QEGS

BLACKBURN

Year 9 Choices

2022

Foreword

GCSE courses have changed considerably and are now containing higher order thinking skills and advanced problem solving techniques. These take time to fully develop and embed and are, in many cases, subject specific. It is only right, therefore, that we begin these courses in Year 9 to enable our pupils to achieve their very best.

What follows is a great deal of useful advice and information about the process itself and the nature of the courses on offer, all of which are good GCSEs. There will be some pupils who will find it difficult to drop any of the subjects they are currently studying, while others will, no doubt, leap at the chance. It is vital they reflect carefully though and are very much involved in the decision that is made, bearing in mind the factors that are outlined in the pages ahead.

As a rough rule of thumb, our experience is that pupils achieve best when they opt for subjects that they are good at and enjoy, although there is a case for having a reasonable balance at GCSE. As a school we are quite flexible as to combinations of subjects – more so than many schools – but we are prescriptive about those subjects which we believe are essential components of a good academic profile, so English Language, English Literature, Humanities, Languages, Mathematics and Sciences remain core curriculum subjects here until GCSE, after which we are happy to encourage the right sort of specialised further study.

Please see this booklet as the beginning of the process, and do encourage your sons and daughters to read it as well, so you and they are thoroughly informed and are able to reach decisions. It is important that final decisions are made by them, but ideally with your agreement.

I am absolutely confident that your son or daughter is in good hands here, and will be supported throughout the course and given good advice on planning workload and revision techniques. If you have concerns, either at this stage or during the next three years, please do not hesitate to get in touch with us. We want to work with you for the benefit of your children.

Please note that while we aim to offer all the courses advertised in this booklet, in the event of a group being extremely small, in common with other schools, we cannot guarantee that course will run. We will, of course, inform you on an individual basis if we foresee this problem once you have made your choices.

Head

Making the Choice

In your first two years at Queen Elizabeth's you have had little choice in the subjects you have taken – everyone has followed virtually the same course, except in Modern Languages. Before entering Year 9, however, you will need to decide on some of the subjects you wish to take for GCSE. We ensure that good breadth is maintained by having a number of compulsory and limited choice subjects, but it is important that there is a measure of choice and the following information is designed to help you.

What should you consider?

There will be much to discuss with your parents, carers and teachers, and you should think about:

- What you enjoy
- What you are good at
- What you need
- What you are recommended to take

What you enjoy

It would be good if you enjoyed all your school subjects, but that is not often the case. Try to decide what makes you like or dislike a subject. Look beyond who teaches you to the course content, the approach to teaching and learning, and the nature of the work involved.

What you are good at

You probably know your academic strengths and weaknesses. Obviously you should think carefully before 'dropping' a strong subject, but equally remember the need to have a balanced curriculum at this stage. Try to be honest: do you have strengths in subjects which you do not enjoy?

What you need

University might seem a long way off but decisions you make now could affect your choice of course later. If you have some ideas about your future career make sure you speak to your Form Tutor, Head of Year, Head of Faculty or Subject Leader, Mr Taylor (Head of Careers) or Mrs Powell (Careers Advisor) about your choices now. If you have no clear idea of a career it is important to maintain a breadth of choice to keep options open later.

What you are recommended to take

You will receive advice from a number of people: your parents and carers, your Form Tutor, your Head of Year, your subject teachers and, possibly, from senior staff at school including Mr Taylor (Head of Careers), Mrs Powell (Careers Advisor) and Mrs Tattersall (Deputy

Head). You will need to consider all this advice and take it into account when arriving at your own final decision.

GCSE

These letters stand for General Certificate of Secondary Education, the examinations taken by 16-year olds in England and Wales. Whilst there is considerable emphasis on subject content and the ability to remember it, GCSEs test other skills as well. They stress the positive – what you know, what you understand and what you can do – rather than look for what you have forgotten.

All of the GCSE courses are assessed by end of course examinations taken in May and June of Year 11. In the vast majority of subjects there will be no coursework or controlled assessments.

All the GCSEs will be graded on the scale 9 – 1.

Number of subjects

When taking GCSE qualifications, it is not possible to 'cram' – time is needed for ideas to grow and skills to develop. We have judged that **TEN** subjects should be the maximum that most pupils take at the end of Year 11, although a few will take more; this more than adequately qualifies you for all possible university choices.

Subjects

The **COMPULSORY** subjects are English Language, English Literature and Mathematics.

The **COMPULSORY LIMITED CHOICE** subjects are Humanities (choice between Geography and History), Language (choice of French, German, Latin and Spanish) and Science (choice between Triple and Trilogy [This choice will be dependent on recommendation by the Head of Science Faculty).

Pupils will then choose three **OPTIONAL** subjects. (If pupils choose to study Triple Science then this will form one of their option choices). The optional subjects do include the option to take more than one Language or Humanity.

Optional subjects; Art, Business, Classical Civilisation, Computer Science, Design Technology, Ethics and Philosophy (Religious Studies), French, German, Geography, History, Latin, Music, Physical Education and Spanish.

PSHEE, PE and Games continue to be compulsory elements of the curriculum in Years 9, 10 and 11.

The teaching of English, Mathematics and Science will be in sets, which are chosen by ability across the year group.

Options

First you need to decide which Language you would like to study from French, German, Latin and Spanish.

Second you need to decide which Humanity you would like to study from Geography and History.

Third you need to decide whether you would like to follow the Trilogy Science course or the Triple Science course. Both of these courses allow you to go on to study A levels in all three Sciences and we expect that most pupils will follow the Trilogy Science course (nationally this is the most popular course), as this will allow you to still have three optional subjects and keep your curriculum broad. Neither is seen as a better option, it simply depends on how much you enjoy studying Science (if you choose Triple Science you will be studying Science for 17 periods a cycle, which is nearly 30% of your lesson time in school). Dr ZM Saunders will also have input into this decision and will recommend the course that is best for you.

Fourth you need to choose three subjects from the list below (two if you have taken the Triple Science option).

Arts & Social Sciences	Humanities	Languages	Technology
Art	Classical Civilisation	French	Computer Science
Business	Ethics & Philosophy	German	DT: Product Design
Music	Geography	Latin	
Physical Education	History	Spanish	

Before making your choices, consider the next four sections carefully.

Balance

It is important that your choices are balanced. Whatever subjects you might wish to take at A level; it is very desirable to have a breadth of GCSEs at grades 9 – 4 (broadly equivalent to the old A* - C) with as wide a range of skills and subject matter as possible. Accordingly, it is recommended to select your option subjects from at least two of the categories shown.

Implications

You may have no fixed ideas at this stage about a future career. Even if you think you have, this may change over the next few years. You must, therefore, ensure that the combination of subjects that you choose leaves the maximum flexibility. You need to keep open as many doors as possible. If in doubt, ask your Form Tutor, Head of Year, Head of Faculty, Subject Leader, Mr Taylor or Mrs Powell.

"Capped" Subjects

Art, Design Technology and Physical Education are "capped" subjects. In order to ensure that these courses run successfully and are properly resourced it is essential for a ceiling on numbers to be imposed in each case. Should these limits be exceeded then the composition of each group will be decided on the basis of:

- Your previous performance in the subject
- Discussions involving you, your parents/carers and the Heads of Faculty of the subject.

Important Notes

1. Do put down the subjects you really wish to take. Attempts will be made to accommodate your choices by adjusting the timetabling arrangements. However, a successful outcome cannot be guaranteed.

2. Ensure that you also list a reserve choice to which you would be committed should your first choices not be feasible for any reason.

3. You and your parents/carers are asked to take the options process outlined in this booklet very seriously indeed. Changes which are requested later in Year 8 can only be implemented in exceptional circumstances. No changes are permitted at the start of Year 9 unless exceptional circumstances apply and, in these cases, only a limited number of changes will be possible.

4. Please ensure that you complete the options questionnaire **no later than Monday 21st February 2022** showing your choices together with a reserve. Late submissions cannot always be accommodated. The timetable and staffing for the next academic year will be decided on the basis of the option choices submitted. This means that late changes may not be possible.

Compulsory Subjects

- English Language and Literature
- Mathematics

ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

Head of English and PSHEE Faculty: Mrs LM Mallon

Why study English Language and Literature at GCSE?

English is a vital skill for the future and is one of the compulsory GCSEs. The skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening are of vital importance in many areas. Not only are they essential in many careers, they also underpin successful study at all levels, and a proficiency in them can also add immeasurably to an individual's general quality of life. English Language is designed to aid and assess such development, and to encourage learners to be inspired by following a broad, coherent, satisfying and worthwhile course of study. It will prepare pupils to make informed decisions about further learning opportunities and career choices and to use language to participate effectively in society and employment. The study of English Literature enables pupils to become critical readers of fiction and non-fiction prose, poetry and drama.

How and what will I study?

The study of English Language will consolidate your ability to write accurately and fluently by studying a range of fiction and non-fiction texts, adapting style and language to a wide range of forms, media, contexts, audiences and purposes.
In lessons, you will be given opportunities to:

- become critical readers of a range of texts, including non-fiction texts.
- understand the patterns, structures and conventions of written and spoken English and how they relate to cultural diversity.

In English Literature you will study a range of novels, poetry and plays. The aim is to study as many genres as possible, including poetry, drama, novels, short stories and biography. All of these provide opportunities to understand social, historical and cultural influences in the study of literature.
In lessons, you will be given opportunities to:

- develop and sustain independent interpretations of whole texts, supporting them with detailed textual references.
- analyse the impact of style, language, structure and form.

How will I be assessed?

English Language
Two written examinations, each one lasting 1 hour 45 minutes.

English Literature
Two written examinations, Paper One, 1 hour 45 minutes and Paper Two, 2 hours 15 minutes.

Where can a GCSE in English Language and English Literature lead to?

GCSE English is an essential qualification for all future study and employment. As well as enriching your GCSE years through exposure to a wide range of important and linguistically rich texts, this subject could lead to A level English Language, A level English Literature or A level English Language and Literature. These are highly respected courses and those who study this subject at A level and beyond equip themselves for a wide range of opportunities and careers.

MATHEMATICS

Acting Head of Mathematics and Computer Science Faculty: Mr DN Roocroft

Why study Mathematics at GCSE?

Mathematics GCSE is compulsory, as mathematics permeates all aspects of life. Clearly those pupils with an interest in the sciences, engineering, finance, data analysis, design or architecture may go on to use their mathematics, but in any case, GCSE Mathematics is an essential ingredient of every pupil's qualification portfolio.

How and what will I study?

The lessons will be structured in a similar way to Years 7 and 8. You will, however, be expected to develop the ability to work in an independent manner, so that you are not as reliant on your teacher for help. Collaboration is often encouraged, so that pupils can learn from each other. Topics, which have been introduced earlier, will be developed further and taken to a more thoughtful level. Therefore, you should expect to see more algebra, geometry, trigonometry and statistics, whilst still needing to use earlier work in areas such as arithmetic.

How will I be assessed?

There are three GCSE examinations and all three will be taken at the end of the Year 11. You are allowed to use a calculator in two of these examinations. One paper is a non-calculator paper. There is no coursework. Pupils will be entered at either Higher tier or Foundation tier and this will be decided during Year 10 (Foundation tier allows pupils to gain a maximum of a grade 5).

Where can a GCSE in Mathematics lead to?

GCSE Mathematics is an essential qualification for all future study and employment. Those pupils with an interest in mathematics, the sciences, engineering, finance or architecture may go on to take Mathematics as an A level subject.

Some of the concepts and techniques seen in Mathematics will be met in other subjects – Biology, Chemistry, Physics and Geography, for example. Even if you do not plan to take Mathematics beyond GCSE the material will be useful to you in many of the A levels that you choose.

Compulsory Limited Choice Subjects

- Humanities (choice between Geography and History)
- Languages (choice of French, German, Spanish and Latin)
- Science (choice between Triple and Trilogy (Combined Science)

GEOGRAPHY

Subject Leader (Geography): Mrs JE Albiston

Why choose Geography at GCSE?

"It is on a connection with the environment that the future of both humanity and the natural world will depend. And it is, surely, our responsibility to do everything within our power to create a planet that provides a home not just for us, but for all life on Earth." Sir David Attenborough.

Geography links the science of the world to politics, economics and the contemporary issues highlighted daily in the news. If you are interested in the world around you, why the landscape of the UK is so dramatic and why it is vitally important that we help all countries around the world to develop a higher standard of living then Geography will help you learn about these issues.

How and what will I study?

Geography is a dynamic subject and it is taught in a dynamic way. Lessons range from decision making exercises, group work, pair work, individual investigations and study. You will cover a variety of topics including: The Challenge of Natural Hazards, The Living World, Physical Landscapes in the UK, Urban Challenges, The Changing Economic World and The Challenge of Resource Management. You will also develop issue evaluation skills and undertake two fieldwork investigations in preparation for the geographical enquiry, which is examined in Paper 3.

How will I be assessed?

There are three examinations sat at the end of Year 11.

Paper 1 - Living with the Physical Environment, 1 hour 30 minutes, 35% of GCSE
Paper 2 - Challenges in the Human Environment, 1 hour 30 minutes, 35% of GCSE
Paper 3 - Geographical Applications, 1 hour 15 minutes, 30% of GCSE

Where can a GCSE in Geography lead to?

Geography is everywhere so it can lead to almost anything, it is both an art and a science. Whilst geographers can choose to specialise in a particular field, like mapping or researching population growth, there are a huge number of career choices available for across different areas. People who study Geography can become lawyers, town planners, scientists, volcanologists, journalists, weather forecasters or architects. The list is endless!

HISTORY

Joint Head of Humanities Faculty: Mr MJ Lockwood

Why choose History at GCSE Level?

GSCE History is an important academic discipline. It is a stimulating subject, which develops the intellect, encourages debate and satisfies curiosity. The study of the past is essential to the understanding of the present. This applies to our own country as well as others.

How and what will I study?

We will be following a course provided by Edexcel.

Paper 1: British Thematic Study with Historical Environment
Topics are linked so that pupils can apply their contextual understanding from the thematic study to the Historic Environment study.
Thematic Study: Warfare and British society c1250 to present.
Themes covered will include: the changing nature of warfare, the experience of war for both combatants and civilians and, finally, case studies ranging from Agincourt through Waterloo to the Iraq war of 2003.
The Historical Environment: London and the Second World War, 1939 to 45.

Paper 2: Period Study and British Depth Study
This paper covers both British depth studies and period studies to act as a chronological and geographical bridge between Paper 1 and Paper 3.
Period Study: Superpower relations and the Cold War, 1941 to 1995.
Depth Study: Early Elizabethan England 1558 to 1588.

Paper 3: Modern Depth Study
This paper covers non-British modern depth studies to enable pupils to focus on one area and explore how and why interpretations to it differ.
The USA, 1954 – 1975: conflict at home and abroad.

The lessons will be centred upon the acquisition of knowledge and the analysis of events. A range of books, DVDs and the Internet are used as well as a wide range of interesting and stimulating resources.

How will I be assessed?

Pupils will sit three papers at the end of Year 11

Paper 1 - 1 hour 15 minutes, worth 30%
Paper 2 - 1 hour 45 minutes, worth 40%
Paper 3 - 1 hour 20 minutes, worth 30%

There is no coursework or controlled assessment option on this course.

Where can a GCSE in History lead to?

History is a discipline which fits well with any other subject. GCSE History is useful for a very wide range of professions in virtually every sphere. These include, amongst others, law, civil service, journalism, accountancy, publishing, broadcasting and banking and finance. However, this list is not exhaustive as History is a subject that opens doors rather than closes them.

LANGUAGES: French, German, Spanish

Head of Languages Faculty: Mrs SL Broom

Why choose Modern Languages at GCSE?

- Languages are a life skill. Knowledge of a foreign language is not just another GCSE grade, it is a concrete and beneficial life skill, like being able to drive a car or touch-type, and it is a skill highly valued by employers.
- Languages teach you cultural awareness, communication and social skills and adaptability.
- Languages give you the edge in the job market. Today there is a global market for jobs. It is not necessary to be completely fluent in a foreign language to be an asset to any potential employer. People with languages demonstrate a wider skill base.
- Learning languages gives you greater opportunities to travel and work abroad.
- Languages combine well with virtually any other subject for further study.
- In a continent where barriers are coming down, both physically and economically, pupils are also encouraged to consider studying a second language at GCSE. The learning skills acquired when studying their first foreign language make the acquisition of a second language manageable and achievable.

How and what will I study?

The format of all the languages offered is identical. The topic areas covered in the courses embrace the three themes: a) identity and culture, b) local, national, international and global areas of interest as well as c) current and future study and employment. Lessons continue to be scheduled in the language laboratory and you are encouraged to communicate as freely as possible in the target language. A whole range of interactive activities are included in the schemes of work to promote interest and motivation in lessons as well to aid independent study and revision.

How will I be assessed?

We follow the AQA specification for all languages. Pupils' listening, speaking, reading and writing skills are examined as four separate examinations at the end of Year 11 worth 25% each. Speaking tests will be conducted by the class teacher. Pupils will be entered at either Higher tier or Foundation tier which will be decided during Year 11.

Where can a GCSE in Modern Languages lead to?

Pupils take modern languages with any combination of other subjects at A level, and even at university. There are numerous courses available after A level, for example, engineering and a modern language, business and a modern language or even medicine and a language. According to a recent survey linguists are sought after in a diverse range of careers: business services, manufacturing, banking and finance, wholesale and retail sales, transport and communications, community, social and personal services, public administration, education, health and social work, hotel and restaurant trades.

LANGUAGES: Latin

Subject Leader (Classical Civilisation and Latin): Miss EJ Hall

Why choose Latin at GCSE?

- Latin offers a valuable, informative and stimulating experience of a language and civilisation that have had a huge and lasting influence on the modern world.
- Latin boosts your confidence in using and understanding the English language with more than 90% of words of more than one syllable in the English language having Latin origins. These words are at the heart of culture, education and science.
- Latin provides an enhanced awareness of how modern languages work, especially French, Spanish and other Romance Languages.
- Latin offers an invaluable general mental training whose skills are easily applied in other areas, including the Sciences and Mathematics.
- Latin will help you to stand out from the crowd with universities and future employers.
- Not many schools offer Latin so seize the opportunity while you can.

How and what will I study?

To begin with the language work, which you have studied previously, will be consolidated. Then you will make further progress using the Cambridge Latin Course and other materials, applying the finishing touches to the language requirements. You will also study some Latin authors and read selections from their works in Latin.

We use a variety of teaching techniques. You are encouraged to think logically and to pay close attention to detail, but the learning of grammar does not dominate the subject. A good memory for learning vocabulary is essential. All the words on the GCSE Vocabulary List can be learnt and tested both at school and at home by means of computer programs especially designed for the task. Other computer programs are networked to assist with consolidation of grammar and the acquisition of translation skills.

How will I be assessed?

Examination Board: Eduqas. All assessment is taken in written examination format at the end of the course. Language (50%) and Literature (50%) make up the GCSE and consist of comprehension questions and written translation.

Where can a GCSE in Latin lead to?

Latin is a highly respected subject for any pupil to have among a set of GCSE qualifications. As well as being exciting and inspiring, the course will help you develop analytical skills and intellectual flexibility which will be useful in a wide range of jobs or in further study. It is very much valued, both by employers and universities, as a strong indicator of intellectual ability. What many employers are looking for is a person who can solve problems, think precisely and communicate clearly and all these qualities are developed by studying Latin.

AQA SEPARATE SCIENCE TRIPLE AWARD: GCSEs in Biology, Chemistry and Physics

Head of Science Faculty: Dr ZM Saunders

Why study AQA Separate Sciences (Triple) at GCSE?

All pupils will study either the Combined Science (Trilogy) Award or the Triple Sciences. The Head of Science Faculty will make recommendations to the Head advising which pupils are more suited for each course. These recommendations will be based upon evidence to date including all Year 7 and Year 8 grades in all three Sciences and subject teacher advice.

Pupils entered for the three separate Sciences will cover a lot of factual information in considerable detail and will need to be able to cope with working at a high level especially in regard to the increased mathematical demand.

Pupils will use one of their option choices to choose to study Separate Sciences (Triple) and, as they will be studying Science for 17 periods per cycle, they really must love Science to choose this option.

How and what will I study?

The main areas covered at GCSE are:
Biology: The Nature and Variety of Living Organisms, Structures and Functions of Living Organisms, Reproduction and Inheritance, Ecology and the Environment, Use of Biological Resources.

Chemistry: Atomic Structure, The Periodic Table, Structure and Bonding, Chemical Calculations, Chemical Changes, Electrolysis, Energy Changes, Rates and Equilibrium, Crude Oil and Fuels, Organic Reactions, Polymers, Chemical Analysis, The Earth's Atmosphere and Resources.

Physics: Mechanics, Electricity, Radioactivity, Waves, Properties of Matter and Electromagnetism, Energy, Generating Electricity, Lenses.

How will I be assessed?

Paper 1 - 1 hour 45 minutes in each subject (3 papers in total).

Paper 2 - 1 hour 45 minutes in each subject (3 papers in total).

It is a linear assessment, with the possibility of sitting either the Higher tier or Foundation tier of examinations. Assessment of investigative skills is assessed in the written examination paper. There is no practical examination or coursework. Pupils learn practical techniques and carry out specific investigations throughout their GCSE course which are tested within their final examinations.

To what can GCSE in Biology, Chemistry and Physics lead?

It is a sound foundation for progression to A levels in all three Sciences, and other comparable post-16 qualifications. You will have acquired good practical skills and be well prepared to take on more advanced work. Career options are wide and varied with anything from accountancy to medicine!

SCIENCE TRILOGY AWARD: AQA GCSE Combined Science (Trilogy)

Head of Science Faculty: Dr ZM Saunders

Why study Combined Science (Trilogy) at GCSE?

All pupils will study either the Combined Science (Trilogy) GCSE or the Triple Sciences. The Head of Science Faculty will make recommendations to the Head advising which pupils are more suited for each course. These recommendations will be based upon evidence to date including all Year 7 and Year 8 grades in all three Sciences and subject teacher advice.

Pupils entered for Combined Science will still study the three Sciences of Biology, Chemistry and Physics for a total of 12 periods per cycle.

Nationally, this is the most popular option of studying Science to GCSE level. Pupils gain 2 GCSE grades in Science.

How and what will I study?

The main areas covered at Combined Science (GCSE) are:
Biology: Keeping Healthy, Coordination and Control, Medicine and Drugs, Adaptation for Survival, Energy and Biomass, Reproduction and Inheritance, Cells, Organisms in the Environment, Enzymes, Respiration, Inheritance in Plants and Animals, Old and New Species.

Chemistry: Atomic Structure, The Periodic Table, Structure and Bonding, Chemical Calculations, Chemical Changes, Electrolysis, Energy Changes, Rates and Equilibrium, Crude Oil and Fuels, Chemical Analysis and the Earth's Atmosphere and Resources.

Physics: Energy and Energy Resources, Generating Electricity, Waves, Radiation and the Universe, Motion, Electricity, Nuclear Physics, Pressure, Gases, Density.

How will I be assessed?

Paper 1 – 1 hour 15 minutes in each subject (3 papers in total).

Paper 2 – 1 hour 15 minutes in each subject (3 papers in total).

These examinations will take place at the end of Year 11. It is a linear assessment, with the possibility of sitting either the Higher tier or Foundation tier of examinations.

Where can GCSE Combined Science (Trilogy) lead?

It is a good foundation for progression to A levels in all three Sciences, and other comparable post-16 qualifications. You will have acquired good practical skills and be well prepared to take on more advanced work. A level courses start assuming that the majority of the population have completed this course. Career options are wide and varied with anything from accountancy to medicine!

Optional Subjects

- Art and Design
- Business
- Classical Civilisation
- Computer Science
- Design Technology
- Ethics and Philosophy
- Geography
- History
- Languages: French, German, Spanish
- Languages: Latin
- Music
- Physical Education

ART and DESIGN (Fine Art) Eduqas

Head of Creative Faculty: Mr TD Birtwistle

Why choose Art at GCSE?

You may wish to study a GCSE in Art if you enjoy the subject and you are creative, imaginative, and enjoy making artwork. You may also wish to study Art at GCSE if you intend to follow an art-related career path or wish to add a creative subject to add balance to your academic suite of choices. Studying Art at GCSE enhances creative thinking skills that are useful in all subjects and careers. This course encourages an adventurous and enquiring approach to Art and you will develop a wide variety of skills. You will obtain a working knowledge of the materials and practices of Art and develop the skills to investigate, analyse and experiment. The course will encourage you to develop your imagination and the skills to express your ideas, feelings and opinions. You will also acquire an understanding of the language and conventions of Art and the place of Art in history and in society.

How and what will I study?

The course consists of drawing, painting, sculpture, digital media, printmaking, photography and installation. The structure of the course will enable you to study a wide variety of skills, techniques and materials. You will be encouraged to develop an adventurous and informed approach to exploring your own ideas, making Art and understanding the work of other artists. You will develop your own interpretations of an individual theme in order to develop and stretch your own strengths and skills. During the course, there are two papers:

Paper 1 is the personal portfolio.
The personal portfolio is work that is produced in lessons. The personal portfolio is based around a number of broad themes which will allow you to explore your own ideas and develop your skills and different materials, from digital media to paint.

Paper 2 is the externally set assignment.
At the beginning of the Lent term in Year 11 you will be given the externally set assignment. This is set by the examination board and will provide you with a range of starting points based around a selection of themes. You will be given approximately twenty hours over the term, to work through the paper fully with your teacher and plan your ideas and final piece for the timed test. The timed test will take place over two days and lasts for ten hours. This part of the course contributes 40% to your overall mark.

How will I be assessed?

The artwork you produce throughout the course will contribute towards your final grade. The weighting of each unit is 60% for Paper 1 and 40% for Paper 2. There are four main areas which you will be assessed on:

- Developing your ideas informed by contextual sources (researching the work of artists)
- Refining your ideas and experimenting with techniques and materials (ranging from drawing, digital work to sculpture)
- Recording your observations, thoughts and ideas through drawings, photographs and texts
- Producing personal responses and finished pieces of work. All of the work you produce for this GCSE will be assessed internally. These marks are then verified by an external moderator from the examination board

Where can a GCSE in Art and Design lead to?

You could go on to take an A level in Art or an Art related subject. You might wish to follow a career where it is useful to have had experience of Art, or where you will need to use some of the skills developed during this course. A GCSE in Art can act as the starting point for many careers such as fine art, architecture, animation, fashion and textile design, graphic design, illustration, photography, to name a few. Whichever you choose, the study of Art can help you develop transferable skills, which you can take into any career.

BUSINESS

Head of Social Sciences Faculty: Ms KM Walmsley

Why choose Business at GCSE?

The Business course gives pupils an insight into the world of work and how businesses are run. It can be a starting point for anyone thinking of setting up their own business or wanting to study management at university. Pupils have also found it has helped in their understanding of family businesses and the topics studied will be of relevance to everyone at some stage in their lives.

How and what will I study?

The course is divided up into 6 main sections.

Firstly, we study the basics of businesses and how they are set up. Then we look at the four main functions in a business:

- Marketing (how the business attracts customers)
- Finance (how the business handles the money flowing into and out of the organisation)
- Human Resources (how the business recruits, trains and motivates its employees)
- Operations (how the business makes sure the right products are produced in the right quantities at the right time)

Finally we look at the external factors that can affect businesses such as technology, the economy, ethics and legal factors.

How will I be assessed?

Assessment is by two examinations.

Paper 1 is a 2 hour examination, worth 62.5% of the total mark
Paper 2 is a 1 hour 30 minute examination, worth 37.5% of the total mark

Both examinations contain case studies where pupils have to write long structured answers to justify their recommendations.

Where can a GCSE in Business lead to?

Each year a number of pupils will go on to study for Business/Management degrees at university after having had their interest in the subject first kindled by studying the subject at GCSE. Even if Business does not lead onto further academic studies, it is hoped that all pupils completing the course will gain a valuable understanding and appreciation of the world of commerce and perhaps be encouraged to take the first steps towards establishing their own business empire.

CLASSICAL CIVILISATION

Subject Leader (Classical Civilisation and Latin): Miss EJ Hall

Why choose Classical Civilisation at GCSE?

So much of today's world can trace its origins back to two great civilisations – Greece and Rome. A study of Classical Civilisation at GCSE will help you begin to understand the relevance that the classical world still holds for us all.

No knowledge of Latin or Greek is required as all the topics we study are in English. What is required is an interest to learn about the classical world, its personalities, events, literature, history, culture, society and mythology. Our experience of the course is that it is suitable for, and enjoyed by, pupils of all abilities. There are many excellent reasons for choosing Classical Civilisation but the best of all is the sheer pleasure a study of the subject can give.

Classical Civilisation can be studied alongside any subject. The course is a very broad one which embraces aspects of many subjects. As such it can appeal to pupils with very different subjects, and complement a variety of other GCSE courses, as well as providing a rewarding contrast in study for the scientist or mathematician.

How and what will I study?

Pupils study two topics from the ancient world, taken from:

Myth and Religion – including Greek and Roman gods, heroes (Hercules and Theseus), festivals, the underworld, temples, the foundation of Rome.

The Homeric world – including life in the Mycenaean age, everyday life (hunting, weapons, chariots, clothing), palaces, burial customs, jewellery, Homer as a storyteller, Odysseus as a leader and hero, the role of the gods, the role of revenge and justice.

The themes above are just some of the areas you will explore. Through this exploration, you will learn how to appreciate different cultures, how to read and appreciate literature in translation and how to communicate clearly and effectively. You will need an open mind, a mature outlook and ability to write answers to short questions and essays. Our teaching methods seek to foster and develop a wide range of study skills, including class discussions and readings. Many of the topics we study are enhanced by an excellent departmental stock of audio-visual material.

How will I be assessed?

There will be an examination of 1 hour 30 minutes for each of the two topics using the OCR specification.

Myth and Religion will be examined on topics from Greece and Rome.

The Homeric World will be examined on culture and literature.

The examination papers will consist of both short answer questions and longer response questions. Each examination represents 50% of the total GCSE.

Where can a GCSE in Classical Civilisation lead to?

A study of Classical Civilisation will help develop analytical skills and intellectual flexibility which will be useful in a wide range of jobs or in further study. It is an especially good preparation for pupils who go on to study English Literature, History, Classical Civilisation, Latin or Greek at A level. It also offers insights that are useful for further study and careers in law, teaching, English, journalism, politics and history.

COMPUTER SCIENCE

Subject Leader (Computer Science): Mr HM Sanderson

Why choose Computer Science at GCSE?

Computing is of enormous importance to the economy. With an increasing number of jobs in this country and abroad requiring an understanding of Computer Science, almost every industry now requires some form of computer technology in order to operate. Computer technology continues to advance rapidly and the way that technology is consumed has also been changing at a fast pace over recent years and, in particular, over the past year to help businesses and schools to be able to continue to operate remotely. The growth in the use of mobile devices and web-related technologies has exploded and, as a direct result, there is an increased demand in industry for people with skills in the field of Computer Science, particularly computer programming. This course will build upon the knowledge and skills acquired in Year 8 and it provides excellent progression to A level Computer Science, vocational courses and on to degree level courses in the areas of computing, engineering and science and even future employment in a wide range of industries.

How and what will I study?

Pupils who opt to study GCSE Computer Science will learn how to design and code applications that run on mobile devices and operate in a web enabled environment. They will learn how to create simple applications including basic computer games and gain an understanding of the process of software design and development as well as the fundamentals of computer systems. This will be achieved by learning how to program using the Python programming language. They will also look at how networks are created and how to prevent cybercrime. Pupils will look at how binary numbers can be used to represent all the things we see and hear on a computer.

How will I be assessed?

The specification is OCR Computer Science (J277) and this is assessed by two equally weighted terminal examinations.

The examined units are:
Unit 1: Computer Systems
Unit 2: Computational Thinking, algorithms and programming

Each of these are worth 50% of the final grade.

Pupils also have the chance to complete a programming project in Year 11 which will help with Unit 2 and provide the opportunity to demonstrate their understanding of coding in Python which is excellent preparation should they choose to go on to study A level Computer Science.

Where can a GCSE in Computer Science lead to?

Pupils who choose to study Computer Science at GCSE could go on to study A level Computer Science and then go on to study the subject at degree level and into future careers in games or software development or mobile app development. Computer Science is now listed as a desirable qualification by the Russell Group of Universities as well as employers. There are many industries which require the skills of computer scientists such as insurance, banking, healthcare and engineering. The possibilities for future career paths are endless with this subject which is always in demand.

DESIGN TECHNOLOGY: PRODUCT DESIGN

Subject Leader (Design Technology): Miss LI Watson

Why choose Product Design at GCSE?

The study of Design Technology seeks to prepare pupils to participate confidently and successfully in an increasingly technological world. A GCSE in Design Technology enables pupils to understand and apply iterative design processes through which they explore, create and evaluate a range of outcomes. Pupils are able to use creativity and imagination to design and make prototypes which includes evidence of modelling to develop and prove product concept and function. These prototypes solve real and relevant problems with a real life client, considering their own and others' needs, wants and values. It provides opportunities to apply knowledge from other disciplines, including Mathematics, Science, Art, Computer Science and the Humanities.

How and what will I study?

The course offers a challenging combination of written theory as well as a design and make element.

- The written theory focuses upon a range of disciplines within Design and Technology, including knowledge in relation to manufacturing processes, materials, sustainability, design and market influences and other subject related topics.
- The coursework element will focus upon a range of iterative design processes undertaken by the pupil, including building upon their computer generated research, product analysis, sketching, computer aided design, engineering drawing, model making and practical skills development. Overall, this will empower pupils to fulfil the process of design and manufacture. Pupils will be required to demonstrate their ability to develop, plan and communicate their ideas clearly and creatively. They will be in a position to analyse critically existing products with regard to form, function, materials, the production processes used and evaluate the overall effectiveness in a competitive marketplace.

How will I be assessed?

A portfolio of work will be produced, under controlled conditions, to demonstrate the pupil's design and technological capabilities. This counts towards 50% of the overall GCSE assessment. At the end of the course, pupils will be tested on their ability to solve problems within the framework of selected materials in an industrial context. This test will take the form of an examination worth 50% of the overall assessment.

Where can a GCSE in Product Design lead to?

The course offers a multi-media approach to Design Technology with excellent progression towards preparation for A level studies in the subject. Both the design and manufacturing industries employ a large number of people in a wide range of professions. With this GCSE you will have gained an insight into the careers of engineer, interior designer, product designer, architect, model maker, teacher/lecturer, construction, furniture designer, wood/metalwork crafts.

ETHICS AND PHILOSOPHY (Religious Studies)

Joint Head of Humanities Faculty: Mr BM Burton

Why choose Ethics and Philosophy (Religious Studies) at GCSE?

Some of the most captivating news items and documentaries on modern television concern controversial issues such as abortion, climate change, crime and war, which often leave us discussing recent case studies for days and weeks to come. Pupils delve much more deeply into these issues and look at reasoned arguments about questions such as 'should Britain execute its worst criminals?' After studying the issues at large, pupils will then assess some religious perspectives on these matters, and are left to decide whether they agree with religious teachings or not. Indeed, there is usually a very good balance of pupils who are atheists, agnostics and those of a religious background, which leads to some fascinating debates.

How and what will I study?

Pupils will follow the GCSE AQA Specification A Religious Studies.

In examination one, pupils will study some enthralling philosophical questions from a choice of world religions regarding creation, destiny, atonement and forgiveness, the afterlife, the problem of evil and suffering, issues regarding human freewill, and further applications of our in-depth Year 8 case study of Nicky Cruz, the notorious New York gangster.

In examination two, pupils will explore themes in the modern world that religions have concerns about. These include animal rights, abortion, euthanasia, terrorism, nuclear weapons, environmental activism, capital punishment, prisons, and sexual ethics questions, such as same-sex parenting.

Please be aware that some of the case studies and associated video material that we use can be of a sensitive nature.

How will I be assessed?

Pupils will sit two examinations at the end of the course, each lasting 1 hour and 45 minutes.

Pupils will produce written answers of various lengths, some of which will be in response to short factual questions, and others involve extended written evaluations. There are no pieces of coursework or controlled assessments for this course.

Where can a GCSE in Religious Studies lead to?

Pupils who study this course may decide to study Philosophy at A level. Pupils find that GCSE and A level qualifications in this subject are well respected by both employers and universities. Also, the vital skills that are practised, and the real-world content that is covered, become highly transferable to other subjects and careers such as law, teaching, medicine, journalism, politics, history, police and probation, social work and many more.

GEOGRAPHY

Subject Leader (Geography): Mrs JE Albiston

Why choose Geography at GCSE?

"It is on a connection with the environment that the future of both humanity and the natural world will depend. And it is, surely, our responsibility to do everything within our power to create a planet that provides a home not just for us, but for all life on Earth." Sir David Attenborough.

Geography links the science of the world to politics, economics and the contemporary issues highlighted daily in the news. If you are interested in the world around you, why the landscape of the UK is so dramatic and why it is vitally important that we help all countries around the world to develop a higher standard of living then Geography will help you learn about these issues.

How and what will I study?

Geography is a dynamic subject and it is taught in a dynamic way. Lessons range from decision making exercises, group work, pair work, individual investigations and study. You will cover a variety of topics including: The Challenge of Natural Hazards, The Living World, Physical Landscapes in the UK, Urban Challenges, The Changing Economic World and The Challenge of Resource Management. You will also develop issue evaluation skills and undertake two fieldwork investigations in preparation for the geographical enquiry, which is examined in Paper 3.

How will I be assessed?

There are three examinations sat at the end of Year 11.

Paper 1 - Living with the Physical Environment, 1 hour 30 minutes, 35% of GCSE
Paper 2 - Challenges in the Human Environment, 1 hour 30 minutes, 35% of GCSE
Paper 3 - Geographical Applications, 1 hour 15 minutes, 30% of GCSE

Where can a GCSE in Geography lead to?

Geography is everywhere so it can lead to almost anything, it is both an art and a science. Whilst geographers can choose to specialise in a particular field, like mapping or researching population growth, there are a huge number of career choices available for across different areas. People who study Geography can become lawyers, town planners, scientists, volcanologists, journalists, weather forecasters or architects. The list is endless!

HISTORY

Joint Head of Humanities Faculty: Mr MJ Lockwood

Why choose History at GCSE Level?

GSCE History is an important academic discipline. It is a stimulating subject, which develops the intellect, encourages debate and satisfies curiosity. The study of the past is essential to the understanding of the present. This applies to our own country as well as others.

How and what will I study?

We will be following a course provided by Edexcel.

Paper 1: British Thematic Study with Historical Environment
Topics are linked so that pupils can apply their contextual understanding from the thematic study to the Historic Environment study.
Thematic Study: Warfare and British society c1250 to present.
Themes covered will include: the changing nature of warfare, the experience of war for both combatants and civilians and, finally, case studies ranging from Agincourt through Waterloo to the Iraq war of 2003.
The Historical Environment: London and the Second World War, 1939 to 45.

Paper 2: Period Study and British Depth Study
This paper covers both British depth studies and period studies to act as a chronological and geographical bridge between Paper 1 and Paper 3.
Period Study: Superpower relations and the Cold War, 1941 to 1995.
Depth Study: Early Elizabethan England 1558 to 1588.

Paper 3: Modern Depth Study
This paper covers non-British modern depth studies to enable pupils to focus on one area and explore how and why interpretations to it differ.
The USA, 1954 – 1975: conflict at home and abroad.

The lessons will be centred upon the acquisition of knowledge and the analysis of events. A range of books, DVDs and the Internet are used as well as a wide range of interesting and stimulating resources.

How will I be assessed?

Pupils will sit three papers at the end of Year 11

Paper 1 - 1 hour 15 minutes, worth 30%
Paper 2 - 1 hour 45 minutes, worth 40%
Paper 3 - 1 hour 20 minutes, worth 30%

There is no coursework or controlled assessment option on this course.

Where can a GCSE in History lead to?

History is a discipline which fits well with any other subject. GCSE History is useful for a very wide range of professions in virtually every sphere. These include, amongst others, law, civil service, journalism, accountancy, publishing, broadcasting and banking and finance. However, this list is not exhaustive as History is a subject that opens doors rather than closes them.

LANGUAGES: French, German, Spanish

Head of Languages Faculty: Mrs SL Broom

Why choose Modern Languages at GCSE?

- Languages are a life skill. Knowledge of a foreign language is not just another GCSE grade, it is a concrete and beneficial life skill, like being able to drive a car or touch-type, and it is a skill highly valued by employers.
- Languages teach you cultural awareness, communication and social skills and adaptability.
- Languages give you the edge in the job market. Today there is a global market for jobs. It is not necessary to be completely fluent in a foreign language to be an asset to any potential employer. People with languages demonstrate a wider skill base.
- Learning languages gives you greater opportunities to travel and work abroad.
- Languages combine well with virtually any other subject for further study.
- In a continent where barriers are coming down, both physically and economically, pupils are also encouraged to consider studying a second language at GCSE. The learning skills acquired when studying their first foreign language make the acquisition of a second language manageable and achievable.

How and what will I study?

The format of all the languages offered is identical. The topic areas covered in the courses embrace the three themes: a) identity and culture, b) local, national, international and global areas of interest as well as c) current and future study and employment. Lessons continue to be scheduled in the language laboratory and you are encouraged to communicate as freely as possible in the target language. A whole range of interactive activities are included in the schemes of work to promote interest and motivation in lessons as well to aid independent study and revision.

How will I be assessed?

We follow the AQA specification for all languages. Pupils' listening, speaking, reading and writing skills are examined as four separate examinations at the end of Year 11 worth 25% each. Speaking tests will be conducted by the class teacher. Pupils will be entered at either Higher tier or Foundation tier which will be decided during Year 11.

Where can a GCSE in Modern Languages lead to?

Pupils take modern languages with any combination of other subjects at A level, and even at university. There are numerous courses available after A level, for example, engineering and a modern language, business and a modern language or even medicine and a language. According to a recent survey linguists are sought after in a diverse range of careers: business services, manufacturing, banking and finance, wholesale and retail sales, transport and communications, community, social and personal services, public administration, education, health and social work, hotel and restaurant trades.

LANGUAGES: Latin

Subject Leader (Classical Civilisation and Latin): Miss EJ Hall

Why choose Latin at GCSE?

- Latin offers a valuable, informative and stimulating experience of a language and civilisation that have had a huge and lasting influence on the modern world.
- Latin boosts your confidence in using and understanding the English language with more than 90% of words of more than one syllable in the English language having Latin origins. These words are at the heart of culture, education and science.
- Latin provides an enhanced awareness of how modern languages work, especially French, Spanish and other Romance Languages.
- Latin offers an invaluable general mental training whose skills are easily applied in other areas, including the Sciences and Mathematics.
- Latin will help you to stand out from the crowd with universities and future employers.
- Not many schools offer Latin so seize the opportunity while you can.

How and what will I study?

To begin with the language work, which you have studied previously, will be consolidated. Then you will make further progress using the Cambridge Latin Course and other materials, applying the finishing touches to the language requirements. You will also study some Latin authors and read selections from their works in Latin.

We use a variety of teaching techniques. You are encouraged to think logically and to pay close attention to detail, but the learning of grammar does not dominate the subject. A good memory for learning vocabulary is essential. All the words on the GCSE Vocabulary List can be learnt and tested both at school and at home by means of computer programs especially designed for the task. Other computer programs are networked to assist with consolidation of grammar and the acquisition of translation skills.

How will I be assessed?

Examination Board: Eduqas. All assessment is taken in written examination format at the end of the course. Language (50%) and Literature (50%) make up the GCSE and consist of comprehension questions and written translation.

Where can a GCSE in Latin lead to?

Latin is a highly respected subject for any pupil to have among a set of GCSE qualifications. As well as being exciting and inspiring, the course will help you develop analytical skills and intellectual flexibility which will be useful in a wide range of jobs or in further study. It is very much valued, both by employers and universities, as a strong indicator of intellectual ability. What many employers are looking for is a person who can solve problems, think precisely and communicate clearly and all these qualities are developed by studying Latin.

MUSIC

Subject Leader (Music): Miss EL Cockshott

Why choose Music at GCSE?

You will study the Eduqas GCSE Music syllabus which will allow for a wide range of musical opportunities including concert visits and performances. In addition to acquiring subject knowledge, this course provides you with the opportunity to gain self-confidence through performing to others and with others. You will develop your creative skills through composing music and will develop transferable skills such as continuous evaluation.
You will also have the opportunity to sit further external qualifications throughout the course, such as ABRSM Practical and Theory examinations.

How and what will I study?

Music is studied in a small group so that the individual needs of each pupil can be addressed quickly and effectively. You will broaden your knowledge of music by studying a range of musical styles such as Film Music, Rock and Pop, Classical, Musicals and Fusion pieces. You will also learn transferrable skills such as writing extended or essay style answers, developing aural ability and the skills needed for analysis.

The lessons are divided between listening and appraising and practical activities to cover the following areas.

Listening and Appraising – you will complete an in-depth study of 2 pieces of music and be able to both answer wider listening questions and be able to give extended answers.

Composition – you will use music software to compose a piece of your choice and another to a set brief.

Performance – you will perform solo and as part of an ensemble on an instrument of your choice.

How will I be assessed?

All performance and composition work is completed as coursework. It is marked internally and moderated externally.

There is an external examination at the end of the course, during which you will answer questions based on the music that you have studied.

Performance 30%	Composition 30%	Listening and Appraising 40%
1 solo and 1 ensemble performance	2 pieces totalling approximately 4 minutes	A 90 minute examination sat at the end of the course

Where can a GCSE in Music lead?

GCSE Music will enable you to go on to study Music and Music Technology at A level and it is accepted by universities for a wide variety of courses. Music is an ideal subject to take with Mathematics, Psychology and the other creative subjects at A level.
Music qualifications are viewed very favourably by further education establishments and employers because of the skills needed to complete such a course. Music-specific career possibilities include performance, free-lance musician, session player, composer, songwriter, classroom teaching, peripatetic teaching, arts administration, TV and radio broadcasting, sound engineering, music production, the movie industry and music therapy.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Head of Physical Education Faculty: Dr ME Butler

Why choose Physical Education at GCSE?

The GCSE Physical Education course is entirely separate from the compulsory practical Physical Education and afternoon Sporting Enrichment lessons taken by all pupils in Years 9, 10 and 11. The GCSE course aims to improve pupils' knowledge and understanding about physical activity, as well as providing them with the opportunity to demonstrate sporting excellence in a limited range of recognised sports.

How and what will I study?

The content is designed to enable pupils to enjoy and understand the benefits of living a healthy and active lifestyle. It can be sub divided into a number of inter-related yet discrete topics within the course:

- Health, fitness and a healthy active lifestyle
- Interpretation of simple mathematical data to include graphs and charts
- Cultural and social factors influencing our participation in sport and physical activity
- Factors relating to sport psychology to include emotional health and well being
- Elementary biomechanical principles relating to sport
- The practical role of the performer in a minimum of 3 sports – one 'team', one 'individual' and one other
- Written coursework focusing on performance analysis
- How individual differences influence performance
- Equality and inequality within sport

Some timetabled lessons are practical in nature where you will be assessed in a limited range of practical sporting activities.

All pupils will be required to swim

How will I be assessed?

Pupils will undertake a focused practical course in which each pupil's practical sporting ability as a performer only will be assessed, 40% of the total examination mark. There is an element of controlled assessment linking in with the practical work that is internally marked and externally moderated. The remaining 60% of the marks are assessed in the final examination.

Pupils should only consider GCSE Physical Education if they represent the school or a club in at least two recognised sporting activities: one 'team' activity and the other 'individual'.

What can a GCSE in Physical Education lead to?

GCSE Physical Education is an ideal course for pupils who may be considering a future career in sport or who have a genuine interest in playing and learning about the exciting world of sport. It can lead to studying the subject at A level and beyond. Whatever you decide, the world of sport is an exciting and rewarding place to be and you could become part of it. From physiotherapy to sports coaching, opportunities to pursue a career in sport have never been greater. Come and join us!

OPTIONS CHOICES BOOKLET

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