



# **GCSE Curriculum Booklet**

For pupils starting courses in September  
2023

# Bancroft's

Independent Co-educational Day School 7–18

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# An introduction from the Head of Middle School

The Middle School years provide you with the opportunity, not only to achieve your academic potential in GCSE exams, but also to develop skills and attributes which are essential to success in later life.

This is an exciting time for students in the L4th as you get to make your GCSE option choices. In the U4th and 5<sup>th</sup> form you study six core subjects: Maths, English Language, English Literature, Biology, Chemistry and Physics. It is also compulsory to study one modern foreign language. You then choose three further subjects from a list of thirteen options - you have complete freedom of choice in this.

This booklet contains information on each course. You will also find extra information about subject courses on Sharepoint. Your teachers, tutors, Housemaster/Housemistress and Heads of Section will be very happy to help you if you are stuck deciding.

## Outline of the U4th and 5ths Curriculum

### Academic subjects

In order that you can spend enough time on each subject, you will have to reduce to nine the number of subjects you study for GCSE. Six of these are compulsory, as are PE and Games. This booklet helps you to choose four more subjects.

### Learning for Life

You will continue to have Learning for Life lessons to you develop confidence and prepare you for life's challenges as well as broadening your interests and deepening your understanding of key issues.

### Learning how to learn

There will be various events throughout the year that will help you develop your metacognition and study skills and establish the best way to learn. This might happen as part of a 'drop down' day or morning or during tutor time; revision clinics will also be offered at lunch time and after school.

## Enrichment beyond the curriculum

To complement your academic work for your GCSE exams, you should aim to be developing yourself beyond the curriculum in the following areas:

1. Physical Activity  
Sport, CCF and the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme all provide opportunities for physical activity, which could also include a sustained commitment to a school team or any club that gets you moving, like yoga or nature walking.
2. Creativity  
You should be aiming to develop your creativity, whether individually or in a group. The three main areas of creative activity in our co-curricular programme are Music, Drama and Art. However, many school clubs also provide opportunities to create, make and perform.

### 3. Scholarship

Learning can happen for its own sake and is not just about exam results. You should show that you are interested in at least one academic area beyond the curriculum. You could be doing wider reading, attending a club or contributing to a magazine.

### 4. Community

Devoting your time, skills and effort to helping others or the environment, whether in our own school community, the local community or the wider world.

### 5. Futures

You should be thinking about how to best prepare yourself for further study and future employment through careers activities and endeavours that show innovation, entrepreneurship and leadership.

You will have the chance to explore and gain skills in these areas through various 'drop down' days and the U4th Summer Challenge.

## The GCSE curriculum

### Compulsory subjects:

English (Language)

English (Literature)

Maths

The three sciences: Chemistry, Biology and Physics

You must pick one Modern Foreign Language: French, German, Russian or Spanish

*N.B. students picking both Latin and Greek may choose not to do a Modern Foreign Language.*

### Optional subjects

You then have a free choice of any **three** from the option subjects. These are:

Art *	French	Religious Studies
Classical Civilisation *	Geography	Russian
Classical Greek (#)	German	Spanish
Computer Science *	History	
Design Technology *	Latin	
Drama *	Music *	
	Physical Education *	

*The subjects marked \* may be chosen even if you have not been studying them in the Lower Fourth. (Classical Civilisation was not available in the Lower Fourth)*

# Gratin must have been studied previously in Lower 4<sup>th</sup>.

*Once we have received all the option forms we design the timetable to accommodate your choices. Very occasionally a pupil selects options which are incompatible with other pupils' choices and therefore cannot be timetabled. We will be in contact if this occurs.*

## Frequently asked questions

### **How should I choose my option subjects?**

You should think about what you are good at and what you enjoy doing. You should also read the course description carefully.

### **Should I choose the same subjects as my friends?**

You'll get to see your friends at break time and lunch time. You need to think about YOU as this choice affects the next two years and maybe your A levels.

### **Who will teach me?**

You can't choose who will teach you at GCSE and you won't find out until the start of the U4th. You shouldn't base your subject choice on whether or not you like your teacher.

### **If I want to take a subject at A level do I need to choose it at GCSE?**

If you already have an idea of a subject you want to do at A level then you may need to choose it at GCSE level – you should speak to your subject teacher for more information.

### **I know what job I want to do in the future. Should this affect my subject choices?**

Beyond the compulsory subjects, no career has any specific GCSE option requirements. You should choose the subjects that interest you now and you'll get to streamline your choices at A level.

### **Do I get to change my mind?**

If you think you have made a mistake in your options at the start of U4th it may be possible to make a change, but it's really important to think carefully and make the right choice so that you don't need to change your mind.

### **Who can I speak to about this?**

You can speak to your tutor, your Housemaster/Housemistress, Miss Hancock (Head of Middle School), Mr Foley (Assistant Head of Middle School and Head of L4th) or Mrs Dean (Head of Careers, Innovation and Entrepreneurship).

The important things to remember are that these are your options, and that the choices you make will stay with you for the next two years.

Miss Hancock  
Head of Middle School

Mr Foley  
Assistant Head of Middle School and Head of L4th

# English Language and English Literature

**Exam Board:** Pearson IGCSE

**English** and **English Literature** are two separate subjects, both studied under the Pearson IGCSE specifications.

The work in English and English Literature covers a wide range of material. The basis of the course is the development of many skills which are essential for success and fulfilment in today's world.

## **Why should I study English Language and English Literature?**

The assured command of written and spoken English, which is developed through the Language course, is enormously empowering, both in your personal relationships and in the working world. The study of Literature teaches you more about yourself and your place in the world, as well as bringing cultural enrichment.

## **What will I study?**

The two subjects are taught in parallel, and the course is organised so that the themes, techniques and issues studied in the Literature texts inform the practice work for the Language components.

The key elements of English Language are:

- Comprehension and comparison of non-fiction texts, one unseen and one from a studied anthology
- Analysis of prose fiction and/or poetry
- Adapting writing for a wide range of different readerships and genres, for example, speeches, magazine articles or advice pieces
- Creative writing
- Learning how to use literary techniques and to manipulate syntax to achieve your desired impact on a reader
- Developing written accuracy and strong vocabulary

The key elements of English Literature are:

- Unseen poetry
- A literary heritage text, either a novel or a play by Shakespeare
- A modern novel
- A modern play
- Studying poetry from a range of cultures, dating from 16<sup>th</sup> to 21<sup>st</sup> Century
- Analysis of writers' methods
- Understanding how writers reflect their context and try to influence their readers.
- Writing coherent essays in a formal, analytical style

### **How will I be assessed?**

Both courses are assessed through one final examination, worth 60%, and two coursework essays, each worth 20%

- English Language-
  - Exam: comprehension and comparison of non-fiction texts and transactional writing (i.e. specific genres such as speech, review, magazine article written for a specific audience/readership.)
  - Coursework: one analytical piece on two poetry or prose texts from the studied anthology; one piece of imaginative writing
  
- English Literature –
  - Exam: analysis of one unseen poem, comparison of two prepared anthology poems, an analytical essay on the modern novel within its context
  - Coursework: one analytical essay on the literary heritage text within its context; one analytical essay on a modern drama

### **How else will my studies be supported?**

With such easy access to the West End, London theatres often stage productions of plays studied or related texts, and where possible, we will try to build seeing these into our teaching programme alongside trips to other relevant exhibitions at museums and galleries. Clubs and societies such as The Teacup, the school's creative writing magazine, and the Debating Society are valuable in the development of skills and passion for English. Regular revision classes are provided for both English Language and English Literature in the second half of the 5<sup>th</sup> form. A weekly lunchtime clinic is also provided in the 5<sup>th</sup> form for those needing extra help. The English Teams pages have links to a range of podcasts, theatre productions and reading lists to provide inspiration for independent reading; there are also fascinating fiction and non-fiction lists and texts in the Library.

### **Skills Gained?**

One of the key skills acquired through studying English at GCSE is the ability to adapt written English to a specified audience and purpose, and pupils will be taught how to manipulate sentence structure to achieve certain effects in creative, persuasive and discursive essays. Analytical skills are developed through preparation for both the examination papers and for coursework; the Literature coursework also requires evaluative skills, a key feature for success in many A level subjects. Classroom discussion helps to develop the verbal skills of articulating increasingly complex ideas and adapting previously held understanding to new facts and ideas. The ability to shape ideas into a coherent argument is developed throughout the two-year course, and pupils are encouraged for their English Language essays to look with increasing depth and insight at different facets of social behaviour; this understanding is enhanced by the study through literature of other writers' expression of those facets. All these skills are essential for a range of A level and university courses and will prove extremely valuable to many careers.

# Mathematics

**Exam Board:** Pearson IGCSE

At the simplest level in our everyday lives we all live with numbers, whether it be with household bills, percentages, measuring, timetables or statistics. On a slightly higher level, mathematics involves abstraction - using symbols, devising rules for their use, and learning how to use their powerful techniques to solve problems. At the highest level mathematics is about devising ways of solving problems of the most abstract nature. These range from the rare, gifted academic mathematician who wins fame and wealth by solving a previously intractable theorem, to those who use their talents to devise, for example, new ways of searching the web, or of analysing the stock market.

## Why should I study Mathematics?

The skills, factual knowledge and techniques taught in Maths at this level are of fundamental importance in later life. An IGCSE or equivalent qualification in Maths is demanded by most careers and for entry into Higher Education.

## What will I study?

The IGCSE Course can be broken down into 4 strands

- Number
- Algebra
- Geometry and Trigonometry
- Statistics and Probability

## How will I be assessed?

The IGCSE Mathematics is examined by two written papers at the end of the course. Some students are accelerated to complete the IGCSE at the end of the Upper Fourth. They will then study the OCR Additional Mathematics Free Standing Mathematics Qualification (FSMQ) in the Fifth Form. Students not taking the FSMQ course wishing to get a head start on A-level (particularly useful for Further Mathematics) will have opportunities to study parts of the FSMQ course.

## How else will be my studies be supported?

Maths is taught in sets according to ability which enables teachers to pitch the material at the level most appropriate to the students in the set.

Every student will be given a Mathswatch login, which gives them access to a website containing topic specific video tutorials and worksheets to enable students to consolidate their knowledge. This is particularly helpful for revision.

The student Sharepoint for IGCSE Maths is particularly useful; it is broken down into individual topics and each page contains the objectives that the students should aim to achieve, a list of the relevant Mathswatch clips and links to problem solving and extension tasks.

There are support sessions at lunchtimes available for those who might be finding the course rather challenging and lots of opportunities for the high fliers to shine; Hans Woyda competitions, Maths Challenges, Maths Feast Competitions, online code breaking competitions to name a few.

## Skills Gained?



- The ability to manipulate numbers is an essential skill in the world beyond school and the ability to problem solve, reason and make logical deductions from given information is essential to success in most subjects and in many professional situations.

# Science

## Exam Board: AQA

All pupils at Bancroft's start studying the GCSE Science content at the start of the L4. The AQA GCSE Science Suite together provide a coordinated science course in which the three sciences, although separate, remain linked by a common approach and course structure.

### Why should I study Science?

The aims of this course are:

- To develop interest in, and enthusiasm for, science;
- To help develop a critical approach to scientific evidence and methods;
- To enable you to acquire and apply skills, knowledge and understanding of *Working scientifically* and the essential role of science in society;
- To provide you with the scientific skills, knowledge and understanding necessary for progression to further learning.

### What will I study?

GCSE science will cover the following topics:

Biology	Chemistry	Physics
Cell biology	Atomic structure and the periodic table	Particle model of matter
Organisation		Energy
Infection and response	Bonding, structure, and the properties of matter	Electricity
Bioenergetics	Quantitative chemistry	Forces
Homeostasis and response	Chemical changes	Waves
Inheritance, variation and evolution	Energy changes	Magnetism and electromagnetism
Ecology	The rate and extent of chemical change	Atomic structure
	Organic chemistry	Space physics (physics only)
	Chemical analysis	
	Chemistry of the atmosphere	
	Using resources	

### Practical work is completed throughout the course

Although there is no direct assessment of practical work in GCSE Science, you will have to do several *required practicals* in each science as stated in the specifications.

You will be assessed on your practical skills in the written exams with **at least 15%** of the marks coming from questions relating to practicals. Each specification includes a list of apparatus that you must be able to use and techniques you must be able to demonstrate. You will need to complete each of the practical activities and make a record of your work and what you have learnt.

## How will I be assessed?

The GCSE course is linear in structure: all students take two equally weighed exams in each science at the end of the course. Both Separate Sciences and Combined Science (Trilogy) are assessed by two papers in each science; the only difference is the length of each exam which is 1¼ h for Combined and 1¾ h for Separates.

The GCSE exams in Science include questions that allow you to demonstrate:

- your knowledge and understanding of the content developed in one section or topic, including the associated mathematical and practical skills or
- your ability to apply mathematical and practical skills to areas of content they are not normally developed in or
- your ability to draw together different areas of knowledge and understanding within one answer.

A range of question types are used, including multiple choice, short answer and those that require extended responses. Extended response questions will be of sufficient length to allow you to demonstrate your ability to construct and develop a sustained line of reasoning which is coherent, relevant, substantiated and logically structured. Extended responses may be prose, extended calculations, or a combination of both, as appropriate to the question.

## How else will my studies be supported?

Bancroft's Science Department is very active, and several trips are organised during the 3 years of the GCSE course. Typical examples from recent years: The Big Bang Fair; Royal Greenwich Observatory; GCSE Science Live Event and the Salters Chemistry Challenge.

Pupils may also participate in extension activities leading to participation in GCSE Olympiad Competitions, CREST awards and the Middle School Essay Prize for Science.

Extra support classes in each Science start in January of the fifth year, although it goes without saying that all teachers are ready to help before that point arrives.

## Skills Gained?

Over the course of studying the science at GCSE you will develop:

- The ability to think scientifically; understand how methods and theories develop over time; use models to solve problems; to appreciate the power and limitations of science; explain everyday applications of science; evaluate risks both in practical and the wider societal context; recognise the importance of peer review and communicating results to a range of audiences.
- Experimental skills and strategies: Use scientific theories to develop hypotheses; Plan or devise experiments; select and apply a range of techniques and apparatus as appropriate; carry out experiments with due regard to risk to obtain accurate results; when to use sampling techniques; make and record measurements; evaluate methods and suggest improvements.

- Analysis and evaluation: presenting observations and other data; translating data from one form to another; carrying out mathematical and statistical analysis; estimating uncertainty; interpreting observations, identifying patterns and trends, drawing inferences; relating data to hypotheses and explanations; being objective in evaluation; communicating the scientific rationale for investigations and the methods used.
- Correct use of scientific vocabulary, quantities, units, symbols and nomenclature: Use scientific vocabulary, terminology and definitions; recognise the importance of scientific quantities and understand how they are determined; use SI units (eg kg, g, mg; km, m, mm; kJ, J) and IUPAC chemical nomenclature; use prefixes and powers of ten for orders of magnitude; Interconvert units; use an appropriate number of significant figures in calculation.

### **Further notes on Combined Science (Trilogy) at Bancroft's:**

The Biology, Chemistry and Physics GCSE courses are taught over three years and typically around 85% of you will achieve three GCSEs in the **Separate Sciences** at the end of the fifth year.

However, the flexibility of our approach means that you may be able to improve your attainment and gain confidence by focussing on two thirds of the science specification in the Fifth Form. You then sit the shorter exams at the end of the course and may be able to gain stronger grades in two GCSEs (**Combined Science: Trilogy**).

The decision on Science GCSE entry (Separate vs Combined) will be taken towards the end of the Upper Fourth in the light of your end-of-year exams and science grades over the year.

### **Key points about our approach to GCSE Science**

- The Biology, Chemistry and Physics content is taught as separate subjects throughout school years L4, U4 and 5.
- There are opportunities for practical skills development throughout the course.
- The subject content and required practicals are common to Combined Science (Trilogy) and Separate Science GCSEs so pupils can move between courses.
- All our science qualifications provide opportunities for progression; Separate Science or Combined Science: Trilogy give students the option to progress to A-levels in science or other subjects.
- Making the decision regarding Combined or Separate sciences as late as possible, after the U4 exams, allows for pupils whose scientific maturity develops at different rates to be correctly entered for an appropriate qualification.

## **French, German & Spanish**

**Exam Board:** Cambridge Assessment International Education IGCSE

The syllabus is designed for learners who are learning French, German or Spanish as a foreign language. The aim is to develop an ability to use the language effectively for purposes of practical communication. The course is based on the linked language skills of listening, reading, speaking and writing, and these are built on as learner's progress through their studies.

The syllabus also aims to offer insights into the culture and civilisation of countries where French, German or Spanish is spoken, thus encouraging positive attitudes towards language learning and towards speakers of foreign languages.

It is not possible to take these subjects if you have not studied them in the L4.

### **Why should I study French/German/Spanish?**

- To use the language for practical communication
- To develop a better understanding of other cultures
- To see these countries and their peoples in a positive light so that you enjoy travel more
- To take the language study further, if you wish
- To understand your own language better
- To take on a rewarding cognitive challenge
- To build a bank of transferrable skills which will be useful in your other subjects, future studies and work

### **What will I study?**

- Advanced vocabulary and syntax to enable you to take part in a variety of transactional activities but also enable you to read/write/listen and converse at a more advanced level
- Information about other cultures and ways of life
- Additional communication and problem solving skills

### **How will I be assessed?**

There is no coursework or controlled assessment. Each language leads to the Cambridge IGCSE which will contain terminal assessment of the following four skills (grading 9-1):

#### **Listening (25%)**

Recordings by native speakers, talking about ordinary topics or acting out everyday situations. It is not necessary to remember everything - it is not a memory test. The questions will be verbal and non-verbal multiple choice.

#### **Speaking (25%)**

There will be one 10-minute test recorded with your own teacher. It will involve a role play testing simple transactional language and an unscripted conversation on defined topics.

### **Reading (25%)**

This involves the comprehension of texts of various lengths on everyday topics. As with the listening, it is not necessary to remember everything - and questions will be verbal and non-verbal multiple choice, leading to some questions requiring answers in the target language.

### **Writing (25%)**

You will have to complete a number of written tasks in the target language, ranging from a simple form filling task to extended free writing on a choice of GCSE topics

### **How else will my studies be supported?**

During the IGCSE course you will be offered the chance to participate in residential trips to France, Germany and Spain. These enjoyable visits give a valuable insight into the language and culture of the country and complement the language work done in the classroom. You will also have timetabled lessons with a native language assistant who will support you in your preparation for the speaking exam.

### **Skills Gained?**

- Communication
- Open-mindedness
- Resilience
- Logical thinking
- Attention to detail

## Russian

**Exam Board:** Pearson

This course has the same essential aims as French, German and Spanish. The syllabus is designed for learners who are learning Russian as a foreign language. The aim is to develop an ability to use the language effectively for purposes of practical communication. The course is based on the linked language skills of listening, reading, speaking and writing, and these are built on as learner's progress through their studies.

The syllabus also aims to offer insights into the culture and civilisation of countries where Russian is spoken, thus encouraging positive attitudes towards language learning and towards speakers of foreign languages.

The course content takes into account the fact that you will be dealing with a new alphabet. It is not possible to take this subject if you have not studied it in the L4.

### Why should I study Russian?

- To use the language for practical communication
- To develop a better understanding of other cultures
- To see these countries and their peoples in a positive light so that you enjoy travel more
- To take the language study further, if you wish
- To understand your own language better
- To take on a rewarding cognitive challenge
- To build a bank of transferrable skills which will be useful in your other subjects, future studies and work

### What will I study?

- Advanced vocabulary and syntax to enable you to take part in a variety of transactional activities but also enable you to read/write/listen and converse at a more advanced level
- Information about other cultures and ways of life
- Additional communication and problem solving skills

### How will I be assessed?

Papers will be tiered, with 25% assessment weightings per skill (listening, speaking, reading and writing). All papers are marked by the awarding body. The Russian course leads to a GCSE examined by Pearson which will contain terminal assessment of the following four skills:

#### Listening (25%)

Understand and respond to different types of spoken language - 45 minutes including 5 minutes' reading time. Multiple choice and short answer open response questions. The majority of the questions will be set in English with two questions set in the target language.

### **Speaking (25%)**

Communicate and interact effectively in speech - 10-12 minutes. Your class teacher will conduct the exam. Students will be assessed through 3 tasks:

- A role play
- Questions based on a picture stimulus
- A conversation

### **Reading (25%)**

Understand and respond to different types of written language -1 hour 5 minutes.

Question types will comprise both multiple choice and short-answer open response questions, and one translation question. There will be three questions set in the target language.

### **Writing (25%)**

Communicate in writing - 1 hour 15 minutes

Two open response tasks and one translation question.

### **How else will my studies be supported?**

During the GCSE course you will be offered the chance to participate in a residential trip to Russia (subject to confirmation). These enjoyable visits give a valuable insight into the language and culture of the country and complement the language work done in the classroom. You will also have timetabled lessons with a native language assistant who will support you in your preparation for the speaking exam.

### **Skills Gained**

- Communication
- Open-mindedness
- Resilience
- Logical thinking
- Attention to detail



# Art and Design

**Exam Board:** OCR

GCSE Art allows you to unleash your imagination in a variety of artistic mediums, including painting, drawing, sculpture, photography and maybe even animation and film making if you choose to. This GCSE is designed to bring Art and Design to life and to help you develop your artistic skills and expand your creativity, imagination and independence. What's more, the possibilities for personal expression are endless.

In the past students who have not studied Art and Design in the L4th have taken GCSE Art and Design and have been successful.

## **Why should I study Art and Design?**

Many employers now actively seek those who have studied the arts. Steve Jobs, founder of Apple, was fond of saying his success was due to his hiring artists fascinated by technology rather than computer geeks. Top talent management agency, The Curve Group specializing in financial and business services, concurs: "Employees with an arts degree have developed more quickly in their roles from the start. They have discipline, confidence and can accept criticism."

The arts develop the broader dimensions of the human being – mind, body and soul. The arts can express the ineffable and make sense of things that otherwise do not seem to. This can be very fulfilling and helps us function as human beings – which can only be good for society as a whole.

## **What will I study?**

You will draw, paint, print, photograph and maybe develop your animation and film making skills. You will research the work of other artists, architects, designers, photographers and film directors.

You will look at other artists to develop knowledge and an understanding of art in historical and contemporary contexts.

You will be encouraged to develop your technical skills but to also develop the them in a personal direction relevant to you and the times you live in.

## **How will I be assessed?**

This GCSE has a 60% coursework unit, which will involve you in producing a portfolio of work. There'll also be a 40% ten-hour practical task for which you'll have ten weeks' preparation time.

At the end of the course, candidates' work is marked and moderated internally and then externally moderated.

### **How else will my studies be supported?**

Gallery and museum visits are encouraged and as a group we will try to get out of school for the day to enjoy a group gallery visit or two. In the past, a range of inspirational visiting speakers have talked about Art History, Architecture, Graphic Design and puppetry for Lion King and these will continue to happen this year. We are lucky that former students are more than willing to pop into school to talk about their experiences at University and Art College. Their experiences studying maybe Architecture or completing a Foundation Art Course may help you to decide on your future.

If possible, all pupils will visit the Curwen Print Workshop and in addition you will be supported with Saturday workshops and afterschool classes.

### **Skills Gained?**

You will gain a very good idea about your own artistic abilities and interests and will be encouraged to express yourself in a variety of ways. You will be helped to build up your skills and will be allowed to define your own projects and approaches with your tutor acting as a critical supporter and guide. You will learn about other artistic journeys and recognize how different genres developed in the past.

You will become more confident making independent decisions all the way, and be self-critical. You will need to be brave in exposing your creations, and accept criticism.

GCSE Art and Design could be the first step towards a career in Art and Design, followed by A-Level, a Foundation Course and/or a Degree. There are good career opportunities such as architecture, advertising, fashion, textiles, graphics, film and television, game design, and industrial design.

If you decide not to take your Art and Design studies any further, the transferable skills you gain will still be valuable. You'll develop problem solving, creative thinking, investigation, research, communication and teamwork skills, and gain the ability to develop, refine and present ideas. Employers and universities regard all of these qualities highly.

Did you know more people work in the creative industries than the finance industry? The creative industries generate £84.1 billion for the United Kingdom (UK) economy each year and employ over 2.8 million people; the creative industries have continued to grow.

# Classical Civilisation

Exam board: OCR

**You do not need to have studied Classics in the L4th to follow this GCSE course.**

It offers you the opportunity to study elements of the visual and material culture (e.g. archaeological evidence and artefacts) and selections from the literature of the Classical World, and to acquire an understanding of their social, historical and cultural contexts.

## Why should I study Classical Civilisation?

- You will examine a wide variety of material, combining the source analysis of History, the environmental factors of Geography and the cultural comparisons of Religious Studies; you will also be introduced to elements of Archaeology and Anthropology.
- You will evaluate the culture of ancient Greece and Rome, using this fresh perspective to reflect on your own experiences and perspective.
- You will develop insights into the relevance of ancient literature and civilisation to our understanding of our modern world of diverse cultures.
- You will have opportunities to provide a personal response to the literature studied.
- Because the material is so wide-ranging, interesting and engaging, you will find it fascinating and enjoyable!

## What will I study?

There are two areas for study:

- **Thematic Study: Myth and Religion**

You will study myth as a symbol of power, myths about the underworld and the role of the gods and heroes in the founding of Athens and Rome, and the importance of Heracles/Hercules to both the Greek and Roman World.

You will also examine the role of religion in the everyday lives of Ancient Greeks and Romans; you will study temples, sacrifice, festivals, death and beliefs in the afterlife.

You will use visual and material culture and literature in conjunction with one another in order to inform your judgements.

- **Literature and Culture: The Homeric World. This component contains two elements:**

1. An in-depth cultural study: the Mycenaean Age:

You will study particular sites, their archaeology and the valuable role they play in our understanding of the age.

You will examine sculpture, frescoes and jewellery, as well as various tombs and the fascinating treasure found in them.

You will also explore everyday life in the Mycenaean Age, enabling you to consider what life was like for real people in this period.

2. Study of related literature: **Homer's Odyssey (Books 9, 10, 19, 21 and 22):**

The books which you will study combine the fantastical and enjoyable tales of Odysseus's journey (9 and 10), with those which give you an insight into aspects such as palace life and the lives of women (19 and 21). The book which focuses on the battle between Odysseus and the Suitors (22) is exciting in itself and poses interesting questions about revenge and punishment.

## How will I be assessed?

- **Thematic Study** will be assessed by a written examination of 1 hour 30 minutes, worth 90 marks - 50% of the total marks for the GCSE.

It will test AO1 [demonstrate knowledge and understanding of literature and visual/material culture from the Classical world] and AO2 [analyse, interpret and evaluate literature and visual/material culture from the Classical world, using evidence and producing coherent and reasoned arguments].

There will be three sections (each worth 30 marks): one on Greece, one on Rome and the third on Greece and Rome.

There will be both short answer and extended response questions.

You will be required to respond to both literary and visual/material sources (some of which will be unseen and some from the prescribed material).

In the third section you will be required to compare two ancient sources, one of which will be literary, the other visual/material (one Greek, one Roman).

- **Literature and Culture** will be assessed by a written examination of 1 hour 30 minutes, worth 90 marks - 50% of the total marks for the GCSE - and testing AO1 and AO2.

There will be two sections (each worth 45 marks): one on the "Culture" topics and sources, the other on the "Literature".

There will be both short answer and extended response questions.

For the "Culture" section, you will be required to respond to some sources which will be unseen and some from the prescribed material; sources for the "Literature" section will be from the prescribed material only.

## How else will my studies be supported?

- You may have the opportunity to acquire a deeper understanding of the material studied by attending lectures and conferences.
- You will have the opportunity to visit museums and attend drama productions.
- You will have the opportunity to attend Classical Society; this holds regular meetings, covering a wide-range of topics.
- You will have the opportunity to research a subject of your choice and give a talk at Classical Society.
- You may have the opportunity to participate in a school visit to either Greece or Italy.

## Skills Gained?

- You will learn how to form your own judgements, how to contribute to discussion and how to listen to, analyse and evaluate the views of others.
- You will learn how to interpret, analyse and evaluate a wide range of evidence.
- You will learn how to select a range of appropriate evidence to support your arguments.
- You will learn how to present your views in a clear, concise and logical manner.
- You will learn how to use your knowledge and analytical skills to gain an insight into the Classical World from the material studied.
- You will develop an awareness of how the Classical sources reflect issues relevant to both the Classical World and today, such as questions of gender, belief, sexuality and citizenship.

# Classical Greek

**Exam board:** OCR

**You must have studied Gratin in L4th** in order to follow this GCSE course.

Greek GCSE has two main elements: language and literature.

## Why should I study Classical Greek?

- You will develop a wide range of transferable skills (e.g. literary criticism, problem-solving, analysis, historical and textual evaluation, and attention to detail).
- You will read a selection of interesting and entertaining literature which has influenced the development of European literature and culture.
- You will study the life, history and customs of the Greek people and, by making comparisons, achieve a better understanding of your own culture.
- You will develop insights into the relevance of Greek and of ancient literature and civilisation to our understanding of our modern world of diverse cultures.
- You will develop the valuable skill of translation and acquire an understanding of the Classical Greek language, as well as enhancing your language awareness in general.
- You will widen your English vocabulary.
- If you are enjoying the Greek element of Gratin so far, you will relish the opportunity to study this fascinating subject in greater depth.

## What will I study?

### Language:

You will use the OCR endorsed textbooks *Greek to GCSE* (parts I and II) by John Taylor and *Greek Stories* by John Taylor and Kristian Waite. The wide-ranging and thought-provoking stories in these books will provide the grammar which you need to know for the GCSE; they will also enable you to develop your translation and reading comprehension skills and to increase your knowledge and understanding of Greek vocabulary (including English derivations), accidence and syntax.

You will also need to learn the words on the Defined Vocabulary List; these will be tested regularly and thoroughly.

### Literature:

You will also study Greek prescribed texts, one prose text and one verse text.

You will be required to answer questions in English on a variety of aspects of content, and to analyse, evaluate and provide a personal response to the literature which you have studied.

The texts are:

- **Prose Literature:**  
You will study selections from Herodotus's *History*, describing a variety of events and unusual customs, such as the capture of Babylon by Cyrus the Great (king of Persia) and the Babylonian Wife Market (at which some men bid for the right to marry certain women, and other men are offered money to marry certain other women).
- **Verse Literature:**  
Part of Homer's *Iliad* Book VI, in which the Trojan prince Hector is begged by his wife, Andromache, not to go out to fight the Greeks. Hector says that it is his duty to do battle, before saying a touching farewell to Andromache (and their infant son) and heading off to fight, accompanied by his brother Paris.

### How will I be assessed?

- **Language:** The written examination will be worth 100 marks (50% of the total marks for the GCSE); it will test AO1 [demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the language]. The paper will last for 1 hour 30 minutes; there will be two sections.  
Section A will be worth 30 marks. The unseen passage will recount a story drawn from mythology or Greek domestic life. 20 marks will be available for answering comprehension questions in English, including questions about the derivation of English words from Greek. 10 marks will be available from questions on accident and syntax.  
Section B will be worth 70 marks. 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 Greek into English.
- **Literature:** There will also be two separate written examinations: Prose Literature and Verse Literature (each worth 25% of the total marks for the GCSE) which will last for 1 hour each. Each paper will test AO2 [demonstrate knowledge and understanding of literature] and AO3 [analyse, evaluate and respond to literature].  
You will be asked to translate a short passage of the set text from Greek into English and to answer comprehension questions. You will also be required to answer analysis questions which will be marked on a point by point basis and an 8-mark analysis question which will be marked using a level of response grid. You will also write an extended response in English, which will draw upon material from the set text.  
Please note that you will be asked questions solely on passages which you have **already seen**.

### How else will my studies be supported?

- You may have the opportunity to acquire a deeper understanding of the literature studied by attending lectures and conferences on the set texts.
- You will have the opportunity to attend Classical Society; this holds regular meetings, covering a wide-range of topics.
- You will have the opportunity to research a subject of your choice and give a talk at Classical Society.
- You may have the opportunity to participate in a school visit to either Greece or Italy.

### Skills Gained?

- You will develop your ability to understand and translate the Greek language.
- You will develop your precision and attention to detail.
- You will enhance your knowledge of English words and their derivations.
- You will develop your proficiency in logical thinking and problem solving.
- You will develop your awareness of written style and learn how to identify the impact of certain literary aspects on the reader.
- You will develop your ability to analyse and evaluate.
- You will learn how to form your own opinions and how to select relevant material to consolidate your arguments.

# Computer Science

**Exam Board:** OCR

## What is Computer Science?

Computer Science is the study of Computers, how they work and how to develop them in order to best solve human needs. In contrast to ICT, in which students would be expected to just use computers, Computer Science aims to give a fuller understanding of how we can make our own software in order to make bespoke solutions to a variety of areas.

## What will I study?

Students will study all aspects of how a computer functions on a day to day basis. This includes: how computers represent a wide range of data; how they communicate with one another; and how they process the data to give us useable results.

Furthermore, students will take on the study of algorithm design. This area is highly recommended in order to develop future problem solving skills. This will include learning to programme using the Python programming language, as well as design algorithms in a variety of ways including flow charts and pseudocode. Many of these abstract techniques are used in other areas of business in the modern world.

## Why should I study Computer Science?

Firstly, Computer Science develops a wide array of skills which can be transferred to both technical and non-technical disciplines. A foundational element of Computer Science is learning the techniques to break a problem down in an effective manner, in order to logically solve very complex problems. Although we will focus on technical areas within this course, techniques within the study of Computer Science have also been cited as being used in other disciplines such as business management to make company efficiency optimal.

Computers will also be a big part of everyone's future. There are an overwhelming number of careers presenting themselves within the working world. Starting a career within Computer Science would open up opportunities in a large number of industries including: Application Development, Banking, Education, etc.

## What Will I study?

There are a wide variety of topics you will study. Below is a full list of the topics covered within the GCSE.

- Systems Architecture
- Memory
- Storage
- Wired and Wireless Networks
- Network Topologies, Protocols and Layers
- System Security
- System Software
- Ethical, Legal, Cultural and Environmental Concerns
- Algorithms
- Programming Techniques
- Producing Robust Programmes
- Computational Logic
- Translators and Facilities of Languages

### How will I be assessed?

The GCSE is comprised of two external exams and an internally assessed non-examinable assessment. The weightings of the assessments are as follows:

Component	How it is assessed	Weighting
Computer Systems	External Exam (1h 30mins)	50%
Computational Thinking, Algorithms and Programming	External Exam (1h 30mins)	50%

### How else will my studies be supported?

Students will have the opportunity to take part in a wide range of activities outside of lessons to support their development within the Computer Science discipline. These will include a visit to Bletchley Park, Home of the Codebreakers; taking part in the National Perse Coding Challenge; and a residential trip to visit some culturally significant sites relating to Computer Science.

### Skills Gained?

- Problem solving
- Modular design
- Collaborative working
- Understanding of emerging technologies
- Computer programming
- Robust systems testing
- Awareness of computer systems for business



# Design and Technology

Exam Board: OCR

## Why Should I Study Design and Technology?

The UK creative industries are worth over £100bn a year and are the fastest-growing sector according to government statistics. The importance and growth potential of the sector was clearly recognised through the landmark sector deal between government and industry when it was announced that “the UK's ingenuity and creativity will be what drives our progress as a nation”.

The world needs creative problem solvers who are willing to use their imagination to answer some of societies biggest ills. To quote Albert Einstein “we cannot solve our problems with the same thinking we used when we created them.”

Design and Technology is fundamental to many aspects of modern life and is key towards inspiring young people to become valued members of tomorrow's society. Whatever your career choice, having the ability to think creatively, think critically and design new and innovative solutions to challenging problems, will be key to shaping the future world that we live in.

This GCSE is planned to engage pupils with the world of design engineering and to develop problem solving skills, creativity and critical thinking through the production of real-life working prototypes (the Design Thinking process). The course has a strong focus upon ‘human-centred’ design, which requires our pupils to identify and solve situations of genuine need. It's a process that starts with the people you're designing for and ends with new solutions that are tailor made to suit their needs.

The course would suit pupils who enjoy the creative process along with hands-on work (thinking through making) using a variety of materials and processes. It will also appeal to those who want to make a genuine difference to people's lives through inclusive design. We expect our students to challenge conventional wisdom and archetypes in pursuit of imaginative solutions.

The knowledge and understanding gained from this GCSE will provide an excellent starting point for pupils thinking of a career in creative or technical areas. With its practical application of scientific and mathematical principles, the subject offers an insight into developing products and systems to fulfil a real need.

The Design and Technology GCSE forms a valuable qualification, in combination with other subjects, as a possible step towards many career areas such as Mechanical Engineering, Industrial Design, Architecture, Interior Design, Product Design, Media/Advertising, Aeronautical Engineering and Civil engineering.

## **What will I study?**

The Design and Technology course engages pupils in a wide variety of investigatory, design and construction activities. We cover; products analysis, drawing skills, prototyping and constructing objects from mixed materials. This can include polymers, woods, metals and smart/modern materials.

Students studying the GCSE will have access to modern CAD and manufacturing methods such as 3D Printing, CNC and Laser cutting, alongside the more traditional skills, in order to create working models.

## **How will my work be assessed?**

The course will be assessed through an iterative design challenge project (50%) and examination (50%).

The Design Project involves construction of a product that allows you to pursue your own design ideas, supported by a design portfolio comprising drawings and notes. The project will be concerned with the design and manufacture of technological devices and products which will solve a problem.

The examination will focus upon a both the 'core' and 'in-depth' knowledge and understanding of the subject area.

## **How else will my studies be supported?**

To add value to pupils learning experience, the Design and Technology Department offers a range of additional educational opportunities to enhance their time studying the GCSE. We give pupils the chance to extend their learning beyond the school by taking them on visits to support their work in the classroom e.g. The Design Museum, New Designers Exhibition, Clerkenwell Design Week. We also invite industry professionals in to the Department to speak with our classes and give pupils their expert advice/support. Throughout the week students are also welcome to attend extension classes in the Dept. where they can have more dedicated time using our facilities and one to one support from teaching staff.

## **Skills Gained?**

- Creativity
- Design Thinking
- Empathy and a 'human centered' philosophy to designing
- Practical capability and an appreciation of craft
- An understanding of emerging technologies
- Computer Aided Design and Manufacture
- Applied Mathematical and Science ability in relation to the subject.

## **Drama**

**Exam Board:** AQA

Drama is a discipline involving the development of a breadth of skills including the ability to communicate, performance skills, research skills, and the development of analytical and evaluative skills focusing on both the written word and live performances. You will have the opportunity to explore theatre from all angles before choosing your focus, whether performance or design-based.

### **Why should I study Drama?**

The GCSE course provides you with the opportunity to gain a better insight and appreciation of issues, from the interpersonal to whole world concerns. It also provides you with a working knowledge of the theatre and how to put performance into practice. You will have the chance to explore the methods of different practitioners and directors, taking inspiration for your own performances. You will be taken to watch a range of theatre performances and you will also create your own pieces of theatre, both devised and scripted, to perform in front of a live audience. Drama develops key transferrable skills such as communication and leadership skills.

### **What will I study?**

#### **Practical Skills:**

You will learn to perform a range of practical skills- both scripted and devised.

- a) A devised piece which you create in its entirety
- b) A scripted excerpt in which you will perform two different extracts from the same text

#### **Studied Text:**

You will be studying a set text practically during the lessons, bringing the text to life through rehearsals, performances and diagrams. You will explore the text from the eyes of an actor, a director, a costume and set designer and a lighting and sound technician.

#### **Live Theatre:**

Within your exam, a section will involve analysing and evaluating live theatre. Therefore, during the course of the two years, you will be taken to a range of different performances covering a range of theatrical styles. In previous years, we've seen *Comedy About a Bank Robbery* at the Criterion, and the award-winning production of *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time* at the Troubadour Theatre.

#### **How will I be assessed?**

The practical element is comprised of two separate performances: scripted (20%) and devised (40%). The devised will be internally assessed and externally moderated, for which you will also submit a coursework logbook. The scripted performance is externally examined.

The written exam (40%) consists of two parts: 1. an analysis of your Studied Text from directors/actors/designers' perspectives, and 2. an evaluation of a Live Theatre performance.

**How else will my studies be supported?**

Throughout the two years, you will be given the opportunity to take part in a range of workshops of a range of different dramatic styles such as immersive, physical or verbatim theatre. You will be taken to four theatrical performances as well as being given the first option on theatre trips run for other year groups. You will be given the opportunity to take part in National Theatre programmes such as New Views and Connections.

**Skills Gained?**

Through studying Drama at GCSE, you will learn the skills of acting, directing, producing and designing. You will develop and hone your analytical and evaluation skills throughout the course, as well as your ability to understand subtext and read human behaviour. Communication skills form the heart of the GCSE which helps you to develop confidence in presentation and interpersonal skills. Drama also develops creativity, the ability to work in a team, leadership and independence.

# Geography

**Exam Board:** AQA

## Why should I study Geography?

Geography is a very wide discipline and this is its major strength and appeal. With a growing global interest in issues such as migration, climate change, environmental degradation and socioeconomic inequality, there has never been a better time to study geography. Whether you have a passion for environmental, economic, political or social events, geography will have some interest and relevance to your life.

## What will I study?

By the time you finish a GCSE in geography, you will have a knowledge and understanding of the following:

- Natural Hazards: tectonics, weather and climate change
- Ecosystems: tropical rainforests and deserts
- Physical Landscapes: rivers and coasts
- Urban Issues and Challenges: urban change globally and in the UK
- The Changing Economic World: the development gap and emerging markets, such as Nigeria
- The Challenge of Resource Management: food, water, energy

## How will I be assessed?

There are three written exams:

- Paper 1: Living with the physical environment, worth 35%
- Paper 2: Challenges in the human environment, worth 35%
- Paper 3: Geographical applications, is a written exam based on two days of fieldwork and a pre-release booklet, worth 30%

## How else will my studies be supported?

The Geography department has subscriptions and access to numerous online resources which can support, challenge and extend your learning. All resources used in the course will be available on Sharepoint and a textbook is also provided. You can become a member of the Royal Geographical Society which enables you to attend their prestigious Monday night lecture program (or watch them online). Two field trips form part of this course and there will also be an international trip offered during your time studying Geography at GCSE which will be relevant to the course.

## Skills Gained?

Together with this broad curriculum, geography teaches and nurtures a wide range of skills that have enormous relevance and practical application to our everyday lives and range of professions:

- Communication skills, written and spoken
- Numerical, ICT and graphical skills including Geographical Information Systems (GIS)
- Problem-solving and decision-making skills
- Independent research

Geography will provide you with a broad knowledge base and transferrable skills that could reward you both academically and advance you professionally.

# History

**Exam Board:** Pearson IGCSE

## Why study History?

History is a vital subject to achieve a clear understanding of today's world. In order to know where you are going, you need to know where you have been.

## What will I study?

The course is firmly focused on **modern world history** of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century.

### Paper 1 (50%)

A study of life in the **United States of America (1945 – 1974)** including the Red Scare, Martin Luther King, Malcolm X and the Civil Rights Movement, the assassination of John F. Kennedy, the women's liberation movement, Hippies, student protests against the Vietnam War and President Nixon and the Watergate scandal.

A study of the development of dictatorship in **Germany (1918 – 1945)** including the social, political and economic consequences of the First World War in the 1920s, the effects of the Great Depression, the rise of Adolf Hitler and the Nazi Party, Nazi policies towards women, children and the disabled, the effects of the Second World War on Germany and the Holocaust.

### Paper 2 (50%)

A study of the **causes and course of the First World War (1905 – 1918)** including the Alliance System, the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand, the establishment of Trench Warfare, the Battle of the Somme, the war at sea and the reasons for the Allied victory.

A breadth study on **China (1900 – 1989)** a period which includes the end of Imperial China, the Japanese invasion and the Second World War, the victory of Mao Zedong and the Communist Party, the Great Leap Forward and Cultural Revolution, and the Tiananmen Square massacre.

## How will I be assessed?

The course includes two written papers and will result in a final grade between 1 and 9. Both papers include elements of source interpretation and require students to be able to explain both the causes and consequences of major events.

## How else will my studies be supported?

The department have a wide range of books and magazines to extend pupil's understanding of the periods we cover and visits to relevant museums and exhibitions are encouraged. All Fifth Year pupils have the opportunity to join the department on a trip abroad to Belgium and France to visit sites significant in the events of the First World War during the autumn term. The department also organises a biannual trip further afield to countries such as the United States of America, Germany and the Czech Republic to further support the teaching of our GCSE curriculum during the autumn term.

## **Skills Gained?**

As well as learning about recent history that has shaped the modern world, you will develop a variety of skills relevant to a wide range of professions:

- Communication skills, both written and spoken
- Independent research
- The critical evaluation of evidence
- Constructing supported arguments in order to reach convincing judgments

The skills learnt by the study of history are those which any intellectually active person must enjoy – the skills of discovery, discussion, decision and most importantly communication.

# Latin

**Exam Board:** OCR

**You must have studied Latin or Gratin in L4th** in order to follow this GCSE course. Latin GCSE has two main elements: language and literature.

## Why should I study Latin?

- You will develop a wide range of transferable skills (e.g. literary criticism, problem-solving, analysis, historical and textual evaluation, and attention to detail).
- You will read a selection of interesting and entertaining literature which has influenced the development of European literature and culture.
- You will study the life, history and customs of the Roman people and, by making comparisons, achieve a better understanding of your own culture.
- You will develop insights into the relevance of Latin and of ancient literature and civilisation to our understanding of our modern world of diverse cultures.
- You will develop the valuable skill of translation and acquire an understanding of the Latin language, as well as enhancing your language awareness in general.
- You will widen your English vocabulary and be able to identify the connections which Latin has with Modern Foreign Languages, especially French and Spanish.
- If you are enjoying Latin so far, you will relish the opportunity to study this fascinating subject in greater depth.

## What will I study?

### Language:

You will use the “Cambridge Latin Course” Books III and IV. The intriguing (and sometimes amusing) stories in these books will provide the grammar which you need to know for the GCSE; they will also enable you to develop your translation and reading comprehension skills and to increase your knowledge and understanding of Latin vocabulary (including English derivations), accidence and syntax. You will also use the OCR endorsed textbooks *Essential GCSE Latin* and *Latin Stories*. You will need to learn the words on the Defined Vocabulary List; these will be tested regularly and thoroughly.

### Literature:

You will also study Latin prescribed texts, one prose text and one verse text.

You will be required to answer questions in English on a variety of aspects of content, and to analyse, evaluate and provide a personal response to the literature which you have studied.

The texts are:

- **Prose** Literature:  
You will study Tacitus’s account of the affair (and “marriage”) between Messalina, the third wife of the Emperor Claudius, and the senator Gaius Silius and their subsequent downfall. You will also study Pliny’s account of a typical day in the life of his uncle, the naturalist and admiral Pliny the Elder.
- **Verse** Literature:  
You will study Ovid’s enchanting and entertaining tale of the devoted and respectful couple Philemon and Baucis. You will also study two poems by Catullus on the theme of friendship.



## How will I be assessed?

- **Language:** The written examination will be worth 100 marks (50% of the total marks for the GCSE); it will test AO1 [demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the language]. The paper will last for 1 hour 30 minutes; there will be two sections.  
**Section A** will be worth 30 marks. The unseen passage will recount a story drawn from mythology or Roman domestic life. 20 marks will be available for answering comprehension questions in English, including questions about the derivation of English words from Latin. 10 marks will be available from questions on accident and syntax.  
**Section B** will be worth 70 marks. 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 into English.
- **Literature:** There will also be two separate written examinations: Prose Literature and Verse Literature (each worth 25% of the total marks for the GCSE), which will last for 1 hour each. Each paper will test AO2 [demonstrate knowledge and understanding of literature] and AO3 [analyse, evaluate and respond to literature].  
You will be asked to translate a short passage of the set text from Latin into English and to answer comprehension questions. You will also be required to answer analysis questions which will be marked on a point by point basis and an 8-mark analysis question which will be marked using a level of response grid. You will also write an extended response in English, which will draw upon material from the set text.

Please note that you will be asked questions solely on passages which you have **already seen**.

## How else will my studies be supported?

- You may have the opportunity to acquire a deeper understanding of the literature studied by attending lectures and conferences on the set texts.
- You will have the opportunity to attend Classical Society; this holds regular meetings, covering a wide-range of topics.
- You will have the opportunity to research a subject of your choice and give a talk at Classical Society.
- You may have the opportunity to participate in a school visit to either Greece or Italy.

## Skills Gained?

- You will develop your ability to understand and translate the Latin language.
- You will develop your precision and attention to detail.
- You will enhance your knowledge of English words and their derivations.
- You will develop your proficiency in logical thinking and problem solving.
- You will develop your awareness of written style and learn how to identify the impact of certain literary aspects on the reader.
- You will develop your ability to analyse and evaluate.
- You will learn how to form your own opinions and how to select relevant material to consolidate your arguments.

# Music

**Exam Board:** Pearson

## Why Study Music?

Studying GCSE Music gives a unique opportunity to combine creativity with technical discipline, analysis and historical context, and performance skills. The course covers performing, composing and listening in a wide variety of musical styles - popular music, world music, and classical music.

GCSE Music is an important creative subject, and as such is welcomed by universities as a sign of academic breadth, even for those planning to take sciences at A-level and university. Studies have shown that the study of music also enhances mathematical ability, as well as sitting comfortably alongside humanities (such as History) and subjects where analysis of artistic works are studied (such as English or Drama). The skills it teaches will also promote a lifelong love of music. The qualification may be viewed as an end in itself or as useful preparation for further study in the Sixth Form.

## What will I study?

The specification is divided into three sections:

### Performing:

You need to aim to be playing at about grade 5 standard or higher by the second year of the course, and will record two performances: one solo and one as part of a group.

### Composing:

You will compose two pieces, one to a brief released by the examination board in the second year of the course, the second in a style of your choice.

### Listening and Appraising:

You will study eight set works and the music context around them from four Areas of Study: Instrumental Music 1600 – 1820; Vocal Music; Music from Stage and Screen; Fusions.

## How will my work be assessed?

### Performing (30%)

You will submit two recordings:

- Solo (15%) :                      - Play, sing or sequence one piece of music
- Ensemble (15%) :                - Perform one piece of music as part of a duet or a larger group

### Composing (30%)

Compositions will be produced using Sibelius and you will need to record your pieces and present them as a notated score or written commentary.

### Listening and Appraising (40%)

This is a written paper, taken in the summer term of the Fifth form, with listening questions on recorded extracts of music from the set works, and music in similar styles.

**How else will my studies be supported?**

You will be supported by having access to technology in A4 to develop your compositions outside of the lesson time and visits from composers to review your work and give advice. Your individual teachers will continue to support you in your vocal or instrumental lessons. The department has a lot of resources to help you prepare for the listening exam and runs extra sessions as necessary to support you in this aspect of the exam. You will also be taken to concerts to see and hear professional musicians and orchestras.

**Skills Gained?**

Your skills in listening, performing and composing will all be enhanced by the course and you will have the opportunity to appraise music that may not be familiar to you, widening your musical experience. You will grow in confidence as a performer and share musical experiences with your peers.

# Physical Education

**Exam Board:** OCR

## Why should I study PE?

Studying GCSE Physical Education will open students' eyes to the amazing world of sports performance. Not only will they have the chance to perform in three different sports through the non-exam assessment component, they will also develop wide-ranging knowledge into the how's and why's of physical activity and sport.

The combination of the physical performance and academic challenge provides an exciting opportunity for students. They can perform and then, through the academic study, learn how to improve 'their' understanding of performance through the application of theory. No previous 'academic' Physical Education study is required.

## What will I study?

**Component 1:** Physical Factors Affecting Performance. Students will start to explore:

- Applied Anatomy & Physiology: How the parts of the human body function during physical activity. The physiological changes and adaptations that can occur due to short-term exercise and long-term training.
- Physical Training: The study of the various 'components of fitness', 'Training Principles' & the 'Prevention of Injury'.

**Component 2:** Socio-cultural Issues and Sports Psychology. Students will develop their knowledge and understanding of:

- Socio-cultural influences: which affect participation and performance in physical activities and sports & the impact sport has on society.
- Sports Psychology:
- Health, fitness and well-being:

**Component 3:** Performance within Physical Education

- Part 1: Performance of three sports or activities, one team, one individual and one free choice.
- Part 2: 'Analysing & Evaluating Performance' (AEP). This 'controlled assessment' is essentially coursework completed under exam conditions. The focus is an analysis of performance in a chosen sport.

## How will I be assessed?

Component 1 and Component 2 will be exam based and will represent 60% of the final mark. Each exam will be one hour long (30% each).

Component 3 (NEA) will represent the remaining 40%. Three practical activities are each worth 10%. Practical assessment will be internal and ongoing throughout the course, however this assessment is moderated externally (via video evidence or on a moderation day). The final 10% is made up by a 'controlled assessment', undertaken during school time, lasting up to 14 hours. The AEPs are externally moderated.

**How else will my studies be supported?**

Students will be offered trips, conferences and visiting speakers throughout the two year course. They will work closely with teacher mentors and coaches to develop both their core and advanced skills in their chosen activities. In addition they will be working with our full time Strength and Conditioning Coach at the school to develop their own core fitness.

**Skills Gained?**

Along with the obvious practical skills, students will gain self-confidence; the ability to work effectively within a team environment; knowledge and understanding of the human body; a better perspective of the 'high profile' world of sport and how it influences society; a better understanding of psychology and dealing with pressure environments; gain a better understanding of the importance of healthy lifestyles, well-being, diet and stress, and therefore how to better manage these situations into adulthood.

# Religious Studies

**Exam Board:** AQA

This course is for all pupils, those with a religious faith and those with no religious persuasion. The course builds on and develops the religious knowledge and understanding gained in the Lower School. The course also develops an individual appreciation of beliefs, practices and ethical themes in religion.

## **Why should I study RS?**

It continues to be important that we gain awareness of the worldviews of both religious and non-religious people in society, in order to gain a better understanding of the experiences of others. GCSE RS is about people, their varying religious and social beliefs, the way they live their lives and their moral principles. Religion and ethics are relevant to everyone, and GCSE RS is an excellent starting point for reflecting on some major issues which matter to everyone, religious or not.

## **What will I study?**

The course will cover a variety of views on both religious and contemporary ethical issues. 50% of the course is comprised of learning about the beliefs and practices of both Christianity and Islam in detail. The remaining 50% of the course is concerned with studying four religious 'themes' or topic areas.

There are four areas of thematic study as part of the course:

### **Religion and Life**

This theme explores moral issues such as abortion and euthanasia, as well as issues concerning our treatment of the environment and animal rights.

### **Peace and Conflict**

This theme considers both the causes of, and possible solutions to, global conflict. This includes consideration of religious and secular wars, terrorism, and the ideas of just war, holy war and pacifism.

### **Crime and Punishment**

What causes crime in our society and what is the purpose of punishment? This theme also examines the role of the law in society and pertinent moral issues, such as the death penalty.

### **Human Rights and Social Justice**

Here we will consider questions of freedom, responsibility and prejudice. This will include an exploration of issues connected with race and gender, poverty and exploitation in society.

## **How will I be assessed?**

RS at Bancroft's follows the AQA Religious Studies A GCSE specification. All assessment is by examination at the end of the Fifth Form. There are two examinations, each 1 hour and 45 minutes in length.

**How else will my studies be supported?**

Members of the RS department run a variety of support clinics to facilitate those who would like to revisit topics or discuss course content in greater depth or detail. Subject teachers will supply pupils who wish to delve further into course content with reading suggestions and opportunities for developing subject-specific insights.

**Skills Gained?**

The course develops a number of key skills, including:

- Debating and communication skills
- Analytical and evaluative skills
- The ability to think both critically, as well as empathetically, about contemporary religious and secular issues.



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