

**BUSINESS STUDIES**  
**HISTORY**  
**ART FRENCH**  
**RELIGIOUS STUDIES**  
**PHYSICAL EDUCATION**  
**LATIN MUSIC**  
**CLASSICAL CIVILISATION**  
**COMPUTER SCIENCE**  
**DANCE SPANISH**  
**FOOD PREPARATION AND NUTRITION**  
**MATHEMATICS CHEMISTRY BIOLOGY PHYSICS**

**GEOGRAPHY DRAMA**  
**TEXTILE DESIGN**  
**ENGLISH LANGUAGE ENGLISH LITERATURE**

# **GCSE GUIDE**

## **2025-2026**



**Kent  
College**

# GCSE GUIDE

An introduction from Mr James Mossman, Deputy Head Academic

We are very proud of our GCSE programme at Kent College. We see every student as an individual learner, with their own strengths and passions, be they academic, sporting or creative.

Alongside a traditional core of academic subjects, students at Kent College have access to a very wide range of GCSE options to meet every interest.

In addition, we timetable our subjects in a way that prioritises student choices. This means that literally thousands of different subject combinations are open to them. Furthermore, pupils and parents should be confident that GCSE results at Kent College are exceptional, standing as evidence of our students' hard work and the excellence of our teaching. As a result, students at Kent College should look forward and be excited about their GCSEs and the success that they will bring.



# GCSE CURRICULUM

In September, students will be entering Year 10 at Kent College. In the first three years of secondary education they have been introduced to a very wide range of subjects and may have already started on GCSE content. Next year, they will continue to study certain core subjects but will be able to choose which additional subjects they study for the General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE).

This booklet is designed to help students and parents understand how GCSEs work and enable everyone to make the right choice of subjects. Take careful note of the advice given here. There are plenty of opportunities for students to discuss their choices with staff.

As a first rule, we suggest that students choose the subjects which they most enjoy; if they enjoy a subject, they are

more likely to be successful. Some may already have a career in mind, and if so, students should select subjects that will help, but don't feel too constricted at this stage. It is good to have a broad range of subjects to keep options open. It may be obvious but, GCSE results are important; good results are needed for entry to A Level courses and to Higher Education.

Students will also need evidence of other achievements in their school career. It is important that the programme of GCSE courses leaves time to pursue other interests. Extra-curricular activities should complement your academic curriculum.

Students should see GCSEs as an opportunity to develop strengths and interests; choose wisely to make the most of the next two years.

## What choices have to be made?

In Years 10 and 11 some subjects, called core subjects, are taken by everyone.

These are:

- ➔ IGCSE English and English Literature
- ➔ IGCSE Mathematics
- ➔ GCSE Science
- ➔ Wellbeing – PSHE
- ➔ Physical Education

Students also choose four subjects from a wide list of options.

Students may choose to study Physical Education in more detail by selecting the GCSE PE option.

Qualifications in Further Mathematics and Classical Greek are also available as extra-curricular subjects; they do not form part of the option choices.



## What are GCSEs and IGCSEs, and how are they graded?

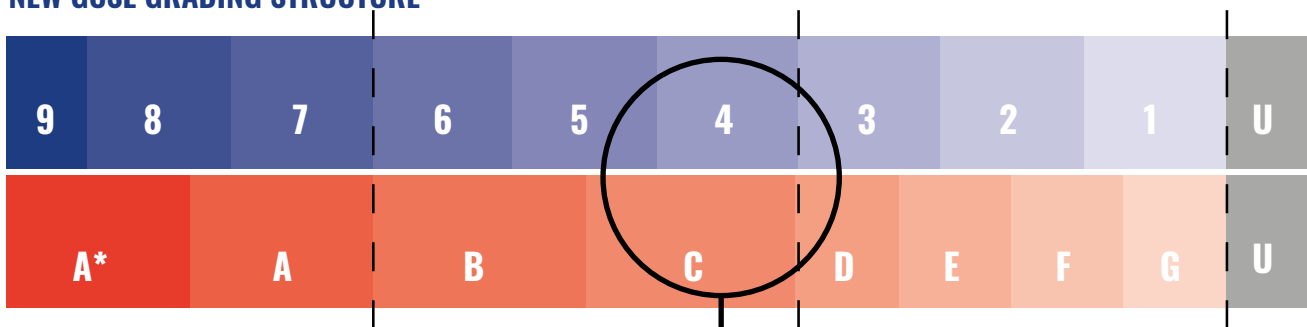
English, Mathematics and History, follow the International GCSE (IGCSE). These qualifications are accepted by other schools and universities, the same as national GCSEs. Each department chooses the GCSE or IGCSE which is most appropriate for Kent College. Throughout this booklet any reference to GCSEs include the IGCSE.

You will be aware that GCSE courses have changed and follow a new grading system:

- ➔ Most courses have nine grades and use numbers:  
9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1, U (where 4 or above is considered a 'good pass')
- ➔ This replaces the previous system of eight grades and letters:  
A\*, A, B, C, D, E, F, G, U (where C or above is considered a 'good pass')

The diagram below explains how the two grading systems relate.

### NEW GCSE GRADING STRUCTURE



### OLD GCSE GRADING STRUCTURE

4 = C

For entrance to the Sixth Form, a minimum of six GCSEs with grade 4 or above including Mathematics and English (either English or English Literature) are normally required. Students not achieving these grades in Mathematics or English will be required to take additional lessons and resit the subject at the earliest opportunity.

Students should also achieve high grades (6+) in the subjects they wish to study at A Level. Students should attain 7+ (ideally 8+) in Mathematics and the Sciences if they wish to study these subjects.



## What subjects should I choose and why?

In addition to the core subjects, students are required to select four additional GCSE subjects, leading to a total of 9 or 10 GCSEs. At Kent College we believe that all students should have the freedom to pursue their individual aspirations. Therefore, we allow students to choose their own combination of option subjects and do all we can to honour these choices, provided that students return their option form by the deadline. That said, on occasions small uptake or over subscription to a course may lead to us ask students to pick a back-up choice. We do also recommend that students choose a balanced range of subjects; therefore, we recommend that students select at least one language, one humanity and one technology-based or creative arts subject.

GCSE subjects are studied for two years and it is important to remember that assessment work is staggered during this time. Some subjects, for example Art, Textile Design and Food Preparation and Nutrition, have a heavy project load and students should take this into account. Although summary details of each subject are included in this booklet, students should also consult subject staff to clarify details. It is important that careers advice is sought if there is any doubt about which subjects are needed for future plans.

The full list of GCSE options currently available are:

**Art**

**Business Studies**

**Classical Civilisation**

**Computer Science** - offered as a Level 2 BTEC

**Dance**

**Drama**

**English as an Additional Language (EAL)**

**Food Preparation and Nutrition**

**French**

**Geography**

**History**

**Latin**

**Music**

**Physical Education**

**RS (Philosophy and Ethics)**

**Spanish**

**Textile Design**

## What subjects should I choose and why?

There are also two GCSE subjects available as extra curricular options. These subjects are taught 'off-timetable' allowing students to take them in addition to their five choices:

➔ **Astronomy**

➔ **Classical Greek**

➔ **Further Mathematics**

Students interested in these options should speak to Mr Haslewood (Astronomy), Mrs Hayes (Classical Greek) or Mrs Allen (Further Mathematics).

There is also a Supervised Study Option.

## Supervised Study Option

Ten GCSEs do mean that students will be very busy, particularly in Year 11, but this is manageable for the majority of Kent College students. However, it is worth noting that nationally it is perfectly acceptable to take only eight or nine GCSEs. As a result, we also offer the possibility of a reduced curriculum in Year 10 and 11 to allow extra time for study and support. This will mean students will choose three instead of four options, giving five supervised study lessons a week to focus on improving grades in the other subjects.

Sessions are in a designated room with computer access and will be supervised by a member of staff who can offer support if required. It will also give a timetabled session for any extra 1:1 support.

This has proven very useful in previous years and it is worth discussing this with Mr Mossman if students are interested. If so, please add Supervised Study as one of the four GCSE options. In addition, it may be that a student does not feel confident in taking 3 separate sciences. Whilst we would not readily recommend this option for the start of Year 10, do feel free to contact Mr Mossman to discuss. Only completing two sciences will not, however, allow students to take an additional option subject, but simply free up further supervised study sessions.

In some cases the school will actively recommend a reduced curriculum. If this the case, we will contact parents to discuss this in advance of the option process being completed.



## English & English Literature (Core)

We follow the Pearson Edexcel IGCSE Specification A syllabus for English Language and English Literature. In English, our students are taught to write concisely and clearly both for functional as well as creative purposes. By the end of the course, they should be able to write in a wide variety of forms and styles with both grammatical accuracy and flair. The grading system reflects the standard 9-1 GCSE system.

The **English Language** course consists of two papers which are taken at the end of Year 11:

### Paper 1 – 60%

This paper requires candidates to:

- ➔ Write a comparison between the unseen text and an anthology text previously studied (22 marks).
- ➔ Write a piece of transactional writing e.g. article or speech. There is a choice between two questions (45 marks).

### Paper 3 – 40%

This paper requires candidates to write three essays, one on an unseen poem (20 marks); the second is a comparative essay on two poems (30 marks) and the final one will be about a novel (40 marks). Prior to the exam, students will have studied the collection of poems and the novel in class.

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### Paper 3 – 40%

Two coursework assignments are submitted. One is an essay on a text from the modern drama set of texts (30 marks) and the other is an essay on a text from the literary heritage section which is a studied Shakespearean play (30 marks).

Although speaking and listening are not formally assessed by this course, students can receive a Spoken Language endorsement which appears on their final IGCSE certificate. Students are invited to present a topic of their choice, listen to questions and respond in a mature and assured manner.

English prepares students to present themselves effectively to the world, both in writing and in speaking. It also gives them a chance to reflect in depth on high quality literature, an art which can render the world a gentler place to inhabit. It forms the basis of all arts subjects and is a foundation for life.

## Mathematics (Core)

The Mathematics Department aims to provide a supportive, enjoyable and stimulating environment where students are inspired and engaged to achieve.

We prepare the students for the Pearson Edexcel IGCSE (4MA1), a course which supports seamless progression to further study, with up-to-date content reflecting the latest thinking in Mathematics. It is comparable to the UK reformed GCSEs in terms of the level of demand and assessment standards. Students will sit two papers at the end of Year 11. Although calculators are allowed on both papers, students need to develop a full range of mental and non-calculator skills. Questions demonstrating the mastery of these skills may be asked in the examination.

There are two level of entries summarised in the table below:

	<b>Grades achievable at this entry level</b>	<b>Papers</b>	<b>Length of Paper</b>	<b>Weighting</b>
<b>Foundation</b>	1-5	Paper 1 (1F)	2 hours	50%
		Paper 2 (2F)	2 hours	50%
<b>Higher</b>	4-9	Paper 1 (1H)	2 hours	50%
		Paper 2 (2H)	2 hours	50%

Candidates are assessed against three main objectives:

- ➔ AO1: demonstrate knowledge, understanding and skills in number and algebra – this forms 57–63% of the qualification.
- ➔ AO2: demonstrate knowledge, understanding and skills in shape, space and measures – this forms 22–28% of the qualification.
- ➔ AO3: demonstrate knowledge, understanding and skills in handling data – this forms 12 – 18% of the qualification.

There will be approximately 40% of questions targeted at grades 5 and 4, across papers 1F and 1H to aid standardisation and comparability of award between tiers.

It is expected that all students work towards the Higher examination. However, after the end of year exam in Year 9 (which will be a full Foundation level paper series), a decision may be made, following consultation with parents, to enter some at Foundation level.

Students interested in studying Mathematics in greater detail are encouraged to choose the AQA Certificate in Further Mathematics option in Year 11.

All students are expected to be equipped with a complete geometry set and a scientific calculator.







## Separate Science (Core)

Studying the sciences as three separate subjects has the following advantages:

Pupils study the subjects in greater depth giving students the greatest opportunities for continuing with STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) beyond A Level.

The sciences develop pupils' practical skills by including a number of practical experiments in the specification content. The skills developed will be assessed through questions in written examinations – improving pupils' analytical and logic skills by applying understanding of scientific concepts and principles to a range of situations.

AQA science examinations:

- ➔ Use more straightforward language and fewer words so they're easier to understand.
- ➔ Have fewer contexts so students don't get confused.
- ➔ Have questions that increase in difficulty, so students feel confident.

Separate sciences GCSE pathway:

	<b>Exams taken in Year 11</b>	<b>3 GCSEs awarded</b>
<b>Biology</b>	Paper 1 (1h 45min) Paper 2 (1h 45min)	Higher or Foundation level
<b>Chemistry</b>	Paper 1 (1h 45min) Paper 2 (1h 45min)	Higher or Foundation level
<b>Physics</b>	Paper 1 (1h 45min) Paper 2 (1h 45min)	Higher or Foundation level

## **Separate Science (Core) continued**

### **Content summary for Biology**

- 1 Cell biology
- 2 Organisation
- 3 Infection and response
- 4 Bioenergetics
- 5 Homeostasis and response
- 6 Inheritance, variation and evolution
- 7 Ecology
- 8 Key ideas

### **Content summary for Chemistry**

- 1 Atomic structure and the periodic table
- 2 Bonding, structure, and the properties of matter
- 3 Quantitative chemistry
- 4 Chemical changes
- 5 Energy changes
- 6 The rate and extent of chemical change
- 7 Organic chemistry
- 8 Chemical analysis
- 9 Chemistry of the atmosphere
- 10 Using resources

### **Content summary for Physics**

- 1 Energy
- 2 Electricity
- 3 Particle model of matter
- 4 Atomic structure
- 5 Forces
- 6 Waves
- 7 Magnetism and electromagnetism
- 8 Space physics (physics only)

The qualifications are linear, with written exams taken in the summer term of Year 11. Each exam paper contains a combination of multiple-choice questions, short answer questions, calculations and extended open response questions.



## Physical Education (Core)

Our aim at Kent College is to promote lifelong participation in sport which ultimately leads to a healthier well-balanced lifestyle. This will then enable the students to fulfil their potential whilst developing the fundamental skills of team work, socialisation and sportsmanship as well as building self-esteem and confidence. We also want to give them a fulfilling and enjoyable break from their academic studies.

In their Physical Education lessons all Year 10 pupils take part in different sports on a half-termly basis. The team players will use this time as an extra training session for hockey in the Autumn term and netball in the Spring term with specialist sports teachers. The students not involved in a team are given the opportunity of a variety of sports during this time including trampolining, fitness, badminton, volleyball, netball, basketball and table tennis. In the summer months those involved in the team will have their cricket training session and the other students have the opportunity to participate in rounders, tennis, cricket, athletics and touch rugby.

In an attempt to challenge the poor statistics regarding girls drop out in Physical Education, we have our Sport and Wellbeing afternoons. The students have opportunities to participate in a broad variety of activities which promote healthy minds and healthy lifestyles. They can participate with friends, using our extensive range of facilities and switch off from their busy schedules. Activities offered include swimming, yoga, trampolining, badminton and a workout in the fitness suite. Suggestions for activities from students are sought and have included self-defence and Zumba. Students playing school team sport will take part in extra training in hockey, netball or cricket.

The busy and varied fixtures list (netball, hockey, cross-country, swimming, athletics, cricket and tennis) provides ample opportunities for the sports enthusiasts to develop their skills and tactical awareness further, as well as gaining valuable match and tournament experience. Pupils are also actively encouraged to attend district and county trials.

## Wellbeing - PSHE

The course focuses on both physical and emotional wellbeing. Issues such as mental health, drugs, alcohol and relationships and sex education are tackled sensitively so that pupils are taught accurate facts and are able to ask questions in a safe space. The emphasis on emotional literacy ensures pupils have a chance to explore a range of healthy coping strategies, develop resilience and a sense of self. At all stages of the course pupils are signposted to available support.

Wellbeing in Years 10 and 11 also encompasses aspects of citizenship and careers as we focus on readiness for the next stage of the pupils' education.



## **Art (Options subject)**

Art is a subject which enables students to fulfil and extend their potential creativity through visual media.

### **Course Content**

The OCR Fine Art course requires students to produce two units of work over the two years.

The aim of the course is to encourage students to develop skills through the exploration of ideas and processes. Over the two year course, they will have the opportunity to include the following:

- ➔ Painting & Drawing
- ➔ Printmaking
- ➔ Sculpture
- ➔ Lens-based imagery
- ➔ Mixed media

Students will use sketchbooks for preparatory drawings, research, experimentation and development of ideas, as well as larger pieces.

### **Scheme of Assessment and Examination**

The course consists of two projects, the portfolio and the examination set task. This work is assessed by both teachers and by a visiting moderator. 60% of the marks are based on the coursework portfolio and 40% for the examination set task.

### **Career Points**

The OCR GCSE Art and Design: Fine Art course offered at Kent College is an ideal preparation for students who may wish to go on to A Level. This in turn could lead to a degree course and a future career in Art and Design.





## Business (Options subject)

The Edexcel GCSE Business course presents students with opportunities to focus on real-world business issues, considering and reflecting upon the moral, ethical and sustainable issues that arise as a result of business activity. Students will learn business concepts and terminology which they should use to investigate contemporary business issues and to assess different types and sizes of businesses in local, national and global contexts.

### Course Content

The specification for GCSE Business is split into two themes.

Theme 1: Investigating a small business	Theme 2: Building a business
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➔ Enterprise and entrepreneurship</li><li>➔ Spotting a business opportunity</li><li>➔ Putting a business idea into practice</li><li>➔ Making the business effective</li><li>➔ Understanding external influences on business</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➔ Growing the business</li><li>➔ Making marketing decisions</li><li>➔ Making operational decisions</li><li>➔ Making financial decisions</li><li>➔ Making human resource decisions</li></ul>

### Assessment

This is a 100% exam based subject where students will be assessed by multiple choice, short answer and extended writing questions. They will also be expected to do some calculations. There are two papers.

#### Paper 1 (examines Theme 1)

- ➔ Written examination: 1 hour and 30 minutes
- ➔ 50% of the qualification

#### Paper 2: (examines Theme 2)

- ➔ Written examination: 1 hour and 30 minutes
- ➔ 50% of the qualification

### Career Opportunities

Business is a versatile subject that can help in many careers, including business management, marketing, advertising, media, financial management, accounting, business law, human resource management, banking, retailing in the public or private sector.

## **Classical Civilisation (Options subject)**

Classical Civilisation GCSE enables students to examine in detail the influential and mysterious cultures of ancient Greece and Rome. They will be fascinated by the gods and monsters of Greek mythology, the horrors of the Roman arena and the origins of drama and modern theatre. By actively enquiring into the breadth of the classical world, pupils become effective learners and critical and reflective thinkers. In turn they take on a very wide range of cross-curricular skills, including literary and artistic analysis, creative writing, drama and rational argument. Along the way they will be encouraged to evaluate how the values and achievements of our society have developed in the last 2000 years, making an informed and personal response to some issues that are still very relevant today. In addition, students who have done either Latin or Classics in Year 9 will find that this course naturally builds on their existing knowledge. However, students do not need to have studied a classical subject previously.

### **Course Content**

#### **→ Myth and religion**

We will study myths regarding the role of the gods and heroes in the founding of Athens and Rome and the importance of Heracles/Hercules to both the Greek and Roman world. Myth as a symbol of power will also be explored, as will ever-popular myths about the underworld. We 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.

#### **→ Roman city life**

In this component we will explore everyday life in Roman cities, including examining typical Roman housing, the education of children, the dinner party (cena), slaves and freedmen and the Roman social system. We will also look closely at Roman leisure and entertainment, such as the amphitheatre and gladiators, chariot races, the theatre and the baths. There is also the opportunity to study Roman literature in translation: the Satires of Horace and Juvenal, fiction of Petronius and letters of Pliny will give pupils an insight into different literary styles and techniques, as well as into interesting areas of Roman life and society.

### **Scheme of Assessment and Examination**

Each of these sections forms 50% of the marks, examined in two written papers.

### **Career Opportunities**

Classical Civilisation, in nurturing a wide range of disciplines, is relevant to a breadth of options at university and beyond. In the past these have included law, history, art, classics, theatre studies, history of art, English, advertising, politics, economics and language.

## Digital Information Technology (Computer Science) (Options subject)

This Pearson BTEC Level 2 Tech Award qualification is for learners interested in taking a hands-on course that will offer them an insight into what the digital sector is like. Digital skills span all industries, and it is essential to have a good level of digital literacy, putting it increasingly on a par with English and Maths skills. The BTEC Tech Award in Digital Information Technology gives learners a broad introduction to several aspects of digital – from UX and interface design to data management and IT systems – enabling learners to gain a wide set of essential digital skills.

Using real life contexts, learners will have the opportunity to explore, develop and apply highly sought-after skills such as data management and data protection, project planning, and the design of user interfaces and dashboards as a way to present and interpret data. They'll learn about the iterative design process, cyber security, virtual teams, codes of conduct and legal and ethical issues.

### Course Content

- ➔ Exploring user interface design principles and project planning techniques
- ➔ Collecting, presenting and interpreting data
- ➔ Effective digital working practices

The types of tasks that are completed are a series of practical tasks which solve the kind of issues that creative IT professionals tackle in real life.

### The course is assessed through:

- ➔ Controlled Assessment – Two thirds of the final grade will be made up of performance in controlled assessment pieces of work that will be created for units 1 and 2. In the first project students use planning techniques to create a user interface that meets user requirements. In the second project students use their spreadsheet skills to create a data dashboard that will allow organisations to make effective decisions.
- ➔ Examination – Unit 3 ('Effective Digital Working Practices') is an examination which is set and marked by Pearson. This exam is designed to allow students to show their knowledge of the digital systems available to organisations and how their features have an impact on the way organisations operate. The exam is worth one third of the final grade.

### Career Opportunities

Digital Information Technology is a perfect stepping-stone into future study and a future career in IT & Computing. The digital sector is a major source of employment in the UK, with 1.46 million people working in digital companies and around 45,000 digital jobs are advertised at any one time.

## **Dance (Options subject)**

Dance is a powerful and expressive subject which encourages pupils to develop their creative, physical, emotional and intellectual capacity, whatever their previous experience in the subject.

This specification recognises the role of dance in young people's lives and pupils will study a range of dance styles and style fusions. Apart from the solo performance, pupils can choose any style in which to perform and choreograph, providing it meets the assessment criteria.

The study of the anthology of professional works will develop their ability to critically appraise professional dance works and provide a springboard for engaging in practical tasks.

Many GCSE Dance students choose dance for the practical rather than theoretical focus and for this reason the written assessment is clear and well-structured. It consists of a variety of question styles, which include multiple choice, short answers and extended written responses. This course creates clear progression to A Level, higher education and beyond.

### **Scheme of Assessment and Examination: Component 1 - Performance & Choreography**

#### **Performance**

- ➔ Solo performance (approximately one minute in duration)
- ➔ Duet/trio performance (three and a half minutes in duration)
- ➔ 30% of GCSE.

#### **Choreography**

- ➔ Solo or group choreography – a solo (two to two and a half minutes) or a group dance for two to five dancers (three to three and a half minutes)
- ➔ 30% of GCSE.

#### **How is it assessed?**

Internally marked and externally moderated.

### **Component 2 - Dance Appreciation**

#### **Written exam: 1 hour 30 minutes**

- ➔ Knowledge and understanding of choreographic processes and performing skills.
- ➔ Critical appreciation of own work.
- ➔ Critical appreciation of professional works.
- ➔ 40% of GCSE.



## **Drama (Options subject)**

The course offers students the opportunity to explore drama as a practical art form in which ideas and meaning are communicated to an audience through choices of form, style and convention.

Students will create, perform and respond to drama, informed by their theoretical knowledge of drama and theatre.

### **Component 1: Understanding drama**

- ➔ Study of one set play from a choice of six
- ➔ Analysis and evaluation of the work of live theatre makers
- ➔ Written (open book) examination lasting 1 hour and 45 minutes
- ➔ Questions are on a given extract from the set play and you have a choice of questions on the work of theatre makers in a live production
- ➔ 40% of GCSE

### **Component 2: Devising drama (practical)**

- ➔ Create and perform your own piece of drama
- ➔ Analysis and evaluation of your own work
- ➔ Your devising log and your performance forms the basis of the assessment
- ➔ 40% of GCSE
- ➔ This component is marked by teachers and moderated by AQA

### **Component 3: Texts in practice (practical)**

- ➔ Performance of two extracts from one play
- ➔ 20% of GCSE
- ➔ This component is marked by AQA

### **Career Opportunities**

The course will help develop confidence, self-expression, creativity, and analytical and written skills, all of which are skills which are greatly sought after. Group work is also a strong element of the course which develops team building skills.

## Food Preparation and Nutrition (Options subject)

The Food Preparation and Nutrition GCSE is an exciting and creative course which focuses on practical cooking skills. Students develop an understanding of nutrition, where food comes from and the working characteristics of food materials. They will also learn about British and international culinary traditions, food security and food safety. They will understand the physical, chemical, nutritional, biological and sensory properties of foods and be able to apply this knowledge in practical work. Students will build on the skills, knowledge and experience gained in Years 7–9 and will design products for real-life needs and situations.

### Course Content

The specification has been organised into the following sections:

Food Preparation	Food, Nutrition and Health
Food Safety	Food Science
Food Provenance	Food Choice

### The practical skills you will learn are:

Knife skills	Preparing fruit and vegetables	Use of the cooker
Use of equipment	Cooking methods	Prepare, combine and shape
Sauce making	Tenderising and marinating	Dough
Raising agents	Setting mixtures	

### Scheme of Assessment and Examination

Written examination:

- ➔ Multiple choice and five open-ended questions
- ➔ 50% of GCSE grade

Practical elements:

- ➔ Task 1: The Food Investigation (15%) – takes 10 hours in lessons
- ➔ Task 2: The Food Preparation Assessment (35%) – takes 20 hours of lesson time
- ➔ 50% of GCSE grade

### Career Opportunities

Food Preparation and Nutrition provides pupils with valuable skills and knowledge which are transferable to other subjects. It complements other studies and is a valuable addition for many career paths including those in health services and the food business and leisure industries.



## Geography (Options subject)

The AQA Geography course aims to develop a sense of place by studying the processes which underlie diverse and dynamic landscapes and environments, whether physical or man-made. Geography helps us understand our own lives in a global world and faces vital issues like climate change, water, food security and poverty eradication. Each of the two main areas of study, physical and human geography is divided into three subsections.

**Paper 1: Living with the physical environment.**

**Section A: The challenge of natural hazards.** Volcanoes, earthquakes, hurricanes, climate change.

**Section B: Physical landscapes in the UK.** Coasts and rivers.

**Section C: The living world.** Tropical rain forests and deserts.

**Paper 2: Challenges in the human environment.**

**Section A: Urban issues and challenges.** Urbanisation, cities, population growth.

**Section B: The changing economic world.** World development, globalisation, TNC's.

**Section C: The challenge of resource management.** Food supply and water security.

**Paper 3: Geographical applications.**

**Section A: Issue evaluation.** New topic each session based on the above themes.

**Section B: Fieldwork.**

**Section C: Geographical skills.** Graphical, numerical and map skills.

Case study examples are taken from all parts of the world and include local, regional and national examples. The syllabus will enable pupils to develop a range of skills such as fieldwork observation, data collection, classification and interpretation, investigation, essay writing, numerical and IT skills; show information on diagrams, graphs and maps, and use Ordnance Survey maps and Geographical Information Systems (GIS), audio-visual materials, magazines and newspapers.

### Scheme of Assessment

Paper 1: Written exam: 1 hour 30 minutes (35% of GCSE)

Paper 2: Written exam: 1 hour 30 minutes (35% of GCSE)

Paper 3: Written exam: 1 hour 30 minutes (30% of GCSE)

Question types for all papers: multiple-choice, short answer, extended prose.

### Career Opportunities

Geography is a useful basis for a wide range of careers from financial services, personnel, conservation, planning, environmental consultancy, Geographical Information Systems, IT, marketing, heritage management, research, teaching, management information services, water companies, civil service, the media, leisure and tourism, land management, surveying, cartography, weather forecasting, geology, transport, economics and global sustainable development, and graduate training schemes in most companies.



## **History (Options subject)**

The Pearson Edexcel IGCSE in History offers an opportunity to expand understanding of the world we live in while acquiring valuable skills for the future.

The topics we have chosen, focus on modern history, enabling students to study and consider some of the most politically and socially influential events of the last 200 years. From crucial developments in the history of medicine, to the era-defining revolution in Russia, studies will encourage an understanding of the historic origins of many of the problems and opportunities of the 21st century.

This course teaches students the skills that are prized in adult life. Students are encouraged to think and write analytically, to interpret and utilise a diverse range of source material, to explore a range of different interpretations, to ask questions, and to make critical judgements.

### **Course Content**

The Pearson Edexcel IGCSE in History consists of four units, which are examined in two papers, each comprising 50% of the final mark. Each paper lasts 1 hour and 30 minutes. The units are as follows:

#### **Depth Studies**

- ➔ Development of dictatorship: Germany, 1918–45
- ➔ A world divided: Superpower relations, 1945–72

#### **Historical Investigation**

- ➔ Russia and the Soviet Union, 1905–24

#### **Breadth Study in Change**

- ➔ Changes in medicine, 1848–1948

### **Career Opportunities**

The skills developed when studying for a GCSE in History are relevant and transferable to any future study or career. History as a subject is highly regarded by universities and employers. This course will encourage pupils to become a confident and questioning individuals, aware of the world around them.

## **Latin (Options subject)**

Latin is a distinctive and prestigious subject. Students are given the opportunity to examine in depth the unique language and literature of ancient Rome. In addition, they will study the culture and social life which is fundamental to our own identity. As well as being exciting and inspiring, this course helps students develop the analytical skills and intellectual flexibility which are very relevant in universities and in the modern workplace. Whilst there may not be any career that absolutely requires Latin, it is still used and respected in certain fields such as medicine and law.

### **Scheme of Assessment and Examination**

Students study three units, one in language and two in literature:

#### **Language (50% of the GCSE)**

In this paper, candidates are asked to translate and answer comprehension questions about stories based on either ancient mythology or history. There is a prescribed word list for this paper.

#### **Thematic Literature (30% of the GCSE)**

Candidates will study excerpts of Latin texts all based around a theme, such as magic and superstition or Roman entertainment. These will include both prose and verse texts, which will show different opinions on ancient life.

#### **Narrative Literature (20% of the GCSE)**

For this paper, candidates study a continuing narrative, analysing the plot, themes and characters of the piece. They will study additional material in English to develop their understanding of the narrative. In recent years this has been a study of Tacitus' account of Boudica's rebellion or an extract from Ovid's Metamorphoses.

### **Career Opportunities**

Latin, in nurturing a wide range of disciplines, is relevant to a breadth of options at university and beyond. In the past, these have included law, medicine, history, classics, theatre studies, English, advertising, politics, and language.

## **Modern Foreign Languages (Options subject)**

We strongly recommend that all students study a modern foreign language at GCSE Level and able linguists should consider studying two languages. Languages can open the door to a wide range of career opportunities and knowledge of a language is a skill highly regarded by universities and employers.

### **Scheme of Assessment and Examination**

All three languages follow the AQA GCSE (1–9) course. It is a linear course with students sitting examinations in the four skills at the end of Year 11: listening, speaking, reading and writing.

### **The following broad topic areas are covered in the course of Years 10 and 11:**

- ➔ Theme 1: People and lifestyle.
- ➔ Theme 2: Popular culture.
- ➔ Theme 3: Communication and the world around us.

### **Assessment consists of the following units:**

- ➔ Paper 1: Listening (25%)
- ➔ Paper 2: Speaking (25%)
- ➔ Paper 3: Reading (25%)
- ➔ Paper 4: Writing (25%)

### **Career Opportunities**

In an increasing global employment market, it is a major advantage to speak a foreign language. Europe is the UK's largest export market and UK employers in areas such as law, banking, management consultancy, the Diplomatic Service, tourism and the arts are looking for employees who can offer a foreign language in addition to their specialist skills. Universities also look favourably on applicants with foreign language skills and value their capacity to argue a case and their eye for detail.



## **Music (Options subject)**

Music is all around us. It influences our moods and emotions and stimulates and motivates us in many ways. Following this GCSE Music course will improve students' confidence and ability in performance (either singing or playing an instrument), nurture creativity through composition, and develop understanding of many different musical styles through four areas of study, ranging from pop to world music. It also provides a very important foundation for the study of music at A Level.

### **Scheme of Assessment and Examination**

We are following the Edexcel syllabus. 40% of the qualification is assessed in an examination at the end of the course. 60% is performing and composing coursework.

#### **Performing**

Two performances are required (either instrumental or voice). One piece must be as a soloist and another as part of an ensemble. Performances should last a combined minimum of four minutes and a maximum of seven minutes. The performance as part of an ensemble must last for a minimum of one minute. Over all, the performing element of the qualification is worth 30% of the marks.

#### **Composing**

Students compose two compositions of at least three minutes' combined duration. One composition is to a brief set by the examination board of at least one minute in duration. Students also compose a piece of your own choosing, of at least one minute in duration. The composing component is worth 30% of the total marks for the qualification.

#### **Appraising**

Areas of study include music from a range of styles and periods including classical, rock, music theatre, film and folk. Section A relates directly to pieces studied during the course. Section B asks students to compare unprepared pieces as well as those that have been studied. The appraising paper is worth 40% of the marks and is taken as an examination at the end of the course. Extracts of music are played as part of the examination.

#### **Career Opportunities**

GCSE Music gives a fascinating insight into a diverse range of musical styles. It develops skills in performing and composition, improves confidence and presentation skills. It may lead to a career in the media, music industry, performing, teaching or arts administration, but also develops transferable skills useful in any profession.

GCSE Music is usually needed for A Level Music to be considered as an option in the Sixth Form.

## Physical Education (Options subject)

The AQA Physical Education course is split into two parts, 40% of the course is practical based and 60% of the course is theory based.

### Practical (40%)

Students will be required to show advanced skills and demonstrate their abilities in increasingly challenging situations. It is advised that these chosen sports are practised at clubs both inside and outside of school time. A love of sport, commitment and enthusiasm are a must, as is a desire to study the theoretical aspects of sport and exercise.

The students will select a maximum of three sports. At least one of these sports must be a team sport and one must be an individual sport. Teachers will work with students to help choose their strongest sports.

Each sport is worth 10% of the practical element and there is an analysis and evaluation coursework project that contributes to the final 10%.

### Theory (60%)

- ➔ Two examination papers, each worth 30% of total GCSE, each paper is 75 minutes in length.
- ➔ The papers are broken down into a mixture of multiple-choice questions, objective test questions, short answer questions and extended answer questions
- ➔ The content and breakdown of each paper are shown in the table below:

Paper 1: The human body and movement in physical activity and sport	Paper 2: Socio-cultural influences and well-being in physical activity and sport:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➔ Applied anatomy and physiology</li><li>➔ Movement analysis</li><li>➔ Physical training</li><li>➔ Use of data</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➔ Sports psychology</li><li>➔ Socio-cultural influences</li><li>➔ Health, fitness and well-being</li><li>➔ Use of data</li></ul>

### Career Opportunities

GCSE PE gives an extra dynamic to GCSE options. If students love sport and want to know more about applying it in different situations this is the course for them.

It will set them up to study A Level PE or BTEC Sport in the Sixth Form as well as helping with knowledge for science and giving an extra opportunity every week to be active.

Potential careers include sports coaching, strength and wellbeing coaching, sports nutrition, teaching and the armed forces.



## Religious Studies (Options subject)

Following on from our successful introduction of Global Citizenship we will now be offering Religious Studies as a natural follow on option.

The AQA Religious Studies A course offers a fantastic opportunity to study two of the major world religions (Christianity and Islam) as well as to debate and evaluate contemporary issues facing our world today, challenging and questioning ideas about belief, values, meaning, purpose and truth.

Studying Religious Studies is much more than just learning about religion. The GCSE course takes a wider exploration of global perspectives and gives an understanding of how religion, philosophy and ethics form the basis of many cultures. Students will develop analytical and critical thinking skills, the ability to work with abstract ideas, communication, leadership and research skills. All these will help prepare students for further study as well as to be a critical and ethical thinker – which is a key skill valued by employers.

**How it is examined:** Two papers, 50% each, each exam lasting 1 hour 45 minutes.

### Paper 1: The study of religions: beliefs, teachings and practices

We will study two religions – Christianity and Islam, which are the largest world religions. Understanding these two religions provides thoughtful religious comparisons, and also gives important contextual knowledge for many major issues facing our world today.

### Paper 2: Religious, philosophical and ethical issues

This paper looks at a range of contemporary world issues and ethical questions from different global and cultural perspectives.

#### The issues we will explore are:

- ➔ Religion, peace and conflict
- ➔ Religion, crime and punishment
- ➔ Religion, human rights and social justice
- ➔ Religion and life

The course develops from many of the ideas and issues introduced in Global Citizenship in Year 7, 8 and 9. If students enjoy exploring and debating ideas about the world and challenging assumptions as well as gaining insight into different beliefs, cultures and perspectives, then this course is for them!

### Career Opportunities

Religious Studies is a very highly regarded subject with universities and employers for the skills it fosters, and will also help students gain more insight and understanding of current affairs, politics, international relations and the world around us.



## **Textile Design (Options subject)**

Textile Design is a versatile practice that involves the creation, selection, manipulation and application of a range of materials such as fibres, yarns and fabrics, and processes such as weaving, knitting, stitching and printing to create designs and products. Textile designers work in a multi-disciplinary ways to create ideas, materials and techniques for different applications. Textile designers also play an important role in the world of fashion, theatre, performance and retail.

### **Areas of study**

Work must demonstrate integrated knowledge, understanding and skills. Work is not limited to one area of study and students could develop work in a least one of the following areas of study.

- ➔ Constructed textiles
- ➔ Digital textiles
- ➔ Dyed fabrics
- ➔ Printed fabrics
- ➔ Fashion design
- ➔ Installed textiles
- ➔ Soft furnishings
- ➔ Stitched and/or embellished textiles

### **Course Content**

- ➔ Component 1: Personal Portfolio in Textile Design (60%)
- ➔ Component 2: Externally Set Assignment in Textile Design (40%)

### **Career Opportunities**

Textile Design can lead to a variety of careers including designing, marketing, buying, merchandising, journalism and costume in theatre or television.

Textile Design practitioners may work within a team environment in a large commercial manufacturing company, on a single aspect of the design or making process, or work as freelance practitioners on commissions or self-directed projects. They will need good communication skills in order to liaise with clients and to promote themselves as textiles designers and makers.

## **ESL English as a Second Language (Options subject)**

International students have the opportunity to take the Pearson Edexcel IGCSE (9-1) English as a Second Language course to get an extra GCSE qualification.

Our International Study Centre works with other departments and our focus is for students to acquire the level of English required for the mainstream British academic curriculum and therefore this course also covers general knowledge topics helping students to succeed in other subjects.

### **Scheme of Assessment and Examination**

IGCSE (9-1) ESL:

**Paper 1:** Reading & Writing (2 hours)

**Paper 2:** Listening (50 minutes)

**Paper 3:** Speaking (optional)

### **All courses cover the following broad topic areas in Years 10 and 11:**

- ➔ Family and friends
- ➔ Exploring the world
- ➔ The entertainment industry
- ➔ Health and lifestyle
- ➔ School, jobs, career and business
- ➔ Natural world and environment
- ➔ Mastering languages
- ➔ Speech and communication
- ➔ Technology and the future

## **Astronomy (Extra-curricular)**

Studying GCSE Astronomy has the following advantages:

Pupils develop a deeper understanding of the universe, exploring both observational and theoretical concepts. This course provides an excellent foundation for pursuing astronomy, astrophysics, or other STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) disciplines beyond GCSE.

The course enhances practical skills through direct astronomical observations, which are assessed as part of the coursework. Pupils improve their problem-solving and analytical abilities by applying mathematical and scientific principles to celestial phenomena.

### **Pearson Edexcel GCSE Astronomy Examinations:**

- ➔ Questions are clearly structured to ensure accessibility for all students.
- ➔ Exams focus on key concepts and practical applications, avoiding unnecessary complexity.
- ➔ Questions progress in difficulty to build confidence and challenge pupils appropriately.

### **GCSE Astronomy Pathway:**

Exams taken in Year 11 – 1 GCSE awarded

- ➔ Paper 1: Naked-eye Astronomy (1h 45min)
- ➔ Paper 2: Telescopic Astronomy (1h 45min)

Both papers are available at a single tier and include a mixture of multiple-choice, short-answer, and extended-response questions.

### **Content Summary for GCSE Astronomy**

#### **1. Naked-eye Astronomy**

- ➔ Earth, Moon, and Sun
- ➔ Planetary systems
- ➔ Gravity and orbits
- ➔ Time and celestial observations

#### **2. Telescopic Astronomy**

- ➔ Electromagnetic spectrum
- ➔ Telescopes and imaging
- ➔ Stars and stellar evolution
- ➔ Galaxies and cosmology
- ➔ The expanding universe

The qualification encourages pupils to observe and record celestial events, including lunar phases, eclipses, and constellations, fostering a hands-on approach to learning about the cosmos.

## **Classical Greek (Extra-curricular)**

As GCSE Classical Greek is taught off-timetable, it can be taken as an extra subject in addition to the full number of other option subjects. There is no requirement to study Latin as well, although of course the two subjects complement one another very well.

It is not for the linguistically faint-hearted, but the rewards of studying this beautiful and subtle ancient language are great. To read extracts from ancient Greek literature in the original language is an exciting and inspiring prospect. It is also an unusual and distinctive subject to offer at this level, and one which is held in high regard by university admissions tutors.

### **Scheme of Assessment and Examination**

Students study three units, one in language and two in literature.

#### **→ Language (50% of the GCSE)**

In this paper candidates are asked to translate and answer comprehension questions about stories based on either ancient mythology or history. There is a prescribed word list for this paper.

#### **→ Prose Literature (25% of the GCSE)**

Candidates will study an example of Classical Greek prose literature for this paper, such as the intriguing (and often bizarre) stories from Herodotus, the so-called 'Father of History'.

#### **→ Verse Literature (25% of the GCSE)**

For this paper, candidates study an example of Classical Greek verse literature, such as extracts from one of Euripides' powerful tragedies, or a section of Homer's epic poem, the Iliad, which explores the anger of Achilles and the its effect of the Greek siege of Troy.

As this is an extra-curricular subject, please do not include it on your options form. If you are interested in studying this GCSE, please contact Mrs Hayes, Head of Classics.

### **Career Opportunities**

Latin, in nurturing a wide range of disciplines, is relevant to a breadth of options at university and beyond. In the past, these have included law, medicine, history, classics, theatre studies, English, advertising, politics, and language.

## Further Mathematics (Extra-curricular)

The AQA Certificate in Further Mathematics (8365) is an additional qualification available to the more able mathematicians who are expected to achieve grades 8 and 9 in IGCSE Mathematics and who are likely to progress to study Mathematics at A Level. It is taught during Year 11.

Further Mathematics places an emphasis on higher order technical proficiency, rigorous argument and problem-solving skills. It gives high achieving pupils an introduction to A Level topics that will help them to develop skills in:

- ➔ Algebra
- ➔ Geometry
- ➔ Calculus
- ➔ Matrices
- ➔ Trigonometry
- ➔ Functions
- ➔ Graphs

### Assessment:

**Paper 1** (non-calculator): 1 hour 45 minutes assessment that makes 50% of the qualification.

**Paper 2** (calculator): 1 hour 45 minutes paper that makes 50% of the qualification.

Although this qualification provides a useful introduction to A Level Mathematics and Further Mathematics it is not a pre-requisite for students who wish to study Mathematics at this level in the Sixth Form.

As this is an extra-curricular subject, please do not include it on your options form. If you are interested in studying this Level 2 certificate, please contact Mrs Allen, Head of Mathematics.

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