



NORTHAMPTON
HIGH SCHOOL

GDST
GIRLS' DAY SCHOOL TRUST

GCSE Years Guide

2022/23

Welcome to the GCSE Years Guide

Although Year 10 is some months away, now is the time to begin looking forward to the four-year journey upon which you are about to embark.

That journey begins with the GCSE years and ends with you leaving to pursue a gap year, university course, apprenticeship or a job via the exciting two years in Sixth Form.

It can seem a daunting prospect to be choosing GCSE subjects already, and for the large proportion of you who are not sure where your future aspirations lie, the task of narrowing your curriculum is a difficult one. It is important to remember that your compulsory core subjects do keep your options open though.

The GCSE years, however, are not just about the subjects you study but about seeking out opportunities to discover who you are and what you enjoy doing. The information in this guide will outline the many ways in which you can get involved in school and the wider community in a

way that has not been possible until now. We hope you will decide to take up some of the leadership opportunities available to you, to volunteer and to continue to enjoy the extracurricular opportunities on offer.

This guide will, I hope, also help you to appreciate the range of support and guidance that is on offer every step of the way over the coming years, to help you become the kind of adult you want to be. There are group and individual guidance workshops, evening information events, tutorials and PSHE sessions, all designed to ensure you get the information you need at the right time for you.

Trust us when we assure you that, by the time you finish your GCSE years, you will be prepped and ready to make the next step of choosing A Levels, and making decisions on what you want to do beyond them. We are here to help, encourage and support you along this exciting road.

Mrs Adèle O'Doherty
Acting Head

Contents

Welcome to the GCSE Years Guide	3	Fashion & Textiles	13
Choosing your GCSEs	4	Food Preparation & Nutrition	13
How will my timetable look?	5	Geography	14
Option Choices	5	History	14
360° Me ePortfolio	6	Latin	15
Enrichment	7 - 8	Mathematics	15
Sport	9	Modern Foreign Languages	16
Guidance	10	Music	17
Art, Craft & Design	11	Physical Education	17
Computer Science	11	Religious Studies	18
Drama	12	Sciences: Biology, Chemistry & Physics	18
English Language & Literature	12	Student Case Studies	19 - 22

Choosing your GCSEs

Our tutors and subject teachers have many years of experience helping students make the right choices at GCSE and A Level. They will be your guides in this process and will be on hand whenever you have any questions or worries.

How will I make my choices with the future in mind?

Although you may well have a general idea of the area you would like to move into, it is very usual to be uncertain of your future career at this stage. Many people change their minds several times along the way. Your time in school, especially in Year 10 and above, is preparing you for life as a global citizen, voter, neighbour and parent as well as a life of work, but don't worry, you will have plenty of support and advice to help you find the right path for you personally through all these challenges.

As a student it is important that you keep two things in mind. Firstly, have you left as many doors as possible open to career choices? The compulsory core helps you to do this. A broad-based education is attractive to future employers and to admissions tutors in Higher Education.



Don't forget, GCSE results will be taken into consideration along with A Levels when you are looking at universities and beyond. When you are thinking about choices, you should ask yourself the following questions:

Which are the right subjects to choose?

- Those you are good at
- Those you may need for a future career
- Those you like and enjoy

Which are the wrong subjects to choose?

- Those you choose because your friend is doing them
- Those you choose only because you like the teacher

Don't rule out a subject because you don't get on with a teacher.

Do take advice from your subject, careers and form teachers.

Don't accept decisions made for you by others, however well meaning.

Do discuss your choices with your parents.

Remember that, ultimately, your choices must be the ones that feel right for you.



How will my timetable look?

There is GCSE overview information for each subject later in this booklet. At times there are changes to the specifications and we will always ensure you are kept up to date. Remember, you can also find the courses on the internet by going to the relevant exam board websites.

Which GCSE subjects are compulsory?

All students will study English, English Literature, Mathematics and the three sciences; Biology, Chemistry and Physics. You will also choose at least one Modern Language from French, German or Spanish. You may choose to study the Sciences as separate GCSEs or as a dual science award.

The dual science award is worth two GCSEs but is still taught as three separate sciences by specialist teachers. There is no need to decide yet whether you want to take the separate or dual science option as everyone does the same course to start with. We will help you make this decision in Year 11.

How many GCSE subjects will I study?

In total, most students will study 9 GCSEs, with students choosing separate sciences having the option of studying 10.

How many lessons will I have in each subject?

GCSE subjects are taught over 4 periods per week, except English Language and Literature, which are over 6 periods per week and science which is taught over 10 periods. Students who take 9 GCSEs will have time for supervised private study during the week.

Which GCSE subjects may I choose from?

You will choose up to three GCSEs from the subjects in the table below, or two if you have chosen an extra language.

Option Choices

Art, Craft & Design
Computer Science
Drama
Fashion & Textiles
Food Preparation & Nutrition
Geography
History
Latin
Music
Physical Education
Religious Studies

Options timetables and deadlines:

GCSE Information Meeting	Tuesday 11 January 2022
Year 9 Parents' Evenings	Tuesday 18 January Monday 24 January
Option Choices made online	Monday 24 January Monday 31 January

Can I take any additional GCSEs?

The timetable is designed carefully to ensure the right academic balance is made between the subjects. It is not possible to add an extra option into the timetable. However, occasionally students wish to take an alternative Modern Language at GCSE because they have a family connection and already have a high degree of proficiency in the language. In these cases, it is possible to consider substituting an optional subject, in consultation with the Academic Deputy Head.

360° Me ePortfolio

360° Me ePortfolios are personal websites built by students to provide an illustration of your life, your educational and other achievements as well as your personal ambitions. At the heart of the ePortfolio is a belief that harnessing the power of technology will have the added benefit of encouraging you to think critically about your wider online life. In effect, by actively managing your digital footprint in this way, you are better placed to avoid some of the negative issues associated with social media.

An alumna of the school, who now works managing the social media presence of large organisations, comments that having a personal site is very advantageous, as it helps to highlight to potential employers positive attributes and the willingness to contribute more widely in society:

“Your social profiles stick with you - social media is going to keep being relevant. You need to know that everything you do, both intentionally and not, contributes to the way others are perceiving your personal brand. Take control of it!” - Alice, GDST Alumna

The aim of the portfolio is for you to illuminate your life for the benefit of people you want to influence and persuade in the professional and academic domains, demonstrating your educational and other achievements as well as your personal ambitions. The websites are private and only available within the GDST network initially, to form tutors and guidance staff, as well as anyone else at school you choose to show it to. You will refine your ePortfolios over the years so that they become a living résumé for future employers or universities, and give a real insight into your potential and track record.



Initially, you create three sections of your site:

- 1. Home Page:** an instantly impactful page which should visually represent you.
- 2. 360° Me Page:** a brief biographical summary.
- 3. Index Page:** a page with links to your academic and other achievements which will grow over time.

Enrichment

Balance is the Key to Life!

Students studying for their GCSEs work conscientiously at their chosen subjects, but there's a great range of enriching extracurricular activities, trips and visits to take advantage of outside the classroom. It's all about creating a sense of balance and building a portfolio that reflects who you are.

Enrichment opportunities are offered across the curriculum. These may include visits to Oxford University for a Classics study day, Café Sci trips to the Space Centre and Bletchley Park, Maths lectures in London, a Theology and Philosophy day in Cambridge, trips to the National Theatre for Drama students, the Geography field trip to Somerset and Nettlecombe Park and Art Trips to the British Museum, Tate Modern and Natural History Museum, as well as visits to the BBC Good Food Show and Clothes Show in Birmingham. Residential trips abroad are also an option, so you could join the Art and Classics trip to Rome, the History and German trip to Berlin, or take part in the German or French/Spanish home stay visits. Clubs and societies thrive in all their forms across the school: you can join the DASH debate teams as part of the interhouse competition, become a Language Leader or join Café Scientifique, a science club run for and by GCSE students who arrange guest lectures and assemblies for their members.

Our Aim

Northampton High School aims to offer a vibrant and innovative learning environment that goes beyond excellent academic teaching and learning. The Enrichment Programme is an important part of ensuring we reach this aim and appears within the formally taught curriculum for students in Years 10-12. The programme complements other non-examined courses we run in the school, specifically Games, but also such courses as the Humanities Transferable Skills programme in Years 7 and 8 and the Global Outlook course offered in Year 9.

Moreover, all our GCSE students are encouraged to develop their own skills, talents and interests. From here you might decide to join the National Citizen Service (NCS), organise some work experience in the summer, or help to organise your year and House charity event. Sports clubs abound, and you might join a sports team like hockey or netball, or work out regularly at the school gym. You could even compete in the GDST Rallies, join the Senior Ski trip or be chosen for one of the Sports Tours. Opportunities in Music and Drama also abound, and you could be part of the Senior Choir, Orchestra, Flute Choir, join the Senior Theatre Company and be part of the Senior Play or take a lead role in House plays.

Alternatively, you might volunteer to lead your House as a House Captain, volunteer as a Junior School Reading Mentor, or get involved with mentoring younger students in the junior school to help with their transition as they join the senior school. You could even volunteer to help organise and run the annual Christmas Variety Show for our local care home. You could, of course, also participate in the Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme, starting with the Bronze Award before joining the Silver and perhaps even the Gold challenges as you progress through the Award.

There are myriad opportunities scattered in your path from which you can choose.

Just a few of the exciting opportunities on offer are listed on the following page, but for a full list and for detailed information on each course, please scan the QR code to read our Enrichment Programme booklet.



Enrichment



National Citizen Service (NCS)

This is a UK-wide programme available, via application, to all 15-17 year olds. NCS comprises various stages and lasts for 3-4 weeks during your summer break. During NCS you will undertake adventurous activities, learn new skills and take part in social action projects alongside likeminded students from across the country. It is a great way to get out of your comfort zone and make new friends. Visit: <https://wearencs.com/> for more information.

Language Leaders Award and Erasmus+

You will have the opportunity to join the Language Leaders programme during Year 10 if you have a particular interest in French, German, Latin or Spanish. You will be able to help run events for other students, organise competitions and support the language learning of younger pupils. At the end of the programme you will gain your Routes into Languages Language Leader Award. Students will also have the opportunity to be involved in projects with our partner schools across Europe in our Erasmus+ collaborations.

Café Scientifique

Café Sci is a programme of lectures, clubs, trips and visiting speakers led by students. If Science is your thing then Café Sci is something you should get involved in. It offers a fantastic opportunity to develop leadership and understanding of how to run an event, including marketing, health and safety and logistics.

Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme

Most pupils undertake the Bronze Award during Year 10 and then smaller numbers proceed to Silver and Gold after completion. You will find yourself helping in the community, building mental and physical fitness and developing new skills, as well as going on an expedition.

Big Bear, Little Bear

You will have the opportunity to be a mentor to a pupil in Year 6 as part of the Big Bear, Little Bear scheme during Year 11. Entry to this scheme is via an application and as part of the process you receive training and support before being partnered with a younger student. The aim of the scheme is to help prepare the younger students for life in Senior School and give them information and advice. In return you will develop mentoring and leadership skills.



Reading Mentors

During spring term of Year 10, you are given your first opportunity to mentor younger pupils, usually in Year 6, by helping them to practise their reading. Doing this will build your confidence as well as that of your partner pupil.

Sport



Sport in the Curriculum

In both years of the GCSE course, you will take part in a Games lesson. This is designed to help you relax and enjoy the company of your friends, while improving your fitness and developing your sports skills.

In Year 10 you will participate in several wellbeing activities or have the option of hockey or netball if you would prefer. Hockey and netball team players will use this time as squad training.

Extracurricular Sport

Outside of lessons there are a huge number of extracurricular sports activities. These run at lunchtime and after school. The offer of sports is varied, and students are encouraged to take part in numerous activities, so they develop a range of skills and fitness.

Clubs that run include rackets, swimming, hockey, netball, football, and gymnastics and fitness. Alongside our clubs we run an extensive fixture programme, fielding teams in a wide variety of sports. We also have an extremely successful Equestrian Team and any student with their own horse can compete with us against other schools.

Our wellbeing curriculum includes activities such as yoga, HIIT, fitness, dance, strength and conditioning and flexibility training. In the summer term students can also take part in tennis, cricket, rounders, and athletics.

In Year 11, you will choose an activity to participate in for half a term at a time. The options change, but examples include fitness, hockey, volleyball, netball, dodgeball, cricket, tennis, yoga, dance, rounders, and squash.



Additionally, as part of the GDST we compete in GDST Rallies. These are tournaments that are run throughout the year for different sports for different age groups. The competition is fierce and shows just how the GDST is bucking the trend of girls' participation in physical activity and sport.

Guidance



Inspiring Futures – a programme for Careers and Guidance

You will have already narrowed your subjects slightly for GCSE but will also be looking ahead to **A Level options**. As soon as you start your GCSEs we begin to look ahead to the next stage of transition, including helping you to develop employability skills. This includes CV writing, positive and professional online profiles, interview techniques and **application writing**. This is consolidated during Enterprise Week towards the end of the summer term. For Year 10, this includes a day spent on careers, including a **networking event** with recent School alumnae. There is also time spent on ePortfolios during this week.

Guest speakers and a range of **workshops** are provided for you across the two years to investigate individual career paths and issues surrounding employment, in greater detail. These vary on an annual basis but we ensure that the key elements are covered for each student. **Speed networking** forms another opportunity to explore different possibilities and also gives you a valuable insight into the best pathways to take.

Your GCSE courses will be enhanced by an extensive programme of **trips** including visits to the Natural History Museum in Oxford to study evolution in the lecture theatre where Darwin and Huxley had their famous 'Great Debate' and to Science Live in Birmingham to hear world famous scientists, such as Professors Jim Al-Khalili, Alice Roberts and Robert Winston speak about their work.

Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education

The programme is designed to develop your **resilience, empathy, life skills** and much more. The sessions will be predominantly delivered to you in your tutor groups by a dedicated team of PSHE teachers. In addition to this team, the School Nurse will deliver sessions on sexual health and a range of outside speakers will deliver bespoke sessions. The PSHE Programme ensures you all receive appropriate support and key knowledge that is targeted to your specific age group. We explore Mindfulness, Relaxation and Positive Mindset in addition to citizenship topics and age-appropriate health topics.

On Track

On Track is our individual mentoring programme for Year 10 and Year 11 students and it helps to ensure that you all get the best possible support to achieve your full potential at GCSE and beyond.

The On Track programme is not exclusively academic in nature and takes a holistic approach, including the input of pastoral leaders, such as Miss Kneen, your Head of Year. This is because we are aware that there may be personal or family concerns that could impact your academic work. Students with specific learning requirements or difficulties are naturally involved in the programme too, their progress being monitored by the **Learning Enhancement Coordinator**, Mrs Beezley. The types of activities within the programme range from individual subject sessions in academic areas, one-to-one mentoring, through to year group sessions on study and exam skills.

Mentoring is based on a one-to-one tailored approach with an experienced teacher, who will use a coaching system to help build a plan for improvement over a set time. This is communicated to you and your parents.



Computer Science

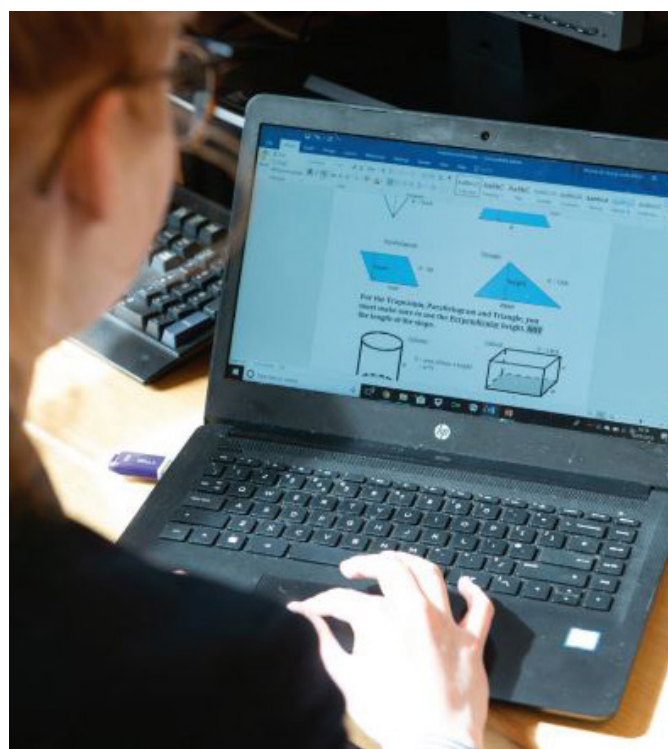
In GCSE Computer Science you will learn to code in either C#, C+ or Python, developing your skills so you are ready for a project at the start of Year 11. You will learn about the hardware and software that make computer systems work, as well as investigating networks and cyber security. The thinking skills you develop will benefit you in all areas of your studies.

Unit 1: Computer systems (40%).
Written exam paper (1 hour and 30 minutes).

Unit 2: Computational thinking, algorithms and programming (40%).
Written exam paper (1 hour and 30 minutes).

Unit 3: Programming project (20%).
Non-Exam Assessment (NEA).

Examination Board: OCR J276.



Art, Craft & Design

Art at GCSE requires a natural curiosity for the world around you and an ability to formulate and carry out in-depth research on selected themes. You will investigate and experiment with a variety of techniques, both detailed and expressive. You will have an opportunity to explore a wide range of materials and improve skills in areas such as painting, drawing, mixed media, printmaking, sculpture, 3D design, textiles and digital media.

Coursework Component One (60%)
Pupils are expected to produce an extensive portfolio of coursework.

Externally Set Component Two (40%)
(released in January + 10 hours controlled assessment). Students will respond to a set topic or theme. There is an extensive preparatory period in which to carry out research, develop ideas and experiment with media. The final personal response is completed in two days at the end of this time.

Examination Board: Edexcel 1AD0.

Drama

In GCSE Drama you will use your creativity and collaborative skills to develop a devised piece from a stimulus, which you will then perform. You will also analyse and evaluate the devising and performance processes in a portfolio. You will perform in two key extracts from a performance text which is externally assessed by a visiting examiner. There is also a practical exploration and study of one complete performance text with a live theatre evaluation.

Component 1: Devising (40%).

Coursework internally assessed and externally moderated.

Component 2: Performance from Text (20%).

Coursework externally assessed by a visiting examiner.

Component 3: Theatre Makers in Practice (40%).

Written examination: 1 hour 30 minutes.

Examination Board: Edexcel 1DRO.



English Language & Literature

In English lessons, you will develop your ability to read and respond to texts from different eras and in different forms, from Shakespeare to modern poetry, from newspaper reports to famous speeches. Personal expression is developed through creative writing, oral presentations and discussion.

Language Component 1: Non-fiction texts and transactional writing (examination, 60%).

Language Component 2: Poetry and prose texts and imaginative writing (coursework, 40%).



Examination Board (Language): Edexcel 4EA1.

Literature Component 1: Poetry and modern prose (examination, 60%).

Literature Component 2: Modern drama and literacy heritage texts (coursework, 40%).

Examination Board (Literature): Edexcel 4ET1.

Fashion & Textiles

GCSE Textile Design is your chance to design products for woven, knitted, stitched, printed or decorative textiles. Areas of study include fashion design and illustration, costume design, constructed textiles, printed and dyed textiles and digital textiles. Our first project is entitled 'Fabulous Florals' and is designed to explore a range of creative textiles techniques alongside studying the work of some contemporary designers. You will create a selection of portfolio pages which showcase a range of creative textiles and design ideas inspired by the theme.

There are two components, which are assessed in school and moderated by the exam board.

Component 1: A portfolio of work to include a sustained project, the theme and direction of which is chosen by the candidate (Weighting to 60% of total GCSE marks).



Component 2: An externally set assignment from AQA, chosen from a set of seven starting points. Candidates will carry out approximately 15 weeks of preparatory work followed by 10 hours of supervised unaided work to realise a final outcome (Weighting to 40% of total GCSE marks).

Examination Board: AQA Textile Design 4204.

Food Preparation & Nutrition



In GCSE Food you will expand your theory knowledge by studying nutrition, processes, dietary needs and food provenance, as some examples. You will build on the practical skills you already have and learn new ones, including making pasta and puff pastry, filleting fish and portioning chickens. Through cooking you will also develop your presentation skills by applying techniques to improve the appearance of food. An annual trip to Borough Market is a fantastic opportunity to explore a bustling food market by seeing what local and seasonal produce is on offer.

Food Preparation and Nutrition:
50% of GCSE 1hr 30 minute written paper.

Food Investigation Task:
15% of GCSE non-examined assessment (NEA).

Food Preparation Task:
35% of GCSE non-examined assessment (NEA).

Examination Board: OCR J309.

Geography

You will study Human and Physical Geography as part of the GCSE course. Specific human topics include examining different levels of global development, how this affects people's standards of living and how trade and investment by large companies can affect development. Physical topics involve developing an understanding of how the world changes through natural processes, how these changes affect our lives and how we can, in turn, impact the planet. In particular, we study coastal processes to examine the impacts of flooding and erosion on people as well as weather hazards, such as the potential impacts of tropical storms.

It is a subject that rewards those who have the ability to reason and think. In content it covers many areas that are directly applicable to 'real life', hence maintaining and broadening your interest in the world around you. It is a modern GCSE course that studies contemporary geographical issues that affect the world today, such as immigration and climate change.

Unit 1: The Physical Environment (37.5%).

Unit 2: The Human Environment (37.5%).

Unit 3: Geographical Investigations (including fieldwork) (25%).

Examination Board: Edexcel 1GAO.



History

A genuine interest in History and reading is essential. The GCSE course will introduce you to some of the key events and personalities that have shaped important developments in British, European and World History. In addition, you will develop skills such as the ability to construct arguments and your written skills will be enhanced in terms of learning to write more concisely and fluently. This makes it highly suited to a wide range of career paths including Law and Journalism. Students are encouraged to debate the issues raised, research around the subjects taught and prepare presentations to enhance learning. Communication skills are vital for success in the world today and the study of History provides a route to acquiring them. Extra sessions and lectures will be available and in recent years, students have been offered trips to the Somme (Warfare Through Time) and Berlin (Cold War).

Units 1, 2 & 3 are assessed by three written exams. There is no coursework.

Paper 1: Thematic study and historic environment. Warfare and British Society 1250 to the present and London and the Second World War 1939-1945.

Written examination: 1 hour and 15 minutes (30% of the qualification).

Paper 2: Period study and British depth study. Superpower relations in the Cold War 1941-1991 and a study of Elizabeth England from 1558-1588.

Written examination: 1 hour and 45 minutes (40% of the qualification).

Paper 3: Modern depth study. Russia and the Soviet Union, 1917-1941.

Written examination: 1 hour and 20 minutes (30% of the qualification).

Examination Board: Edexcel 1H10.

Latin

In the GCSE Latin course, you will study language and literature; exploring Roman civilisation through visual and literary sources is also available as an option. In the language component, you develop your skills in translation, comprehension, analysing grammar and prose composition. The literature element enables you to read extracts from a range of verse and prose authors; you will explore Roman ideas in the original language and develop your essay-writing skills, including justifying your opinions and making comparisons. Through the texts, you learn about Roman values, society and culture, as well as considering the impact of literature on its intended audience.

Students can gain the national Language Leaders Award in Latin. Extra support sessions are available and, when feasible, students have been offered trips to the theatre, national museums and Oxford University, as well as to Pompeii and the Bay of Naples or Rome.

Component 1: Latin Language (50%): An unseen passage of Latin divided into four sections (two comprehensions and two translations) of increasing difficulty. You can then choose between answering grammar questions on an unseen passage or writing three very short Latin sentences.



Component 2: Latin Literature and Sources (30%) Extracts of Latin literature, both prose and verse, on a theme, together with ancient archaeological source materials on the same theme. Open-book assessment, with a mix of comprehension, style and mini-essay questions.

Component 3: Latin Literature or Roman Civilisation (20%). Either: prose or verse literature forming a sustained narrative, with extra passages read in English. Open-book assessment, with a mix of comprehension, style and essay questions; Or: a range of ancient sources on a Roman cultural topic, with a mix of short, factual questions, mini-essays and explanatory questions.

Examination Board: EDUQAS C990PB

Mathematics

As a core subject, we see great Maths skills as being fundamental to your academic profile. We support, challenge and stretch all students enabling you to become confident mathematicians with a love of the subject. We also allow you the opportunity to study Further Mathematics GCSE if you show considerable potential in the subject.

Paper 1: carries 50% of the total mark.

Paper 2: carries 50% of the total mark.

Each examination paper lasts for 2 hours.

At both Higher and Foundation tiers, candidates will be expected to be able to use and apply Mathematics both with and without calculators.

Examination Board: Edexcel IGCSE 4MA1.

Modern Foreign Languages

Languages are an important asset in today's world and we pride ourselves on offering three popular Modern Foreign Languages: AQA GCSE in French and Spanish and the Cambridge IGCSE in German. You have the opportunity to study two languages at GCSE if you would like and, if you speak another language at home, we will endeavour to support you in further study of this language. As well as developing excellent language skills, our Key Stage 4 courses give you a fascinating insight into different cultures as well as important life skills for a global employment market.



FRENCH, SPANISH

Examination Board: AQA

The GCSE examination has four assessment components, which correspond to the four skills involved in language learning:

Exam structure:

Listening: 25%.
Reading: 25%.
Speaking: 25%.
Writing: 25%.

Each component will be examined at the end of the course. In French and Spanish, students study all of the following themes on which the assessments are based. Theme 1: Identity and culture; theme 2: Local, national, international and global areas of interest; theme 3: Current and future study and employment.

GERMAN

Examination Board: CAMBRIDGE

The IGCSE examination has four assessment components, which correspond to the four skills involved in language learning:

Exam structure:

Listening: 25%.
Reading: 25%.
Speaking: 25%.
Writing: 25%.

All four skills will be assessed in the final end of course examinations. The five topic areas for study are: Everyday Activities, Personal and Social Life, The World Around Us, The World of Work and The International World.



Music

Music GCSE is an opportunity for you to develop your skills in performing, composing, analysing and appraising music. The course is enjoyable and both challenges and stimulates your musical abilities. You will be supported to perform regularly at school and beyond: individually, in small group settings and in the Orchestra, if possible.

There are three components:

Listening: 40% Listening-based written paper set by the board.

Performing: 30% Supervised Controlled Assessment.

Composing: 30% Supervised Controlled Assessment.

We welcome students who have reached around Grade 3 standard in Year 9, as this will mean they are ready for starting the performing element of the course.



During the course we expect you to develop your performing skills to approximately Grade 5 standard by the beginning of Year 11. Students should continue with individual instrumental or singing lessons, in order to fulfil the performing requirements of the course. To develop the necessary ensemble skills, participation in ensemble and group sessions is also necessary.

Examination Board: Edexcel 1MU0.

Physical Education

The GCSE in Physical Education is the opportunity for you to develop your practical skills alongside your theoretical knowledge of human anatomy, biomechanics, sociocultural influences, and sports psychology. We recommend that you regularly participate in a range of sports outside of the curriculum, for school or club to compliment the practical lessons. Overall, the PE GCSE is a varied and interesting course with far reaching applications beyond GCSE.

Practical: 40% - assessment in three sports and a written Analysis and Evaluation of Performance.

Examinations - 60% broken down as:

Paper 1: 30%, 1 hour and 15 minutes - The Human Body and Movement in Physical Education.



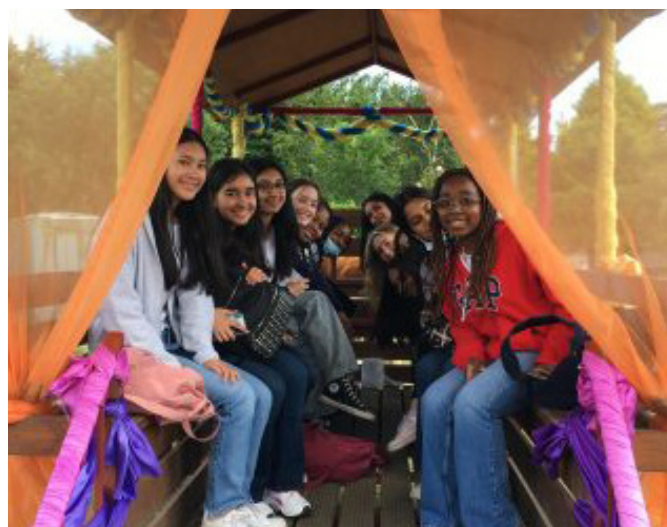
Paper 2: 30%, 1 hour and 15 minutes - Sociocultural Influences and Wellbeing in Physical Activity and Sport.

Examination Board: AQA 8582.

Religious Studies

In Religious Studies GCSE, you will study Hinduism and Christianity as well as a range of philosophical and ethical themes that link these important world religions. Our aim is always to educate, and not to indoctrinate. We are proud to welcome students from a wide variety of religious backgrounds as well as those who are Atheist, Humanist or may have no clearly formulated beliefs. We respect the right of all students to maintain and develop their own beliefs and values, as we value the diversity of faiths and philosophies of our students striving to nurture an ethos of dialogue, understanding, and critical thinking.

Component One (Year 10): The Study of Religions (50% of GCSE) Hinduism and Christianity.



Component Two (Year 11): Thematic Studies (50% of GCSE) - Four of the following six topics will be studied; (A) Relationships and Families, (B) Religion and Life, (C) The existence of God and Revelation, (D) Religion, Peace and Conflict, (E) Religion, Crime and Punishment, (F) Religion, Human Rights and Social Justice.

Examination Board: AQA 8062LA.

Sciences Biology, Chemistry & Physics

Leading to three GCSEs in Biology, Chemistry and Physics, or GCSE Combined Science (Trilogy 8464), leading to two GCSEs across the three Sciences.

As core subjects in our curriculum, you will find the Sciences relevant, challenging and exciting. You may choose to study the Sciences as separate GCSEs or as a Dual Science award called Trilogy. Whether you choose separate Sciences or the Dual Science award you will always be taught in separate Sciences by specialist teachers.



In separate Sciences, students will sit 6 written papers, 2 for each subject, each of which will be 1 hour 45 minutes long, consisting of multiple choice, structured, closed short answer and open response questions. In the Trilogy course there are 6 papers: 2 Biology, 2 Chemistry and 2 Physics. Each of the papers will assess knowledge and understanding from distinct topic areas.

Examination Board: AQA 8461 Biology, 8462 Chemistry, 8463 Physics, 8464 Trilogy.

Student Case Studies

Hi, my name is Ella, and I am currently in Year 11 studying 10 GCSE subjects. These include: Separate Sciences, Geography, PE, Art and French.

I feel that choosing your GCSE subjects is the real first step along your future academic pathway. When this decision first comes up, you may immediately be excited to drop the subjects you dislike and to continue learning the ones you find interesting. But in reality, everyone is also slightly confused and anxious, whether they decide to show it or not.

Some of you may know exactly what you want to do, but others may not have a clue, both are completely normal. Personally, when I came to choose subjects, I struggled at first and felt that most of my friends had a clear view on the subjects they were really passionate about, some even thinking further into the future. This worried me because I felt behind, disorganised and scared to make the wrong decisions. But after speaking to different teachers and some older girls about my worries, I realised that this feeling is very common and extremely normal.

I have learnt that although it may seem daunting, choosing your subjects is actually an exciting process, giving you the first feel of freedom within your learning.

My recommendation is to not worry about what people around you are doing and choose subjects which excite, fascinate and intrigue you. Listen to your teachers and have an open mind, as they will have excellent knowledge of the course content and will be there to advise you.

Don't be afraid to ask a teacher for a quick talk, they will be more than happy to. They want to teach their passion and help you discover yours.

I am currently choosing my A Level subjects, which may seem like an even bigger step into your future. Trust me, I feel like that too, but I am very confident that I will make choices that I will love and work hard towards, with the help of the school and teachers. I have already attended a Sixth Form information evening with my parents and plan to have a consultation evening with two selected teachers to have a discussion about my own interests, desires and future. This has already built my confidence and given me the security I need to feel good about my future.

They have introduced me to life at Sixth Form, not only the subjects available but the vast range of other opportunities that are given such as, EPQs, MOOCs or Electives. This has left me excited for the next two years that are to come.

My main point is to not feel as though the choices that you make now are set in stone forever, because they are not; your future can change, evolve and switch entirely if you make it so. Don't ever feel like a wrong decision now will determine your entire future, because it won't; not all wrong decisions are 'bad'; they can allow you to discover your many interests.

So don't worry if you haven't got your whole future planned out. Just take small steps, ask for guidance and do what you enjoy.



Student Case Studies

Hi, my name is Esther. For my GCSEs I chose to study: **Triple Science**, History, Theology & Philosophy, Drama and Spanish. All these subjects have been my most favoured subjects since Year 7.

Although my subject choices were 100% my decision, I was able to seek advice and help from my parents and teachers. Having a balance of creative subjects and more academic subjects was very crucial to me, as I hope to be a lawyer or film director/producer or a film solicitor (a mix of both!).

The subjects that I find the most challenging are Chemistry and Physics. Although I get relatively good grades in these two subjects, I must do a lot of revision and work extra hard in these lessons.

However, my teachers are very good at supporting me in class and after class if I request extra help.

I chose History and Theology & Philosophy in particular because topics such as humanity, morals, law, and economy really interest me. To support my interests, I take PPE (People, Politics and Ethics) as an Enrichment lesson, which is taught by Mrs Eldridge. Within our PPE lessons we discuss current affairs. I'm very grateful that the school complements our interests as we receive a wider range of lessons expanding beyond our normal GCSE curriculum.



Hello, my name is Janice and for my GCSE options I chose Triple Science, Geography, TP, Music and French for my Modern Foreign Language, alongside the core subjects. In Year 11, I also decided to take Further Maths.

For me, I already had a rough idea of my GCSE subjects as I really enjoy French, want to pursue a career in **dentistry** and play musical instruments, but the advice from teachers and students I was given really helped me to be 100% sure. Leading up to picking my GCSEs, there was a lot of information and support, including the GCSE information evening where I could talk to the teachers to know what the course entails, preparing me for challenges I would face. A piece of advice that really stuck with me was pick subjects that you enjoy, as it really helped with motivation when the workload became bigger.

When the first lockdown started, I was in Year 9 and had just picked my subjects; obviously I had worries about cancellations of GCSEs and keeping on track with the content through online learning without the normal facilities. However, the school did their absolute best with still providing support and attention to

everyone, so now in Year 11, I feel confident about going into GCSEs.

Overall, the school has the students' best interests at heart, and understands the reality of exam pressures. We are not only supported throughout our subjects, but we learn crucial revision techniques as well, and future skills for A Levels and university. Currently, I am deciding my A Level subjects and to discuss my options, I attended the information evening and the personal consultation session which has really helped me gain a better understanding of the subjects, but also the range of opportunities such as an EPQ, Electives and MOOCs. The website Unifrog that the school recommends during a specialised Year 11 assembly has allowed me to research potential universities and find experiences that will help me stand out from other candidates.

To conclude, I am extremely grateful for the encouraging nature of the school to pursue your dream career and the facilities they provide to achieve that.



Hi, my name is Hattie and for my GCSEs I chose Geography, Drama, PE and French for my Modern Foreign Language, along with Triple Science. When I was in the process of choosing these, my teachers gave me a lot of guidance and advice. This helped me to pick subjects that I enjoy and will do best at. School has always been there for me, which has helped a lot and I know that I can rely on my teachers to give me lots of support throughout my GCSE journey.

For me it has been important to balance my academics, sport, and social life but I feel as though it is working really well. I am enjoying having all the options for extracurricular clubs; they have allowed me to have a break, so that when I go back to lessons, I am more focused.

I enjoy my lessons and my chosen subjects are proving to be very fun and interesting. Not only this but I have got to know and become friends with a lot more people in my year which is really nice.

I have great teachers who provide me with the revision tools I need to do well. The school constantly shows how much they care about their students; the teachers provide support and help whenever needed and guide us to make the best decisions we can.



Hi, my name is Simran and I am in Year 11. For my GCSE subjects, I chose to continue with Triple Science, History, Theology and Philosophy, **Drama** and Spanish as my Modern Foreign Language.

Before selecting my subjects, we had much help offered to us which was very reassuring, as despite it being a very tough decision to make, there were always people available to provide guidance. In particular, the GCSE options evening we had was very useful as I was given a lot of advice from my teachers, which eventually helped me choose the right options for me. I was helped to pick subjects that I would not only do well in but also enjoy learning which made the whole process seem less intimidating.

By having the guidance of the staff as well as listening to the speeches of those older than me who had already gone through the process, I was reminded that the school was there to support me with things such as exam stress and pressure so that I could do well when it came to doing tests. Hearing the experiences of others was valuable as I could see that GCSEs were manageable with a good work balance and that it wasn't as demanding as I had previously thought.

Throughout my GCSE years I have gained much help throughout in extra revision sessions.

By spending time going over topics from class, this has allowed me to have a better understanding and therefore get better results. On top of this, termly tutorials have also been great for support as, by setting goals for subjects, I constantly have targets and aims to reach towards. The revision guides given to us by Miss Kneen have also been great help to me personally in finding the best techniques to use before exams for my different subjects.

At the moment, I am in the process of choosing A Level options which, despite being a large step up, has become more manageable with the large amounts of support given to us by the school. The Sixth Form assemblies presented to us have really shown in more detail what each subject entails, making me more open to subjects I wouldn't have initially considered before. Recently, having attended the Sixth Form information evening, any worries and concerns I had about my choices were settled, and more ideas, such as considering doing an EPQ, were given to me. The school's programmes alongside the willingness of all the staff to have extra individual conversations for more information and guidance have really helped me envision a clear path to achieve my goals.



Student Case Studies

My name is Alessia and for my GCSE options I chose French, Theology and Philosophy, Geography and **Food Technology**, as well as continuing with Triple Science. Also, I have decided that I will do the Further Maths examination.

Initially I was quite unsure what subjects to consider taking, however I knew that I wanted to do a creative subject. Throughout the process of making my choices, the teachers guided me through it, helping me choose subjects I would enjoy and what was right for me. On top of this, tutorials with my Form Tutor helped me rid of any uncertainty, with one-to-one conversations discussing potential options that would give me the correct balance of free time and work.

Throughout my GCSE years, I have received extra support from subject clinics. This is something I have really appreciated, including the recapping of certain things we were unsure on and needed revisiting. It helped me to keep on top of my revision throughout the year, retouching on what we had previously learnt. It also helped me to understand different ways to revise by doing past papers or active recall, supporting me with revision.

The school has given me lots of support throughout my decisions, and continues to do so with my A Level options. I really value the guidance that the teachers have provided me through challenges in my GCSE studies.



Hi, my name is Sahitya and for my GCSE options I chose Triple Science, Geography, **Latin** and German. In addition, I am considering doing Further Maths. I am two months and twelve days into Year 10, meaning that I am also two months and twelve days into stressing about tests, wondering what to write on my university application and worrying about my final GCSE results. But let's go all the way back to the beginning and talk about choosing which subjects to do.

The first step for me was choosing whether I wanted to do 10, or maybe 11 GCSEs, or if I wanted to do 9 and have private study instead. Of course, that was an obvious choice and I went for private study (mostly because I wanted to spend more time on enriching the subjects I picked and so I can work on my time management skills). Now comes the actual choosing of subjects. I chose Triple Science in order to expand my knowledge in Science as that is the subject I am most passionate about. I hope to follow a career in Medicine. Choosing a Modern Foreign Language was also a simple choice because I knew I only wanted to do one language, but then Latin came along and, well, we all know how that went.

The final choice was between the Humanities and, for me, that was the most difficult to answer. I was extremely passionate about all three (History, Geography and TP), so I first talked to my parents, weighed pros and cons before narrowing my choice to History and Geography. Then I talked to my Humanities teachers, as well as my Head of Year, in order to get a better insight as to how I am doing in each subject and how this subject may help me achieve my goals for my future. From there, I had the final say. Even after submitting them I was slightly insecure with my choices, but after discussions with Miss Kneen and Mr Earp, we worked out the best route to take.

Naturally, there are moments where I really regret not picking subjects such as History or Computing, but just knowing that I had, and will continue having, so much support from my teachers gave me confidence to follow through with my plans. As long as your choices are something you are passionate about and don't let anyone negatively influence your decision, everything will work out just fine. Good luck!





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Nov 2021