



# GCSE Options

Year 10 & 11: 2026-2028

# Head's Introduction



Deciding your GCSE Options is an exciting time. For the first time in your school career, you are given an opportunity to choose some of the subjects that you will be studying in the next stage of your education, and, likewise, some of the subjects that you no longer wish to study. Inside this brochure, you will find information about the curriculum offered in Years 10 and 11 to help you make decisions concerning the subjects for these years. Your GCSE subjects will be the stepping stones into further education so it is important to be logical and thoughtful in your approach. The subjects should excite and challenge you but support your strengths and be a balanced selection to keep further education options as wide as possible, allowing you enough flexibility for several career alternatives. At this stage of your schooling, you are not expected to know exactly what path you want your life to follow so keeping your options open gives you more freedom further down the line.

The best advice we can give you when making your preferred Options choices is that:

- You are logical and thoughtful in your approach.
- Make sure to gather all the information you need from subject teachers and don't be afraid to ask questions.
- Think about your own strengths and interests.
- Look forward to where you are aspiring and reflect honestly as to where you are now.

What you should not do is to choose a subject because all your friends are choosing it. Your choices must be those that reflect your own interests and passions. If you are thoughtful and careful when making your choices, your decisions will be informed, rational and your GCSE programme will be a positive, rewarding and fulfilling experience.

Richard May

# GCSE Programme Overview

The GCSE programme at Durlston has two elements: Core subjects and Option subjects.

All pupils follow a course in all the Core subjects – English Language, English Literature, Mathematics and Science (either combined or separate sciences).

These are complemented by up to four Option subjects – selected from the following: Art, Craft and Design; Business Studies; Computer Science; Drama; French; Food and Nutrition, Geography; History; Music; Physical Education; Religious Studies; Spanish.

Specific details including course content and assessment/examination structures on all of the above subjects are included in this booklet.

The combination of Core and Option subjects means pupils will typically take nine or ten GCSEs. In addition to these examined GCSE subjects, Durlston pupils continue to have PSHE (including RSE), LE@D and Sport for Life lessons built into their timetable (please see page 32 for further details).

Pupils should follow GCSE courses in which they are enthusiastic, have a genuine interest for and feel confident studying. Some pupils will instinctively know which Options subjects they want to select, others will require some further guidance. Durlston staff are always happy to discuss this with pupils and their parents, both informally and at specific points in the GCSE Options timeline. Advice can be sought from subject teachers, Form Tutors, Heads of Department and the Senior Leadership Team.

Our ultimate aim is to support pupils to achieve the best possible outcomes for them as individuals. As a result, in discussion with the school, pupils can follow fewer GCSE courses than the standard offering. If you are considering this, please make contact with Mrs Lack, Head of Learning Support for the Senior School, in the first instance.

## Options Timeline

### **Mid February 2026 – GCSE Options evening**

An opportunity for parents and pupils to discuss potential Option choices with teachers on a 1:1 basis.

### **Late February 2026 – Preferred GCSE Options Form submitted**

Pupils will be asked to select their four preferred Option choices plus two backup choices. These choices will then allow the school to arrange the GCSE Option blocks to allow the largest number of pupils to select their preferred subject choices at the next stage of the process. For pupils where their Options selection does not work, their backup choice will be suggested so it is important that this is considered carefully. If any subject does not attract a viable number of pupils, the School reserves the right to withdraw that course and pupils will be asked to choose an alternative.

### **Early March 2026 – Final GCSE Options Form submitted**

Pupils will be asked to select their final GCSE Options from the predetermined blocks of subjects.

### **Late March 2026 – GCSE Options confirmed in writing**

Pupils are issued with confirmation of their GCSE Options for September 2026. Changes may be made after this date if it is possible to accommodate them.

# English Language

Subject name	English Language
Exam Board	Pearson Edexcel
GCSE/iGCSE	iGCSE

## Why study this subject

English is a compulsory subject, which means everyone must study it at GCSE level. The main reason for this is that English is essential in today's world. No matter which future pathway a student takes, there will be an expectation that they are a confident and competent user of the language.

## Course overview

Pupils will read a wide range of texts critically and use knowledge gained from wide reading to inform and improve their own writing.

They will write effectively and coherently using Standard English appropriately; grammar will be used correctly, as will punctuation and spelling conventions.

Pupils will acquire and apply a wide vocabulary alongside knowledge and understanding of grammatical terminology and linguistic conventions for reading, writing and spoken language.

## Assessment Details

### Component 1 Non-fiction Texts and Transactional Writing

**60% Weighting | Written exam**  
**2 hours 15 minutes | 90 Marks**  
**Externally assessed**

#### Content overview

Using the contemporary non-fiction texts from Part 1 of the Pearson Edexcel International GCSE English Anthology, pupils will develop their analysis skills. They will also develop transactional writing skills for a variety of purposes and audiences.

#### Assessment overview

**Section A: Reading** – a mixture of short and long answer questions related to a non-fiction text from Part 1 of the Pearson Edexcel International GCSE English Anthology and one previously unseen extract. Total of 45 marks.

**Section B: Transactional Writing** – one 45 mark writing task, from a choice of two involving a given audience, form or purpose.

### Component 2 Poetry and Prose Texts and Imaginative Writing

**40% Weighting | Coursework**  
**60 Marks | Internally assessed**

#### Content overview

Using the poetry and prose texts from Part 2 of the Pearson Edexcel International GCSE English Anthology, pupils will develop their analysis skills. They will also develop imaginative writing skills to engage the reader.

#### Assessment overview

Two essay assignments, internally set and assessed, and externally moderated by the exam board.

## Additional information

Pupils may be entered for an optional section Spoken Language Endorsement. Internally assessed under controlled conditions Oral examination: maximum 10 minutes.

The spoken language presentation may take a variety of forms, including:

- a) a speech or talk by a student, followed by questions from the audience.
- b) a formal debate or dialogue, such as an interview where the student is able to prepare extended responses to questions or prompts, which have been shared in advance, followed by questions from the audience.

# English Literature

Assessment Details		Subject name	English Literature
Component 1	A Shakespeare play A 19th Century Novel	Exam Board	AQA
Component 2	Modern Texts and Poetry	GCSE/iGCSE	GCSE
<b>40% Weighting   Written exam</b> <b>1 hour 45 minutes   64 Marks</b> <b>Externally assessed</b>	<b>Content overview</b> Shakespeare: <i>Macbeth</i> or <i>Romeo and Juliet</i> . The 19th Century Novel: <i>A Christmas Carol</i> or <i>Pride and Prejudice</i> . <b>Assessment overview</b> Section A: Shakespeare – pupils will answer one question on their play of choice. They will be required to write in detail about an extract from the play and then to write about the play as a whole. Section B: The 19th-Century Novel – pupils will answer one question on their novel of choice. They will be required to write in detail about an extract from the novel and then to write about the novel as a whole.	<b>Why study this subject</b> This is a core subject which all pupils are expected to study at GCSE level. GCSE English Literature is important in everyday life because it connects pupils with larger truths and ideas in a society. This course allows pupils to access and develop a wide range of language knowledge and skills. These include understanding a word, phrase or sentence in context, exploring aspects of plot, characterisation, events and settings, and distinguishing between what is stated explicitly and what is implied. <b>Course overview</b> Pupils will read a wide range of classic and modern literature with the aim of developing a critical understanding of the writers' social, historical, and cultural context. This understanding is then used to make informed personalised responses that derive from analysis and evaluation of the text.	
<b>60% Weighting   Written exam</b> <b>2 hours 15 minutes   96 Marks</b> <b>Externally assessed</b>	<b>Content overview</b> Modern drama: <i>An Inspector Calls</i> Poetry: <i>Power and Conflict</i> <b>Assessment overview</b> Section A: Modern Texts – pupils will answer one essay question from a choice of two on their studied modern prose or drama text. Section B: Poetry – pupils will answer one comparative question on one named poem printed on the paper and one other poem from their chosen anthology cluster. Section C: Unseen Poetry – pupils will answer one question on one unseen poem and one question comparing this poem with a second unseen poem.	<b>Additional information</b> Teaching for both components will focus on the whole texts, developing pupils' comprehension and critical reading, as well as their ability to produce clear and coherent writing using accurate standard English. To help pupils develop their skills, wider reading of literary texts is encouraged.	

# Mathematics

<b>Subject name</b>	<b>Mathematics</b>
<b>Exam Board</b>	<b>Pearson Edexcel</b>
<b>GCSE/iGCSE</b>	<b>iGCSE</b>

## Why study this subject

Mathematics is a creative and highly interconnected discipline that has been developed over centuries. It is essential to everyday life, critical to science, technology and engineering, and necessary for financial literacy and most forms of employment. A high quality mathematics education therefore provides a foundation for understanding the world, the ability to reason mathematically, an appreciation of the beauty and power of mathematics, and a sense of enjoyment and curiosity about the subject.

## Course overview

GCSE Mathematics covers a wide range of basic mathematical knowledge and skills, grouped into four areas: Number, Algebra, Geometry and Statistics.

Pupils will be assessed on their ability to use skills, reason mathematically and solve abstract problems.

This course supports progression to further study, providing learners with the skills and knowledge required for a smooth transition to post-16 qualifications as well as increase their employability prospects.

## Additional information

### Examination tiers

Pupils will sit papers at either the Foundation or Higher Tier. The grades attainable at the Foundation Tier range from 1–5, while the Higher Tier grades range from 4–9 with a ‘safety net’ grade 3 for pupils scoring just below the grade 4 threshold. It is therefore possible to attain grades 3–5 at either tier.

Both tiers of papers will contain a number of identical questions and cover very similar topics, however the Higher Tier paper has a larger weighting given to problem solving questions that may be more abstract in nature as well as including a number of additional topics as detailed in the adjacent table.

Pupils will follow a syllabus and be entered for examination at a tier which gives them the best chance to attain the highest possible grade based on their general, day to day ability.

## Assessment Details

<b>Option 1</b>	<b>Foundation Tier (Grades 1–5)</b>
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**2 x 50% Weighting | 2 x Written exams**

**2 x 2 hours | 100 Marks**

**Externally assessed**

### Content overview

The Foundation Tier requires pupils to demonstrate application and understanding of the following:

- Number
- Algebra
- Demonstrate manipulative skills
- Construct and use graphs
- Geometry
- Use properties of angles
- Understand a range of transformations
- Work within the metric system
- Use ruler, compasses and protractor appropriately
- Understand basic ideas of statistical averages and use a range of statistical techniques
- Use basic ideas of probability
- Standard form
- Trigonometry
- Pythagoras
- Compound measures
- Ratio and proportion
- Percentages
- Simultaneous equations
- Sequences
- Rearranging formulae
- Set notation
- Limits of accuracy
- Transformations

### Assessment overview

The final assessment is made up of two calculator papers.

Option 2	Higher Tier (Grades 4-9)
<b>2 x 50% Weighting   2 x Written exams</b>	
<b>2 x 2 hours   100 Marks</b>	
<b>Externally assessed</b>	
<b>Content overview</b>	
At higher level each paper will assess the full range of targeted grades at Higher Tier (9-4), however questions will assume knowledge from the Foundation Tier subject content. Each paper will have approximately 40% of the marks distributed evenly over grades 6, 7, 8 and 9.	
Topics that appear in the Higher Tier, in addition to those in the Foundation Tier include:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Surds</li> <li>• Solving quadratic equations</li> <li>• Using direct and inverse proportion</li> <li>• Function notation</li> <li>• Calculus</li> <li>• Circle theorems</li> <li>• Vectors</li> <li>• Histograms</li> <li>• Cumulative frequency graphs</li> <li>• Tree diagrams for probability</li> <li>• Completing the square using the quadratic formula</li> <li>• Advanced trigonometry</li> <li>• 3D pythagoras</li> <li>• Algebraic proof</li> <li>• Summation of series</li> <li>• Repeated percentage change</li> </ul>	
<b>Assessment overview</b>	
The final assessment is made up of two equally weighted calculator papers.	

## AQA Level 2 Certificate in Further Mathematics

Where appropriate, we offer this challenging and engaging course designed for high-achieving Maths students, typically those aiming for grades 7, 8, or 9. It bridges the gap between iGCSE Maths and A-level Maths, providing a solid foundation and a taste of advanced mathematical concepts.

Taking the course offers significant advantages for students, particularly by developing complex problem-solving strategies. It both complements the standard iGCSE course, solidifying the core skills required to achieve the highest grades, but also goes beyond the regular Key Stage 4 curriculum, introducing topics that are often encountered in the first year of A-level Maths. The delivery of Further Mathematics takes place during regular timetabled Maths lessons.

Successful completion of the course results in certification and demonstrates high mathematical aptitude, serving to enhance any post-16 or future employment application.



# Science

## (Combined Science: Trilogy or Biology, Chemistry & Physics)

We offer both the combined and separate Science courses. The Combined Science: Trilogy syllabus includes the study of each of the three discrete disciplines of Biology, Chemistry and Physics, but 'combines' the content coverage to produce two GCSE grades. The separate Biology, Chemistry and Physics courses contain the same content as the Combined Trilogy syllabus, plus additional, more complex subtopics. Following this route results in three GCSE grades. Both routes equip pupils to follow science courses for A-Level. Both courses are delivered through regular timetabled lessons. Pupils choosing the separate sciences route will be expected to take all three courses.

<b>Subject name</b>	<b>Combined Science: Trilogy or Biology, Chemistry &amp; Physics</b>
<b>Exam Board</b>	<b>AQA</b>
<b>GCSE/iGCSE</b>	<b>GCSE</b>

Our standard Science course is the Combined Science: Trilogy syllabus. This specification includes the study of each of the three discrete disciplines of Biology, Chemistry and Physics but 'combines' the content coverage to produce two GCSE grades. When appropriate, the following of the 'separate' Biology, Chemistry and Physics courses can be explored, resulting in three GCSE grades. These separate courses contain the same content as the Combined Trilogy syllabus plus additional, more complex topics. Both routes equip pupils to follow Science courses for A-Level.

### Why study this subject

Studying GCSE Science offers a holistic understanding of scientific principles, from the fields of biology, chemistry, and physics. Pupils develop a broad foundation, fostering critical thinking, problem-solving, and analytical skills essential for diverse career paths. The course explores real-world applications, enhancing scientific literacy and encouraging curiosity about natural phenomena.

GCSE Science introduces fundamental concepts such as energy transfer, chemical reactions, and biological systems, empowering pupils to comprehend complex scientific phenomena. It provides a stepping stone for further education in STEM fields, opening doors to a myriad of professions in medicine, engineering, research, and technology.

Moreover, studying GCSE Science cultivates practical skills through experiments and investigations, nurturing a scientific mindset and promoting hands-on learning. It fosters an appreciation for the natural world and encourages informed decision-making on issues like climate change, healthcare, and technological advancements. Overall, this course lays a robust groundwork for pupils to engage with and contribute to the scientific world around them.

### Course overview

Both courses cover and be examined across the following topics:

#### Biology

- Cell biology
- Organisation
- Infection and response
- Bioenergetics
- Homeostasis and response
- Inheritance, variation and evolution
- Ecology

#### Chemistry

- Atomic structure and the periodic table
- Bonding, structure, and the properties of matter
- Quantitative chemistry
- Chemical changes
- Energy changes
- The rate and extent of chemical change
- Organic chemistry
- Chemical analysis
- Chemistry of the atmosphere
- Using resources

#### Physics

- Energy
- Electricity
- Particle model of matter
- Atomic structure
- Forces
- Waves
- Magnetism and electromagnetism

Assessment Details	Physics
<p><b>Assessment summary</b>            There are six papers: two biology, two chemistry and two physics. Each of the papers will assess knowledge and understanding from distinct topic areas, using multiple choice, structured, closed short answer, and open response questions.</p>	<p><b>Combined Sciences</b>  <b>33.3% Weighting   2 x Written exams</b>  <b>2 x 1 hour 15 minutes   2 x 70 Marks</b>  <b>Externally assessed</b></p>
<p><b>Biology</b></p>	<p><b>Separate Sciences</b>  <b>2 x 50% Weighting   2 x Written exams</b>  <b>2 x 1 hour 45 minutes   2 x 100 Marks</b>  <b>Externally assessed</b></p>
<p><b>Combined Sciences</b>  <b>33.3% Weighting   2 x Written exams</b>  <b>2 x 1 hour 15 minutes   2 x 70 Marks</b>  <b>Externally assessed</b></p> <p><b>Separate Sciences</b>  <b>2 x 50% Weighting   2 x Written exams</b>  <b>2 x 1 hour 45 minutes   2 x 100 Marks</b>  <b>Externally assessed</b></p> <p><b>Content overview</b>            Paper 1: Cell biology; Organisation; Infection and response; and Bioenergetics            Paper 2: Homeostasis and response; Inheritance, Variation and evolution; and Ecology</p> <p><b>Assessment overview</b>            Multiple choice, structured, closed short answer, and open response</p>	<p><b>Content overview</b>            Paper 1: Energy; Electricity; Particle model of matter; and Atomic structure            Paper 2: Forces; Waves; and Magnetism and electromagnetism</p> <p><b>Assessment overview</b>            Multiple choice, structured, closed short answer, and open response</p>
<p><b>Chemistry</b></p> <p><b>Combined Sciences</b>  <b>33.3% Weighting   2 x Written exams</b>  <b>2 x 1 hour 15 minutes   2 x 70 Marks</b>  <b>Externally assessed</b></p> <p><b>Separate Sciences</b>  <b>2 x 50% Weighting   2 x Written exams</b>  <b>2 x 1 hour 45 minutes   2 x 100 Marks</b>  <b>Externally assessed</b></p> <p><b>Content overview</b>            Paper 1: Atomic structure and the periodic table; Bonding, Structure, and the Properties of matter; Quantitative chemistry; Chemical changes; and Energy changes            Paper 2: The rate and extent of chemical change; Organic chemistry; Chemical analysis; Chemistry of the atmosphere; and Using resources</p> <p><b>Assessment overview</b>            Multiple choice, structured, closed short answer, and open response</p>	 <p><b>Combined Science Grading</b>            Since pupils will have covered two GCSEs' worth of content and the overall exam time is similar to that for two GCSEs, it's right that the grade they get, recognises that. The double grade will be based on their overall mark across the three subjects; they won't get a separate mark for each science, and good performance in one area will compensate for weaker performance in another, as in any GCSE. This is reflected in the available grade combinations, which can therefore only be either the same (for example 5-5) or adjacent (for example 5-4) grades from 9 to 1. So pupils won't end up with grade combinations such as 5-3 or 7-4.</p>

# 3D Design

<b>Subject name</b>	<b>Art and Design: 3D Design</b>
<b>Exam Board</b>	<b>AQA</b>
<b>GCSE/iGCSE</b>	<b>GCSE</b>

## Why study this subject

This is an exciting and creative course with a practical design and technology focus, allowing pupils to continue to practise their workshop skills and develop design understanding through the exploration of hands-on projects.

The pupils will develop many transferable skills in drawing, designing and making, which will allow them to progress on to a wide range of options at post-16, including Design and Technology, Art, and Engineering courses.

## Course overview

Pupils will study topics including architecture, furniture design and the natural world. They will look at contemporary and historical designers and use the workshop to design and make projects, which they will refine and evaluate through making, modelling and drawing.

A sketchbook record will be kept of all work, featuring photographs, writing, and drawing, and this will demonstrate coverage of the four assessment objectives.

While some project briefs will be prescribed, there is much scope within this course for pupils to develop and explore their individual interests within the field of 3D design, and to use a wide range of materials and techniques in their models, including woodwork, plasterwork, found materials, CAD and laser cutting.

## Assessment Details

### Assessment summary

Pupils' work is marked holistically for each component against the Assessment Objectives.

<b>Component 1</b>	<b>Portfolio Coursework</b>
<b>60% Weighting   Coursework</b>	
<b>96 Marks   Internally assessed and externally moderated</b>	
<b>Content overview</b>	Component 1 (Portfolio) will comprise two design and make projects, which will be rigorously recorded in sketchbooks in order to demonstrate competence in the four assessment objectives.
<b>Assessment overview</b>	
<b>AO1:</b> Develop ideas through investigations, demonstrating critical understanding of sources.	
<b>AO2:</b> Refine work by exploring ideas, selecting and experimenting with appropriate media, materials, techniques and processes.	
<b>AO3:</b> Record ideas, observations and insights relevant to intentions as work progresses.	
<b>AO4:</b> Present a personal and meaningful response that realises intentions and demonstrates understanding of visual language.	

Component 2	Externally Set Assignment
<b>40% Weighting   Personal project preparation with a practical exam at the end of the preparation time.</b>	
<b>10 hours   96 Marks   Internally assessed and externally moderated</b>	
<b>Content overview</b>	
In Component 2 (externally set assignment), pupils will develop their own design and make a project using a starting point provided by AQA. This project will evidence the student's ability to work independently within time constraints, using ideas of their own in a design, and addressing the requirements of all four assessment objectives.	
<b>Assessment overview</b>	
<b>AO1:</b> Develop ideas through investigations, demonstrating critical understanding of sources.	
<b>AO2:</b> Refine work by exploring ideas, selecting and experimenting with appropriate media, materials, techniques and processes.	
<b>AO3:</b> Record ideas, observations and insights relevant to intentions as work progresses.	
<b>AO4:</b> Present a personal and meaningful response that realises intentions and demonstrates understanding of visual language.	



## Additional information

### Trips and Visits

School-organised trips will support coursework and exam project work, and pupils may also draw on inspiration from their own visits. This will support research, visual recording and ideas development, as well as cultural and contextual awareness.

### Resources

Most resources will be provided by the school, but some specialist resources and specific personal project resources may need to be sourced independently.

### Time

There will be a requirement for pupils to continue their personal project work independently outside of timetabled lessons and guided learning hours.

# Art and Design

<b>Subject name</b>	<b>Art and Design: Art, Craft and Design</b>
<b>Exam Board</b>	<b>AQA</b>
<b>GCSE/iGCSE</b>	<b>GCSE</b>

## Why study this subject

Art and Design allows pupils to develop their practical skills set, visual awareness and cultural understanding. The Creative Arts engage imagination and stimulate flexibility of mind to support with future employability. Personal curiosity and brave engagement are encouraged, enabling self-reflection, creativity, personal opinions and independence to make sense of and live within an increasingly visual world. Studying Art and Design develops key transferable skills to support their futures.

## Course overview

Pupils will explore a range of media, materials and techniques as they develop sustained projects, supporting work and personal outcomes. They will create work within a range of disciplines including; Fine Art, Photography, Textiles, Graphic Design and 3D Design.

Ideas are explored and communicated through practical experimentation, visual and written recording, research into historical, social and cultural contextual references and culminate in personal outcomes.

Pupils will develop an awareness of how their work is viewed and displayed and the impact of this on others. They will develop their use of visual language to communicate and support their intentions, development and progression of ideas.

Pupils must evaluate their work and demonstrate an ongoing development of ideas throughout their project work.

## Assessment Details

### Assessment summary

Pupils' work is marked holistically for each component against the Assessment Objectives.

### Component 1      Portfolio Coursework

#### 60% Weighting | Coursework

96 Marks | Internally assessed and externally moderated

### Content overview

In Component 1 (portfolio) pupils develop responses to initial starting points, project briefs or specified tasks and realise intentions informed by research, the development and refinement of ideas and meaningful engagement with selected sources. Responses will include evidence of drawing for different purposes and needs and written annotation.

### Assessment overview

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

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

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

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

Component 2	Externally Set Assignment
<b>40% Weighting   Personal project preparation followed by practical exam</b>	
<b>10 hours   96 Marks</b>	
<b>Content overview</b>	
In Component 2 (externally set assignment) pupils respond to a starting point provided by AQA. This response provides evidence of the student's ability to work independently within specified time constraints, realise intentions that are personal and meaningful and explicitly address the requirements of all four assessment objectives.	
<b>Assessment overview</b>	
<b>AO1:</b> Develop ideas through investigations, demonstrating critical understanding of sources.	
<b>AO2:</b> Refine work by exploring ideas, selecting and experimenting with appropriate media, materials, techniques and processes.	
<b>AO3:</b> Record ideas, observations and insights relevant to intentions as work progresses.	
<b>AO4:</b> Present a personal and meaningful response that realises intentions and demonstrates understanding of visual language.	
	

## Additional information

### Trips and Visits

Pupils will be expected to engage with relevant trips and visits to support their coursework and exam project work both through organised school events as well as independently. This will support with research, visual recording, ideas development and cultural awareness.

### Resources

Most resources will be provided by the school but some specialist resources and specific personal project resources will need to be sourced independently.

### Time

There will be the requirement for pupils to continue their personal project work independently outside of timetabled lessons and guided learning hours.

# Business

Subject name	<b>Business</b>
Exam Board	<b>OCR</b>
GCSE/iGCSE	<b>GCSE</b>

## Why study this subject

Studying Business Studies GCSE offers a robust foundation for a wide array of possible career paths, including accounting, economics, finance, and human resources. It also prepares students for the A-Level business studies course.

Students gain knowledge in various aspects of business including customers, markets, finance, operations, strategy, business policy, communications, and IT. They also acquire skills in decision-making, creativity, problem-solving, financial understanding, data analysis, and teamwork.

## Course overview

This course introduces learners to the business world, empowering them to develop as commercially minded and enterprising individuals. Learners will have the opportunity to develop a wide range of skills, enabling them to use business information critically, to develop arguments, to make justified decisions and to prepare them for further study and career pathways.

## Assessment Details

<b>Component 1</b>	<b>Business Activity, Marketing and People</b>
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**50% Weighting | Written exam**

**1 hour 30 minutes | 90 Marks**

**Externally assessed**

### Content overview

Syllabus content is split across the following topics:

- Business Activity
- Marketing
- People (HR and Employment Law)

### Assessment overview

A mix of short answer and structured questions based on stimulus material covering all of the specification content.

<b>Component 2</b>	<b>Business Perceptions</b>
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**50% Weighting | Written exam**

**1 hour 30 minutes | 90 Marks**

**Externally assessed**

### Content overview

Syllabus content is split across the following topics:

- Operations
- Finance
- Economics

### Assessment overview

Data response questions covering all of the specification content.



# Computer Science

Assessment Details		Subject name	Computer Science
Component 1	Computer Science	Exam Board	OCR
Component 2	Computational Thinking, Algorithms and Programming	GCSE/iGCSE	GCSE
<b>50% Weighting   Written exam</b> <b>1 hour 30 minutes   80 Marks</b> <b>Externally assessed</b>			<b>Why study this subject</b> In today's society, computers have become an essential part of our lives and the demand for computing professionals is skyrocketing. Computer Science graduates have some of the highest starting salaries among all graduates. This course provides excellent preparation for studying computer science at a higher level. Pupils will also develop critical thinking, analysis, problem-solving and mathematical skills, which are valuable in many other occupations.
<b>50% Weighting   Written exam</b> <b>1 hour 30 minutes   80 Marks</b> <b>Externally assessed</b>			<b>Course overview</b> The course consists of two equally important components, both of which receive an equal amount of teaching time. <b>Component 1:</b> Covers various topics such as how computers work, networking, cybersecurity, and the ethical, legal, and social implications of using computers. Although it is mainly theoretical, it also includes numerous practical exercises. <b>Component 2:</b> Focuses on programming in Python, covering algorithmic design, data representation and manipulation, input and output processes, debugging and testing techniques. It also incorporates theoretical concepts to provide a comprehensive understanding of the creation of computer programs. Although this subject does not have coursework, pupils are expected to become proficient Python programmers by the end of the course. Programming skills are tested in paper 2.
 A photograph showing a group of students in a computer lab. They are seated around a long table, each working on a laptop. A teacher, wearing a dark suit, is visible in the foreground, interacting with one of the students. The room is filled with multiple computer monitors and desks.			

# Drama

<b>Subject name</b>	<b>Drama</b>
<b>Exam Board</b>	<b>Eduqas</b>
<b>GCSE/iGCSE</b>	<b>GCSE</b>

## Why study this subject

Drama GCSE offers pupils an engaging exploration of theatrical art with a mix of practical and written work unlike any other subject.

- Pupils delve into acting techniques, script analysis, and stagecraft
- Gain a deeper understanding of dramatic storytelling and theatrical production
- Foster a love for the performing arts
- Explore the social and cultural influence of Drama
- Build confidence, teamwork, presentation and analytical thinking skills
- Gain transferable skills for a future in performing arts and beyond

## Course overview

The specification is designed to give a broad and balanced experience of Drama. Pupils will:

- Work collaboratively writing, producing and acting in a play you create and perform
- Study and practically explore a wide range of theatre genres and practitioners
- Interpret a character and hone acting and presentation skills by performing sections from a scripted play
- Understand the social and historical context of a chosen performance
- Learn theatre roles and professional theatre terminology
- Review live theatre productions
- Analyse a set play text

Pupils will also be given the opportunity to develop design skills in areas such as:

- Lighting design
- Sound design
- Set design
- Costume, hair and make-up design

A range of practical and written assignments will develop analytical and creative writing alongside the ability to self-reflect. Studying drama encourages opportunities for higher order thinking, by considering ideas which go beyond language.

## Assessment Details

### Assessment summary

As part of the Drama GCSE course pupils will collaborate in devising their own piece of theatre and perform sections from a script. Concentrating on acting or design, they will explore a dramatic text in depth and view a variety of live theatre productions. The Eduqas GCSE Drama specification has three components: Devising Theatre, Performing from a Text, and Interpreting Theatre.

### Component 1 Devising Theatre

**40% Weighting | Performance (9–16 minutes), portfolio and written evaluation (1 hour 30 minutes)**  
**60 Marks | Internally assessed and externally moderated**

### Content overview

Creation, development and performance of a piece of devised theatre from a stimulus using either the techniques of an influential theatre practitioner or the characteristics of a genre of drama. Pupils choose to be assessed on either acting or set/costume design.

### Assessment overview

- A portfolio of supporting evidence based on the rehearsal process.
- A group devised performance lasting between 9–16 minutes
- A written evaluation of the final performance or design.



Component 2	Performing from a Text
<p><b>20% Weighting   Performance (5–14 minutes) or written piece (150 words)</b></p> <p><b>60 Marks   Internally assessed and externally moderated</b></p>	
<p><b>Content overview</b></p> <p>Pupils study two extracts from the same text chosen by them or their teacher. Assessment is a choice between acting or design.</p>	
<p><b>Assessment overview</b></p> <p>Pupils participate in a performance based on two 10 minute extracts from a performance text of their own choice, in groups of between 2–4 pupils. They may focus on performance or design. Performances last between 5–14 minutes for a visiting examiner. The written element consists of a 150 word summary, outlining artistic intentions for the piece.</p>	
Component 3	Interpreting Theatre
<p><b>40% Weighting   Written exam</b></p> <p><b>1 hour 30 minutes   60 Marks (Section A: 45, Section B: 15)   Externally assessed</b></p>	
<p><b>Content overview</b></p> <p>A written exam which includes an analysis of a set text <i>The It</i>, alongside a live theatre review.</p>	
<p><b>Assessment overview</b></p> <p>Pupils will answer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Section A: Set Text</b> – a series of questions based on the set text.</li> <li>• <b>Section B: Live Theatre Review</b> – one question from a choice of two, analysing and evaluating a given aspect of a live theatre production seen during the course.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Additional information</b></p> <p>During the course pupils will see several theatre productions, selecting one performance to review for the exam paper.</p>	

# French

<b>Subject name</b>	<b>French</b>
<b>Exam Board</b>	<b>Pearson Edexcel</b>
<b>GCSE/iGCSE</b>	<b>iGCSE</b>

## Why study this subject

Studying a modern language at GCSE is very fulfilling in itself but it also enables you to discover different cultures and ways of life and enhances opportunities at universities and many professions. Being able to express yourself in French is both a joy and a real achievement and GCSE French enables you to do this. A genuine interest and enthusiasm for discovering the language is important as pupils will express themselves in French and be able to enjoy the many activities they will take part in.

## Course overview

The qualification requires pupils to develop their knowledge of vocabulary and structures in a range of settings which:

- Are of relevance and interest to the student
- Correspond to the pupil's level of maturity
- Reflect, and are appropriate to, the culture of countries and communities where the French language is spoken

## Skills

This qualification gives pupils the opportunity to:

- Develop their ability to listen to and understand the spoken French language in a range of contexts and a variety of styles
- Read and respond to different types of written language
- Communicate in writing.
- Understand and apply a range of vocabulary and structures
- Develop effective language learning and communication skills
- Communicate in speech for different purposes

## Topic areas

All questions will be set in the context of the following topic areas. These will enable pupils to focus on appropriate vocabulary.

- **Topic area A:** Home and abroad
- **Topic area B:** Education and employment
- **Topic area C:** House, home and daily routines
- **Topic area D:** The modern world and the environment
- **Topic area E:** Social activities, fitness and health

## Assessment Details

### Component 1      Listening

**25% Weighting | Written exam**  
**30 minutes, plus 5 minutes of reading time**  
**40 Marks | Externally assessed**

#### Content overview

This paper assesses listening skills across five topic areas:

- Home and abroad
- Education and employment
- Personal life and relationships
- The world around us
- Social activities, fitness and health

#### Assessment overview

This paper comprises seven tasks, which are a combination of multiple-choice, multiple-matching, note-taking and gap-fill questions. All five topic areas are assessed.

### Component 2      Reading and Writing

**50% Weighting | Written exam**  
**1 Hour 45 minutes, plus 5 minutes of reading time | 80 Marks (40 for reading and 40 for writing) | Externally assessed**

#### Content overview

This paper assesses reading and writing skills in separate sections across five topic areas:

- Home and abroad
- Education and employment
- Personal life and relationships
- The world around us
- Social activities, fitness and health

#### Assessment overview

##### Section A: Reading

Five questions, which are a combination of multiple-choice, note-taking, gap-fill and short answer questions.

##### Section B: Writing

There are two open-response writing tasks (60–75 words and 130–150 words) and a task that requires writing verbs in their correct forms. Each task in this section is linked to a specific topic area.

## Component 3      Speaking

**25% Weighting | Recorded conversation**

**8-10 minutes | 40 Marks**

**Externally assessed**

### **Content overview**

This paper assesses speaking skills across five topic areas:

- Home and abroad
- Education and employment
- Personal life and relationships
- The world around us
- Social activities, fitness and health

### **Assessment overview**

The examination is made up of three tasks (A, B and C). The tasks must be conducted in consecutive order.

The assessments are conducted by teachers in one session within a prescribed assessment window. The recordings are then submitted to Pearson Edexcel for external marking.



# Food Preparation & Nutrition

<b>Subject name</b>	<b>Food Preparation &amp; Nutrition</b>
<b>Exam Board</b>	<b>Eduqas</b>
<b>GCSE/iGCSE</b>	<b>GCSE</b>

## Why study this subject

Studying GCSE Food Preparation and Nutrition allows you to gain practical cooking skills, and develop a deep understanding of nutrition and healthy eating principles, while also learning about food science and making informed decisions about food choices. The curriculum is designed to help you directly connect theory to practice through a strong emphasis on practical assessments, making it valuable for both personal well-being and potential future careers in food-related fields.

## Course overview

The course heavily emphasises practical cooking skills, allowing you to learn a variety of techniques and prepare different dishes while applying your theoretical knowledge.

You will gain in-depth knowledge about nutritional components, dietary guidelines, and the impact of food choices on health, enabling you to make informed decisions about your own diet and others.

The curriculum also explores the science behind food, including food properties, cooking methods, and food safety, providing a deeper understanding of how food works.

In addition, you will develop critical thinking abilities needed to analyse food choices, consider social and cultural influences on diet, and evaluate food information.

The knowledge gained can directly benefit your daily life by helping you plan healthy meals, make informed grocery choices, and cook nutritious food for yourself and others.

During the course, you can expect to:

- Take part in a variety of cooking tutorials and experiences, such as practical demonstrations from teachers or professional chefs, either in person or online
- Gain experience of receiving and responding to feedback
- Work collaboratively when planning and preparing meals and menus
- Explore the various career opportunities within the related sectors

<b>Assessment Details</b>	
<b>Component 1</b>	<b>Principles of Food and Nutrition</b>
<b>40% Weighting   Digital examination (1 hour 30 minutes)</b>	<b>80 Marks   Externally assessed</b>
<b>Content overview</b>	In this component, pupils develop knowledge and understanding of food and nutrition, food preparation and cooking.
<b>Assessment overview</b>	Questions requiring objective responses, quick-response, short and extended answers.
<b>Component 2</b>	<b>Food Investigation</b>
<b>20% Weighting   Coursework (8 hours)</b>	<b>40 Marks   Internally assessed and externally moderated</b>
<b>Content overview</b>	In this component, pupils will learn and apply their knowledge and understanding of the working characteristics, functions and chemical properties of ingredients in a recipe.
<b>Assessment overview</b>	Pupils are required to complete a food investigation. The initial task requires the cooking of a control food item outcome, using a recipe, in order to develop a baseline. Research is conducted into the working characteristics, functions and chemical properties of ingredients in the recipe and a hypothesis is developed. Additional tasks are then centred around proving or disproving the hypothesis.

**Component 3****Food and Nutrition  
in Action****40% Weighting | Coursework****12 hours | 80 marks****Internally assessed and externally moderated****Content overview**

In this component, pupils learn how to plan, prepare, cook and present food using appropriate skills and techniques.

**Assessment overview**

Pupils are required to plan, prepare and cook a food outcome from a choice of two briefs. Pupils research and investigate their chosen task and choose an appropriate recipe. The rest of the assessment is based around planning, preparing and cooking the food outcome to meet the brief.



# Geography

Subject name	Geography
Exam Board	AQA
GCSE/iGCSE	GCSE

## Why study this subject

This exciting and relevant course studies geography in a balanced framework of physical and human themes.

Pupils will travel the world from their classroom, exploring case studies in the United Kingdom (UK), higher income countries (HICs), newly emerging economies (NEEs) and lower income countries (LICs).

Topics of study include climate change, poverty, deprivation, global shifts in economic power and the challenge of sustainable resource use.

Geography encourages pupils to understand their role in society by considering different viewpoints, values and attitudes.

## Course overview

The subject is split into four units:

1. Living with the physical environment
2. Challenges in the human environment
3. Geographical applications
4. Geographical skills

In Units 1 and 2 the content is split into sections, with each section focusing on a particular geographical theme. For example, hazards, climate change, ecosystems, population, urban growth, sustainability and economic development.

In Unit 3, pupils will undertake two geographical enquiries which will include the use of primary data, collected as part of a fieldwork experience.

In Unit 4, pupils will develop and demonstrate a range of geographical skills including cartographic, graphical, numerical and statistical skills.

## Assessment Details

### Assessment summary

Assessment is in the form of three written exam papers.

#### Component 1

#### Living with the Physical Environment

**35% Weighting | Written exam**

**1 hour 30 minutes | 88 Marks**

**Externally assessed**

### Content overview

The challenge of natural hazards, The living world, Physical landscapes in the UK, Geographical skills

### Assessment overview

**Section A:** answer all questions (33 marks)

**Section B:** answer all questions (25 marks)

**Section C:** answer any two questions from questions 3, 4 and 5 (30 marks)

**Question types:** multiple choice, short answer, level of response, extended prose

#### Component 2

#### Challenges in the Human Environment

**35% Weighting | Written exam**

**1 hour 30 minutes | 60 Marks**

**Externally assessed**

### Content overview

Urban issues and challenges, The changing economic world, The challenge of resource management, Geographical skills

### Assessment overview

**Section A:** answer all questions (33 marks)

**Section B:** answer all questions (30 marks)

**Section C:** answer question 3 and one from questions 4, 5 or 6 (25 marks)

**Question types:** multiple choice, short answer, level of response, extended prose

## Component 3

## Geography Applications

**30% Weighting | Written exam**

**1 hour 30 minutes | 76 Marks**

**Externally assessed (pre-release booklet made available 12 weeks before paper 3 exam)**

### Content overview

Issue evaluation, Fieldwork, Geographical skills

### Assessment overview

**Section A:** answer all questions (37 marks)

**Section B:** answer all questions (39 marks)

**Question types:** multiple choice, short answer, level of response, extended prose



# History

Subject name	History
Exam Board	Pearson Edexcel
GCSE/iGCSE	GCSE

## Why study this subject

Studying History at GCSE invites pupils to delve into significant historical events, societies, and individuals, providing a rich understanding of the past's impact on the present. This course fosters critical analysis, research skills, and a nuanced comprehension of complex historical narratives. Through exploring themes like conflict, change, and cultural evolution, students develop a broader perspective on global events and their implications. Studying history enhances critical thinking, contextual understanding, and encourages an appreciation for diverse viewpoints, shaping well-informed, socially conscious individuals.

## Course overview

- Crime and punishment in Britain, c1000–present and Whitechapel c1870–c1900: crime, policing, and the inner city
- Anglo-Saxon and Norman England, c1060–88
- The American West, c1835–c1895
- Weimar and Nazi Germany, 1918–39

## Assessment Details

### Component 1      **Historic Environment and Thematic Study**

**30% Weighting | Written exam**  
**1 hour 15 minutes | 52 Marks (16 for Historic Environment and 36 for Thematic Study)**  
**Externally assessed**

#### Content overview

Crime and punishment in Britain, c1000–present and Whitechapel, c1870–c1900: crime, policing and the inner city.

#### Assessment overview

**Section A: Historic Environment** – pupils answer a question that assesses their knowledge, plus a two-part question based on two provided sources.

**Section B: Thematic Study** – pupils answer three questions that assess their knowledge and understanding. The first two questions are compulsory. For the third question, pupils answer one from a choice of two.

### Component 2      **Period Study and British Depth Study**

**40% Weighting | Written exam**  
**1 hour 45 minutes | 64 Marks (32 for the period study and 32 for the British depth study)**  
**Externally assessed**

#### Content overview

British depth: Anglo-Saxon and Norman England, c1060–88 Period study: The American West, c1835–c1895.

#### Assessment overview

**Period study:** pupils answer three questions that assess their knowledge and understanding. The first two questions are compulsory. For the third question, pupils select two out of three parts.

**British depth study:** pupils answer a single three-part question that assesses their knowledge and understanding. The first two parts are compulsory. For the third part, pupils select one from a choice of two.

## Component 3      Modern Depth Study

**30% Weighting | Written exam**

**1 hour 20 minutes | 52 Marks**

**Externally assessed**

### **Content overview**

Weimar and Nazi Germany, 1918–39.

### **Assessment overview**

**Section A:** pupils answer a question based on a provided source and a question that assesses their knowledge and understanding.

**Section B:** pupils answer a single four-part question, based on two provided sources and two provided interpretations.



# Music

<b>Subject name</b>	<b>Music</b>
<b>Exam Board</b>	<b>AQA</b>
<b>GCSE/iGCSE</b>	<b>GCSE</b>

## Why study this subject

To develop and enhance pupil's understanding of how Music plays a role in society and our existence.

Through a series of exciting practical projects, pupils will explore the potential Music has to creatively inspire, whilst developing the ability to perform and compose.

## Course overview

Through the three topic areas of understanding, performing and composing music, pupils will be encouraged to engage critically and creatively with a wide range of music and musical contexts. They will investigate music from a range of eras, from Beethoven through to Queen's Bohemian Rhapsody via Music Theatre and Folk.

Using a range of technology and practical music making, pupils will compose two pieces during the course, and will work with other musicians to perform both alone and as part of a small group.

Pupils will attend concerts and workshops designed to enhance their understanding and knowledge of the areas of study, whilst providing them with ideas for their own composition work.

You do not have to be a certain grade to take GCSE, but it is expected that you will be having lessons on either a musical instrument or vocal tuition. These lessons do not have to be in school. If you have had lessons in the past and are unsure of your suitability, speak to Mrs Moss. As long as you are passionate about music, we will work with you to enhance and develop your skills, encouraging you to think outside your own creative boundaries and exploring new genres and concepts.

## Assessment Details

### Component 1      Understanding Music

**40% Weighting | Written exam**  
**1 hour 30 minutes | 96 Marks**  
**Externally assessed**

#### Content overview

Through the study of set works, pupils will develop an understanding of the key areas of music and the technical aspects of music making. The following are examples of what pupils will cover:

- Beethoven: Symphony No.1
- Handel: Hallelujah Chorus, Zadok the Priest
- Bartok: Hungarian Pictures
- Queen: Bohemian Rhapsody
- Esperanza Spalding: I Know you Know

#### Assessment overview

This will be the only written examination. Pupils will be required to listen to both unfamiliar music as well as their chosen study pieces (examples above).

### Component 2      Performing

**30% Weighting | Coursework**  
**1 hour 20 minutes | Solo performance: 36 marks, Ensemble Performance: 36 marks**  
**Externally assessed**

#### Content overview

A minimum of four minutes of performance in total is required, of which a minimum of one minute must be the ensemble performance.

#### Assessment overview

Pupils will record two performances using either their own instruments, Djing or production via music technology. One performance must be as a soloist and one as part of an ensemble.

## Component 3 Composing Music

**30% Weighting | Coursework**

**72 Marks | Internally assessed and externally moderated**

### Content overview

Pupils must learn how to develop musical ideas, including extending and manipulating their own material, and compose music that is convincing, adhering to their chosen forms and structures. Pieces in the past have been composed for film clips, adverts and public events.

### Assessment overview

Two compositions will be created over the course. One will be to a brief provided by AQA, and other will be a free composition based on the areas of study covered in component 1. Submissions will be recorded and sent with an accompanying score and a written brief.



# Physical Education

<b>Subject name</b>	<b>Physical Education</b>
<b>Exam Board</b>	<b>Pearson Edexcel</b>
<b>GCSE/iGCSE</b>	<b>GCSE</b>

## Why study this subject

Stimulating content is at the heart of this qualification. Students will receive a well-rounded and full introduction to the world of PE, sport and sport science through the combination of physical performance and academic challenges. This course aims to inspire, motivate and challenge pupils to make informed decisions about further learning opportunities and career pathways. It encourages students to contextualise theory and to develop and apply their knowledge, understanding and quality of performances in practical assessments by understanding the benefits of health, fitness and well-being. They will study how the physiological and psychological state affects performance in physical activity and sport. Practically, they will experience different physical activities and improve their skills and techniques. They will develop their application of selecting and using tactics, strategies and/or compositional ideas. They will study how to analyse and evaluate effectively to improve performance in physical activity and sport. In addition, they will understand the key socio-cultural influences which can affect people's involvement in physical activity and sport. If you enjoy your sport and are keen to learn more, then this is the GCSE for you.

## Course overview

### Theory (60%)

- Applied anatomy and physiology
- Movement analysis
- Physical training
- Use of data
- Sports psychology
- Socio-cultural influences
- Health, fitness and wellbeing

### Application of theory (10%)

Design, implementation and evaluation of a Personal Exercise Programme (PEP)

### Practical (30%)

Three different sports (two individual and one team, or vice versa) from the following\*:

#### Team:

- Acrobatic Gymnastics
- Association Football
- Badminton
- Basketball
- Camogie
- Cricket
- Dance
- Figure Skating
- Futsal
- Gaelic Football
- Handball
- Hockey (Field)
- Hurling
- Inline Roller Hockey
- Lacrosse
- Netball
- Rowing
- Rugby League
- Rugby Union
- Sailing
- Sculling
- Squash
- Table Tennis
- Tennis
- Volleyball
- Water Polo

#### Individual:

- Amateur Boxing
- Athletics
- Badminton
- BMX
- Canoeing/Kayaking
- Cycling
- Dance
- Diving
- Equestrian
- Figure Skating
- Golf
- Gymnastics
- Rock Climbing
- Sailing
- Sculling
- Skiing
- Snowboarding
- Squash
- Swimming
- Table Tennis
- Tennis
- Trampolining
- Windsurfing

\*There are restrictions for some activities.



Assessment Details		Paper 3	Practical Performance
<b>Paper 1</b>	<b>Fitness and Body Systems</b>	<b>30% Weighting   Coursework</b> <b>105 Marks (35 per activity)  </b> <b>Internally assessed and externally moderated</b>	
<b>36% Weighting   Written exam</b> <b>1 hour 30 minutes   80 Marks</b> <b>Externally assessed</b>		<b>Content overview</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Skills during individual and team activities</li> <li>General performance skills</li> </ul> <b>Assessment overview</b> <p>The assessment consists of students completing three physical activities from a set list. One must be a team activity, one must be an individual activity, and the final activity can be a free choice. Students must participate in three separate activities.</p>	
<b>Paper 2</b>	<b>Health and Performance</b>	<b>10% Weighting   Coursework</b> <b>20 Marks   Internally assessed and externally moderated</b>	<b>Personal Exercise Program (PEP)</b>
<b>24% Weighting   Written exam</b> <b>1 hour 15 minutes   60 Marks</b> <b>Externally assessed</b>		<b>Content overview</b> <p>The aim of the PEP is for students to develop their ability to analyse and evaluate their personal fitness to improve/optimise performance in physical activity and sport.</p> <b>Assessment overview</b> <p>Assessment of the PEP covers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Analysis and evaluation of their current fitness, and justification for their decision to pursue a particular method of training in their PEP</li> <li>Post-PEP analysis and evaluation and their recommendation for further training to improve their performance</li> <li>Overall coherence and conciseness of the student's PEP</li> </ul>	

# Religious Studies

<b>Subject name</b>	<b>Religious Studies</b>
<b>Exam Board</b>	<b>AQA</b>
<b>GCSE/iGCSE</b>	<b>GCSE</b>

## Why study this subject

Religious Studies at GCSE level offers a profound exploration of diverse religious beliefs, ethical issues, and philosophical concepts. It encourages critical thinking, empathy, and a deeper understanding of different cultures and perspectives. Through the study of key themes like ethics, relationships, and the existence of God, students develop analytical skills and an appreciation for moral complexities. This course cultivates tolerance, fosters open-mindedness, and equips students with valuable insights into global societies and ethical dilemmas.

## Course overview

The course content covers a range of the major world religions, six contemporary ethical themes and two textual studies, ensuring pupils have a diverse choice of intriguing subjects to explore.

Pupils will be challenged with questions about belief, values, meaning, purpose and truth, enabling them to develop their own attitudes towards religious issues.

Pupils will also gain an appreciation of how religion, philosophy and ethics form the basis of our culture. They will develop analytical and critical thinking skills, the ability to work with abstract ideas, leadership and research skills. All these skills will help prepare them for further study.

Religious Studies is a literacy based subject. Therefore, pupils also need to be competent in extended writing and be keen to learn new subject-specific terminology.

## Assessment Details

<b>Component 1</b>	<b>The Study of Religions: Beliefs, Teachings and Practices</b>
<b>50% Weighting   Written exam</b>	<b>1 hour 45 minutes   102 Marks</b>
<b>Externally assessed</b>	
<b>Content overview</b>	Beliefs, teachings and practices of two from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Buddhism</li><li>• Christianity</li><li>• Judaism</li></ul>
<b>Assessment overview</b>	Each religion has a common structure of two five-part questions of 1, 2, 4, 5 and 12 marks. Each religion is marked out of 48. 6 marks are awarded for spelling, punctuation and grammar.
<b>Component 2</b>	<b>Thematic Studies</b>
<b>50% Weighting   Written exam</b>	<b>1 hour 45 minutes   102 Marks</b>
<b>Externally assessed</b>	
<b>Content overview</b>	Four religious, philosophical and ethical studies themes from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Theme A: Relationships and families</li><li>• Theme B: Religion and life</li><li>• Theme C: The existence of God and revelation</li><li>• Theme D: Religion, peace and conflict</li><li>• Theme E: Religion, crime and punishment</li><li>• Theme F: Religion, human rights and social justice</li></ul>
<b>Assessment overview</b>	Each theme has a common structure of one five-part question of 1, 2, 4, 5 and 12 marks. Each theme is marked out of 24. 6 marks are awarded for spelling, punctuation and grammar.



# Spanish

Subject name	Spanish
Exam Board	Pearson Edexcel
GCSE/iGCSE	iGCSE

## Why study this subject

Spanish is one of the most widely spoken languages in the world, and learning it can open up opportunities for communication with over 460 million people globally. Studying Spanish provides insights into the rich and diverse cultures of Spanish-speaking countries, including Spain, Mexico, and many others. Spanish proficiency can be an asset in various career fields, such as business, international relations, and tourism. GCSE Spanish can serve as a foundation for further studies in the language at A-levels or in higher education. Overall, learning Spanish at GCSE can be a valuable investment in your education and future opportunities.

## Course overview

The qualification requires pupils to develop their knowledge of vocabulary and structures in a range of settings which:

- Are of relevance and interest to the student
- Correspond to the pupils level of maturity
- Reflect, and are appropriate to, the culture of countries and communities where the Spanish language is spoken

## Skills:

This qualification gives pupils the opportunity to:

- Develop their ability to listen to and understand the spoken Spanish language in a range of contexts and a variety of styles
- Read and respond to different types of written language
- Communicate in writing
- Understand and apply a range of vocabulary and structures
- Develop effective language learning and communication skills
- Communicate in speech for different purposes

## Topic areas:

All questions will be set in the context of the following topic areas. These will enable pupils to focus on appropriate vocabulary.

- **Topic area A:** Home and abroad
- **Topic area B:** Education and employment
- **Topic area C:** House, home and daily routines
- **Topic area D:** The modern world and the environment
- **Topic area E:** Social activities, fitness and health

## Assessment Details

### Component 1 Listening

**25% Weighting | Written exam  
30 minutes, plus 5 minutes of reading time | 40 Marks  
Externally assessed**

#### Content overview

This paper assesses listening skills across five topic areas:

- Home and abroad
- Education and employment
- Personal life and relationships
- The world around us
- Social activities, fitness and health

#### Assessment overview

Seven tasks, which are a combination of multiple-choice, multiple-matching, note taking and gap-fill questions. All five topic areas are assessed.

### Component 2 Reading and Writing

**50% Weighting | Written exam  
1 hour 45 minutes | 80 Marks (40 for reading and 40 for writing) | Externally assessed**

#### Content overview

This paper assesses reading and writing skills in separate sections across five topic areas:

- Home and abroad
- Education and employment
- Personal life and relationships
- The world around us
- Social activities, fitness and health

#### Assessment overview

##### Section A: Reading

Five tasks, which are a combination of multiple-choice, note-taking, gap-fill and short answer questions.

##### Section B: Writing

There are two open-response writing tasks (60–70 words and 130–150 words) and a task that requires writing verbs in their correct forms. Each task in this section is linked to a specific topic area.

## Component 3      Speaking

**25% Weighting | Recorded conversation**  
**8-10 minutes | 40 Marks**  
**Internally conducted and externally assessed**

### Content overview

This paper assesses speaking skills across five topic areas:

- Home and abroad
- Education and employment
- Personal life and relationships
- The world around us
- Social activities, fitness and health

### Assessment overview

The examination is made up of three tasks (A, B and C). Pupils will present and answer questions on a picture that is related to one of the topic areas. They will also discuss two different topics, chosen at random by Pearson Edexcel.

The assessments are conducted by the teacher in one session within a prescribed assessment window. The recordings are then submitted to Pearson Edexcel for external marking.



# The Wider Curriculum

## PSHE

In addition to their GCSE subjects, all pupils follow a course in PSHE which incorporates Relationship and Sex Education (RSE) and Citizenship. The course aims to help our pupils foster lifelong aspirations, goals and values. We encourage them to become confident young people and to manage change, enhancing their self-esteem (including mental health) and social skills. It helps them become aware of their personal responsibilities, as well as developing healthy relationships and respect for others. They also learn what an active, safe lifestyle looks like. From making informed decisions about alcohol to succeeding in their first job, PSHE education helps pupils prepare for all opportunities, challenges and decisions they will have to make as they become young adults. It also supports other subjects across the curriculum, as well as complimenting the LE@D sessions.

## LE@D

The Life Experiences @ Durlston programme provides our pupils with a further enriched educational experience to support them as they build a portfolio of life skills and start to make decisions about their futures. Sessions include a mixture of information sharing, practical activities, hands-on workshops and guest speakers. The overarching aim of the sessions is to ensure that pupils build up their skills and knowledge to be in a position to make informed choices about their post-16 options, be that via full-time education or apprenticeships, and then beyond into post-compulsory education and ultimately their adult working life. Sessions are run by Durlston staff as well as a plethora of visitors from a wide variety of working and educational backgrounds. Career advice is explicitly addressed with pupils supported and encouraged to explore and develop their personal skills and preferences. Pupils gain crucial insights into the wide range of employment and career pathways so that they feel confident in finding a route that best fits their own individual circumstances and aspirations.

## Sport for Life

Games lessons are built into the timetable to allow pupils continued development of their team sports skills. As appropriate, fixtures are organised with other schools so that pupils can experience competitive school sport.

Complementing the Games lessons, our 'Sport for Life' programme aims to widen our pupils horizons when it comes to finding ways to be physically active throughout their life. We organise a variety of experiences with the aim of engaging pupils and encouraging them to foster life-long participation. These activities may include; golf, laser clay pigeon shooting, mountain biking, rock climbing, abseiling, raft building, high ropes, archery and skiing.

The principles that underpin this programme include inclusivity, accountability, responsiveness, collaboration and are all pupil-centred. The outcomes include participation, wellbeing and resilience, promoting positive mental health, physical confidence and competence while meeting new people and experiencing new places. By allowing pupils the opportunity to experience a variety of activities that go beyond the school grounds, they will be able to make informed choices about their health and wellbeing as they venture into the world as young adults.

## Duke of Edinburgh Award

Academic work is at the heart of school life. However, it is hugely beneficial for them to maintain and develop a wide range of interests outside the classroom either through the school's wider co-curricular programme or within the wider community. The Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme is one important part of this wider curriculum and we strongly encourage pupils to get involved in this highly regarded programme.

# FAQs

## **Why do I need to choose my GCSE Options now?**

It may seem quite early to be thinking about which subjects pupils would like to study next September. However, a lot of planning needs to take place so that we can build a timetable to accommodate the range of choices pupils make.

## **Can I change my mind about my Option choices later?**

Yes, students can change their options after the submission of their Final GCSE Options form. However, once they have made their initial choices in January, we will take those choices, devise the Options blocks and build the timetable around them. If a student subsequently decides to change their mind about their Options, they may find either that the combination of subjects they wish to study isn't possible. It is therefore in a pupil's best interest to think very carefully and consult as many people as possible now, so that they are as confident as they can be when they fill in the form, that those are the best choices for them and their future.

## **What should I do if I need help choosing my Options?**

We hope that this brochure, together with the time that subject teachers and form tutors spend with pupils discussing their Options, will enable them to make informed, intelligent choices. However, if pupils need further help, then they should make sure that they ask the relevant staff. These are likely to be subject teachers, Form Tutors, relevant Heads of Department, Mr Collard (Head of Senior School), Mr Lack (Deputy Head, Academic), Mrs Gill (Deputy Head, Pastoral) or Mr May (Headmaster).

## **I want to keep my university and career options as open as possible. What should I choose?**

It's almost impossible to avoid closing some doors at this stage (pupils cannot, for example, pick up a language for A-Level study if they haven't chosen to continue with it at GCSE). The core subjects followed by all pupils at Durlston should, however, help to maintain a satisfactory breadth for many possibilities in the future.

## **Why is there a mixture of different examination boards and GCSE/iGCSE courses?**

Different examination boards offer varying topic coverage and assessment methods. Heads of Department have selected what they feel to be the most engaging and accessible subject specifications for our pupils.

## **What is the difference between Combined Science and Separate Sciences?**

The Combined Science Trilogy course includes the study of each of the three discrete disciplines of Biology, Chemistry and Physics but 'combines' the content coverage to produce two GCSE grades. The 'separate' Biology, Chemistry and Physics courses contain the same content as the Combined Trilogy syllabus plus additional, more complex topics.

## **Will the Combined Science GCSE allow me to study a separate science subject at A-Level?**

Yes. The content of the Combined Science course is sufficient preparation for taking either Biology, Chemistry or Physics at A-Level.

## **Might any of the details outlined in this booklet change before the GCSE Options courses start in Year 10?**

Every effort has been made to ensure that the details in this booklet are accurate. Due to publishing and printing deadlines, subject-specific information may change before the start of Year 10. Any such changes will be communicated appropriately.

## **What if one of my Options choices isn't available?**

We endeavour to arrange the Options 'blocks' to fit with the vast majority of pupils' preferred subject choices. However, there are occasions when we are unable to offer subjects in the final blocks either because of timetabling clashes or because running the subject isn't viable. In these instances, pupils' reserve Options choices will be used instead so it is vitally important that these reserve selections are made carefully, in the knowledge that there is a chance you will take them as a GCSE.



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