



# GCSE Subject Guide

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*Bold & Loyal*  
1882...



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# GCSE Options Process

- 1 **The Options Process begins.**  
In January, the Deputy Head Academic and the Head of Lower School explain the options process to Year 9 pupils.
- 2 **Time to think.**  
Pupils have time to think about their GCSE choices in their Life Skills and Tutor Periods.  
We also host a GCSE Option Day in January. They may speak to their Personal Tutor, Heads of Departments or any other teachers about questions they may have.
- 3 **The Careers Team.**  
The Careers Team will introduce pupils to their chosen portfolio and Xello. These resources will help pupils to explore their passions, interests and skills as well as study options and job roles.
- 4 **Make a decision.**  
By the Easter Holidays, each Year 9 pupil submits their choices of GCSE subjects. If a pupil changes their mind about a subject then, they would need to speak to the Head of Lower School.

## Pupils, please remember

### DO choose a course because:

- You are good at it and think you will enjoy the subject
- It links to a possible career
- It goes well with your other choices
- Your research shows that it will interest you and motivate you to learn

### DO NOT choose a course because:

- Your friends have chosen it
- You think it will be easy
- Someone else thinks that it is a good idea
- You like the teacher you have now
- You didn't have time to research your options properly



# Helping you find your chosen career



## Core Subjects

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# English Language

| Core Subject  |
|---|
| Examination Board – AQA   |
| <p><b>English Language is a core GCSE subject. It is an essential requirement for university entry as well as other types of higher education and employment.</b></p> <p><b>This course develops your ability to communicate effectively especially in expression and analysis.</b></p> <p><b>English encourages logical argument discussion, debate and creative thinking. Many skills that are acquired in English Language are transferable; these include essay writing, précis and discursive techniques and the ability to read texts implicitly.</b></p> |

## What is studied?

**The GCSE English Language course follows the AQA specification:**

- 20<sup>th</sup>/21<sup>st</sup> century unseen literature reading
- Creative writing – descriptive or narrative
- 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup>/21<sup>st</sup> unseen non-fiction reading
- Transactional writing – writing to express a viewpoint
- Spoken language unit, requiring the delivery of a speech

## What is the course structure?

### YEAR 10

#### Autumn Term:

- Transactional writing
- 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup>/21<sup>st</sup> non-fiction reading and comprehension

#### Spring Term:

- Creative writing – narrative/ descriptive

#### Summer Term:

- 20<sup>th</sup>/21<sup>st</sup> century unseen literature reading and comprehension
- Spoken language presentation

## YEAR 11

#### Autumn Term:

- Creative writing – narrative/ descriptive

#### Spring Term:

- 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup>/21<sup>st</sup> non-fiction reading and comprehension
- Transactional writing

#### Summer Term:

- Revision

## How will it be examined?

### Paper 1 (50%)

- Writers' Viewpoints and Perspectives 1 hour 45 minutes
- 20<sup>th</sup>/21<sup>st</sup> century literature – reading
- Descriptive or narrative writing

### Paper 2 (50%)

- Explorations in Creative Reading and Writing 1 hour 45 minutes
- 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup>/21<sup>st</sup> century literary and non-literary non-fiction texts – reading
- Writing to present a viewpoint
- Non-examination assessment
- Spoken language presentation

# English Literature

## Core Subject

### Examination Board – AQA

**English Literature promotes analytical skills and the ability to synthesise material. Pupils are encouraged to understand the viewpoints of others and work towards reasoned conclusions and learn how contextual factors influence writers and their audiences. Informed reading and study of prose, poetry and drama will aid an understanding of the human condition and universal truths.**

## What is studied?

**The GCSE English Literature course follows the AQA specification:**

- The study of Shakespeare – one of *Macbeth*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *The Tempest*, *The Merchant of Venice*, *Much Ado About Nothing* or *Julius Caesar*
- The study of 19<sup>th</sup> century prose – one of *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*, *A Christmas Carol*, *Great Expectations*, *Jane Eyre*, *Frankenstein*, *Pride and Prejudice* or *The Sign of Four*
- The study of a post-1914 prose or drama – one of *An Inspector Calls*, *Blood Brothers*, *DNA*, *A Taste of Honey*, *Princess & The Hustler*, *Leave Taking*, *Lord of the Flies*, AQA Anthology *Telling Tales*, *Animal Farm*, *Anita and Me*, *Pigeon English* or *My Name is Leon*
- Poetry from 1789 to the present day

## What is the course structure?

### YEAR 10

#### Autumn Term:

- Post-1914 text
- Poetry anthology and unseen poetry

#### Spring Term:

- 19<sup>th</sup> century prose
- Poetry anthology

#### Summer Term:

- 19<sup>th</sup> century prose
- Unseen poetry and poetry anthology

## YEAR 11

#### Autumn Term:

- Shakespeare
- Poetry anthology

#### Spring Term:

- Revision of post-1914 prose/drama
- Revision of 19<sup>th</sup> century novel

#### Summer Term:

- Revision of poetry anthology and unseen poetry

## How will it be examined?

### Paper 1 (40%) – 1 hour 45 minutes

- Shakespeare
- The 19<sup>th</sup> century novel

### Paper 2 (60%) 2 hours 30 minutes examination

- Post-1914 drama/prose
- Poetry anthology
- Unseen poetry

# Mathematics

| Core Subject  |
|---|
| Examination Board – AQA   |
| <b>Mathematics provides a powerful universal language and an intellectual tool. It is the language of Science and Technology. It enables us to probe the natural universe and develop new technologies that help us understand our environment, and change societal expectations and standards of living.</b><br><b>Mathematics disciplines the mind and develops logical thinking, critical reasoning, and problem solving skills.</b><br><b>Pupils will use technology to support their Mathematics, making use of mathematical and statistical graphing tools.</b> |

## What is studied?

Pupils will already have begun studying towards the AQA Exam Board GCSE Mathematics in Year 9 and studies in Year 10 and Year 11 will follow on from this, or from work studied in a previous school. Pupils will study a mixture of topics from areas of Mathematics, such as algebra, geometry, statistics, proportion and probability.

## How will it be examined?

The examination, taken in Year 11, will comprise three written papers each 1 hour 30 minutes long. One of the three papers will be a non-calculator paper. The examination can be entered at one of two levels. This will be decided in advance of the examination in consultation between teacher, pupil and parents.

| Tier of Entry | Grades Available |
|---------------|------------------|
| Foundation    | 1-5              |
| Higher Grades | 4-9              |

# Science

| Core Subject   |
|--|
| Examination Board – AQA  |
| <b>Science is mandatory in the National Curriculum and so all GCSE age pupils study a balanced Science course where an equal amount of time is spent on Biology, Chemistry and Physics. A good grounding of Science will allow you to understand how scientific advances will affect them. Many pupils will opt to study Double Award Science (AQA Trilogy). Pupils who have an interest in a scientific career or who may wish to study A Level Science in the future should consider the Separate Science option (AQA Physics, Chemistry and Biology - see page 25).</b> |

## What is studied?

The GCSE Science course follows the AQA syllabus. Those pupils that opt for Double Award Science (i.e. those who do not select Separate Sciences as an option) will study a linear GCSE Science course, with exams at the end of Year 11. This route is referred to as Double Award Science because pupils receive an average grade for Science, equivalent to two Science GCSEs.

Those who select Separate Sciences as an option will study the three Sciences independently and will gain three GCSEs grades at the end of Year 11. The following information is for Double Award Science. For information about the individual Biology, Chemistry and Physics GCSEs, please see the Separate Sciences option page.

## What is the course structure?

Pupils who study Double Award Science will follow the AQA Trilogy GCSE Science course:

### BIOLOGY

- Cell biology
- Organisation
- Infection and response
- Bioenergetics
- Homeostasis and response
- Inheritance, variation and evolution
- Ecology

### CHEMISTRY

- Atomic structure and the periodic table
- Bonding, structure and the properties of matter
- Quantitative chemistry
- Chemical changes
- Energy changes
- The rate and extent of chemical change
- Organic chemistry
- Chemical analysis
- Chemistry of the atmosphere

### PHYSICS

- Forces
- Energy
- Waves
- Electricity
- Magnetism and electromagnetism
- Particle model of matter
- Atomic structure

## How will it be examined?

Six exams at the end of Year 11, two for each of the three Sciences. Each exam is 1 hour and 15 minutes long and has an equal weighting. A variety of types of question will appear on each exam, covering all of the theory. There is no coursework, but pupils will be required to complete around eight ‘required practicals’ in each Science. Questions in the exam are likely to expect a familiarity with these practicals. The exams come in two tiers: Foundation, with simpler questions styles and less content, allows access up to grade 5. Higher tier has more challenging questions and allows access to the highest grades.



# Optional Subjects

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# Art

| Optional Subject  | Examination Board – Eduqas |
|---|----------------------------|
| <b>Art provides an opportunity to express creative ideas whilst developing work that is of a technically high standard. GCSE Art offers the first step for those who may wish to pursue an eventual career in any visual, media or creative discipline.</b> |                            |
| <b>Art is often required for related university studies, for example Architecture, Design, Restoration, and History of Art.</b>   |                            |

**PLEASE NOTE:**

**Pupils can only take one of Art or Graphic Communication and not both.**

| What is studied?   |
|--|
| The GCSE Art course follows the Eduqas syllabus. Pupils follow a structured programme of projects designed to build technical abilities primarily in painting and drawing. Ideas are developed through experimental approaches to drawing that provide each pupil with a rich visual vocabulary to express creative ideas, and gives pupils the tools required to make increasingly more personal work as the course progresses. |
| A series of workshops in areas such as painting, printmaking and photography further strengthen the range of media contained within projects. Pupils are encouraged to study the work of others through visual analysis and reflective writing. A number of visits to galleries and museums inform and give context to projects.   |
| The course demands high standards and to be successful pupils need to be open to exploring ideas, have a capacity for hard work and a growing passion for Art.   |

| What is the course structure?  |
|--|
| <b>UNIT 1: PORTFOLIO OF WORK (60%)</b><br>Structured and Personal Projects and Technical Workshops. Pupils are encouraged to develop mature, sustained and personal responses to project briefs leading to work that is technically sound.                                   |
| <b>UNIT 2: EXTERNALLY SET TASK (40%)</b><br>Pupils respond to their chosen starting point to produce a considered personal body of work. This unit takes the form of unlimited preparation time (as directed by the Centre) and a 10-hour period of sustained focused study. |

**How will it be examined?**

| UNIT 1  |
|---|
| Portfolio constitutes 60% of the GCSE. Internally marked, externally moderated.           |
| UNIT 2  |
| Externally set task constitutes 40% of the GCSE. Internally marked, externally moderated. |

# Graphic Communication

| Optional Subject   | Examination Board – Eduqas |
|--|----------------------------|
| <b>The GCSE Graphic Communication course follows the Eduqas specification. Pupils explore a broad range of graphic media, processes and techniques used within contemporary creative industries. The course emphasises visual communication, encouraging pupils to develop ideas through meaningful experimentation and to produce work with a clear design purpose.</b> |                            |

| PLEASE NOTE:  |
|---|
| <b>Pupils can only take one of Art or Graphic Communication and not both.</b> |

| What is studied?   |
|--|
| Pupils learn how to respond to design problems by combining traditional hand-rendered skills with digital approaches. They investigate the work of graphic designers, illustrators, typographers and advertising agencies to inform their own ideas. A strong focus is placed on creative thinking, refining design outcomes and communicating messages effectively to an intended audience. |

Areas of study may include:

- Illustration
- Typography
- Layout design
- Branding and identity
- Advertising and marketing design
- Digital imaging and photo manipulation
- Packaging design
- Printmaking processes
- Storyboarding and visual narrative

Graphic Communication suits pupils who enjoy problem-solving, visual storytelling and working with both digital and traditional media.

| What is the course structure?  |
|--|
| <b>UNIT 1: PORTFOLIO OF WORK (60%)</b><br>Pupils produce a portfolio of work demonstrating a personal and meaningful response to set themes. This will include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Projects exploring a range of graphic communication media</li> <li>• Artist and designer research and visual analysis</li> <li>• Idea development through drawing, digital experimentation and layout trials</li> <li>• Design sheets showing refinement, annotation and decision-making</li> <li>• A final outcome (or outcomes) for each project</li> </ul> The portfolio is internally set and assessed, reflecting pupils' ability to develop creative ideas independently and communicate visually with increasing confidence. |

# Graphic Communication

continued...

## UNIT 2: EXTERNALLY SET TASK (40%)

Eduqas releases an externally set theme in January of Year 11. Pupils choose one starting point and develop a body of preparatory work over several weeks. This leads to a 10-hour period of supervised, sustained focus, during which they produce a final response.

Preparatory work may include:

- Research and analysis
- Drawing and digital experimentation
- Typography exploration
- Layout development
- Refinement of a chosen design direction

**AO1 - Critical understanding:**  
investigating and analysing artists, designers, themes and sources

**AO2 - Creative making:**  
experimenting with media, processes and techniques

**AO3 - Reflective recording:**  
drawing, photography, digital studies and written analysis

**AO4 - Personal presentation:**  
producing resolved, meaningful final outcomes

### How will it be examined?

Assessment follows the Eduqas Art & Design marking objectives:

#### AO 1 - Critical understanding:

investigating and analysing artists, designers, themes and sources

#### AO2 - Creative making:

experimenting with media, processes and techniques

#### AO3 - Reflective recording:

drawing, photography, digital studies and written analysis

#### AO4 - Personal presentation:

producing resolved, meaningful final outcomes

There are no written examinations.

Assessment is based entirely on coursework and the final externally set task. All work is internally assessed and externally moderated by Eduqas

# Business

## Optional Subject

### Examination Board – Edexcel

**Business is hugely relevant to the world around us. The GCSE encourages pupils to discuss current affairs and issues and focusses on using business examples in 'real-life'. It is studied through investigation, not just listening and reading. Pupils develop a full range of skills that are useful in other subjects you study and in employment.**

## What is studied?

The GCSE Business course follows the Pearson Edexcel syllabus. Pupils are introduced to the world of business and look at what makes a business successful.

They find out how to start a business; the different types of business and services and the way they interact with the world around them. Pupils learn how to make a business effective and manage money well. The course introduces the different functions within a business, such as finance, marketing, human resources management and operations. Pupils study how these functions work together for a business to be successful.

## How will it be examined?

The GCSE will be assessed in two equally weighted exam papers, each lasting 1 hour and 30 minutes. Both papers have a mixture of multiple choice, calculations, short answer and extended writing questions. The case studies used in the paper will be based on real life relevant business examples.

## What is the course structure?

The GCSE is split up into two themes. These themes are:

### Theme 1: Investigating a small business.

The focus here is on setting up a new business and covers topics such as entrepreneurship and how to spot business opportunities.

### Theme 2: Building a business.

This theme will look at developing a small start-up business into a medium/large size business. It covers the main four business functions; marketing, operations, finance and human resources.

# Design and Technology

| Optional Subject   | Examination Board – Pearson  |
|--|--|
| <b>Design and Technology gives pupils the opportunity to learn about a wide range of materials and manufacturing techniques including CAD/CAM. The course will help pupils to understand the design process, which will be used to develop initial ideas into fully functional products.</b> |  |
| <b>Design and Technology is ideal for pupils who enjoy:</b>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thinking creatively</li> <li>• Problem solving</li> <li>• Designing</li> <li>• Testing ideas</li> <li>• Making</li> </ul> |
| <b>PLEASE NOTE:</b><br>Pupils can only take one of Art or Graphic Communication and not both.  |  |

**PLEASE NOTE:**  
Pupils can only take one of Art or Graphic Communication and not both.

| What is studied?  |
|---|
| <p>Pupils understand and apply iterative design processes through which they explore, create and evaluate a range of outcomes. The qualification enables the use of creativity and imagination to design and make prototypes that solve real and relevant problems, considering others' needs, wants and values.</p> <p>It gives opportunities to apply knowledge from other disciplines, including mathematics, science, art and design, computing and the humanities. Pupils learn how to take design risks, helping them to become resourceful, innovative and enterprising citizens. They will develop an awareness of practices from the creative, engineering and manufacturing industries.</p> |
| <b>How will it be examined?</b>   |

## What is the course structure?

**Theory:** This will cover core content and a materials specialism (timbers). Examples of theory topics include:

- The impact of new and emerging technologies
- Modern and smart materials, composite materials and technical textiles
- Mechanical devices used to produce different sorts of movements
- The categorisation of the types, properties and structure of woods, paper and board, metals, polymers and textiles
- The work of past and present professionals and companies
- Specialist techniques, tools, equipment and processes that can be used

| Design and make skills:   |
|---|
| A projectbase assignment that will develop the following:   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Drawing and modelling skills</li> <li>• Analytical skills</li> <li>• ICT skills</li> <li>• Hand, machine and CAM production methods</li> </ul> |

The latter part of Year 10 is dedicated to preparing pupils for their non-examination assessment task.

## How will it be examined?

### WRITTEN PAPER (50%)

1 hour 45 minutes

One paper with two sections

- Core content: 40 marks
- Materials specialism: 60 marks

### NON EXAMINED ASSESSMENT (50%)

A single design-and-make activity consisting of the development of a made outcome and a concise design folder and/or appropriate ICT evidence.

# Drama

| Optional Subject        | Examination Board – AQA   |
|-------------------------|---|
| <b>What is studied?</b> | <p><b>Drama help pupils develop as creative, effective, independent and reflective learner who can make informed choices in process and performance. Through working collaboratively pupils learn to generate, develop and communicate ideas. Pupils develop an awareness and understanding of the roles and processes undertaken in contemporary professional theatre practice and learn to reflect on and evaluate their own work and that of others.</b></p> |

**What is studied?**

The GCSE Drama course follows the AQA syllabus. Pupils apply their knowledge and understanding when making, performing and responding to drama. They explore performance texts, understanding their social, cultural and historical context and how they could be staged. Pupils develop a range of theatrical skills inspired by different theatre practitioners and apply them to create performances.

## What is the course structure?

The Exam board we study is AQA. The following components will be taught concurrently throughout the GCSE years culminating in external and internal assessments and exams in Year 11.

## COMPONENT 1:

### Understanding drama (40%)

Written exam: 1 hour and 45 minutes

In Section A of the exam, pupils are asked 4 multiple choice questions about the professional theatre. Pupils will study the fantastic play *Blood Brothers* for section B of their exam and explore practically how they would design and perform it. They are asked a series of 4 questions on one extract of the play. In Section C, pupils are asked to write a Live Theatre Evaluation based on a performance they have seen during the course.

## COMPONENT 2:

### Devising a Drama (40%)

Non-exam assessment: internally assessed by teacher, moderated by AQA.

Pupils create their own performance based on stimuli given by the teacher.

They are assessed on their individual performance. They also write a devising log which analyses and evaluates their rehearsal process and the final performance.

## COMPONENT 3:

### Texts in Practice (20%)

Externally assessed.

Pupils perform in two extracts from the same play for a visiting examiner.

# French

| Optional Subject   |
|--|
| Examination Board – Edexcel  |
| <b>French improves communication skills and awareness of the world.</b>  |
| <b>Pupils learn about a different culture through music, film, travel, the internet and the media.</b>   |
| <b>French is the second most frequently taught foreign language after English and is the only other language to be spoken on five continents. It is an official working language of many international organisations, including the United Nations, UNESCO, NATO, the European Union, the International Red Cross and the Olympic Committee.</b>   |
| <b>Languages are beneficial in the workplace and employees with a language can be paid 20% more than those who do not have one. Universities and employers value languages highly and a GCSE in a language is a requirement for some courses. With more than 90 million tourists every year, France is the world's largest tourist destination – what better reason to study its language?</b> |

| What is studied?   |
|--|
| Pupils study Reading, Writing, Listening and Speaking through Media, ICT and many authentic resources, includes stories, newspaper items, the internet, poems and song lyrics.   |
| <b>The themes that are covered:</b>  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The world around us</li> <li>• Social activities, fitness and health</li> <li>• Home and abroad</li> <li>• Education and employment</li> <li>• Personal life and relationships</li> </ul> |

## What is the course structure?

Pupils follow the Edexcel IGCSE course, which is fully assessed by an exam at the end of the course. All pupils sit the same exam, which caters for the range of ability.

| How will it be examined?  |
|---|
| The qualification is assessed over four areas:  |
| <b>SPEAKING (25%)</b>   |
| An oral exam at the end of Year 11.   |
| <b>READING (25%)</b>  |
| Short passages with different types of task, such as multiple choice and true/false.                    |
| <b>LISTENING (25%)</b>  |
| Short passages with different types of task, such as multiple choice and true/false.                    |
| <b>WRITING (25%)</b>  |
| One short piece of writing based on a reading text and one longer piece based on a choice of questions. |

# Geography

| Optional Subject  |
|---|
| Examination Board – AQA   |
| <b>The world is likely to change extensively in the next 50 years. Our role in that change is more important than ever. Geography explains the changes and helps to prepare people. It is a subject about now and the future. Geography provides a balanced view.</b> |
| <b>Employers want people with the following attributes:</b>   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good communication skills</li> <li>• Ability to work as a team</li> <li>• Ability to manage themselves</li> <li>• Numeracy and literacy</li> <li>• Ability to solve problems</li> </ul>                                      |
| <b>Employers want people with the following skills:</b>   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Computer literacy</li> <li>• Spatial awareness</li> <li>• Environmental and social awareness</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Geography provides them all!</b>   |

## What is studied?

Pupils follow the GCSE syllabus laid out by the AQA examining board. This is made up of three key components:

### PHYSICAL ELEMENTS

Natural Hazards (Tectonic and Weather Hazards) Climate Change Ecosystems (Tropical Rainforests and Deserts) The Physical Landscapes of the UK (River and Coastal Landscapes).

### HUMAN ELEMENTS

Urban Issues and Challenges Changing Economic World The Challenge of Resource Management (Food, Water, Energy).

### GEOGRAPHICAL APPLICATIONS

This element is based both on fieldwork and pre-exam release material. Pupils are asked structured questions based on their fieldwork experiences, as well as their understanding and analysis of primary and secondary data.

## GEOGRAPHICAL FIELD WORK EXPERIENCE

The Geography Department visits landscapes that pupils may be less familiar with, to broaden their knowledge and experiences within the UK and abroad. Two fieldwork days are recommended within the new syllabus. The excursions may focus on an urban settlement study as well as a detailed look at a local river. Pupils also visit a tectonically active area. The Geography Department's biannual foreign trip has in the past visited the thermal pools, volcanoes and waterfalls of Iceland but may include the volcanoes of southern Italy and the ruins of Pompeii.

### How will it be examined?

#### UNIT 1: PHYSICAL GEOGRAPHY (35%)

1 hour 30-minute examination

#### UNIT 2: HUMAN GEOGRAPHY (35%)

1 hour 30-minute examination

#### UNIT 3: GEOGRAPHICAL APPLICATIONS (30%)

1 hour 30-minute examination

# History

| Optional Subject        |
|-------------------------|
| Examination Board – AQA |

If you enjoy finding out about people, events and places, have an enquiring mind and can argue your point of view then GCSE History could be for you.

## What is studied?

The GCSE History course follows the AQA syllabus. This course is designed to give pupils experience of many different types of History. We will look at International and British History, ranging from Medieval to Modern.

To begin pupils look at thematic study. This will investigate the History of Medicine from around c.1000 to present day showing the development from the continuing medieval belief in ancient ideas and superstition, through the work of Edward Jenner and Louis Pasteur to the NHS and transplants. Then pupils will either study the development of Russia from the last Tsars through Communism and then World War II under Stalin or the development of America through the era of Prohibition and Depression to the era of Civil Rights.

This will be followed by an in-depth study of the Cold War in Asia between 1950 and 1975, which concentrates on the Korean and Vietnam Wars. The last section of the course will be a British Depth Study of the reign of Edward I, examining Edward's wars and medieval life and will include a study of a specific historical site.

## What is the course structure?

### YEAR 10:

Health and the People: c. 1000 to the present day, Russia 1894-1945: Tsarism and Communism or America 1920 - 1975: Opportunity and inequality and Conflict and Tension in Asia, 1950 - 1975.

### YEAR 11:

Conflict and Tension in Asia, 1950-1975, and Medieval England – the reign of Edward I, 1272-1307.

## How will it be examined?

The following is how each module is examined and what it is worth:

### PAPER 1

Topic: Tsarism and Communism or America 1920 - 1975: Opportunity and inequality and Conflict and Tension in Asia, 1950 - 1975.

#### Assessment:

- Written Paper
- 2 hours – 84 marks
- 50% of the qualification
- Each topic worth 25% of the total GCSE

### PAPER 2

Topic: Health and the People: c. 1000 to the present day and Medieval England – the reign of Edward I, 1272-1307.

#### Assessment:

- Written Paper
- 2 hours – 84 marks
- 50% of the qualification
- Each topic worth 25% of the total GCSE

# Music

| Optional Subject            |
|-----------------------------|
| Examination Board – Edexcel |

**We experience music every day. No day goes past without being exposed to music of some description. Life without it is almost unimaginable. Studying GCSE Music helps pupils to understand how music works and why there are so many different types of music.**

**GCSE Music is an enjoyable course and pupils develop confidence and a wide variety of transferable skills. Studying the subject will show employers that you have a wide range of interests and have the dedication and commitment to learn a musical instrument (which includes voice) and study music.**

## What is studied?

The GCSE Music course follows the Pearson Edexcel syllabus. Music allows you to study music in depth, beginning with basic chords, melodies, devices and structures, moving onto the analysis of specific key works. We look at how different composers have approached writing music and a wide variety of different styles of music.

The course also allows you to develop your own musicality through performing and composing music. Ideally you will already be able to play an instrument or sing but no formal experience of composing is required. We provide GCSE Music students with free instrumental tuition in the instrument that they will be assessed on in Unit 1. You must join at least one of the school ensembles to develop your musicality and develop essential ensemble skills.

## What is the course structure?

### UNIT 1: PERFORMING

The recognition and development of performance skills, both in solo and ensemble situations, through discussion, demonstration and performance. The preparation and recording of the Solo and Ensemble coursework pieces for assessment.

### UNIT 2: COMPOSING

The study of basic composition techniques. The creation of two compositions: one free choice composition, and one composition to a set brief released by the exam board in September of Year 11.

### UNIT 3: APPRAISING

The development of listening and analysis skills, along with contextual studies of musical periods and styles. Pupils study eight different pieces of music across the two-year course, ranging from classical music to popular styles and music from other cultures.

## How will it be examined?

### UNIT 1: PERFORMING (30%)

One Solo and one Ensemble piece are recorded in Year 11. The performances are both internally assessed and externally moderated.

### UNIT 2: COMPOSING (30%)

Two compositions are completed over the two-year course. The compositions are internally assessed and externally moderated.

### UNIT 3: APPRAISING (40%)

There is a written paper that lasts 1 hour 45 minutes. It includes listening questions using extracts of music.

# Physical Education

| Optional Subject   |
|--|
| Examination Board – AQA  |
| <p><b>Pupils who study Physical Education become increasingly physically competent through being actively engaged in a range of physical activities. They develop their performance in different types of physical activity. Pupils are inspired, moved and challenged by following a broad, coherent and enriching course of study and develop an awareness of your own and other cultures in relation to Physical Education.</b></p> |

## What is studied?

- The structure and function of the skeletal, muscular, cardiovascular and respiratory systems
- Effects of exercise on body systems
- Movement analysis
- Components of fitness
- Applying the principles of training
- Preventing injury in physical activity and training
- Socio-cultural influences in physical activities and sport
- Diet and nutrition
- Ethical issues in physical activity and sport
- The characteristics and classification of skilful movement
- Goal setting and mental preparation to improve performance
- Knowledge and understanding of guidance and feedback
- Health, fitness and well-being
- Diet and nutrition (including the use of data)

## How is it examined?

The human body and movement in physical activity and sport – 1 hour 15 minutes – Written Paper  
 Sociocultural influences and well-being in physical activity and sport – 1 hour 15 minutes – Written Paper  
 Pupils who study Physical Education become increasingly physically competent through being actively engaged in a range of physical activities. They develop their performance in different types of physical activity. Pupils are inspired, moved and challenged by following a broad, coherent and enriching course of study and develop an awareness of your own and other cultures in relation to Physical Education.

# Physical Education

continued...

## NON-EXAMINED ASSESSMENT PERFORMANCE IN PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND SPORT

The practical consists of three practical activities – one activity from an ‘individual’ list, one from a ‘team’ list and one other from either list. Pupils are marked on: range of skills, quality of skills, decision making and the ability to apply them to the full context, i.e. competitive game or event.

### TEAM ACTIVITY

- Acrobatic gymnastics (cannot be assessed with gymnastics)
- Association football (cannot be five-a-side or assessed with futsal)
- Badminton (cannot be assessed with singles)
- Basketball (cannot be street basketball)
- Camogie (cannot be assessed with hurling)
- Cricket
- Dance (this can only be used for one activity)
- Figure skating (this can only be used for one activity, cannot be assessed with dance)
- Futsal (cannot be assessed with football)
- Gaelic football
- Handball
- Hockey (must be field hockey)
- Hurling (cannot be assessed with camogie)
- Ice hockey (cannot be assessed with inline roller hockey)
- Inline roller hockey (cannot be assessed with ice hockey)
- Lacrosse
- Netball

### INDIVIDUAL ACTIVITY

- Amateur boxing
- Athletics
- Badminton (cannot be assessed with doubles)
- Canoeing (cannot be assessed with kayaking, rowing or sculling)
- Cycling Track, road or BMX cycling (racing, not tricks) only
- Dance (this can only be used for one activity)
- Diving Platform diving
- Equestrian
- Figure skating (this can only be used for one activity; cannot be assessed with dance)
- Golf
- Gymnastics (floor routines and apparatus only)
- Kayaking (cannot be assessed with canoeing, rowing or sculling)
- Rock climbing (can be indoor or outdoor)
- Sailing Royal Yachting Association (recognised sailing boat classes only; this can only be used for one activity)
- Sculling (cannot be assessed with rowing, canoeing or kayaking; cannot be assessed with team sculling)
- Skiing Outdoor/indoor on snow; cannot be assessed with snowboarding. Must not be dry slopes
- Snowboarding (outdoor or indoor on snow; must not be on dry slopes)
- Squash (cannot be assessed with doubles)
- Swimming (not synchronised swimming, personal survival or lifesaving)
- Table Tennis (cannot be assessed with doubles)
- Tennis (cannot be assessed with doubles)
- Trampolining
- Windsurfing For the Performance Analysis Assessment (written task) pupils are required to demonstrate their ability to analyse performance in order to:
  - Determine the strengths and weaknesses of a performance
  - Evaluate performance using theoretical principles to cause improvement

# Religious Studies

| Optional Subject           |
|----------------------------|
| Examination Board – Eduqas |

**Religious Studies is an academically rigorous discipline which considers social, ethical, theological and philosophical issues through the lens of the beliefs and practices of religions, as well as exploring nonreligious worldviews. The subject utilises a range of disciplines and approaches, with lessons featuring regular discussion and debate, along with articulating and developing these ideas in writing.**

**Blending approaches from the humanities, social sciences and philosophy, Religious Studies can help to develop academic writing and critical thinking. It is particularly useful for any careers which involve interacting with and understanding people. This includes education, politics, law and policing, medicine, health and social care, and a wide range of others.**

## What is studied?

Pupils follow the Eduqas GCSE Religious Studies specification, focusing on Christianity and Islam. The course is divided into ‘Religious, Philosophical and Ethical Studies in the Modern World’, and two smaller components each on the ‘Study of a World Faith’.

## What is the course structure?

**Year 10 – Religious, Philosophical and Ethical Studies**

### COMPONENT 1

- Theme 1: Issues of human relationships
- Theme 2: Issues of life and death
- Theme 3: Issues of good and evil
- Theme 4: Issues of human rights

**Year 11 – Study of Two World Faiths**

### COMPONENT 2

- Christian beliefs & teachings
- Christian religious practices

### COMPONENT 3

- Muslim beliefs & teachings
- Muslim religious practices

## How will it be examined?

These components are assessed through three examinations at the end of the course, which will each fall on a different date.

The four ‘Issues’ components are assessed in one longer paper of 2 hours, worth 50% of the overall GCSE grade, while the ‘Study of a World Faith’ components, each worth 25% of the overall grade, are assessed through two 1-hour exams.

## Optional Subject

### Examination Board – AQA

**Separate Sciences are an excellent preparation for A Level and university science-related courses. Pupils do not have to be committed to Sixth Form study, they should be open to widening horizons. They would also benefit from a natural inquisitiveness to learn by scientific enquiry.**

**Studying Biology, Chemistry and Physics as individual GCSEs is likely to be more challenging than the Double Award Science course. Do not expect just to sit and soak up knowledge, instead pupils are encouraged to ask questions and develop skills to help find answers through research and experimentation. Studying the sciences prepares pupils for careers which need new recruits even in times of recession.**

## What is studied?

Those who select Separate Sciences as an option study the three sciences independently and will gain three GCSE grades at the end of Year 11.

## What is the course structure?

Pupils follow the new AQA Biology, Chemistry and Physics courses:

### BIOLOGY

- Cell biology
- Organisation
- Infection and response
- Bioenergetics
- Homeostasis and response
- Inheritance, variation and evolution
- Ecology

### CHEMISTRY

- Atomic structure and the periodic table
- Bonding, structure and the properties of matter
- Quantitative chemistry
- Chemical changes
- Energy changes
- The rate and extent of chemical change
- Organic chemistry
- Chemical analysis
- Chemistry of the atmosphere
- Using resources

## PHYSICS

- Forces
- Energy
- Waves
- Electricity
- Magnetism and electromagnetism
- Particle model of matter
- Atomic structure
- Space physics

## How is it examined?

Two exams at the end of Year 11 in each of the three sciences. Each exam is 1 hour 45 minutes long and has an equal weighting. A variety of types of question will appear on each exam.

There is no coursework but pupils will be required to complete a number of ‘required practicals’ in each science. Questions in the exams will expect a familiarity with these practicals. The exams come in two tiers: Foundation, with simpler question styles and less content, allows access up to grade 5. Higher tier has more challenging questions and allows access to the highest grades.

# Spanish

| Optional Subject  |
|---|
| Examination Board – Edexcel   |
| <p>If you speak Spanish you can communicate with almost 600 million people worldwide which is why it tops the British Council's list of the most important language to learn for the future of the UK. If you need more reasons, it is the world's second most spoken language and ranks second in terms of native speakers plus it is the second most used language in international communication, and an official language of the UN and its organisations. Think how many more employment options that gives you!</p> <p>Spanish will raise awareness of many different cultures and will provide strategies to improve communication skills. It will give a better understanding of English (since much of the vocabulary of English has Latin origins), and to take a trip to Spain or Latin America, a little knowledge of Spanish will go a long way. Universities and employers value languages highly and a GCSE is a requirement for some courses.</p> |
|   |

## What is studied?

Pupils will study Reading, Writing, Listening and Speaking through media, ICT, contact with native speakers and many authentic resources, such as stories, newspaper items, the internet, and song lyrics.

The themes that we will cover over the two years are:

- Home and abroad
- Education and Employment
- Personal life and relationships
- The world around us
- Social activities, fitness and health

## How will it be examined?

Pupils will take the Edexcel IGCSE Spanish course which is 100% assessed by exam. All pupils sit the same exam, which caters for the whole range of ability. There is no Foundation or Higher level.

### SPEAKING (25%)

An oral exam conducted by your teacher at the end of Year 11.

### READING (25%)

Short passages with different types of task, such as multiple choice, true/ false and open questions.

### LISTENING (25%)

Short passages with different types of task, such as multiple choice, true/ false and open questions.

### WRITING (25%)

One short piece of writing (60 – 75 words) and one longer piece of writing (130 – 150 words) based on a choice of questions.



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# International

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# International English

Optional Subject

Examination Board – AQA

International English courses for Years 9, 10 and 11 are tailor-made to support the pupils' needs and command of English whilst providing stimulating content which enhances the learning experience as well as broadening cross-curricular knowledge, understanding of the UK and other anglophone countries.

## For Speakers of English as an Additional Language.

### What is studied?

Pupils will study two courses over a total of ten periods per fortnight. One course prepares them to take English IGCSE exams in either First or Second Language according to level, with an option of also possibly undertaking an IGCSE in World Literature. This latter qualification introduces less culturally biased texts to international pupils as compared to the GCSE literature course. In the other course, Cambridge English language qualifications are taken according to level. An introductory IELTS course may also be studied in Year 11 for those who will need this qualification in the Sixth Form. Trinity GESE oral examinations are

also often undertaken. Pupils need to be good communicators, ready to work on language skills that need improvement. They will also be expected to read independently and regularly, and therefore make good use of the school library in term time, as well as borrow books over the holidays. International pupils are introduced to the UK through cultural studies work and range of excursions to places such as Bristol and Stratford Upon Avon. The department is a friendly place for pupils to integrate and have fun in, with social activities also included such as bowling and meals out.



*Bold & Loyal*  
1882...

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