



# GCSE Years Guide



NORTHAMPTON  
HIGH SCHOOL

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GDST

# Welcome to the GCSE Years Guide

Although Lower Fifth 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 of 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 extra-curricular opportunities on offer.

This guide will, I hope, also help you to appreciate the range of support and guidance that is on offer at 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 and tutorials and PSHEE 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 that exciting road.

**Mrs Adèle O'Doherty**  
Deputy Head Pastoral Care and Guidance



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# Choosing your GCSEs

Our tutors and subject teachers have many years of experience in 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 careers at this stage. Many people change their minds several times along the way. Your time in school, especially in Lower Fifth 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 careers choices? The compulsory core helps you to do this. For example, sciences and languages have become increasingly important as their popularity has declined across the country. A broad-based education is increasingly 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*

# What will my timetable look like?

## Which GCSE subjects are compulsory?

All students will study English, English Literature, Mathematics and the three Sciences of 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.

## 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 in 4 periods per week, except English Language and Literature, which are in 6 periods per week and the Dual Science award, which is taught over 9 periods in the week.

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. If you choose Separate Sciences, you may choose two or three subjects from the list.

# Option Choices

Art, Craft & Design	History
Computer Science	Latin
Drama	Music
Fashion & Textiles	Physical Education
Food Preparation & Nutrition	Religion, Philosophy & Ethics
Geography	

## 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 Headmistress.

# Options Timeline

GCSE Information meeting:	Tuesday 15 January 2019	6.00 -7.00pm
U4 Parents' Evening:	Thursday 24 January 2019	5.00 -7.00pm
Options Choices made online:	Thursday 24 January 2019 – Thursday 31 January 2019	

# 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 Me 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 lives. In effect, by actively managing your digital footprints 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 '360° Me ePortfolio' 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.

As a starting point and to ensure the sites are as impactful as possible, you are asked to build only 3 sections into the sites. The landing or home page, which is designed to make an immediate impact and is usually made up of pictures or a single theme that relates to the owner. Secondly, a biography in the form of the '360° Me' page, explaining who you are, where you have come from and what you aim to achieve in life. Finally a section with subpages to illustrate and evidence your academic and extracurricular activities.



# 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 enrichment, 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.



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 become part of the Big Sister, Little Sister programme as a mentor to Year 6 to help them through the transition to high school. You could even volunteer to help organise and run the annual Christmas Variety Show for our local Age UK day centre.

You could, of course, also join the Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme, starting with the Bronze award in Lower Fifth 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.



## Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme

During Lower Fifth, you will be invited to join the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme.

This is a venture which can be undertaken at three levels – Bronze, Silver and Gold – with starting ages of 14, 15 and 16 respectively, up to a maximum age of 24. At each level, the demands become greater; as the duration of each section increases, so too does the commitment needed to complete them. We therefore start pupils in Lower Fifth at Bronze level and progress upwards, rather than entering directly at Silver or Gold level. Accordingly, nearly everybody in the year group participates in the Bronze Award as it is the most accessible award. Each award is achieved by completing a personal programme of activities in sections: Volunteering, Physical, Skill and Expedition. You will find yourself helping in the community, getting fitter, developing new skills and talents and, of course, going on an expedition.



We hope that participation in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme enriches your life, encouraging you to give something back to the wider community, learn or hone a new skill, maintain physical health and of course undertake the challenge of the expedition weekend. The Duke of Edinburgh's Award is to be recommended!

## National Citizen Service

National Citizen Service (NCS) is a once in a lifetime part-residential experience open to all 15 to 17 year olds across England and Northern Ireland. The programme helps young people build skills for work and life while taking on exciting challenges, making new friends and contributing to their community. The experience consists of several stages and lasts for 3-4 weeks: Adventure, Skills, Social Action, followed by graduation from the programme.



### 1. Phase 1: Adventure

The first week is spent at an outdoor activity centre participating in team building activities such as abseiling, water rafting and canoeing, with between 12-15 other young people in each group.

### 2. Phase 2: Skills

In the second week, participants live away from home, typically at local university halls of residence, learning how to be self-sufficient, developing new skills in confidence, leadership and communication to boost their CV or UCAS personal statement, and finding out more about the needs of their local community.

### 3. Phase 3: Social Action

Based back at home, participants then continue to work in their teams to give something back to their community through the development and delivery of a social action project.

NCS runs outside term time and is delivered by a network of quality-assured youth and community organisations. Participants pay a maximum of £50 for a place. Bursaries are available for those unable to meet the cost and support is provided for students with additional needs. The sign-up process includes choosing preferred dates, usually across the School holidays.

You will receive information on how to join NCS during Lower Fifth.

### Reading Mentors

Each year at the end of the spring term, you will be asked to volunteer to become reading mentors for students who would like to develop their literacy and confidence in reading in Year 6 and Upper Third. After an initial meeting, you will have weekly sessions, and can read aloud, help with choosing books and discuss vocabulary and choice of language. Lower Fifth and Upper Fifth students are invaluable in assisting Upper Third to make progress through the Bronze Reading scheme, and of course, can help their partner plan for book week events.

### Big Bear, Little Bear

At the start of Upper Fifth you will be asked to join the Big Bear, Little Bear programme, where, after the application process and undergoing safeguarding and coaching training, you are partnered with a Year 5 Junior School student and meet throughout the year, Christmas party and Easter party. The aim of the scheme is to develop the confidence of our Junior School students as they progress through the year, and help to prepare them for the transition to Senior School. In turn, you will develop mentoring skills and leadership qualities as well as having the satisfaction of giving something back to the community.



### Age UK Annual Christmas Variety Show

In the first term of Upper Fifth, you are invited to volunteer to plan, organise, rehearse and perform a Christmas Variety Show at the William and Patricia Venton Age UK Day Centre in December. The Venton Centre offers daily care for those in Northampton and across the county, allowing people to socialise, have a cup of tea and a bite to eat. Our annual Christmas show is part of the voluntary entertainment programme run at the centre, and might be the only 'Christmas' social opportunity that some visitors have. You decide, based on your own talents, what sort of show you would like to create: music, carols, monologues, poetry, drama and dance have been previous components. Rehearsals take place in the autumn term before a final performance, after which we serve mince pies, coffee and tea to residents and enjoy a chance to chat. You will develop a sense of leadership and social responsibility from this opportunity, and, of course, a feeling of serving the wider community.



### Language Leaders Award

You will be given the opportunity to join the Language Leaders scheme during your GCSE years, covering French, German, Latin and Spanish. This involves running events for your own year groups and for younger students, inviting guest speakers to the school, organising entry to competitions, running language clubs and even giving assemblies. On completion of the scheme, you are given your Language Leaders award to recognise the significant contribution you have made to the Languages faculty and the school.

### Café Scientifique

Café Scientifique is a programme of lectures, visiting speakers, trips and enrichment clubs, organised and led by students in Lower Fifth both for yourselves and for other year groups in the school. 'Café Sci' as it is more commonly known offers a fantastic opportunity to develop leadership, team work and responsibility, including marketing, advertising and considering health and safety and catering requirements for events. Activities have included workshops, (such as the Lush event for Upper Third, making bath bombs) trips to Bletchley Park and talks by researchers and lecturers from leading UK universities and businesses.



# Sport

### Sport in the curriculum

In both years of the GCSE course you will take part in a games afternoon. This is designed to help you de-stress and enjoy the company of your friends, while improving your fitness and developing your sports skills.

In Lower Fifth you will be assessed in hockey or netball and squad players will use this time as a training session. Other options will be available such as fitness, aerobics, high intensity training, spin, football, tag rugby, swimming, and water polo. In the summer term students take part in tennis, athletics, cricket and rounders.

In Upper Fifth you will get the option to choose two activities to take part in each week for 50 minutes each. The options change but examples are fitness, hockey, netball, swimming, aquafit, water polo, trampolining, gymnastics, basketball, dodgeball, badminton, squash, lacrosse, football, tag rugby, running, triathlon, dance, spin, aerobics, boxercise, yoga and pilates. Again in the summer term we also offer tennis, cricket, rounders and athletics.

### Extracurricular sport

Outside of lessons there are a huge number of extracurricular sports activities. These run before school, at lunchtime and after school. Before school we offer clubs such as spin, indoor hockey, swimming, badminton and 'girls with balls'. At lunchtime there is water polo and the opportunity to use the fitness suite. After school there is a wide variety of sessions such as: hockey, netball, tennis (depending on the term), gymnastics, badminton, cross-country and the gym and fitness suite is open every day after school until 5pm. Alongside this, we run a large fixture programme with teams in a huge variety of sports.



# 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 to develop employability skills. This includes CV writing, positive and professional online profiles, interview techniques and cover application writing. This is consolidated during Enterprise Week towards the end of the Summer Term. For Lower Fifth, 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.

The programme harnesses the power of our network – the GDST and friends and associates of the school, including parents and members of the Chamber of Commerce, and employers and representatives of Further and Higher Education. Speakers and workshops include Nick Cave from the admissions team at the University of Leicester, Liz Male from Liz Male Consulting (a PR company specialising in construction), Sykes and Co and Lisa Carter, an occupational psychologist.

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.

In school there will be opportunities to attend STEM Careers Speed Networking events and aspiring medics can join MedSoc and engineers can get hands-on project experience at EngSoc meetings and support with applications for prestigious Arkwright Scholarships.

## Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education

The Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHEE) lessons are delivered through the Radically Enhanced Curriculum (REC) periods. 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 PSHEE 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.

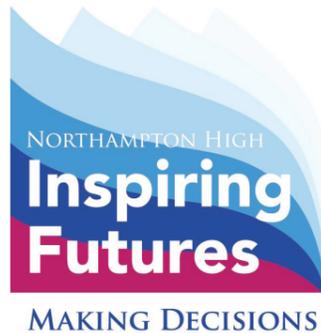
The PSHEE Programme ensures you all receive appropriate support and key knowledge that is targeted to your specific age group. We explore Mindfulness, Relaxation and Positive Mindset in addition to citizenship topics and age-appropriate health topics.

## On Track

On Track is our mentoring programme for Lower and Upper Fifth students which aims 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, linked to an expert organisation, Elevate Education. The Elevate programme develops excellent exam skills, using past papers and scientific approaches to revision, with the style mirrored in lessons by teachers.

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. We use the GROW coaching model, which encourages a cycle of reflective development. If you are interested in how this works, this case study may be of interest: <https://www.nationalcollege.org.uk/cm-mcadv-cs-secondary.pdf>



# Art, Craft and Design

## Course Outline

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.

## Assessment Outline

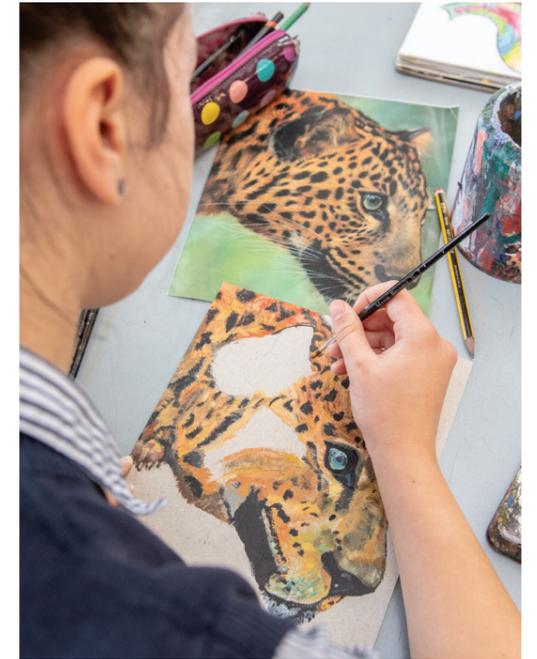
### Coursework Component One = 60%

Pupils are expected to produce an extensive portfolio of coursework.

### Externally Set Assignment 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 2 days at the end of this time.

Examination Board: Edexcel 1AD0



# Computer Science

## Course Outline

In GCSE Computer Science you will learn to code in either C# or Python, developing your skills so you are ready for a project at the start of Upper Fifth. 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.

## Assessment Outline

### Unit 1: Computer systems (40%)

- Written exam paper (1 hour and 30 minutes)

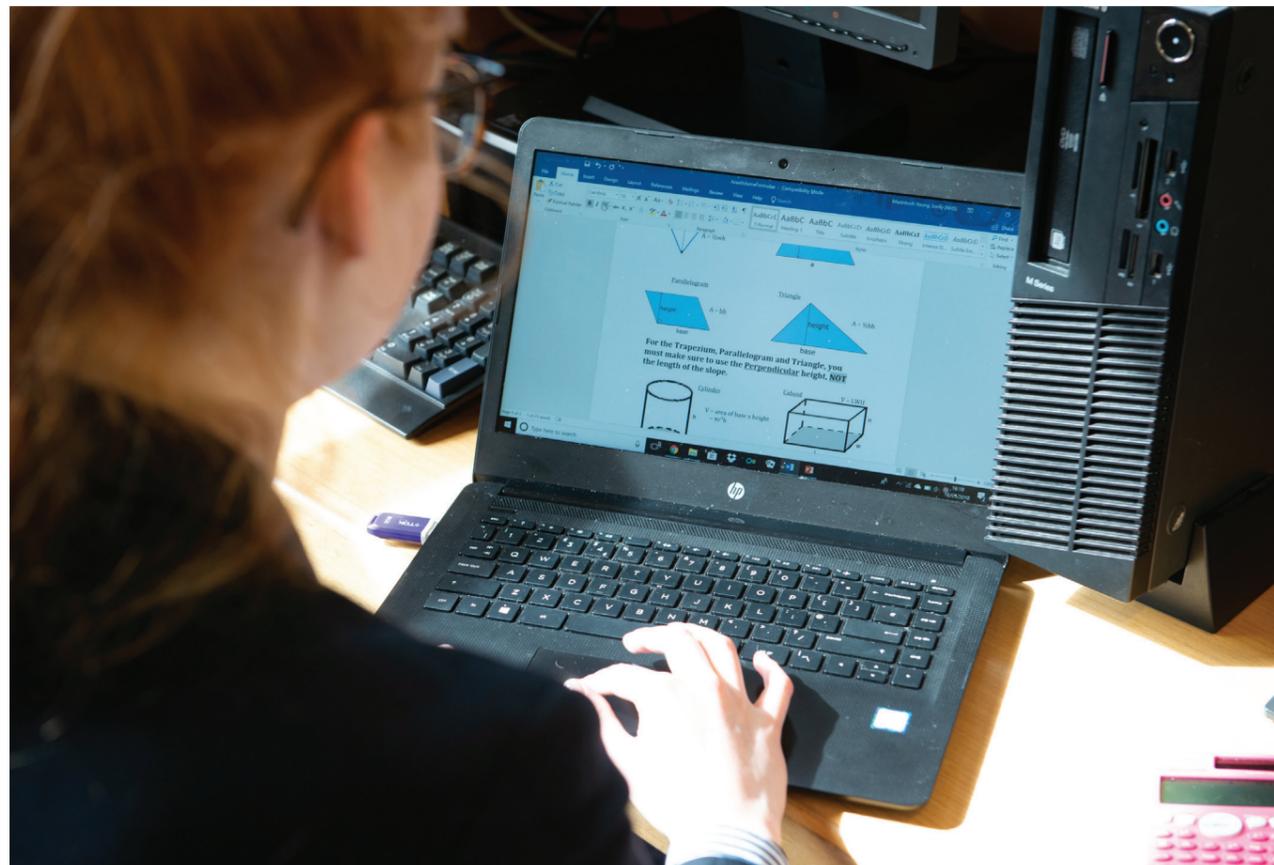
### Unit 2: Computational thinking, algorithms and programming (40%)

- Written exam paper (1 hour and 30 minutes)

### Unit 3: Programming project (20%)

- Non-Exam Assessment (NEA)

Examination Board: OCR J276



# Drama

## Course Outline

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.

## Assessment Outline

### Component 1: Devising

Coursework 40% of the qualification – 60 marks

Internally assessed and externally moderated.

### Component 2: Performance from Text

Coursework 20% of the qualification

Externally assessed by a visiting examiner.

### Component 3: Theatre Makers in Practice

Written examination: 1 hour 30 minutes – 40% of the qualification.

Examination Board: Edexcel 1DRO



# English Language & Literature

## Course Outline

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.

## Assessment Outline

### Language- Edexcel 4AE1

**Component 1:** Non-fiction texts and transactional writing (examination, 60% of IGCSE)

**Component 2:** Poetry and prose texts and imaginative writing (coursework, 40% of IGCSE)

### Literature – OCR J352

**Unit 1:** Exploring modern and literary heritage texts (examination, 50% of GCSE)

**Unit 2:** Exploring poetry and Shakespeare (examination, 50% of GCSE)



# Fashion & Textiles

## Course Outline

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.

## Assessment Outline

Two components which are both assessed in school and moderated by the exam board.

**Areas of study:** Fashion design and illustration, costume design, constructed textiles, surface pattern, digital textiles, embellished textiles, art textiles, printed and dyed textiles and textiles for interiors.

**Component 1:** A portfolio of work to include a sustained project the theme and direction of which is chosen by the candidate.

Weighting: 60% of total GCSE marks.

**Component 2:** An externally set assignment from AQA. Chosen from a set of 7 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: 40% of total GCSE marks

**Examination Board: AQA Textile Design 4204**



# Food Preparation & Nutrition

## Course Outline

In GCSE Food you will look at nutrition, including processes and productions, dietary needs and food provenance. You will cook, of course, and build skills in making homemade pasta, filleting fish, portioning chicken, chopping, making bread and making pastry. Through cooking, you will also learn and develop your presentation skills by applying techniques to improve the appearance of food. An annual trip to the BBC Good Food Show allows the opportunity to explore new ingredients and products and see recipe demonstrations from some of the most popular chefs in the UK.

## Assessment Outline

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

## Course Outline

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.

## Assessment Outline

Three examination papers:

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

## Course Outline

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 during REC periods and girls will be offered trips to the Somme in 2019 (Warfare Through Time) and Berlin 2020 (Cold War).

## Assessment Outline

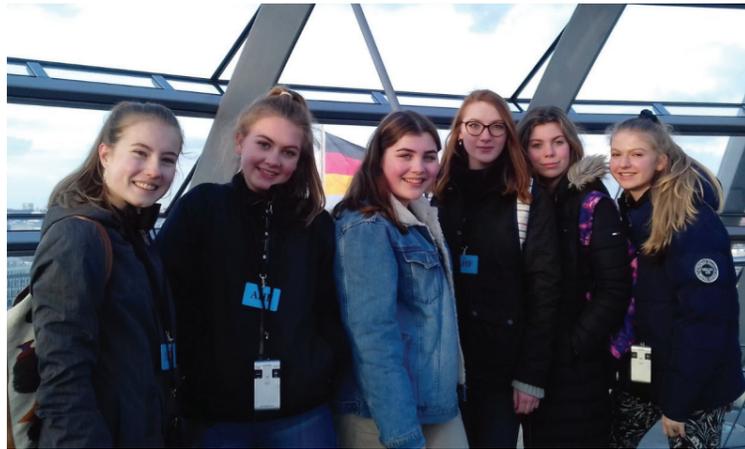
Units 1, 2 & 3 are assessed by three written exams. There is no coursework.

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 1941-91 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, 1917-41. Written examination: 1 hour and 20 minutes (30% of the qualification)

Examination Board: Edexcel 1H10



# Latin

## Course Outline

The Latin GCSE course is structured around language and literature. The language focus develops your linguistic skills of translation and comprehension, whilst the literature element enables you to read a range of verse and prose authors in the original language, appreciating both the content and style of the passages. You will develop your vocabulary (and have increased knowledge of cognates and derivatives in English and some of the Romance languages) as well as encountering and mastering a range of accidence and syntax. You will, naturally, research the context of the set texts, learning about Roman values, history and politics, and will learn to carefully evaluate the impact of literature on its intended audience. In addition, extra support sessions are offered during the REC period, and we are usually able to offer a number of trips, such as to Oxford University (L5) or to Rome (2019) or Pompeii (2021). Students can also gain the national Language Leaders Award in Latin.

## Assessment Outline

1 Language paper, worth 50% of the total GCSE.

2 Literature papers, worth 25% of the total GCSE each.

There is no coursework.

### Unit J282/01: Latin Language 1 (1 hour)

An unseen passage of Latin divided into three sections; the first two sections are examined by comprehension questions but the third section involves translation. This paper is worth 50% of the total.

### Unit J282/02 or 03: Latin Prose Literature (1 hour)

Questions are set on a prescribed prose text, involving comment on context, background and literary content. This paper is worth 25% of the total.

### Unit J282/04 or 05: Latin Verse Literature (1 hour)

Questions are set on a prescribed verse text, involving comment on context, background and literary content. This paper is worth 25% of the total.

Examination Board: OCR J282



# Mathematics

## Course Outline

As a core subject we see great Maths skills as being a fundamental part of 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 potential in the subject.

## Assessment Outline

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 2 languages at GCSE if you want 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**

### Course and Assessment Outline

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

Exam structure:

Listening:	25%
Speaking:	25%
Reading:	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**

### Course and Assessment Outline

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

Listening Comprehension	25%
Reading Comprehension	25%
Speaking	25%
Writing	25%

All four skills will be assessed in 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

## Course Outline

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.

## Assessment Outline

There are three components:

<b>Listening</b>	40%	Listening based written paper set by the board
<b>Performing</b>	30%	Supervised Controlled Assessment
<b>Composing</b>	30%	Supervised Controlled Assessment

## Entry Criteria

We welcome students who have reached around Grade 3 standard in Upper Fourth, 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 Upper Fifth. 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

## Course Outline

In GCSE PE you will study a non-examined assessment consisting of three sporting activities and one written analysis. The examined assessment consists of two written papers, the human body and movement in physical activity, and sociocultural influences and wellbeing in physical activity and sport. Of course, beyond this you will build up skills in both team and individual sports.

## Assessment Outline

The course is 60% theory and 40% practical.

Both Unit 1 and Unit 2 are assessed with a separate paper lasting 1 hour and 15 minutes and they are both worth 30% of the total GCSE.

**Examination Board: AQA**



# Religion, Philosophy & Ethics

## Course Outline

In the Religion, Philosophy and Ethics GCSE you will study Hinduism and Christianity as well as a range of philosophical 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.

## Content Outline

### Part One (L5):

The Study of Religions (50% of GCSE) Hinduism and Christianity.

### Part Two (U5):

Thematic Studies (50% of GCSE) - Four of the following six topics will be studied; (1) Relationships and Families, (2) Religion and Life, (3) The existence of God and Revelation, (4) Religion, Peace and Conflict, (5) Religion, Crime and Punishment, (6) Religion, Human Rights and Social Justice.

Examination Board: AQA



# Separate 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.

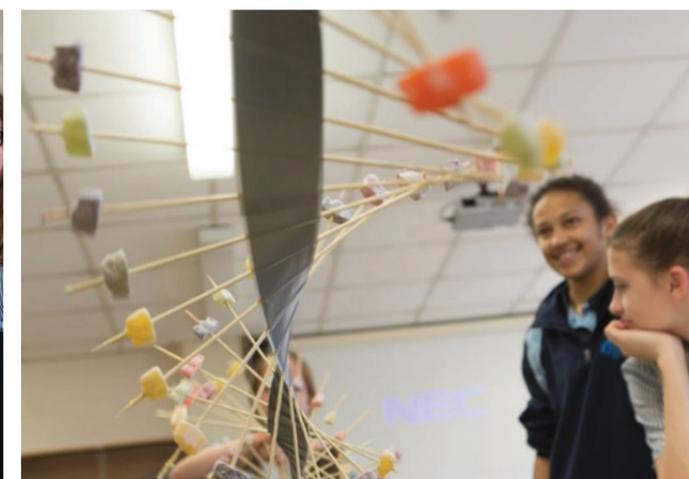
## Course Outline

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.

## Assessment Outline

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



# Case Studies: Lower Fifth



**Katie Ashton**

I started my GCSEs this year and picked to do Maths, English Literature and Language, Triple Science, German, Geography and Art. I really enjoy all my subjects but particularly Geography and Art which I find very interesting and find the lessons and teachers great. All the teachers are supportive and help with anything you need, as well as encouraging you in all subjects.



**Nifé Oluwatayo**

I've had a great time this year learning in Lower Fifth. Currently I am taking Maths, English Language and Literature, Triple Science, Spanish, Religious Studies and Drama. At the beginning I thought moving into Lower Fifth would be a hard and daunting experience but that wasn't the case. The staff are very considerate, and ease us in slowly to the whole process. My favourite subject is Drama because there are many creative components to Drama. There are also nice trips, for example our Drama trip earlier on this year to go and see "The Lovely Bones".



# Case Studies: Upper Fifth



**Daria Alexandre-Sefre**

The GCSEs I am studying are Spanish, History and Latin as well as the compulsory subjects, with French in the core subjects I also study Persian outside of school and I hope to achieve a Persian GCSE by the end of next year. I will also soon be taking my grade four LAMDA and piano exams. In the future I hope to have a career that involves debating, decision making and a job that helps the more vulnerable people in society such as a judge, politician or a worker in United Nations. This year I was elected as the student council prefect, which will give me the opportunity to represent and raise my form's opinions and ideas on how to improve the school. I am also looking forward to hopefully becoming a Language Leader, a Reading Mentor and a "Big Sister" to help the younger members of the school.



**Diya Batra**

Alongside the compulsory GCSEs, I am studying Latin, History and Religious Studies. At school, I am on the badminton team, I'm in the public speaking club and I'm the charity prefect of my form. Outside of school, I take piano and LAMDA lessons and I also play badminton twice a week. Because of this busy schedule, I felt a bit overwhelmed at first as I didn't really know how to manage my time between extra-curriculars, schoolwork and actually having a social life. However, I found that the best way to do that was to be organised from the very start, which seems difficult but, if you're committed, you'll find that it comes easily.



**Shreya Mittal**

As my options, I currently take French, Latin and Geography, with Spanish as a core subject. Although taking two modern languages may seem daunting, I really enjoy learning them as it means that I can learn about different cultures, and also make use of my language skills in the future. Geography is another subject which I feel is really useful in real life as it widens my knowledge about the physical characteristics of the world, and relates this to how it affects us as humans. I truly feel that the teachers at the High School support me with my GCSEs in every way possible - from the mentoring programmes to the extra help sessions for each subject. We are also given opportunities such as the Big Bear Little Bear scheme, and DofE which was a really good experience as it allowed us to demonstrate our leadership and teamwork skills, just like we will need to do in the future.



NORTHAMPTON  
HIGH SCHOOL

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