

ST MARY'S

GCSE options

2024-26 GUIDE



St Mary's
Colchester

GCSE options

THIS BOOKLET IS DESIGNED TO HELP YOU MAKE INFORMED DECISIONS WHEN CHOOSING YOUR GCSE OPTIONS.

COMPULSORY SUBJECTS

You must study these.

GCSE:

- English Language
- English Literature
- Mathematics
- Science - all girls take Combined Science (two GCSEs) OR Separate Science - Biology, Chemistry and Physics (three GCSEs)

Non-examination:

- PSHE
- Physical Education

OPTIONAL SUBJECTS

Below are the options you can choose from. The minimum number of pupils required for a subject to run is five.

GCSE/iGCSE:

Art and Design
Classical Civilisation
Drama
Geography
History
ICT
Latin
Modern Language - a choice of one or two languages from French, German, and Spanish
Music
Physical Education
Religious Studies

Cambridge O-Level:

Fashion and Textiles

Level 1/2 Vocational Award - Technical Award

Hospitality and Catering

making your choices

TO GET THE MOST OUT OF YOUR GCSE STUDIES YOU SHOULD MAKE SURE THE FOLLOWING POINTS ARE AT THE FOREFRONT OF YOUR MIND WHEN SELECTING COURSES:

- You like the subject and find it interesting
 - You are good at the subject
 - Your future career plans require you to take the subject
 - You think you will achieve well in the subject
 - You can challenge yourself and develop new skills
 - Taking the course will give you a sense of achievement and enjoyment
- Your teachers think it is a suitable choice for you
 - It will combine well with other options and help your overall education
 - You like the method of assessment and learning
 - It is something you would like to progress in

Remember, choices which offer you a balanced range of subjects are always a good foundation for further studies.

compulsory subjects

ENGLISH LANGUAGE (EDEXCEL 1EN0)

General aims

We aim for the English Language course to enable all pupils to express themselves articulately and with confidence in a variety of speaking, listening, and written activities. The course covers critical, personal, and imaginative responses to a variety of genres.

The GCSE English course encourages pupils to learn to read a range of texts fluently and with good understanding. Pupils read critically, using previous knowledge gained from wider reading to inform and improve their own writing. They write effectively and coherently using Standard English appropriately, using grammar correctly, punctuating and spelling accurately.

An aim of the course is for pupils to acquire and apply a wide vocabulary alongside knowledge and understanding of grammatical terminology and linguistic conventions for reading, writing, and spoken language.

Pupils learn to listen to and understand spoken language and to use spoken Standard English effectively. Spoken language will be reported as a separate grade on pupils' certificates; they are awarded either a pass, a merit, or a distinction.

Content of the course and assessment

Paper 1 (40%) - Fiction and Imaginative

Writing: Pupils study a range of prose fiction, developing skills to analyse and evaluate 19th century fiction extracts. They develop imaginative writing skills to engage the reader and use spelling, punctuation and grammar accurately.

Paper 2 (60%) - Non-fiction and Transactional

Writing: Pupils study and analyse selections from a range of non-fiction texts (including literary non-fiction) as well as exploring and developing transactional writing skills, for example letters, articles, and reports.

ENGLISH LITERATURE (EDEXCEL 1ET0)

General aims

Pupils read a wide range of classic literature fluently and with good understanding, making connections with their reading. They read in depth, critically and evaluatively, so that they are able to discuss and explain their understanding and ideas.

GCSE pupils develop the habit of reading widely and often, learning to appreciate the depth and power of the English literary heritage. They write accurately, effectively, and analytically about their reading, using Standard English, acquiring and using a wide vocabulary, including grammatical terminology and the literary and linguistic terms they need in order to be able to criticise and analyse what they read.

Content of the course and assessment

Paper 1 (50%) - Shakespeare and Post

1914 Literature: Pupils study a Shakespeare play and a post-1914 British play or novel. They develop the skills to analyse how the language, form, structure, and context of texts can create meanings and effects. Pupils also develop skills to maintain a critical style and informed personal response.

Paper 2 (50%) - 19th century novel and a range of romantic, heritage and contemporary poetry:

Pupils study a 19th century novel and a poetry anthology from the exam board. They develop skills to analyse how the language, structure, form, and context of texts can create meanings and effects. Pupils also develop skills to maintain a critical style and informed personal response as well as comparison skills.

compulsory subjects

MATHEMATICS (EDEXCEL 1MA1)

General aims

The aims of this GCSE specification are to encourage pupils to:

- develop a positive attitude to Mathematics
- consolidate basic skills and tackle appropriately challenging work
- apply mathematical knowledge and understanding to solve problems
- think and communicate mathematically - precisely, logically, and creatively
- appreciate the place and use of Mathematics in society
- apply mathematical concepts to situations arising in their own lives
- understand the interdependence of different branches of Mathematics
- acquire the skills needed to use technology, such as calculators and computers, effectively
- work co-operatively, independently and practically
- acquire a firm foundation for further study assessment

The Edexcel GCSE in Mathematics is assessed through three equally weighted, written examination papers at either Foundation tier or Higher tier. The components of each tier and the grades available are shown below:

Foundation tier

Paper 1F (non-calculator)
Paper 2F (calculator)
Paper 3F (calculator)
1 hour 30 minutes

Grades available: 5-1

Higher tier

Paper 1H (non-calculator)
Paper 2H (calculator)
Paper 3H (calculator)
1 hour 30 minutes

Grades available: 9-3

compulsory subjects

SCIENCE (EDEXCEL 1SCO OR 1BIO, 1CHO AND 1PHO)

Why Science?

Science is an invaluable GCSE. It can be the launch pad for a huge variety of careers in sport, engineering, medicine and, of course, working for NASA. The Science Department follows the Edexcel GCSE course with a high standard of scientific content. Science is compulsory but there is an element of choice with two potential routes: Combined Science or Separate Science.

Combined Science: this is the most common option. Biology, Chemistry, and Physics are studied with six examinations of 1 hour 10 minutes, resulting in two GCSE awards on the 9-1 grade scale.

Science at A Level can be studied with most colleges asking for a minimum of a Grade 6.

Separate Sciences: there are three separate GCSE awards - Biology, Chemistry and Physics. Naturally there is more content and some of this content is challenging. At the end of Year 11 there are six exams of 1 hour 45 minutes each.

Pupils who choose the **Separate Sciences** are usually very academically motivated and are happy to work independently where

required. It is expected that these pupils should be scoring consistently good grades in their assessments (as a guide somewhere around a Grade 5). They would also need to be confident with their Maths ability as each of the Sciences has a significant percentage of Maths content (Physics has 30%, Chemistry 20%, and Biology 10%). A good reading ability and level of English is also desirable. Lastly, we would expect a good overall result for the end of year exams in Year 9, averaging out at around a Grade 6, with a Grade 5 in Maths.

Separate Sciences are often a choice for pupils wishing to study more than one Science at A-Level (e.g. potential medics would choose this option) or pupils who are especially interested in the subject.

Higher and Foundation

Pupils will be guided to take either the Higher or Foundation tier. The Higher paper is taken by pupils who can comfortably achieve a Grade 5 and above. In the Foundation papers there are more multiple-choice questions and fewer long answer questions. You can reach a maximum of a Grade 5 if you sit the Foundation papers. It is worth noting your GCSE certificate will not detail which tier you sat. Most students will be taught the Higher content allowing students the opportunity for improvement across the course. The final choice of tiers is usually made halfway through Year 11.

	Combined	Separate Sciences
GCSE awards	2	3
Can I study A-level?	Yes (minimum Grade 6)	Yes (minimum Grade 6)
How many exams?	6 x 1 hour 10 mins	6 x 1 hour 45 mins
What grade can I achieve?	9-4 Higher	9-4 Higher
	5-1 Foundation	5-1 Foundation

compulsory subjects

PERSONAL, SOCIAL, AND HEALTH EDUCATION (NO EXAM)

General aims

Personal, Social, and Health Education aims to cover the following topics with a view to preparing pupils to make informed decisions at the appropriate stages in their futures:

- Life Beyond School
- Health and Wellbeing
- Relationships and Sex Education
- Staying Safe Online and Offline
- Celebrating Diversity and Equality

Content of the course

The final two years at St Mary's play an important part in preparing pupils for the future, and that includes all aspects, not only the academic ones. The approaches used in PSHE offer the opportunity for in-depth discussion and the ability to listen, which is of equal value to that of voicing your own opinion.

PSHE lessons provide an opportunity for pupils to discuss the more personal and social aspects of life in preparation for the future.

Careers advice is available throughout the pupils' time at St Mary's, helping them to make informed decisions. Specific skills in writing letters of application, compiling CVs (Curriculum Vitae), and attending interviews are developed in Year 11. Practice interviews are held in the autumn term.

compulsory subjects

PHYSICAL EDUCATION (NO EXAM)

General aims

The aim of the PE Course in Years 10 and 11 is for the pupils to experience a wide range of popular sporting activities to stimulate an interest that may be continued after leaving school. We aim to develop practical abilities and knowledge to a level that will give pupils the confidence to join an outside organisation.

Pupils are grouped in a variety of ways - by their own chosen social group, their chosen activity group, and sometimes by their ability to increase their social skills. Pupils are encouraged to begin to take responsibility for their own fitness and physical wellbeing.

Content of the course

Major games and activities: Consolidating the games/activities that have been studied in Years 7-9 (basketball, volleyball, netball, fitness, tennis, rounders, athletics). Personal skill levels are improved largely within game situations, while knowledge of the sport, tactics and teamwork are developed.

Introductory courses: new sporting activities may include badminton and golf. This leads pupils, where possible, to make their own selection of activities in Year 11, that they can

follow over the two terms, allowing for greater depth of enjoyment.

It is hoped that sufficient interest and skill level will be achieved in one or more of these activities to inspire each pupil to want to continue with an activity that she enjoys after leaving school.

optional subjects

ART AND DESIGN

FINE ART

(EDEXCEL 1FA0)

PHOTOGRAPHY

(EDEXCEL 1PY0)

Content of the course

Art and Design equips pupils with the skills to enjoy, produce, and engage with the visual arts throughout their lives, whilst having immense value as a GCSE subject.

GCSE Art and Design provides the opportunity for pupils to:

- explore both contemporary and historical sources of art, craft, and design
- take an individual approach to their art, craft, and design making
- develop the skill of selecting their best and most appropriate work for presentation.
- actively engage in the creative process of art, craft, and design to develop as effective and independent learners, as well as critical and reflective thinkers with enquiring minds.

The GCSE course in Art and Design is structured into two internally assessed and externally moderated components.

- Component 1: Personal Portfolio (internally set)
- Component 2: Externally Set Assignment

Component 1: Personal Portfolio 60% of the qualification

- Pupils create a personal portfolio of work that demonstrates knowledge, understanding, and skills.

- The portfolio takes a thematic approach and linear structure exploring a broad theme, such as 'Structure' or 'Upside Down & Inside Out'.

Component 2: Externally Set Assignment 40% of the qualification

- The Externally Set Assignment represents the culmination of the GCSE course as it draws together all the knowledge, understanding, and skills developed in Component 1
- Pupils must present a personal response to an externally set broad-based thematic starting point, set by the Examination Board, Pearson.

Areas of Study

There is a choice of two components; Fine Art or Photography. There is a need for all pupils to use drawing in their studies (even photographers) and annotate using historical and contextual references (to write a series of explanations in sketch books).

Assessment Qualification Aims and Objectives

This GCSE Art and Design qualification requires pupils to:

- develop creative, imaginative, and intuitive capabilities when exploring and making images, artefacts, and products.
- become confident in taking risks and learn from experience when exploring and experimenting with ideas, processes, media, materials, and techniques
- develop critical understanding through investigative, analytical, experimental, practical, technical, and expressive skills

optional subjects

ART AND DESIGN

FINE ART

(EDEXCEL 1FA0)

PHOTOGRAPHY

(EDEXCEL 1PY0)

- develop and refine ideas and proposals, personal outcomes or solutions with increasing independence
- acquire and develop technical skills through working with a broad range of media, materials, techniques, processes, and technologies with purpose and intent
- develop knowledge and understanding of art, craft and design in historical and contemporary contexts, societies and cultures
- develop an awareness of the different roles and individual work practices evident in the production of art, craft and design in the creative and cultural industries
- develop an awareness of the purposes, intentions and functions of art, craft, and design in a variety of contexts and as appropriate to the student's own work
- demonstrate safe working practices in art, craft and design

optional subjects

CLASSICAL CIVILISATION (OCR J199E)

General aims

The Classical Civilisation GCSE course 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.

From women in the Ancient World to the study of religious beliefs and ancient ideas about war, Classical Civilisation involves interesting discussions about issues that still affect us today.

The Classical Civilisation course can improve skills in essay writing and sourcing analysis and teach how to structure an argument. It shows good thinking and evaluation skills, and an interest in people and cultures so is great preparation for A levels in a wide variety of subjects, from Archaeology to Politics and Law.

Content of the course and assessment

Component Group 1: Thematic Study

This involves a comparative study of ancient Greece and Rome, and combines literary and visual/material sources.

Written exam: 1 hour 30 minutes = 50% of total marks.

Women in the Ancient World:

- Women of Legend: Depiction of women in myths and legends of Greece and Rome, e.g. Pandora, Helen of Troy
- Young Women: Everyday life for a young woman in Greece and Rome and what this implies about their status in society
- Women in the Home: The roles and responsibilities of female members of the household
- 'Improper' Women: The legal and social position of women who were unmarried;

- ideas about how females should behave
- Women and Religion: Roles of women in religious rites
- Women and Power: The extent to which women were able to be involved in the political process or effect political change
- Warrior Women: Women warriors in art and literature
- Women to be Feared: The presentation of foreign, powerful women in art and literature, including how they compare to 'respectable' women in each culture

Component Group 2: Literature and Culture

This contains two elements: one in-depth cultural study and one study of related literature.

Written exam: 1 hour 30 minutes = 50% of total marks.

Roman City Life: Culture

- Roman Housing: House design including flats, Pompeian domus. Rich and poor living conditions
- The Roman Home and Family: Paterfamilias, patrons and clients, education, dinner parties
- Society: Citizens and citizenship, politicians, slaves and freedmen
- Leisure and Entertainment: Amphitheatre, chariot races, Circus Maximus, the theatre, Roman baths

Literature

- Satire and Fiction: The origins and purposes of satire; use of humour and exaggeration
- Pliny and his Letters: Pliny's letters as a personal commentary on Roman life
- Experiencing Roman City Life: What was life like for rich and poor? What were the dangers of city life? What did people do in their leisure time?
- Relationships and Roman Society: What were the Roman attitudes towards slaves and masters, women and men, patrons, and clients?

optional subjects

DRAMA **(IGCSE CAMBRIDGE 0994)**

General aims

This mixture of practical performance and written exam develops self-confidence, the ability to work with others and the ability to think on one's feet in most situations. Drama is also useful for helping with social skills that are invaluable in later life. And, of course, pupils learn all about theatre and how to create and analyse performance work of a high standard. This subject is useful for anyone wishing to pursue Drama or Performance at a higher level, or indeed anyone who is looking to challenge themselves. It is both demanding and rewarding, requiring a high level of commitment and enthusiasm. Language skills, both written and oral, should be of at least a good standard.

Content of the course and assessment

The specification requires students to study practical drama, text work and written analysis.

Paper 1: Understanding Drama (40%)

A written paper assessing knowledge and understanding of drama and theatre. This includes study of extracts from two plays and analysis and evaluation of a piece of devised practical work performed during the course.

Component 2: Practical Work (60%)

Pupils work in groups to create a piece of theatre from a given stimulus; they are assessed on the performance. They must also act in two extracts from a play; one an individual performance, the other a group. This component is marked by the teacher and externally moderated by a Cambridge Assessor.

optional subjects

GEOGRAPHY (EDEXCEL 1GA0)

General aims

Geography focuses on the issues that will face pupils as citizens of the future. For example:

- Will the Earth be able to provide us with all the resources we take for granted?
- What really causes 'natural disasters' such as floods, earthquakes, and volcanoes? Can people cope with them?
- How do coastal processes affect or threaten our future and how - or indeed should - we manage them?
- What causes people to migrate and what impact does this have on the country of origin and the host country?
- Is there any point to recycling, or should we just be less wasteful?

This course will be enjoyed by those who want to study a subject that:

- is relevant to the world we live in, and to our future
- encourages discussion of current affairs and issues
- focuses on the environment
- involves practical work outdoors
- is studied through investigation, not just listening and reading
- develops a full range of skills that will be useful in the other subjects and in employment

Content of the course and assessment

The Physical Environment: The changing landscapes of the UK - two studies from coastal, river, or glaciated landscapes; weather hazards and climate change - two studies of tropical storms and drought; ecosystems, biodiversity and management - two studies of tropical rainforests and temperate deciduous woodlands. This is 37.5% of the final grade (90 marks) for a 1 hour 30 minutes written paper.

The Human Environment: Changing cities - two studies including a UK city and a city in a developing or emerging country; global development - a study of a developing or emerging country; resource management - a study of energy or water. This is 37.5% of the final grade (90 marks) for a 1 hour 30 minutes written paper.

Geographical Investigations: Fieldwork and UK Challenges

The changing landscapes of the UK - two studies from coastal, river or glaciated landscapes; weather hazards and climate change - two studies of tropical storms and drought; ecosystems, biodiversity and management - two studies of tropical rainforests and temperate deciduous woodlands; changing cities - two studies including a UK city and a city in a developing or emerging country; global development - a study of a developing or emerging country; resource management - a study of energy or water.

Fieldwork: One physical and one human investigation; UK Challenges - a study drawing across knowledge and understanding from The Physical Environment and The Human Environment. This represents 25% of the final grade (60 marks) for a 1 hour 15 minutes written paper.

There are numerous opportunities for field work, both locally and further afield. The Examination Board expectation is that each pupil can have completed their field work for Paper 3 in a location that contrasts to where she lives. To meet this requirement, there will be a three-day residential trip to the North downs, Surrey; the cost for this will be approximately £400.

optional subjects

HISTORY **(OCR J411GF)**

General aims

History GCSE is a stimulating, challenging and wide-ranging option and we hope to inspire pupils to be open-minded, yet critical, citizens of the twenty-first century.

The aims of the GCSE course are:

- to make history meaningful - we encourage pupils to become curious, to develop their own opinions based on a respect for evidence and to build a deeper understanding of the present by engaging with and questioning the past
- to develop a wide and deep knowledge – pupils will gain knowledge of significant historical issues that will help them in their further study of history and in making sense of their world
- to engage in historical enquiry and understanding interpretations – pupils will be consistently encouraged to develop their own ideas and understanding by looking at the way the past is continually viewed from different points of view; this ensures that learners are consistently thinking about how and why it is possible to arrive at different interpretations of the same events
- to use historical sources – we will look at a range of authentic source material including eyewitness accounts, documents, historical sites, archaeological evidence and the writings of historians
- study diversity – we will look at a variety of periods from a variety of perspectives, to develop an understanding of social and cultural diversity within a local, British and global context
- discover about 'History Around Us' – we will study our local historic environment, which is a stimulating and life-enhancing

way of engaging with history, and will enhance our pupils' developing sense of identity

- encourage enjoyable and rigorous learning

Content of the course

The GCSE History course offers an exciting opportunity to gain a better understanding of the world in which we live and to fire our students' enthusiasm for the past.

At GCSE we try to explain some of the significant issues that have shaped the world, country and local area we live in:

- How has life in Britain changed over the previous centuries?
- What was the significance of crucial events in British history?
- How have local historical sites been developed, shaped and interpreted?
- What was it like to live under a dictatorship?
- How similar and different is the modern day to past eras?

Content of the course and assessment

The GCSE is assessed solely by written examination. There are five strands to the OCR GCSE History B Syllabus, which are assessed over three examinations:

The first examination (1 hour 45 minutes paper) will contain the British Thematic study on Migration to Britain from c.1250 to the present day (20%) and the British Depth Study on the Norman Conquest, 1065-1087 (20%).

The second examination (1 hour paper) will be based on a site study analysing History Around Us, where we will look at the Kelvedon Hatch Secret Nuclear Bunker and the history of the Cold War (20%).

optional subjects

HISTORY **(OCR J411GF)**

The third examination (1 hour 45 minutes paper) will contain the World Period Study studying the Making of America, 1789-1900 (20%) and the World Depth Study looking at Living under Nazi Rule, 1933-1945 (20%).

As part of the course, all pupils visit Kelvedon Hatch Secret Nuclear Bunker to perform a local site study; they will also be offered the opportunity to visit Kraków and Auschwitz-Birkenau in Poland, to further their understanding of Living Under Nazi Rule.

Whilst History is not only a valuable subject in its own right, it also builds bridges to many other subjects and teaches skills that prove useful in working life:

- A greater understanding of current affairs and important events in the world
- Experience in judging the reliability of information

- Learning to look at problems and arguments in a balanced and unbiased way
- Developing skilful oral and written communication.
- Becoming an independent thinker

optional subjects

HOSPITALITY AND CATERING (WJEC EDUQAS LEVEL 1/2 VOCATIONAL AWARD - TECHNICAL AWARD AA 5409QA)

General aims

This course concentrates on the hospitality and catering industry.

Pupils develop the knowledge and understanding related to a range of hospitality and catering providers; how they operate and what they must consider to be successful; learn about issues related to nutrition and food safety and how they affect successful hospitality and catering operations. In this qualification, pupils also develop food preparation and cooking skills as well as the transferable skills of problem solving, organisation and time management.

Pupils learn about the Hospitality and Catering industry by completing lots of practical work with weekly practical lessons. Therefore, it is essential that they are prepared to bring ingredients at least once a week.

Future career opportunities include becoming a chef, studying sports science, becoming a dietician, food journalist, working in product development, working as a home economist, or in events management, hospitality, front of house, conference management, as a buyer, production manager, public relations, hygiene control, for the National Health Service, working in health promotion, technical management, food quality, food preparation and retail.

This qualification develops skills in communication, creativity, independence, team building and evaluation. Food is one of the fastest growing industries with many varied jobs on offer.

Assessment

Unit 1 (40%): The Hospitality and Catering Industry will be externally assessed with a written examination that lasts 80 minutes. You will be graded:

- Level 1 Pass
- Level 1 Merit
- Level 1 Distinction
- Level 1 Distinction
- Level 2 Pass
- Level 2 Merit
- Level 2 Distinction
- Level 2 Distinction*

Unit 2 (60%): Hospitality and Catering in Action is internally assessed. This involves the completion of a piece of controlled assessment in school under examination conditions (NEA). Pupils will be set a task and must safely plan, prepare, cook and present dishes to satisfy the task.

optional subjects

ICT (EDEXCEL IGCSE 4IT1)

General aims

This course enables pupils to:

- explore how digital technology impacts on the lives of individuals, organisations and society
- learn about current and emerging digital technologies and the issues raised by their use, in a range of contexts, by individuals and organisations
- develop awareness of the risks that are inherent in using ICT and the features of safe, secure, and responsible practice
- work with a range of digital tools and techniques to produce effective ICT solutions in a range of contexts

Assessment

Paper 1: Written Paper - 50% of the total

Pupils are assessed through a 1 hour 30 minute written examination, which is set and marked by the Examination Board, Pearson. This comprises of a mixture of multiple-choice and short/long questions. The total number of marks available for the examination paper is 100. Pupils must study each of the following topics:

Topic 1: Digital Devices

Topic 2: Connectivity

Topic 3: Operating Online

Topic 4: Online Goods and Services

Paper 2: Practical Paper - 50% of the total

Pupils are assessed through a 3 hour practical examination, set and marked by Pearson (this includes printing time). The examination window takes place during a week in May or June. Pupils must study both of the following topics:

Topic 5: Applying Information and Communication Technology

Topic 6: Software Skills (Graphics, Web authoring, Presentations, Databases, Spreadsheets).

optional subjects

LATIN (WJEC EDUQAS C990PB)

General aims

Latin GCSE aims to provide a foundation in linguistic and cultural competence, enabling pupils to gain knowledge and understanding of the Roman world through reading and responding to its language and literature. Pupils will be encouraged to use their knowledge and understanding of the ancient language to deepen their understanding of English and other languages. They will be able to develop research and analytical skills, which will empower them to become independent learners and equip them for further study in many different areas. If pupils have opted to take the WJEC Level 1 Exam in Year 9, they will have covered some of this course already.

Assessment

Component 1: Latin Language - Written examination: 1 hour 30 minutes = 50% of total marks.

Section A: This takes the form of a momentum test consisting of a narrative in Latin divided into three passages. There are comprehension questions on parts one and three, and the middle part is to be translated into English. There is a Defined Vocabulary List of 440 words in this section.

Section B: This offers a choice between a translation from English into Latin of a small number of simple (single clause) sentences, or the recognition, analysis and explanation of syntax and accidence within a short passage of Latin (i.e. identifying the grammar).

Component 2: Latin Literature and Sources (Themes) - Written examination: 1 hour 15 minutes (open-book exam) = 30% of total marks. The 2024-2026 Theme is 'Love and Marriage'. This exam consists of a range of comprehension questions and is an open-book assessment.

Component 3: 3B Roman Civilisation - Written examination 1 hour = 20% of total marks. The assessment consists of a range of comprehension questions and longer written tasks.

optional subjects

MODERN LANGUAGES

FRENCH

(EDEXCEL 1FR0)

GERMAN

(EDEXCEL 1GN0)

SPANISH

(EDEXCEL 1SP0)

We live in a multilingual, multicultural world. Only 6% of the world's population speak English as a first language and 75% of the world's population don't speak any English at all. Being able to communicate in more than one language will allow pupils to become global citizens and will put them on a par with their multilingual international peers.

Learning a language is not just about being able to speak it; it is also about learning about your own and other cultures and developing your intercultural competence. Language learning is a multi-sensory experience in which pupils will be tested, equally, in their ability to listen, speak, read and write.

Languages offered are:

French
German
Spanish

Modern Languages are assessed at GCSE in the four skill areas: Speaking, Listening, Reading, and Writing. All examinations are set and marked by Edexcel. They are taken at the end of Year 11.

Foundation and Higher papers are available so that every pupil can demonstrate her skills to the best of her ability.

The course and assessments are designed to include cultural and authentic content wherever possible, showing how language is used in real life.

As communication skills are very important in language study, visits abroad are encouraged. We hope that all the pupils will take the opportunity to visit the relevant country during the course, either on trips organised by the school or through individual arrangements.

optional subjects

MUSIC **(EDEXCEL 1MU0)**

General aims

GCSE Music aims to give a solid foundation to both hobby and career musicians and accommodates a range of abilities. It focuses on the core activities of Understanding Music, Performing and Composing. As most pupils take performing lessons privately, some of the preparation for the performance component is usually undertaken by pupils' instrumental/voice teacher.

Post-16 study can include A level Music, A level Music Technology or Performing Arts courses. Many Music pupils maintain it as a valued hobby throughout adulthood, whereas music for others can be a career. It can be followed, for example, through performing, composing (e.g. for TV and film, stage, concert hall), teaching/lecturing, sound technology (e.g. in a theatre or studio), music journalism, music therapy, education/arts management and consultancy.

Content of the course and assessment

The GCSE Music course comprises three components:

Listening and Appraising (40%):

This is a listening paper which is 1 hour 30 minutes and is taken at the end of the course. Pupils study a wide variety of genres from four areas of study: Concerto Through Time, Rhythms Around the World, Film and Computer Game Music, Conventions of Pop.

Performing Music (30%):

Pupils perform one solo and one ensemble piece on a chosen instrument or voice. Those who have taken instrumental/vocal examinations will find they are familiar with this requirement which makes Music an excellent choice for them. It is important that those taking Music GCSE gain performing experience through participation in school groups such as Choir, Chamber Choir or Orchestra and taking part in school concerts and events.

Composing Music (30%):

Pupils are required to compose two pieces of music; one composed in Year 10 (which is a pupil set brief) and one composition in Year 11 (which is an Examination Board set brief). It is possible to compose in a wide variety of styles and for any combination of instruments/voices. Popular choices include songs of any sort and solos/duets for any instrument with piano accompaniment.

optional subjects

PHYSICAL EDUCATION (WJEC EDUQAS C550QS)

General aims

The GCSE PE course is designed to encourage and enable pupils to develop theoretical knowledge and understanding of the factors that underpin physical activity and sport; they will also then be able to apply this knowledge to improve performance. Pupils will be expected to take part in physical activities that they may not themselves opt to take as one of their three sports. In all activities they will have the opportunity to develop skills and techniques, select and use tactics, strategies and/or compositional ideas. Pupils will also develop their ability to analyse and evaluate to improve performance in physical activity and sport. Please note that they should be strong in three sports (i.e. at school, club, or county standard as a minimum) to access the higher grades at GCSE PE.

Content of the course and assessment

Component 1 - Theory: The theory element of the course is broken down into sections and covers a range of content. Pupils learn about Health, training, and exercise; Exercise physiology; Movement analysis; Psychology or sport and physical activity; Socio-cultural issues in physical activity and sport. This is comprised of two units and is assessed via a two-hour exam, which carries 60% of the total marks. Pupils are assessed through short and extended answers to questions.

Component 2 - The Active Participant:

Practical controlled assessments on three different sports, one of which must be a team sport and one must be an individual sport; the

third can be either. Any activities taken off-site must be recorded on video, both in Year 10 to moderate and in Year 11 as the pupils' final examination piece. The three sports count for 30% of the total marks; the remaining 10% is assessed through an analysis and evaluation of pupils' performance in one of their chosen activities.

For the practical element, pupils are formally assessed on one day during Year 11, between March and May. An external assessor visits the school to watch the performances/videos. Pupils must offer three performances, at least one as a team player and one as an individual performer.

For the analysis and evaluation, pupils must design and carry out a personal training programme, with the aim of providing recommendations to improve performance in one of the practical activities in which they are being assessed. Any activities taken off-site must be recorded on video, both in Year 10 to moderate and in Year 11 as their final exam piece.

Team sports: association football, badminton, basketball, camogie, cricket, dance, Gaelic football, handball, hockey, hurling, lacrosse, netball, rowing, rugby league and union, squash, table tennis, tennis and volleyball.

Individual activities: amateur boxing, athletics, badminton, canoeing, cycling, dance, diving, golf, gymnastics, equestrian, kayaking, rock climbing, rowing (sculling), skiing, snowboarding, squash, swimming, table tennis, tennis and trampolining.

There are limitations on some combinations of sports, for example pupils may not take skiing and snowboarding.

optional subjects

RELIGIOUS STUDIES (EDEXCEL 1RBOZK)

General aims

Religious Studies at GCSE enables pupils to study Christianity and Judaism as a lived religion in the United Kingdom and throughout the world along with its beliefs, teachings, and practices. Pupils will have the opportunity to explore how faith impact the followers' views on the world with particular focus on; family, matters of life and death, crime and punishment, and peace and conflict. When examining ethical issues, other worldviews are considered (such as Atheist and Humanist) and pupils will have the opportunity to reflect on, and think critically about, their own ideas and belief systems.

A good level of written English along with good revision skills are necessary for this course.

Content of the course and assessment

The examination consists of two papers:

The first paper covers Christian beliefs and practices, the Christian family, marriage and relationships, and issues on life and death – including topics such as abortion, euthanasia, and the afterlife.

The second paper covers Jewish beliefs and practices, peace and conflict, crime and punishment - including topics such as the treatment of criminals and the death penalty.

Pupils can travel to Kraków and visit Auschwitz.

optional subjects

FASHION AND TEXTILES (CAMBRIDGE O LEVEL 6130)

General aims

Fashion and Textiles provides a useful background for many creative career paths and is a valuable life skill. The project-based approach with emphasis on design and making, develops creativity, graphic communication, the application of ICT in the workplace as well as developing technical skills. Pupils must be self-motivated and dedicated. It is not necessary to be able to draw beautifully to take this course, but pupils should have a creative mind backed up with an ability to develop good practical skills and the ability to present work well.

Content of the course and assessment

The course builds on the basic skills taught in Key Stage 3 and aims to develop pupils' knowledge, skills, creativity and enjoyment of Fashion and Textiles. Students will learn to develop and use a design brief in response to varying consumer needs. They will explore the design principles of line, form and colour as well as develop and refine their practical skills, to produce high quality, desirable textile products. Commercial practice, including the use of ICT (Information Computer Technology), CAD (Computer Aided Design), and CAM (Computer Aided Manufacturing), will be studied as well as contemporary fashion design and accessory design. This is a practical based course demonstrating both design and technical skills supported with theoretical knowledge.

Component 1 Fundamentals of Fashion and Textiles (Written Examination): 50% externally assessed. The written exam is two hours and covers fibres and fabrics, manufacturing processes, surface decoration, CAD/CAM, commercial practices and sustainability.

Component 2 Coursework: 50% internally assessed and externally moderated. Two coursework projects provide students with the opportunity to demonstrate the ability to integrate knowledge from Component 1, through designing and making skills to produce one quality textile garment and one fashion accessory that satisfy a specific need or function. Each product will have a portfolio to evidence the planning, development, testing and evaluation stages.

This course will be examined in the early summer of Year 10, due to changes by the examination board preventing it from being examined in the summer of Year 11. The Year 9 work undertaken this academic year, forms part of the syllabus and the work produced during the Autumn and Spring terms will form part of the accessory coursework project. After completing the course, during the remainder of Year 10 and Year 11, pupils will help to create the costumes for the school production.

year 10 and 11 courses

COMPULSORY

Subject	Board and code
English Language	Edexcel 1ENO
English Literature	Edexcel 1ETO
Mathematics	Edexcel 1MA1
Science: Combined or Separate	Edexcel 1SC0 or 1BIO, 1CHO & 1PHO
PSHE	No exam
Physical Education	No exam

OPTIONAL

Subject	Board and code
Art and Design	
Fine Art	Edexcel 1FA0
Photography	Edexcel 1PY0
Classical Civilisation	OCR J199E
Drama	Cambridge 0994
Fashion and Textiles	Cambridge 6130
Geography	Edexcel 1GA0
History	OCR J411GF
Hospitality and Catering	WJEC Level 1/2 5409QA
ICT	Edexcel 4IT1
Latin	WJEC Eduqas C990PB
Modern Languages	
French	Edexcel 1FR0
German	Edexcel 1GN0
Spanish	Edexcel 1SP0
Music	Edexcel 1MU0
Physical Education	WJEC Eduqas C550QS
Religious Studies	Edexcel 1RB0ZK