The background of the entire page is a photograph of three students in school uniforms leaning on a stone balustrade. They are positioned in front of a large, classical stone archway. The scene is set outdoors on a bright day, with a green lawn and trees in the background, and a large building visible in the distance. The text 'GCSE COURSE BOOKLET' is overlaid on the upper right portion of the image.

# GCSE

COURSE BOOKLET



**Prior Park**  
College



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At Prior Park College we strive to offer a curriculum that both prepares students for future study and their careers and ignites an intellectual curiosity in the world around them. At GCSE we see it as vitally important that students maintain their breadth of interest, but we allow choice for those who wish to specialise early in areas such as humanities, languages or the arts.

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

### WHAT CAN I STUDY?

Students at Prior Park College study up to ten GCSE subjects.

There are a number of Core GCSE subjects: English Language, English Literature or English as an Additional Language, Mathematics, Dual Award Science (covering Biology, Chemistry and Physics equally) and Religious Studies. Study of these subjects is compulsory for everyone.

Students are then able to choose four optional subjects: Art, Business, Classical Civilisation, Computer Science, Design & Technology, Drama, French, Geography, History, Latin, Mandarin, Music, Physical Education, Separate Sciences (3 GCSEs in Biology, Chemistry and Physics), Spanish and Textiles.

We encourage you to study a language if you are able and also to consider taking History or Geography (or both!) but we do not make these subjects obligatory. It may also be possible to take a GCSE in another language if you are a native or fluent speaker but you will need a tutor to help prepare you for this.

### WHAT SHOULD I STUDY?

Choose subjects in which you have a keen interest. You will need to work consistently hard for two years in order to succeed at



GCSE and you may be willing to do extra work and apply yourself effectively if the subject captivates your interest.

Don't forget, there may be some subjects that you haven't studied yet, so you need to find out as much as possible about them. Speak to students who have studied them in the past or who study them now. Try and separate the teacher from the subject as teachers can change. Some subjects may require more coursework than others; some subjects will be practical as well as theoretical. Think about how well suited your skills and talents are to each subject.

There are a few subjects that require you to have studied them before; Latin, French, Mandarin or Spanish fall into this category. Most others do not stipulate that you must have studied them but it is wise to talk to the Head of Department to see if they have any advice for you. If you are new to Prior Park College, our Admissions team can put you in touch with the correct people.

### ARE SOME SUBJECTS MORE USEFUL FOR THE FUTURE?

If you already know what you want to study or what career you wish to pursue then it is helpful to do a small amount of research. If you are still trying to work out what the future holds for you, rest assured that our

core subjects at Prior Park College will give you a strong foundation from which to build for A Level and beyond.

If you think you might want to study a subject at A Level then GCSE provides the perfect opportunity to discover more about the subject before your choices narrow to just three. The only subjects that are pre-requisite for A Level study, outside of the compulsory core subjects, are modern and ancient languages.

### THE OPTIONS PROCESS

Initially, students will have a free choice from these subjects. We use this information to attempt to build options blocks that reflect the choices of an individual cohort of students. Once these timetable blocks are built, students will need to select four subjects, one from each block.

As the year goes on there will be some flexibility to change options but it is very unlikely that the distribution of subjects between the blocks will change to accommodate individual requests. Popular subjects may also become full so we are not always able to satisfy late subject changes.

**Mrs Laura Stotesbury**  
Deputy Head Academic

All students at Prior Park College will study English. Native speakers will pursue GCSEs in both English Language and English Literature.

International students with very strong English language ability may also follow this route (at the school's discretion), others will take iGCSE English as a Second Language. Other qualifications are also available for one year students.

## ENGLISH LANGUAGE

### EXAM BOARD

AQA

### WEB LINK

<https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/english/gcse/english-language-8700>

### WHAT DO WE STUDY?

The Language course offers students a chance to develop the skills they need to read, understand and analyse a wide range of texts (19th, 20th and 21st century) as well as to write clearly, coherently and accurately using a range of vocabulary and sentence structures.

### ASSESSMENT STRUCTURE

English Language is assessed through 2 written papers (all texts in the examination will be unseen): both exams are 1 hour 45 minutes and are worth 50%.

Paper 1: Explorations in Creative Reading and Writing.

Paper 2: Writers' Viewpoints and Perspectives.

Students also complete a Speaking and Listening assessment during the school year: this is separately endorsed, with students achieving a Pass, Merit or Distinction.

### HOW COULD I PREPARE?

For the Language course, developed reading skills, a good vocabulary and an awareness of topical issues will be invaluable - whether they are gained from listening to news bulletins or discussion programmes on the radio, or from reading news articles. Similarly, good quality or what is sometimes termed 'literary' non-fiction (e.g. 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.



## ENGLISH LITERATURE

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### EXAM BOARD

AQA

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### WEB LINK

[www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/english/gcse/english-literature-8702](http://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/english/gcse/english-literature-8702)

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### WHAT DO WE STUDY?

The Literature course offers students the chance to study three different texts in depth (Romeo and Juliet, Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde and An Inspector Calls) 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.

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### ASSESSMENT STRUCTURE

English Literature is assessed through two written papers (both papers are closed book).

Paper 1: Shakespeare and the 19th century novel is 1 hour 45 minutes long and worth 40% of the total GCSE.

Paper 2: Modern Texts and Poetry covers the final set text and poetry (both the taught anthology and unseen poems).

The paper is 2 hours 15 minutes and is worth 60% of the total GCSE.

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### HOW COULD I PREPARE?

Students will study a variety of different texts: one of these will be a play by Shakespeare. Any general books on Shakespeare and Elizabethan/Jacobean drama would be a useful preparation, as would nineteenth century novels.

Form 4 students should approach their subject teachers for suitable novels that they can read over the summer holidays. We would also recommend that students take advantage of any opportunity to go to the theatre.

## ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

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### EXAM BOARD

Cambridge International

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### WEB LINK

[www.cambridgeinternational.org/programmes-and-qualifications/cambridge-igcse-english-second-language-9-1-0991](http://www.cambridgeinternational.org/programmes-and-qualifications/cambridge-igcse-english-second-language-9-1-0991)

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### WHAT DO WE STUDY?

This course is for international students who need to improve their English so as to access the other subjects on the curriculum. The aim is to develop the ability to use English effectively for practical communication, to form a sound base for the skills required for further study using English as the medium of instruction, and to develop an awareness of the nature of language and language learning skills. Students are taught to improve their reading, writing, speaking and listening skills, as well as improve their knowledge of English grammar and vocabulary.

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### ASSESSMENT STRUCTURE

Reading & Writing Paper (2 hours, 70% of grade):

- Skim reading to extract the gist of texts
- Scan reading for specific details
- Reading and taking notes
- Reading and writing a summary
- Writing in an informal style (e.g. email to a friend)
- Writing in a more formal style (e.g. article for a school magazine).

Listening paper (approx. 45 minutes, 15% of grade):

- Extensive and intensive listening.

Interview (approx. 15 minutes, 15% of grade):

- Speaking with fluency, accuracy & good pronunciation.

International students with very strong English language ability may take First Language English GCSE (at the discretion of the school). Many international students are encouraged to take one of the suite of Cambridge examinations (First Certificate or Cambridge Advanced). These exams are particularly popular with our international students who only stay at the college for one year. Please note that international students may be required to take the IELTS examination during their time in Sixth Form if they wish to study as an international student at a UK university.

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### HOW COULD I PREPARE?

Successful students are those who use English on a daily basis. Students who are well integrated into the international community at Prior Park tend to do well, as do those who regularly watch English TV programmes. A systematic approach to learning English vocabulary is essential, as is an awareness of typical errors when checking writing.

# MATHEMATICS

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## EXAM BOARD

IGCSE - Edexcel Mathematics A – 4MA1

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## WEB LINK

<https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/edexcel-international-gcse-and-edexcel-certificates/international-gcse-mathematics-a-2016.html>

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## WHAT DO WE STUDY?

This course encourages students to think for themselves at all stages.

Objectives of the course are that students should:

Demonstrate knowledge, understanding and skills in number and algebra:

- numbers and the numbering system
- calculations
- solving numerical problems
- equations, formulae and identities
- sequences, functions and graphs.

Demonstrate knowledge, understanding and skills in shape, space and measures:

- geometry and trigonometry
- vectors and transformation geometry.

Demonstrate knowledge, understanding and skills in handling data:

- statistics
- probability.

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## ASSESSMENT STRUCTURE

IGCSE is a linear course and the students will sit 2 examination papers at the end of Upper 5. There is no longer any coursework component at IGCSE level.

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## HOW COULD I PREPARE?

Students should ensure that their basic arithmetic, algebraic and geometric skills are understood and practiced regularly. There are a number of websites that offer examples and questions e.g. BBC KS3 Bitesize.

Students should look at the website nrich, which offers lots of puzzles and articles on Mathematics. <http://nrich.maths.org/forstudents>

All students at Prior Park College will study Biology, Physics and Chemistry taught by subject specialists. The Combined Science course below, counts for two GCSE passes and students will get two separate grades e.g. 9-8 or 6-6 based on their average performance across all three sciences. This is the default curriculum pathway for all students. Alternatively, a student can choose to follow the separate science route, taking a GCSE in all three sciences. This will count as one of their options and will leave them a choice of up to three further GCSEs from the optional subjects. These students will get three separate 9-1 grades, one in each of the sciences.

# COMBINED SCIENCE

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## EXAM BOARD

AQA Combined Science: Trilogy (8464)

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## WEB LINK

<https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/science/gcse/combined-science-trilogy-8464>

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## WHAT DO WE STUDY?

The course offers the same type and number of units as separate sciences but in places has less content.

Biology has 7 units: Cell biology, Organisation, Infection and response, Bioenergetics, Homeostasis and response, Inheritance, Variation and evolution, Ecology.

Chemistry has 10 units: 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.

Physics has 7 units: Energy, Electricity, Particle model of matter, Atomic structure, Forces, Waves, Magnetism.

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## ASSESSMENT STRUCTURE

There are 6 science papers (two papers per subject).

Each paper is a written exam: 1 hour 15 minutes.

Foundation and Higher Tier papers are available. 70 marks per paper.

Each paper contributes to 16.7% of the GCSE. The grade achieved will be based on an aggregate score of all six papers. The grades will range from 9,9 (highest) to 1,1 (the lowest).

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## HOW COULD I PREPARE?

This course builds on KS3 science covered in Years 7 and 8. The course is designed for students wishing to go on to A Level science or for those students who want a general grounding in science. Compared to the 'separate' route, the course allows room to study an additional non-science subject. Having a natural interest in the sciences, either through wider reading, visiting scientific institutions, watching science programmes and / or 'hands-on' practical, is useful preparation.

# BIOLOGY

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## EXAM BOARD

AQA GCSE Biology (8461)

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## WEB LINK

<https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/science/gcse/biology-8461>

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## WHAT DO WE STUDY?

The course is divided into 7 units:

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

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## ASSESSMENT STRUCTURE

There are 2 question papers to be taken at the end of the course.

Each paper is a written exam: 1 hour 45 minutes. Foundation and Higher Tier papers are available. 100 marks per paper. Each paper contributes to 50% of the GCSE. The grade achieved will be based on an aggregate score of the two papers.

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## HOW COULD I PREPARE?

This course builds on KS3 science covered in Years 7 and 8. It is designed for students wishing to do lot of science in their timetable and are likely to pursue the A Level sciences. Having a natural interest in the subject either through wider reading, visiting scientific institutions, watching science programmes and/or 'hands-on' practical, is useful preparation.

# CHEMISTRY

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## EXAM BOARD

AQA GCSE Chemistry (8462)

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## WEB LINK

<https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/science/gcse/chemistry-8462>

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## WHAT DO WE STUDY?

The course has been developed to provide students with the opportunity to experience Chemistry within the context of their general education and in terms of progression to A Level. Our 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.

Overview of subject content - 10 topic areas:

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 extend of chemical change
7. Organic chemistry
8. Chemical analysis
9. Chemistry of the atmosphere
10. Using resources.

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## ASSESSMENT STRUCTURE

2 externally assessed written papers, each 1 hour 45 minutes, both sat in June of Upper 5.

Paper 1: 1 hour 45 minutes on Topics 1 to 5 above  
50% of overall mark, structured and open questions.

Paper 2: 1 hour 45 minutes on Topics 6-10 above  
50% of overall mark, structured and open questions.

There is no controlled assessment, however students will have to complete 8 required practicals, and written exam questions will draw on students' practical science experience. At least 15% of the marks will be allocated to these, looking at areas such as investigative skills, knowledge of practical methodology and terminology and students' ability to analyse and evaluate experimental data.

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## HOW COULD I PREPARE?

Suggested reading: 'New Scientist', 'Chemistry in Education'.



## PHYSICS

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### EXAM BOARD

Edexcel (GCSE 9-1 Physics)

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### WEB LINK

<https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/edexcel-gcse/sciences-2016.html#tab-Physics>

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### WHAT DO WE STUDY?

**Motion:** Speed, distance and Newton's Laws of motion. We'll study how forces affect how objects move and how we can use this to our advantage in dramatic situations like car crashes.

**Energy:** The different forms energy can take and the processes that convert it from one form into another.

**Waves:** Different kinds of wave; sound, light, EM, and their behaviours. We also look at the many uses of the EM spectrum and its possible dangers.

**Radioactivity:** Atoms and the things that make them up. Students will look at the different types of radiation and their uses and danger. We will see some real radioactive sources and begin to learn how to handle them safely. We will also study how nuclear power stations work.

**Astronomy:** The solar system, orbits and the life cycles of stars, along with bigger questions about where the universe came from.

**Electricity:** Electric circuits, and how electricity works in the national grid. We also look at static electricity.

**Magnetism:** The review of Magnetic fields, then move on to the interactions between magnets and electricity. This leads to how motors and generators work.

**Particles:** In this final unit we look at how the particles inside materials determine their properties - density, pressure and gases are all covered.

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### ASSESSMENT STRUCTURE

2 written papers, 1 hour 45 minutes each, taken at the end of the course in Upper 5. Each one will assess different parts of the content. Both papers are equally weighted and contain a mixture of different question styles, including multiple-choice, short-answer questions, extended responses and calculations.

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### HOW COULD I PREPARE?

Your existing KS3 course will have given you a lot of the grounding you need in basic theories of energy, heat transfer or speed. 'New Scientist' magazine gives a weekly insight into the importance of current topics in Physics. The Physics department also has a small library of subject-related books that you are welcome to borrow.

# RELIGIOUS STUDIES

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## EXAM BOARD

AQA Religious Studies

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## WEB LINK

<https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/religious-studies/gcse/religious-studies-b-8063>

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## WHAT DO WE STUDY?

Catholic Christianity (50% of the GCSE): the following topics will be considered through the areas of Beliefs and teachings, Forms of expression, Sources of authority and Practices: Creation; Incarnation; Trinity; Redemption, Church and the Kingdom of God and Eschatology (life after death). This will include looking at artistic expressions of e.g. Creation and the Trinity.

Judaism (25%): Key perspectives on the Jewish faith - Beliefs and Teaching and Practices, e.g. we will study the Covenant relationship between God and the people and look at the synagogue.

Themes (moral issues) (25%):

1. Religion, relationships and families (including love, relationships, marriage and gender issues).
2. Religion, peace and conflict (including forgiveness and reconciliation, the Just War theory, nuclear weapons, terrorism, pacifism and conflict resolution).

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 behaviour.

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## ASSESSMENT STRUCTURE

Assessment will be through 2 examinations, 1 for each unit, each worth 50% of the full GCSE. These will be 1 hour 45 minutes each and will be taken in the summer of the students' Upper 5 year. Topics from both units will be taught during each year of the 2-year course.

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## HOW COULD I PREPARE?

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 topics listed above will be helpful in fostering an interest in Religious Studies.

# ART

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## EXAM BOARD

OCR

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## WEB LINK

[www.ocr.org.uk/qualifications/gcse/art-and-design-j170-j176-from-2016](http://www.ocr.org.uk/qualifications/gcse/art-and-design-j170-j176-from-2016)

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## WHAT DO WE STUDY?

Students follow the Fine Art route of the OCR Art and Design specification. Fine Art offers a highly flexible course and students are able to explore a wide variety of mediums including drawing, painting, printmaking, digital and photographic processes, ceramics and mixed-media techniques, as well as an introduction to a number of themes within the history of art. During the first term, students develop their practical and research skills through two contrasting projects.

From the second term onwards, they are able to select a more individual direction for their Coursework Portfolio (60%) and pursue an independent project over three terms which culminates with a major piece of coursework. The Set Task unit (40%) is a series of starting points set by the exam board. Students pursue a further project in response to one of these starting points and then produce a final piece under exam conditions. A GCSE in Fine Art not only offers students the opportunity to extend their creative capacities, but it also promotes independent research, presentation skills and good time-management.

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## ASSESSMENT STRUCTURE

60% Coursework Portfolio undertaken over three terms.  
40% Set Task undertaken over one term and finishing with a 10 hour exam over two days.

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## HOW COULD I PREPARE?

Drawing is an essential component of GCSE Art but it can take many forms. As well as observational drawing, imaginative drawing, doodling, digital art and designing are all excellent ways to prepare for the course. Visit Tate Britain, Tate Modern or the Saatchi Gallery websites or go there in person. Start to think about the kind of art you like and why you like it. Go to local museums and visit the commercial galleries in Bath such as Beaux Arts. Explore ideas independently through keeping a sketchbook and include collected items such as tickets, postcards, etc, which mean something to you. Look at Pinterest and make a board. Take interesting photos with your mobile phone and edit them thoughtfully. Enjoy looking at objects, people, places and record them in a variety of ways.

# BUSINESS

## EXAM BOARD

Edexcel

## WEB LINK

<https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/edexcel-gcses/business-2017.html>

## WHAT DO WE STUDY?

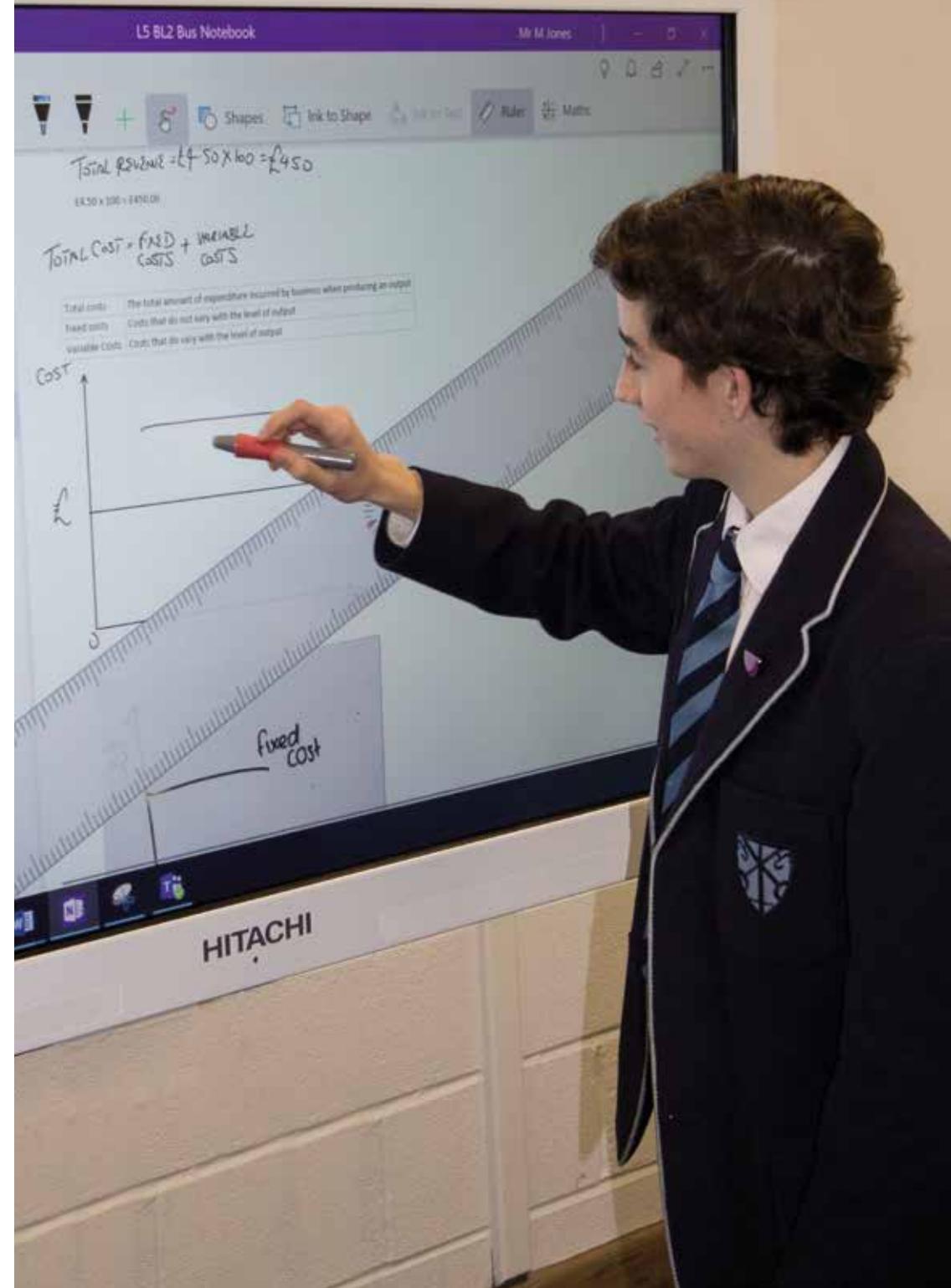
We investigate small business, looking at enterprise and entrepreneurship. Learn how to spot business opportunities and how to put business ideas into practice. Understand what makes a business effective and the external influences that affect it. We learn about the functional areas of business such as Marketing, Human Resources, Operations and Production and Finance and Accounts.

## ASSESSMENT STRUCTURE

2 exam papers, both 1 hour 30 minutes and 90 marks each. The papers will consist of calculations, multiple-choice, short-answer and extended-writing questions based on business contexts.

## HOW COULD I PREPARE?

You should have an interest in the commercial world and the operating of a business. You could look for opportunities to become involved in enterprise schemes or clubs in school, or seek to take responsibility for running any school enterprises such as house tuck shops. You should take an interest in current business events and keep up-to-date with the latest developments in Business decisions, locations and technology. You could watch television programmes on enterprise and business such as The Apprentice or Dragons Den.



# CLASSICAL CIVILISATION

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## EXAM BOARD

OCR

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## WEB LINK

<https://ocr.org.uk/qualifications/gcse/classical-civilisation-j199-from-2017>

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## WHAT DO WE STUDY?

Myth and Religion in Greece and Rome: Students study a range of topics within this component, exploring the foundation myths of Athens and Rome, myths about gods and heroes, beliefs about death and the Underworld and how religious worship was conducted.

The Homeric World: Students read selections from Homer's *Odyssey*, the epic tale of Odysseus' journey back home from the Trojan War. They investigate the ancient cities of Mycenae, Tiryns and Troy, exploring daily life, military matters, the buildings and artwork and the grand palaces.

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## ASSESSMENT STRUCTURE

2 written exams, each 90 minutes long, one on each component. There is no coursework or controlled assessment requirement.

There is no Latin or Greek language in the GCSE Classical Civilisation course. You do not need to have studied Classical Civilisation previously, nor do you need any experience of Latin or Greek, as these are not part of the GCSE course. A lively interest and curiosity are more important than your previous (in)experience with the subject.

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## HOW COULD I PREPARE?

Pupils could prepare by doing some research: exploring some of the ancient myths, reading some literature, watching relevant documentaries, or by visiting Roman or Greek sites. The Classical Civilisation teachers are very happy to talk to you if you want to find out more or want some tips on where to start exploring this diverse and exciting subject.

# COMPUTER SCIENCE

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## EXAM BOARD

OCR

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## WEB LINK

[www.ocr.org.uk/Images/225975-specification-accredited-gcse-computer-science-j276.pdf](http://www.ocr.org.uk/Images/225975-specification-accredited-gcse-computer-science-j276.pdf)

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## WHAT DO WE STUDY?

Students will study a wide range of computer science topics. These will build on the content delivered over previous years and will include: Hardware – CPU, storage, memory, networks and system security.

- Software: systems software, operating systems, utility software, data compression, data encryption, backups
- Ethical, Legal, Cultural & Environmental concerns – legislation, impact of technology
- Algorithms – computational thinking skills, abstraction, searching, sorting
- Pseudocode – reading, writing, planning, conventions, comparison to Python
- Programming using Python – sequence, selection, iteration, SQL, arrays, data types, inputs, outputs, input sanitisation, comments, reusability
- Boolean operators & logic – IF, AND, OR, NOT, logic gates, circuit diagrams, truth tables
- Translators & Languages – IDE, compilers, interpreters, assemblers, run time environments
- Data representation – bit/byte, binary, denary, hexadecimal, ASCII, how images are stored, sound representation, compression types.

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## ASSESSMENT STRUCTURE

2 x 1 hour written papers plus a practical coding task. The exams make up 100% of the final mark as the task is not an assessed component.

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## HOW COULD I PREPARE?

Engage with opportunities to improve your general ICT/technology knowledge e.g. understanding your home network. You could also follow some free online courses for coding such as W3 schools, Code Combat and Code Academy. Working well in your Computer Science lessons will also help a great deal and the lower-school curriculum is aimed at laying the foundations for GCSE and beyond.



## DESIGN & TECHNOLOGY

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### EXAM BOARD

Pearson Edexcel

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### WEB LINK

<https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/edexcel-gcses/design-and-technology-2017.html>

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### WHAT DO WE STUDY?

This course encourages students to develop an awareness of the nature and significant importance of Design Technology in a rapidly changing society. Students combine practical skills with an understanding of aesthetic, social and environment issues, function and industrial practices; essential in the technological field.

Lower 5 focusses on building up students' skills in the workshop environment. Students start by learning about and working with wood, metal and plastic. They use a range of hand tools and machinery. Further projects encompass metal casting, welding, electronics and smart materials. As well as practical experiences, students also learn about industrial processes and the issues surrounding sustainability and the impact we are having on our environment. They will then look at traditional graphical communication skills, then move on to using industry standard computer-aided design software. From lasercutters and 3D Printers through to the comprehensive range of CNC Machines, students will experience using the very latest technologies that the design industry has to offer.

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### ASSESSMENT STRUCTURE

Students will be assessed at the end of Upper 5.

Component 1: Written Examination (1DT0/1F)  
1 hour 45 minutes, 100 marks, 50%. A theory exam.  
Section A assesses core content.  
Section B assesses the material category chosen.

Component 2: Design and Making Practice (1DT0/02)  
Approximately 45 hours, 100 marks, 50%.  
A project based on contextual challenge. It tests skills of investigating, designing, making and evaluating a prototype of a product.

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### HOW COULD I PREPARE?

The best design and technology students have a genuine passion for design and an interest in how things work. They are entrepreneurial and are creative problem solvers. They are confident in a practical environment and have good communication skills. To be successful students must be organised and able to work within strict time frames. Watch the BBC series 'Design For Life', and follow the CreativeDesignPPC Youtube channel.

# DRAMA

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## EXAM BOARD

Edexcel

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## WEB LINK

<https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/edexcel-gcse/drama-2016.html>

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## WHAT DO WE STUDY?

Students undertake a series of components which encourage them to look at how drama can help explore current issues or thematic ideas. They will also work on three texts by well-known playwrights and explore the various options and choices facing a drama practitioner today. There are regular theatre trips and students write review notes, which is part of the final written examination. They will also take a final practical examination where they will work in a group drawn from classmates and create or develop a piece of theatre which is then marked externally by a visiting examiner. There is also a devising option which allows for students to create their own piece of theatre from scratch and perform it to their peers. This also contains a portfolio submission.

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## ASSESSMENT STRUCTURE

Some of the assessment is practical, although students will be required to keep a written record of their practical work; they will explore themes, ideas and plays in a wholly practical way and the teacher will assess how well they have done.

Students will also be required to perform in a play or contribute a form of design to a production, such as costume, lighting or sound. They will perform the play with a visiting examiner in the audience.

There is 1 written examination, lasting 1 hour 45 minutes and worth 40% of the overall grade. Students will write about the work of a leading playwright and also answer questions on theatre that they will watch during the course.

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## HOW COULD I PREPARE?

Students will probably have had experience of drama during Key Stage 3 in Drama lessons or in English lessons. They may also be a member of a drama club. Any of these experiences can help if they choose Drama as a GCSE subject. An enthusiasm for the subject, plus going to see a lot of theatre and reading plays, will be an ideal preparation for any student considering the subject for GCSE.

# FRENCH

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## EXAM BOARD

Edexcel IGCSE (4FR1)

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## WEB LINK

<https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/edexcel-international-gcse-and-edexcel-certificates/international-gcse-french-2017.html>

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## WHAT DO WE STUDY?

During the course we study vocabulary based around the topics of being at home and abroad, education and employment, personal life and relationships, the world around us, social activities, fitness and health. A full range of tenses are covered and students will achieve relative fluency in common conversational topics. They will also have the chance to put these skills into action on a trip, which takes place every two years and includes lessons in the mornings and then cultural activities in the afternoons. The course is taught with a wide range of integrated ICT solutions, which allows our linguists to contextualise their language skills in today's digital world. During the course, students also have the opportunity to practice with a native language assistant on a weekly basis in order to improve their spontaneous production.

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## ASSESSMENT STRUCTURE

Students sit a Listening Examination, which lasts 30 minutes.

There is then a Reading and Writing Examination that lasts 1 hour 45 minutes.

They will also sit a Speaking Examination, which lasts 8-10 minutes.

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## HOW COULD I PREPARE?

Having studied French previously is a pre-requisite. You could also consume francophone news media and use apps such as Quizlet to revise vocabulary.

# GEOGRAPHY

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## EXAM BOARD

AQA Geography GCSE (8035)

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## WEB LINK

<https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/geography/gcse/geography-8035>

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## WHAT DO WE STUDY?

1. Living with the physical environment: the challenge of natural hazards; the living world; physical landscapes in the UK.
2. Challenges in the human environment: urban issues and challenges; the changing economic world; the challenge of resource management.
3. Geographical applications; issue evaluation; fieldwork.
4. Geographical skills.

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## ASSESSMENT STRUCTURE

Paper 1: Living with the physical environment - 1 hour 30 minutes, 88 marks (35% of GCSE)

Paper 2: Challenges in the human environment - 1 hour 30 minutes, 88 marks (35% of GCSE)

Paper 3: Geographical applications - 1 hour 15 minutes, 76 marks (30% of GCSE)

Question types: multiple-choice, short-answer, levels of response, extended prose.

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## HOW COULD I PREPARE?

Did you enjoy the learning and topics at KS3? Read widely in quality newspapers about environmental, social, political and economic issues. Watch documentaries on the BBC - David Attenborough; Iain Stewart; Brian Cox. Keep your eyes open and be aware of what is going on around you, wherever you are, and think about why it is happening at your specific location.

# HISTORY

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## EXAM BOARD

AQA History (8145)

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## WEB LINK

<https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/history/gcse>

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## WHAT DO WE STUDY?

Paper 1: 'Understanding the Modern World'  
1AB Germany, 1890-1945: Democracy and Dictatorship  
1BC Conflict and tension between East and West, 1945-1972.

Paper 2: 'Shaping the Nation'  
2AC Britain: Migration, empires and the people c. 790-Present  
2BC Elizabethan England, c. 1568-1603.

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 sources 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.

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## ASSESSMENT STRUCTURE

The History course is linear, as such, all units are examined in Upper 5.

Paper 1: Understanding the Modern World written exam: 1 hour 45 minutes, 50%.

Paper 2: Shaping the Nation  
Written exam: 1 hour 45 minutes, 50%.

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## HOW COULD I PREPARE?

The best History students are capable of using their knowledge to construct arguments, both in writing and during class discussions. The History SharePoint has a wide range of GCSE resources that you can consult to see what sorts of topics are covered. 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.

## LATIN

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### EXAM BOARD

OCR

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### WEB LINK

<https://ocr.org.uk/qualifications/gcse/latin-j282-from-2016>

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### WHAT DO WE STUDY?

**Language:** we consolidate the work already done on Latin language, building confidence in applying the rules of grammar, learning new forms and structures, and introducing new vocabulary.  
We read stories about Roman history, going from the early days of the city, through the threat posed by Hannibal, to the life and death of Julius Caesar.

**Literature:** Pupils study one verse and one prose text. The set authors for GCSE exams include extracts from the works of Virgil and Ovid (verse) and Cicero and Apuleius (prose).

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### ASSESSMENT STRUCTURE

1 written paper for Latin Language (90 minutes)  
1 paper for Verse Literature (60 minutes)  
1 paper for Prose Literature (60 minutes)

There is no coursework or controlled assessment component.

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### HOW COULD I PREPARE?

You must have studied Latin up to F4 (Year 9 level), and have a sound grasp of the vocabulary and language work covered.

You could start reading some Latin literature (in translation), to gain a sense of what is to come, or researching Rome and the Romans. There is also a GCSE set vocabulary list: you could start to learn some of the words in it.

## MANDARIN

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### EXAM BOARD

Edexcel IGCSE (4CN1) / HSK 4/5 (dependent on ability)

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### WEB LINK

IGCSE - <https://qualifications.pearson.com/content/demo/en/qualifications/edexcel-international-gcses-and-edexcel-certificates/international-gcse-chinese-2017.html>

HSK - <http://www.chinesetest.cn/gosign.do?id=1&lid=0>

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### WHAT DO WE STUDY?

During the course we study vocabulary based around the topics of being at home and abroad, education and employment, personal life and relationships, the world around us, social activities, fitness and health. A full range of tenses are covered and students will achieve relative fluency in common conversational topics. They will also have the chance to put these skills into action on a trip, which takes place every two years and includes lessons in the mornings and then cultural activities in the afternoons. The course is taught with a wide range of integrated ICT solutions, which allows our linguists to contextualise their language skills in today's digital world. Students have the option to take IGCSE or Mandarin (or both) depending on their ambitions and goals.

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### ASSESSMENT STRUCTURE

IGCSE - Listening - 30 minutes  
Reading and Writing - 1 hour 45 minutes  
Speaking 8-10 minutes

HSK - Dependent on level taken. Instead of grades given, students can choose the level they wish to achieve when registering for the examinations.

HSK is the internationally recognised qualification for learners of Chinese as a foreign language.

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### HOW COULD I PREPARE?

Having studied Mandarin Chinese previously is highly recommended. Please note that there will be the option to take the HSK (up to Level 5), the IGCSE or both.



# MUSIC

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## EXAM BOARD

Eduqas

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## WEB LINK

<https://eduqas.co.uk/qualifications/music/gcse>

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## WHAT DO WE STUDY?

Eduqas GCSE spans a huge range of music from four wide areas of study (Musical Forms and Devices, Music for Ensemble, Film Music, and Popular Music) and includes detailed study of two set works, by Mozart and the band 'Rainbow'. We study music from the sixteenth century right up to the present day, getting to understand its elements and how it works. Students also develop their performing as singers or instrumentalists, performing solos and ensembles; finally students learn to compose their own pieces in a range of styles.

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## ASSESSMENT STRUCTURE

There is just one major listening/appraising exam worth 40%, which is taken in summer Upper 5. In addition, throughout the two years, composing and performing skills are taught and developed to produce the remaining 60% of the mark, which is built up of coursework. This is two compositions and two individually recorded performances (one solo and one ensemble) which are externally assessed at the end of U5.

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## HOW COULD I PREPARE?

Listen to lots of different types of music. Grades are not required, but the ability to play or sing is essential, ideally to at least Grade 3 standard by the end of Upper 5, as is some understanding of Music Theory. You need an appetite for lots of different kinds of music, and a willingness to get involved in performing in ensembles, choirs etc.

# PHYSICAL EDUCATION

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## EXAM BOARD

AQA

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## WEB LINK

<https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/physical-education/gcse>

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## WHAT DO WE STUDY?

Paper 1:

- The muscular and skeletal systems
- The cardio-vascular and respiratory systems
- Aerobic and Anaerobic exercise
- The effects of exercise
- The components of fitness, methods of training, principles of training, fitness testing
- Training and injury prevention.

Paper 2:

- Goal setting and SMART targets
- Information processing, guidance and feedback on performance
- Mental preparation for performance
- Social groups and engagement in physical activity and sport
- Commercialisation, media, sponsorship and technology in physical activity and sport
- Diet, health, fitness and well-being
- Drugs and hooliganism in sport.

Non-Examined Assessment (NEA)

- Practical Performance in 3 activities
- Analysis of Performance in 1 activity.

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## ASSESSMENT STRUCTURE

2 exams, each 1 hour 15 minutes; worth 60% of the overall course.

NEA written Analysis of Performance in 1 activity, NEA Practical Performance in 3 sporting activities; worth 40% of the overall course.

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## HOW COULD I PREPARE?

Play as much sport as possible, especially in sports that you might choose to have your practical performance assessed in. Watch as much sport as you can on TV and follow current issues in the media.

# SPANISH

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## EXAM BOARD

Edexcel IGCSE (4SP1)

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## WEB LINK

<https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/edexcel-international-gcses-and-edexcel-certificates/international-gcse-spanish-2017.html>

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## WHAT DO WE STUDY?

During the course we study vocabulary based around the topics of being at home and abroad, education and employment, personal life and relationships, the world around us, social activities, fitness and health. A full range of tenses are covered and students will achieve relative fluency in common conversational topics. They will also have the chance to put these skills into action on a trip, which takes place every two years and includes lessons in the mornings and then cultural activities in the afternoons. The course is taught with a wide range of integrated ICT solutions, which allows our linguists to contextualise their language skills in today's digital world. During the course students also have the opportunity to practice with a native language assistant on a weekly basis in order to improve their spontaneous production.

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## ASSESSMENT STRUCTURE

Students sit a Listening Examination, which lasts 30 minutes.

There is then a Reading and Writing Examination that lasts 1 hour 45 minutes.

They will also sit a Speaking Examination, which lasts 8-10 minutes.

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## HOW COULD I PREPARE?

Having studied Spanish previously is highly recommended. You could also consume spanophone news media and use apps such as Quizlet to revise vocabulary.

# TEXTILES

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## EXAM BOARD

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## WEB LINK

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## WHAT DO WE STUDY?

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## ASSESSMENT STRUCTURE

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## HOW COULD I PREPARE?

OCR

[www.ocr.org.uk/qualifications/gcse/art-and-design-j170-j176-from-2016](http://www.ocr.org.uk/qualifications/gcse/art-and-design-j170-j176-from-2016)

Students follow the Textile Design route of the OCR Art and Design specification. They explore a wide variety of media including dyed and printed textiles, drawing, mark-making, collage, appliqué, fabric manipulation, hand and machine embroidery, constructed textiles, laser cutting and smart/modern materials.

In the second term they begin their Coursework Portfolio unit (60%) in which they produce an extended project leading to the production of a costume/ fashion/ surface print/ interior or art piece as a final outcome. The Set Task unit (40%) is a series of starting points set by the exam board. Students pursue a further project in response to one of these starting points and then produce a final piece under exam conditions. A GCSE in Textile Design not only offers students the opportunity to extend their creative capacities, but it also promotes independent research, presentation skills and good time-management

60% Coursework Portfolio undertaken over three terms.

40% Set Task undertaken over one term and finishing with a 10 hour exam over two days.

Visit London galleries and museums such as the V & A. Go to local galleries and museums, fashion shows, visit contemporary fashion & interior shops. Visit the commercial galleries in Bath. Try drawing, designing and making things for pleasure at home. Keep a sketchbook of drawings and collected items such as tickets, postcards, etc, which mean something to you. Make a Pinterest board. Take interesting photos with your mobile phone. Enjoy looking at things and recording them.





# Prior Park College

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