

# St George's School



## GCSE Options Booklet

January 2026

# GCSE Courses from 2026

## 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 2026 - Key Dates

Date	What's happening?
Thursday 8 January 2026	GCSE Options Talk for parents, 7pm-8pm Chapel.
Friday 9 January 2026	Friday 5 talk for pupils - GCSE Options Launch
Friday 16 January 2026	Friday 5 talk for pupils – PE, Languages, Technology, Business & Economics
Wednesday 21 January 2026	Year 9 Parents Evening, online 5-8pm.
Thursday 22 January 2026	Online choices form goes 'live' via email
Wednesday 28 January 2026	GCSE subject Fair for Year 9. 1.30-2pm in the Assembly Hall.
Friday 13 February 2026, 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	○ French
○ Business or Economics	○ Geography
○ Computer Science	○ History
○ Design & Technology	○ Music
○ Drama	○ Physical Education
○ Economics	○ Spanish
○ Food Preparation & Nutrition	○ Separate Sciences

- When choosing, keep in mind that students can:
  - ✓ Do more than one practical subject
  - ✓ Take both Geography and History
  - ✓ Take two foreign languages
  - ✓ 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 18 September 2026**.

## 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. 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
					Science Triple				
8	6	2	1	2	9	5	5	5	5

### How to submit the options form?

Parents/Guardians will receive an invite email on 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2026 containing the link to submit their online GCSE options form. This needs to be completed by Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> February at midday. Students will receive a confirmation email of their option allocations in early May 2026.

### 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 [rglass@stgeorges.herts.sch.uk](mailto:rglass@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 J Wright
Physical Education	Mr D Rees
PSHE and Careers	Miss C Carter-Crosby
Religious Studies	Mr M Gammon
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 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 J Wright



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>

## How the three sciences are assessed

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.

## Type of exam questions

Multiple choice, structured, closed short answer, and open response.

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.

Students can also opt for the Sports Leaders route if they want to widen their experience of coaching and leading activities. This culminates in a number of students being selected to help lead sporting activities within our local primary schools. 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

Course Leader: Ms C Carter-Crosby **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 want you to enjoy GCSE Art and feel inspired by it.

We aim to make the Art and Design course as exciting and engaging as possible. Our goal is for you to develop valuable creative and artistic skills that will benefit you beyond the Art rooms and support you in the future. Employers value students who can demonstrate creativity and experience of working sequentially, using practical, problem-solving skills. **There are no written exams and our courses are 100% coursework.**

Art results at St George's are outstanding. In 2025 68% gained a grade 7, 8 or 9 with 92% achieving grades 6-9. This places St George's Art Department among the most successful in the country. Our average grade score was 7.3. We want you to gain a high-grade qualification to support your educational journey. Art is now regarded by universities and colleges as equally valid as all other option subjects, including humanities.

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

This component consists three projects, each with a different theme. The first two may have themes such as food, animals or landscapes. The third project will be a theme of your own choice. This will form your mock GCSE exam, completed in the autumn term of year 11. Each project will include A2 sheets and final outcomes.

In year 10 there will be a summer drawing exam, which will contribute to one of your two projects.

In year 11 you will have free choice to explore a theme for your mock practical exam. This is a unique opportunity to investigate your own ideas, develop your creative thinking and refine your skills; you will have complete ownership of your project. You will have two days to produce an exciting final outcome (your GCSE Mock exam).

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

This unit follows the same structure as your other projects; you will produce preparatory work on A2 sheets, sketchbook work and a final outcome. The exam paper is issued in January of Year 11 after which you will develop preparatory work based on your chosen theme.

The two-day exam usually takes place in late April or early May. Independent research is an important part of the course, as is the study of the work of other artists. You will acquire a range of art skills, as well as transferable skills that are valuable in many areas of life, including visual awareness, observational skills, artistic appreciation and the capacity to develop an idea and design outcomes.

GCSE Art is also a wonderful experience in its own right, providing you with skills that will support whatever career path you choose, our former students have become, scientists, doctors, politicians.

According to the GOV.UK Creative Industries website, the creative sector is one of the fastest-growing in the UK. Career paths span advertising, media, film, product design, engineering and architecture, graphics, illustration, fashion, textiles and fine art.

# 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 only choose Economics or Business!

# GCSE Computer Science OCR J277

Course Leader: Mr J O'Neill



This course has been designed to develop student understanding of how computers work, how data is processed, and how software is created. It teaches core computer science principles such as algorithms, programming, data representation, and computer systems, whilst also building problem solving and logical thinking skills. Its purpose is to help students think computationally, understand the impact of digital technology, and gain practical programming experience for further study or real-world applications.

## Through this qualification, students:

- Develop core computational thinking and problem-solving skills
- Understand how computer systems, networks and data work
- Learn to design, write, test and debug programs
- Apply algorithms to analyse and solve computational problems
- Explore the ethical, legal and environmental impacts of technology
- Gain practical experience using programming languages and software tools

## Why choose GCSE Computer Science?

- It builds analytical and logical thinking skills that are useful across many subjects and careers.
- It provides a strong foundation for further study in computing, IT, engineering, and emerging digital technologies.

Component 1	Computer Systems
<b>Written paper: 1 hour 30 mins - 80 Marks - 50% of the qualification</b>	
Covers the fundamental principles of how computer systems operate, including the CPU, memory, storage, networks, cyber security, system software and data representation. Students develop an understanding of the technology that underpins modern computing systems.	
Component 2	Computational thinking, Algorithms and Programming
<b>Written paper: 1 hour 30 mins - 80 Marks - 50% of the qualification</b>	
Focuses on developing computational thinking skills through algorithms, programming constructs, logic, data handling, testing and code analysis. Students learn how to design solutions, write and refine programs, and understand how algorithms work in practice	

# GCSE Design + Technology AQA 8552

Course Leader: Mr S Tweeddale



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, forward-thinking subject focused on providing students with relevant design skills to solve real-world problems regardless of context.

Design & Technology is taught across all material areas, providing students with extensive choice in their final prototype design. A typical D&T lesson involves: taking apart existing products to investigate their manufacturing, interviewing clients and users to understand their needs and wants, designing and prototyping using modern and smart materials, experimenting with 3D printing and laser cutting, investigating the use of industrial processes to mass produce products and its effect on 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.

## **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, 80 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 1H10

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 – Edexcel 1FR1

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

At St George's we consistently achieve exceptional results at French GCSE, with over 80% of students achieving grades 7-9, placing us among the top-performing schools in the country.

## Course Outline

The French GCSE course is structured around five broad thematic contexts:

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

Students use the Edexcel coursebook which builds directly on the KS3 curriculum. Students have access to a physical textbook in the classroom and an online textbook plus online self-study resources. They are asked to purchase their own copy of the [vocabulary, grammar and translation workbook](#) for self-study, revision and some in-class use throughout the course. This is currently priced at £8.99.

## Assessment

The course is assessed via four 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:** Multiple-choice and short answer tasks from reading a selection of texts on a range of topics from the course plus translation into English.

**Writing:** Two written tasks of 40-50, 80-90 or 130-150 words (word count depending on higher or foundation tier) relating to the five thematic contexts of the course, plus translation into French.

**Speaking:** Three tasks: Read aloud, role-play, and picture description & conversation. Conducted by the class teacher, marked by the exam board

## More reasons to choose French?

- French is one of the top languages spoken in international businesses. It is highly valued if you want to work for global companies, in international law, diplomacy, or tourism and increase your earning potential. Whether you're interested in working with technology, fashion, or even film, speaking French can open doors to global job opportunities and internships.
- Once you understand how French works, it can make learning other languages easier in the future.
- Communicating easily with locals makes travel to French-speaking areas a lot more fun and rewarding.

# GCSE Spanish – Edexcel 1SP1

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.* Studying Spanish to GCSE level develops essential transferable skills: effective communication, the ability to express and justify opinions, cultural appreciation, and an improved understanding of your native language.

At St George's we consistently achieve exceptional results at Spanish GCSE, with over 50% of students achieving grades 7-9, placing us among the top-performing schools in the country.

## Course Outline

The Spanish GCSE course is structured around five broad thematic contexts:

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

Students use the Edexcel coursebook which builds directly on the KS3 curriculum (physical and online access). They are asked to purchase their own copy of the [vocabulary, grammar and translation workbook](#) (approx. £8.99) for self-study, revision and some in-class use throughout the course.

## Assessment

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

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

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

**Writing:** Two written tasks of 40-50, 80-90 or 130-150 words (word count depending on higher or foundation tier) relating to the five thematic contexts of the course, plus translation into Spanish.

**Speaking:** Three tasks: Read aloud, role-play, and picture description & conversation. Conducted by the class teacher, marked by the exam board.

## Enrichment opportunity: Annual Trip to Barcelona

The MFL department runs an annual trip to Barcelona for year 10 students. This opportunity allows students to experience Spanish culture first-hand, use their language skills with local secondary students, and with cross-curricular links to art, history, football. This year the trip cost just over £900. Places are limited.

## *More reasons to choose Spanish?*

- Global reach; Spanish is the second most-spoken language in the world, with over 580 million speakers across Spain, Latin America, and the USA.
- Career Potential: It is one of the most useful languages for global business in sectors like travel, media, business, and healthcare.
- Travel and Culture: Learning Spanish opens up the Spanish-speaking world, allowing for authentic visitor experiences, understanding locals, and enjoying entertainment without subtitles.
- Linguistic Foundation: Speaking Spanish, one of the easiest languages for English speakers to acquire, makes learning any future language significantly easier.

# GCSE Music - Edexcel 1MU01

Course Leader: Miss A Humphrey



GCSE Music is a really interesting and enjoyable course, linking strongly with History and MFL. It involves the study of contextual musical history, composers' intentions and technological innovation (e.g. the invention of the piano). GCSE musicians explore a wide range of repertoire from Beethoven to John William's Stars Wars.

This course is suitable for anyone who enjoys listening to music, composing using music technology and learning about the history of music, musicians and composers. With results at 100% 9-4 (over 60% reaching 7+) Music is a great choice for a broad and balanced, high-achieving options set.

**Unit 01 Performance:** Candidates will need to learn and perform 2 pieces of music by April of Year 11 (singing or instrumental). There is no requirement for students to have taken previous grades, or be of a particular standard. Anyone can do well in GCSE Music, so long as they practice!

**Unit 02 Composition:** Candidates are to compose 2 pieces of music, which are to be completed with supervision in lesson time only. Whether using Garageband, Logic or Sibelius, they are supported by their teacher to translate their ideas into musical reality.

**Unit 03 Appraising:** The exam paper consists of a series of listening questions about the 8 Set Works. Students learn a contextual history and set of musical facts about each of the 8 pieces. The exam is a series of short questions about an extract from each set piece e.g. What instruments are playing? Describe the dynamics in the extract? What makes this music sound sad?

60%	<b>Performing (1Mu0/01)</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Students will record two performances, totally 4 minutes (1 solo, 1 duet/group)</li><li>No minimum standard, but a GCSE 9 is around Grade 4/5</li><li>Audience is not required for performance; best version submitted for examination</li></ul>
40%	<b>Composing (1Mu0/02)</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Two compositions to be completed, only during lesson time (no homework)</li><li>One Free Choice (Y10) and one Responding to a Brief (Y11)</li><li>Internally marked, externally moderated</li></ul>
40%	<b>Listening Exam (1Mu0/03)</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>1 hour 45 minutes exam</li><li>Question styles: multiple choice, short answer, one-word answer</li><li>Eight set works including Star Wars, Queen, Beethoven and Defying Gravity</li></ul>

## More Reasons to Study GCSE MUSIC

- Stand out from the crowd; Considered an "academic art" by top universities
- Smaller classes = more support
- Very little written work
- Home-learning centred around practicing, not projects
- Cambridge University study shows GCSE musicians achieve a grade better in other subjects too!

# 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 demanding and suited to students with a strong interest in maths and the sciences who may 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, thereby 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.