



Talbot Heath
Independent School for Girls aged 3-18

GCSE OPTIONS 2022

Talbot Heath School
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Introduction

It is our aim to fit courses as far as possible around your own requirements: we do not create our timetable until after we know the broad subject choices made by the whole year. It is, therefore, essential for you and for the school that you make the correct subject choices and choose courses that fit your abilities and aspirations.

This booklet is designed to give you as much information as possible about GCSE courses so that you will be able to make these choices.

It is often difficult to simplify specification information. If you are not clear about any information in this booklet, do not hesitate to ask your form or subject teacher. If you wish to discuss option choices in general please speak to Mr Gibson.

I hope that you will find this booklet useful and that it will enable you to make your choice of GCSE subjects.

Angharad Holloway

Head

Answers to some general questions

1. Why choose?

There is insufficient time to take all the subjects you presently study to the standard required for public examinations at 16+. Remember, quality rather than quantity is the aim.

2. Why is the choice difficult?

- a) You may have to give up a subject you really like.
- b) You may not like some of the subjects offered.
- c) You have not decided on your career and therefore are not sure which subjects to choose.

3. Why is the choice important?

- a) Your work will involve intense study for two years and there is very little room for change once a course has started.
- b) By dropping subjects, you may automatically exclude certain jobs or careers in the future.

4. How should I go about choosing?

- a) Think about what you would like to study and why.
- b) Think about how your choice will affect your future career by reading Careers Information.
- c) Think about how your choice will affect future A Level subjects.
- d) Talk to people: your parents, your Form Teacher, your Subject Teacher, the Careers Teacher, pupils currently studying the subject, and friends following careers in which you are interested.

Courses of Study

Core Subjects: (6 GCSEs)

- English Language
- English Literature
- Mathematics
- Combined Science (2 GCSEs)
- French or Spanish

Option Subjects - you may choose 3 GCSEs from:

- Art (Fine Art, Graphics, Textiles, Photography)
- Business, Classical Civilisation, Computer Science
- Drama and Theatre Studies, Food Preparation and Nutrition
- Geography, History, Latin, Music, Physical Education
- Religious Studies, Spanish (if not studied as your core language)
- Triple Science (Chemistry, Physics and Biology) - triple Science counts as one option choice

A course of nine examination subjects involves a heavy workload: in some cases, it may be that girls could benefit from a reduction. Although most girls will start with nine subjects, the school may inform parents during the course that a reduction is appropriate.

GCSE Subjects and Specification Details

Subject	Page
Art: Fine Art, Graphics, Textiles, Photography	8
Biology	4
Business	9
Chemistry	5
Classical Civilisation	10
Computer Science	17
Drama and Theatre Studies	11
English Language	2
English Literature	2
Food Preparation and Nutrition	12
Latin	14
Modern Languages: French and Spanish	7
Geography	12
History	13
Mathematics	3
Music	15
Physical Education	16
Physics	6
Religious Studies	17
Science (combined)	3

Examinations at Sixteen Plus

The **General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE)** is the aim of all courses offered to pupils.

It is based on rules (known as "national criteria") which apply to every subject. All specifications, schemes for examinations and gradings in each subject have to comply with these rules.

In almost every subject, pupils' final grades will be awarded based on their performance in the final examinations (in only a few cases there remains some practical element to the course).

The written papers at the end of the course are designed so that all pupils have the opportunity to show what they know, understand and can do, without regard to the performance of others.

For all subjects, grades will be awarded on a scale of 1 (lowest) to 9 (highest grade). The lowest mark for a new grade 4 will be the equivalent to that for a C on the legacy scheme. The lowest mark for a new grade 7 will be the equivalent to that for an A. The highest mark of 9 is to reflect exceptional performance.

CAREERS

It is important to choose a balanced range of subjects, bearing in mind that dropping a particular subject may restrict career opportunities. It is very important to investigate the qualifications required for any career interest so that relevant subjects can be continued to GCSE level. It is worth remembering that acceptance on A level courses is dependent upon good GCSE grades, and so it is sensible to choose the subjects that you are good at.

During the Upper Fourth year, each girl has an individual interview in which she can discuss her career interests and option choices as well as participating in classroom career exercises.

This link is continued through until Upper Sixth. Careers advice is available in both Lower Fifth and Upper Fifth years, with particular emphasis on 16+ choices.

Careers advice, with particular reference to university choices, is continued in the Sixth Form.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

All students in the Lower Fifth and Upper Fifth years are required to follow this personal development course. These sessions take place as discrete sessions throughout the year, and during assembly time.

The course includes a discussion on contemporary moral issues and specialists are invited into School to give presentations on matters such as sex and contraception, drug abuse, the working of magistrates and stress management.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

A wider range of activities is included in the PE programme for the Lower and Upper Fifth years. The Lower Fifths follow a balanced curriculum which includes team games and individual sports. In the Upper Fifth the choice is greater and they have the opportunity to learn more individual sports that are not included in the curriculum lower down the school, e.g. squash, yoga, fitness, and aerobics.

GCSE Core Subjects

GCSE English Language and English Literature

GCSE English Language

OCR (J351)

Learners will develop the skills to read fluently and write effectively by engaging with a wide variety of high-quality texts both literary and non-fiction. They will be required to challenge their critical thinking skills and develop their ability to synthesise information and evaluate ideas. Learners will be given the exciting opportunity to experiment in their own writing across a range of contexts and styles. Their own writing will be informed by the deep understanding of the language gained through studying a range of text types. They will be empowered for life with the practical ability to write with grammatical accuracy, with accurate spelling and punctuation and employing a sophisticated range of structural devices. Learners will also develop a confident control of spoken English.

- Students must respond to 19th, 20th and 21st century texts.
- Students must compare at least two unseen texts.
- Spoken language will be assessed but will not count towards exam results.
- 20% assessment weighting will be for spelling, sentence structure, punctuation and grammar.

GCSE English Literature

OCR (J352)

The OCR GCSE English Literature specification inspires, motivates and challenges learners through a broad, coherent and engaging course of study. It will open up new literary worlds for pupils, taking them on a journey through a diverse range of substantial literature. Learners will study whole texts in a range of genres, stimulating their curiosity and igniting a life-long passion for literature. The course includes a Shakespeare play, a wide selection of poetry, a 19th century novel and fiction or drama from the British Isles from 1914 onwards. The course is designed to develop knowledge and skills in reading, writing and critical thinking. Learners will develop their expertise in reading literature critically while making connections across their reading. They will grow as articulate, informed, and insightful readers, developing skills that will empower them for life.

In English Literature:

Students must study a 19th century novel, an entire Shakespeare play and a selection of poetry, including representative Romantic poetry.

- Students must compare at least two unseen texts.
- The modern prose or drama must be by writers from the British Isles.
- Exams will be closed book

Assessment

- Assessment will be through examination: 4 hours for English Language and 4 hours for English Literature.

Mathematics

Edexcel (1MA1)

This GCSE course in Mathematics encourages students to develop confidence in, and a positive attitude towards, mathematics and to recognise the importance of mathematics in their own lives and to society. It requires candidates to demonstrate their knowledge, understanding and skills in the four main area of study:

- Number and algebra, which involves calculations, solving numerical problems, equations, formulae and identities, sequences, functions and graphs.
- Shape, space and measures, which involves geometrical reasoning, transformations and coordinates, measures and constructions.
- Handling data, which involves planning and collecting data, processing and representing data, interpreting and discussing results.
- Using and applying mathematics, including functional skills, which requires problem solving, communicating and making reasoned arguments, to describe connections between mathematical concepts, in everyday real-life situations.

The course is a linear course with three examinations taken at the end of Upper 5 (Year 11).

Each examination contains a mixture of questions from all of the above assessment objectives, and each paper is 1½ hours in length.

Currently all candidates are entered at the Higher Tier, taking papers 1-3:

- Paper 1 is a non-calculator paper;
- Papers 2 and 3 are calculator papers (calculators must have trigonometric functions, but must not be programmable).

There is no coursework or controlled assessment element in GCSE Mathematics, so each paper counts for 33.3 % of the final mark.

GCSE Mathematics forms a good basis for the AS and A level Mathematics courses and is an invaluable tool for all other subject areas.

Sciences

Combined Science

OCR (J250)

All students will take either Combined Science (equivalent to 2 GCSE grades) or Separate Science (Triple Science) which offer 3 GCSE grades, one for each science subject. Any pupils considering following a science subject beyond GCSE should opt for the Separate Science route.

Pupils taking Combined Science take 6 units from each science discipline (a total of 18 units)

Further information regarding the content of the units can be found in the information for each subject which follows this section

How the Combined Science course is assessed:

Content overview	Examination overview	
B1, B2 and B3	J250/07 60 mark written paper 70 minutes	16.7% of total GCSE
B4, B5 and B6 (with assumed knowledge of B1-3)	J250/08 60 mark written paper 70 minutes	16.7% of total GCSE
C1,C2 and C3	J250/09 60 mark written paper 70 minutes	16.7% of total GCSE
C4, C5 and C6 (with assumed knowledge of C1-3)	J250/10 60 mark written paper 70 minutes	16.7% of total GCSE
P1, P2 and P3	J250/11 60 mark written paper 70 minutes	16.7% of total GCSE
P4, P5 and P6 (with assumed knowledge of P1-3)	J250/12 60 mark written paper 70 minutes	16.7% of total GCSE

Biology

OCR (J247)

The units which make up the Separate Science GCSE in Biology and the Biology units that contribute to the Combined Science GCSE qualification are the same; except that in each unit there is a greater breadth and depth of topics covered.

The units are:

- B1 Cell level systems
- B2 Scaling up
- B3 Organism level systems
- B4 Community level systems
- B5 Genes, inheritance and selection
- B6 Global challenges
- B7 Practical skills

Your daughter will have completed units 1 and 2 by the end of Upper 4.

How the GCSE Biology course is assessed:

Content overview	Examination overview	
B1, B2 and B3	J247/03 90 mark written paper 1 hour 45 minutes	50% of total GCSE
B4, B5 and B6 (with assumed knowledge of B1-3)	J247/04 90 mark written paper 1 hour 45 minutes	50% of total GCSE

Practical skills (B7) are assessed within both of the written papers

Chemistry

OCR (J248)

The units which make up the Separate Science GCSE in Chemistry and the Chemistry units that contribute to the Combined Science GCSE qualification are the same; except that in each unit there is a greater breadth and depth of topics covered.

The units are:

- C1 Particles
- C2 Elements, compounds and mixtures
- C3 Chemical reactions
- C4 Predicting and identifying reactions and products
- C5 Monitoring and controlling reactions
- C6 Global challenges
- C7 Practical skills

How the GCSE Chemistry course is assessed:

Content overview	Examination overview	
C1, C2 and C3	J248/03 90 mark written paper 1 hour 45 minutes	50% of total GCSE
C4, C5 and C6 (with assumed knowledge of C1-3)	J248/04 90 mark written paper 1 hour 45 minutes	50% of total GCSE

Practical skills (C7) are assessed within both of the written papers

Physics

OCR (J249)

The units which make up the Separate Science GCSE in Physics and the Physics units that contribute to the Combined Science GCSE qualification are the same; except that in each unit there is a greater breadth and depth of topics covered. In addition, two further units will be studied for GCSE Physics.

The units are:

- P1 Matter
- P2 Forces
- P3 Electricity
- P4 Magnetism and magnetic fields
- P5 Waves in matter
- P6 Radioactive decay – waves and particles
- P7 Energy
- P8 Global challenges
- P9 Practical skills

How the GCSE Physics course is assessed:

Content overview	Examination overview	
P1, P2, P3 and P4	J249/03 90 mark written paper 1 hour 45 minutes	50% of total GCSE
P5, P6, P7 and P8 (with assumed knowledge of P1-4)	J249/04 90 mark written paper 1 hour 45 minutes	50% of total GCSE

Practical skills (P9) are assessed within both of the written papers

Modern Foreign Languages

French Edexcel (1FR0) Spanish Edexcel (1SP0)

CORE SUBJECT LANGUAGE: FRENCH OR SPANISH

OPTION: SPANISH

Pupils choose either French or Spanish as their core subject language. When making the choice, girls should remember the following:

1. If they are good at languages and want to study two languages they should opt for French as the core subject and Spanish as an option. As most of our European competitors are studying at least two modern foreign languages, we hope that our girls will see the advantage of doing the same.
2. If they choose to study one language. they should choose either Spanish or French as the core subject.

In both languages, we start the GCSE course from U4.

If they choose Spanish as their core subject they will have to cover exactly the same amount of language for GCSE as they would in French.

Modern Languages specification

The Modern Languages specification requires the pupil to experience all the four language skill areas (listening, speaking, reading and writing). Topic areas relate to the student's everyday life and interests. Some modern-day issues, such as racism and health issues, will be covered.

Wherever possible the teaching will be in the target language.

The papers have a two-tier structure, but pupils will normally be entered for the higher tier.

Mark schemes place emphasis on an extended range of language and ideas plus grammatical accuracy

Methods of study

Pupils will have extensive practice of the skills required for the examination. The textbooks are supplemented with additional worksheets, reading and listening passages. Pupils will use a mixture of Foundation and Higher material ...most pupils will sit the Higher tier of exam at the end. Oral and written work is based on useful everyday experiences and modern-day issues. Grammar is taught as and when appropriate to the capabilities of the students.

GCSE students have six lessons per fortnight, plus in Lower 5 and Upper 5 an additional lesson in a small group with the language assistant, to practise for the speaking assessments. We use IT and each class has a weekly lesson in the languages laboratory where they practise the speaking and listening skills. Regular homework is an essential part of the course.

Assessment

There will a final examination in listening, speaking, reading and writing. Each skill is worth 25% of the final mark.

Careers

Opportunities for linguists include banking, business management, accountancy, law and teaching. The study of languages also provides general skills and personal qualities which are prized by a range of employers: communication skills, independent thought and initiative.

GCSE OPTIONS SUBJECTS

Art: Fine Art, Graphics, Textiles, Photography.

AQA Fine Art (8202) Graphics (8203) Textiles (8204) Photography (8206)

Why choose Art?

GCSE Art and Design provides students with a wide range of creative, exciting and stimulating opportunities to explore their interests in ways that are both personally relevant and developmental.

Course structure and assessment

The course consists of two main units **Component 1: 60%. Component 2: 40%**

Throughout the GCSE course, students will create two sustained projects for component 1 and one project for component 2.

Component 1: A sustained portfolio. Students complete two personal projects, developed in response to a theme, task or brief, evidencing a journey from initial engagement with an idea to realising intentions. Throughout this, students will enhance their skills depending on their chosen area of study.

Component 2: Externally Set Assignment. A project developed on a theme set by the examination board, culminating in a timed 10 hour examination to complete the project.

Unit 1 and 2 are marked using the same assessment objectives, all areas are evenly weighted at 25% and each project will need to include the following:

AO1: Develop ideas through investigations, demonstrating critical understanding of sources.

AO2: Refine work by exploring ideas, selecting and experimenting with appropriate media, materials, techniques and processes.

AO3: Record ideas, observations and insights relevant to intentions as work progresses.

AO4: Present a personal and meaningful response that realises intentions and demonstrates understanding of visual language.

Students will be able to select from one of the titles to peruse for their GCSE.

Fine Art: Drawing, painting, sculpture, lens-/light-based media, photography and the moving image, printmaking, textile, mixed media and land art.

Graphic Communication: Communication graphics, design for print, advertising and branding, illustration, package design, typography, interactive design, multi-media, motion graphics, signage and exhibition graphics.

Textiles: Art textiles, constructed textiles, surface pattern, stitched and/or embellished textiles, soft furnishings, textiles for interiors.

Photography: Portraiture, location photography, studio photography, experimental imagery, installation, documentary photography, photo-journalism, moving image.

Students are required to develop knowledge, understanding and skills relevant to their chosen title through integrated practical, critical and theoretical study that encourages direct engagement with original works and practice. They may work with both traditional and contemporary media.

The course is designed so that it is a strong foundation for further progression to Art and Design related courses such as A level Art and Design and enhanced vocational and career pathways.

Business

Introduction

The School offers business at GCSE to all students in the school from year 10 upwards. Lessons aim to be student centred with an emphasis on active learning and participation by students during lessons. Topical and current business and economics information and media based resources are used in lessons to bring extra relevance to the theory which is learned in the context of real world situations.

The course

We study the **OCR (J204)** specification. The subject covers a wide range of business topics including how businesses are set up and run, how businesses grow, marketing, basic accounts and finance, people in business, production, technology and the business environment.

Year 10

During the year 10 course students learn about marketing and enterprise, the marketing mix and market research. They study the reasons for marketing and market research; the product decisions businesses make; promotion strategies, pricing strategies and the channels of distribution available; primary and secondary methods of market research. Students also learn about setting up a business and features of enterprise; the sectors of the economy and chain of production; the resources and outputs of business; the objectives and growth of business; stakeholders of business and potential conflicts; the legal structure of businesses; business organisation and communication; employment and retention of staff; leadership and motivation; training and appraisal; employment protection and legislation.

Year 11

In year 11 students learn about methods of production, how technology affects production, lean production techniques and the importance of ensuring quality products for customers. They learn about finance, including how to raise finance for a business, cash flow forecasting, revenue, costs and break even and the importance of profit to a successful business. Students examine the external influences a business needs to deal with such as economic, environmental and ethical issues.

Assessment

The assessment consists of two written examinations at the end of year 11:

Business 1: business activity, marketing and people (01)

Business 2: operations, finance and influences on business (02)

They are 90 minutes each and each make up 50% of the final mark. There is no longer any controlled assessment or pre-release stimulus material. There is explicit application and assessment of quantitative skills (minimum of 10% of overall marks) at the level of Key Stage 3 Maths.

Both question papers have a section with multiple choice questions.

Resources

Students have access to networked computers within the department and are able to use other ICT facilities in the school when appropriate.

Each student is issued with a course textbook, is provided with other texts and learning materials as appropriate and is encouraged to use other resources, for instance in the school library, and to engage in wider reading and research. In business studies we like to relate the topics to the real world and are constantly finding examples of real businesses to use in our answers. We use internet research to illustrate the business theory and make it come alive

Classical Civilisation

Why choose Classical Civilisation?

This fascinating course aims to provide students with an understanding of various aspects of the classical world, both Greek and Roman, such as literature, art, archaeology and history, and to develop students' critical responses to what they read. All material is read in English, and no knowledge of ancient languages is required.

Course Structure

We follow the **OCR specification (J199)** where students study two components: Greek and Roman mythology and religion, and the Homeric world.

Component 1: *Greek and Roman mythology and religion* (50% of the total GCSE marks)

This component involves a comparative study of ancient Greece and Rome, and combines literary and visual/material sources.

Students will study myths regarding the role of the gods and heroes in the founding of Athens and Rome and the importance of Hercules to both the Greek and Roman world. These are well known stories that students will enjoy engaging with and studying in increased depth. Myth as a symbol of power will also be explored, as will ever-popular myths about the underworld.

Students will also look at the role of religion in the everyday lives of ancient Greeks and Romans. The study of temples, sacrifice, festivals, death and beliefs in the afterlife will give a broad overview of religion in the ancient world. This component provides opportunity for the study of a wide variety of material remains, including remarkable temples and works of art.

Students will be required to make informed comparisons between Greek and Roman ideas, including the characteristics of the different societies, and the impact of the different cultural contexts on the theme studied.

Component 2: *the Homeric world* (50% of the total GCSE marks)

The Greeks themselves recognised the world of Homer's poems as the beginning of Greek literature and civilisation, and this component provides the opportunity for the study of a fascinating period of history and a work of literature with great enduring appeal.

The Culture section involves a study of life in Mycenaean times. This is a very diverse area, allowing the study of particular sites, their archaeology and the valuable role they play in our understanding of the age. The Mycenaean Age is also rich in sculpture, frescos and jewellery, as well as the famous tombs and their accompanying treasure, meaning that students can study a wide range of fascinating materials. Everyday life in Mycenaean times is also explored, allowing students to consider what life was like for real people in this period, rather than simply focusing on the exploits of epic heroes.

However, since the exploits of epic heroes are one of the most popular areas of study for students, Homer's *Odyssey* has been chosen to form the Literature half of this component. The selection of books chosen for study in this component combine the fantastical and enjoyable tales of Odysseus' journey, with those which give students a possible insight into everyday life; including aspects such as palace life and the lives of women. The final books, which focus on the battle between Odysseus and the suitors, are exciting in themselves and also pose interesting questions about revenge and punishment

What does Classical Civilisation combine with?

Classical Civilisation combines well with almost all combinations of GCSE subjects, and can be studied at A level and at university. Classical Civilisation is particularly useful for those interested in English literature, Journalism, History, Law or Archaeology.

Drama and Theatre Studies

Why choose Drama?

The course is exciting, challenging and rewarding. The course encourages students to explore and actively engage in a wide range of creative and intellectual tasks in order to develop as effective, independent learners and as critical, reflective thinkers with enquiring minds.

GCSE Drama also enables students to work imaginatively and creatively in collaborative contexts, generating, developing and communicating ideas.

Working as part of a team is something that draws girls to this subject. It is also a skill that attracts prospective employers and GCSE Drama and Theatre Studies provides a strong foundation for those wishing to take A level Theatre Studies/English in the sixth form; it also combines well with many other subjects to provide a broad and balanced choice of A level options.

Areas of Study

The GCSE course is divided up into three components: two practical performances and one written exam paper.

Component 1: Written Exam Paper

40% of the GCSE marks 1 hour and 45 minutes.

The written paper is comprised of three compulsory questions:

Section A: four multiple choice questions on role and terminology

Section B: four questions on a given extract from a set play

Section C: one two part question (from a choice of questions) on a live production seen

Component 2: Devising Drama (Performance)

40% of the GCSE Marks

Performance of a devised piece of drama. Students may contribute as performers or designers. Completion of a devising log.

Component 3: Texts in practice (Performance)

20% of the GCSE marks

Performance of two extracts from one scripted play. Students may select monologues, duologues or group scenes as part of their performances.

Free choice of text.

Students may work as performers or designers.

What qualities are needed?

A love of drama and an interest in theatre; studying a subject which you enjoy will ensure future success. As an actor, director or designer build your confidence and discover your potential through an exciting range of productions, visits to the theatre and the detailed studying of texts.

Food Preparation and Nutrition

Exam board: WJEC/Educas

This course will appeal to students who would like to develop a wide range of food preparation and cooking skills, and gain a clear understanding of the role of nutrition and diet in health, as well as the principles of food hygiene and safety. You are most likely to enjoy the course if you want to learn how to cook a wide variety of quality dishes and understand the scientific principles behind food preparation and nutrition. You will need to bring your ingredients to each practical session and keep up to date with preparation for the examination and non-examination assessments.

How is the course assessed?

Written examination: 1 hour 45 minutes

Principles of Food Preparation and Nutrition - 50% of total qualification

Non-examination assessment: Internally assessed

1. The Food Investigation Assessment

8 hours: 15% of total qualification.

A scientific food investigation which will assess the learner's knowledge, skills and understanding in relation to scientific principles underlying the preparation and cooking of food.

2. The Food Preparation Assessment

12 hours to include a 3 hour practical session: 35% of total qualification.

Prepare, cook and present a menu which assesses the learner's knowledge, skills and understanding in relation to the planning, preparation, cooking and presentation of food.

Each assessment will be based on a choice of two tasks released by WJEC annually

Geography

"Geography is the subject that holds the key to our future" **Michael Palin**

The world in which we live is likely to change more in the next 50 years than it has ever done before. Geography explains why and helps to prepare you for those changes.

At GCSE, we follow the AQA **specification (8035)** which is both engaging and relevant to today's geographers. The course enables students to explore the world, the issues it is facing and their own place within it. Students will gain far more than just geographical knowledge. They will gain confidence in geographical skills and undertake assessments that build on their KS3 knowledge, thus helping them to succeed in their chosen career path.

Course outline and Assessment:

Paper 1: Living with the physical environment:

Challenge of natural hazards (including earthquakes, volcanoes, weather hazards and climate change)

The living world (ecosystems, tropical rainforests & hot deserts)

Physical landscapes in the UK (including coastal & river landscapes)

Paper 2: Challenges in the human environment:

Urban issues & challenges (including squatter settlements, transport and a major UK city)

Changing economic world (development and economic futures of the UK)

Resource management & energy

Paper 3: Geographical applications:

Issue evaluation: pre-release resource booklet (12 weeks before the exams)

Fieldwork: 2 geographical enquiries (one physical & one human)

Fieldwork:

Students will undertake fieldwork in two contrasting local environments and the skills and knowledge they acquire will be assessed within the exam papers. Students do not complete a piece of coursework

Why choose Geography?

Geography helps you think independently and creatively, enabling you to make decisions.

Statistics show, that compared to other subjects, Geography graduates are amongst the most employable due to the subject combining elements of Science and Arts.

If you enjoy Geography, carry on studying it! You are more likely to gain a good result in a subject you enjoy.

History

History is the study of how we got to where we are today. It explains why people behaved in certain ways and, thus, how current events have been influenced by the past. We study it in the hope that we can learn from the mistakes of the past, recognise when we are being manipulated by government or the media, test our values and search for the truth.

At GCSE we follow the Edexcel specification, 1H10. We have chosen a varied course which includes some of the most interesting and important aspects of medieval, early modern and modern history. It also has the bonus of links with other subjects such as Science and RS. The course is comprised of the following elements:

Paper One (1H10/11): Thematic study and historic environment:

- Medicine in Britain, c1250-present
- The British sector of the Western Front, 1914-18: injuries, treatments and the trenches

Paper Two (1H10/B4 and P4): Period study and British depth study:

- Early Elizabethan England, 1558-1588
- Superpower relations and the Cold War, 1941-91

Paper Three (1H10/31): Modern depth study

- Weimar and Nazi Germany, 1918-39

Some of the skills you will learn

- Analysis
- Clarity of thought and expression
- Debating skills
- Evaluation

Assessment

Assessment is split into the following components:

Paper One: 1 hour and 15 minutes; (30%)

Short answers on knowledge, evaluation and sources; one essay

Paper Two: 1 hour and 45 minutes (40%)

A mixture of short and long answers on knowledge and understanding

Paper Three: 1 hour and 20 minutes (30%)

A mixture of short and long answers testing source evaluation knowledge and understanding; one essay

Why take History?

If you are interested, want to know why the world is like it is, (or are just plain nosey), it's the subject for you! Of course, all the skills you acquire will stand you in good stead for a huge range of careers. If you like to think, discuss and argue, and want to know more about our world, then it is likely that you will enjoy History at GCSE.

Latin

Why Choose Latin?

A GCSE in Latin is highly regarded by universities and works very well with any combination of academic subjects, as the skills and knowledge gained are transferable.

- Latin not only provides a linguistic challenge, but develops critical, analytical and problem-solving skills. It also helps strengthen students' literacy skills and facilitates learning another language.
- Latin provides an authentic insight into the Classical world and students become aware of the literature, poetry and prose that have shaped Western literacy to the present day.

This course aims to develop students' knowledge of vocabulary and grammar in order to be able to read, understand and interpret Latin texts.

Course and Assessment structure

We follow the **OCR specification (J282)** where students study Latin language and Latin prose and verse literature. The examination consists of three papers.

Component 1: Latin language (50% of the total GCSE marks)

Knowledge and understanding of Latin language are tested through translation, comprehension and grammar questions.

Component 2: Latin prose literature (25% of the total GCSE marks)

Knowledge and understanding of the prose set texts are tested mainly through comprehension questions, with some translation and an extended response question.

Component 3: Latin verse literature (25% of the total GCSE marks)

Knowledge and understanding of the verse set texts are tested mainly through comprehension questions, with some translation and an extended response question.

What does Latin combine with?

Latin fits very well with almost all combinations of GCSE subjects, and can be studied at A level and at university. Latin is particularly useful for those interested in English literature, History, Law or Archaeology, and the logical training gained from learning a classical language is also valuable for those interested in Computing, Mathematics or Accountancy.

Music

OCR (J536)

Why choose GCSE music

Music is an academic subject in its own right, but it actually benefits other subjects too. A recent study in the UK found that playing a musical instrument appears to enhance general performance in other subjects at GCSE. Music develops imagination, resourcefulness, resilience, problem solving, team working, performance and presentation skills, listening skills, self-esteem, creativity, self-expression and confidence.

Both employers and universities see creative subjects as an asset. Increasingly, employers and universities are looking for young people who have skills that can be learned through music: creative thinking, emotional intelligence, adaptability, communication and tenacity to name just a few.

There is only one exam for GCSE music – the rest is course work. This takes the pressure off revision during those critical weeks when pupils have many other exams.

There are three strands to GCSE music: Performance, Composition and Listening and Appraising.

Four main Areas of Study will be explored in lessons to develop a detailed knowledge of a range of Musical styles. These are:

- **Film and Video Game Music**
- **Rhythms of The World**
- **The Popular Song**
- **The Concerto Through Time (orchestral music)**

Performance (30%)

Students are required to produce two performances on any chosen instrument and/or voice with choices as follows –

- a **solo** either unaccompanied or with a live or pre- recorded accompaniment
- performing an individual part within a live **ensemble**
- a **multi-tracked recording and/or performance** in which the learner performs and records at least one part
- a **sequenced recording and/or performance** where the learner programs all parts (into Logic Pro X)

Composition (30%)

Students create two compositions. One piece is a free choice composition and the second piece is composed in response to one of several briefs provided by the exam board which relate to the Areas of Study..

Listening and appraising (40%)

There is one exam in total, which lasts up to 1 hour 30 minutes. Students will listen to short extracts of music and answer a range of closed and open style questions. The extracts of music will be unfamiliar but are derived from the four different Areas of Study.

Students are prepared for this exam by learning how composers and artists use instrumental resources and the elements of music to compose and perform music. Each Area of Study is explored in a practical manner, through listening, performing and creating music to enable a deeper understanding and appreciation of each style.

Physical Education

It is important that students understand why people get involved in physical activity, and the long-term health benefits of a sustained active lifestyle, including key influences that impact on people's involvement in physical activity. Pupils will understand fitness and body systems and the demands placed upon the body during performance.

GCSE Physical Education, using the **Edexcel specification**, should encourage creativity and decision-making skills to enable students to plan effectively for sporting performances, and to respond to changing situations, whilst preparing students to make informed decisions about further learning opportunities and career choices.

The course is assessed in four components:

Component 1: Fitness and Body Systems

Written examination: 1 hour and 45 minutes: 36% of the qualification

Content overview

- Topic 1: Applied anatomy and physiology
- Topic 2: Movement analysis
- Topic 3: Physical training
- Topic 4: Use of data

Component 2: Health and Performance

Written examination: 1 hour and 15 minutes: 24% of the qualification

Content overview

- Topic 1: Health, fitness and well-being
- Topic 2: Sport psychology
- Topic 3: Socio-cultural influences
- Topic 4: Use of data

Component 3: Practical Performance

30% of the qualification

Content overview

- Skills during individual and team activities
- General performance skills

Assessment overview

The assessment consists of students completing **three** physical activities from a set list.

One must be a **team** activity.

One must be an **individual** activity.

The final activity can be a **free** choice.

Component 4: Personal Exercise Programme (PEP)

Non-examined assessment: internally marked and externally moderated: 10% of the qualification

Content overview

- To design their own personal exercise programme to improve fitness levels.

This course is suitable for athletes and sports players who show a keen aptitude in at least three sporting areas and who are actively involved outside regular Physical Education lessons.

Religious Studies

AQA A (8062)

We live in a world where the concept of truth is increasingly defined not by an objective standard set by science or society, but by what appeals most to people at any given time. In the era of fake news, political extremes and religious fundamentalism, it is becoming increasingly important for young people to critically assess and evaluate ideas ahead of forming their own conclusions. This is what GCSE RS offers. In the course students embark on a study of belief and ethics, exploring how religions have developed, and how these have informed society and the way we live. Students will explore issues that are hotly debated in society today, from Euthanasia and abortion, to same-sex marriage and the death penalty.

Students will conduct a close study of two world religions, Buddhism and Christianity, they will explore their origins, key beliefs and practices and their impact on society. This gives the skills of analysis, evaluation and empathy and forms half of the assessed content (one exam paper).

For the rest of their assessed content, students will also study four topics on the theme of Ethics where we look at key issues, religious and non-religious teachings and form our own views, these are:

- **Relationships and Family life:** Divorce, Marriage, Sex, Homosexuality
- **Crime and Punishment:** Forgiveness, Evil, The Death Penalty, Reasons for Punishment
- **Human Rights:** Value of Life, Poverty, Purpose of Charity, Prejudice
- **Life:** Abortion, Euthanasia, Origins of life, The Universe

RS GCSE is a subject for those who follow current events and enjoy 'arguing' and exploring how human beings interact with each other. It probes the nature and complexity of the human spirit and is not just what the scriptures say. A lively and inquiring mind is needed and RS goes well with humanities subjects and is a good preparation for a variety of careers, especially those which involve dealing with people, e.g. Medicine, Psychology, Law, Media, Police, Army etc. It is a sought after and academically rigorous qualification which is respected by employers and further education establishments alike.

Computer Science

The GCSE in Computer Science is engaging and practical, encouraging creativity and problem solving. It encourages students to develop their understanding and application of the core concepts in computer science. Students also analyse problems in computational terms and devise creative solutions by designing, writing, testing and evaluating programs.

Specification code: OCR J277

Students are assessed through two exam papers, both 1 hour 30 minutes and worth 50% each.

Component 01: Computer systems

Introduces students to the central processing unit (CPU), computer memory and storage, data representation, wired and wireless networks, network topologies, system security and system software. It also looks at ethical, legal, cultural and environmental concerns associated with computer science.

Component 02: Computational thinking, algorithms and programming

Students apply knowledge and understanding gained in component 01. They develop skills and understanding in computational thinking: algorithms, programming techniques, producing robust programs, computational logic and translators.

Practical programming

Students are to be given the opportunity to undertake a programming task(s) during their course of study which allows them to develop their skills to design, write, test and refine programs using the Python programming language. Students will be assessed on these skills during the written examinations, in particular component 02 (section B).

Why choose Computer Science?

Computer Science is an exciting subject and can provide students with huge opportunities across lots of industries; this list shows some of the jobs it can lead to:

- Computer programmer
- Clothes designer
- CAD designer
- Games developer
- Software developer
- Software architect
- Geographical information systems officer
- Technical author
- Music data analyst
- MI5 MI6 and GCHQ