

GCSE Course Guide



PRIOR PARK
SCHOOL
GIBRALTAR

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WELCOME TO THE GCSE OPTIONS BOOKLET

In the next few weeks you will be asked to select the subjects you want to study at GCSE level in Years 10 and 11. You may already have some idea about the courses you wish to follow and so the selection process may be relatively simple. Others of you may not be as sure, so to help you we have tried to make the GCSE options process as simple as possible and would encourage you to seek advice from your parents/guardians and current teachers.

Dear Student,

Most of you will be studying for 9 or 10 GCSE subjects. However, for some students, including those on the Learning Development Programme (LDP) or for whom English is a second language, it may be advisable to study fewer subjects – where this applies the Deputy Head will be able to advise you about this.

At Prior Park School, seven subjects are still considered to be “core” subjects and these are compulsory. They are English Language and English Literature, Mathematics, Science (all three sciences are compulsory) and Spanish. All students will follow GCSE Religious Studies AQA Spec A, unless they choose to study the AQA specification B syllabus focusing on Catholic Christianity as one of the three additional “optional” subjects.

Following the parent information evening, you and your parents might like to discuss your GCSE options with your current teachers. After this, you will be asked to make your final selection by the end of April.

Following analysis of choices, the timetable for 2019-20 will be constructed and, whilst there will be some flexibility for you to change your mind about which subjects you wish to study at GCSE, accommodation of late changes cannot be guaranteed.

This booklet is designed to give you more information about the many subjects on offer at Prior Park School, and hopefully it will help you to make the right choices for GCSE.

A recent change at GCSE level was the grading. All GCSE qualifications are graded on a nine point scale. 1-9 where 9 is the best grade. Students who fail to reach the minimum standard for grade 1 will be recorded as U and will not receive a qualification certificate.

If you have any queries about this process please do not hesitate to contact me via e-mail at:
pmartyn@priorparkschools.com

I hope you find this booklet helpful and, on behalf of all the staff, wish you every success with your future choices.

Yours sincerely

Mr Paul Martyn
Deputy Head (Academic)
Prior Park School, Gibraltar

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT KEY STAGE 4 (GCSE)

WHAT SUBJECTS ARE AVAILABLE?

Pages 5 - 11 will give you information on the core or compulsory subjects. Pages 12-23 will give you an idea of which optional subjects are available at Prior Park School, from which you can choose three subjects. Read them all carefully before making any snap decisions.

WHAT SUBJECTS SHOULD I CHOOSE?

Liking a subject may be an initial guide as you are likely to perform well when you are enjoying the work and feel committed to it. For example, successful students are often those who enjoy a subject so much they even read beyond the curriculum. If you choose something because you feel you should, you may be less likely to make the most of the opportunities. Don't forget, there may be some subjects here you have not tried yet, so you need to find out as much as possible about them too. Some subjects may require more project work than others; some subjects will be practical/hands-on as well as theoretical. Understanding yourself and what you enjoy is important.

Unfortunately, it will probably not be possible to study a Modern Foreign Language at GCSE level if you have not studied it in Year 9.

WHAT AM I GOOD AT?

There may be some subjects for which you feel you have a natural ability; it comes easily to you. Opting for these courses will develop your skills and can help build your confidence. If you are not sure if you have the ability then ask your current teachers - they have considerable expertise at spotting talent!

WHAT SUBJECTS DO I NEED THAT WILL BE RELEVANT FOR A JOB?

If you have definite ideas as to which University course or career you wish to follow post Sixth Form then it is



always helpful to research the subject requirements. If you do not have any idea then try not to be overly concerned. The seven compulsory subjects at PPS cover the essentials that may be specified by universities or employers for most, if not all, courses. It is worth noting that all subjects offered at PPS are "relevant" because they can help you to develop skills that can be useful and applicable later on. These are called transferable skills; something that you have acquired in one context that can be applied to another. The following subjects may differ in the knowledge and information you will learn, but they all share many common objectives. They will, for example, teach you to find, sort and evaluate information; how to analyse problems and construct possible solutions; how to communicate your ideas verbally or on paper, and how to cope with complex ideas.

Employers are particularly interested in people having the following transferable skills:

- Communication skills;
- Thinking creatively;
- Understanding and being able to work with people;
- Understanding science and the world;

Being able to solve problems.

- Thinking about subjects in terms of what skills they will help you acquire and develop can therefore be in itself a valuable life skill.

SO, WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

- Talk to your current teachers about your thoughts;
- Read this book carefully and draw up a short list of possible subjects.
- Try to distinguish between your current teacher and the subject they teach you! You may want to take a subject because you like the teacher but it won't be the case that you will have that person next year. So, do you like it enough to do it anyway?

We wish you good luck with the process ahead of you.

CORE SUBJECTS

ENGLISH

SUBJECT TITLE/ EXAMINATION BOARD

Edexcel Certificate in English Language 4EA1 (IGCSE)

Edexcel Certificate in English Literature 4ET1 (IGCSE)

AIMS OF THE COURSE

Both the Language and Literature courses have been designed with the aim of developing students' reading, writing, speaking and listening skills. The Language course offers students a chance to develop their research skills and to become more thoughtful readers, able to detect bias and to infer meanings. The Literature course offers students the chance to study three different texts in depth, giving them a sense of the variety and richness of Literature in English, as well as building analytical skills through the study of a range of poems from different periods.

SUBJECT CONTENT

English Language

During the Michaelmas term, students will undertake a research project, producing an extended piece of writing - this could be either, argumentative, discursive, informative or persuasive - with a commentary explaining how their research informed and shaped their writing, and how they targeted their audience. This task will help students to develop the reading and writing skills needed for their Language exam, which consists of a non-fiction comprehension task and a piece of composition. These skills will be further developed during the end of the Michaelmas term in year 10 and revisited in year 11.

English Literature

In the Lent term of year 10, students will focus on the Literature coursework: a comparative essay which allows students the chance to study two texts in depth, exploring thematic and contextual

links between them. At the end of the summer term, students will begin their Literature set text. Following this, students will also be taught the skills required to respond to unseen poetry, building on the work already done at the end of year 10.

The rest of the year 11 will focus on consolidating exam skills in both Literature and Language.

SKILLS DEVELOPED THROUGH THE COURSE

Students will develop:

- Reading, study and research skills - including the ability to identify bias, 'read between the lines' and the ability to evaluate sources of information
- The ability to analyse techniques and their effects
- The ability to compare texts from different periods
- Skills in essay-writing and composition
- An awareness of different modes of writing
- The ability to communicate clearly and fluently.

ASSESSMENTS/EXAMINATIONS

English Language

English Language is assessed by an external written examination (60%) and two coursework tasks (40%).

English Literature

English Literature is assessed by one written examination of a set text and unseen poetry (60%) and two coursework tasks (40%).

SUGGESTED READING /ACTIVITIES

Students will study a variety of different texts: one of these will be a play by Shakespeare. For the coursework option we have tended to select 20th century plays and novels. Any general books on Shakespeare and Elizabethan/Jacobean drama would be a useful preparation; as would novels from the 1930s onwards. Year 10 students should approach their

subject teachers for suitable novels that they can read over the summer holidays. We would recommend that students take advantage of any opportunity to go to the theatre. For the Language course, awareness of current affairs will be invaluable - whether it is gained from listening to news bulletins or discussion programmes on the radio, or from reading articles in the news. Similarly, good quality or what is sometimes termed 'literary' non-fiction (Nick Hornby's writing on music and football, or Francis Spufford's memoirs of his reading habits), would also be invaluable. Class teachers will be happy to recommend other titles.

RELEVANCE OF THE SUBJECT OR CAREER OPPORTUNITIES IF STUDIED AT A HIGHER LEVEL

English provides students with a good grounding in a variety of key skills: the ability to communicate clearly; to undertake independent research; to select, summarise and evaluate different sources; to structure and draft extended pieces of writing. These are all 'transferable' skills which will be invaluable in further or higher education and beyond. The potential career opportunities which English opens up include: the law; civil service; media and broadcasting; speechwriting and education.

CORE SUBJECTS

MATHS

SUBJECT TITLE/ EXAMINATION BOARD

GCSE Edexcel Mathematics A, 4MA1

AIMS OF THE COURSE

- Develop knowledge, skills and understanding of mathematical methods and concepts
- Acquire and use problem-solving strategies
- Select and apply mathematical techniques and methods in mathematical, everyday and real-world situations
- Reason mathematically, make deductions and inferences and draw conclusions
- Interpret and communicate mathematical information in a variety of forms appropriate to the information and context.

SUBJECT CONTENT

This course is based around the National Curriculum and students are encouraged to think for themselves at all stages. All students are issued with textbooks which are specifically tailored to the course which is studied.

SKILLS DEVELOPED THROUGH THE COURSE

Students should have the confidence and ability to be able to apply their mathematical knowledge to any problems that they encounter.

ASSESSMENTS/EXAMINATIONS

IGCSE is a linear course and the students will sit two examination papers at the end of the two years i.e. in year 11. All students will sit the Higher level papers. There is no longer any coursework component at IGCSE level.

SUGGESTED READING /ACTIVITIES

Students should look at the website nrich, which offers lots of puzzles and articles on Mathematics - www.nrich.maths.org/forstudents

RELEVANCE OF THE SUBJECT/CAREER OPPORTUNITIES IF STUDIED AT A HIGHER LEVEL

Many careers require the techniques and skills that Mathematics offers. For example, Psychology degrees often require Maths in order for students to undertake the statistical analysis of clinical experiments.

Common careers – Accountancy, Engineering, Architecture and most science based careers.



CORE SUBJECTS

GCSE SCIENCE TEACHING AT PRIOR PARK SCHOOL

Students will follow one of two routes through their Science GCSE at PPS. Some students may opt to take AQA's Separate Science GCSEs as described in more detail below, they will do this by selecting 'Separate Science' as one of their three options. The majority of the other students will take a path leading to "Double Award Science" GCSE qualifications, which equates to two GCSEs in science rather than three.

This flexibility allows us to cater to the needs of students and to stretch the best scientists. It also allows us to provide an excellent all round science

education for those students who may not wish to follow science beyond KS4 and /or cater for the needs of those students who find the sciences particularly challenging. With a careful setting policy we are able to maximise the full potential of each student and allow for late developers to move between sets if their progress warrants such a promotion.

Along the Double Award path, the content in each of the three sciences is slightly reduced. Nonetheless, the level of examination questions is broadly the

same. Following this route enables these students to proceed through the material at a slightly slower pace, thereby helping to consolidate their learning. It should be noted that a majority of students in the UK follow the Double Science route and all A level science courses are designed on the assumption that students have this qualification as their base starting point. To that end, having Double Award Science GCSEs presents no barrier to taking A level sciences at PPS. Indeed, over the years Prior Park College has had many outstanding A level students who have followed this GCSE route.

BIOLOGY

SUBJECT TITLE/ EXAMINATION BOARD

AQA/ GCSE Biology (8461)

(Or Biology as part of Double Award Science (AQA GCSE Science, 8464)

AIMS OF THE COURSE

The course aims to stimulate interest and enthusiasm for biological science by giving a good grounding in the living world and of those factors which have a major impact on that world. It seeks to enable students to understand how living organisms function at the level of the cell as well as whole organisms. It also seeks to enable them to appreciate how understanding the process of scientific enquiry enables new discoveries to be made. The course will provide a firm foundation for A level Biology.

SUBJECT CONTENT

The course is divided into 7 units:

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

SKILLS DEVELOPED THROUGH THE COURSE

- Understanding the relationships between plants and animals
- Understanding biological processes
- Assessing some of the impacts of humans on the living world
- Researching and debating some current issues in Biology – for example, cloning and genetic engineering
- Contributing to team work in planning and carrying out practical investigations
- Understanding the stages involved in designing valid experiments: predict, design, implement, analyse and evaluate
- Learning how to apply mathematics to biological data
- Learning techniques required for revision and exams.

ASSESSMENTS/EXAMINATIONS

The scheme of assessment is linear, with two question papers to be taken at the end of the course. The details are given below:

Paper 1: Assesses topics 1-4 only:
Written exam: 1 hour 45 minutes at Foundation or Higher Tier.

100 marks = 50% of GCSE

Questions are multiple choice, structured, closed short answer and open response.

Paper 2: Assesses topics 5-7 only:

Written exam: 1 hour 45 minutes at Foundation or Higher Tier.

100 marks = 50% of GCSE

Questions are multiple choice, structured, closed short answer and open response.

SUGGESTED READING /ACTIVITIES

New Scientist for an awareness of current issues in science. Biological Science Review for students aspiring to go on to do A Level Biology. Student BMJ for aspiring medical students. Daily newspaper articles.

RELEVANCE OF THE SUBJECT/CAREER OPPORTUNITIES IF STUDIED AT A HIGHER LEVEL

The Certificate in Biology course is a firm base from which to advance to AS and A Level Biology and eventually to careers in Medicine, Dentistry, Veterinary Science, Biochemistry, Pharmacy and Physiotherapy.

CORE SUBJECTS

CHEMISTRY

AQA/ GCSE Chemistry (8462)

or Chemistry as part of Double Award Science (AQA GCSE Science, 8464)

AIMS OF THE COURSE

The course aim is to provide a rigorous but interesting grounding in the principles of Chemistry, accessible to all but one that challenges the most able. Our teaching approach is heavily based on practical investigation. The course is linear, examined at the end of year 11.

SUBJECT CONTENT

Overview of the subject content:

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

SKILLS DEVELOPED THROUGH THE COURSE

As part of the GCSE Chemistry course students will:

- Learn about the unifying patterns and themes of chemistry
- Appreciate the practical nature of chemistry, acquiring experimental and investigative skills based on correct and safe laboratory techniques
- Appreciate the importance to scientific methods of accurate experimental work and reporting
- Be able to form hypotheses and design experiments to test them
- Understand the widespread importance of chemistry and the way materials are used in the world
- Appreciate how the work of the chemist has social, industrial, technological, environmental and economic consequences for the community

ASSESSMENTS/EXAMINATIONS

Two externally assessed papers, both sat in June of year 11 to provide either a separate award GCSE in Chemistry or as part of the dual award AQA GCSE in Science:

Paper 1

Written paper - 1 hour 45 minutes
First Five topics listed
50% of overall mark

Paper 2

Written paper - 1 hour 45 minutes
Second Five topics listed
50% of overall mark

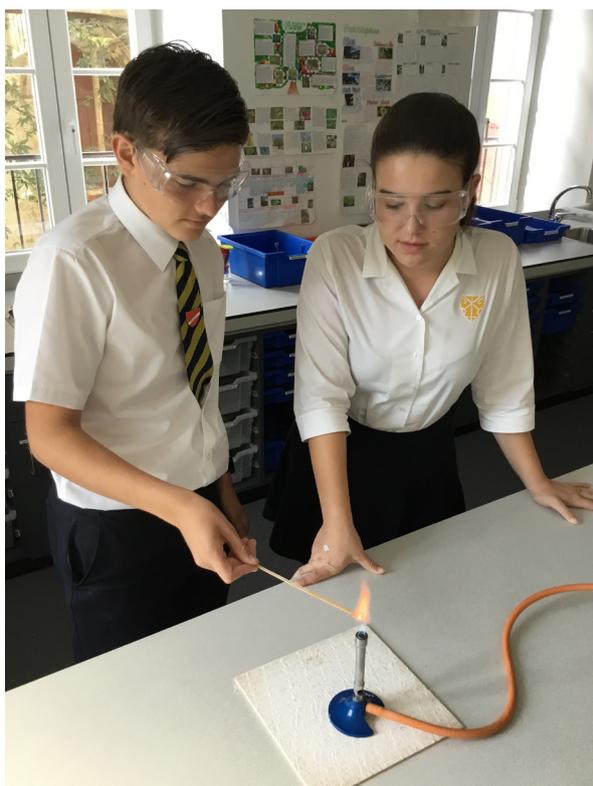
SUGGESTED READING /ACTIVITIES

All students are provided with AQA Chemistry by Lawrie Ryan. Chemistry books by other authors/ publishers (such as Collins) are also available within Laboratory. Students are advised to get personal copy of the new Higher Level Grade 9-1 AQA GCSE Chemistry

Revision Guide (Online Edition available) by CGP Books. Students are also encouraged to read more widely including New Scientist, BBC Bitesize and to join the Royal Society of Chemistry ChemNet.

RELEVANCE OF THE SUBJECT/ CAREER OPPORTUNITIES IF STUDIED AT A HIGHER LEVEL

Chemistry is a demanding yet very highly regarded A Level. It is valued by University Admissions Tutors for most subjects. However, it has direct relevance for any Chemistry related degree, including Chemical Engineering, Biochemistry, and other Life Sciences. It is also an essential subject for anyone interested in Medicine, Veterinary Medicine, Dentistry and Pharmacy.



CORE SUBJECTS

PHYSICS

AQA/ GCSE Physics (8463)

or Physics as part of Double Award Science (AQA GCSE Science, 8464)

AIMS OF THE COURSE

The aim of the course is to promote an enquiring mind and a critical approach to thinking about how the world around us works. As well as theoretical ideas, students will develop their practical skills through experimental work related to each of the topics covered. Students are also encouraged to think about how they can use the ideas they meet in Physics to address problems and concerns in the world around them.

SUBJECT CONTENT

Forces and Their Effects

- Motion
- Forces, Moment and Momentum
- Work and Energy
- Waves and Electromagnetic Waves
- Electricity, Mains Electricity and Motors
- Magnetism
- Astronomy
- Density, Pressure and Internal Energy
- Radioactivity, Fission and Fusion

SKILLS DEVELOPED THROUGH THE COURSE

Students will develop the ability to think about scientific ideas critically and consider how reliable information or results are.

They will develop a range of practical skills as well as the ability to contribute as part of a group. Students will develop the ability to present their own ideas to others in an informative way.

ASSESSMENTS/EXAMINATIONS

The assessment is based around two written papers taken at the end of the course. There is no coursework element.

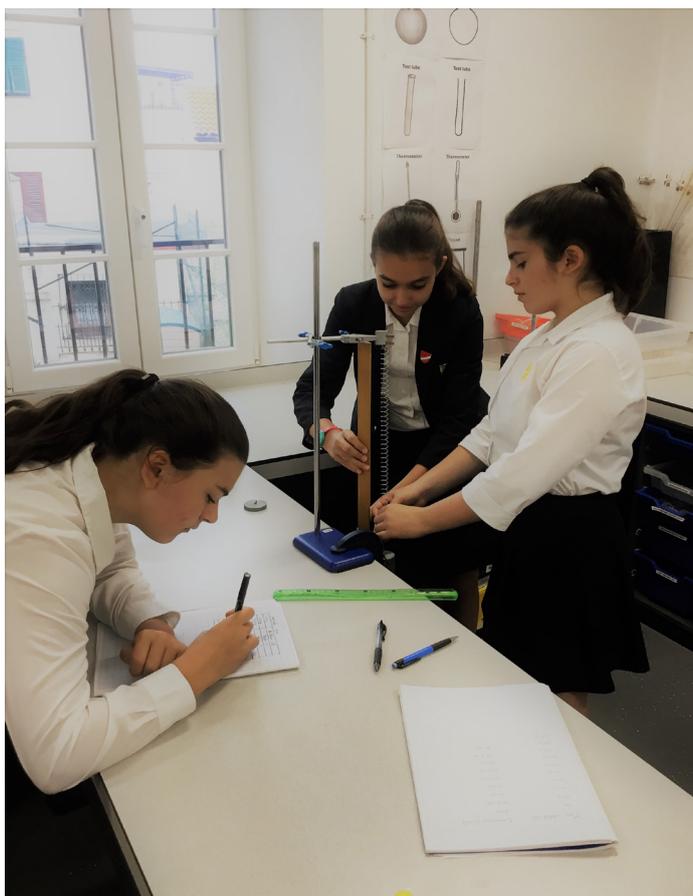
SUGGESTED READING /ACTIVITIES

The New Scientist magazine in the department and the school library gives a weekly insight into the importance of current lines of investigation in Physics, as well as the other sciences. The BBC News website has a section on Science and Technology that has many interesting and up to date ideas for students to read about.

RELEVANCE OF THE SUBJECT/CAREER OPPORTUNITIES IF STUDIED AT A HIGHER LEVEL

Physics is a subject that opens many doors for the future. As well as leading to a career in the sciences or engineering it provides strong support for those wishing to go into Medicine, Finance and Veterinary Science.

Students who study Physics must show they have a critical mind and the ability to analyze problems and come up with solutions.



CORE SUBJECTS

RELIGIOUS STUDIES (CORE)

Religious Studies AQA Specification A

AIMS OF THE COURSE

At Prior Park we value the study of religion for a number of reasons. Firstly, for the believer and non-believer-alike, religions are a precious repository of philosophical and moral wisdom worth reflecting on and applying to our own lives.

Secondly, we believe that true comprehension of our cultural heritage involves being religiously literate. One cannot fully appreciate neither history or art without a good understanding of the faiths which many have fought for and been deeply inspired by. Likewise, to understand the changing landscape of our modern world such a knowledge is equally essential.

Thirdly, the study of religion promotes the ability of each and every pupil to express themselves clearly and to develop, define and defend their viewpoint intelligently both in speech and with the written word. Few other curriculum subjects offer students the space to explore their own worldview and response to life's ultimate questions. The course at GCSE is taught with a view to meeting each of these aims.

COURSE STRUCTURE

Pupils begin their study of GCSE RE a year before other subjects in year 9 since the entire course is taught in a single period per week over three school years. We ensure that in year 9 students learn the modules that are co-teachable with the Catholic RE GCSE specification. This means that, should a pupil decide to opt to take the Catholic GCSE in year 10 rather than continue with specification A, they will still have learnt relevant GCSE content in year 9.

ASSESSMENTS/EXAMINATIONS

Pupils study for two papers, each of which takes 1 hour and 45 minutes to complete and is divided into four sections.

Paper 1:

Pupils are examined in the beliefs and practices of two world religions. They must taking careful notice of variations within and commonalities between both traditions. The religions studied are Christianity and Islam.

Paper 2:

Pupils apply their learning about religious principles to questions of ethical and philosophical interest. These are 'war and peace'; 'crime and punishment'; 'the existence of God and revelation' and 'relationships and families'

SKILLS DEVELOPED THROUGH THE COURSE

In pursuing this course pupils learn to:

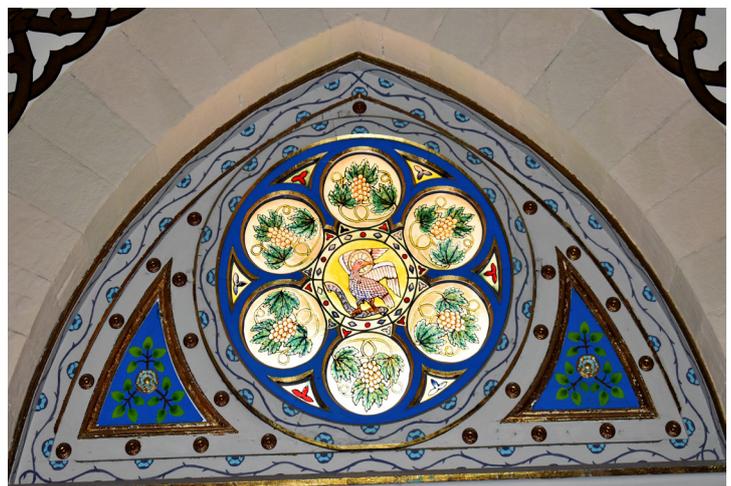
- Recall information rapidly with accuracy
- Explain how beliefs translate into actions
- Explain the impact of scripture on modern believers
- Explain their own and competing viewpoints on contemporary moral and philosophical issues
- Evaluate arguments, demonstrating their strengths and weaknesses clearly

SUGGESTED READING /ACTIVITIES

Students on this course can enrich their learning by taking a keen interest in current affairs, especially by reading a broadsheet newspaper and or a quality magazine articles related to religion, crime, relationships and war. Students who attend Mass or any other religious service will also find that listening to sermons will help them to deepen their understanding of scripture and how sacred texts motivate faith communities.

RELEVANCE OF THE SUBJECT/CAREER OPPORTUNITIES IF STUDIED AT A HIGHER LEVEL

A GCSE in religious offers a good grounding for A-level and degree courses in philosophy, ethics, theology, English, history and journalism.



CORE SUBJECTS

SPANISH

AQA GCSE Spanish (8698)

This course aims to enable students of all abilities to develop their Spanish language skills to their full potential, equipping them with the knowledge to communicate in a variety of contexts with confidence. This course offers both a Foundation Tier (grades 1–5) and a Higher Tier (grades 4–9).

AIMS OF THE COURSE

The aims and objectives of this qualification are to enable students to develop:

- Understanding and use of written and spoken forms of the target language, in a range of familiar and practical contexts, and for a variety of purposes
- The ability to communicate effectively in the target language through speaking and the written word, using a range of vocabulary and structures
- A knowledge and understanding of the target language grammar and its practical application
- A knowledge and understanding of countries and communities where the target language is spoken

SUBJECT CONTENT

Theme 1: Identity and culture: Me, my family and friends; Technology in everyday life; Free-time activities; Customs and festivals in Spanish-speaking countries/communities

Theme 2: Local, national, international and global areas of interest: Home, town, neighbourhood and region; Social issues; Global issues; Travel and tourism

Theme 3: Current and future study and employment: My studies; Life at school/college; Education post-16; Jobs, career choices and ambitions

SKILLS DEVELOPED THROUGH THE COURSE

Students should be competent in the following areas by the end of their GCSE course:

- Communication strategies in both understanding (reading and listening) and those that relate to production (speaking and writing)
- Understanding the spoken word: questions, requests, conversations; announcements, radio, TV
- Understanding the written word: signs, notices, labels, instructions
- Timetables, programmes, advertisements, messages, cards, letters, books
- Initiating a conversation, to ask questions as well as to reply, to request and give information, explanations and opinions

ASSESSMENTS/EXAMINATIONS

This GCSE Spanish course offers a Foundation Tier (grades 1–5) and a Higher Tier (grades 4–9). Students must take all four question papers at the same tier.

Paper 1: Listening. What's assessed: This paper requires learners to respond to a range of questions in English and also in Spanish. Question types will include multiple choice with non-verbal and written responses; gap-fill one word answers; selecting correct/false statements; and short answer responses.

Paper 2: Speaking. What's assessed: This paper requires learners to respond in Spanish to a role play (2 minutes), a photo card (2 minutes) and a conversation (3–5 minutes at Foundation Tier; 5–7 at Higher Tier). Assessment of this component will also take account of knowledge of, and accurate application of, grammar and structures.

Paper 3: Reading. What's assessed: This paper requires learners to respond

to a range of questions in English and also in Spanish. Question types will include multiple choice with non-verbal responses; match-up responses; gap-fill one word answers; selecting correct/false statements; short answer responses; completing information in a table; and longer responses.

Paper 4: Writing. What's assessed: This paper requires learners to respond in Spanish to a range of written tasks. Assessment in this component will also take account of knowledge of, and accurate application of, grammar and structures.

SUGGESTED READING /ACTIVITIES

Online resources: Spanish TV; Spanishrevision.co.uk; Bitesize, Duolingo, Quizlet. Watching films as well as accessing authentic materials and cultural content in Spanish.

RELEVANCE OF THE SUBJECT/CAREER OPPORTUNITIES IF STUDIED AT A HIGHER LEVEL

Research shows there is a direct correlation between bilingualism and intelligence, memory skills and higher academic achievement.

A foreign language skill not only brings practical benefits of enabling you to communicate more freely with people, it also allows you to appreciate other cultures; language being the window into the ideas and experiences of a nation.

Those who can speak and write more than one language are the ones in demand in an employment market where people work for international companies, work with foreign nationals and work and live in other countries.

Modern Language graduates enjoy one of the highest employment rates in an increasingly competitive job market.

OPTIONAL SUBJECTS

ART

Art and Design Fine Art OCR, J170

AIMS OF THE COURSE

To develop individual creativity and understanding of the visual arts.

SUBJECT CONTENT

The subject content is broad and covers painting, drawing, printmaking, sculpture and digital media. Students explore a number of themes and build practical skills and contextual understanding; as the course progresses the direction of their work becomes highly individual and they are encouraged to develop their own interests and strengths as young artists.

SKILLS DEVELOPED THROUGH THE COURSE

- Observational and spatial skills
- An understanding of visual language and the world of images that surrounds us
- Sustaining a creative development of visual ideas
- Practical techniques and processes

ASSESSMENTS/EXAMINATIONS

Coursework Folio 60%

This is a project based on a theme, done in school and prep time. Working to this theme, students will demonstrate their skills in a wide range of media

Students will produce a personal sketch book which is a journal of ideas, images and experiments and annotated research into the work of other artists. At least two large final works will be done within this project.

OCR Set Task 40%

On return to school in the New Year of the year 11, students will be given a choice of starting points set by OCR. They will then begin another body of work built around a new sketch book, which concludes with a ten hour exam in about mid-April (this is Art all day for two days and proves to be great fun!)

SUGGESTED READING /ACTIVITIES

- Visit Tate Britain and Tate Modern websites
- Go to the public art gallery and see what's on
- Visit the commercial galleries
- Try drawing and making things for pleasure. You could even consider painting designs on objects at home
- Take interesting photos with your mobile phone, try to enjoy and get into the habit of looking at things!

Our world is very visual with TV, films, adverts, magazines, product presentation, style and fashion. Art at school can only help us digest this rich diet.

Art at GCSE encourages and helps develop the sense that students must take responsibility for their efforts, and hence their own education, and make their own decisions and choices based upon personal research. Those who do well always "pick up the ball and run with it."



OPTIONAL SUBJECTS

BUSINESS STUDIES

Edexcel GCSE Business Studies

AIMS OF THE COURSE

Students of the Edexcel GCSE Business Studies course will gain a holistic understanding of business and develop a range of relevant skills, including decision making, problem solving, challenging assumptions and quantifying and managing information.

SUBJECT CONTENT

Enterprise drives our economy on a local, domestic and global scale. It generates employment, encourages competition and fuels research and development. Business studies is a fascinating and dynamic subject, which teaches pupils the principles and theories behind business management and the practices behind running a successful business.

There is a practical side to study too and students relish the opportunity to explore the business models and strategies of well-known brand companies or small scale local businesses.

Business studies lessons explode into life with:

- Animated presentations, which

facilitate students' understanding of key examination techniques

- Interactive and fun activities, with lively exercises that seek to introduce and reinforce key concepts
- Short video case studies and supporting worksheets, which seek to illustrate key concepts as well as first-hand experience from local entrepreneurs.

ASSESSMENTS/EXAMINATIONS

The course consists of two externally examined papers.

The specification is structured into two themes, taking students from how entrepreneurs start businesses (Theme 1) through to growing and global businesses (Theme 2). There are two equally weighted exam papers, focusing on each specification theme.

Theme 1 (Paper 1) concentrates on the key business concepts, issues and skills involved in starting and running a small business. It provides a framework for students to explore core concepts through the lens of an entrepreneur setting up a business.

Theme 2 (Paper 2) examines how a business develops beyond the start-up phase. It focuses on the key business concepts, issues and decisions used to grow a business, with an emphasis on aspects of marketing, operations, finance and human resources. It also considers the impact of the wider world on the decisions a business makes as it grows. Exam papers include ramped questions that help to build students' confidence.

RELEVANCE OF THE SUBJECT/ CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

Business Studies students go on to study a wide range of courses at university all over the UK and beyond. Most universities have a Business School. There are Business courses and more focused courses, such as in Finance, Management or Marketing but many degrees will mix Business with other disciplines, such as Languages, Economics and Law.



OPTIONAL SUBJECTS

COMPUTER SCIENCE

SUBJECT TITLE/ EXAMINATION BOARD AND CODE

AQA Computer Science (8520)

AIMS OF THE COURSE

Computer Science will help develop a student's understanding of technology and how it is created and developed. It complements subjects that use problem-solving, data analysis and understanding how to interpret results to provide a clear working path, providing accessibility to a wide range of opportunities outside of school.

SUBJECT CONTENT

The course content is broad and covers algorithmic thinking, programming, data representation, fundamentals of computer systems, computer networking, cyber security, software development and ethical, legal and environmental impacts of digital technology on the wider society. The course will provide a range of programming experiences and will push individuals to take on their own independent programming enquiry.

SKILLS DEVELOPED THROUGH THE COURSE

- Problem-solving skills and logical thought through computational thinking.
- Analysis of algorithms and programming syntax.
- Developing the skills to understand the ever-changing world of technology.
- Software development.

ASSESSMENT AND EXAMINATIONS

Paper 1 - Computational Thinking and Problem Solving (Exam 50%)

The exam assesses computational thinking, problem-solving, code tracing and applied computing as well as theoretical knowledge of computer science including algorithmic thinking, programming, data representation and computer systems. The questions are a mix of multiple choice, short answer and long answer which will challenge a

student's practical problem solving and computational thinking skills.

Paper 2 - Written Assessment (Exam 50%)

The exam assesses theoretical knowledge on data representation, computer systems, computer networks, cybersecurity and ethical, legal and environmental impacts of digital technology on the wider society. The questions are a mix of multiple choice, short answer, long answer and extended response questions which challenge a student's theoretical knowledge.

Programming Project

Students will be expected to develop a computer program which has been designed, written and tested to solve a problem. The programming project develops a student's ability to use the knowledge and skills gained through the course to solve a problem. Students will be expected to follow a systematic approach to problem-solving, consistent with the skills developed over the course of the first year. The skills developed can be applied to exam questions on computational thinking. The programming project must be completed but does not weigh in on the overall marks for the GCSE.

SUGGESTED READING/ACTIVITIES

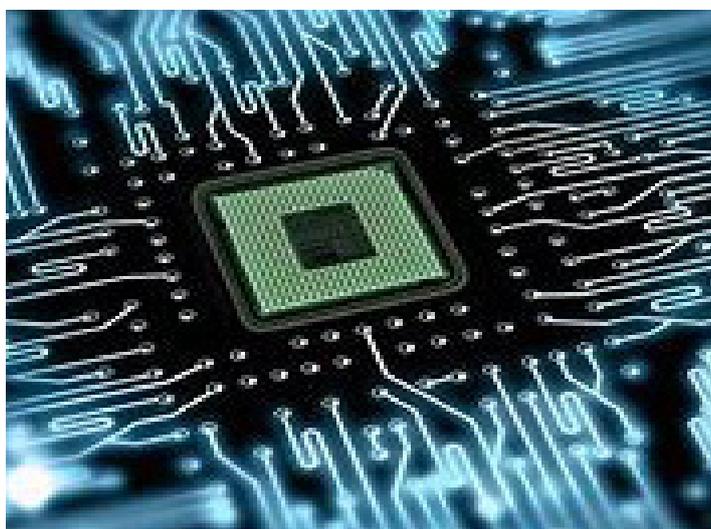
Visit 'codecademy.com' and take on some programming activities to do with Python.

Download 'Learn Python' on mobile devices and practise programming.

RELEVANCE OF THE SUBJECT/CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

Technology is relevant in all aspects of today's world and Computer Science helps enrich students' knowledge of computing so that they will be prepared to use technology in any scenario through computational thinking and problem-solving techniques.

Most, if not all jobs require some level of computing knowledge, whether it'd be as a programmer in game/software development, designer of clothing or 3D models, working in the education sector, as an officer for geographical information systems, or working as part of an office. Students undertaking Computer Science will be highly valued and employable across all career paths.



OPTIONAL SUBJECTS

DRAMA

SUBJECT TITLE/ EXAMINATION BOARD AND CODE

AQA Drama (8261)

AIMS OF THE COURSE

The course aims to develop creative, effective, independent and reflective students who are able to make informed choices. They will have the opportunity to study the roles and processes undertaken in contemporary professional theatre practice, contribute as an individual to performances and reflect on their own work and that of others.

SUBJECT CONTENT

Component 1 - Understanding Drama

- A - Roles & Terminology
- B - Study of a set play
- C - Live theatre production

Component 2 - Devising Drama

Component 3 - Texts in Practice

SKILLS DEVELOPED THROUGH THE COURSE

- To explore performance texts and be able to understand their cultural and historical context including theatrical conventions of the period in which they were created.
- A range of theatrical skills and how to apply them to a performance.
- To be able to work collaboratively to generate, develop and communicate ideas.
- To apply knowledge and understanding when performing or responding to drama.

ASSESSMENT AND EXAMINATIONS

Written Paper - 40%

Devised Drama Performance - 40%

Study and Performance from a set play.

SUGGESTED READING/ACTIVITIES

LAMDA preparations and examinations
Theatre Visits
Reading plays (Blood Brothers)

RELEVANCE OF THE SUBJECT/CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

- Helps to build self-esteem and confidence
- Preparation for the interviews and public speaking
- Preparation for work in the theatre
- Preparations for auditions in order to be considered for acting roles.



OPTIONAL SUBJECTS

FRENCH

AQA French (8658)

This course aims to enable students of all abilities to develop their French language skills to their full potential, equipping them with the knowledge to communicate in a variety of contexts with confidence. This course offers both a Foundation Tier (grades 1–5) and a Higher Tier (grades 4–9).

AIMS OF THE COURSE

The aims and objectives of this qualification are to enable students to develop:

- Understanding and use of written and spoken forms of the target language, in a range of familiar and practical contexts, and for a variety of purposes
- The ability to communicate effectively in the target language through speaking and the written word, using a range of vocabulary and structures
- A knowledge and understanding of the target language grammar and its practical application
- A knowledge and understanding of countries and communities where the target language is spoken

SUBJECT CONTENT

Theme 1: Identity and culture: Me, my family and friends; Technology in everyday life; Free-time activities; Customs and festivals in French-speaking countries/communities

Theme 2: Local, national, international and global areas of interest: Home, town, neighbourhood and region; Social issues; Global issues; Travel and tourism

Theme 3: Current and future study and employment: My studies; Life at school/college; Education post-16; Jobs, career choices and ambitions

SKILLS DEVELOPED THROUGH THE COURSE

Students should be competent in the following areas by the end of their GCSE course:

- Communication strategies in both understanding (reading and listening) and those that relate to production (speaking and writing)
- Understanding the spoken word: questions, requests, conversations; announcements, radio, TV
- Understanding the written word: signs, notices, labels, instructions
- Timetables, programmes, advertisements, messages, cards, letters, books
- Initiating a conversation, to ask questions as well as to reply, to request and give information, explanations and opinions

ASSESSMENT AND EXAMINATIONS

This GCSE French course offers a Foundation Tier (grades 1–5) and a Higher Tier (grades 4–9). Students must take all four question papers at the same tier.

Paper 1: Listening. What's assessed: This paper requires learners to respond to a range of questions in English and also in French. Question types will include multiple choice with non-verbal and written responses; gap-fill one word answers; selecting correct/false statements; and short answer responses.

Paper 2: Speaking. What's assessed: This paper requires learners to respond in French to a role play (2 minutes), a photo card (2 minutes) and a conversation (3–5 minutes at Foundation Tier; 5–7 at Higher Tier). Assessment of this component will also take account of knowledge of, and accurate application of, grammar and structures.

Paper 3: Reading. What's assessed: This paper requires learners to respond to a range of questions in English and also in French. Question types will include multiple choice with non-verbal responses; match-up responses; gap-fill one word answers; selecting correct/false statements; short answer responses; completing information in a table; and longer responses.

Paper 4: Writing. What's assessed: This paper requires learners to respond in French to a range of written tasks. Assessment in this component will also take account of knowledge of, and accurate application of, grammar and structures.

SUGGESTED READING /ACTIVITIES

Online resources: TV5 French; Lyrics Training; Languages Online. Watching films, listening to the radio, as well as reading books and magazines in French.

RELEVANCE OF THE SUBJECT/ CAREER OPPORTUNITIES IF STUDIED AT A HIGHER LEVEL

A foreign language skill not only brings practical benefits of enabling you to communicate more freely with people, it also allows you to appreciate other cultures; language being the window into the ideas and experiences of a nation. Those who can speak and write more than one language are the ones in demand in an employment market where people work for international companies, work with foreign nationals and work and live in other countries. As one of the key skills recognised by employers, good communicators are in demand in management, commerce, public relations, the media, marketing, advertising and finance. Modern Language graduates enjoy one of the highest employment rates in an increasingly competitive job market.

OPTIONAL SUBJECTS

GEOGRAPHY

AQA Certificate GCSE, 8031

AIMS OF THE COURSE

To give students a clear overview of the world in the first part of the 21st century. To allow students to experience 'awe and wonder' about the world around them. To make learning fun and enquiry based, whilst maintaining a good balance between human and physical geography. There will be opportunities for field work to reinforce concepts and case studies covered in class.

SUBJECT CONTENT

Living with the physical environment: Discover more about the challenge of natural hazards and the living world, physical landscapes of the United Kingdom and human interaction with them. This unit develops an understanding of the tectonic, geomorphological, biological and meteorological processes and features in different environments. It provides you with the knowledge about the need for management strategies governed by sustainability and consideration of the direct and indirect effects of human interaction with the Earth and the atmosphere.

Challenges in the human environment: This unit is concerned with human processes, systems and outcomes and how these change both spatially and temporally. You will develop an understanding of the factors that produce a diverse variety of human environments; the dynamic nature of these environments that change over time and place; the need for sustainable management; and the areas of current and future challenge and opportunity for these environments.

SKILLS DEVELOPED THROUGH THE COURSE

Students will learn how to describe and explain patterns and geographical concepts. They will be taught how to be analytical and confident thinkers in a variety of familiar and more challenging situations. Students will learn key communication skills in a variety of styles ranging from written and visual responses through to group and individual presentations. The Decision Making section will foster skills of critical thinking and assimilation of evidence.

ASSESSMENTS/EXAMINATIONS

We follow a linear course with the examinations at the end of Year 11.

There are three exam papers.

Paper 1: The Physical Environment 90 minutes to answer three structured sections.

Paper 2: The Human Environment 90 minutes to answer three structured sections.

Paper 3: Geographical Applications 75 minutes. The examination will involve an issue evaluation and field work and geographical skills.

SUGGESTED READING /ACTIVITIES

'National Geographic', quality newspapers (Guardian; Independent; Times), BBC News website, 'The Economist', 'New Scientist'

RELEVANCE OF THE SUBJECT/CAREER OPPORTUNITIES IF STUDIED AT A HIGHER LEVEL

We live in the world, are part of world events and are affected by environmental, geological and socio-economic events. Studying geography is vital so that students can understand what is happening around them and so that they can recognise the part that they play in living sustainably. Geographers are vital members of society, providing key analytical skills along with the ability to bring together diverse ideas and communicate conclusions clearly. As a result, Geographers are well suited to a broad range of careers. Most jobs require research, problem-solving and communication; therefore, Geographers are highly employable.



OPTIONAL SUBJECTS

HISTORY

GCSE History: Understanding the Modern World and Shaping the Nation (AQA 8145)

Specifications will be ready for first teaching in September 2016 and will be examined for the first time in summer 2018.

AIMS OF THE COURSE

History GCSE is designed to ensure a broad and comparable course. Its structure embeds the requirement to study history across three eras, three time scales and three geographical contexts. The two papers will allow pupils to gain an understanding of the modern world and how events over the last century have shaped the world they live in.

The Modern World paper will include a period study, which is based upon an unfolding narrative of two substantial and related developments and offers students the opportunity to study a country during a period of turbulence. The wider world depth study will encourage pupils to be deepen their understanding of different, but complimentary aspects of the modern world. The study seeks to show how and why conflict occurred, and why it proved difficult to resolve immediate issues which resulted from it.

This thematic study will enable students to gain an understanding of how medicine and public health developed in Britain over a long period of time. It considers the causes, scale, nature and consequences of short and long term developments, their impact on British society and how they were related to the key features and characteristics of the periods during which they took place.

Although the focus of this study is the development of medicine and public health in Britain, it will draw on wider world developments that impacted on

the core themes. Students will have the opportunity to see how some ideas and events in the wider world affected Britain and will promote the idea that key themes did not develop in isolation.

SUBJECT CONTENT

Paper 1

Understanding the Modern World': Germany, 1890-1945: Democracy and Dictatorship and Conflict and tension, 1918-1939.

Paper 2

'Shaping the Nation': Britain: Health and the people: c1000 to the present day.

SKILLS DEVELOPED THROUGH THE COURSE

Students will:

- Develop and extend their knowledge and understanding of specified key events, periods and societies in local, British, and wider world history; and of the wide diversity of human experience
- Engage in historical enquiry to develop as independent learners and as critical and reflective thinkers
- Develop the ability to ask relevant questions about the past, to investigate issues critically and to make valid historical claims by using a range of source in their historical significance and how and why different interpretations have been constructed about them.
- Organise and communicate their historical knowledge and understanding in different ways and reach substantiated conclusions.

ASSESSMENTS/EXAMINATIONS

The History course is linear, as such, all units are examined in year 11.

Paper 1

Understanding of the Modern World. Written exam: 1 hour 45 minutes.

50% of GCSE

Paper 2

Shaping the nation.

Written exam: 1 hour 45 minutes.

50% of GCSE

SUGGESTED READING /ACTIVITIES

Both the BBC History and Imperial War Museum websites offer excellent overviews of the topics studied. In addition, the Spartacus Educational website is a useful reference point. To encourage independent learning and stimulate critical thinking a number of relevant podcasts can be found on the BBC4 podcast: In Our Time, presented by Melvyn Bragg.

RELEVANCE OF THE SUBJECT/CAREER OPPORTUNITIES IF STUDIED AT A HIGHER LEVEL

History should be studied due to a passion for learning about events and people in the past. However, it also teaches valuable transferable skills, meaning that those with History at A Level and Degree level are highly regarded by employers. Many students who study History at A Level go on to study research-based degrees, including History, Politics, Economics, Law and Journalism, which all require the candidate to formulate an argument, essay or speech using wide-ranging evidence. However, History is also highly regarded in Science and many students go on to study Medicine.

OPTIONAL SUBJECTS

MUSIC

Music Edexcel (1MU0)

AIMS OF THE COURSE

To develop knowledge, understanding, skills and appreciation of music through performing, composing and appraising.

SUBJECT CONTENT

Students produce both a solo and ensemble performance. Performances may be on any instrument and in any style, with the teacher guiding the student in their choice of music. Students also produce two compositions; one free composition set by the student and one composition to a brief set by the exam board. They may compose their pieces using music technology such as GarageBand or Sibelius notation software.

Through the study of music across a variety of styles and genres, including the study of eight set works, students will have the opportunity to develop their listening and appraising skills. They will learn to engage critically and creatively with music, developing an understanding of the place of music in different cultures and contexts.

SKILLS DEVELOPED THROUGH THE COURSE

Students develop their musicianship skills, including their ability to: perform individually and as part of a group, compose and develop musical ideas, demonstrate and apply musical knowledge and use appraising skills to make evaluative and critical judgements about music. Studying music also equips students with a range of qualities and transferable skills that are of significant value to higher education institutions and future employers, including:

- Creativity and innovation
- ICT literacy
- Critical thinking and problem solving
- Communication and collaboration
- Self-motivation and dedication

ASSESSMENTS/EXAMINATIONS

Component 1: Performing (coursework) [30%]

Students produce two performances of at least four minutes' combined duration, including:

Component 2: Composing (coursework) [30%]

Students produce two compositions of at least three minutes' combined duration, including:

Component 3: Appraising (written examination) [40%]

- During an examination lasting 1 hour and 45 minutes, students listen and respond to questions on both familiar and unfamiliar extracts of music.

SUGGESTED READING /ACTIVITIES

Students should be able to play an instrument or sing to a Grade 3 standard (or equivalent) upon embarking on the course. Due to the theoretical aspect of the Appraising component, it is expected that students will have a sound understanding of staff notation. GCSE music students are expected to be actively involved in musical life of the school, including concerts, charitable events, recitals and Mass.

RELEVANCE OF THE SUBJECT/CAREER OPPORTUNITIES IF STUDIED AT A HIGHER LEVEL

Students who wish to study music at GCSE level will have the opportunity to broaden their musical experiences and interests, pursue their passion and develop a life-long enjoyment for music. The course builds a solid foundation for further study of music at A Level and beyond and can lead to careers in performance, composition and the production of music. Whatever future their ambitions, the qualities and skills mastered throughout the course are well suited to a broad range of careers in the 21st century workplace.

"I enjoy GCSE Music because it has allowed me to understand and appreciate music from different eras and cultures. Undertaking this course has challenged and inspired me to create my own pieces of music, which has been a very fulfilling experience. Playing in concerts has developed my technique, confidence and expression in performance."

Emily Watts



OPTIONAL SUBJECTS

PHOTOGRAPHY

SUBJECT TITLE/ EXAMINATION BOARD AND CODE

OCR Photography (J173)

AIMS OF THE COURSE

GCSE photography will teach students to look at the world in a creative way. This course will enable students to construct photographic images so that they contain high visual appeal and visual communication.

SUBJECT CONTENT

Students will explore, acquire and develop skills, knowledge and understanding through the application of traditional and digital techniques and processes. Students will explore practical and relevant critical and contextual sources such as the work of historical and contemporary photographers and the different purposes, intentions and functions of photography as appropriate to their own work

SKILLS DEVELOPED THROUGH THE COURSE

Students will demonstrate the ability to work creatively with processes and techniques such as: photograms, pin hole cameras, digital processes, time-lapse photography, stop-frame animation, installation, film, video, animation, photomontage, digital manipulation of images.

Students would first start the year by doing image analysis on photographers' works. Following this we would build up their technical understanding through a range small projects, covering various areas of photography: Mobile, ISO/f-stop/Shutter speed, darkroom, portrait, macro, fast & slow shutter speeds, natural and studio lighting, Photoshop etc. Each of these mini projects will include: photographer research, image analysis, photo shoots, contact sheets, development of ideas, final edits etc

ASSESSMENT AND EXAMINATIONS

Coursework portfolio is 60% this is based around a theme, completed in school and prep time. Working to this theme, students will demonstrate their skills in a wide range of media.

The remainder 40% is an Externally Set Task which will be completed in year 11, students will be given a choice of starting points set by OCR. They will then begin another body of work, which concludes with a ten hour exam where they work on a final piece.

SUGGESTED READING/ACTIVITIES

Visit Photographers Gallery & Gibraltar Photographic Societies websites. Visit other photographic specific websites & familiarise yourself with The National Geographic Photography Competition. Start to take photographs and look for opportunities to take a great image; focus on a theme, for example portraits. Aim to capture as much details as possible then manipulate with these on Photoshop. We would recommend investing in a DSLR camera, the following are all suitable cameras ranging from 300-900 GBP. Please note it is not essential to purchase a new camera as we have 2 in school.

Canon 1300D

Canon 750D

Canon 800D

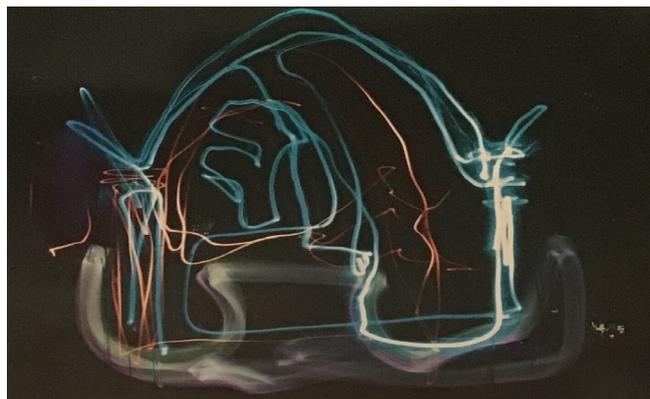
Canon 7D Mark II

RELEVANCE OF THE SUBJECT/CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

The world is filled with computers and other portable electronic devices, photography is an exciting medium which can be used in many different ways. Almost all businesses have an online presence, with online advertising increasing by the day. The demand for web designers, app designers, software designers, graphic designers, digital

illustrators, multimedia artists, video producers, online publishers, animation artists, game designers and many other digital careers is undergoing unprecedented growth.

The transferable skills you can gain when studying photography can be hugely relevant in the world of work; decision making, digital understanding, communication, self-confidence, presentation, collaboration, self-analysis, research and marketing skills are all essential elements covered in this course.



OPTIONAL SUBJECTS

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Pearson Edexcel Level 2 GCSE (9-1) in Physical Education (1PEO)

AIMS OF THE COURSE

- To develop theoretical knowledge and understanding of the factors that underpin physical activity and sport and use this knowledge and understanding to improve performance.
- To understand how the physiological and psychological state effects performance in physical activity and sport. To perform effectively in different physical activities by developing skills and techniques and selecting and using tactics, strategies and/or compositional ideas.
- To develop ability to analyse and evaluate to improve performance in physical activity and sport.
- To understand the contribution that physical activity and sport make to health, fitness and well-being.
- To understand the key socio-cultural influences that can affect people's involvement in physical activity and sport.

SUBJECT CONTENT

- Fitness and Body Systems
- Health and Performance
- Practical Performance
- Personal Exercise Program (PEP)

SKILLS DEVELOPED THROUGH THE COURSE

Students will learn about the body systems and the way in which they function simultaneously to achieve an outcome. In particular, they will relate this to sporting actions and reflect on the benefits of health and fitness to achieve sporting success.

ASSESSMENTS/EXAMINATIONS

Fitness and Body Systems (1PE)/01
1 hour 45 minutes written examination
36% of the qualification

Health and Performance (1PE)/02
1 hour 15 minutes written examination
24% of the qualification

Practical Performance (1PE)/03
Three practical activities
30% of the qualification

Personal Exercise Programme (PEP) (1PE)/04 Coursework
10% of the qualification

RELEVANCE OF THE SUBJECT/CAREER OPPORTUNITIES IF STUDIED AT A HIGHER LEVEL

Students can progress from this qualification to:

- Further study of physical education at AS and A Level
- Vocational courses such as BTEC Nationals in Sport and Sports & Exercise Sciences
- Apprenticeships and other training
- Employment in a related sector such as Physiotherapy, Sports Medicine, Sports Psychology, and Physiology.



OPTIONAL SUBJECTS

PSYCHOLOGY

SUBJECT TITLE/ EXAMINATION BOARD AND CODE

Pearson Edexcel Level 1/Level 2 GCSE (9 - 1) in Psychology (1PS0)

The Edexcel syllabus has a wide range of optional topics, an engaging and contemporary selection of studies including the following areas:

- The application of psychological concepts and theories to a range of contexts
- A holistic understanding of psychology
- The application of appropriate mathematical skills relevant to psychology
- A sound understanding of the research methods used by psychologists to understand behaviour
- The application of theory to real-world context.

AIMS OF THE COURSE

The aims and objectives of this qualification are to enable students to:

- Use specialist vocabulary, psychological concepts, terminology and convention to engage in the process of psychological enquiry
- Acquire knowledge and understanding of psychology, developing an understanding of self and others, and how psychological understanding can help to explain everyday social phenomena
- Understand how psychological research is conducted, including the role of scientific method and data analysis
- Present information, develop arguments and draw conclusions through a critical approach to psychological evidence, developing as reflective thinkers
- Develop an understanding of the relationship between psychology and personal, moral, social and cultural issues, and develop an understanding of ethical issues in psychology
- Develop an understanding of psychological issues, the contribution

of psychology to individual, social and cultural diversity, and how psychology contributes to society.

SUBJECT CONTENT

Students will be expected to demonstrate their understanding of the interrelationships between the core areas of psychology and issues and debates within them.

The content contains three sections:

- **Section A:** Compulsory topics (Topics 1 to 5): Development, Memory, Psychological problems, The brain and neuropsychology and Social influence.
- **Section B:** Optional topics (Topics 6 to 10), from which students must study two of them: Criminal Psychology, the Self, Perception, Sleeping and dreaming and Language, thought and communication.
- **Section C:** Research methods (Topic 11).

SKILLS DEVELOPED THROUGH THE COURSE

Students will gain knowledge and understanding of key features of the following core areas of psychology:

- Biological – an understanding of biological concepts in psychology, including neuroscience and genetics as contributors to behaviour
- Cognitive – an understanding of thought, information and mental processing as contributors to behaviour
- Social – an understanding of the social area of psychology, the impact of social and environmental factors on behaviour and the influence of groups
- Developmental – an understanding of how individuals change throughout their lives, with a particular focus on childhood and how both nature and nurture can affect individuals
- Individual differences – an understanding of the complex nature of human behaviour and experiences and

why and how people are different.

ASSESSMENT AND EXAMINATIONS

The course is assessed by 100% external examination. There are two separate papers:

Paper 1 (1 hour and 45 minutes - 55% of the qualification - 98 marks).

The paper consists of six sections. These sections will include multiple-choice, short-open and open-response questions. The sixth section will contain two extended open-response questions. These questions will focus on debates within psychology and the interrelationships between the core areas of psychology.

Paper 2 (1 hour and 20 minutes - 45% of the qualification - 79 marks).

The paper consists of six sections. The first section will focus primarily on Research methods. It will contain question types that include calculations, multiple-choice, short-open and open response questions, and one extended open-response question. Each of the next five sections covers one of the optional topics 6 to 10 and students will have to answer all questions from the two selected topics. These sections will include multiple-choice, short-open and open-response questions, and one extended open-response question.

SUGGESTED READING/ACTIVITIES

There are plenty of introductory books to Psychology, such as 'Psychology' by (S. Ciccarelli and G. Meyer), 'Introduction to Psychology' (R. Barron), 'Psychology introduction' (S. K. Mangal). Reading magazines like 'The Scientist' or 'The Psychologist' is useful to keep up to date on a range of topics.

Finally, there is a wide variety of YouTube channels dedicated to Psychology, such as 'Practical Psychology', Kati Morton's channel, 'Psych2Go', 'SciShow Psych', etc.

OPTIONAL SUBJECTS

RELIGIOUS STUDIES (CATHOLIC CHRISTIANITY)

Religious Studies AQA Specification B

AIMS OF THE COURSE

This optional Religious Studies GCSE differs from the compulsory course in that it focuses on Catholic Christianity. In addition to studying the tenets of the Catholic faith, pupils consider some of the most important moral issues in contemporary society and compare and contrast Christianity with a second religion, Islam.

Our aim at Prior Park is to give students an interesting and varied religious education, developing their awareness and understanding of key beliefs and how religious values shape behavior.

SUBJECT CONTENT

- Catholic Christianity (50% of the GCSE)
- Islam (25%)
- Applying Catholicism to moral issues (25%)

Catholic Christianity:

The following topics will be considered through the areas of beliefs and teachings, forms of expression, Sources of authority and Practices: Creation; the person of Jesus; the Trinity; Redemption, the Church and the Kingdom of God and Eschatology (life after death). This will include looking at artistic expressions of e.g. The creation story and the Trinity.

Islam:

Key perspectives on the Islamic faith - Beliefs and Teachings and Practices. (All pupils cover this aspect of the course in year 9 since it is co-teachable with the compulsory specification)

Applying Catholicism Moral issues:

Two key topics:
Religion, relationships and families (including love, relationships, marriage and gender issues)

Religion, war and peace

(including just war theory, pacifism, perspectives on nuclear weaponry and violent protest)

SKILLS DEVELOPED THROUGH THE COURSE

Students will have shown an ability to analyse complex issues and to write clearly about them, putting forward arguments for and against particular points of view and making relevant conclusions.

Students will also have an opportunity to ask questions, debate and discuss, in which their own opinions can be expressed, listened to and challenged.

ASSESSMENTS/EXAMINATIONS

Assessment will be entirely through two examinations, one for each unit, each worth 50% of the full GCSE. These will be taken in the summer of the students' year 11. There will not be public examinations in Religious Studies at Prior Park in year 10. There is no coursework component. Topics from both units will be taught during each year of the two year course.

SUGGESTED READING /ACTIVITIES

Being aware of current affairs, especially ethical problems and religious issues, is an excellent way of preparing for the GCSE, as well as helping to develop an understanding of how people reach decisions in complex situations. Any books, articles and websites that consider any of the ethical issues listed above will be helpful in fostering an interest in Religious Studies.

RELEVANCE OF THE SUBJECT/CAREER OPPORTUNITIES IF STUDIED AT A HIGHER LEVEL

There are many religious and ethical issues in the modern world which have an important bearing on people's lives, whatever their personal beliefs. It is very

useful for students to have the opportunity of studying Religious Studies GCSE as it encourages students to consider a variety of points of view; especially to understand Church teaching about contemporary moral issues and to explore the story and meaning of Jesus' life.

Many students continue to study Religious Studies at A Level, which is highly regarded by Universities and potential employers. Students with an Religious Studies A Level can apply to a variety of Degree courses which could include Theology/Religious Studies, English, History, Anthropology, Medicine (medical ethics is increasingly important in the medical profession), Drama (understanding the nature of people's beliefs and how this influences their lives) and Law, to name but a few. An understanding of business ethics is also increasingly important in today's employment market.

Future careers can be equally broad, including teaching, nursing, medicine, social work, law, business, the media, journalism and ministry.



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Information given in this document is believed to be correct at the time of printing (March 2019). This, however, does not form part of any agreement between the School and current or prospective parents. Those requiring information on specific matters should seek written confirmation from the School.