travel and tourism
- Lifestyle and well-being

We follow the Edexcel coursebook which reviews and builds directly on the skills and knowledge gained in KS3. The course is taught as a series of units, which are sequenced to cover the full GCSE specification and sequentially build, revisit and consolidate grammatical knowledge.

Students are taught in mixed ability groups. Most students follow the GCSE higher-tier content and decisions on tier entry are made at the start of the spring term in year 11.

## Assessment

The course is assessed via 4 final exams each worth 25%:

**Listening:** Multiple choice and short-answer tasks based on a series of recordings on a range of topics from the course.

**Reading:** Translation into English, plus a series of multiple-choice and short-answer tasks from reading a selection of texts on a range of topics from the course.

**Writing:** Translation into French, plus 2 written tasks of 40-50, 80-90 or 130-150 words (depending on whether students sit foundation or higher-tier exams) on topics relating to the main themes covered by the course.

**Speaking:** Conducted by the teacher, this consists of 3 tasks. A recording is sent to the exam board for marking.

- Read aloud task with two straightforward follow-up questions
- Role-play task
- Picture description and conversation; Students choose one of two pictures to describe. They then answer two unprepared questions and participate in a conversation extending from the broader thematic context of the picture.

### *Why choose French?*

- French is spoken in over 29 countries across the world. It is an official language in countries in Africa, the Caribbean, in Canada and many more.
- French is one of the top languages spoken by international businesses. Knowing it, can make you stand out if you want to work for global companies or in international law, diplomacy, or tourism.
- Whether you're interested in working in technology, fashion, or even film, speaking French can open doors to job opportunities and internships both in the UK and abroad.
- Once you understand how French works, you'll find it easier to pick up Italian, Spanish and Portuguese. Speaking more than one language makes it easier to learn another language in future.
- You'll understand French songs and films without subtitles, and you'll be able to appreciate French food and fashion on a whole new level.
- Imagine going to Paris or even a small village in the French countryside and speaking the language confidently. Whether you're ordering food or making friends, it's a lot more fun and rewarding when you can communicate easily.
- You may think French is difficult, but you already know a lot of the grammar and tenses required to get a good grade at GCSE. Many English words come from French, so you'll find a lot of cognates and familiar terms.

### *Why choose Spanish?*

- Spanish is the second most-spoken language in the world, with over 580 million speakers across Spain, Latin America, and parts of the USA.
- Spanish is one of the most useful languages for jobs. Many international businesses, especially in travel, media, business, and healthcare, look for employees who can speak Spanish.
- Learning Spanish opens up the whole Spanish-speaking world to you. Imagine travelling through countries like Spain, Argentina, Costa Rica, and Peru, and being able to have real conversations with locals, understand signs, and truly experience the culture.
- Speaking Spanish will make your holidays so much better. Instead of feeling lost or relying on translators, you can explore more confidently and make new friends.
- There is a great range of Spanish-language entertainment that you will be able to understand without subtitles. Think of artists like Shakira and Beyoncé.
- Speaking more than one language makes it easier to learn any other language in the future.
- Spanish is one of the easiest languages for English speakers to learn. The grammar rules tend to be quite straightforward and there are lots of cognates so you'll recognize many words straight away.

## GCSE Music Edexcel MU01

Course Leader: Miss A Humphrey



This course is suitable for anyone who enjoys listening to and making music. The performance paper will require students to have some kind of instrumental instruction outside of the classroom.

### **Component 1: Performing (\*Paper code: 1MU0/01)**

Non-examined assessment: internally marked and externally moderated - 30% of the qualification (60 marks).

- Students perform for at least 4 minutes' combined duration
- Total performances under 4 minutes will be awarded 0 marks
- They will perform two pieces
- Solo performance: this must be of at least 1 minute in duration, and may comprise one or more pieces
- Ensemble performance: this must be of at least 1 minute in duration, and may comprise one or more pieces
- Each performance will be out of 30 marks
- Internally marked and externally moderated

### **Component 2: Composing (\*Paper code: 1MU0/02)**

Non-examined assessment: internally marked and externally moderated - 30% of the qualification (60 marks).

- Developing musical ideas
- Compositional techniques and strategies
- Ensuring technical control and coherence
- Methods of notating composition scores

Assessment overview:

- Students compose two compositions, of at least 3 minutes' combined duration
- One composition to a brief set by Pearson, of at least 1 minute in duration
- One free composition set by the student, of at least 1 minute in duration
- Each composition will be out of 30 marks
- Internally marked and externally moderated

### **Component 3: Appraising (\*Paper code: 1MU0/03)**

Written examination: 1 hour and 45 minutes - 40% of the qualification (80 marks).

- Musical elements, musical contexts and musical language
- Areas of study:
  - Instrumental Music 1700–1820
  - Vocal Music
  - Music for Stage and Screen
  - Fusions

# GCSE Physical Education OCR J587

Course Leader: Mr D Rees



As a Physical Education (PE) department, we want you to reach your potential within our subject and gain the highest grade possible to aid you on your educational and occupational journey. PE is seen by universities and colleges as equal to all other option subjects and is endorsed by many leading universities. This course has been significantly updated to include more challenging theory material such as sports psychology, biomechanics, movement analysis and an explanation of the body systems. This makes it appealing to those that enjoy the scientific and social-cultural elements of sport, as well as those that enjoy performing within practical activities.

**The course is divided into 60% Theory and 40% Practical.**

The theory course is assessed through two 60-mark 1 hour written papers. Each paper is worth 30% of the final grade.

**Theory Component 1: Physical factors affecting performance (30%)**

Paper 1: Applied anatomy and physiology and Physical Training

**Theory Component 2: Social-cultural issues and sports psychology (30%)**

Paper 2: Social-cultural influences, Sports psychology, Health, fitness and well-being

**Practical Component 3: Performance in physical education (Non-Exam Assessment)**

Student performance in three activities taken from two approved lists:

- One from the 'individual' list 10%,
- One from the 'team' list 10% and
- One other from either list 10%

Students can **only** be assessed as a player/performer in practical activities contained on the QCA's approved individual and team activity lists. If a student wishes to be assessed in an activity not contained on the school's curriculum but which is on the QCA's approved activity lists, this can be arranged separately but students considering this must discuss it with their teacher. Students choosing PE at GCSE are advised they need to be regularly attending extra-curricular practices, either as part of the school's extra-curricular programme or at a local club. It is strongly advised students are taking part in three sports competitively on a regular basis throughout the two-year course.

**Practical Component 3: Analysing and Evaluating Performance (AEP) (Non-Exam Assessment)**

Pupils will also complete an analysis of performance in one chosen sport. This is worth **10%** of their practical NEA mark. Apart from extending a student's enjoyment and awareness of PE, it will provide a suitable basis for further study or experience in PE or help with related subjects (i.e. Biology) and will certainly be a benefit for those wishing to study A Level PE, although not compulsory.



## GCSE Separate Sciences AQA

Course Leader: Mrs M Evans



**GCSE Biology AQA 8461**

**GCSE Chemistry AQA 8462**

**GCSE Physics AQA 8463**

Separate Sciences (commonly referred to as Triple Science or Single Sciences) is where students study all three sciences and end up with three separate GCSE grades.

The course is a demanding course suited to students with a strong interest in maths and the sciences who wish to pursue a science-based career in the future. It contains similar content and specification as the AQA Combined Science GCSE but also incorporates additional material that deepens understanding further, thus providing a more secure foundation for those wishing to study science-based courses Post 16. It is important to note that taking the Separate Sciences is not a prerequisite of entry to A-Level Sciences. The Separate Science option leads to 3 separate GCSEs in Biology, Chemistry and Physics.

With Combined Science, students will sit 6 x 1 hour 15-minute exams at the end of Year 11.

For students taking Separate Sciences they will sit 6 x 1 hour 45-minute exams.

Regardless of whether students study Combined or Separate sciences they will study all three disciplines of science. The key difference is the depth of study, the length of exams and the number of qualifications.

### **Questions?**

If you have questions, please contact Mrs Evans (Director of Learning - Science).

As with all options courses that we run, the school needs to ensure that the course is viable. The school therefore reserves the right to withdraw this option if pupil numbers fall below a viable threshold.