



BROMSGROVE SCHOOL

YEAR 8 GCSE
SUBJECT CHOICES 2019

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This booklet is intended to help pupils entering Year 9 and their parents to make sensible decisions about their choice of subjects for GCSE. We hope that it contains enough information to start thinking about choices. There will be opportunities at the GCSE Course Information Morning on **Saturday 23rd March** to ask further questions and obtain advice, both about courses in general and about individual pupil's needs.

THE GCSE COURSE

The GCSE course at Bromsgrove covers the three years of the Lower and Upper Fourth and the Fifth Form.

The GCSE Curriculum

In light of recent Government GCSE reforms, the School has recently undertaken a wide-ranging review of our Year 9 – 11 academic offer, as we seek to ensure that we continue to offer a broad programme that goes well beyond the norm of the National Curriculum. The three year GCSE programme that our Year 9 students will embark upon in September will have a depth of academic rigour, whilst retaining a large element of student choice and flexibility between and within various subject areas.

All students will work towards qualifications in English Language and English Literature, Mathematics, Biology, Chemistry and Physics (as stand-alone separate or a combined dual award) and Religious Studies. Pupils will also take at least one language and at least one of History and Geography. Beyond these subjects, students have two further options which may be used to take creative subjects or weight their overall programme of studies further to the humanities or languages. Pupils also undertake two lessons a week in non-examined Health and Movement.

The following table gives a tabular visualisation of the subjects to be studied:

Mathematics	English	Sciences	Humanities	Languages	Arts & Other Options
(1 GCSE) Compulsory	(2 GCSEs) Compulsory	(2/3 GCSEs) Compulsory	(2 GCSE) Compulsory	(1 GCSE) Choose one of:	(2 GCSEs) Choose two of:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mathematics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • English Language • English Literature 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biology • Chemistry • Physics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Religious Studies (short course) Plus choose 1 of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Geography • History 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • French • German • Spanish • Beginners Spanish • Beginners German • EAL • Ancient Greek 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Art • Design Technology • Drama • Music • Textiles • Business • Classical Civilisation • Physical Education • Geography • History • Latin • German • EAL

ADVICE ON HOW TO MAKE GCSE CHOICES and CAREERS ISSUES

In choosing your subjects to go along with English, Mathematics, Religious Studies, a Modern Language, the Sciences and History or Geography you are able to choose subjects that will suit you. Your abilities, interests and career hopes should be considered to give you a balanced and appropriate programme.

You will want to choose subjects in which you are fairly successful. Your class and subject teachers will be able to tell you what the requirements are for the various subjects, and guide you on how easy or difficult you will find them. You will also naturally gravitate towards subjects you think you will enjoy.

Do not close off future options at this relatively early stage in your schooling. If you have career ambitions which require the study of certain subjects, you must bear this in mind. What you choose now does affect later choices in education; most IB or AS level courses expect the subject to have been passed at GCSE, but IB or A level Economics, Politics, Business Studies, History, Geography and Drama and Theatre Studies do not. It is necessary, however, to check with the department about particular skills which may be required.

1. Very few careers are now open to pupils who achieve only GCSE qualifications, and many professions which used to accept post-Sixth Form entrants are now requiring degrees. A degree-level qualification is now the norm.
2. Medicine and veterinary science usually require very high grades at GCSE, followed by very high grades in the IB or A level for acceptance at university. These are increasingly careers only for the very able pupils, and it is wrong to encourage the average pupil, no matter how great their interest, into thinking that they will automatically be successful. Credible candidates need at the least the strongest of science backgrounds.
3. Physics and Mathematics in the Sixth Form are essential for engineering. Design Technology is a useful, though not essential, additional subject to consider.
4. Careers in accountancy, law, banking and a number of others do not demand specific subjects (apart from English and Mathematics) at GCSE level. However, history or literary interests are obviously a help in law, and geography may be a help in chartered surveying. In the same way, business studies will be a useful subject for would-be accountants.
5. Where people are set on their future path, choices should be well focused – potential future linguists should take two languages, anyone set on history at university must take history, and so on.
6. Leaving out certain subjects can close doors to certain careers, though the choice we offer makes this quite difficult. The Careers Department will advise on particular situations.

Careers information and guidance features prominently in the Fifth Form, and tests of aptitude and interest are administered (for those who desire to take them) at the end of the Upper Fourth year. A report is written on the results of these, and this, together with the School's assessment of the academic prospects of individual pupils, forms a basis for discussions with Houseparents and careers staff about what to do after GCSEs.

Once a student is in the Sixth Form, the range of options has narrowed. For anyone in doubt as to his or her future, further careers tests and interviews may be requested. There is a structured programme throughout the Lower Sixth year giving extensive advice on the admissions procedures to both UK and international universities. This is provided on both a group and an individual basis.

Choices should be submitted by Wednesday 27th March. These will be made via a Survey Monkey link that you will be sent following the choice information morning on the 23rd March. If you change your mind later please let us know immediately. Timetabling for next year is done early in June, and we may not be able to accommodate requests for certain changes after this has been done.

Choices will have to fit the timetable, and this may impose constraints for a very few pupils with unusual choices.

THE COMPULSORY CORE SUBJECTS

MATHEMATICS

Like most leading independent schools, our Mathematics Department follows Edexcel's International GCSE (IGCSE) course rather than the traditional GCSE course. The IGCSE is a strong preparation for study of Mathematics in the Sixth Form as it concentrates to a greater extent on algebraic topics and less on contextualised problems and some more obscure areas of statistics.

At Bromsgrove, it is usual that all pupils study for the Higher Tier paper whilst the top set also tackles an Additional Mathematics qualification. The nature of all Mathematics courses is to stretch pupils by developing a deep understanding of material they have covered. We set pupils so they can aim for their best possible grade; some pupils in lower sets stand a better chance of a good grade by ensuring that they fully understand the material they have met, rather than rushing through the hardest material in order to achieve full coverage. Considerable care is taken to ensure that pupils are placed in their correct set - that is, the set in which the Mathematics will be challenging but within their scope.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

Bromsgrovians study Edexcel GCSE English Language (1EN0) and Edexcel IGCSE English Literature (4ET1) courses, qualifications which are complementary but lead to separate awards.

Designed for students with English as their first language, GCSE English Language develops the ability to communicate clearly, accurately and effectively in both writing and speech. Students learn to employ a wide ranging vocabulary, using correct grammar, spelling and a variety of punctuation, and adapting the tone and style of their writing to suit different purposes and engage their readers. The syllabus also develops textual analysis skills such as interpretation, synthesis, inference and evaluation. In Paper 1 they will analyse a 19th century fiction text and produce some imaginative writing; Paper 2 presents two 20th/21st century texts to compare and requires a piece of 'transactional writing', for example a speech, a letter, an article, or an information text. Speaking and listening skills are also assessed but are awarded their own grade, separate from the GCSE result.

For their IGCSE English Literature course, students will study a variety of texts in depth, exploring the techniques writers use to present key themes and characters, as well as the significance of the texts' historical contexts, and key features of the relevant literary genre. Students will produce two pieces of coursework, one on pre-20th century 'literary heritage' text, and one on a modern play. They will then sit one final exam paper testing their knowledge of a 20th century novel, two poems from the Edexcel IGCSE Anthology and a response to an unseen poem.

Whilst it is not particularly beneficial to have read the set texts in advance, continuing to read, widely and observantly, other literature beyond the confines of the syllabus remains essential for developing students' confidence with interpreting language and enhancing their own powers of expression, and should be considered a prerequisite for those aspiring to the highest grades.'

BIOLOGY, CHEMISTRY AND PHYSICS

Each of these subjects places considerable emphasis on the practical side of science and its relation to the world in which we live. Practical skills are assessed for the GCSE courses within the terminal exams.

Strong scientists, many of whom will be hoping to take at least one of the subjects further, will take Biology, Chemistry and Physics as separate triple award qualifications. The stand-alone qualification in each of the Sciences sees them studied in both significant depth and breadth. However, where students need more time to reflect upon the core of each specification, they will work towards a combined science qualification – this is equivalent to two GCSE qualifications. The AQA Combined Science (Trilogy) course ensures that, as a minimum, all of our pupils gain a very good grounding in each Science subject. High grades in the Combined Science award will provide sufficient preparation for those wishing to study Biology, Chemistry or Physics in the Sixth Form.

There is no requirement at this stage to choose whether to study the dual award or the three subjects as standalone subjects; this will be decided based on attainment and progress during the Lower Fourth.

RELIGIOUS STUDIES

The AQA Short Course qualification involves the study of Christianity and Buddhism providing an insight into two contrasting world views on ultimate questions. Additionally, the course includes consideration of a number of philosophical and ethical themes based around key beliefs, relationships, family life, peace and conflict. The course provides a sound introduction to the study of ethics, philosophy and theology. Students analyse the problems arising in each topic area and study religious and secular responses. Through their studies that will develop important skills including the ability to write coherent analysis of themes and critically evaluate challenging arguments.

One of the main aims of studying Religious Studies at GCSE is to provide pupils with the opportunity to identify, investigate and respond to fundamental questions about life and human experience. It is a relevant, challenging and thought provoking course which contributes to the development of pupils' academic and spiritual potential. It fully reflects and supports students in becoming responsible and mature human beings.

There is no coursework with students sitting a single examination of 1 hour 45 minutes.

HUMANITIES - Choose at least one of either:

GEOGRAPHY

Geography is the study of where places are, what they are like and what it is like to live there. It is concerned with why places are changing and why there are arguments about the use we make of them.

In the GCSE course leading to the AQA examination, pupils will discover useful facts from a range of case studies and apply their knowledge into a range of questions. They will develop their understanding and use of a range of maps; draw sketch maps, annotate photographs, plot and interpret graphs and use simple geographical instruments. Students get many opportunities throughout the course to work both independently and in group.

Field work is an integral part of the GCSE. In the Upper Fourth students carry out a river investigation and visit the Carding Mill Valley, Shropshire. In the Fifth Form students will be given the opportunity to investigate issues in an urban environment.

After an introductory review of key geographical topics and skills during the first term Lower and Upper Fourth work focuses on key aspects of physical geography such as tectonic and weather hazards, the living world, physical landscapes in the UK, rivers and glaciers. Fifth Form topics focus on human geography, considering themes such as urban issues and the impacts of economic factors and energy use on the environment.

HISTORY

History GCSE aims to promote a lasting interest in the past and to develop a wide range of analytical skills. These include the ability to select, use and evaluate evidence and to understand the full meaning of a range of historical ideas.

The AQA specification covers a wide range of topics and approaches. Some topics are studied in real depth whilst others are reviewed over much longer time frames to help students develop the skills and confidence to zoom in and out of issues to gain a subtle sense of context and detail.

There is a detailed study of the establishment of Norman control under William the Conqueror, life under the Normans and the role of religion. A broad sweep of British political history is also from the Magna Carta and the development of the conflict between church and state, through to various challenges to the state during the Tudors and Stuarts, including the impact of the Civil War. Nineteenth century reform movements such as Chartism and the growth of unions are considered before the rise of the suffragette movement, ending with a study of the race relations and political protests of post war Britain.

Twentieth century American social history spans the roaring 1920s and the Great Depression to the civil rights struggles in the middle of the century. The superpower rivalry of the Cold War is studied from the emergence of the 'iron curtain' through to the Cuban missile crisis and the eventual collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991.

Both the papers on pre-twentieth century British political history and modern America are sat at the end of the Fifth Form, with no accompanying controlled assessment or coursework.

In all of the above, source material is reviewed and questioned, participation in discussions encouraged and the ability to write tightly argued and justified prose is practised.

LANGUAGES - choose at least one of either:

- French
- German
- Spanish
- English as an Additional Language
- Beginners' Spanish
- Beginners' German
- Ancient Greek

MODERN LANGUAGES

Courses in French, German and Spanish (either for continuers or beginners in German and Spanish) aim to give pupils a high level of written and oral fluency. Pupils studying the languages are assessed in reading, writing, listening and speaking. These skills are developed through pupils taking an active part in lessons and experimenting with the language. For an authentic language experience, students are encouraged to participate in exchanges and trips. We have a highly successful exchange visit to Potsdam near Berlin as well as a study trip to Spain and an activities trip to France. Pupils are strongly encouraged to participate, and examination results have reflected this participation. The department is fortunate to be very well equipped and has the services of native languages assistants in all three languages. Pupils find GCSE languages challenging but fun and, ultimately, increasingly useful in the world of education and business.

ENGLISH AS AN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE

All international pupils whose English level is below C1 (advanced) on the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR), study for IGCSE English as a Second Language, through a rigorous and challenging English course at advanced level.

The Edexcel International GCSE in English as a Second Language (ESL) is broadly equivalent to many of the benchmarks of Level B2 of the Council of Europe's Common European Framework of Reference for Languages. Students at this level are expected to: understand the main ideas of complex text about both concrete and abstract topics; interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes interaction possible without strain; produce clear, detailed text on a wide range of subjects; and explain a viewpoint on a topical issue, giving the advantages and disadvantages of various options. Students will be expected to communicate formally and informally in a range of contexts, and will also be expected to understand a wider range of texts, styles and registers than they can produce themselves. The aim of the Edexcel International GCSE in English as a Second Language (ESL) is to test English language competence through realistic and contextualised tasks based on authentic texts. Reading, writing and listening skills are tested through two examination papers. Speaking is tested through a face-to-face interview at School.

ANCIENT GREEK

Pupils who have enjoyed and excelled in their study of Latin in Years 7-8 may choose also to study ancient Greek as a separate subject in the 'Languages' option block at GCSE (taking the place of a modern language). While most students who choose ancient Greek will also be continuing with Latin as a GCSE option, this is not compulsory; though in practice any student considering Greek will discuss this with their Latin teacher at the time of making option choices.

The course takes students from beginners' level (Greek alphabet and words) through the basic and intermediate structures of the language (declensions, tenses, constructions) and on to reading original ancient Greek literature, especially extracts from Homer's Iliad and Odyssey (on the Trojan war and its aftermath) and prose selections from authors such as Plato (the philosophy of Socrates) and Herodotus (the history of the Persians and their war with Greece). The course is examined in exactly the same way as GCSE Latin: a paper of unprepared translation and comprehension, and two papers on the study of prepared literary texts (one verse, one prose).

Ancient Greek is an extremely rare subject at school level, and we are lucky to have the opportunity to offer it at Bromsgrove. It will appeal to those with a fascination with the ancient world (its history, mythology and archaeology) and enable them to experience it in a genuinely first-hand manner: through the words of its inhabitants and in the original language. Studying the ancient world through Greek - and Latin - is what the 'Classics' are truly about!

Pupils can, if they wish, study just one language for GCSE. However, either German or Latin can be added to French, Spanish or Ancient Greek to give them two languages at GCSE, and experience has shown that two languages very much complement one another and mutually enhance progress.

THE OPTION SUBJECTS - choose two

- Art
- Textiles
- Business Studies
- Classical Civilisation
- Design and Technology
- Drama
- English as an Additional Language
- Geography
- German
- History
- Latin
- Music
- Physical Education

Details of each course can be found below.

For details about Languages and Geography/History see the core subject details above.

ART and TEXTILES

There are two Art options at GCSE level. **GCSE Art** covers a range of both 2D and 3D media including painting, drawing, printmaking, sculpture and ceramics, photography, textiles, and site-specific art. **GCSE Textiles** allows pupils to focus on this area and specialises in surface pattern, dyed and screen printed techniques, machine and hand embroidery, and constructed textiles and sculptural work.

Both options afford pupils the opportunity to obtain a first-rate visual vocabulary and enhanced manipulative and problem-solving skills. Pupils are actively engaged in the creative process of art, craft and design in order to develop as effective and independent learners, and as critical and reflective thinkers with enquiring minds. Pupils become confident in taking risks and learn from experience when exploring and experimenting with ideas and processes. There is no formal written element although pupils develop critical understanding through investigative, analytical and expressive skills. This develops knowledge and understanding of art, craft and design in historical and contemporary contexts, societies and cultures. All essential for further study or employment in the creative and cultural industries

Art: Students are initially directed through teacher-led projects so that all experience an element of painting, drawing, printmaking, textiles and 3D work. Photography is usually treated as an activity to enable pupils to amass a rich portfolio of techniques and methods. Interwoven with these disciplines is the critical, analytical and contextual study or history of art component – essential for developing the understanding, procedures, influences and methodologies of artists. In the Fifth Form, pupils increasingly take greater ownership of their work and draw on their own cultural experiences, exhibiting an understanding of their strengths, limitations and artistic interests. Students need to be able to articulate their ideas and opinions in a fluent and coherent way both verbally and visually. Sketchbooks are used to compile source material, experiences and to work through ideas and concepts. Final outcomes may take any number of forms. Coursework = 60% Exam = 40%.

Textiles: involves the creation, selection and manipulation of textiles across a variety of practices. Embracing both traditional and contemporary technologies, a strong contextual element is also required as the work of textile artists, fashion designers and crafts people is explored. Natural and manufactured materials including paper, wire, tissue, plastics, recycled packaging, silk, wool, cotton, polyester and hessian are utilised. Disciplines include constructed textiles, digitally printed and sublimation dyed and screen-printed textiles, fine art textiles and fashion textiles. Pupils are required to work in one or more of these disciplines and although clearly not exclusively garment construction, many pupils take advantage of the qualified tailoring expertise of Department staff. Coursework = 60% Exam = 40%.

Pupils may opt for either Art or Textiles but not both.

BUSINESS

GCSE Business is an exciting and extremely relevant course with the focus on acquiring the necessary skills to aid decision making and problem solving. The harsh reality is that all of us will commence work at some point and knowledge of how organisations of all types are run and managed is a useful life skill. These skills are important whether you intend to run your own business or plan to play an important part in the management of another. Career aspirations in the traditional professions (law, accountancy etc) will be enhanced by the study of business.

The course is based upon the four functional areas of a business (Marketing, Finance, Human Resources and Operations Management) as well topics about business in the real world and influences on business. The course looks at everything from entrepreneurs to large multinational companies. There is increasing consideration of the external environment in which all organisations operate, as well as exploration of the impact of globalisation upon a business. Within the course, a great emphasis is placed on pupil-based learning and the course is particularly suited to those prepared to offer their views and opinions about given scenarios. Both case studies and current business issues are used to develop understanding of theories and concepts. This is critical, as the external assessments will be based upon real business situations.

Assessment consists of two examinations which require students to use their knowledge and understanding of topics taught and to apply it to given business contexts. Students will need to display a range of skills including the calculation, interpretation, use and limitation of quantitative data and the analysis of qualitative data relevant to a business context to support, inform and justify their business decisions.

The increasing importance and relevance of Business Studies is reflected in the wide range of Business courses on offer at university. If you have a genuine interest in current affairs and the way in which firms operate, the GCSE Business course offers an excellent introduction to the subject and a strong foundation for further study.

CLASSICAL CIVILISATION

'Class Civ' is a fascinating subject, looking at ancient **Greece** and **Rome** in all its aspects and by many means: archaeological remains, works of art, and written documents in translation - both practical (letters, inscriptions) and literary (poems, histories, plays, philosophy). Accordingly, no knowledge of ancient languages is required to take this subject at GCSE.

The course offers a varied look at two major themes on the ancient world: 'Myth and Religion', where ancient Greek and Roman myths are understood in the context of their relevance to religious and political life in the ancient world; and 'Roman City Life', looking in-depth at the types of building, living conditions, social and political organisation, and 'daily life' in several cities of Roman Italy (Rome, Ostia, Pompeii & Herculaneum). Each topic is worth 50% of the final assessment, and each examined at the end of the course.

Cultural study is enhanced by surveying a combination of literary, visual and archaeological source material from a well-defined list for each topic. Therefore, pupils will build up their knowledge using anything from the timeless stories of mythology or Homer's epics to the daily minutiae of a letter of Pliny or detail of an inscription, from the image of a Greek statue or painting from Pompeii to the purpose and construction of buildings such as the Parthenon or Colosseum.

An interest in history, literature and the ancient world in general are strong recommendations. No knowledge of Greek or Latin is required, and pupils do not need to have studied the subject previously.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

Design and Technology encourages learners to develop design and thinking skills that open up a world of possibility, giving them the tools to create the future. The subject excites and engages learners with contemporary topics seen in creative, engineering and manufacturing industries. It generates empathetic learners who have the ability to confidently critique products, situations and society in every walk of their lives now and in the future. Learners will be required to use critical thinking, leading towards invention and design innovation, to design and make prototypes that solve real and relevant problems, considering their own and others' needs, wants and values. Design and Technology is a subject that brings learning to life.

Within Design and Technology pupils learn how to use software such as Solidworks, Sketchup, Photoshop and Techsoft 2D Design. They utilise Computer Aided Manufacture with cutting edge manufacturing capability including 3D printers, laser cutters and CNC machinery to realise their ideas. Pupils are taught by teachers with a wide range of experience in industry, design and engineering and learn about materials and manufacturing processes as well as design methodologies that deal with the real world.

The assessment's written exam brings together students' broad 'core' knowledge and understanding together with 'In-depth' knowledge on at least one main material category. A minimum of 15% of the paper accesses learners' mathematical skills as applied within a design and technology context. A design challenge expressed through a portfolio and a prototype and taking approximately 40 hours to complete accounts for half of the final marks available.

The course not only provides pupils with the creative and dynamic skills needed for their GCSE but also sets them up to study the Product Design or Design Engineering A levels currently offered in the department. This can open up career paths in engineering, architecture, product design, and many other fields.

DRAMA

GCSE Drama allows pupils to foster creativity, personal growth, self-confidence, communication and analytical skills. It promotes involvement in and enjoyment of drama and theatre as performers, devisers, directors and designers. Students have the opportunity to study theatre texts from a literary and practical context, developing their skills as informed and thoughtful audience members.

Throughout the course, pupils have opportunities to participate in and interpret their own and others' drama. They investigate the forms, styles, and contexts of drama, learning to work collaboratively to develop ideas and the confidence to experiment with technical elements, as well as to reflect on their own and others' performances. Drama allows pupils to explore not only their own ideas, but also social, cultural and historical themes through the medium of theatre and to develop effective and creative ways of communicating those themes and ideas to an audience.

Pupils will have the opportunity to learn not only how to become effective performers, but also an understanding of how key performance styles have developed over time and about the conventions, ideas and processes involved in creating effective and engaging theatre performance. Through the study of both published plays and devised pieces, students develop both naturalistic and non-naturalistic approaches to performance, using a range of forms and strategies. Various elements that affect the way themes and character are communicated to an audience, such as use of space, lighting and gesture are also reflected upon. Work is contextualised through the study of key theatre practitioners.

The course is assessed through the development of a practical devised piece based on a stimulus and subsequent research, students acting in two scenes from a published play, and a final written examination, which assesses knowledge and understanding of theatre practices, techniques, and live performance. In the two practical components the student can choose whether to be assessed as a performer or in a production design role (lighting designer, set designer, costume designer, set and prop designer, or puppet designer).

LATIN

Pupils intending to take this course need to have studied Latin in Year 8.

This valuable and academically rigorous course enables pupils to develop a real fluency and competence in reading Latin – both for its own sake as the linguistic foundation of many modern European ('Romance') languages and (far more excitingly!) as a major language with which to understand the life, history and culture of the ancient world.

The GCSE course enables students to understand and translate 'unprepared' Latin, as well as giving them the opportunity to read Roman authors' works in the original language. Paper 1 tests language, and comprises stories for translation and comprehension: all new language and vocabulary for the course are completed by Easter of year 10, affording plenty of time to practice reading and translating. Papers 2 and 3 are based on 'set authors' which change every few years. These usually include extracts from the 'epic' poetry of Virgil's Aeneid, the histories of Julius Caesar and Tacitus, or the more personal poetry of authors like Catullus, Horace or Ovid. These texts are studied in great depth in class throughout the course, and the exams ask questions on their content, interpretation and style.

The primary reason for studying Latin should be personal interest in both language and in the ancient world; though it is also widely acknowledged that Latin develops a wide range of skills, including:

- competence in the intricacies of Latin language
- a sensitive and analytical approach to language more generally
- literary and linguistic analysis
- historical and contextual awareness of language and literature
- ability to make an informed and critical personal response to ancient ('source') material in the original language
- awareness of the continuing influence of the classical world on modern culture

MUSIC

GCSE Music shows potential universities and employers that you are creative, that you have the discipline required to learn an instrument and that you work well both individually and as part of a team. Music is constantly evolving, inspiring creativity and expression in a way that no other subject can. We know that every student has different learning styles and musical tastes, which is why this GCSE course values all music styles, skills and instruments. There are three component parts:

Understanding Music (40% of the total marks)

The only examined unit in the GCSE Music course is taken at the end of the Fifth Form, and regular 'active' listening exercises prepare students for this examination. Students learn how to listen perceptively to music through the study of a variety of styles, each of which can inform compositional ideas and performance skills. There are four areas of study which provide an appropriate focus for students to appraise, develop and demonstrate an in-depth knowledge and understanding of musical elements, musical context and musical language.

1. Western classical tradition 1650 – 1910
2. Popular music
3. Traditional music
4. Western classical tradition since 1910

Performing Music (30% of the total marks)

There are two performances to prepare: one solo, another as part of a group. Although some credit is given to those who perform more advanced music, there is no minimum standard and even the most modest piece can be submitted with great reward. Each performance is marked on accuracy, interpretation and expression. The two performances can be recorded (and re-recorded if necessary) at any point of the course but must be presented as one unedited take. The skills necessary for this component are mostly prepared in individual music lessons with specialist teachers, and by joining extra-curricular groups at School. Both of these activities are requirements of taking this subject at GCSE level.

Composing Music (30% of the total marks)

Students are required to compose two pieces of original music. One of these will be written to a brief set by AQA which will refer to a specific context (ie audience/occasion) and may include different stimuli such as a poem or a piece of text, photographs or film; the other gives the candidate a free choice of style. Composing music requires knowledge of notation, a desire to learn about various styles of music, and the dedication to create and develop musical ideas. Successful compositions contain a balance of repetition and contrast, and evidence that the candidate understands the capabilities and qualities of the instruments being written for. Musical scores are produced using the latest Sibelius or Garageband software.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

GCSE Physical Education is an exciting and stimulating subject for those who love taking part in sport and physical activity. It is designed to allow candidates to extend their knowledge in a wide range of topics from the way our bodies work and respond to exercise to the pathways athletes can take to the Olympics and on to how our brains process information to help us learn new sports skills. These diverse fields of study are divided into three units:

Unit 1: Applied Anatomy, Physiology and Physical Training

Unit 2: Socio-cultural Factors, Sports Psychology, Health, Fitness and Well-being

Unit 3: Practical Activity Assessment

Units 1 and 2 are each assessed through written exams at the end of the Fifth Form. Both papers are an hour long and comprise 30% of the final marks (60% altogether). The papers are a mixture of multiple choice, short and longer answer questions. Unit 3 contributes 40% to the final mark. Candidates will be assessed in their ability in their three strongest sports and will also complete an Analysis and Evaluation of Performance coursework assignment. This is an opportunity for candidates to allow their knowledge of their best sport to shine.

Practical assessment is on-going throughout the course and we tend to give candidates marks for a wide range of activities to allow us flexibility in maximising the scores of their final three sports. It is an advantage to be a strong performer, but it is certainly not a barrier to a high final grade if not. In addition to our main School sports, we can assess candidates in off-site activities such as snow sports, water sports or equestrianism.

SPECIFICATION DETAILS FOR EACH SUBJECT

SPECIFICATION TITLE	QUALIFICATION	EXAMINATION BOARD	SPECIFICATION CODE
Ancient Greek	GCSE	OCR	J292
Art, Craft & Design	GCSE	EDUQAS	C650QS
Art (Textiles)	GCSE	EDUQAS	C652QS
Biology*	GCSE	AQA	8461
Business	GCSE	AQA	8132
Chemistry*	IGCSE	EDEXCEL	4CH1
Classical Civilisation	GCSE	OCR	J199
Design & Technology	GCSE	OCR	J310
Drama GCSE	GCSE	AQA	8261
English (First Language)	GCSE	EDEXCEL	1ENO
English Literature	IGCSE	EDEXCEL	4ET1
English as a Second Language	IGCSE	EDEXCEL	4ES1A
French	GCSE	EDEXCEL	1FRO
Geography	GCSE	AQA	8035
German	GCSE	EDEXCEL	1GNO
History	GCSE	AQA	8145
Latin	GCSE	OCR	J282
Mathematics(Specification A)	IGCSE	EDEXCEL	4MA1
Additional Maths	FSMQ	OCR	6993
Music	GCSE	AQA	8271
Physical Education	GCSE	OCR	J587
Physics*	GCSE	AQA	8463
Religious Studies (Specification A)	GCSE	AQA	8061
Combined Science: Trilogy*	GCSE	AQA	8464
Spanish	GCSE	EDEXCEL	1SPO

* All pupils will study the AQA Combined Science: 'Trilogy' course in the Lower Fourth. Pupils may progress to specialise in the separate Biology, Chemistry and Physics (I)GCSE courses in the Upper Fourth, where assessment data supports this.

*German pupils would be expected to study triple award science from Upper Fourth onward to ensure that they comply with the requirements of the Abitur, if intending on pursuing higher education in Germany.

