



2024-2026

GCSE Options Course Guidance

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NONSUCH
HIGH SCHOOL FOR GIRLS

FORGING OUR PATHS; BUILDING THE FUTURE



OUR KEY STAGE 4 CURRICULUM

Our KS4 curriculum is designed to provide you with a diverse range of educational opportunities to suit your needs. It is aimed at enabling you to reach the highest levels of achievement and personal development.

You are encouraged to choose whichever options **you want** and we will endeavour to build our curriculum around you where we can. Our KS4 options provision allows for greater **personalisation**, providing you with a challenging, broad and rich curriculum. You will continue to develop your oracy to become articulate and **confident** in expressing opinions informed by a knowledge rich curriculum. We aim to develop a **love** of learning and scholarship so that you will flourish in KS5. The curriculum aims to enrich rather than accelerate. Our pastoral system will support you as you prepare for your external examinations and make decisions about your future pathways. A core aim of the PSHE programme is to foster **resilience** and confidence and to promote the school's core values. We aim to equip you with the skills to keep you safe in the face of social media and peer pressure.

What GCSE options can I study?

Astronomy	Art & Design	Computer Science	Drama	Food Prep	French
Geography	German	History	Latin	Music	PE
Photography	RS	Product Design	Spanish	Textiles	

THE OPTIONS PROCESS OVERVIEW

Key deadline dates

Assembly 11 January	Introduction to GCSE options with Miss Wright
8 Weeks	Series of workshops to help support your decision making
Decision Deadline 23 February 2024	Final Deadline for submitting GCSE Options choices – No further changes can be made during year 9

How long do I have to make my mind up and what if I change my mind?

Online registration of subject interest opens on:	You and your parents will receive your online login on Friday 19 January via email. Please take your time when selecting your subject choices. We do not expect you to decide straight away.
Deadline to complete online registration	Friday 23 February 2024
Notification of subject Choices	Early on in the summer term, we will write to you to confirm your subject choices
Second day back in September (INSET DAY)	In the event that you change your mind over the summer, please meet with Ms Wright on the first day back to discuss the possibility of moving subjects. We do our best to make these changes however we are unable to guarantee it at this stage. We are unable to make any subject change requests after 30 September 2024

What will my timetable look like in years 10 and 11?

You will either study 10 GCSE subjects or 10.5 GCSEs. The number will depend on whether you select full course RS or short course RS.

- For those wishing to study full course RS, you will be able to select two further GCSE option choices and will have two study periods on your timetable. You will study 10 GCSEs in total.
- For those studying half course RS, you will be able to select 3 further GCSE option choices. You will not have study periods on your timetable. You will study 10.5 GCSEs in total.

If you opt to study FULL course GCSE RE

50 sixty minute-lessons on two-week cycle

Periods	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50
10/11	Ma	Ma	Ma	Ma	Ma	Ma	En	En	En	En	En	En	En	En	Chem	Chem	Chem	Chem	Bio	Bio	Bio	Bio	Phy	Phy	Phy	Phy	MFL	MFL	MFL	MFL	PE	PE	PE	PE	PE	RS	RS	RS	RS	Study	Study	OPTION 2	OPTION 3	PHSCE	PHSCE					

If you opt to study HALF course GCSE RE

50 sixty minute-lessons on two-week cycle

Periods	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50
10/11	Ma	Ma	Ma	Ma	Ma	Ma	En	En	En	En	En	En	En	En	Chem	Chem	Chem	Chem	Bio	Bio	Bio	Bio	Phy	Phy	Phy	Phy	MFL	MFL	MFL	MFL	PE	PE	PE	PE	PE	RS	RS	OPTION 1	OPTION 2	OPTION 3	PHSCE	PHSCE								

GCSE Art & Design (Fine Art)

Examination Board: AQA

Syllabus: Art & Design - Fine Art Endorsement



Art & Design is a largely practical but academic course; it is all about creativity and ideas and it will help you to develop visual perception and understanding of our predominantly visual society. Fine Art is defined as the need to explore an idea, convey an experience or respond to a theme or issue of personal significance.

You will be equipped with a variety of practical skills and gain the confidence and enthusiasm to use them, exploring a range of materials, processes and techniques. You will develop research, experimentation, problem solving and communication skills; encouraging you to express your ideas and opinions, in visual and written forms.

The skills learnt will enable you to act and think creatively, make independent judgements to analyse and evaluate your own work and the work of others, crucial when you visit galleries and exhibitions as part of your contextual research (visits to galleries are expected as part of the course). You will have the opportunity to experiment within the areas of Fine Art in order to explore your strengths and preferences. You will also learn to demonstrate your knowledge and understanding of past and contemporary art relevant to your studies, and to develop imaginative and personal responses that embrace a range of ideas.



In Component 1 and Component 2, you will be required to work in one or more disciplines of Fine Art. You may wish to explore overlapping areas and/or combinations of areas below:

- | | |
|-----------------|--|
| 1. Painting | 6. Lens-/light-based media |
| 2. Drawing | 7. Photography and the moving image |
| 3. Printmaking | 8. Mixed media (artworks created in non-traditional media e.g. assemblage) |
| 4. Sculpture | 9. Land art |
| 5. Installation | |

You will complete a '**Portfolio**' of work which will consist of two areas of study; (60% of the overall grade) and an examination unit ('**Externally Set Assignment**') worth the remaining 40%. The portfolio will represent your course of study which will include a **sustained project developed** in response to a subject, theme, task or brief evidencing the journey from initial engagement with an idea(s) to the realisation of intentions. This will give you the opportunity to demonstrate, through an extended creative response, your ability to draw together different areas of knowledge, skills and/or understanding from across your course of study. Your portfolio will also contain **selected further work** resulting from activities such as trials and experiments; skills-based workshops; responses to gallery, museum or site visits; work placements; independent study and evidence of your specific role in any group work undertaken.

Component 1: Portfolio (Controlled Coursework 60%)

In Year 10 you will undertake a sustained project on the theme of 'Environment' which will enable you to experience a variety of media and techniques that will be resolved in a mixed media final outcome. In Y11 you will complete a following project on the theme of 'Past, Present, Future'; with a development of ideas which will be resolved in a final outcome in supervised time in your mock exam. Component 1 will be internally moderated throughout and externally moderated as they form your 'Portfolio'.

This component will involve you:

1. Generating and developing ideas informed by primary and contextual sources
2. Refining their ideas through experimenting with media, and developing and applying skills
3. Researching, recording, analysing and reviewing their own and others' work
4. Selecting, creating, realising and presenting personally developed outcomes

Component 2: Externally Set Assignment (40% of GCSE)

This component represents the culmination of your GCSE course. The ESA will have seven broad based thematic starting points of which you will choose one to develop in a preparatory period followed by a 10-hour period of supervised, unaided study where you may refer to your preparatory work. The ESA provides you with the opportunity to demonstrate, through an extended creative response, your ability to draw together different areas of knowledge, skills and/or understanding in response to your selected starting point from your initial engagement with your selected starting point through to your final realisation of your intentions in the 10 hours of supervised time.



Career options

Art & Design GCSE is **essential** if you are considering any kind of creative future; it is the means by which you create a portfolio of work to gain a place at Art College or university. Students would generally be expected to develop their work to a higher level through A-Level studies then onto a diagnostic pre-degree Foundation course or straight onto University level study. It is a facilitating subject for careers in architecture, creative technologies, fashion and textiles, illustration, graphic design, editorial photography, marketing, curation, fine art, publishing, web design...to name but a few! It may be the first step to a career that doesn't even exist yet!

GCSE Astronomy



Examination Board:

Edexcel

Examination:

100% *

Why study Astronomy

Astronomy is one of the oldest of the sciences. It has had a significant cultural influence throughout the world and astronomical ideas permeate everyday life.

Recent advances made in astronomical discovery through the application of science and the use of new technology, especially in the realm of space exploration, further illustrate the relevance and the value of studying this subject.

The aims of the course include:

1. acquisition of knowledge and understanding of the study and practice of astronomy and its methods of enquiry
2. development of an informed interest in current discoveries and space exploration
3. awareness of the social, economic, technological and cultural influences in the study of astronomy
4. appreciation that the study and practice of astronomy are cumulative activities, involving links between many branches of science.





Subject content broadly covers the areas of Earth, Moon and Sun; Planetary Systems; Stars; and Galaxies and Cosmology.

There is no longer a controlled assessment element to the course. However, Edexcel requires students to plan, carry out, analyse and evaluate two observational projects. One project involves unaided (naked eye) observations and the other project requires a camera, a pair of binoculars or a telescope (amateur or robotic). These projects are assessed by the teacher and results are not reported to the exam board.

Benefits of studying Astronomy

By studying GCSE Astronomy, you will be developing a deeper understanding and application of the principles of both mathematics and physics. It provides excellent preparation for A-level Physics studies.

Qualifications at a glance

Naked-eye Astronomy	Telescopic Astronomy
Content overview	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Planet Earth 2 The lunar disc 3 The Earth-Moon-Sun system 4 Time and the Earth-Moon-Sun cycles 5 Solar System observation 6 Celestial observation 7 Early models of the Solar System 8 Planetary motion and gravity 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 9 Exploring the Moon 10 Solar astronomy 11 Exploring the Solar System 12 Formation of planetary systems 13 Exploring starlight 14 Stellar evolution 15 Our place in the Galaxy 16 Cosmology
Assessment overview	
 Written examination: 1 hour 45 minutes	 Written examination: 1 hour 45 minutes
 50% of the qualification 100 marks	 50% of the qualification 100 marks
Observational skills <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ Students must undertake at least one unaided and one aided observation. ★ Centres must confirm that each student has completed at least one unaided and one aided observation by completing and submitting an Observation Statement. ★ Students will need to use their knowledge and understanding of observational techniques and procedures in the written assessments. 	



GCSE Computer Science

Examination Board: AQA

Examination: 100%



Why study GCSE Computer Science?

If you found yourself with more questions than we covered in KS3, or love that feeling of success when a program finally works, then Computer Science is for you.

Studying Computer Science gives you a deeper understanding of topics you have met already as well as a few new ones. Key computing concepts and the fundamentals of computer programming are recovered and extended through Visual Basic.Net which also helps you make the step towards industry-standard programming languages.

What are the benefits of GCSE Computer Science?

AQA have designed this specification to address industry concerns about “a lack of skills” in the Computer Science field and to provide an academically rigorous, valuable qualification. Nearly every employment sector will have some element of Computer Science involved and if you understand enough to be able to explain it to others, then you will find many companies that will want you to be able to translate between the technical teams and the delivery teams.

Perhaps you are more technically minded, in which case this course gives you the grounding you need to develop your skills in whichever programming language you end up using.

The classes are designed to help develop your creativity and logical thinking, while encouraging you to explore your inquisitive nature to develop independent learning and problem-solving skills. The programming tasks introduce you again to a set of basic concepts and translates them from Small Basic and Python into Visual Basic.Net before applying them to a programmable solution as a team or individually. It lays the groundwork for learning, working and living in an increasingly digital world but does **not** aim to teach you how to use computers or software as this would fall into the IT specification.

Being digitally literate is important for the future, but being able to create the systems that will improve our existence requires Computer Science. If you love solving puzzles, and you are interested in what is going on inside a computer, or how data moves seemingly effortlessly across the world, Computer Science is for you.

Theory Topics:

As well as learning practical skills, you will study how and why computers work which then affects how we write the programs that interact with them. With some overlap from Physics, you will discover the micro world of how images appear on our screens, why telephone waiting line music always cuts out, what is inside the black box of a computer and why are Gaming computers so expensive? What is the internet? When we save to “the cloud” where does it really go? Is my digital data truly safe anywhere and what can I do to reduce my risk of cyber-attack? How do we get computers and printers to talk to each other? How do we store big data and then find anything in it again? Why would we want to? What impact are we having on our fragile planet through our use of Computer Science? What is the impact on humanity and is it heading in the right direction?

Support for Learning:

You will be issued with a textbook specifically written for the AQA GCSE qualification. Lesson content and additional learning materials are provided via SharePoint and Teams, so that you can

access, revisit or review content whenever you wish. Most homework will also be set, submitted, marked and returned using Teams. Some theory is completed through flipped learning, which will give you more opportunity to ask any questions you may have on the topic.

We recommend having access to a Windows-based computer for the course so that there are no compatibility issues with the software we use. Whilst we try to keep to online software, we may have to use Visual Studio which requires loading onto a computer. As such, it is assumed that you will have primary or equally shared access to a computer at home that can have software installed or will work during Twilight sessions.

Theory Assessment (100% of the GCSE assessment)

At the end of Year 11 you will sit two written examinations. The papers consist of a mix of multiple choice, short-answer, longer-answer and extended response questions. The first paper assesses programming (with hand-written questions set in Visual Basic), practical problem solving and computational thinking skills and the second assesses your theoretical knowledge.

Practical Assessment

Throughout the course, you will rediscover the programming concepts covered at KS3 and look at more data structures. Each new set of concepts is then applied to a mini project that uses all of the skills learnt so far. Paper 1 assesses your programming logic and understanding of structures, using a combination of pseudocode, flowcharts and Visual Basic. This is a handwritten assessment. There is no NEA assessment in this course.

Other opportunities

There are always plenty of clubs to be led by students and the Computer Science Department is always open to ideas if there is an area you feel particularly passionate about.



GCSE Design and Technology



AQA Course Structure

GCSE Design and Technology will prepare students to participate confidently and successfully in an increasingly technological world.

Students will gain awareness of, and learn from, wider influences on Design and Technology including historical, social, cultural, environmental and economic factors. They will also have the opportunity to work creatively when designing and making and to apply technical and practical expertise.

Course Content

GCSE Design & Technology allows students to study core technical and designing and making principles, including a broad range of design processes, materials techniques and equipment. The new qualification is modern and relevant, so students can learn about contemporary technologies, materials and processes, as well as established practices. There is also a greater emphasis on understanding and applying iterative design processes. Students will use their creativity and imagination to design and make prototypes that solve real and relevant problems, considering their own and others' needs, wants and values.

Assessment

Written exam paper (2 hours) - 50% of total marks

1. 100 marks
2. The paper is made up of:
 - Section A** – A mixture of multiple choice and short answer questions assessing a breadth of technical knowledge and understanding (20 marks)
 - Section B** – Specialist technical principles - several short answer questions and one extended response to assess a more in-depth knowledge of technical principles (30 marks)
 - Section C** – Designing and making principles - a mixture of short answer and extended response questions including a design question (50 marks)

Non-Examined Assessment (NEA) - 50% of total marks

- 100 marks
- Practical application of technical principles, designing and making principles and specialist knowledge
- 30 - 35 hours (in lessons and after school catch-up sessions)
- Assessment criteria:
 - Identifying and investigating design possibilities, producing a design brief and specification,
 - generating design ideas, developing design ideas, realising design ideas, analysing & evaluating
- In the spirit of the iterative design process, the above should be awarded holistically where they take place and not in a linear manner
- Contextual challenges to be released annually by AQA on 1 June of Year 10
- Students will produce a working prototype and portfolio of evidence (max. 20 pages)
- Work will be marked by teachers and moderated by AQA

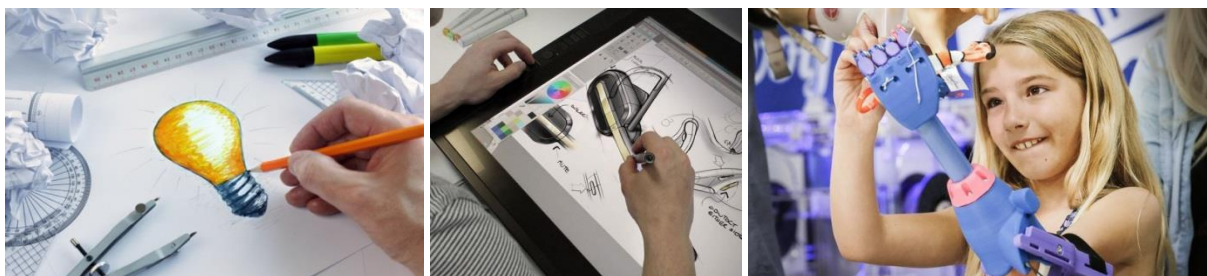
Design & Technology will help you develop a number of skills including:

- assembling and assessing data
- investigating facts and use deduction
- putting over your point of view fluently
- working as a team to achieve results

You will also develop your designing, creativity, making, problem solving, working to a deadline and working independently skills.

Design & Technology can lead to a range of careers including:

Civil engineering, electrical engineering, mechanical engineering, architecture, landscape architecture, product design, industrial design, graphic design, furniture designer, teacher, careers in the media industry, interior designer, theatre designer, careers in the medical industry.



GCSE Food Preparation and Nutrition AQA

GCSE Food Preparation and Nutrition is an exciting and creative course which focuses on practical cooking skills to ensure students develop a thorough understanding of nutrition, food safety, food provenance and the working characteristics and chemical properties of food ingredients.

Subject Content – What is covered?

Food preparation skills are integrated into five core topics:

1. **Food, nutrition and health** – Macro Nutrients, Micro Nutrients, Nutritional Needs and Health.
2. **Food science** – Cooking of food, Heat Transfer and the Functional and Chemical Properties of Food.
3. **Food safety** – Food Spoilage, Contamination and the Principles of Food Safety.
4. **Food choice** – Factors affecting Food Choice, British and International Cuisines, Sensory Evaluation, Food Labelling and Marketing
5. **Food provenance** – Environmental Impact and Sustainability of Food, Food Processing and Production.

Technical skills include: General practical skills, Knife skills, Preparing fruits and vegetables, Use of cooker, Use of equipment, Cooking methods, Combining and shaping mixtures, Sauce making, Tenderising and marinating, Dough, Raising agents, Setting mixtures.

Assessments

Written exam: (50%) 1 hour 45 minutes

The paper will be made up of 20 multiple choice questions worth 20 marks and 5 questions each with a number of sub-questions worth 80 marks.

Non-Examined Assessment (NEA): Task 1- Food investigation (15%)

This tests students' understanding of the working characteristics and functional and chemical properties of ingredients. Students will submit a written report (1,500–2,000 words) including photographic evidence of the practical investigation experiments. 10 lesson hours.

Non-Examined Assessment (NEA): Task 2- Food Preparation (35%)

This tests students' knowledge, skills and understanding in relation to the planning, preparation, cooking and presentation of food and application of nutrition related to the chosen task. Students will cook three dishes within a single period of three hours, planning in advance how this will be achieved. Students will submit a written portfolio (20 A4 pages) including photographic evidence. 20 lesson hours.

Which careers can this course lead to?

Studying Food Preparation and Nutrition can lead to exciting and well-paid career options.

This course could lead you into roles such as: Nutritionist, Dietician, Medicine, Food Scientist, Microbiologist, Chef, Food Product Developer, Buyer, Food Safety Inspectors, Quality Managers, Teacher, Food Engineer, Food Technologist, Food Photographer, Food Stylist, Home Economist, Hotel and Restaurant Manager.



GCSE Art and Design: Textile design AQA

Course Structure and Content

Component 1: Personal Portfolio (Coursework Controlled Assessment): 60%

In Year 10 you will produce a coursework portfolio with themed project work and final outcome pieces. These assignments will be internally moderated throughout the year and externally moderated at the culmination of your GCSE.

Component 2: Externally Set Assignment (Examination) 40%

This unit represents the culmination of the GCSE course. This externally set assignment will have a broad-based thematic starting point, developed through a series of suggested starting points. Students will have a preparatory period followed by a 10 hour examination period.

It is expected to attend at least one lunch time catch up session per week to aid the completion of the portfolio and preparation for the exam.

Why study Textiles?

The Textiles course gives students the opportunity to design and make garments or products and swatches. Textiles can be studied via fashion garments/costumes, accessories or interiors. Students will consider the role of the fashion/interior/textile designer and the various approaches taken to designing products. Students will also study the application of surface decoration and the role of new materials e.g. smart fabrics in the design of garments for contemporary markets. Students will use a wide range of equipment and processes, including ICT, in order to realise their designs.

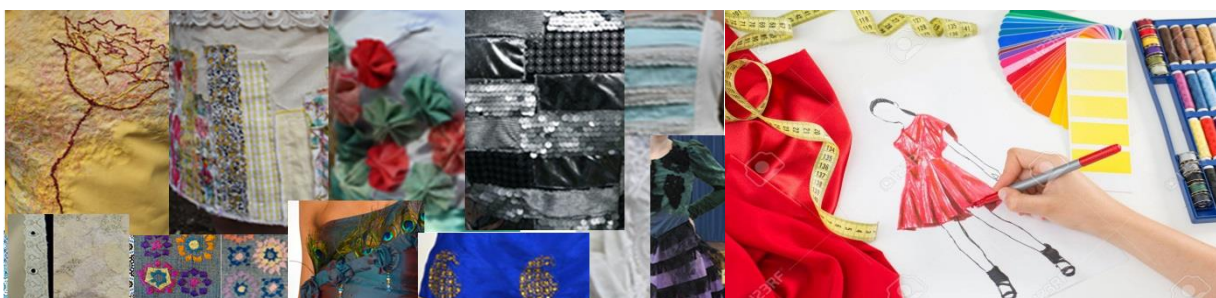
Areas of Study

In Component 1 and Component 2 students are required to work in one or more area(s) of textile design, such as; Art textiles fashion design and illustration, costume design, constructed textiles, printed and dyed textiles, surface pattern, stitched and/or embellished textiles, soft furnishings and/or textiles for interiors, digital textiles, installed textiles.

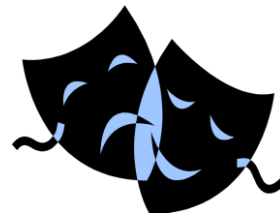
Which careers can this course lead to?

The worldwide Textiles industry values the British education system and looks to employ those trained in the UK. Areas of employment are vast and can include; **Media and Fashion**; Journalists, bloggers, writers, fashion/textile historians, marketing and management, promotion and advertising, **Fashion Retail** Buying, merchandising, visual merchandising, technicians, pattern cutters, graders, tailors and **Design** Costume (stage of film), Fashion (menswear, womenswear, children's wear, accessories, foundation garments), **Textile**- clothing or furnishing (printed, woven or knit).

Manual dexterity skills demonstrated in textiles can be used in other careers such as medicine, dentistry, and engineering.



GCSE Drama



Examination Board: AQA

Syllabus: Drama

Coursework: 60%

Written Examination: 40%

Why study GCSE Drama?

Students interested in both drama and the performing arts enjoy the GCSE course, which allows them to build essential transferrable skills for future success in life. The course looks to develop an understanding of the following:

1. Creating a role for a devised performance through the use of body and voice
2. Developing a character through script analysis and performance
3. Communicating an interpretation to an audience
4. Accessing and analysing a wide range of play texts
5. Considering the social, cultural and historical context of plays and performances
6. Theatre styles and techniques
7. Technical theatre

What are the benefits of studying GCSE Drama?

Alongside the practical focus of the course, students benefit from the life skills and alternative learning styles that a GCSE in Drama offers. All students gain invaluable transferable skills in creativity, problem solving, collaboration, negotiation, presentation, self-discipline and communication. These essential interpersonal skills aid students across all their other GCSE subjects and in future educational and vocational pathways. This course is particularly useful for students who wish to study Law or Psychology in the future.

Practical Assessment

The course will assess candidates through a devised performance, supported by a written reflection log, a scripted performance and a written examination at the end of Year 11.

Component 2: Devising

Students will be given a stimulus (a picture or a story) and, implementing practitioner theory, will create a 10-20 minute performance. This will be supported by workshops in which students explore practitioner theory.

The devised performance is internally examined and externally moderated. Alongside this, pupils will document their process and will be assessed on supporting notes that accompany their work.

Component 3: Scripted Performances

Students will select one play from a choice of 4 plays in which to do two extracts from. They will need to have a clear character interpretation and show understanding of the play as a whole. Current script choices include:

1. My Mother Said I Never Should by Charlotte Keatley
2. Top Girls by Caryl Churchill
3. Shakers by John Godbar
4. Kindertransport by Diane Samuels
5. Chatroom by Edna Walsh
6. DNA by Dennis Kelly

The scripted performance is externally examined and there is no written aspect to this component.

Written Assessment

Component 1:

In their written exam, students will be expected to answer five multiple-choice questions and then answer questions on how they would interpret, direct or perform in one play that we will have studied practically and an analysis of a live theatre production.

The current set text is Author Miller’s The Crucible.

For the live theatre analysis pupils will see a live recorded performance of Danny Boyle’s Frankenstein, with Benedict Cumberbatch in year 10 and in year 11 will attend a live show in London. We cannot confirm what the live production will be, however past performances seen include The Woman in Black, The Play that Goes Wrong and The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time.

The GCSE Drama course is demanding but hugely rewarding; students must be motivated and hardworking and should understand the need to commit to rehearsal sessions outside lessons.

Career options:

Many students continue to study theatre and performance at both A-Level and later at university and successfully pursue a variety of inspirational careers supported by the skills gained through their drama experiences at Nonsuch. The course is particularly useful for those looking to go into a career where they need to interact with the public, problem solve and be able to think on their feet!

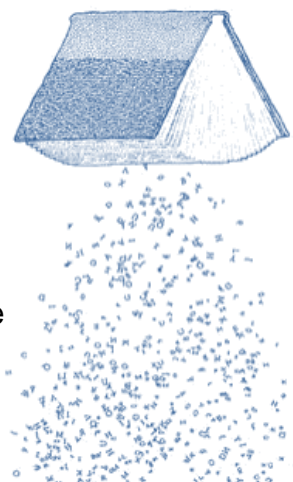
GCSE

English



Language and GCSE English Literature (Core)

Examination Board:	AQA
Syllabus:	<i>English Language (8700)</i>
Examination:	100%
Syllabus	<i>English Literature (8702)</i>
Examination:	100%



English in Years 10 and 11 is an integrated course leading to two separate GCSE qualifications, in English Language and in English Literature. It aims to develop the skills of speaking and listening*, reading and writing to foster an interest in spoken and written language, and especially to encourage a love of literature.

Students are given the opportunity to explore a wide variety of literary texts. Major authors from previous centuries are studied, together with a range of high quality twentieth century literature including plays, novels and poetry.

In both English Language and English Literature, assessment of reading and writing is solely through end-of-course examinations. The GCSE course in Years 10 and 11 builds upon the work done in Years 7, 8 and 9 and we believe that it affords the best chance now available to show what students can achieve in this subject. A variety of trips is offered across the course, from theatre to live poetry performances, to enrich students' subject understanding and to help in preparation for the exams. Both courses provide an excellent basis for studying English at A Level.

*Speaking and Listening are a requirement of the GCSE Language course. Although the marks awarded do not go towards the final grade, students will receive a pass, merit or distinction with their English Language result.

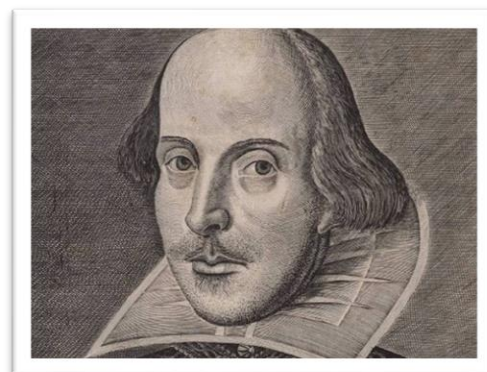
The end of course exams will consist of the following forms of assessment:

English Literature (8702)

Paper 1: Shakespeare and the 19th century novel
Paper 2: Modern texts and poetry

English Language (8700)

Paper 1: Explorations in creative reading and writing
Paper 2: Writers' viewpoints and perspectives



Career Options

There are a large number of career opportunities for those wishing to study English post-GCSE. Careers in journalism, marketing, law, publishing, editing, PR and teaching are popular choices.

GCSE Geography



Examination Board: AQA

Syllabus: Geography (8035)

Examination: 100%

Why study GCSE Geography?

The course in Geography (which all students have started in year 9) aims to provide a sound knowledge of both the physical and human aspects and challenges of our world. Each student will gain a valuable insight into the main processes which affect the physical environment and people's lives and so develop a mature understanding of geographical concepts at local, national and world levels.

Students have the chance to develop their opinion on important geographic issues- how to reduce the development gap between HICs and LICs; how should they defend a stretch of coastal from flooding and erosion; how to mitigate the effects of climate change and how can we make cities more sustainable?

1. Paper 1: Living with the physical environment

1. The challenge of Natural Hazards (including climate change and extreme weather)
2. Physical Landscapes in the UK (Coasts and Rivers)
3. The Living World (Tropical Rainforests and Cold Environments)

Paper 2: Challenges of our human environment

1. Urban Issues and Challenges
2. Changing Economic World
3. The Challenge of Resource Management (with a focus on food)



4. Paper 3: Geographical applications

1. **Issue evaluation:** This section encourages students to think critically about a particular geographical issue and select proposed solutions as well as justify their choices. This issue can be taken from any part of their course and will involve analysis of a variety of sources such as maps, graphs and images. This is provided to pupils in the form of a pre-release booklet 12 weeks before their GCSE exams.
2. **Fieldwork:** Students **must undertake two geographical fieldwork investigations**, to collect primary data, one related to human geography, the other related to physical geography. In previous years, we have visited the River Tillingbourne near Dorking to investigate how rivers change downstream and the Olympic Park in Stratford, East London to study the impacts of regeneration. Students then have to use all the different elements of their fieldwork enquiries, from explaining why their location was suitable for data collection to their final conclusions and evaluation as part of their Paper 3 examination.

Geographical skills leads to a wide range of exciting career prospects as it is one of the most versatile subjects.

1. The wide range of transferable skills and knowledge can help support many different A-Level subjects and highly regarded by many different employers.
2. Geographers are everywhere! In banks, businesses, finance, NGOs and charities, town and transport planning, conservation, geopolitics, teaching, aid agencies, medicine and disease management, flood management, coastal defences, tour operators, weather forecasts, climate change mitigation, GIS software development and many more!
3. This is useful if you are not sure yet what you want to do in the future!

GCSE History

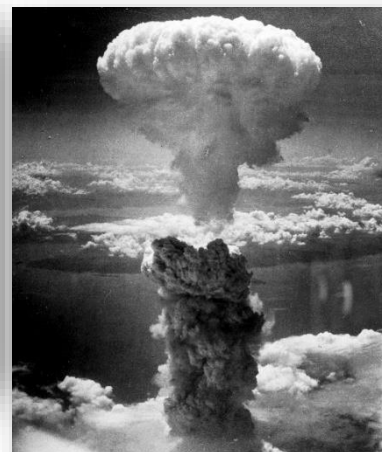
Examination Board: Edexcel

Syllabus: History

Examination: 100% (3 papers)

Why study GCSE History?

At GCSE we study history across different eras and continents. The topics studied and themes we consider continue to be relevant and will give students a valuable insight into the political, social and economic challenges that we face today. It is our intention that students of history at Nonsuch will leave us with a better understanding of the world as it was in the past, as it is today and as it will be in the future.

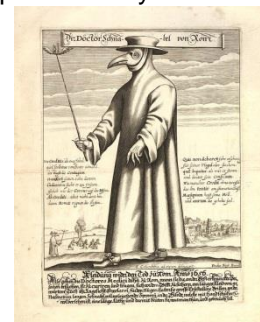


At GCSE we study topics including China in the twentieth century, the reigns of King Richard and King John, the development of Medicine from 1250 and the Cold War. These modules will help you to better understand the major political and economic systems of the twentieth century world - capitalism, liberal democracy, communism, fascism, autocracy – as well as introducing you to significant historical figures such as Chairman Mao, Florence Nightingale, Mikhail Gorbachev and Richard the Lionheart.

The course develops skills which are vital in a modern society that is so dependent on processing information through the media and the internet. It encourages students to look at evidence, to ask how we know about the past, and to question the reliability of different sources of information. We practise using factual material to develop clear and logical arguments, to consider why things happen and why different people react in different ways.



A GCSE in History is excellent preparation for a huge number of future careers and the historical skills of research, analysis and debate transfer well to studies in other subjects. History qualifications are respected in every profession and provide a particularly useful background for **careers** in law, media, accountancy, finance, international development, and the civil and diplomatic services.



Moreover, Russell Group universities have named history as a facilitating subject. This means that anyone who has studied history will be better prepared to study at university.

History is a difficult subject but students at Nonsuch continue to thrive at GCSE level. **In 2023 40% of history students at Nonsuch were awarded a level 9 and 93% achieving between 9-7.** This is a remarkable achievement and demonstrates how achievable a top grade in history is.

GCSE history students will also be given the opportunity to attend a two-day visit to the WW1 Battlefields in Belgium, which will prove to be one of the most memorable moments of their time here.

Paper	Name of the Course	Description
Paper 1	1. Medicine in Britain 1250 to the present including a study of the British sector of the Western Front 1914-18: injuries, treatment and the trenches.	In this module you will examine how medicine has changed over the past millennium, studying the key individuals responsible and the breakthroughs they enabled. The unit also includes a study of medicine in WW1. As part of our study, we will undertake a trip to the WW1 battlefields in Belgium.
Paper 2	1. Superpower relations and the Cold War, 1941-91 2. The reigns of King Richard I and King John, 1189-1216	In this module you will study two contrasting periods in history. In the first you will examine the threat of nuclear war that existed after 1945 as part of the battle between capitalist America and communist Soviet Union.

		In the second module, you will study the reigns of two of England's most famous kings, Richard and John, who were involved in the Crusades and the signing of the Magna Carta.
Paper 3	1. Mao's China, 1945-76	In the final module you will examine life in communist China. How did China become communist? What is communism? Why did Mao kill so many of his own people?

GCSE Latin

Examination Board: OCR

Syllabus: Latin

Examination: 100%

Of course, you already know that Latin requires a bit of effort. But you can handle that! And **Latin GCSE is also quite straightforward**: If you learn the fixed vocabulary list and the grammar essentials, if you learn the set literature and culture samples, you will get top marks. And you've already been doing it for years ...

Latin Language:

Half the exam is about **Language**. You may have noticed in Year 9 that we've really been working on that! So in Year 10 we move onto the official GCSE coursebook - 'Latin to GCSE'. We work through it in Year 10, generally finishing language by the Christmas break in Year 11.

The coursebook is supported by loads of additional resources to help you learn and revise the vocab and grammar as you go. There's no speaking exam – which takes some pressure off! *euge!* (Latin for 'Yay!')

Because you've studied Latin since year 7, we'll have plenty of time in Years 10-11 to become total Latin experts. In fact, because we've been pushing you in Y9, you're already well on the way!

Latin Literature and Roman Culture

Beside language, there are two short papers. We study ONE paper of '**Literature and Culture**'. It includes short passages, already *in English translation*, from primary sources: an inscription here, a poem there, a speech or playscript somewhere else – as well as pictures of artworks and architecture. It's really quite easy and a lot of fun. We also study ONE paper of **Literature in the original Latin** – but of course we give you a translation and notes! We work through the translated 'Literature and Culture' paper first, in Y10 Spring and Summer terms. Then, around the move from Y10 to Y11, we start the Literature-in-Latin. It's all wrapped through the Autumn and part of the Spring term, leaving plenty of time for revision.

For exams in 2026, the '**Culture**' paper (Y10 study) topics are **Entertainment** (Amphitheatres and Gladiators; Theatre; Chariot Racing; Dinner Parties) and **Beliefs** (Gods, Religion, After-Life and Founding Myths). For the 'Literature' paper (Y11 study) we'll read **Ovid's** poetic description of Jupiter and Mercury visiting a humble farmhouse and the poet **Catullus'** verses on friendship.

So why study Latin?

People will tell you that Latin is 'useful': This is absolutely true. Your English spelling and grammar will be deadly accurate. Your vocabulary, including literary, technical, scientific and medical terms, will be excellent. Your analysis of complex documents will be brilliant. You'll be good at learning other/modern languages. You'll impress universities and employers with your top-level, academic background. But these brain-box reasons are not the only reasons why you should study Latin.

The Latin-speaking Roman world pulled together parts of Europe, the Near East and North Africa. This empire of a thousand years left us five European languages and enormous amounts of impressive art and architecture which the modern world has taken and adapted. But the Romans also left us their ideas on law and politics, religion and philosophy, in myths and love stories, speeches and histories. Rome is worth studying because it is *interesting*. *That is why you should join us on this journey and study Latin!*



Modern Foreign Languages: French, German, Spanish

Examination Board: AQA

Syllabus: French

Examination: 100%

Examination Board: AQA

Syllabus: German

Examination: 100%

Examination Board: AQA

Syllabus: Spanish

Examination: 100%



Why study a Modern Foreign Language?

The cohort of pupils starting their GCSE courses in September 2024 will be taking a brand new GCSE in MFL as part of a national strategy to encourage the study of languages.

This GCSE has been designed around the three key areas of vocabulary, grammar and phonics. One of the key differences of this course compared to previous specifications is that it is designed around the most commonly used items of vocabulary in the modern language. This means that all items of vocabulary tested in reading and listening comprehension will be covered during the course and that these items of vocabulary will be of huge practical use for any future work, study or travel in the target language countries.

The continued importance and relevance of MFL means that all students continue to study at least one modern language to the end of Year 11, but it is our firm belief that the study of two languages to GCSE level is both desirable and enjoyable. Prospective employers are keen to employ people with a working knowledge of more than one foreign language, where they have business links in Europe and beyond, and students with two languages can often learn another one more rapidly at a later stage in their careers. In addition, Russell Group universities consistently name MFL as a facilitating subject. The study of Spanish, French and/or German to GCSE level gives students a widely recognised academic qualification and a practical skill which will almost certainly be of use professionally and/or personally in the future, in addition to developing your communication and interpersonal skills.

Key Stage 4 work builds on that covered in Years 7 to 9. Students will have opportunities to practise the language in real situations, listen to authentic materials in the language laboratory, and produce written work, including translations. New grammar is introduced including different tenses, structures and vocabulary, in addition to revisiting many areas covered in earlier years to refine and develop previously learnt language. There are also several educational and cultural visits organised within the department for all languages, most recently to Santander, Cologne and Paris. By the time you reach the exams at the end of Year 11 you will have developed the ability to communicate accurately and clearly in one or two modern languages and you will also have had lots of fun!

Assessment

All four skill areas are assessed (Listening 25%, Speaking 25%, Reading 25% and Writing 25%). The course is assessed by formal examination in all skills at the end of year 11. It is envisaged that we will continue to use AQA as our examination board, though as new specifications are being finalised we will

make a final decision in early 2024. All exam boards employ the same weighting of exams and do not include coursework.

The new GCSE forms a very strong basis for further study at Key Stage 5 and will equip students with the ability to use the language in a very practical way. **Languages are useful in a range of careers**, for example, in the fields of Finance, Education, Law, Publishing, Media, Human Resources, Advertising and Marketing.



GCSE Mathematics (Core)

Examination Board:	EDEXCEL
Syllabus:	GCSE (9 – 1) 1MA1
Examination:	100%



The course is the continuation of National Curriculum Mathematics leading to Key Stage 4 at the end of year 11.

GCSE Mathematics is designed to give students confidence in the handling of everyday mathematical problems, to develop their insight into mathematical ways of thinking and to provide a basis on which further mathematical understanding may grow. Areas of the subject covered are Number, Geometric Measures, Algebra and Statistics.

The GCSE qualification consists of three papers, each of which is 1 hour 30 minutes in length and each carries equal weighting. Paper 1 is a non-calculator paper and papers 2 and 3 are calculator papers. All students take this qualification.

The examination board (EDEXCEL) offers Mathematics GCSE at Higher or Foundation level. **All students at Nonsuch will sit the Higher Level syllabus.** There is no coursework component for GCSE Mathematics.

Career Options

Students studying Mathematics in higher education have career opportunities in Engineering, Medicine, Computer Science, Actuarial Sciences, Statistical Analysis and Banking, to name a few. They will have developed very special skills which they can use in devising solutions to complex problems in the workplace - perhaps in combustion phenomena for an oil company, in weather forecasting, in stock control for a large national retail company or in the statistical analysis of field trials for a drug company.

The versatility of mathematics graduates makes them highly sought after by employers.

GCSE Music



Examination Board:	EDEXCEL
Syllabus:	Music (full course)
Performance Coursework:	30%
Composition Coursework:	30%
Listening & Analysis Examination:	40%

Why study GCSE Music?

The GCSE Music course allows students to further develop their own musical talents and gives them the opportunity to explore a diverse range of musical styles and traditions. Music students will also study how musical works reflect their historical and social context.

Component	Music GCSE is assessed through the following core components:
Paper 1: <i>Performing</i>	<p>Students perform for at least four minutes' combined duration:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Solo performance: this must be of at least one minute in duration and may comprise one or more pieces. Out of 30 marks. Ensemble performance: this must be of at least one minute in duration and may comprise one or more pieces. Out of 30 marks. Internally marked and externally moderated.
Paper 2: <i>Composing</i>	<p>Students compose two compositions, of at least three minutes' combined duration.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> One composition to a brief set by Edexcel, of at least one minute in duration. One free composition set by the student, of at least one minute in duration. Each composition will be out of 30 marks. Internally marked and externally moderated.
Paper 3: <i>Listening and Appraising</i>	<p>The paper is made up of two sections and is out of a total of 80 marks.</p> <p>Section A – Areas of study, dictation, and unfamiliar pieces (68 marks)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Six questions related to six of the eight set works. One short melody/rhythm completion exercise. One question on an unfamiliar piece (skeleton score provided) with questions on its musical elements, musical contexts and musical language. <p>Section B – Extended response comparison between a set work and one unfamiliar piece (12 marks)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> One question that asks students to compare and/or evaluate the musical elements, musical contexts and musical language of one set work with one unfamiliar piece of music. A CD with the music extracts will be played to all students at the same time and will repeat the extracts a set number of times.

Due to the performing aspect of the course, students do need to be receiving lessons in their first study instrument throughout the duration of the course. Students can perform on any instrument or voice, in any style. Although there is no specified standard that needs to be reached to choose Music as an option, by the end of the course it is expected that students will have reached at least Grade 4 or 5 standard on their first study instrument. Throughout the course, students develop a solid understanding of traditional music theory, composition methods and analysis techniques, as well as practical performance skills. **It is expected that all students taking GCSE Music will play an active part in school musical activities. All students must purchase the Anthology of Setworks. They will be provided for Pupil Premium students.**



GCSE Photography

Examination Board: AQA

Syllabus: Art & Design - Photography Endorsement

Photography lens and light-based media includes work in film, video, digital-imaging and light sensitive materials, including experiencing the dark room. Work in this area should be a means of personal enquiry and expression involving the selection and manipulation of images, whilst extending your knowledge and technical understanding.

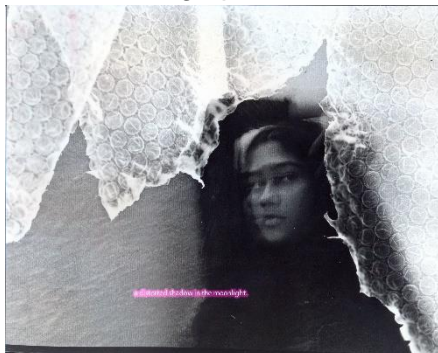
You will be required to develop work that goes far beyond simply recording images with a camera. Photography is defined here as the practice of producing images using light-sensitive materials such as photographic film, or digital methods of development and production to create static or moving images.

In Component 1 and Component 2, you will be required to work in one or more areas of Photography. You may wish to explore overlapping areas and/or combinations of areas below:

1. Portraiture
1. Location photography
2. Studio photography
3. Experimental imagery
4. Installation
5. Documentary photography
6. Photo-journalism
7. Moving image: film, video and animation
8. Fashion photography

You will be required to cover at least two of the following disciplines:

1. Film-Based Photography
2. Digital Photography
3. Moving Image
4. Photographic Genres



Component 1: Portfolio (Controlled Coursework 60%)

In Year 10 you will undertake a sustained project on the theme of 'Identity' which will be resolved in a final outcome in supervised time in your mock exam. In Year 11 you will undertake a sustained project on the theme of 'Surrealism' which will be resolved in a final outcome in supervised time in your mock exam. These components will be internally moderated throughout and externally moderated as they form your 'Portfolio'.

This component will involve you:

1. Generating and developing ideas informed by primary and contextual sources
2. Refining their ideas through experimenting with media, and developing and applying skills
3. Researching, recording, analysing and reviewing their own and others' work
4. Selecting, creating, realising and presenting personally developed outcomes

Component 1 aims to teach set of skills that will be employed more independently by student in the second part of the course, Component 2.

Component 2: Externally Set Assignment (Exam 40%)

This component represents the culmination of your GCSE course. The ESA will have seven broad based thematic starting points of which you will choose one to develop in a preparatory period followed by a 10-hour period of supervised, unaided study where you may refer to your preparatory work. The ESA provides you with the opportunity to demonstrate, through an extended creative response, your ability to draw together different areas of knowledge, skills and/or understanding in response to your selected starting point from your initial engagement with your selected starting point through to your final realisation of your intentions in the 10 hours of supervised time.

Career Options

Photography GCSE is essential if you are considering a creative career; from fashion journalism, editorial photography, web design to film and media production. It is the means by which you create a portfolio of work to gain a place at Art College or university. Students would generally be expected to develop their work to a higher level through A-Level studies then onto a diagnostic pre-degree Foundation course or straight onto University level study.



GCSE Physical Education

Examination Board: AQA

Examination: 60%: Theoretical component

Two 1 hour and 15 minute papers worth 30% each

40%: Practical component

Students will submit practical assessments in three different activities; one of them must be a team activity, one individual and the third can be either team or individual.



Why study GCSE Physical Education?

A GCSE in Physical Education would be an asset to any student who might be interested in a medical career as it provides an excellent grounding in human biology. It will also be beneficial to anyone wishing to work in the sports industry (for example in technical development, sports science research, sports sponsorship or marketing). Physiotherapy, nutrition, physiology or leisure management are among the many further career opportunities. Many students also take GCSE PE as a subject they enjoy, even if they do not intend to pursue a career in PE in the future.

The course:

Practical component

All PE students follow courses in at least three different sporting activities in lesson time. These may include netball, trampolining, football, badminton and athletics. However, please note that these may vary in order to take into account the experience of the group and the facilities that are available for practical work at the time. There are also many other sports available that students can be assessed in if they are performing at a suitable standard outside school.

Students will be assessed on their practical ability in these activities – looking at both the skills in isolation and how they are applied in game situations. It is necessary to produce video footage of the students performing in some of their practical assessments; this is the case for activities that are completed within school and those undertaken outside school. Attendance at **extra-curricular activities and fixtures is a requirement** in order to reach their full potential in the practical aspect of the examination.

A component of the practical element involves an evaluating and improving section where students will be required to analyse their strengths and weaknesses.

Theoretical component

The main areas of study are as follows:

1. The human body and movement in physical activity and sport
2. Movement analysis
 1. Physical training
 2. Use of data
3. Socio-cultural influences and well-being in physical activity and sport
4. Sports psychology
5. Socio-cultural influences
 1. Health, fitness and well-being

GCSE Religious Studies (Full course)



Examination Board:

Syllabus:

Examination

OCR

Religious Studies

100% exam

Why pick full course RS?

For those particularly interested in philosophical and ethical BIG questions such as does God exist, why do people claim to have seen visions of God, what are the ethics of war, should we forgive those who wrong us in all circumstances – and many more! Full course students tend to trend to overall higher results than short course, as they are given further time to develop the skills and knowledge learnt in their short course classes.

Topics	Full course RS is assessed through the following core topics:
Paper 1: Religion	<p>You will study the topics from short course (Christianity Beliefs & Teaching and Islam Beliefs & Teachings) PLUS:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Christian Practices - worship, prayer and sacraments, pilgrimage, the role of the church in the local community and wider world, mission Islamic Practices - Islam as a way of life, public and private worship, the 5 pillars, festivals and holy days, the true meaning and nature of jihad
Paper 2: Philosophy & Ethics	<p>You will study the topics from short course (Dialogue and Relationships & Families) PLUS:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> The existence of God and ultimate reality: arguments on the existence and nature of God, the problem of evil, religious experiences Religion, peace and conflict: war and peace, views on violence, use of technology in war, forgiveness and reconciliation, liberation theology

For full specification details see website www.ocr.org.uk

Skills Developed:

You will develop the ability to:

- Recall, select and deploy knowledge under timed pressure
- Describe, analyse and explain the key elements of the religions studied
- Describe, analyse and explain the effect of the religions studied on individual and societies' moral behaviour
- Evaluate different arguments to a high level – a key skill for future study in many disciplines

In the future?

Religious Studies is a valuable entry qualification to A-levels and beyond to higher education. All colleges and universities regard Religious Studies as an academic subject and accept and welcome students with this qualification onto a variety of courses. A qualification in Religious Studies is considered an asset in many careers particularly those involving working with people e.g. journalism, politics, law, teaching, medicine and publishing.

GCSE Religious Studies (Short Course)



Examination Board:

OCR

Syllabus:

Religious Studies

Examination:

100% exam

Topics	Short course RS is assessed through the following core topics:
1 Exam: Religion, Philosophy and Ethics in the modern world	<p>Over the course you will study:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Christian Beliefs and Teachings - Nature of God and the Trinity, creation, evil and suffering, the person of Jesus Christ and his role in salvation, eschatological beliefs (the afterlife) Islam Beliefs and Teachings - Nature of Allah, core beliefs, Sunni and Shia Islam, prophethood, sources of wisdom, angels, eschatological beliefs Relationships and families: changes in the family, gender roles, issues of quality and diversity within Christianity and wider UK society Dialogue between religious and non-religious beliefs and attitudes: religion in British society and the challenge of secularism, controversial issues: abortion, euthanasia, genetics, potential clashes between religion and modern society, atheism and humanism

For full specification details see website www.ocr.org.uk

Skills Developed:

You will develop the ability to:

- Recall, select and deploy knowledge under timed pressure
- Describe, analyse and explain the key elements of the religions studied
- Describe, analyse and explain the effect of the religions studied on individual and societies' moral behaviour
- Evaluate different arguments to a high level – a key skill for future study in many disciplines

In the future?

Religious Studies is a valuable entry qualification to A-levels and beyond to higher education. Studying Short Course RS is not a barrier to later choosing Philosophy & Ethics at A-level here at Nonsuch. All colleges and universities regard Religious Studies as an academic subject and accept and welcome students with this qualification onto a variety of courses. A qualification in Religious Studies is considered an asset in many **careers** particularly those involving working with people e.g. journalism, politics, law, teaching, medicine and publishing.

GCSE Science (Triple, Core)

“Nothing in life is to be feared, it is only to be understood. Now is the time to understand more, so that we may fear less.”

Marie Curie



3 GCSE courses are studied in science:

Biology: OCR Gateway Science – Biology A (9-1)

Chemistry: OCR Gateway Science – Chemistry A (9-1)

Physics: OCR Gateway Science – Physics A (9-1)

External Examination: 100%

Practical Skills Endorsement: Pass / Fail

All students will achieve three independent GCSE grades - for Biology, Chemistry and Physics.

GCSE in Biology A (Gateway Science) helps students develop their biological knowledge and scientific thinking. They discover how key concepts in biology make sense of the observed diversity of natural phenomena. Practical skills are integrated with the theoretical topics.

GCSE Chemistry A (Gateway Science) qualification develops students' broad scientific knowledge as well as their conceptual understanding of a range of topics within chemistry itself. They develop practical and problem-solving skills and an ability to evaluate claims based on science through critical analysis.

GCSE in Physics A (Gateway Science) introduces students to the key concepts of physics, integrating theory with practical skills. It helps students develop their knowledge of scientific methodology and their conceptual understanding of physics and how this can be applied to the world around them.

Students will be entered for public examinations at the end of Year 11 and will sit two exams per subject.

During the course the students will complete a series of required practical experiments for each subject and will be awarded a pass or fail grade by the school. (Please note this is a separate endorsement to the GCSE and will not affect the student's grade or ability to pass the course).

Biology, Chemistry and Physics lessons are taught as separate subjects with a subject specialist teacher for each subject.

Entry to the examination will be at Higher Tier – giving access to GCSE Grades 9 to 4.

“Science is a way of thinking much more than it is a body of knowledge”

Carl Sagan



2024-2026

Over to you...