

WOODBRIDGE
SCHOOL

GCSE OPTIONS 2026

GCSE Options

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This stage of Year 9 is an important and exciting one. The Year 9 curriculum is deliberately broad, ensuring that students access a wide range of complementary and contrasting subjects including humanities, science, languages and creatives. This enables them to develop interests in many directions.

In Year 10 students focus their study more, and typically fifteen subjects become ten. Students identify subjects that they would like to continue further, still keeping a healthy balance of different skills, but allowing more curriculum time and increased depth of learning in each.

All students take English Language, English Literature and Mathematics. Students can then opt to take three sciences (Biology, Chemistry, and Physics) as separate GCSEs plus four other options, or Combined Science plus five other options. Your child's Science teacher will help decide which is the more appropriate pathway. Those already considering the sciences for study in the Sixth Form should ensure that they choose the separate sciences at GCSE.

A broad balance of other choices is important, and students should study a Language (ancient or modern) as well as a humanities subject and a creative or technical subject.

There are many criteria that should inform your child's subject preferences, not limited to

enjoyment, level of ability, and preparation for Sixth Form courses. Please see, for example, the advice regarding science choices.

I hope you will find this booklet useful. Each Head of Department has set out a brief summary of the course, the examination structure and the likely demands on a student. I would stress, however, that the GCSE years should be a time of enjoyment and that the balance between academic work and other interests is crucial.

If you have any questions at all, please do contact the relevant Head of Department or your child's tutor. Additionally, our Careers Advisor, Mrs Stafford (careers@woodbridgeschool.org.uk), is available for more general advice about the world of work and qualifications beyond School.

As a final point, we do try to offer all students' preferred courses where possible. If a certain combination of preferences cannot be offered, or if a course cannot run as hoped, we will endeavour to offer a sound alternative including your child's next preference.



Mr K Hayward-Bradley

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USEFUL INFORMATION

GCSE GRADING SYSTEM

The grading system for GCSE is a grade 9 to 1 system.

Grades 9, 8 and 7 are considered to be very high grades (previously A* and A grades). The top fifth of all those who are graded 7 and above in each subject are awarded a grade 9.

Grades 6, 5 and 4 are pass grades (previously B and C), with grade 5 often known as a "strong pass" grade. At Woodbridge we ask for grade 6 and above to continue a subject through to A level.

Grades 3, 2 and 1, although nominally pass grades, are not generally considered to be pass grades by schools, universities or employers.

GCSE OPTIONS PROCESS

- » **January 2026** – GCSE Options Fair
- » **February 2026** – Deadline for return of options form

USEFUL CONTACTS

Should you have any questions or wish to organise a private tour, contact our Admissions Team via:

Visit: woodbridgeschool.org.uk/admissions

Email: admissions@woodbridgeschool.org.uk

Call: 01394 615041

If you have any questions regarding GCSEs at Woodbridge School, please contact our Admissions Team using the details above or our Deputy Head Academic, Karl Hayward-Bradley, via khayward-bradley@woodbridgeschool.org.uk.



English Language and Literature

(Core Subjects)

Edexcel IGCSE English Language Specification 'A' (4EA1)

Edexcel IGCSE English Literature (4ET1)

COURSE CONTENT

During the two years of your GCSE studies most of you will complete courses in both English Language and English Literature. The Literature course will cover a variety of skills and texts including a twentieth century novel (for example *Of Mice and Men*), a selection of poetry (ranging from Shakespeare's Sonnet 116 to Sujata Bhatt's *Search for My Tongue*), and a modern play as well as one text from our literary heritage. The English Language course will extend your writing skills and teach you how to write for a different range of purposes and audiences.

You must also expect some emphasis on the accuracy of your written English during the two years as this is formally assessed at IGCSE.

Controlled Assessment

There are no controlled assessments for the Edexcel IGCSE qualifications.

English Literature

Paper 1: Poetry and Modern Prose

2 Hours (60% of IGCSE)

A: a response to a previously unseen poem;
B: a response comparing two poems from those published in the Edexcel Anthology;
C: a response to a modern prose text, for example *Of Mice and Men* by John Steinbeck.

Paper 2: Drama and Literary Heritage

1 hour 30 minutes (40% of IGCSE)

A: a response to a modern drama text, for example *A View from the Bridge* by Arthur Miller.
B: a response to a text from our literary heritage, for example (full text) *Romeo and Juliet*.

English Language Specification 'A'

Paper 1: 2 hours 15 minutes (60% of IGCSE)

A: a response to a previously unseen non-fiction extract;
B: a response to one of the extracts included in the non-fiction section of the Edexcel Anthology;
C: transactional writing from a choice of two tasks involving a given audience, form and purpose.

Paper 2: 1 hour 30 minutes (40% of IGCSE)

A: an analytical response based on a piece of literary prose or a poem from the Edexcel Anthology Section 2;
B: a piece of imaginative writing from a choice of three tasks.

HOW WILL I BE TAUGHT?

The study of English is the study of all kinds of ideas and views and how they are expressed in language, so you will spend a lot of your time with different kinds of text, exploring their meanings and their attempts to move or manipulate you. Then you will present your own analysis, your own views, or your own attempts to move or manipulate your audience.

First and foremost you will develop your analytical skills in reading and writing. You will practise how to explore the language of a text, and tease out its possible meanings. Your teacher will show you how to structure an argument, how to build paragraphs out of ideas, and how to integrate and examine evidence - a process you should find exciting and empowering. Your teacher will also encourage you to make your prose as accurate and precise as possible. You will be given time to think for yourself, and it is vital that you take the opportunity to do so. The more independent you become, the more you will enjoy the course and flourish.

You will also have many chances to discuss ideas and issues in pairs and groups in class, whether they arise from a literature or a media text. It is important that you develop your ability to read, write and speak in formal Standard English over the two years. Think about the importance of this skill in future life.

Mrs S Fernley

Head of English

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Mathematics

(Core Subject)

Edexcel International GCSE Mathematics Specification 'A' (4MA1)

COURSE CONTENT

The International GCSE, commonly known as an IGCSE, aims to give students a foundation in mathematical skills and to develop their knowledge and understanding of how to use and apply mathematical techniques and concepts to solve problems. It includes similar content to the standard mathematics GCSE such as number, algebra, probability and shape and space as well as additional advanced topics such as calculus. It also has more depth on functions and set theory. The course provides an excellent mathematical foundation as well as offering a very good introduction to A level Mathematics.

Controlled Assessment

There are no controlled assessments for the Edexcel IGCSE qualifications.

Examination

Students will mostly take the higher tier papers, each of which lasts 2 hours where they can obtain grades from 4-9, some will sit the foundation tier papers (where they can gain grades 1-5). All papers are taken at the end of the course in Year 11.

HOW WILL I BE TAUGHT?

You will be taught using a range of formal and informal methods, through demonstration as well as collaborative work. Successful problem solving depends not only on having the requisite techniques at one's fingertips but also having the courage to try alternative approaches and the determination to see them through. You will be taught to see beyond the single-stage problems that lie at the heart of much of the mathematics covered pre-GCSE, hence the need for both independent and shared endeavour.

At its most sophisticated, the course will show you how many apparently disparate topics are inextricably interconnected as you use your problem-solving skills to tackle multi-stage challenges. Students in the top set will work at a

faster pace than the sets below to allow time in Year 11 to study some extra topics required for the Further Maths GCSE, which will be taken alongside the IGCSE in Year 11.

Opportunities for field work and trips

The department endeavours to explore areas beyond the curriculum wherever possible. In addition, you will have the opportunity to test your prowess in various national mathematics competitions during the year and the School also competes in the national mathematics team challenge. Our mathematicians and computer scientists also have an impressive record in the National Cipher Challenge.

What skills will I develop?

Mathematics is the archetypal problem-solving subject; it hones skills in logical thinking, abstraction, visualisation, structuring, precision, estimation and approximation, tenacity and perseverance. The best mathematics is often described as beautiful or elegant; you will have plenty of opportunities to see why as you construct your own beautiful proofs and solutions.

Where can IGCSE Or GCSE Mathematics lead?

At a practical level, Mathematics GCSE or IGCSE at grade 4 or better is regarded by employers as a key qualification for many jobs, and increasingly tests of Mathematics or logic are included in the interview and selection process. It is also a requirement for most degree courses, is a crucial stepping stone to studying mathematics in the Sixth Form and is fundamental for entry into engineering and computing, most sciences, and much of the world of business, economics, insurance and finance.

Mr M Core

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The Sciences

(Core Subject)

AQA Biology (8461)
AQA Chemistry (8462)
AQA Physics (8643)
AQA Combined Science Trilogy (8464)

HOW WILL I BE TAUGHT?

You will have a specialist teacher in each of the three sciences. Learning will occur through a variety of methods and media to ensure lessons are varied and interesting: You will utilise independent study, research projects and group work together with teacher led activities and online resources. Real-life applications and links to everyday life will be explored. The sciences, by definition, include practical work; chemists love a dramatic colour change! Where possible, field trips are incorporated – including to the valley to count clover and daisies in transect work! Exam technique and practice of exam questions will be stressed, emphasising the importance of these skills.

What skills will I develop?

The sciences are essential to develop critical thinking; the desire to question what you see

COURSE CONTENT - COMBINED SCIENCE

Biology

- Cell biology
- Organisation
- Infection and response
- Bioenergetics
- Homeostasis and response
- Inheritance, variation and evolution
- Ecology

Chemistry

- Atomic structure and the Periodic Table
- Bonding, structure, and the properties of matter
- Quantitative chemistry
- Chemical changes
- Energy changes
- The rate and extent of chemical change
- Organic chemistry
- Chemical analysis
- Chemistry of the atmosphere
- Using resources

and understand, and the workings behind life itself. You will be encouraged to interpret and analyse information, to hypothesise and to prove or disprove theories. The sciences will inspire you to be creative in your thinking and application of knowledge, whilst learning to write coherently and succinctly.

Where will studying Science lead?

Literally, anywhere. The skill set and knowledge acquired are transferable to a plethora of careers and further study. The real-life, innovative and ever-changing applications of all sciences, alongside the variety of skills you will learn, mean that you will be in high demand.

Whether you want to study medicine or veterinary sciences, or aspire to be an astrophysicist or an engineer developing a new vaccine or perfume, science qualifications are respected in many fields of work and universities.

Physics

- Energy
- Electricity
- Particle model of matter
- Atomic structure
- Forces
- Waves
- Magnetism and electromagnetism

Examination (Combined Science)

There are six papers: two biology, two chemistry and two physics. Each of the papers will assess knowledge and understanding from distinct topic areas.

Each paper: 1 hour 15 minutes (16.7% of GCSE)

For full details visit:
aqa.org.uk/subjects/science/gcse/science-8464

Continued overleaf.

The Sciences (cont')

(Core Subject)

COURSE CONTENT - SEPARATE SCIENCES

BIOLOGY

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

Examination

Paper 1

Topics 1-4
Written exam: 1 hour 45 minutes
(50% of GCSE)

Paper 2

Topics 5-7
Written exam: 1 hour 45 minutes
(50% of GCSE)

Both papers contain multiple choice, structured, closed short answer and open response questions.

Dr L Rickard

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CHEMISTRY

- 1. Atomic structure and the Periodic Table
- 2. Bonding, structure, and the properties of matter
- 3. Quantitative chemistry
- 4. Chemical changes
- 5. Energy changes
- 6. The rate and extent of chemical change
- 7. Organic chemistry
- 8. Chemical analysis
- 9. Chemistry of the atmosphere
- 10. Using resources

Examination

Paper 1

Topics 1-5
Written exam: 1 hour 45 minutes
(50% of GCSE)

Paper 2

Topics 6-10
Written exam: 1 hour 45 minutes
(50% of GCSE)

Both papers contain multiple choice, structured, closed short answer and open response questions.

Mrs W McNally

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PHYSICS

- 1. Energy
- 2. Electricity
- 3. Particle model of matter
- 4. Atomic structure
- 5. Forces
- 6. Waves
- 7. Magnetism and electro-magnetism
- 8. Space Physics

Examination

Paper 1

Units 1-5
Written exam: 1 hour 45 minutes
(50% of GCSE)

Paper 2

Units 5-8
Written exam: 1 hour 45 minutes
(50% of GCSE)

Both papers contain multiple choice, structured, closed short answer and open response questions.

Mr J Cooper

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Modern Languages: French, Spanish

AQA French, Spanish (New GCSE September 2024)

The Modern Languages department will be preparing students for the new AQA specifications in GCSE French and/or Spanish, and both specifications will be identical. You should choose the language with which you feel most comfortable in terms of its sounds, grammar, perceived future use and culture. You must choose one language, but should also seriously consider the opportunities and competitive edge that two languages will undoubtedly give you.

COURSE CONTENT

The topics you will study are:

- People and lifestyle: Identity and relationships; healthy living and lifestyle; education and work
- Popular culture: Free-time activities; customs, festivals and celebrations; celebrity culture
- Communication and the world around us: Travel and tourism; media and technology; the environment and where people live

Assessment

The course is linear which means that all exams will be sat at the end of the two years. All languages have a foundation tier (grades 1-5) and a higher tier (grades 4-9), and students must take all four skills, which are equally weighted, at the same tier.

Examination

Paper	Tasks
1 listening	Part 1: Questions in English based solely on prescribed vocabulary & grammar lists Part 2: Dictation (five sentences) in the target language
2 speaking	Part 1: Reading aloud task followed by four questions Part 2: Role play Part 3: Picture task based on two photographs followed by a conversation (approximately 5 minutes)
3 reading	Part 1: Questions in English based mainly on prescribed vocabulary & grammar lists Part 2: Translation into English (five sentences)
4 writing	Part 1: Structured and open-ended writing tasks Part 2: a translation into the target language (five sentences)

HOW WILL I BE TAUGHT?

The key word at GCSE is authenticity; you will use language needed for real situations that you will encounter in the country under study, either on a visit or beyond school. Practice in all four skills using topic specific material will hence be at the heart of every good language lesson. Lessons are varied and enjoyable, using a wide variety of resources and materials, with increasing emphasis on examination techniques as the course progresses.

Opportunities for fieldwork and trips

You will be encouraged to participate in a study trip to Salamanca or Nice. The advantages of such trips are obvious, but the one most worthy of mention is the opportunity to experience everyday life with a host family and immerse oneself in the culture. An intrinsic part of any language learning process, a language trip can only improve your confidence and language competence, particularly given the amount of time you will spend in lessons each day.

What skills will I develop?

Although grammar is still the backbone to any language learning, the focus is on using the language to understand and communicate ideas, opinions and needs. Many of the skills you will therefore develop when learning a modern language should stand you in good stead in the outside world, communicating, listening and understanding others being the prime ones.

Where can Modern Languages GCSEs lead?

Linguists are highly valued in the working world, and having a language will open many doors. Opportunities to study abroad as part of a degree course are ten-fold and career opportunities are diverse, ranging from the legal and diplomatic worlds to commerce, journalism and interpreting. Scientists, engineers and doctors are also all known to benefit from having a language, if not two, hence by continuing with languages, a bright future awaits.

Mrs L Chandler

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Modern Languages: Mandarin

AQA Mandarin

The Modern Languages department currently prepares students for the AQA specification in GCSE Mandarin.

In addition to studying Mandarin, you should also seriously consider the opportunities and competitive edge that two languages will undoubtedly give you.

COURSE CONTENT

The topics you will study are:

- Family, friendships, technology, leisure and customs
- Home town, social and global issues, travel and tourism
- School, future plans, jobs

Assessment

The course is linear which means that all exams will be sat at the end of the two years. Mandarin offers a foundation tier (grades 1-5) and a higher tier (grades 4-9), and students must take all four skills, which are equally weighted, at the same tier.

Examination

Paper	Length	Tasks
1 listening	35 minutes (F) 45 minutes (H)	Questions to be answered non-verbally, in English and in the target language
2 speaking	7-9 minutes (F) 10-12 minutes (H)	A role-play, a photo card, and a general conversation
3 reading	45 minutes (F) 60 minutes (H)	Questions to be answered non-verbally, in English and in the target language, plus a translation into English
4 writing	60 minutes (F) 75 minutes (H)	Structured and open-ended writing tasks plus a translation into the target language

HOW WILL I BE TAUGHT?

The key word at GCSE is authenticity; you will use language needed for real situations that you will encounter in the country under study, either on an exchange visit or beyond school. Practice in all four skills using topic specific material will hence be at the heart of every good language lesson. Lessons are varied and enjoyable, using a wide variety of resources and materials, with increasing emphasis on examination techniques as the course progresses.

Opportunities for fieldwork and trips

You will be encouraged to participate in the language exchange to the outskirts of Shanghai, China. The advantages of this trip is obvious, but the one most worthy of mention is the opportunity to experience everyday life with a host family and immerse oneself in the culture. An intrinsic part of any language learning process, a language trip can only improve your confidence and language competence.

What skills will I develop?

While communication skills will develop greatly, learning Mandarin will help to boost cognitive flexibility and aid problem-solving. The uniqueness of Mandarin as a language means grammar is relatively simple. The skill of character writing is one of the most significant for many learners.

Where can Modern Languages GCSEs lead?

This Chinese cultural insight can be invaluable in professions such as international relations, journalism, and education. It will allow pupils to communicate effectively and foster deeper connections in their various fields of work, which are vital in both personal and professional contexts.

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History

AQA History (8145BC)

COURSE CONTENT

Paper 1: Understanding the Modern World

Comprising two parts:

- Germany 1890-1945: Democracy and Dictatorship
- Conflict and Tension 1918-1939

Paper 2: Shaping the Nation

Comprising two parts:

- Britain: Power and the People c. 1180 to the present day
- Norman England c.1066-c.1100

Examination

Paper 1: Understanding the Modern World

Examination: Trinity term (Year 11)

2 hours (50% of GCSE)

Paper 2: Shaping the Nation

Examination: Trinity term (Year 11)

2 hours minutes (50% of GCSE)

HOW WILL I BE TAUGHT?

Lively discussion is at the heart of every good history lesson. You will debate concepts and ideas, learning to construct arguments in written and oral form, and also how to share them in the most effective way. You will examine a wide range of sources, establishing what their meaning is and how valuable they are. Similarly you will scrutinise the views of historians, some who you agree with and others you do not. You will be expected to question and challenge them. You will be invited to share your opinions, to base them upon well-selected and effectively deployed evidence, take a balanced approach to the question, and make well-rounded judgements. You will undertake knowledge based research, create a variety of study materials for use in exam preparation, and practise the techniques you will need in those exams.

What skills will I develop?

The skills you develop through studying History will prepare you strongly for the modern workplace and an evolving UK job market. You will develop higher-order thinking skills, learning to distinguish between complex factors, construct balanced arguments and make informed judgements in uncertain and rapidly changing contexts. You will become more skilled at structuring ideas clearly, logically and persuasively – essential in an age where effective communication, decision-making and leadership remain vital. You will learn to make careful inferences and understand how individuals and institutions shape information for particular audiences and for particular purposes. By scrutinising evidence from newspapers, speeches, letters, images and media, you will develop analytical rigour and informed scepticism, enabling you to identify bias, challenge misinformation and evaluate material critically. You will learn to respect the views of others while confidently questioning them using evidence-based reasoning. Your understanding of human nature, cultures and identities will deepen, strengthening empathy, collaboration and communication through spoken and written work.

Where can History GCSE lead?

Historians are highly valued in today's job market. They pursue a wide range of careers, including law, journalism, investigation, broadcasting, publishing and public service. Historians also thrive in marketing, advertising and public relations, where understanding audiences and narratives is essential. In particular they succeed in business, where project management, interpersonal skills, critical and creative thinking, make sound judgements, and much more, are still so important in all sectors.

Mr N Smith

Head of History

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Geography

Edexcel GCSE Geography A: Geographical Themes and Challenges

COURSE CONTENT

There are three distinct components to the course: the physical environment, the human environment and geographical investigations. These give a good balance of topics that are 'engaging and relevant to today's geographers'. (Edexcel)

Physical Environment

Topic 1: the changing landscapes of the UK - including optional sub-topics from which students choose two of three:

- 1A: coastal landscapes and processes
- 1B: river landscapes and processes
- 1C: glaciated upland landscapes and processes

Topic 2: weather hazards and climate change

Topic 3: ecosystems, biodiversity and management

Human Environment

Topic 4: changing cities

Topic 5: global development

Topic 6: resource management – including optional sub-topics from which students choose one of two

- 6A: energy resource management
- 6B: water resource management

Geographical Investigations

Topic 7: geographical investigations - fieldwork

Topic 8: geographical investigations - UK challenges

Examination

There is a written examination for each component; 1 hour 45 minutes for Paper 1 and 1 hour 30 minutes each for Papers 2 and 3.

The Physical and Human papers are each worth 37.5% and the Investigations paper is worth 25%. The exams include multiple choice questions, short open response, calculations, 8-mark and 12-mark extended writing questions.

HOW WILL I BE TAUGHT?

A wide variety of methods is employed, including research of up-to-date case study material from different media. IT is used for research, presentation and data handling. Local field work allows application of knowledge and, of course, there is some good old fashioned talk and chalk together with the colouring of maps!

What skills will I develop?

Geography is an ideal subject for developing a wide range of skills. You will learn how to research information from a range of sources and present it in a variety of ways both written and in diagrams. You will learn how to question, investigate, interpret and apply. You can develop experience of manipulating data, using statistical techniques, spreadsheets and graphic packages. Your field work will help you to develop the skills of organizing your own time, and working and co-operating with others. The skills you develop in GCSE Geography will support you in further study as well as in the world of work.

Where can Geography GCSE lead?

Anywhere! Given the wide range of knowledge and skills that you will develop, a GCSE in Geography will support you in future educational and career decisions. In this ever changing world, it is vital to be a knowledgeable and concerned 'global citizen'.

Miss J A Gill

Head of Geography
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Business

AQA - (8132)

COURSE CONTENT

1. Business in the real world
2. Influences on business
3. Business operations
4. Human resources
5. Marketing
6. Finance

The qualification is linear which means that students will sit all of their examinations at the end of the course.

Paper 1: Influences of operations and HRM on business activity

- Business in the real world
- Influences on business
- Business operations
- Human resources

Paper 2: Influences of marketing and finance on business activity

- Business in the real world
- Influences on business
- Marketing
- Finance

Examination

Paper 1: Influences of operations and HRM on business activity

1 hour 45 minutes
(50% of GCSE)

Paper 2: Influences of marketing and finance on business activity

1 hour 45 minutes
(50% of GCSE)

HOW WILL I BE TAUGHT?

You will participate in discussions of business ideas in various case study contexts, as well as in relation to the changing business and economic

environment. There will be opportunity for independent research into your preferred areas of business interest, as well as more formal teacher-led lessons and guided work on conceptual knowledge. There is much scope for use of multimedia resources to investigate the ever-changing business world.

What skills will I develop?

The main aims of the syllabus are to develop a knowledge and understanding of the business environment whilst developing skills such as numeracy and literacy in order to present and interpret information. In addition, the course aims to develop effective use of relevant terminology, concepts and methods and recognise strengths and weaknesses of ideas used.

The examination papers test business knowledge, comprehension of business concepts, analysis and evaluation, with greater emphasis on the last.

Where can Business GCSE lead?

The AQA course offers a direct link with both the A level courses in economics and business. Skills acquired and the applied nature of the material allows students a sound grounding for A level study in either discipline. The course offers you an opportunity to acquire key business concepts, as well as skills for life.

To see a more detailed outline of the course go to www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/business-subjects and follow the links to GCSE Business.

As this is a subject that is not on the curriculum before Year 10, talking about the subject to those who teach it will give you a much better idea of what it is really about. Please do feel free to ask any of the department staff if you would like further information about business at GCSE level.

Mr J Percival

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Philosophy, Religion and Ethics

Edexcel B (1RBO)

COURSE CONTENT

There will be two areas of study:

Christianity: Christian Beliefs, Marriage and the Family, Living the Christian Life and Matters of Life and Death (including abortion and euthanasia).

The study of Islam: Muslim Beliefs, Crime and Punishment, Living the Muslim Life and Peace and Conflict.

Examination

1. Christianity Paper: Religion and Ethics:

1 hour 45 minutes
(50% of GCSE)

2. The Study of Islam Paper:

1 hour 45 minutes-
Religion, Peace and Conflict.
(50% of GCSE)

HOW WILL I BE TAUGHT?

You do not need to hold any religious belief to study Philosophy, Religion and Ethics, nor will you be expected to adopt a particular viewpoint. Many students who identify as atheist or non-religious choose this GCSE, as the subject explores both factual knowledge and personal, reasoned opinion. The ideas and concepts studied are often open to interpretation and shaped by cultural, historical and social contexts.

Lessons are interactive, with considerable discussion and debate, allowing you to question ideas, challenge assumptions and develop your own informed conclusions. You will explore a wide range of viewpoints using case studies, source material and contemporary issues, encouraging critical thinking and respectful dialogue. Alongside this, you will regularly practise examination-style questions, building confidence in expressing clear, well-structured arguments both verbally and in writing.

What skills will I develop?

Philosophy, Religion and Ethics develops strong analytical, critical and open-minded thinking across the interconnected fields of philosophy, ethics and religious belief. You will strengthen your verbal and written reasoning, communication skills and mental agility, learning to express complex ideas clearly and thoughtfully. PRE is a globally significant subject that helps you understand how faith and belief shape the values, identities and decisions of much of the world's population. This awareness supports respectful dialogue and deeper cultural understanding. The ability to engage with others sensitively, thoughtfully and with genuine understanding is a vital skill for effective leadership and management in any context.

Where can PRE GCSE lead?

Philosophy, Religion and Ethics is a respected GCSE and A level subject, valued for the strong analytical, evaluative and reasoning skills it develops. Students who study this subject go on to pursue a wide range of careers in law, politics and public policy, diplomacy and journalism. It is also highly relevant to careers in education, social work, international relations, business, management, human resources, and even medicine and the police, anywhere indeed where empathy, ethical judgement, and cultural awareness are important.

Mr N Smith

Head of PRE
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Latin WJEC (C990)

COURSE CONTENT

Component 1: Latin Language

Section A is a momentum test consisting of a passage of Latin divided into three sections. There are comprehension questions on parts one and three (totalling 55% of the marks for this paper), and the middle part is translated into English (35%).

Section B offers the choice between:

- A translation from English into Latin of three simple sentences (e.g. the slaves were working)
- Grammar questions on a short passage of Latin (e.g. pick out a verb in the imperfect tense)

Section B accounts for 10% of the marks in this component.

Component 2: Latin Literature and Sources

Students will study approximately 125–130 lines of Latin, from Roman authors such as Vergil, Ovid and Martial. The passages follow a common theme. Each theme is accompanied by a selection of prescribed ancient source materials (e.g. paintings, mosaics, sculptures, buildings, graffiti).

Component 3: Roman Civilisation

Studying Roman civilisation gives students a more rounded understanding of what it was to be a Roman living almost two thousand years ago. Moreover, the culture of ancient Rome has significantly influenced subsequent cultures, including our own. For the civilisation topic, we

study an overarching topic (such as Roman family life or life in Roman towns), which includes several subsidiary topics (for example, marriage, religion, Roman houses or dinner-parties).

Controlled Assessment

There is no controlled assessment for Latin.

Examination

3 examinations:

Component 1: Latin Language

- Written exam: 1 hour 30 minutes
50% of GCSE (100 marks)

Component 2: Latin Literature and Sources

- Written exam: 1 hour 15 minutes
30% of GCSE (60 marks)

Component 3: Roman Civilisation

- Written exam: 1 hour
20% of GCSE (40 marks)

Miss A Wright

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Drama



AQA (8261)

COURSE CONTENT

Component 1: Understanding Drama

- Knowledge and understanding of drama and theatre
- Study of a set play - 'Around the World in 80 Days', adapted by Laura Eason
- Analysis and evaluation of the work of live theatre makers

Written exam: 1 hour 45 mins
(40% of GCSE)

Component 2: Devising Drama (Completed in Year 10)

- Process of creating devised drama
- Performance of devised drama (group performance)

This is accompanied by a Devising Log, documenting the creation and development of ideas to communicate meaning through a devised performance.

(40% of GCSE)

Component 3: Texts In Practice (Completed in Year 11)

- Performance of two extracts from one play (group performance)

(20% of GCSE)

HOW WILL I BE TAUGHT?

Drama lessons are defined by a fast-paced, dynamic and aspirational approach to learning. You are encouraged to make work you are passionate about, to be inquisitive and adventurous in your thinking and playful and ambitious in your creative execution. Specialist teaching staff support you when preparing practical examination work in our state-of-the-art Seckford Theatre and with over 30 year's combined experience they are expertly placed to help you unpack the demands of the written examination.

Opportunities for field work and trips

Over the two years you will have the opportunity to experience live theatre alongside screenings of professional productions at the Seckford Theatre. Trips over the last few years have included:

- 'Come From Away' (touring production) - Norwich Theatre Royal
- 'Guys and Dolls' - The Bridge Theatre, London
- 'Metamorphosis' (directed by Frantic Assembly) Mercury Theatre, Colchester

What skills will I develop?

GCSE Drama equips you with a highly desirable set of transferable skills. You will develop your ability to communicate whilst honing your ability to think critically. Drama deepens your ability to empathise, boosts self-confidence and improves public speaking skills. Lessons will help you develop leadership skills whilst encouraging an understanding of how to work effectively with others. Over the two years you will develop an appreciation of Drama and Theatre as an Art form, something people go on to enjoy for years in the future.

Where can Drama GCSE lead?

In an increasingly competitive market, GCSE Drama equips you with a broad set of skills that make you appealing to institutes of further education and employers. Previous students have gone on to study Drama at an advanced level, both academically and professionally, and pursued a wide range of careers in Education, journalism, events management and the arts in general.

Feel free to speak to a member of the Drama department if you would like further information, or if you would like to receive our GCSE Survival Guide document please contact Ms Mayes using the details provided.

Ms G Mayes

Head of Drama
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Music

EDUQAS

COURSE CONTENT

Unit 1: Performing (30%)

Comprising two parts:

- The performance of one solo piece which is assessed and recorded internally (candidates should be at least Grade 4 Associated Board standard).
- The performance of one other piece during the course, which will be an ensemble for at least two players. This is recorded internally.

Total performance time must be at least four minutes.

Unit 2: Composition Coursework (30%)

This unit comprises of two compositions with a combined duration of at least three minutes.

- One composition to a brief set by EDUQAS
- One composition of the candidate's own choice

Unit 3: Listening and Appraising Written Exam (60%)

In your exam there will be 8 questions. Each will have an extract of music which is played out loud for you to answer the questions on what you hear. Question 1 and question 7 will always be on the 2 set works (*Badinerie* by J.S.Bach and *Africa* by Toto).

Students will be expected to be able to appraise unfamiliar music which has similar stylistic characteristics to the set works. The Board provides a suggested wider listening list to assist in this aspect, although these works themselves will not be examined.

Controlled Assessment

The controlled assessment comprises two sections:

- Performance – this will be completed in either lunchtime recitals or class, at some point during Year 11 (30% of GCSE)
- Composing – this will be ongoing in lessons in preparation for the recording in the early part of the Trinity term in Year 11 (30% of GCSE)

Examination

Unit 3

Trinity term (Year 11)

1 hour 45 minutes (40% of GCSE)

The questions will focus on three things:

- Elements of Music – melody, harmony, tonality, form and structure, dynamics, sonority, texture, tempo, rhythm, metre.
- The Context – the time, place or purpose of the music
- Musical Language – the list of musical terms in Appendix C of the specification, notes in the treble and bass clef and any specific vocabulary which goes with the set works.

HOW WILL I BE TAUGHT?

Performances are prepared with instrumental teachers and there are many opportunities to play and refine them. Composition is taught using Noteflight and Soundtrap software using exercises to build up a portfolio in Year 10 – this is then developed into the two final pieces in Year 11. In the classroom you will learn how to properly listen to music using analytical techniques which will allow you to explore how a wide range of music is put together. Activities focus on discussion and developing creative thinking processes.

Opportunities for field work and trips

We usually have opportunities to see professional performances and undertake workshops with a variety of groups and players.

What skills will I develop?

Music develops your practical skills as well as helping you to build creative approaches to problems and situations. You will learn how to listen in a detailed way to a variety of styles and genres and how to articulate your interpretations both orally and through written work.

Where can Music GCSE lead?

Music is a dynamic subject that has broad application in the real-world. Musicians tend to be busy and organised people and many continue to play and sing throughout their lives whether professionally or as an amateur. Music can lead to many careers in the arts including performing, arts management, teaching, music therapy and journalism. However many musicians also use their highly transferable skills in completely different areas such as medicine, the law or financial services.

A more detailed version of the syllabus can be found on the EDUQAS website.

Mr J Woodley

Director of Music

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Art, Craft and Design

OCR J171 Fine Art

COURSE CONTENT

This two year linear qualification is divided into two Components; the Personal Portfolio (60% of overall mark) and the 'Externally Set Assignment' (40% of overall mark).

The Personal Portfolio is all practical coursework either completed in the class or at home. This Portfolio is almost entirely independently driven by the student, supported and structured by the teacher; however, Year 10 does start with an induction period focusing on different approaches to drawing and secondly various whole day workshops. After these have been covered the student can move into any media for an extended period of time and explore a theme of their choice. This unit finishes with a 10 hour mock exam in the Michaelmas Term of Year 11.

The Externally Set Assignment is a much shorter independent project that responds to an externally set theme. The students use classwork and homework to prepare and trial ideas for a 10 hour exam in the Summer term of Year 11. The students then present their work for marking and moderation and for the enjoyment of their family and friends.

Controlled Assessment

The study briefs for Unit 1 are set by the School and the student and the brief for Unit 2 is set by Edexcel. The whole course is marked internally by department staff and is then moderated by an Edexcel examiner.

HOW WILL I BE TAUGHT?

There are 4 hours and 40 minutes of lessons over a two week timetable. During the lessons you will be engaged with practical, creative work from the outset. New techniques are learned as well as ways of thinking and looking. Making and expressing your ideas are at the forefront of the course. The entire course is 'hands-on' from day one. The student is supported to generate the body of work that best satisfies their own creative ambitions and passions and best meets the exam board assessment criteria.

Opportunities for field work and trips

We organise a huge number of extra opportunities. We have a peripatetic tutoring system for young artists, stretch and invest clubs, artist workshops, regular exhibition opportunities, collaboration with industry and a huge visual art careers initiative called Woodbridge Talks.

What skills will I develop?

- Photography
- Painting
- Printing
- Drawing
- Sculpture
- Textiles
- Fashion and Film
- Art Appreciation
- Critical and Contextual Skills

The course is flexible so you can learn as many different skills as you need in order to pursue your own particular and relevant line of study. Other than the practical, the student learns to think and work independently. GCSE Art, Craft and Design is both challenging and rewarding; an opportunity to explore and define yourself creatively. It is also a chance to share with others what you consider to be important and worthy of discussion and reflection.

Where can GCSE Art, Craft and Design lead?

Absolutely anywhere! Britain still leads the world in the creative arts. It is no accident that we have the best creative minds in the world as it stems from the most comprehensive art education in the world. The creative arts are the most diverse field of employment that exists. A good grade at GCSE can lead the way to an art A level and then to a place at university; For any specific information regarding the Edexcel art course, please refer to www.edexcel.com and follow the link from to GCSE Art and Design.

Mr J Hutch

Head of Art

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Computer Science



OCR (J277)

COURSE CONTENT

Component 1: Computer Systems (01)

This component will assess:

- 1.1 Systems architecture
- 1.2 Memory and storage
- 1.3 Computer networks, connections and protocols
- 1.4 Network security
- 1.5 Systems software
- 1.6 Ethical, legal, cultural and environmental impacts of digital technology

Component 2: Computational Thinking, Algorithms and Programming (02)

This component will assess:

- 2.1 Algorithms
- 2.2 Programming fundamentals
- 2.3 Producing robust programs
- 2.4 Boolean logic
- 2.5 Programming languages and Integrated Development Environments

Practical Programming

Students are given the opportunity to undertake a programming task(s), either to a specification or to solve a problem (or problems), during their course of study. Students may draw on some of the content in both components when engaged in Practical Programming.

Examination

Component 1: Computer Systems (01)

Trinity term (Year 11)

1 hour 30 minutes (50% of GCSE)

Component 2: Computational thinking, algorithms and programming (02)

Trinity term (Year 11)

1 hour 30 minutes (50% of GCSE)

HOW WILL I BE TAUGHT?

Interactive discussion is at the heart of every good computing lesson. You will discuss concepts and ideas, undertake skills-based exercises, knowledge-based

research (sometimes teacher-led, sometimes independent), learn to program using a variety of tools and techniques, and practise examination techniques.

What skills will I develop?

The majority of skills learned in computing are applicable to further study and the outside world. You will learn the skills of analysis and problem-solving, programming and logical thinking. Logic is fundamental to programming and has wide applications in future study.

Where can GCSE Computer Science lead?

Computer scientists have an almost unparalleled opportunity to pursue careers in science, computing and mathematics, with the skills that the increasingly systems-driven world is crying out for. Computer scientists are in great demand – recent research suggests that computing has the greatest potential employment demand over the next few years. Students with qualifications at GCSE and A level are highly in demand by UK universities.

To see a full overview of the course go to [ocr.org.uk/qualifications/gcse/computer-science-j277-from-2020/](https://www.ocr.org.uk/qualifications/gcse/computer-science-j277-from-2020/)

Mr J Harrod

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Design: Three Dimensional

AQA (8205)

COURSE CONTENT

Three-dimensional design is defined as the design, prototyping and modelling or making of primarily functional and aesthetic products, objects, and environments, drawing upon intellectual, creative and practical skills.

Areas of study:

- Architecture
- Product design
- Jewellery design
- Environmental design
- 3D digital design
- Designs for theatre, film and television

Knowledge, understanding and skills taught throughout the course:

- Research and evaluation skills.
- Analysing and evaluating existing products, artists, designers and architects.
- Evaluation and critical analysis of work to expand on and make progress.
- Undertaking focused tasks to develop and demonstrate skills in visual communication, modelling, and practical processes and techniques.
- Learning how to develop and refine ideas through the selection of appropriate materials, techniques and methods.
- Plan and produce prototypes and design concepts.
- Learning how to produce original, personal and creative responses.
- Develop confidence and skills with a range of materials, tools, processes and equipment.
- Safe working practice.
- Responding successfully to a design brief.

Assessment:

Component 1: Portfolio 60% of GCSE

Students must submit a portfolio that evidences a sustained project and a selection of further work. This component is marked as a whole, so

it is important that students are selective of the work they present ensuring it provides sufficient evidence of meeting all four assessment objectives.

Evidence of drawing activity and written annotation is highly important, so it is expected that students who wish to take GCSE Design have a degree of confidence in producing visual communication and do not view this type of work as a chore.

Component 2: Externally Set Assignment 40% of GCSE

In January of Year 11, students are given a choice of seven design starting points issued by the exam board. Students will then undertake preparatory work with teacher guidance and in April will complete a final piece or pieces in a 10-hour examination period. Evidence of drawing activity and written annotation is also highly important in this component.

HOW WILL I BE TAUGHT?

Lessons typically follow a project-based approach, where you largely learn through practice and experimentation. Practical, analytical and visual communication skills are developed through a variety of tasks, which are designed to support you in completing your own independent project in the Lent term of Year 10.

The 'sustained project' will be your opportunity to focus in on an area of design you are most interested in. You can choose from architecture, furniture design, product design, jewellery design or design for TV, film and theatre. These titles are not explicit however, and there is flexibility to pursue an alternative avenue, provided that it is a 3D response.

You are encouraged to develop work that is personal to you, inspired from contextual sources that you are keen to explore. You are not told what to do, instead you are given

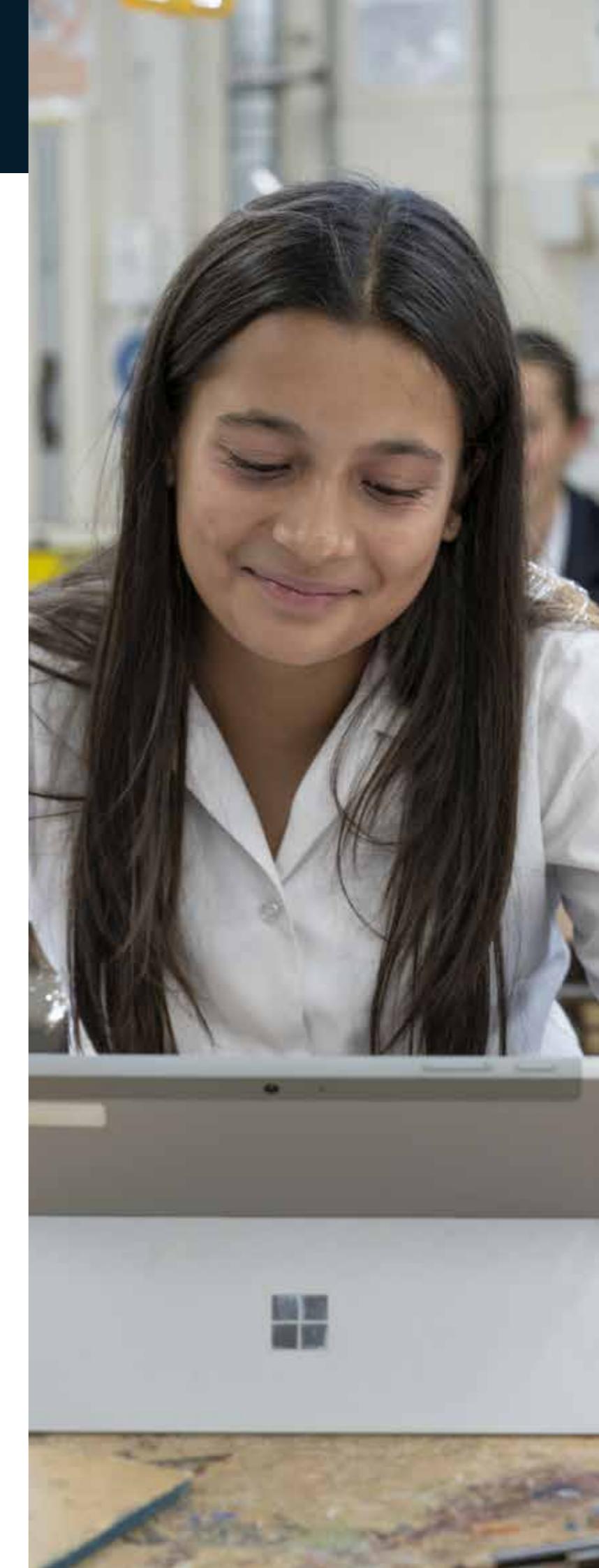
options, guidance, references to stimulate you, ideas to help you get started and lots more. There are mandatory tasks to complete, but also opportunities to strengthen and expand upon areas to allow your projects to evolve personally and meaningfully.

Where can GCSE in 3D Design lead?

This course provides the ideal foundation for the A level in 3D design. It can then lead to higher education and careers in areas such as product and industrial design, architecture, interior design, jewellery design, fashion, and design for theatre, film and television. Furthermore, the course develops many transferable skills and attributes that are useful in lots of other areas, such as adaptability, problem solving skills, resilience, creative thinking, and analytical skills.

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Physical Education

AQA (8582)

COURSE CONTENT

Paper 1: The human body and movement in physical activity and sport

- Applied anatomy & physiology
- Movement analysis
- Physical training
- Use of data

Paper 2: Socio-cultural influences and well-being in physical activity and sport

- Sports psychology
- Socio-cultural influences
- Health, fitness and well-being
- Use of data

Non-Examination Assessment

Practical performance in physical activity and sport

- Practical performance in three different physical activities in the role of player/performer (one in a team activity, one in an individual activity and a third in either a team or individual activity).
- Analysis and evaluation of performance to bring about improvement in one activity.
- Assessed by teachers
- Moderated by AQA
- 100 marks
- 40% of GCSE

Examination

Paper 1:

- Written exam: 1 hour 15 minutes
- 78 marks
- 30% of GCSE
- Mixture of multiple choice/objective test questions, short answer and extended answer questions

Paper 2:

- Written exam: 1 hour 15 minutes
- 78 marks
- 30% of GCSE
- Mixture of multiple choice/objective test questions, short answer and extended answer questions

HOW WILL I BE TAUGHT?

The course has both theoretical and practical elements; therefore three lessons each fortnight will be theory-based and two lessons practical-based.

Where can GCSE Physical Education lead?

As well as being the ideal preparation for the A level Physical Education course, GCSE Physical Education allows for progression to other qualifications in sport or sport and exercise science. The course develops transferable skills that employers are looking for and can lead to a wide variety of employment opportunities in teaching, coaching, officiating, recreational management, leisure activities, the fitness industry and the Armed Forces.

Miss N Sanders

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Photography

OCR J173 Photography

COURSE CONTENT

This two year linear qualification is divided into two components; the Personal Portfolio (60% of overall mark) and the Externally Set Assignment (40% of overall mark).

The Personal Portfolio is all practical coursework either completed in the class or at home. This Portfolio is almost entirely independently driven by the student, supported and structured by the teacher; however, Year 10 does start with two key areas of focus; in camera skills and post production. After these have been covered the student can move into any lens based media for an extended period of time and explore a theme of their choice. Instead of a sketchbook the students create an exciting and detailed PowerPoint presentation to document all their work. This unit finishes with a 10 hour mock exam in the Michaelmas Term of Year 11.

The Externally Set Assignment is a much shorter independent project that responds to an externally set theme. The students use classwork and homework to prepare and trial ideas for a 10 hour exam in the Summer term of Year 11. The students then present their work for marking and moderation and for the enjoyment of their family and friends.

Controlled Assessment

The study briefs for Unit 1 are set by the School and the student and the brief for Unit 2 is set by Edexcel. The whole course is marked internally by department staff and is then moderated by an Edexcel examiner.

HOW WILL I BE TAUGHT?

There are 4 hours and 40 minutes of lessons over a two week timetable. During the lessons you will be engaged with practical, creative work from the outset. New techniques are learned as well as ways of thinking and looking. Making and expressing your ideas are at the forefront of the course. The entire course is 'hands-on' from day one and the student is free to generate the body of work that best satisfies their own creative ambitions and passions, in line with the exam board assessment criteria.

The initial set up of the course is teacher led but this quickly transitions into a highly independent framework revolving around three key aspects; planning a photographic shoot, actioning this plan and reviewing the product of the shoot in order to move forward creatively.

Opportunities for field work and trips

We organise a huge number of extra opportunities. We have a peripatetic tutoring system for young artists, stretch and invest clubs, artist workshops, regular exhibition opportunities, collaboration with industry and a huge visual art careers initiative called Woodbridge Talks.

What skills will I develop?

- Digital photography
- Post production editing (Photoshop)
- Mixed media exploration
- Art appreciation
- Critical and contextual skills

The course is entirely flexible so you can learn as many different skills as you need in order to pursue your own particular and relevant line of study. Other than the practical, the student learns to think and work independently. GCSE Photography is both challenging and rewarding. There is a steep learning curve that is fascinating. Group learning is important and a high level of organisation helps.

Where Can GCSE Photography lead?

Absolutely anywhere! Britain still leads the world in the creative arts. It is no accident that we have the best creative minds in the world as it stems from the most comprehensive art education in the world. The creative arts are the most diverse field of employment that exists. A good grade at GCSE can lead the way to an art A level and then to a place at university.

Mr J Hutch

Head of Art

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