



Holland Park School

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HOLLAND PARK SCHOOL

Key Stage Four Options | 2026 - 2028



Options Booklet

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The Options Process | 2026 - 2028

Introduction

Selecting your options subjects is a significant decision and one which requires careful thought and consideration. It is at this juncture you are able to indicate a preference for the subjects that you will study in the next two academic years; a first taste of academic freedom! This needn't be a complex process but it is worth asking the right questions: which subject is right for me? What if I don't know what I want to do? How can I best support my child? This booklet is designed to help parents and students make decisions about future programmes of study. It will help you to choose subjects that suit your aspirations and skills as well as your needs.

Please use all the information available to you: this booklet; advice from teachers; your tutors and your parents. It is important that you consult with your teachers and your tutors as they will be able to guide you and suggest whether they think a subject would suit you as a learner.

Once you have digested this information, please complete the options form which will be sent to the student email address you have provided to the school. Please remember that whilst every effort is made to ensure you have at least one of your first choice options, this is not always possible, so please ensure you would be happy taking your reserve options, if necessary.

MRS HILL
ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL

The Curriculum at Key Stage Four

The curriculum at Key Stage Four consists of a mixture of Core Subjects and Options Subjects. Students will be able to choose Options Subjects; Core Subjects are compulsory.

The Key Stage Four curriculum reflects the National Curriculum requirements and the curriculum policy of the school. The school aims to offer a broad and balanced curriculum. Whilst the school values a breadth of choice, it places equal emphasis on establishing the suitability of courses for students and on ensuring that the courses students select are appropriate to their needs.

Whilst all the qualifications offered have equal status, they do emphasise different skills and ways of learning. When making choices students must balance their skills and learning styles in order to pick courses on which they are likely to be successful.

What are GCSEs?

GCSE stands for General Certificate of Secondary Education. These qualifications are the most common sat

by students in Key Stage Four. The qualification usually involves studying the theory of a subject, combined with some investigative work. Some subjects also involve practical work. GCSEs are at levels 1 and 2 on the National Qualifications Framework, depending on the grade achieved (see the table below). All GCSE examinations are now graded from 9-1 rather than A*-G. A table of comparison is included below for your reference.

New grading structure	Current grading structure
9	A*
8	A
7	A
6	B
5	B
4	C
3	D
2	E
1	F
1	G
U	U

GOOD PASS (DPE)
5 and above = top of C and above

AWARDING
4 and above = bottom of C and above

Exam Boards will use a statistical method (known as comparable outcomes) so that:

- broadly the same proportion of students will achieve a grade 4, equivalent to an old grade C and above;
- broadly the same proportion of students will achieve a grade 7, equivalent to an old grade A and above;
- the bottom of grade 1 will be aligned with the bottom of grade G; and
- a grade 5 will be awarded to the top third of students gaining the equivalent of an old grade B.

What is a BTEC?

BTEC qualifications are equivalent to GCSEs. This means they are equally valued by employers. Usually, these courses have been designed in collaboration with industry, so they can equip students with the skills and knowledge that employers desire. The qualifications offer a mix of theory and practice. The main distinction in relation to learning between GCSEs and BTECs is that many BTEC qualifications still include an element of portfolio work, controlled assessment or coursework. This means it is assessed differently (with portfolio work contributing to the final qualification) and less pressure is placed on the final examination. They have the following equivalences to GCSE:

The Options Process | Tips and FAQs

Level 2 Vocational Award

Level 2 Distinction* = one 8/9 or A* at GCSE

Level 2 Distinction = one 7 or A at GCSE

Level 2 Merit = one 5/6 or B at GCSE

Level 2 Pass = one 4/5 or C at GCSE

Level 1 = one 3/2/1 or D/E/F/G at GCSE

What is the English Baccalaureate?

This was introduced by the Government in 2011 as a standard that some students can aim for in their KS4 studies. To achieve the English Baccalaureate, students must complete and obtain a Grade 4 or higher in the following subjects:

- maths;
- English language or literature;
- combined sciences;
- a language (e.g. Spanish, French or Latin); and
- either geography or history.

In order to obtain the English Baccalaureate, students will therefore need at least 4s in the subjects listed above. We expect all students to study one language and either history or geography at Key Stage 4.

Dates, Deadlines and Options Forms

Options forms will be completed online this year using a website called **TOOLS**. A link to the website will be sent to student email addresses and the options form will be visible and editable by parents who have signed up.

The deadline for the completion of the online options form will be **Monday 9th February 2026**. Students who miss this deadline will have options assigned to them.

Priority and Reserve choices

Students will be asked to indicate a first and reserve choice in particular blocks. Whilst every endeavour is made to ensure students are given at least one of their first choice options, this is not always possible given class size limitations. For example, it is only possible to run 2 x food technology classes due to the requirement for specialist classrooms. In the case that more students select an option than there are places available, places will be randomly allocated.

Advice for Students | Selecting your Subjects

Perhaps the most crucial questions to consider when making choices for GCSE are:

- 1) In what subjects have I already been successful?
- 2) What subjects do I enjoy and what are my interests?
- 3) Which subjects do I need for further education? It is rare for professions to make strong subject-specific demands for GCSEs. It is, however, important that you pick subjects which reflect what you might wish to go

on to study at Sixth Form or College.

When selecting your subjects it is important that you are guided by your subject teachers as they know your capabilities and the demands of each subject. You should think whether the option subjects you are choosing now fit in with what you will need for a further education or careers plan that you might have in mind for the future.

Top Tips for Choosing Subjects

Dos

- Do choose subjects which you enjoy.
- Do choose subjects in which you have been successful.
- Do take into account any requirements you might need for further education.
- Do find out everything that you can about the subject before you choose it. Once you have been assigned to your subject there will be no opportunity to switch as classes will have been filled.
- Do listen to the advice your subject teachers give you.

Don'ts

- Do not choose a subject because a friend has chosen it.
- Do not choose a subject because you like the teacher.
- Do not choose a subject without care and thought.
- Do not choose a subject because you think it will be easy.
- Do not ignore a subject that may be new to you. Find out about it.

What Independent Study can I expect?

Students will be expected to complete between 30 and 60 minutes of independent study a week for each of their GCSE subjects. Teachers will set this in lesson time and it will continue to be recorded on Teams.

We request that all parents monitor the recording and completion of independent study of their child. Should parents feel that their child is not receiving the correct amount of independent study, they should contact their child's subject teacher in the first instance to make enquiries.

How can I support my child at home?

- Monitor their workbooks and independent study.
- Test them on what has been covered in lessons over the course of a week.
- Ensure there is space at home for self-study.
- Ensure students balance school work and independent study with time to relax and engage in exercise or sport.
- Encourage your child to complete additional reading around their examination subjects.
- Engage your child in debate about topics they are studying.

Options and Your Future

Will my options affect my future?

It is always worth bearing in mind that the subjects you study at Key Stage 4 could affect your further education choices in the future. It is, however, most important that your subjects are chosen for the right reasons. There are only a limited number of courses and pathways which demand particular GCSEs and, to be transparent, GCSE choices have a very limited impact on university choices and pathways. At this stage of your academic career, it is more important that the subjects you choose to specialise in are compatible with those you might wish to study at Sixth Form, College, or that they feed into an Apprenticeship or employment route you have in mind.

If you have a particular career goal then it is always advisable to check which subjects are required for entry. To choose a subject that has presented you with difficulties in the past because it is needed for a particular career is not an advisable course of action – if you attain a low grade then this may not enable you to enter that profession, and if the subject plays a large part in the job then it might not be the right path for you. If you are considering higher education, then it is worth remembering that three or four subjects taken at GCSE might have to be studied to A Level for entry to university.

If you have no career ideas at present, that is perfectly normal at this stage. It is important, however, to consider what career areas you could be ruling out with your choices and be sure that you are happy about them.

In Tutor Time you will receive advice and information over the coming months on career-related issues, including impartial information on all the possible pathways open to you after Year 11 and guidance from Mr. McCarthy about any key actions you need to undertake.

The Sixth Form library is accessible with the permission of Mr. Arnold or Ms Hart and it contains a wealth of career-related information and university prospectuses.

There are also some very useful websites to aid your careers research:-

<https://nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk>

www.careerpilot.org.uk

www.icould.com

www.careersbox.co.uk

www.prospects.ac.uk/jobs-and-work-experience/ job-sectors

Thinking about University?

It may seem like a long time away, but if you are considering applying to a competitive university and especially a competitive course at a competitive university, it is important that you consider all the aspects of the entrance requirements, including the GCSE requirements.

It is important to note that aside from a few specific courses (listed below) there is a limited link between GCSE choices and university courses. For example, it is not necessary for a student to have studied computer science or business studies at GCSE in order to study it at university - a student's grade in mathematics is much more significant.

A summary below gives an indication of common courses which require certain GCSE requirements. Remember that these are only examples. It is important to check university websites for detailed requirements before applying.

- Applicants to study Medicine, Veterinary Medicine or Dentistry are usually required to have very good GCSE results (grades 8 and 9) in mathematics, science and English.

- For a degree in English, an A level in English is a must but universities may look for applicants to have a GCSE in a Modern Foreign Language, history or RE to complement this.

- Students hoping to study mathematics, accountancy, business, computer science or economics at university do not need to have any specific GCSEs other than mathematics. Students will be expected to have a strong pass (Grade 7 or above) in GCSE mathematics for many of these courses.

UCAS at www.ucas.com

This is the central organisation through which applications are processed for entry to higher education but it also includes information and services for prospective students.

Who can help me make my choices?

You should speak to: your tutor; your subject teachers; your HoY; Mr McCarthy (our career's advisor: robert.mccarthy@hollandparkschool.co.uk).

THE CURRICULUM STRUCTURE

The Curriculum | 2026 - 28

Students in Year 10 follow a core curriculum (this is compulsory and followed by all students) and then select FOUR options subjects that they will study for TWO years. All courses started in Year 10 will be examined at the end of Year 11.

The Core Curriculum

In Year 10, students will continue to study English, mathematics, science, personal development and PE as non-examined subjects. They will sit both English examinations at the end of Year 11. They will NOT take English language a year early. Students will also continue to study Religious Studies, and sit all examinations at the end of Year 10.

Options Subjects

Students select FOUR options subjects to study to GCSE level from the blocks below. Students will select one option from each Block, ensuring that their choices included a **language** (French, Spanish or Latin) and a **humanity** (geography or history). Students will be asked to choose two reserve choices for their other two choices, in case their first choices are full or unable to run.

BLOCK A
Spanish
French
History
Geography
Latin
Business Studies
Food Prep. & Nutrition

BLOCK B
Spanish
French
History
Geography
Art
Business Studies
Sports Science

BLOCK C
Spanish
French
History
Geography
Art
Computing
Textiles

BLOCK D
Sports Science or Sports Studies
Food and Nutrition
Music
Drama
Computing
Business
Photography

FAQs

Can my child select ANY GCSE subject?

All courses are available to all students, but our guidance is: Latin should only be chosen by students who have studied it at KS3.

How can I support my child at home?

A common hiccup for students in Year 10 is organisation and prioritisation as students learn to manage a more significant amount of work. Helping your child to prioritise their independent study, devise revision schedules and test them on their weekly learning across their GCSE and core subjects would be beneficial. It is also helpful for parents to keep in contact with their child's teachers about how they are managing their independent study at home. As mentioned previously, ensuring there is a quiet space at home for students to work helps to facilitate their progress. Similarly, setting clear boundaries for students about times to complete independent study and times for relaxation and socialising is also helpful.

Why must I take a language and a humanities subject?

We aim for our curriculum to be broad and balanced for all students and as such we expect all students to study at least one language and humanities subject (as dictated by the EBacc) to GCSE level. This is a non-negotiable part of our curriculum model. Some exceptions are made for students with EAL or SEN on a case-by-case basis. This would usually involve a reduction in the number of exams taken rather than a departure from the curriculum structure outlined above.

How to I select my options this year?

This year the school is using a system called TOOLS that will make selecting your options easier. You and your parents will receive a letter that will allow you to set up an account and then you simply select your preferred subjects.

Who can see what options I select?

Parents who sign up will have permission to view and edit your options alongside you. Your tutor will also be able to see and edit your options alongside you.

CORE SUBJECTS

2026 - 2028

GCSE RELIGIOUS STUDIES | CORE YEAR 10

What is GCSE Religious Studies?

Studying Religious Education at GCSE level enables you to learn about different religious and non-religious viewpoints as well as ethical theories. You will gain an in-depth knowledge of Christian and Buddhist beliefs and practices and you will apply these ideas to a range of topics such as Crime and Punishment, Peace and Conflict, Marriage and the Family and Matters of Life and Death.

The benefits of studying RE are:

1. You will develop your debating skills and learn to defend your views using evidence and logic;
2. You will come to understand what influences and motivates people's perspective and judgements;
3. You will explore a range of ethical issues which permeate our lives and begin to form or justify your own opinions in relation to these matters;
4. You will gain an appreciation for the complexity of tradition, culture and religion and how it influences daily life; and
5. You will consider complex philosophical matters such as the existence of life after death.

What skills will I develop?

RE is predominantly an essay-based course. Your examination will include a mixture of shorter answer questions as well as longer essay questions which require you to formulate a line of argument, explain different viewpoints, evaluate the success of these views and justify your conclusion. RE is also a great opportunity to listen to the views of others and defend your own opinions through regular debates and discussions. Studying RE will require you to learn quotations from Christian and Buddhist scriptures.

What specification will I follow?

GCSE Religious Studies B

A link to the specification can be found here:
<https://qualifications.pearson.com/content/dam/pdf/GCSE/Religious%20Studies/2016/Specification%20and%20sample%20assessments/Specification-GCSE-L1-L2-Religious-Studies-B-June-2016-Draft-4.pdf>

What will I study?

Paper 1 | Buddhism: Religion and Ethics. This includes the study of Buddhist beliefs, practices, and the application of these views to various issues within the topics of Marriage and the Family and Matters of Life and Death, for example, Buddhist views on gender equality

and ethical dilemmas such as abortion, euthanasia and animal rights.

Paper 2 | Christianity: Peace and Conflict. This includes the study of Christian beliefs, practices and the application of these views to various issues within the topics of Peace and Conflict and Crime and Punishment, for example, questions of the treatment of criminals and whether Christians should go to war.

How will I be assessed?

There are two examinations at the end of the course:

Paper 1: Buddhism: Religion and Ethics (1 hour 45 minutes)

Paper 2: Christianity: Peace and Conflict (1 hour 45 minutes)

The examinations include shorter answer questions and four extended evaluative essays.

What do people who study Religious Studies go on to do?

RE is a broad subject which develops essay-writing and evaluation skills therefore people who have studied RE have gone on to work in the following sectors: law, business, sales, management, marketing, research, teaching, childcare, politics, academia, international relations, foreign affairs.

Questions about this course can be directed to: poppy.
metherell@hollandparkschool.co.uk

Who should I speak to if I have any questions?

Mrs Bertie, 3.6



GCSE ENGLISH LANGUAGE | CORE

What is GCSE English Language?

Understanding how writers try to manipulate what we think and feel – whether in a newspaper article about immigration or a description of a character – and being able to do that manipulating in your own writing is the key focus. Paper 1, Explorations in Creative Reading and Writing, focuses on fiction writing: there are four reading questions in response to an extract from a novel or short story followed by a chance to explore your own creative writing. In Paper 2, Writers' Viewpoints and Perspectives, two non-fiction extracts provide an opportunity to work out how a writer feels about an issue and how they try to make us feel similarly through four reading questions. There is then a chance to write a speech, article, or other non-fiction text. The spoken language unit will emphasise the importance of the wider benefits that speaking and listening skills have for students.

What skills will I develop?

For GCSE English Language students will:

- read fluently, and with good understanding, a wide range of texts from the 19th 20th and 21st centuries, including literature and literary non-fiction as well as other writing such as reviews and journalism;
- read and evaluate texts critically and make comparisons between texts;
- summarise and synthesise information or ideas from texts
- use knowledge gained from wide reading to inform and improve their own writing;
- write effectively and coherently using Standard English appropriately;
- use grammar correctly and punctuate and spell accurately;
- acquire and apply a wide vocabulary, alongside a knowledge and understanding of grammatical terminology, and linguistic conventions for reading, writing and spoken language; and
- listen to and understand spoken language and use spoken Standard English effectively.

What specification will I follow?

AQA GCSE English Language

A link to the specification is included below:

<https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/english/gcse/english-language-8700>

How will I be assessed?

All texts in the examinations will be unseen.

Paper 1 | Explorations in Creative Reading and Writing

is a written examination of 1 hour 45 minutes. Section A (Reading) is based on a literature fiction text and students will answer 1 short form question, 2 longer form questions and 1 extended question. Section B (Writing) is based upon descriptive or narrative writing and students will write one extended written response with marks for content and technical accuracy.

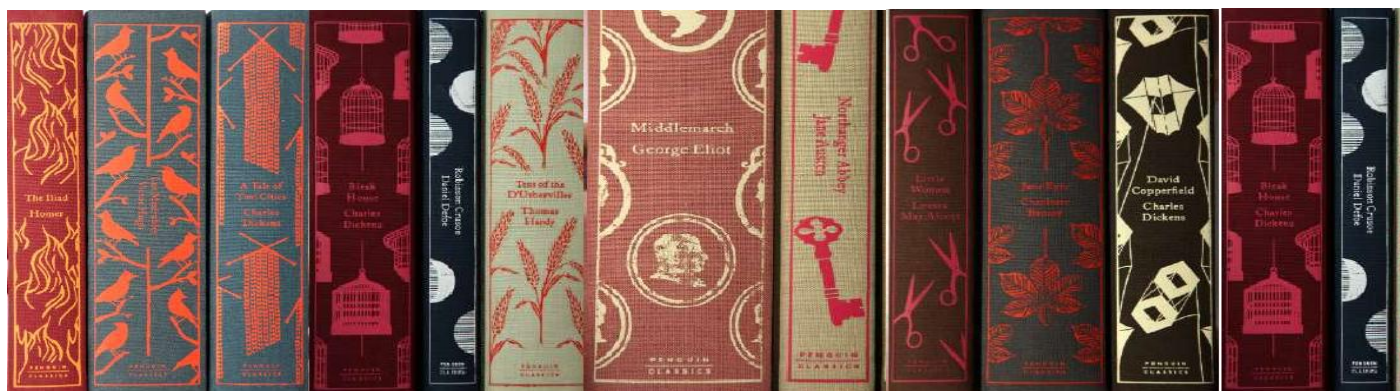
Paper 2 | Writers' Viewpoints and Perspectives

is a written examination of 1 hour and 45 minutes. Section A (Reading) is based on two non-fiction texts. Section B (Writing) asks students to write to present a viewpoint; students will write one extended answer worth 40 marks.

Non-examination Assessment | Spoken Language. Students will be assessed on their presentation skills, capacity to use Standard English and respond to questions and feedback. This is assessed by the teacher, not externally.

Who should I speak to if I have any questions?

Mr Waterhouse room 4.02



GCSE ENGLISH LITERATURE | CORE

What is GCSE English Literature?

Students will study a range of literature from Shakespeare through to the present day. Our chosen specification encourages students to embed a passion for reading, an understanding of writers' intentions and methods and spark discussion about human nature, culture and context.

What will I study?

Students will study four texts: Shakespeare's play, *Macbeth*, a 19th century novel (Charles Dickens' *A Christmas Carol*), a modern prose (George Orwell's *Animal Farm*) and a cluster of 15 poems thematically linked by the theme of Power and Conflict. There will also be a focus on students' ability to interpret unseen poems.

How will I be assessed?

Students will sit two examinations; both are closed book.

Paper 1: Shakespeare and the 19th-century novel | This is a written examination of 1 hour 45 minutes. Students will answer 1 question on the Shakespeare play they have studied and 1 question on the 19th-century novel they have studied.
40% of GCSE

Paper 2: Modern texts and Poetry | This is a written paper of 2 hours 15 minutes. Section A will require students to write one essay from a choice of two on the studied modern prose. Section B will require students to answer one comparative question about a poem printed in the paper and one other poem from their chosen anthology cluster. Section C, unseen poetry, will require students to answer one question on one unseen poem and one question comparing this poem with a second unseen poem.
60% of GCSE

Who should I speak to if I have any questions?

Mr Waterhouse room 4.02

What specification will I follow?

AQA GCSE English Literature (8702)

The specification can be found here:

<https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/english/gcse/english-literature-8702>

What skills will I develop?

- **literal and inferential comprehension:** understanding a word, phrase or sentence in context; exploring aspects of plot, characterisation, events and settings;
- **critical reading:** identifying the theme and distinguishing between themes; supporting a point of view by referring to evidence in the text; recognising the possibility of and evaluating different responses to a text; using understanding of writers' social, historical and cultural contexts to inform evaluation;
- **evaluation of a writer's choice of vocabulary, grammatical and structural features:** analysing and evaluating how language, structure, form and presentation contribute to quality and impact;
- **comparing texts:** comparing and contrasting texts studied, referring where relevant to theme, characterisation, context (where known), style and literary quality; comparing two texts critically with respect to the above; and
- **writing critically with confidence and flair:** writing effectively about literature synthesising understanding of plot and character with close textual analysis and contextual knowledge.

Recommended Reading:

Context and understanding of writers' styles will assist students in their study of the set texts. Therefore students will benefit from reading more works from the following authors ahead of commencing this course in Year 11:

- Charles Dickens;
- George Orwell and
- William Shakespeare

Students will also benefit from extending their knowledge of poetry. Collections by Simon Armitage, Carol Ann Duffy, Ted Hughes, Seamus Heaney, John Agard and Wilfred Owen offer good introductions.



GCSE SCIENCE | CORE

What is GCSE Science?

Science is a set of ideas about the material world. In this course you will be investigating, observing, experimenting or testing out ideas and thinking about them using empirical methods. Science GCSE enables students to learn about the theory of many biological, chemical and physical aspects of our world as well as investigate these through core practical experiments. This will involve talking about, reading and writing about science as well as representing science in its many forms both mathematically and visually through models.

This specification encourages the development of knowledge and understanding in science through opportunities for working scientifically. Working scientifically is the sum of all the activities that scientists do.

What skills will I develop?

Students will:

- develop their practical skills through a range of required practical experiments carried out in lessons;
- Use scientific theories and explanations to develop hypotheses;
- Understand how scientific methods and theories develop over time;
- Use a variety of models such as representational, spatial, descriptive, computational and mathematical to solve problems, make predictions and to develop scientific explanations and understanding of familiar and unfamiliar facts;
- Appreciate the power and limitations of science and consider any ethical issues which may arise;
- Present observations and other data using appropriate methods;
- Present reasoned explanations including relating data to hypotheses; and

Carry out and represent mathematical and statistical analysis.

What specification will I follow?

Students will follow either the Triple or Combined - Trilogy curriculum for Science.

Students studying the Triple Science curriculum will finish Year 11 with three GCSEs separately graded for Biology, Chemistry and Physics. Students studying the Combined – Trilogy Science curriculum will finish Year 11 with two GCSEs combined, such as 7:6 or 6:6, with no distinction being made for differing performances across the three science disciplines.

AQA GCSE Combined Science: Trilogy
A link to the specification can be found here:

<https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/science/gcse/combined-science-trilogy-8464>

AQA Biology, AQA Chemistry and AQA Physics.

The links to each specification can be found here:

<https://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/biology/specifications/AQA-8461-SP-2016.PDF>

<https://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/chemistry/specifications/AQA-8462-SP-2016.PDF>

<https://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/physics/specifications/AQA-8463-SP-2016.PDF>

How will I be assessed?

There are six papers: two biology, two chemistry and two physics. Each of the papers will assess knowledge and understanding from distinct topic areas. The content of the papers will be dependent on whether you are following the Triple or Combined - Trilogy curriculum

Will I be following the Triple of Combined curriculum?

Students in sets 1 and 2 will follow the Triple Science curriculum whilst those in sets 3 and 4 will follow the Combined - Trilogy curriculum. Sets for Year 10 science will be determined by students' performance on the End of Year 9 Science Assessments. There will not be an opportunity for students to opt-in to Triple Science unless this is supported by evidence of aptitude in assessed conditions.

Foundation and Higher Tiers for Combined

Students will either sit the Higher or Foundation Tier paper in Combined Science. The Foundation Tier paper enables students to achieve Grade 1 - 5, whereas the Higher Tier paper is graded from 5-9. Students' performance in internal examinations between September and January of Year 11 will be used to determine which Tier of paper students will sit.

Can I still study science at A level if I have followed the Combined course?

The minimum requirement for entry onto the A level course is either a 7 in Triple or 7:7 in Combined.

Who should I speak to if I have any questions?

Mr Baptiste, room 2.11

GCSE MATHEMATICS| CORE



What is GCSE Mathematics?

The aims and objectives of the Edexcel GCSE (9–1) in Mathematics are to enable students to:

- develop fluent knowledge, skills and understanding of mathematical methods and concepts;
- acquire, select and apply mathematical techniques to solve problems;
- reason mathematically, make deductions and inferences, and draw conclusions; and
- comprehend, interpret and communicate mathematical information in a variety of forms appropriate to the information and context.

What will I study?

- 1 Number (structure and calculation, fractions, decimals and percentages, measures and accuracy).
- 2 Algebra (notation, vocabulary and manipulation, graphs, solving equations and inequalities, sequences)
- 3 Ratio, proportion and rates of change
- 4 Geometry and measures (properties and constructions, mensuration and calculation, vectors)
- 5 Probability
- 6 Statistics

What specification will I follow?

Edexcel GCSE Mathematics

A link to the specification can be found here:
<https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/edexcel-gcses/mathematics-2015.html>

How will I be assessed?

The qualification consists of three equally-weighted written examination papers at either Foundation tier or Higher tier.

Paper 1 is a non-calculator assessment and a calculator is allowed for Paper 2 and Paper 3.

Each paper is 1 hour and 30 minutes long. Each paper has 80 marks. There is no coursework which contributes towards the final Grade; the GCSE is achieved through external examinations only.

Foundation and Higher Tiers

Students will either sit the Higher or Foundation Tier paper in mathematics. The Foundation Tier paper enables students to achieve Grade 1 - 5, whereas the Higher Tier paper is graded from 5-9. Students' performance in internal examinations between September and January of Year 11 will be used to determine which Tier of paper students will sit.

What do mathematicians go on to do?

Mathematics is a key subject which enables access to a whole host of different careers. People who enjoy mathematics and choose to study it to an advanced level might go on to study engineering, medicine, architecture, research, accountancy and finance, data analysis, insurance, software development, the Civil Service...to name a few!

Who should I speak to if I have any questions?

Ms Neary or Ms Bailey

SUBJECT OPTIONS

2026 - 2028

GCSE ART AND DESIGN



What is GCSE Art and Design?

Creativity, or as the late art critic John Berger preferred to describe it as “the act of giving form to what we receive” is at the heart of every area of our lives. GCSE Art provides students a chance to develop and nurture this life affirming activity, both visually and conceptually, developing their own unique approach to the visual arts with the support of their teacher.

You will learn from direct teaching, peer learning, presentations, gallery and exhibition trips, reflective reading and writing as well as visits from professional practitioners working in the creative sectors. All art students are encouraged to experiment and will have the opportunity to use a wide range of materials including, but not limited to, painting, drawing, sculpture, video, installation, photography, performance and printmaking.

Five reasons you should study art:

1. Infinity: the possibilities for personal expression are endless, making it exciting and challenging.
2. Independence: art GCSE is the only subject where you get to decide what you study! You will need to be highly self-motivated and independent, but you also get to choose the avenues of your creative journey and tailor it to your own strengths and interests.
3. Flexibility: you will have the opportunity to work across a range of artistic disciplines, allowing for a huge scope for individually tailored research and development.
4. Knowledge: as well as improving your technical skills, you will also gain a strong grounding in the theoretical and conceptual underpinnings of visual culture.
5. Transferrable skills: the resourcefulness and problem-solving skills you learn in art can be applied to any subject or career.

What skills will I develop?

You will develop a portfolio of work that demonstrates your creativity and understanding of contemporary and historical art. Alongside improving your technical expertise in a range of different processes, materials and techniques, you will learn how to:

- Develop and refine your ideas;
- Present a personal response that realises your intentions;
- Effectively use visual language and the formal elements to create powerful images; and
- Conduct independent research.

What skills do I need to possess?

In order to achieve the highest results and benefit fully from the course, you will need to have:

- Strong technical drawing skills;
- An understanding of photography;
- An ability to think imaginatively and creatively;
- An ability to critically analyse your own work and the work of others;
- An open mind and a confidence in taking creative risks.

What specification will I follow?

Edexcel GCSE Art and Design

A link to the specification can be found here:

<https://qualifications.pearson.com/content/dam/pdf/GCSE/Art%20and%20Design/2016/specification-and-sample-assessments/gcse-art-design-2016-spec.pdf>

GCSE ART AND DESIGN

What will I study?

The course is split into two sections:

Component 1: Coursework Portfolio (60%)

This is a sustained project, responding to a theme set by the school which evidences the journey from initial engagement to the realisation of intentions. As well as practical work, this portfolio must demonstrate the research and critical study of artists which connect with the chosen area of study.

Component 2: Exam (40%)

This is a shorter project, where students respond to starting point from an externally set paper. A preparatory period is then followed by 10 hours of supervised time in which to create a final outcome

Recommended Reading

The Story of Art, E.M. Gombrich

Ways of Seeing, J. Berger

Painting Today, Pub: Phaidon

Art Today, pub: Phaidon

Vitamin P series, pub: Phaidon

How will I be assessed?

Both your coursework and exam portfolios will be assessed using the following assessment objectives.

AO1 (25%): develop ideas through investigations, demonstrating critical understanding of sources.

AO2 (25%): refine work by exploring ideas, selecting and experimenting with appropriate media, materials, techniques and processes.

AO3 (25%): record ideas, observations and insights relevant to intentions and demonstrate understanding of visual language.

AO4 (25%): present a personal and meaningful response that realises intentions and demonstrates understanding of visual language.

What do artists go on to do?

"Employees with an art degree have developed more quickly in their roles from the start. They have discipline, confidence and can accept criticism."

- Steve Jobs

There is an increasing demand for creative and innovative people in industry and business. Students who have studied art have gone on to work in the following sectors: film, animation, antiques dealing, architecture, costume design, theatre, fashion design, fine artist, curator, floristry, furniture design, design engineering, interior design, jewellery design, graphic design, illustration, photography, production design, tattooing, textile design, web design, teaching and education.

Art presents opportunities to develop lifelong skills in analysis, research, interpretation and creative execution.

Who should I speak to if I have any questions?

Ms Tukacevska, room 3.14



GCSE BUSINESS STUDIES

What is GCSE Business Studies?

It is difficult to imagine a world without businesses. They make up the very fabric of our culture, define many options available to us and provide the government with capital to enact its manifesto commitments.

GCSE Business Studies is a course that introduces students to the concepts that undergird businesses: the management of human resources and material resources; economic principles that determine value, supply and demand; calculative concepts that allow for forecasts, predictions and measures of success; legal considerations which secure the principles of business management.

What skills will I develop?

This is a course that is wide ranging in its development of skills. It will hone the capacity of students to make business decisions, to determine best possible outcomes, to understand potential pitfalls in any plan. It is a course that cultivates critical thinking and the capacity to make sense of reasonably complex business conundra. It also develops numeracy and capacity to calculate. For those interested in studying law at a later date, this is a good course for understanding how a large part of British society is organised, structured and defined.

What specification will I follow?

This is GCSE Business Studies 9-1 Edexcel.
A link to the specification can be found here:
<https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/edexcel-gcses/business-2017.html>

What will I study?

The curriculum is split into two themes theme 1: investigating small businesses. This theme closely looks at starting up a business, topics include; enterprise and entrepreneurship, spotting a business opportunity, putting a business idea into practice, making a business effective and understanding external influences on business. Theme 2 will then seek to explore building a business with topics including; growing the business, making marketing decision, making operational decisions, making financial decisions, making human resource decisions.

Who should I speak to if I have any questions?

Ms Kanso, room 2.8

How will I be assessed?

The whole course is assessed in two written papers each one hour and 45 minutes in length. Paper 1 investigates small businesses and Paper 2 focuses on building a business. The assessments are out of 90 marks and students must answer all the questions on both papers.

During the course, students will have opportunities to develop their subject knowledge by writing examination answers, by demonstrating the accumulation of subject knowledge and by lesson assessments. There will be a practice examination opportunity during the course.

What do students of Business Studies go on to do?

Students of business studies are versatile and go on to do all sorts of activities. Some may enter law, developing as they do an understanding of business law during the process of the course. Some may use it to enter government, journalism or the civil service as an understanding of the private sector is invariably important in each of those industries. It is possible that some will become entrepreneurs themselves, or enter the financial services industry, or go on to study for an MBA. The wonderful thing about Business Studies is that, rather than being limiting, it is entirely enabling.

Recommended Reading

The Freakonomics series is very good and well worth reading. Oxford University Press' Capitalism: A Very Short Introduction also serves as a very useful starting point for this course. For those wishing to go beyond obvious introductions, any classical understanding of economics is quirky way into Business Studies, particularly enlightenment works from the likes of Adam Smith and David Hume.



GCSE CLASSICAL CIVILISATION

What is GCSE Classical Civilisation?

Classical Civilisation GCSE provides learners with a broad, coherent and rewarding study of the culture of the classical world. It offers learners the opportunity to study elements of the literature and visual/material culture of the classical world, and acquire an understanding of their social, historical and cultural contexts. Classical Civilisation focuses on the civilisations of Greece and Rome, and is a wide-ranging subject involving the study of literature, art, artefacts, archaeological sites, and the ancient historical context.

Why should you study Classical Civilisation?

1. You don't need to know any languages, all the texts are in translation, so it doesn't matter if you haven't studied Latin before; all you need is an interest in the Ancient World and its cultures.
2. The classical world is fascinating! From women in the Ancient World, to the study of religious beliefs and ancient ideas about war, Classical Civilisation involves interesting discussions about things that are still important today. As Peter Jones put it in 'Taking the Long view': "... men grappled with exactly the same issues that we do: life, death, gods, sex, love, family, children, education, the nature of the world, our origins and development, the past, money, health, status, other cultures, friendship, power, patriotism, politics, law, crime, justice, empire, war."
3. This immersive and engaging subject is the broadest approach to an interdisciplinary field, incorporating the study of history, literature, language, art, philosophy, archaeology and other areas.

What skills will I develop?

Classical Civilisation is just as useful as other humanities subjects like History, Geography and Religious Studies. Subjects like this give you really good skills such as essay writing and source analysis, and teach you how to structure a good argument. They show you are good at thinking and evaluating, and also that you have an interest in people and cultures. If you are planning to go on to sixth form then Classical Civilisation GCSE is great preparation for A Levels in a wide variety of subjects, from Art History to Politics to Law. It is usually counted alongside your other humanities choices when sixth forms are looking at your application. If you want to go on to do vocational courses at sixth form, or go straight into the working world after your GCSEs, Classical Civilisation gives you a really wide range of knowledge and skills that you can use. Employers will be able to see that you are someone with broad interests who can

communicate their ideas well.

What specification will I follow?

OCR GCSE Classical Civilisation

A link to the specification can be found here:

<https://www.ocr.org.uk/Images/315240-specification-accrued-gcse-classical-civilisation-j199.pdf>

What will I study?

Thematic Study (50%)

A 1 hour 30 minute written paper, either on 'Myth and Religion' or on 'Women in the Ancient world'. This component involves a comparative study of ancient Greece and Rome, and combines literary and visual/ material sources.

Literature and Culture (50%)

A 1 hour 30 minute written paper either on 'The Homeric World', 'Roman City Life' or 'War and Warfare'. All of these components contain two elements; one in-depth cultural study and one study of related literature.

What do Classical Civilisation graduates go on to study?

Students who have studied Classical Civilisation have gone on to work in the following sectors: law, journalism, publishing, archaeology, management, research, teaching, travel and tourism, marketing, sales, curation and arts management, heritage manager, politics, the civil service and diplomacy, translation and working internationally.

Who can I speak to for more information?

Ms Hart, 2.25 or Mr Gammon, 2.05

GCSE COMPUTER SCIENCE

What is GCSE Computer Science?

Computer science is a diverse subject with lots of applications. Computer scientists design new software, solve computing problems, and develop diverse ways to use technology. At the heart of the subject, all computer scientists rely on computational thinking. Computational thinking involves looking at a problem and working out a way a computer might be able to help one solve it. To do this, one needs to understand how computers can be manipulated to solve these problems. GCSE Computer Science introduces students to computational thinking by equipping students with the knowledge and understanding of how computers work and how they can be used to assist both individuals and society as a whole.

What skills will I develop and what will I study?

Students will develop a set of computational thinking skills that enable them to understand how computers work and how to use computers to solve complex problems. Students will become competent at designing, reading, writing, and debugging computer programs. They will be able to apply their skills to produce robust programs and contribute to the analysis, modification and improvement of existing algorithms. Students will learn about data representation, types of languages and code translation. They will gain valuable programming experience in both python and SQL and develop a firm understanding of the building blocks of programming (data structures). Furthermore, they will also develop a comprehensive understanding of hardware, software, cloud computing and embedded systems alongside an inquisition into the components of the CPU, the role of an OS and how each topic is connected through intricate use of computational thinking principles.

Many computer applications in use today would not be possible without networks. Students will understand the key principles behind the organization and set-up of computer networks. They will further develop their understanding of known dangers of using networks and how to provide solutions to complex network threats such as malware. Additionally, students will be aware of the influence of computing technology and recognize that computing has an impact on nearly every aspect of the world in which they live. They will, therefore, study the impact of computers on the lives of individuals and on society. By the end of the course, students will understand and apply the fundamental principles and concepts of computer science, including abstraction, decom-

position, logic, algorithms and data representation. They will analyse problems in computational terms through practical experience of solving such problems including designing, writing, and debugging programs. Students will think creatively, innovatively, analytically and logically.

What specification will I follow?

OCR Computer Science (J277)

How will I be assessed?

For J277/01, students will learn about computer systems and their inner workings including: Systems architecture, Memory and storage , Computer networks, connections and protocols, Network security, Systems software and ethical, legal, cultural and environmental impacts of digital technology.

For J277/02, students will learn about Computational thinking, algorithms and programming including the key topics: Algorithms, Programming fundamentals , Producing robust programs, Boolean logic and Programming languages and Integrated Development Environments. Students will also receive consistent opportunities to program using python and develop a series a programs on a weekly basis to maintain proficiency.

What do students of Computer Science go on to do?

This course provides an excellent pathway for students to learn topics that will directly impact their ability to seek a successful degree and eventual career in computer science, while giving an accurate view of the professional requirements of a computer scientist.

Computer Science is a highly specialised qualification which prepares students for the competitive IT industry as it continues to expand. Students who continue to study Computer Science to A level or degree level will have the ability to progress to many potential careers in industries including:

- web development
- software engineering
- games development
- cybersecurity
- Data science
- AI

Who can I contact for more information?

Ms Padhee, 1.19

GCSE DRAMA

What is GCSE Drama?

GCSE Drama offers students many opportunities involve themselves in performance, it is best suited to those who are interested in developing an understanding of the different roles and responsibilities of people involved in theatre productions. All students explore texts practically and have the opportunity to create their own original drama. GCSE Drama offers students the opportunity to explore drama as a practical art form in which ideas and meaning are communicated to an audience through choices of form, style and convention. Students will create, perform and respond to drama informed by their theoretical knowledge of drama and theatre.

What specification will I follow?

AQA GCSE Drama (9-1) 8261

A link to the specification is included below:

<https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/drama/gcse/drama-8261>

What will I study?

Students will develop their understanding of dramatic works by studying the characteristics of performance texts and dramatic works, focusing on core attributes such as character, form and language. They will consider the social, cultural and historical contexts of these dramatic works and how meaning is both interpreted and communicated through devices such as the use of space, design, lighting and sound. Students will also learn about the various roles and responsibilities held by theatre makers including everyone from performers and directors to sound technicians and set designers.

Students will study one set play. This year *Blood Brothers* by Willy Russell was studied and analysed, this may include A. Miller's 'The Crucible' in the future as well as Dennis Kelly's 'DNA'. Students will use the theoretical knowledge and understanding they have developed to inform their own practical work.

Who should I speak to if I have any questions?

Ms Tate, 4.10

How will I be assessed?

Component 1: Understanding Drama (40% - Written). This unit assesses students' knowledge and understanding of drama and theatre. Students will study one set play and analyse and evaluate the work of live theatre makers. It is assessed in a written examination of 1 hour 45 minutes and students are permitted access to the text studied during the examination.

Component 2: Devising Drama (Practical - 40%). This is a practical element of the course. It examines students' capacity to create devised drama, perform it and analyse and evaluate their own work. It is assessed through a log book and the performance. It is marked by teachers and moderated by AQA.

Component 3: Texts in Practice (Practical- 20%) Students will perform two extracts from one play (students may contribute as a performer or designer). This unit is marked by AQA.

What do students of Drama go on to do?

- Students of GCSE Drama find that their skills in presentation, volume and confidence increases substantially throughout the course.
- Studying Drama often helps to develop students analytical writing and understanding of Shakespearean language- a skill of paramount importance at GCSE.
- Collaboration and support of peers underpins the GCSE Drama experience, teaching students about team work and communication.
- Students can go on to study A level Drama.
- Careers involving skills learnt during a Drama GCSE qualification range from theatre and television to Marketing, Teaching and any profession that values presentation skills.



GCSE FOOD PREPARATION AND NUTRITION



How will I be assessed?

Paper 1: Food preparation and Nutrition - this is a written paper of 1 hour and 45 minutes. There is a mix of multiple choice questions and 5 essay style questions. This paper is worth 50% of the GCSE

NEA (non-exam assessment) This assessment is based on practical tasks. Task 1 focuses on students' understanding of the working characteristics, functional and chemical properties of ingredients. It is assessed through a written report of 1500-2000 words. Task 2 is a food preparation assessment and focuses on students planning, preparation, cooking, presentation of food and application of nutrition. It is assessed through the submission of a portfolio including photographic evidence.

What is GCSE Food and Nutrition?

This new GCSE Food Preparation and Nutrition is an exciting and creative course which focuses on practical cooking skills to ensure students develop a thorough understanding of nutrition, food provenance and the working characteristics of food materials. At its heart, this qualification focuses on nurturing students' practical cookery skills to give them a strong understanding of nutrition.

What do students go on to do?

Upon completion of this course, students will be qualified to go on to further study, or embark on an apprenticeship or full time career in the catering or food industries.

Who should I speak to if I have any questions?

Mr Egleton, 2.15

What skills will I develop?

You will develop core knowledge relating to food preparation, safety and nutrition as well as a wide range of practical skills. Over the course you will prepare and present a range of different dishes and meals that utilise the theoretical knowledge you have learnt.

What specification will I follow?

AQA Food Preparation and Nutrition

<https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/food/gcse/food-preparation-and-nutrition-8585/specification-at-a-glance>

What will I study?

Food preparation skills are integrated into five core topics:

- Food, nutrition and health
- Food science
- Food safety
- Food choice
- Food provenance.

There is more specific information here:

<https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/food/gcse/food-preparation-and-nutrition-8585/subject-content>



GCSE FRENCH

What is GCSE French?

French GCSE will develop your understanding of the language and culture of France and other Francophone countries. It will equip you with the skills necessary to be able to communicate confidently and accurately in the French language. A strong basis in the language will be established providing a secure enough grounding so as to enable you to live and work in France or the Francophone world in the future. It will also develop your language-acquisition skills in general, which will make learning other languages easier.

Languages qualifications are a valuable asset. Once considered the preserve of only the ablest students, Holland Park School is immensely proud of its longstanding success in assisting all of its students to leave school with at least one foreign language qualification. Our results in this area have consistently been at the top end of performance when compared with schools nationwide.

Here are five reasons you should study French:

1. To possess the ability to communicate in a language other than one's own is a rich and rewarding skill that is as economically valuable as it is culturally enriching. There is barely a week that passes when we do not hear employers or organisations bemoan the lack of language skills amongst the UK workforce. To have a foreign language qualification is to advantage oneself professionally. Languages students are among the most employable graduates (journalism, publishing, marketing, public service, banking, teaching, IT...). Bi/multilingual staff are valued in the job market and often earn more.
2. To become a better global citizen. In an increasingly globalised and interconnected world, to speak just one language is to limit one's scope of potential and opportunity for the range of relationships and experiences, professional and social, which will be available to you. 75% of the world's population can't speak English!
3. To demonstrate your capacity to undertake and succeed in what is recognised as an intellectually demanding and academically rigorous course. Employers and prestigious universities will be impressed by a suite of qualifications that includes a modern foreign language; a foreign language GCSE is necessary for the EBACC. It helps you to understand your own language better – including grammar, vocabulary, and communication skills, and even improves your memory and brain function. Languages improve your overall performance at school – academic results indicate this is especially true in reading, vocabulary and maths. Studies have even shown that people who speak more than one language tend to have lower rates of dementia in later life.
4. French is one of the few subjects that you can study which is both highly academic and practical. It is directly transferable from the classroom into the real world and can be used from the moment it is learnt in real life contexts.
5. You can access a wealth of Francophone culture in the original language, which is an immensely enriching but also empowering experience. It enhances your travel experiences as you can travel the world more easily and gain different perspectives on different countries and cultures. As language and culture are linked, you can develop your appreciation for films, TV, books, poetry in their original language.



GCSE FRENCH



What skills will I develop?

Alongside the acquisition of a broad vocabulary and sound working knowledge of French grammar, you will develop the ability to communicate more effectively. Gaining a greater understanding of how language works, is manipulated and constructed, will enhance your capacity to speak, read and write in your first language(s). Your literacy levels – both spoken and written - will improve and you can expect to enhance your memory and intellectual skill.

What do linguists go on to do?

Students who have studied languages have gone on to work in the following sectors: law, sales, business, environment, information technology, management, finance, banking, marketing, research, teaching, travel and tourism, curation and arts management, politics, the civil service and diplomacy, translation and working internationally. Languages are broadly recognised as particularly valuable subjects for careers that involve working with other people and require face-to-face interactions

What specification will I follow?

Edexcel GCSE French

A link to the specification can be found here:
<https://qualifications.pearson.com/content/dam/pdf/GCSE/Spanish/2024/specification-and-sample-assessments/gq000027-gcse-spanish-specification-2024-issue-1.pdf>

What will I study?

The course is split into six thematic contexts, which provides the situations in which you communicate and comprehend the language and culture:

- My personal world
- Lifestyle and wellbeing
- My neighbourhood
- Media and technology
- Studying and my future
- Travel and tourism

How will I be assessed?

There are four examinations at the end of the course, reflecting the four skills of speaking, listening, reading and writing:

Paper 1: Speaking in French (25%)

Task 1: Read aloud

Task 2: Role Play

Task 3: Picture task with conversation

Paper 2: Listening and understanding in French (25%)

Section A: Listening

Section B: Dictation

Paper 3: Reading and understanding in French (25%)

Section A: Reading and understanding

Section B: Translation into English

Paper 4: Writing in French (25%)

Questions 1 and 2: open response questions

Question 3: translation into French

Who should I speak to if I have any questions?

Ms Hart, 2.25 or Mr Gammon, 2.5

GCSE GEOGRAPHY

What is GCSE Geography?

Geography is about understanding the world's people, places and environments. Studying geography at GCSE level will help you to understand the unique features of our world, the interdependence of physical and human geography and your place within it.

Here are five reasons you should study geography:

1. To understand basic physical systems that affect our world (e.g. earth-sun relationships, water cycles, wind and ocean currents);
2. To understand the geography of the past and how geography has played a significant role in the evolution of people, their ideas, places and environments;
3. To recognise spatial distributions at all scales — local and global — in order to understand the complex connectivity of people and places;
4. To be able to make sensible judgements about matters involving relationships between the physical environment and society; and
5. To understand global interdependence and to become a better global citizen.

What skills will I develop?

Geography is a skilled-based course. You will have opportunities to learn new skills such as map skills, interpreting photographs, analysing articles, decision-making and debating. You will develop your complex problem-solving skills, judgement, decision-making and critical thinking skills. You will also hone your argumentative writing skills as many of the essays you will write will require you to assess and evaluate different perspectives and justify your judgements.

What specification will I follow?

Edexcel GCSE Geography B

A link to the specification can be found here:
<https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/edexcel-gcses/geography-b-2016.html>

What will I study?

The course is split into three sections:

Component 1 – Global Geographical Issues

This includes the study of hazardous earth, development dynamics and challenges of an urbanising world.

Component 2 – UK Geographical Issues

This includes the study of the UK's evolving landscape, coastal change and conflict, the UK's evolving human landscapes and a geographical investigation including one physical geography fieldwork investigation and one

human geography fieldwork investigation.

Component 3 – People and Environmental Issues

This includes the study of people and the biosphere, forests under threat, consuming energy resources and making geographical decisions.

Fieldwork

As part of the course, students will take part in two pieces of fieldwork which will allow them to investigate different geographical issues and apply what they have learnt in theory in practice.

Fieldwork 1 will be a physical geography investigation into coastal change and conflict.

Fieldwork 2 will focus on how the quality of life differs in urban areas as part of investigating dynamic urban areas

How will I be assessed?

There are three examinations at the end of the year:

Component 1 (1 hour 30 minutes) Global Geographical Issues

Component 2 (1 hour 30 minutes) UK Geographical Issues

Component 3 (1 hour 30 minutes) People and Environmental Issues

The examinations include multiple-choice questions, short open response, long open response, calculations and 8-mark extended writing questions. Component 3 offers one 12 mark decision-making extended writing question too with the use of resources.

What do geographers go on to do?

Students who have studied geography have gone on to work in the following sectors: law, science, sales, business, environment, information technology, management, finance, banking, marketing, research, manufacturing, teaching, childcare, engineering, arts, design and media, town planning and working internationally. Geography is a broad subject and applies well to both scientific and humanitarian work.

Who should I speak to if I have any questions?

Mr Macneal, 3.3



GCSE HISTORY

What is GCSE History?

GCSE History is the study of Democracy in Britain (think: Civil Wars, American Revolutions, the suffragette campaigns for female equality, black migration from the Caribbean...), the Restoration era (think: the Great Fire, the Plague, wars with the Dutch, the theatre...), the Cold War (think: Vietnam Wars, Korean Wars, Space Races, Communist Witch-hunts, Berlin Walls, and Cuban Missile Crises...) and America in the 20th Century (think: the Jazz Age, the Ku Klux Klan, the New Deal, Civil Rights Campaign, Suburbia, and Second Wave Feminism).

Looking at these topics in depth will develop and extend your knowledge and understand not only of local and British History, but also of the wider world.

What skills will I develop?

At the most general level, how to argue and how to communicate your views to other people in a compelling and stylish manner. The transferability of these skills are unparalleled. More specifically, it will also enable students to:

- Support their views with evidence. After all, without providing detailed and substantiated evidence to verify your opinions, then you're unlikely to be persuasive or convincing.
- Appreciate the similarities and differences between past and present events. History doesn't repeat itself, but it does rhyme.
- Acquire a better grasp of causality. In the abstract, causality is quite straight forward, x causes y. But in practice it is a far messier affair: why was Trump elected? Why did England lose to Italy in the 2021 Euro finals? Why did Boris have to resign?
- To understand how the past has been interpreted over time and weigh up how credible other people's views of the past are
- To consider the concept of significance and why we choose to designate some events, topics and ideas as having it, and how this might change over time. For example, the significance of the Black Death (1348) may well have increased in light of the Covid-19 Pandemic.

What specification will I follow?

AQA GCSE (9-1) History (8145)

A link to the specification can be found here:

<https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/history/gcse>

What will I study?

Paper 1: Understanding the modern world helps students to understand key developments and events in modern world history. Students will study Conflict and Tension between the East and West 1945-1972 and America: Equality and Opportunity 1920-1973.

Paper 2: Shaping the nation enables students to understand key developments and events in the history of Britain. Students will study Restoration England and Britain: Power and the People in this paper.

How will I be assessed?

Students will sit two written examinations each lasting two hours. Each paper is worth 50 percent.

- Paper 1: Understanding the modern world has 10 questions
- Paper 2: shaping the nation has 8 questions

There is no coursework

Recommended Reading

Here are some summer reads to prepare you for your GCSE:

One Summer: America 1927 by Bill Bryson

Black and British by David Olusoga

Empireland by Sathnam Sanghera

A Short history of England by Simon Jenkins

The Catcher in the Rye by J.D. Salinger

Sapiens by Yuval Noah Harari

Who should I speak to if I have any questions?

Mr Farrell, 2.9



GCSE LATIN



What is GCSE Latin?

The study of Latin is about acquiring understanding of the Latin language and the related ancient literature, values and society. Studying Latin at GCSE level will allow learners to develop their knowledge of Latin vocabulary, morphology and syntax so that they can read and understand unseen passages of Latin.

Here are five reasons you should study Latin:

1. To develop insights into the relevance of Latin and of ancient literature and civilisation to your understanding of our modern world of diverse cultures.
2. To deploy knowledge and understanding of Latin to deepen your understanding of other languages.
3. To be able to relate knowledge and understanding of the ancient world to other disciplines through the study of ancient literature and ancient sources.
4. To demonstrate your capacity to undertake and succeed in what is recognised as one of the most intellectually demanding and academically rigorous subjects on the curriculum. Employers and prestigious universities

will take note of a candidate whose qualifications include Latin.

5. To begin to acquire the skill to be able to access some of the world's finest literary texts.

Latin qualifications are a valuable asset. Historically the preserve of privileged students attending schools in the independent sector, the study of Latin has seen a renaissance in recent times. Holland Park School is very proud of its offering of Latin to students who wish to pursue this discipline, and encourages all those who have had the opportunity to study the subject to secure an examination qualification given its kudos .

What skills will I develop?

Studying Latin will develop your research and analytical skills, empowering you to become independent learners and enquirers. You will be better equipped for further study in arts, humanities and sciences. Having developed and deployed your knowledge of



GCSE LATIN

vocabulary, morphology and syntax in order to read, understand and interpret Latin, you will be able to select, analyse and evaluate evidence to draw informed conclusions from the literature studied. Through your knowledge and understanding of ancient literature, values and society, you will be able to identify and appreciate its literary form and impact on the reader.

What specification will I follow?

OCR GCSE Latin

A link to the specification can be found here:
<https://ocr.org.uk/qualifications/gcse/latin-j282-from-2016/>

What will I study?

The course is split into three sections:

Latin Language

For this section of the course you will study texts and stories in Latin to build knowledge and understanding of Latin vocabulary, accident and syntax. You will learn how to demonstrate your linguistic competence through the translation and comprehension of unseen Latin passages. You will come to understand the derivation of English words from Latin thus enhancing your capacity to use a broader and more sophisticated vocabulary in English.

Prose Literature

Here you will study passages from a range of Roman writers, such as Caesar, Livy and Pliny.

Verse Literature

Here you will study a section of Virgil's Aeneid.

Both the Prose and Verse Literature components will develop your knowledge and understanding of ancient literature through studying the set texts listed above. These components assess your ability to analyse, evaluate and respond to the ancient literature you have studied. You will be required to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the set text, including identification of aspects of content, culture, social practices and values, as appropriate to the text studied.

How will I be assessed?

There are three examinations at the end of the year:

Latin Language (1 hour and 30 minutes) This is a compulsory component. It is worth 100 marks, representing 50% of the total marks for the GCSE (9–1). Section A consists of 30 marks. In Section A, the unseen passage will recount a story drawn from mythol-

ogy or Roman domestic life. 20 marks are available for answering comprehension questions in English, including questions about the derivation of English words from Latin. 10 marks are available for questions on accident and syntax or translating three basic English sentences into Latin. Section B consists of 70 marks. In Section B, the unseen passages will recount a story or stories drawn from history. 20 marks will be available for answering comprehension questions in English. 50 marks will be available for translating a passage of unseen Latin of at least 90 words into English.

Prose Literature (1 hour) This component is worth 50 marks, representing 25% of the total marks for the GCSE.

Verse Literature (1 hour) This component is worth 50 marks, representing 25% of the total marks for the GCSE.

What do linguists go on to do?

Studying Latin is one route into 'Classics', the study of the literature, history, and philosophy of the Greek and Roman worlds (as well as the ancient world more broadly). Students who have studied Latin have gone on to work in the following sectors: law, sales, business, environment, information technology, management, finance, banking, marketing, research, teaching, travel and tourism, curation and arts management, politics, the civil service and diplomacy, translation and working internationally. Languages are broadly recognised as particularly valuable subjects for careers that involve working with other people and require face-to-face interactions.

Speak to Ms Hart in 2.25 for more information.



GCSE MUSIC

What is GCSE Music?

GCSE Music is a fabulous, rigorous and exciting course that combines the practical with the theoretical, the artistic with the scientific and the emotional with the rational. As is the case with A Level Music, GCSE Music is a tripartite course which includes: composition, performance and musical theory. The musical theory is very wide ranging and covers a broad spectrum of genres and traditions, including the western classical tradition. There is some opportunity to use technology in this course in the process of music production, and there are numerous opportunities to develop one's knowledge of the musical canon across the ages.

What skills will I develop?

Students studying music at GCSE will develop their listening and appraising skills, their performance skills and their compositional skills as well as their understanding of a very broad range of music across the ages. Putting thoughts about music into words is a notoriously hard activity; there is something about the musical form that is entirely ineffable, but in GCSE music we find modes of expression to make sense of that which brings spirituality and beauty to life.

What specification will I follow?

The specification is AQA GCSE Music 9-1, available on the AQA website.

What will I study?

Three components (understanding music, performing music and composing music) separate the three parts of the course. The latter two involve developing coursework in advance. The first component involves some listening to unfamiliar music across four areas of study (68 marks on the paper) and a section on known set works (28 marks on the paper).

How will I be assessed?

Assessment will be part of the coursework (accounting for 60% of the total marks) which includes Performing Music and Composing Music. For Component 2 (Performing Music), students carry out two performances (using instruments, voices or technology), one of which is a solo performance while the other is with an ensemble. Students are required to perform for a minimum of four minutes, of which at least one minute must be taken up by the ensemble performance. In Component 3 (Composing Music), students are required to produce two compositions with a combined minimum duration of three minutes which are internally marked and externally moderated. Component 1 (Understanding Music) is assessed

by means of a 1-hour and -a-half terminal summer examination that appraises students' listening and contextual understanding of music.

What do students of Music go on to do?

It is likely that those who study music will go on to be sensitive creatures, with a heightened awareness of the value of the aesthetic. In some rare circumstances, students gain admission to conservatoires to prepare for a career in professional music making. In other cases, students simply take their enjoyment of music on with them and continue to perform in an amateur capacity later in life. Either way, such an experience cannot be replicated in any other course.

Recommended Reading

<https://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/music/AQA-8271-RL-MUSIC.PDF>

Michael Hurd's book *An Outline History of European Music* is a superb introduction to the theoretical study of music. It is odd, though, to speak about recommended reading without also mentioning recommended listening. Having a good grounding in the music of the western classical tradition should be given the top priority; renaissance, baroque, classical and romantic music ought to be understood and at least some composers from each era should become familiar to students. Beyond that, learning about the sounds and words of contemporary music - in classical and popular form - is also a very valuable musical initiation.

Who can I contact?

Ms. Chapman. 4.18



SPORTS SCIENCE

What is Sports Science ?

Sports Science is a theoretical and practical study of sport and physical sciences. It inducts students into the principles behind training and the development of skill and performance in physical activity. It constitutes some development of skills within defined fields. Students are expected to develop their understanding of all sports, as well as develop a specialism in three sporting areas, which must include solo sports as well as team sports.

What skills will I develop?

Students will develop their understanding of anatomy. Within the specification there are a number of opportunities to develop bio-mechanics and an understanding of how the body both carries out physical activities and how it can be most efficiently deployed to maximise performance. Students will learn how training develops their skills and how different training methods can be effective for different purposes. There will be opportunities to consider the socio-cultural implications of physical activity, including gender and sport; drugs and sport; sport and physical disability; sports psychology and nutrition and healthy living.

What specification will I follow?

The specification is AQA GCSE PE.

This is available here: <https://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/pe/specifications/AQA-8582-SP-2016.PDF>

What will I study?

Students will study a range of sports as part of this specification, including association football, badminton, basketball, cricket, hockey, netball, rugby union, table tennis, volleyball. There will be opportunities to specialise so that students are able to explore some sports in detail, but a broad understanding of all of these sports is encouraged so that students develop a breadth of knowledge. All sports are different and in this way the course provides plenty of opportunities to develop specialist expertise. There are different assessment regimes for the different sports which helps to encourage excellence in the different disciplines.

How will I be assessed?

There are three parts of this course. The first two parts are written papers assessed by hour and 15 minute examinations, each being 30% of the total examination. The first paper assesses: applied anatomy and physiology; movement analysis; physical training; use of data. The second paper assesses: sports psychology; socio-cultural influences; health, fitness and well-being; use of data.

The final part is a Non-Examination Assessment. This includes a **practical performance in three different physical activities** and a written analysis and evaluation of performance to bring about performance in one activity. This part is worth 40% of the GCSE, is assessed internally and moderated externally. **This part requires students to have a reasonable grasp of three different sports.**

What do students of Physical Education go on to do?

Students of physical education go on to lead healthy, fulfilled lives and to understand the value of challenging oneself and setting and meeting goals in life. They understand the value of competing, of winning graciously and of losing with generosity and goodwill.

Recommended Reading

Some may use this GCSE to explore what it might be like to work in sports-related roles, as personal trainers, physiotherapists or coaches. Others may use it to enhance and enrich their enjoyment of wider personal activity.

Who should I speak to if I have any questions?

Mr James, 1.23

Can I choose both Sports Science and Sports Studies?

Students are required to choose either Sports Science or Sports Studies. Sports Studies is the more suitable course for students who do not currently play at least three different sports to a reasonable level.



SPORTS STUDIES

What is Sports Studies?

Sports Studies a theoretical and practical study of sport and physical education. It introduces students to the areas of training for sport, nutrition in sport, technological advances in sport, the cardiorespiratory systems and offer students the opportunity to learn how plan for and then lead a sports session.

What specification will I follow?

Pearson BTEC Level 1/Level 2 Tech Award in Sport

This is available here: <https://qualifications.pearson.com/content/dam/pdf/btec-tec-awards/sport/2022/specification-and-sample-assessments/btec-tech-award-sport-spec.pdf>

What will I study?

Students will study three components.

Component 1: Preparing participants to take part in sport and physical activity. In this unit students will explore the different types and provision of sport and physical activity available for different types of participants, barriers to participation and ways to overcome these barriers to increase participation in sport and physical activity. They will also research equipment and technological advances in a chosen sport or physical activity and how to prepare our bodies for participation in sport and physical activity.

Component 2: Taking part and improving other participants sporting performance. This component looks at components of fitness and their effect on performance, take part in practical sport, explore the role of officials in sport and learn to apply methods and sporting drills to improve other participants' sporting performance.

Component 3: Developing fitness to improve other participant's performance in sport and physical activity. In this unit students will develop an understanding of the importance of fitness and the different types of fitness for performance in sport and physical activity. They will also develop an understanding of the body and fitness testing.

How will I be assessed?

Each component is weighted equally and is worth 33% of a student's final grade.

Components 1 and 2 are coursework units. Students will be set an assignment at the end of the component and will have two weeks to complete it. This will be marked and given back to students who will then have a further week to make necessary improvements to their work.

Component 3 is an exam unit. Students will be set an assignment task to be completed under exam conditions.

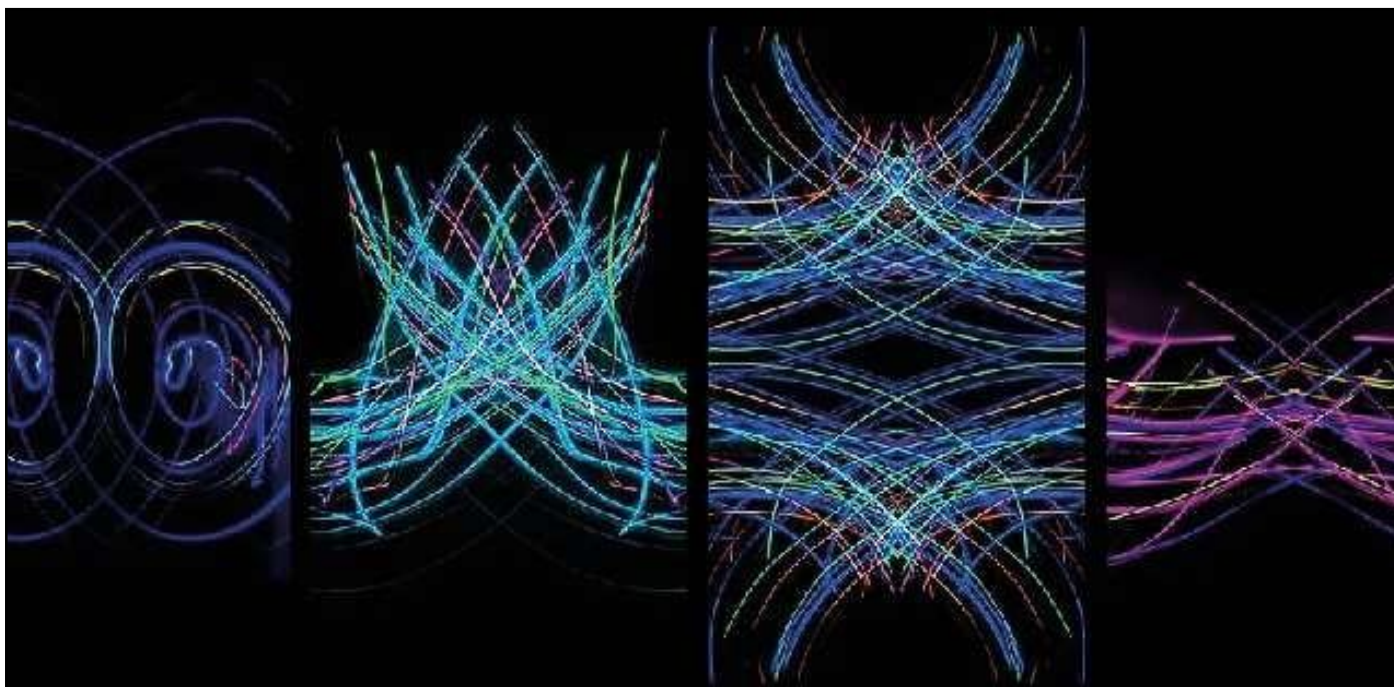
On completion of the course, students will be awarded a Pass, Merit of Distinction grade.

Who should I speak to if I have any questions?

Mr James, 1.23



GCSE PHOTOGRAPHY



What is GCSE Photography?

"Photography is a way of feeling, of touching, of loving. What you have caught on film is captured forever... It remembers little things, long after you have forgotten everything."

— Aaron Siskind

Photography is defined as the practice of producing images using light-sensitive materials such as photographic film, or digital methods of development and production to create static or moving images. Photography is increasingly popular as a GCSE choice. It encourages the exploration of photography as an artistic medium. It combines well with more traditional subjects, providing an outlet for creativity. Lessons take place in the purpose-built photography laboratory, which includes a fully-equipped darkroom. You will learn from direct teaching, peer learning, presentations, trips, reflective reading and writing as well as visits from professional practitioners working in the creative sectors. All photography students are encouraged to experiment and will have the opportunity to use a wide range of materials including, but not limited to, digital and film camera, dark room processes and editing software such as Photoshop.

Here are five reasons you should study photography:

1. You will gain technical editing skills in Photoshop which can be used across a range of different professions in the creative industries.
2. You will create your own professional website to present and exhibit your work.
3. You will have the opportunity to work across a range of artistic disciplines, allowing for a huge scope for individually tailored research and development.
4. Photography and the arts will improve skills in resourcefulness, problem solving and thinking outside of the box which can be applied to a variety of different professions.
5. Photography is a platform which can offer students an alternative way to explore their intelligence and creativity.

What skills will I develop?

You will develop a Wix website of work that demonstrates your creativity and understanding of contemporary and historical photography. Students will explore historical, contemporary, social, cultural and issues-based contexts and external considerations such as those associated with the cultural industries and client-oriented requirements.

Students will demonstrate the ability to:

Use photographic techniques and processes, appropriate to students' personal intentions, for example:
Lighting, viewpoint, aperture, depth of field, shutter speed and movement, use of enlarger, chemical and/or digital processes, use media and materials, as appropriate to students' personal intentions, for example: Film, photographic papers, chemicals appropriate to darkroom practices, digital media, programs and related technologies, graphic media for purposes such as storyboarding, planning and constructing shoots.

What specification will I follow?

AQA GCSE Photography

A link to the specification can be found here:
<https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/art-and-design/gcse/>

GCSE PHOTOGRAPHY

art-and-design-8201-8206/subject-content/photography

What will I study?

Areas of study In Component 1 and Component 2 students are required to work in one or more area(s) of photography, such as those listed below:

Portraiture, location photography, studio photography, experimental imagery, installation, documentary photography, photo-journalism, moving image: film, video and animation, fashion photography.

The course is split into two sections:

Component 1: Coursework Portfolio (60%)

This must include a sustained project evidencing the journey from initial engagement to the realisation of intentions.

Component 2: Examination (40%)

Students respond to starting point from an externally set assigning paper. A preparatory period is then followed by 10 hours of supervised time in which to create a final outcome

How will I be assessed?

AO1: Develop ideas through investigations, demonstrating critical understanding of sources.

AO2: Refine work by exploring ideas, selecting and experimenting with appropriate media, materials, techniques and processes.

AO3: Record ideas, observations and insights relevant to intentions as work progresses.

AO4: Present a personal and meaningful response that realises intentions and demonstrates understanding of visual language.

What do people who study photography go on to do?

"...photographs open doors into the past but they also allow a look into the future." – **Sally Mann**

There is an increasing demand for creative and innovative people in industry and business. Students who have studied photography have gone on to work in the following sectors: heritage, film, animation, Web Editor, fine artist, Magazine editor, curator, graphic design, illustration, photographer, production design, Marketing assistant, Advertising Art Director, Community Arts Worker, Commercial Art Gallery Manager, Multimedia Specialist, Brand Ambassador/Sales Promotion Executives, Retoucher and teaching and education.

Who should I speak to if I have any questions?

MsTukacevska, 3.14



GCSE SPANISH

What is GCSE Spanish?

Spanish GCSE will develop your understanding of the language and culture of Spain and other Spanish speaking countries. It will equip you with the skills necessary to be able to communicate confidently and accurately in the Spanish language. A strong basis in the language will be established providing a secure enough grounding so as to enable you to live and work in Spain or the Hispanic world in the future. It will also develop your language-acquisition skills in general, which will make learning other languages easier.

Languages qualifications are a valuable asset. Once considered the preserve of only the ablest students, Holland Park School is immensely proud of its long-standing success in assisting all of its students to leave school with at least one foreign language qualification. Our results in this area have consistently been at the top end of performance when compared with schools nationwide.

Here are five reasons you should study Spanish:

1. To possess the ability to communicate in a language other than one's own is a rich and rewarding skill that is as economically valuable as it is culturally enriching. There is barely a week that passes when we do not hear employers or organisations bemoan the lack of language skills amongst the UK workforce. To have a foreign language qualification is to advantage oneself professionally. Languages students are among the most employable graduates (journalism, publishing, marketing, public service, banking, teaching, IT...). Bi/multilingual staff are valued in the job market and often earn more.

2. To become a better global citizen. In an increasingly globalised and interconnected world, to speak just one language is to limit one's scope of potential and opportunity for the range of relationships and experiences, professional and social, which will be available to you. 75% of the world's population can't speak English!

3. To demonstrate your capacity to undertake and succeed in what is recognised as an intellectually demanding and academically rigorous course. Employers and prestigious universities will be impressed by a suite of qualifications that includes a modern foreign language; a foreign language GCSE is necessary for the EBACC. It helps you to understand your own language better – including grammar, vocabulary, and communication skills, and even improves your memory and brain function.

Languages improve your overall performance at school – academic results indicate this is especially true in reading, vocabulary and maths. Studies have even shown that people who speak more than one language tend to have lower rates of dementia in later life.

4. Spanish is one of the few subjects that you can study which is both highly academic and practical. It is directly transferable from the classroom into the real world and can be used from the moment it is learnt in real life contexts.

5. You can access a wealth of Hispanic culture in the original language, which is an immensely enriching but also empowering experience. It enhances your travel experiences as you can travel the world more easily and gain different perspectives on different countries and cultures. As language and culture are linked, you can develop your appreciation for films, TV, books, poetry in their original language.



GCSE SPANISH



What skills will I develop?

Alongside the acquisition of a broad vocabulary and sound working knowledge of Spanish grammar, you will develop the ability to communicate more effectively. Gaining a greater understanding of how language works, is manipulated and constructed, will enhance your capacity to speak, read and write in your first language(s). Your literacy levels – both spoken and written - will improve and you can expect to enhance your memory and intellectual skill.

What will I study?

The course is split into six thematic contexts, which provides the situations in which you communicate and comprehend the language and culture:

- My personal world
- Lifestyle and wellbeing
- My neighbourhood
- Media and technology
- Studying and my future
- Travel and tourism

What specification will I follow?

Edexcel GCSE Spanish

A link to the specification can be found here:

<https://qualifications.pearson.com/content/dam/pdf/GCSE/Spanish/2024/specification-and-sample-assessments/gq000027-gcse-spanish-specification-2024-issue-1.pdf>

How will I be assessed?

There are four examinations at the end of the course, reflecting the four skills of speaking, listening, reading and writing:

Paper 1: Speaking in Spanish (25%)

Task 1: Read aloud

Task 2: Role Play

Task 3: Picture task with conversation

Paper 2: Listening and understanding in Spanish (25%)

Section A: Listening

Section B: Dictation

Paper 3: Reading and understanding in Spanish (25%)

Section A: Reading and understanding

Section B: Translation into English

Paper 4: Writing in Spanish (25%)

Questions 1 and 2: open response questions

Question 3: translation into Spanish

What do linguists go on to do?

Students who have studied languages have gone on to work in the following sectors: law, sales, business, environment, information technology, management, finance, banking, marketing, research, teaching, travel and tourism, curation and arts management, politics, the civil service and diplomacy, translation and working internationally.

Who should I speak to if I have any questions?

Ms Hart, 2.5