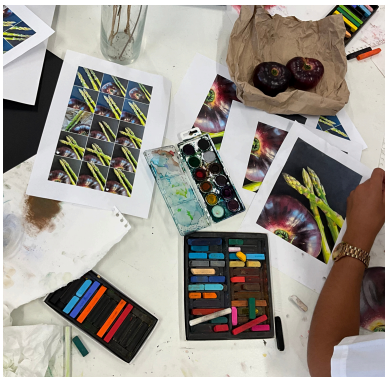
Prior Park
Gibraltar

GCSE COURSE GUIDE 2026



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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, or AQA specification B syllabus focusing on Catholic Christianity.

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 March

Following analysis of choices, the timetable for 2026-27 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.

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

Yours sincerely
Ms Danielle Rozario
Deputy Head (Academic)

Frequently Asked Questions about Key Stage 4 (GCSE)

What subjects are available?

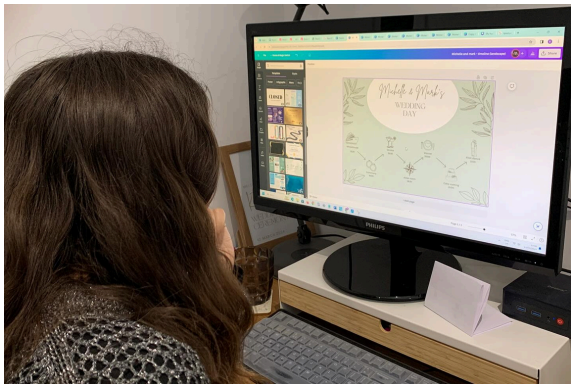
Pages 5 - 12 will give you information on the core or compulsory subjects. Pages 13-23 will give you an idea of which optional subjects are available at Prior Park School, from which you can choose three subjects. Read them all carefully before making any snap decisions.

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 subject may require more project work than others; some subject 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 GSE 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

What subjects are available?

If you do not have any idea then try not to be overly concerned. The seven compulsory subjects at PPSG 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 PPSG 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 that 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 help you acquire and develop can therefore be, in itself, a valuable 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!

OxfordAQA International GCSE English Literature

Aims of the Course

Our English Literature course provides opportunities for students to develop knowledge and skills in reading, writing and critical thinking. Through literature, students have a chance to develop culturally and acquire knowledge of the best that has been thought and written.

Subject Content

The range of texts has been selected to reinforce the principles behind the study of literature, whilst at the same time offering students the flexibility to access the content and express their own interests in the topics studied. Students study a range of high quality, intellectually challenging, and substantial whole texts in detail.
These include: one whole prose fiction text, one whole drama text and a selection of poetry.

- Prose fiction: Students will study one text, and we usually teach the OxfordAQA Exams Short Stories Anthology which consists of seven short stories.
- Drama: Students will study one play, either William Shakespeare´s Macbeth or J.B. Priestley´s An Inspector Calls.
- Poetry: Students will study the OxfordAQA Exams Poetry Anthology People and Places. The 20 poems in this anthology are thematically linked in a variety of ways, allowing students to study a range of connected and linked ideas and themes from poets and poetry from different times and contexts.
- Unseen poetry: In preparing for the unseen poetry section of the examination students should experience a wide range of poetry to develop their ability to closely analyse poems. They should be able to analyse and compare key features such as their content, theme, structure and use of language.
- Unseen Prose: In preparing for the unseen prose section of the examination students should experience a wide range of prose texts to develop their ability to closely analyse the variety of ways writers create meanings and influence the reader.

Skills Developed Through the Course

This course enables students to:

- Read a wide range of literature fluently and with good understanding
- Read in depth and critically evaluate sources in order to discuss and explain their understanding and ideas
- Develop the habit of reading widely and often
- Write accurately, effectively and analytically about their reading.
- Understand and engage with, themes, ideas and contexts.
- Analyse how writers create meanings and effects.
- Express informed, personal responses to literary texts, using appropriate terminology, and coherent, accurate writing.

Assessments & Examinations

This is a linear qualification and we follow Route A:

Paper 1 – Prose and Drama:

- Section A – Prose Fiction
- Section B – Drama
- Students answer one question from each section
- Closed-book exam
- 1 hour 30 minutes
- 60 marks
- 40% of GCSE

Paper 2 – Poetry and Unseen Texts:

- Section A – Poetry
- Section B – Unseen Poetry
- Section C – Unseen Prose
- Students answer one question from each section
- Open-book exam
- 2 hours 15 minutes
- 90 marks
- 60% of GCSE

Suggested Reading & Activites

Students should read a wide range of poetry and prose texts. A recommended reading list can be found on Teams and class teachers are more than happy to give further reading suggestions. 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 also encourage students to take advantage of any opportunity to go to the theatre.

Relevance of the Subject

English Literature provides students with a good grasp of 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. Our chosen qualification offers students the opportunity to read a wide range of literature fluently, critically and with good understanding, so that they can discuss and explain their understanding and ideas in detail and appreciate the depth and power of literary texts. Studying literature encourages students to read widely for pleasure and be a strong preparation for studying literature at a higher level. The potential career opportunities, which English Literature opens, include: the law; civil service; media and broadcasting; speechwriting and education.

OxfordAQA International GCSE English Language

Aims of the Course

Our English Language syllabus encourages students to be inspired, motivated and challenged by following a broad, coherent, practical, satisfying and worthwhile course of study. Students develop their curiosity about the living world and engage with English language in their everyday lives in order to make informed choices about further study in English language and related disciplines.

Subject Content

The specification provides freedom of choice in learning, and students' skills in reading and writing are assessed through two different examination papers. There is also an optional endorsement for speaking and listening, which enables students to show future employers and educational institutions that they have a proficiency in spoken English.

Literary non-fiction and composition (Paper 1)
Section A: The passages for the reading section on Paper 1 will be literary non-fiction, e.g. autobiography, biography, letters, memoir and travel/adventure writing.
Section B: The writing section will consist of three tasks from which students choose one: descriptive/imaginative/argumentative or discursive.

Source-based reading and directed writing (Paper 2)
Section A: The reading texts for Paper 2 will relate to modern world themes and issues. Some of the texts may be brief or solely visual. Texts may be fiction or non-fiction.
Section B: The focus of the writing task will be writing for audience and purpose, which could be both multiple and diverse. The most successful responses will demonstrate the students' ability to respond to this demand.

Speaking and Listening (optional endorsement)
This optional endorsement carries a separate statement on the student's certificate for English to show proficiency in spoken English.

Skills Developed Through the Course

The course enables students to:

- Demonstrate skills in speaking, listening, reading and writing necessary to communicate with others confidently, effectively, precisely and appropriately
- Express themselves creatively and imaginatively
- Understand the patterns, structures and conventions of written and spoken English
- Select and adapt speech and writing to different situations and audiences
- Become critical readers of a range of texts
- Use reading to gain access to knowledge and to develop their own skills as writers
- Connect ideas, themes and issues, drawing on a range of texts.

Assessments & Examinations

This is a linear qualification consisting of two externally assessed exam papers and one optional speaking and listening endorsement. We follow Route A:

Paper 1 – Literary Non-Fiction and Composition:

- Section A – Literary Non-Fiction
- Section B – Composition
- Students answer all questions from Section A and one question from Section B
- 2 hours
- 80 marks
- 60% of GCSE

Paper 2 – Source-based Reading and Directed Writing:

- Section A – Reading
- Section B – Writing
- Students answer all questions from Section A and one question from Section B
- 2 hours
- 80 marks
- 40% of GCSE

OPTIONAL ENDORSEMENT
Speaking and Listening:

- Students undertake either a presentation or an interview with extended turns speaking and responding.
- Teacher assessed and AQA moderated.

Suggested Reading & Activites

For the English Language course, awareness of current affairs is recommendable; this could be gained from reading articles in the newspapers or from listening to news bulletins or discussion programmes on the radio. Similarly, reading good quality of literary and non-literary fiction, such as travel writing, autobiographies, biographies, blogs and articles, is also important. Class teachers will be happy to recommend suitable titles, and there is also a recommended reading list on Teams.

Relevance of the Subject

Thanks to its rigorous summative assessment of students' skills and abilities, this International English GCSE specification offers excellent preparation for International AS and A-level English Language, as well as giving students a grounding in a wide variety of language that will stay with them for life. The different reading tasks in Paper 1 and Paper 2 enable students to develop specific skills in inference, exploration, language analysis and deduction, alongside the more general skills of selection, synthesis and organisation. The distinctive 'stepped' approach to reading in Paper 1 helps all students to engage with the texts. Students have the opportunity to produce planned, developed and sustained responses, with a choice of writing tasks in both exam papers.

Pearson Edexcel International Mathematics

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.
- Appreciate the importance of deductions and inferences and draw conclusions.
- Interpret and communicate mathematical information in a variety of forms appropriate to 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

- Acquire a foundation of mathematics skills for further study in the subject or related areas.
- Enjoy using and applying mathematical techniques and concepts, and becoming confident in using mathematics to solve problems.
- Using their mathematical skills to develop and improve their problem solving skills, that can be applied to many other subject areas.

Assessments and Examinations

iGCSE is a linear course and the students will sit two examination papers at the end of the three years i.e. in year 11.

Each Paper is 50% of the total grades and lasts 2 hours each.

There is no longer any coursework component at iGCSE level

Suggested Reading & Activites

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

Dr Frost, Corbett Maths, Mathswatch and Physics Maths Tutor.

Relevance of the Subject

Maths IGCSE is necessary for almost all Degrees, and most careers . Also it is a subject that is required for many of the other subjects that they study at GCSE and beyond

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 include; Accountancy, Engineering, Architecture.

Cambridge IGCSE Biology or Biology as part of Cambridge IGCSE Co-ordinated Sciences

Students will follow one of two routes through their Science GCSE at PPSG. Some students may op to take CIE'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 other students will take a Cambridge iGCSE Combined Science 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 needs of those students who find the sciences particularly challenging. 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.

Double Award Science GCSEs presents no barrier to taking A level sciences at PPSG.

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

Candidates study the following topics:

- Characteristics and classification of living organisms
- Organisation of the organism
- Movement into and out of cells
- Biological molecules
- Enzymes
- Plant nutrition
- Human nutrition
- Transport in plants
- Transport in animals
- Diseases and immunity
- Gas exchange in humans
- Respiration
- Excretion in humans
- Coordination and response
- Drugs
- Reproduction
- Inheritance
- Variation and selection
- Organisms and their environment

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 investigation
- 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 three question papers to be taken at the end of the course. the details are given below:

Paper 1:
Multiple choice paper comprised of 40 x four option multiple choice questions. 45 minutes duration. Equivalent to 30% of GCSE grade.

Paper 2
Written exam: 1 hour 15 minutes at Core of Extended Tier. Equivalent to 50% of GCSE grade. Comprised of short-answer structured question.

Paper 3
Written Exam: 1 hour at Core of Extended Tier. Equivalent to 20% of GCSE grade. Questions will be based on the experimental skills.

Suggested Reading & Activites

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

The Certificate in the 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.

Cambridge IGCSE Chemistry or Chemistry as part of Cambridge IGCSE Co-ordinated Sciences

Aims of the Course

The course's 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

Candidates study the following topics:

- States of matter
- Atoms, elements and compounds
- Stoichiometry
- Electrochemistry
- Chemical energetics
- Chemical reactions
- Acids, bases and salts
- The Periodic Table
- Metals
- Chemistry of the environment
- Organic chemistry
- Experimental techniques and chemical analysis

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

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

Paper 1:
Multiple choice paper comprised of 40 x four option multiple choice questions. 45 minutes duration. Equivalent to 30% of GCSE grade.

Paper 2
Written exam: 1 hour 15 minutes at Core or Extended Tier. Equivalent to 50% of GCSE grade. Comprised of short-answer structured question.

Paper 3
Written exam: 1 hour at Core or Extended Tier. Equivalent to 20% of GCSE grade. Questions will be based on the experimental skills.

Suggested Reading & Activites

Students are also encouraged to read widely including New Scientist, Science News Explores and Chemistry Review.

Relevance of the Subject

IGCSE Chemistry provides a solid foundation for various career paths, both within and beyond the scientific field. For those pursuing careers in science, such as medicine, veterinary, dentistry, pharmacy, engineering, or environmental science, it offers essential knowledge of chemical principles and laboratory skills. Additionally, the analytical and problem-solving skills developed through studying chemistry are highly valued in non-scientific careers like finance, law, and business. Understanding chemistry also fosters critical thinking and a methodical approach to challenges, making it a versatile subject that opens doors to diverse opportunities.

Cambridge IGCSE Physics or Physics as part of Cambridge IGCSE Co-ordinated Sciences

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

Candidates study the following topics:

- Motion, forces and energy
- Thermal physics
- Waves
- Electricity and magnetism
- Nuclear physics
- Space physics

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

Paper 1
Multiple choice paper comprised of 40 x four option multiple choice questions. 45 minutes duration. Equivalent to 30% of GCSE grade.

Paper 2
Written exam: 1 hour 15 minutes at Core or Extended Tier. Equivalent to 50% of GCSE grade. Comprised of short-answer and structured questions.

Paper 3
Written exam: 1 hour at Core or Extended Tier. Equivalent to 20% of GCSE grade. Questions will be based on the experimental skills.

Suggested Reading & Activites

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

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 analyse problems and come up with solutions.

AQA Specification A Religious Studies

Aims of the Course

At Prior Park we value the study of religion for a number of reasons. Firstly, for the believer and nonbeliever-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 Stucture

Students choose their specification choosing between the Christian Catholic paper and the Christianity and Buddhism paper. Those choosing Christianity and Buddhism study the beliefs and practices of both religions, This includes looking at the foundations of each religion, worship, festivals, the different schools of thought and the afterlife. This is studied in Year 10 and then we go on to look at the Themes paper in Year 11. This focuses on relationships in society, crime and punishment focusing on justice and the role of capital punishment, peace and conflict touching upon the just war theory, terrorism and peacemaking and finally Matters of life focusing on the Sanctity of Life and Quality of Life in terms of abortion and euthanasia

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

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 Buddhism. The units studied are Christian Beliefs, Buddhist Beliefs, Christian Practices and Buddhist practices. These units provide the foundations and teachings to study the Themes in paper 2.

Paper 2
Pupils apply their learning about religious principles to questions of ethical and philosophical interest. These Theme A: Relationships and Families, Theme B: Matters of life, Theme D: Religion, Peace and Conflict and Theme E: Crime and punishment.

Suggested Reading & Activites

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 scared texts motivate faith communities. It is also helpful to have conversations about the units of study at home, exploring these ideas, beliefs and practices.

Relevance of the Subject

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

Students who study RE typically go on to study Law, teaching, politics, journalism, policing, civil servant, the military, accountancy, nursing and medicine to name a few. The skills used in Religious Studies are invaluable to other courses and professions.

AQA Religious Studies (Catholic Christianity)

Aims of the Course

Religious Studies GCSE differs from the Specification A 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 behaviour.

Course Stucture

- Catholic Christianity - 50%
- 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 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 & Activites

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

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 teachings 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 a 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.

AQA Spanish

Aims of the Course

The AQA GCSE in Spanish is designed for use in schools and forms part of a comprehensive suite of GCSE language qualifications offered by AQA. This qualification is intended for students who are learning Spanish to support their future education, career opportunities, and global communication skills.

The GCSE Spanish course aligns broadly with Levels A2 and B1 of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). At this level, students should be able to understand the main points of familiar topics regularly encountered in daily life, including work, school, and leisure. They will develop the ability to communicate effectively in common real-life situations, particularly when traveling in a Spanish-speaking environment.

Students will be expected to produce simple but coherent texts on topics of personal interest and to describe experiences, events, hopes, and ambitions, while also being able to express and justify opinions. The course encourages both formal and informal communication across a range of contexts, as well as comprehension of a variety of text types and styles.

The aim of the qualification is to develop practical language skills through engaging, realistic, and culturally authentic tasks. Listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills are assessed through final examinations, ensuring students gain confidence and competence in Spanish as a means of communication.

Subject Content

The AQA GCSE in Spanish covers a range of topic areas designed to develop students' linguistic skills and cultural understanding. By the end of the course, students should be able to communicate effectively across various contexts, using Spanish with confidence.

Theme 1: People and Lifestyle

- Me, my family, and friends: Exploring relationships, marriage, and partnerships.
- Technology in everyday life: Discussing social media, mobile technology, and their advantages and disadvantages.
- Free-time activities: Engaging with music, cinema, TV, sport, food, and dining out.
- Customs and festivals: Understanding traditions in Spanish-speaking countries.

Theme 2: Popular Culture

- Music: Exploring different genres and their cultural significance.
- Cinema and TV: Discussing popular films and television shows.
- Fashion and trends: Examining current fashion trends and their impact.
- Food and drink: Exploring culinary traditions and popular dishes.

Theme 3: Communication and the World Around Us

- Home, town, neighborhood, and region: Describing places, advantages, and disadvantages of where you live.
- Social issues: Charity and voluntary work, healthy and unhealthy lifestyles.
- Global issues: The environment, poverty, and homelessness.
- Travel and tourism: Holiday preferences, experiences, and destinations.

This structure aims to develop students' linguistic skills and cultural understanding, preparing them for real-world communication in Spanish.

Skills Developed Through the Course

- Communication Skills
- Understanding the Spoken and Written Word
- Speaking and Interaction
- Writing with Accuracy
- Using Grammar Effectively

Assessments & Examinations

Paper 1: Listening (25%)

- Duration: 35 min (Foundation) / 45 min (Higher)
- Marks: 40 (Foundation) / 50 (Higher)
- Content: Listening comprehension and a dictation exercise.

Paper 2: Speaking (25%)

- Duration: 7–9 min (Foundation) / 10–12 min (Higher)
- Marks: 50 (both tiers)
- Content: Role-play, reading aloud with a short discussion, and a photo card discussion.

Paper 3: Reading (25%)

- Duration: 45 min (Foundation) / 1 hour (Higher)
- Marks: 50 (both tiers)
- Content: Reading comprehension and translation from Spanish to English.

Paper 4: Writing (25%)

- Duration: 1 hr 10 min (Foundation) / 1 hr 15 min (Higher)
- Marks: 50 (both tiers)
- Foundation: Short sentences on a photo, structured writing tasks, grammar exercises, and translation into Spanish.
- Higher: Translation into Spanish, structured writing, and an open-ended writing task.

All four exams must be taken at the same tier (Foundation or Higher).

Suggested Reading & Activites

Reading:
- Short stories and articles in Spanish (e.g., news websites like BBC Mundo).
- Spanish literature extracts, poems, and song lyrics.
- Spanish-language magazines and blogs on topics like travel, culture, and daily life.

Listening & Watching:
- Spanish films and TV shows with subtitles (e.g., El Internado, Coco).
- Spanish music and podcasts (e.g., Duolingo Spanish Podcast).
- YouTube channels and news reports in Spanish.

Speaking & Writing:
- Practice conversations with a language partner or tutor.
- Keeping a Spanish journal to describe daily activities.
- Role-play activities and discussions on GCSE topics.

Interactive Activities:
- Language apps (e.g., Duolingo, Quizlet for vocabulary).
- Online Spanish quizzes and games.
- Engaging in social media content in Spanish (following influencers, reading comments).

These activities will improve vocabulary, comprehension, and fluency in preparation for the exams.

Relevance of the Subject

Why Study Spanish?
- Spanish is one of the most widely spoken languages in the world, with over 500 million speakers.
- It enhances travel experiences in Spain and Latin America.
- Learning a language improves memory, problem-solving, and communication skills.
- It supports further education in languages, international relations, and business.

Studying Spanish at a higher level can open doors to careers in:
- Translation & Interpretation – Working in international organizations, media, or government.
- Business & Marketing – International trade, tourism, and global marketing roles.
- Education – Teaching Spanish in schools or language institutes.
- Law & Diplomacy – Roles in international law, diplomacy, and humanitarian work.
- Tourism & Hospitality – Working in hotels, airlines, and travel agencies.
- Media & Journalism – Reporting on international news or working in bilingual media.

Spanish is a valuable skill in today's global job market, making candidates more competitive and culturally aware.

OCR Art and Design Fine Art

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 surround us
- Sustaining a creative development of visual ideas
- Practical techniques and processes

Assessments & Examinations

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

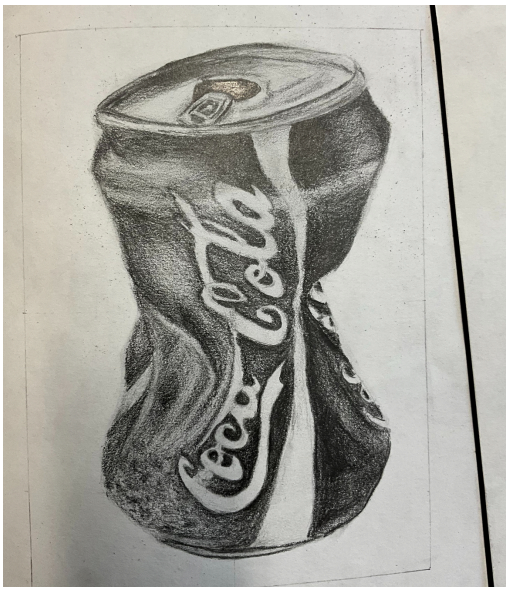
Students will produce a personal sketch book which is a journal of ideas, images and experiments and annotated research into the work of other artists. At least two large final works will be done within this project.

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 & Activites

- 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".



Cambridge iGCSE Business Studies

Aims of the Course

Students of the Cambridge iGCSE Business Studies course will understand different forms of business organisations, the environments in which businesses operate, and business functions such as marketing, operations and finance. They will also appreciate the role of people in business success.

Subject Content

Understanding Business Activity
This section introduces the underlying ideas and concepts of business and includes the purpose and nature of business activity and how businesses can be classified. Enterprise and entrepreneurs, and why some businesses grow while others remain small are further important issues.

People in Business
The focus is the functional area of human resources and includes the importance and methods of motivating a workforce. How businesses are organised and managed and the methods of recruitment, selection and training of employees are also considered. Finally, the section covers the importance and methods of effective internal and external communication.

Marketing
This section includes the role of marketing, the distinctions between niche and mass markets and the techniques of market segmentation. The methods and importance of market research are covered. The central role of the marketing mix, i.e. the four Ps, is made clear. Marketing strategies to influence consumer decisions at home and in new foreign markets are the final topics in this section.

Operations management
The focus is the functional area of production and includes the meaning and methods of production and how productivity can be increased. The different costs of production and break even analysis are covered. The section concludes with the importance and methods of achieving quality in the production process and location decisions of businesses.

Financial Information
This finance and accounting section covers the need for and sources of business finance, cash-flow forecasting and working capital. Simple income statements are covered as well as statements of financial position and the analysis of accounts including why and how accounts are used.

External influences
This section focuses on different external influences on business activity and how these impact on a business. It includes government influences on economic, environmental and ethical issues and how they impact on the functional areas of businesses. In addition, the international economy including globalisation and its effects on businesses and governments, multinational businesses and exchange rates are important issues.

Assessments & Examinations

The course consists of two externally examined papers. There are two equally weighted exam papers (both 90 minutes).

Paper 1 has four questions, requiring a mix of short answer and structured data responses.

Paper 2 has four questions based on a case study, provided as an insert with the paper.

Relevance of the Subject

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.

iGCSE Cambridge Computer Science

Aims of the Course

Studying Computer Science enriches a student's ability to tackle complex problems and enhances their critical thinking skills. This discipline merges exceptionally well with subjects like mathematics and physics, as well as any field that requires problem-solving, data analysis, and the interpretation of results to build effective strategies. Moreover, Computer Science opens the door to an expansion of opportunities beyond the academics, equipping students with versatile skills applicable in numerous professional contexts.

Subject Content

This course offers an extensive curriculum that encompasses various key areas of Computer Science, including data representation, data transmission, hardware, software, the internet and its uses, automated and emerging technologies, algorithm design and problem-solving, programming, databases, and Boolean logic. The course provides a range of programming experiences which are completed in the Python language. This hands-on approach is designed to foster independent exploration through a series of engaging programming projects; some of these projects include tic-tac-toe, top trumps, password generators, robots and programming, and using Pygame to create a 2D Zelda-like game.

Skills Developed Through the Course

- Programming (in Python)
- Problem-solving
- Critical-thinking
- Algorithm analysis
- Robotics and engineering
- Back-end development

Assessments & Examinations

Paper 1 (50% of the grade)
A fully theory-based paper on computer systems that includes short-answer and structured questions. The questions are based on topics 1 to 6 of the subject content. These topics are: data representation, data transmission, hardware, software, the internet and its uses, and automated and emerging technologies. The exam is a paper-based exam and will expect hand-written answers.

Paper 2 (50% of the grade)
A problem-solving paper on algorithms, programming, and logic that includes short-answer and structured questions, and a scenario-based question at the end of the exam. The questions are based on topics 7 to 10 of the subject content. These topics are: Algorithm design and problem-solving, programming, databases, and Boolean logic. The exam is a paper-based exam and will expect hand-written answers; in the exam there will be programming questions where the student is expected to hand-write programming algorithms. However, due to the nature of the exam being paper-based, there is a greater leniency in programming syntax and the focus fall more on the logic of the algorithms. At the end of the paper there will be a scenario where the students will be asked to hand-write code for a solution to a problem.

Programming Project (Does not count toward final marks)
Students will begin GCSE learning programming syntax and techniques. This shifts the more challenging topic to the start and gives the student the full two years to practise and refine their programming ability. Once the basics are covered, students will embark on several programming projects that are done independently, in a group, or as a class. Each student is expected to complete at least two programming projects throughout the iGCSE course. Students can opt to choose their own project to work on, or they can choose from a range of programming projects that include (but are not limited to):

- Password checker and generator
- ASCII art generator
- Flight booking simulator
- Dogs Top Trump Game
- Tic-tac-toe
- 2D game (based on the retro Zelda games)
- Robot building and programming project

The projects develop the student's ability to use knowledge and skills gained on the course to solve a problem and act as a great method of revision for the paper 2 exam.

Suggested Reading & Activites

Python Programming Tutorials:

CodèDex www.codedex.io

Video Course http://tinyurl.com/2bs9kc6r

Mr McAuliffe Course http://tinyurl.com/34rav6mt

Python Programming Challenges:

CodeWars http://tinyurl.com/5b7r7yhb

Scan to find out more

Relevance of the Subject

In today's technology-driven world, Computer Science is essential, equipping students with a deep understanding of computing. This knowledge is crucial for adeptly navigating and utilizing technology in various scenarios, bolstered by sharpened critical-thinking and problem-solving skills. In the modern job market, a solid grasp of computing is indispensable, applying to a diverse array of professions. Whether it's programming in game or software development, innovating in artificial intelligence, fashion design, education, managing geographical information systems, or functioning in an office setting, computing knowledge is a key asset.

Students who master Computer Science are not just learning; they are positioning themselves as highly sought-after and employable individuals in virtually any career path. This relevance has been further amplified by the rapid advancement and integration of artificial intelligence and automated technologies in multiple sectors. At the end of the day, do you want to be the person using A.I. or do you want to be the person who makes A.I. work for you?

Cambridge IGCSE Drama

Aims of the Course

Through practical and theoretical study, learners develop an understanding and enjoyment of drama, developing group and individual skills and studying ways to communicate ideas and feelings to an audience. They learn how to discover the performance possibilities of a text and other stimuli and devise dramatic material of their own. Learners also develop their performance skills, the demonstration of which will form part of the final assessment.

Subject Content

- Component 1 – Written Exam : Study of two set play text extracts
- Component 2 – Practical Coursework : Three examined practical performances

Skills Developed Through the Course

- The 4 C's - Drama is a wonderful opportunity for students to develop their confidence and creativity in a collaborative and supportive environment. To be a strong communicator is imperative in any future career path and Drama can be a foundational platform on which to develop this essential quality.
- Knowledge and understanding of repertoire (AO1)- Candidates demonstrate and develop their knowledge and understanding of the process of moving from script to performance, and can justify artistic choices as actor, director or designer.
- Devising original drama (AO2) - Candidates demonstrate and develop their ability to devise and evaluate their own original pieces of drama, with clear artistic intentions.
- Performance skills (AO3) - Candidates demonstrate and develop their performance skills and their ability to communicate effectively and powerfully with an audience.

Assessments & Examinations

Component 1 - Written Exam - 40% (2 hrs 30 mins)

- Section A & B : Short and Long answer questions based on two set play extracts, from the perspective of an actor, director and designer (set, costume, lighting, sound).
- Section C : Evaluative questions on student devised performance

Component 2 – Practical Coursework - 60%

- Group devised performance – from a stimulus (2-6 candidates)
- Group scripted performance – from a published play (2-6 candidates)
- Individual performance – from a published play (monologue)

Relevance of the Subject

GCSE Drama builds students' confidence, self-esteem, public speaking and creative thinking skills. Students discuss and create collaboratively, building empathy and emotional intelligence through practical exploration.

Students will have the opportunity to broaden their theatrical horizons, be introduced to new practitioners and develop a life-long passion for theatre. The course builds a solid foundation for further study of Drama at A Level and beyond and can lead to careers in performance, directing, design, media, journalism and the creative industries.

Students who wish to pursue any career path in which communication is key would benefit from GCSE Drama – in fact, Law and Medicine final exams both feature role play / simulation assessments to assess soft skills and interaction.

Whatever future career path students follow, the qualities and skills mastered throughout the course will help students to become confident, assured and collaborative young people ready for their next steps.

AQA French

Aims of the Course

The AQA GCSE in French is designed for use in schools and forms part of a comprehensive suite of GCSE language qualifications offered by AQA. This qualification is intended for students who are learning French to support their future education, career opportunities, and global communication skills.

The GCSE French course aligns broadly with Levels A2 and B1 of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). At this level, students should be able to understand the main points of familiar topics regularly encountered in daily life, including work, school, and leisure. They will develop the ability to communicate effectively in common real-life situations, particularly when traveling in a French-speaking environment.

Students will be expected to produce simple but coherent texts on topics of personal interest and to describe experiences, events, hopes, and ambitions, while also being able to express and justify opinions. The course encourages both formal and informal communication across a range of contexts, as well as comprehension of a variety of text types and styles.

The aim of the qualification is to develop practical language skills through engaging, realistic, and culturally authentic tasks. Listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills are assessed through final examinations, ensuring students gain confidence and competence in French as a means of communication.

Subject Content

The AQA GCSE in French covers a range of topic areas designed to develop students' linguistic skills and cultural understanding. By the end of the course, students should be able to communicate effectively across various contexts, using French with confidence.

Theme 1: People and Lifestyle

- Me, my family, and friends: Exploring relationships, marriage, and partnerships.
- Technology in everyday life: Discussing social media, mobile technology, and their advantages and disadvantages.
- Free-time activities: Engaging with music, cinema, TV, sport, food, and dining out.
- Customs and festivals: Understanding traditions in French-speaking countries.

Theme 2: Popular Culture

- Music: Exploring different genres and their cultural significance.
- Cinema and TV: Discussing popular films and television shows.
- Fashion and trends: Examining current fashion trends and their impact.
- Food and drink: Exploring culinary traditions and popular dishes.

Theme 3: Communication and the World Around Us

- Home, town, neighborhood, and region: Describing places, advantages, and disadvantages of where you live.
- Social issues: Charity and voluntary work, healthy and unhealthy lifestyles.
- Global issues: The environment, poverty, and homelessness.
- Travel and tourism: Holiday preferences, experiences, and destinations.

This structure aims to develop students' linguistic skills and cultural understanding, preparing them for real-world communication in French.

Skills Developed Through the Course

- Communication Skills
- Understanding the Spoken and Written Word
- Speaking and Interaction
- Writing with Accuracy
- Using Grammar Effectively

Assessments & Examinations

Paper 1: Listening (25%)

- Duration: 35 min (Foundation) / 45 min (Higher)
- Marks: 40 (Foundation) / 50 (Higher)
- Content: Listening comprehension and a dictation exercise.

Paper 2: Speaking (25%)

- Duration: 7–9 min (Foundation) / 10–12 min (Higher)
- Marks: 50 (both tiers)
- Content: Role-play, reading aloud with a short discussion, and a photo card discussion.

Paper 3: Reading (25%)

- Duration: 45 min (Foundation) / 1 hour (Higher)
- Marks: 50 (both tiers)
- Content: Reading comprehension and translation from French to English.

Paper 4: Writing (25%)

- Duration: 1 hr 10 min (Foundation) / 1 hr 15 min (Higher)
- Marks: 50 (both tiers)
- Foundation: Short sentences on a photo, structured writing tasks, grammar exercises, and translation into French.
- Higher: Translation into French, structured writing, and an open-ended writing task.

All four exams must be taken at the same tier (Foundation or Higher).

Suggested Reading & Activites

Reading:
- Short stories and articles in French (e.g., news websites like Le Monde, BBC Afrique).
- French literature extracts, poems, and song lyrics.
- French-language magazines and blogs on topics like travel, culture, and daily life.

Listening & Watching:
- French films and TV shows with subtitles (e.g., Les Choristes, Ratatouille).
- French music and podcasts (e.g., Coffee Break French).
- YouTube channels and news reports in French.

Speaking & Writing:
- Practice conversations with a language partner or tutor.
- Keeping a French journal to describe daily activities.
- Role-play activities and discussions on GCSE topics.

Interactive Activities:
- Language apps (e.g., Duolingo, Quizlet for vocabulary).
- Online French quizzes and games.
- Engaging in social media content in French (following influencers, reading comments).

These activities will improve vocabulary, comprehension, and fluency in preparation for the exams.

Relevance of the Subject

Why Study French?
- French is spoken in over 30 countries and is an official language of international organizations like the UN and EU.
- It enhances travel experiences in France and French-speaking regions.
- Learning a language improves memory, problem-solving, and communication skills.
- It supports further education in languages, international relations, and business.

Career Opportunities with French Studying French at a higher level can open doors to careers in:
- Translation & Interpretation – Working in international organizations, media, or government.
- Business & Marketing – International trade, tourism, and global marketing roles.
- Education – Teaching French in schools or language institutes.
- Law & Diplomacy – Roles in international law, diplomacy, and humanitarian work.
- Tourism & Hospitality – Working in hotels, airlines, and travel agencies.
- Media & Journalism – Reporting on international news or working in bilingual media.

French is a valuable skill in today's global job market, making candidates more competitive and culturally aware.

Cambridge IGCSE Geography

Aims of the Course

To enable students to develop an understanding of location on a local, regional and global scale. To gain awareness of the characteristics, distribution and processes affecting contrasting physical and human environments. To understand the ways in which people interact with each other and with their environment. To be aware of the contrasting opportunities and constraints presented by different environments. To have an appreciation of and concern for the environment. To have an appreciation of the earth including its people, places, landscapes, natural processes and phenomena.

Subject Content

The Syllabus is divided into ten topics which have been designed to develop an understanding of both the natural and human environment:

Physical Geography:

Changing river environments

- Changing coastal environments
- Changing ecosystems
- Tectonic hazards
- Climate change

Human Geography:

- Changing populations
- Changing towns and cities
- Development
- Changing economies
- Resource provision

Skills Developed Through the Course

Students will be taught how to be analytical and confident thinkers in a variety of familiar and more challenging situations. They will learn to accurately produce and interpret a variety of graph types, describing and explaining patterns and referring to geographical concepts and processes. Students will interpret a range of maps, to gain an understanding of place at a local, regional and global scale. The development of mathematical skills will include averages, decimals, fractions, percentages and ratios. Key communication skills will be practiced, including short and developed written responses through to group and individual presentations. Students will develop independent learning skills through devising a geographical investigation: choosing hypothesis, devising methodologies; understanding sampling techniques, appropriately presenting findings and analysing results. Students are encouraged to be confident, reflective, innovative, engaged and independent learners

Assessments & Examinations

There are three Assessment Objectives to this qualification and each has a different weighting:
AO1 Knowledge & Understanding (32%)
AO2 Skills & Analysis (48%)
AO3 Judgment & Decision making (20%)

Students will sit three exams in this subject

Paper 1: Physical Geography
1 hour 45 minutes – 75 marks (36% of final mark)
Structured questions containing a mix of short answer and extended response questions. Some questions based on source material.
Students answer one compulsory section of 25 marks then choose 2 additional sections from a choice of 3.

Paper 2: Human Geography
1 hour 45 minutes – 75 marks (36% of final mark)
Structured questions containing a mix of short answer and extended response questions. Some questions based on source material.
Students answer one compulsory section of 25 marks then choose 2 additional sections from a choice of 3.

Paper 3: Geographical Investigations (Alternative to coursework)
1 hour 30 minutes – 60 marks (28% of final mark)
Structured questions containing a mix of short answer and extended response questions. Some questions based on source material.
Students answer all questions on the paper.

Edexcel History

Aims of the Course

The aims and objectives of this qualification are designed to enable students to develop and extend their knowledge and understanding of key events, periods, and societies in history, as well as the wide diversity of human experiences. Students will engage in historical enquiry to cultivate their skills as independent learners and critical, reflective thinkers. They will also develop the ability to ask relevant questions about the past, investigate issues critically, and make valid historical claims by analysing a range of sources within their historical context. Furthermore, students will become aware of how different people, events, and developments have been given historical significance, and understand how and why various interpretations of them have been constructed. Ultimately, they will learn to organize and communicate their historical knowledge and understanding in various forms while drawing substantiated conclusions.

Subject Content

Paper 1: Depth Studies

- A World Divided: Superpower Relations, 1943-72
- A Divided Union: Civil Rights in the USA, 1945-74

Paper 2

- Russia and the Soviet Union, 1905-24
- The Middle East: Conflict, Crisis and Change, 1917-2012

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
Depth Studies: A World Divided and Divided Union
Written exam: 1 hour 30 minutes
50% of the qualification

Paper 2
Investigation and Breadth Studies: Russia and the Soviet Union and the Middle East.
Written exam: 1 hour 30 minutes
50% of the qualification

Suggested Reading & Activites

BBC History and Spartacus History are useful websites to start research into all areas studied. Watching TV series and films related to the topics at an age-appropriate level is also good for general background into the topics. To encourage independent learning and critical thinking, various relevant podcasts can be found online, particularly 'And the Rest is History'.

Relevance of the Subject

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.

Edexcel Music

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, including voice, 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 software such as GarageBand, Logic Pro, MuseScore 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 performing individually and as a part of a group, composing and making evaluative judgments about pieces of 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: a solo performance and an ensemble performance.

Component 2
Composing (coursework)[30%] Students produce two compositions of at least three minutes' combined duration, including :a free composition and a set-brief composition.

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 & Activites

Students should aim 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 the wider musical life of the school, including termly concerts and performances.

Relevance of the Subject

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 their ambitions, the qualities and skills mastered throughout the course are well suited to a broad range of careers in the 21st century workplace.

OCR Photography

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/fstop/ 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

Assessments & 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 & Activites

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

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.

Edexcel Physical Education

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 Performance (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 30 minutes written examination 36% of the qualification

Health and Performance (1PE0/02) 1 hour 15 minutes written examination 24% of the qualification

Practical Performance (1PE0/03) Three practical activities 30% of the qualification

Personal Exercise Programme (PEP) (1PE0/04) Coursework 10% of the qualification

Relevance of the Subject

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

OCR Psychology

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

Throughout the course, students study various psychological ideas, processes, techniques and procedures within the following topics:

- Criminal psychology
- Memory
- Psychological problems
- Sleep and dreaming
- The brain and neuropsychology
- Development
- Social Influence
- Research Methods

In each component, students study two core studies, through with they develop knowledge and understanding of the five core areas of psychology:

- Biological
- Cognitive
- Social
- Developmental
- Individual Differences

Each component also includes a section on research methods.

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.

Assessments & Examinations

Studies and applications in psychology 1 - 1 hour and 20 minutes (50%)

Studies and applications in psychology 2 - 1 hour and 30 minutes (50%)

Relevance of the Subject

There are plenty of introductory books to Psychology, such as 'Psychology' by (S. Ciccareli 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.

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Information given in this document is believed to be correct at the time of printing (February 2026). 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.