



TORQUAY GIRLS' GRAMMAR SCHOOL

A large circular collage with a blue, purple, and yellow border. Inside the circle, there are three photographs: a group of four girls in school uniforms smiling, a science teacher in a white lab coat working with students in a chemistry lab, and two girls looking at a book. In the background of the collage is a faint, grey line-art illustration of a castle.

GCSE OPTIONS 2026

A GUIDE TO THE TRANSITION TO

KS4



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INTRODUCTION

Dear Year 9,

The purpose of this booklet is to support you in your GCSE choices as you move into your final months within the Lower School at TGGs. Please read through all the information carefully as the decisions you will make this term will determine your direction of study for the next 2 years, and into the Sixth Form and beyond. School staff will always be able to support you with any questions about the subjects and your final choices.

At TGGs, we aim to give you impartial, unbiased advice to help you make realistic decisions about education, training and work.

Our overriding philosophy is that the subjects you choose for GCSE should be chosen because you enjoy them! **Remember**, there is no “must do” combination of subjects at GCSE for any career routes. We have set up the options at TGGs to ensure that you end Year 11 with a broad and balanced set of subjects - if you do know what you want to do double check the entry requirements.... It is therefore impossible to make the wrong choice!

It may seem rather soon to be thinking about a career or university choice, but you must start to consider your ideas because certain options may be more difficult to access to if you do not have the correct subjects at GCSE level – therefore do look at the A level requirements page to reassure yourself of your choices.

Your reason for choosing subjects should be because:

- You enjoy them;
- You are good at them;
- They will give you the knowledge and skills needed to support your future pathways and potential.

It is important not to let the choice of your friends or your personal feelings towards teachers influence you.

All students moving into Year 10 in September 2026 will take core GCSE subjects as follows;

<i>English Language</i>	<i>Combined Science</i>
<i>English Literature</i>	<i>Religious Studies</i>
<i>Mathematics</i>	

Plus **A Humanity**: *History or Geography*

In addition to the core subjects, students will be able to choose three other subjects of their choice from:

<i>Art and Design;</i>	<i>History;</i>	<i>Music;</i>
<i>Business Studies;</i>	<i>Geography;</i>	<i>Physical Education;</i>
<i>Computer Science;</i>	<i>French;</i>	<i>Triple Science*</i>
<i>Drama,</i>	<i>Spanish;</i>	

All students also do two non-GCSE subjects which are PE and PSHE.

*Students may use an option choice to study three separate sciences. Triple Science is particularly useful for those students wanting to continue with one or more science subjects at A level or are considering a science-related degree at university. It is possible for double science students to take A level sciences.

Frequently asked questions include:

Can I study two languages? – **YES**

Can I study History and Geography? – **YES**

Is double or triple science best for me? – Study the A level requirements on the 6th Form website and also see the guidance in the science section. The science team will be delivering an assembly to support your understanding of this.

We hope that you will find this booklet useful and advise you to use it as part of the broader guidance programme designed for you this year.

Good luck!



MAKING YOUR CHOICE

There are several questions that you need to ask yourself...

1. **What subjects do you feel you are good at?** Look at the feedback teachers have given you, especially on parents' evenings. Consult subject staff (but be mindful that it is also useful to balance their guidance with impartial views). We are expecting you to attend the parents' evening with your parents. Do not choose a subject which is too difficult for you.
2. **Which subjects do you love?** Read through the subject descriptions in this booklet - consider the skills and knowledge that you will gain. Consider the subjects you have studied this year - which did you enjoy the most? For example, when sitting down to work in a particular lesson, or when completing homework at home, you might feel more motivated than you do with other subjects.
3. **Which subjects do you need?** If you do feel certain about the career you are aiming for it is important to check that you are taking the correct GCSE subjects. If you do not have a specific career interest, and even if you do, it is best to keep your options open; often by the end of the Year 11 you may well have changed your mind - so it is good to keep a 'balance' of subjects.
4. **Am I doing well in this subject?** For example, you might find that you consistently get good feedback from your teacher in this subject and have consistently met or exceeded your expectations. You can also ask this at parents' evening.
5. **Do you have an interest in this subject beyond the classroom?** For example, you might attend enrichment opportunities in this subject area. You might also have represented your house, or the school, in something relevant to this subject.
6. **Does my preferred way of working fit with the demands of this subject?** For example, if you like writing essays and are confident drafting and re-drafting pieces of work, then more literacy-based subjects are possibly well suited to you. If you like completing practical work and are happy planning larger projects, then STEM subjects are probably well suited to you. If you are happy performing in front of your peers, then drama or music are potentially a good fit.

You are now embarking on one of the most important decisions of your educational career. Making sure you pick the Key Stage 4 courses that are right for you will make a big difference to the next two years and beyond. Getting it right will help you to finish Year 11 with a great set of GCSE results; getting it wrong will put that at risk. So, it's important, and you should take some time to make the correct decision for you.

Remember at GCSE level there are **no courses** that you **MUST** study for a particular career and that a less well-balanced good set of results will be much better than a superbly balanced set of low grades at GCSE. Keeping a balance is a useful point to start from, though.

Whichever courses you choose, you will receive the highest quality teaching and opportunities that rival any in other schools nationally. You will be supported at every stage by your Form Tutor, Head of Year and all staff. However, you also need to know that being successful at KS4 demands maturity, and that maturity begins now by making sure you choose your courses wisely.



LOOKING AHEAD

You will not be considering a college or university place for a long while yet, but it is important to understand that the choices you make now have a bearing on your openings later on. At the end of Year 11 you may:

- enter 6th form to undertake A-levels / AQA Baccalaureate;
- seek employment (with training);
- seek Apprenticeships;
- enter college of further education;
- follow vocational courses, T-Levels BTEC or National Vocational diplomas

At the end of Years 12 and 13 you may enter:

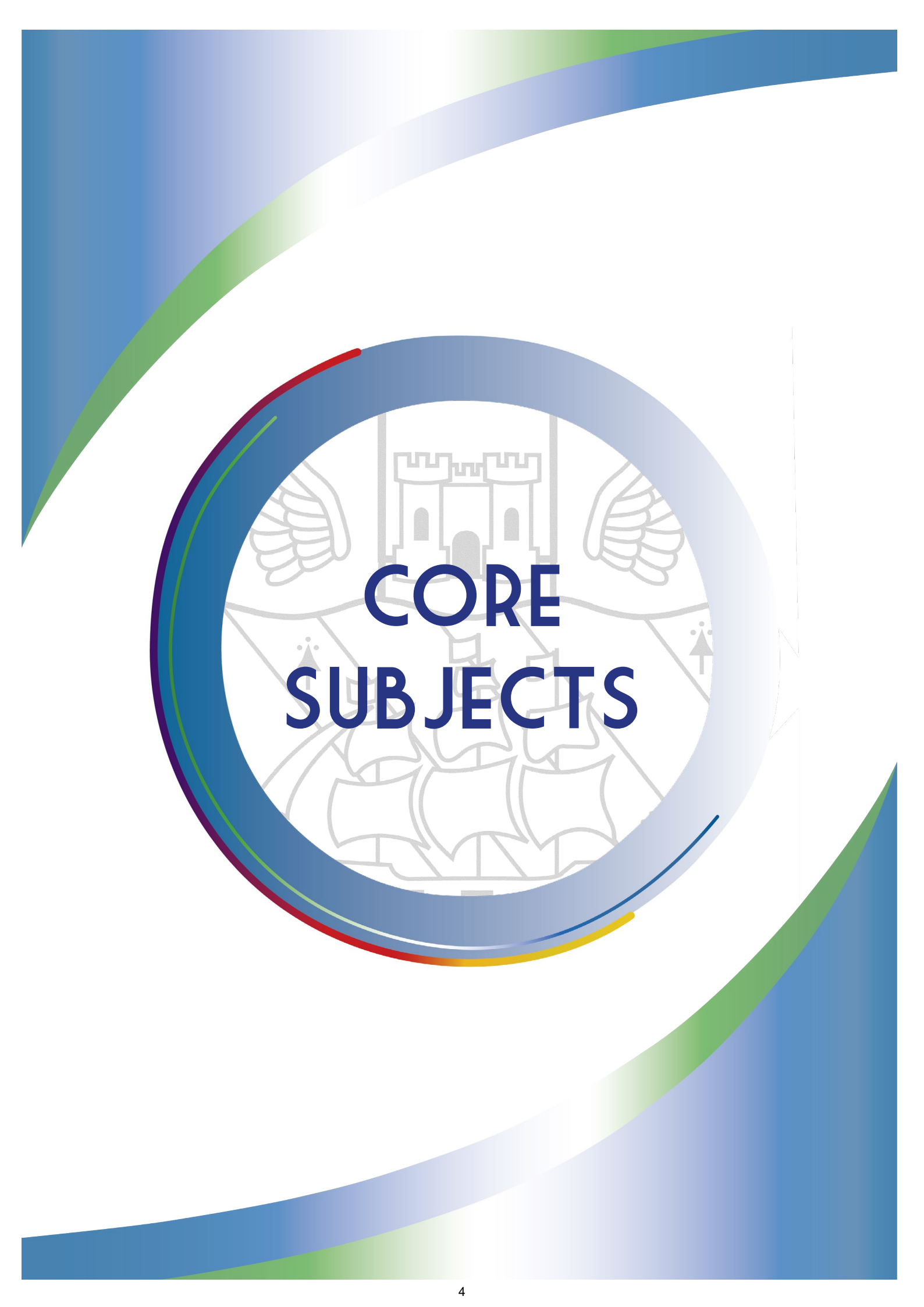
- university;
- college of higher education;
- college of further education;
- professional qualifications;
- apprenticeships;
- seek employment;
- take a year off (often called a "Gap Year").

FOR MORE INFORMATION...

1. Ask Careers Staff (Mrs S Rolfe)
2. Ask the Qualified Careers Personal Adviser (Mrs L Morgan)
3. Ask form teachers, Head of Year and subject teachers.
4. Consult relevant websites in the Careers folder in SharePoint.
5. Use the Careers Library or 'ICOULD, 'UNIFROG' and other resources on the Internet, including university webpages.
6. Consult the Careers Notice Boards in the Roberts Building.
7. Attend Parents Evening
8. Attend Options Evening
9. Attend the careers talks, workshops and presentations that are advertised through the Student Notices.
10. For more information about the TGGs curriculum visit:
www.tggsacademy.org/curriculum
11. Consult the School Careers Newsletter at www.tggsacademy.org/careers_news

Don't forget...

Your option choices should be submitted by 3.30pm on Friday 13th February 2026



CORE SUBJECTS

Our Team



Miss K Durman
Head of KS3



Ms C Jenkins
Head of KS5



Mrs C Peake
Head of Department & KS4



Mrs R Gorrin



Miss S Cross



Mrs H Baker-Thornton



Ms T Banks



Miss A Davidson

ENGLISH LANGUAGE & ENGLISH LITERATURE

Exam Board - AQA

English Language - the Exam

Paper 1: 20th Century Fiction and Imaginative Writing - 1hr 45mins, 50% of mark

Paper 2: Non-Fiction and Transactional Writing - 1hr 45mins, 50% of mark

Spoken Language Component:

A presentation with following questions and feedback

English Literature - The Exam

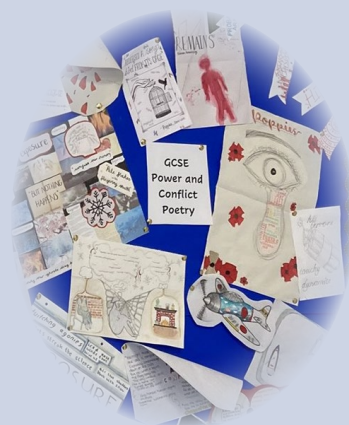
Paper 1: Shakespeare and 19th Century Novel - 1hr 45mins, 40% of mark

Paper 2: Modern Drama, Poetry Anthology and Unseen Poetry - 2hrs 15 mins, 60% of mark

CAREERS USING ENGLISH & ENGLISH LITERATURE

English can lead to a variety of career options including teaching, journalism, media and public relations. It is a valuable transferrable skill as studying English encourages the development of critical analysis, expression and fluency of writing.

English is also a valuable academic subject in careers such as medicine, sciences and business as an ability to write well is a necessary skill for writing business plans, grant proposals and patient records.



AN OVERVIEW OF GCSE ENGLISH AND ENGLISH LITERATURE

Throughout the course, students are given regular opportunities to explore different real-life and creative writing styles; they are encouraged to consciously 'design' their own writing, experiment with different techniques and to take risks in order to build their confidence and autonomy as writers.

Learning through talk is at the heart of English at KS4, both class discussion and independent group exploration being a vital part of every lesson so that students can develop their own ideas and interpretations as well as their confidence. In addition, the Spoken Language unit gives students the freedom to explore their own interests and the issues that matter most to them and many find this to be one of the most enjoyable aspects of the course.

In preparation for KS5, students are encouraged to make links between the texts we read, understanding their place within the English Canon and within world literature. The understanding of perspective is key to unlocking texts, exploring authorial voice and language choices as well as understanding the impact of social and historical context. We question how texts reflect the values of when they were written, how they challenge established ideas and how reception of the ideas has changed for readers and audiences over time.

HOW THE GCSE PAPERS ARE STRUCTURED

English Language

Paper 1: Section A

This contains an extract (up to 650 words) of unseen 19th Century fiction.

Paper 1: Section B

Creative writing - students have a choice of 2 tasks linked to a theme

Paper 2: Section A

This involves a comparison of 2 unseen non-fiction texts from the 20th and/or 21st Century (totalling up to 1000 words)

Paper 2: Section B

Transactional writing, a choice of 2 tasks with form and purpose specified.

English Literature

Paper 1: Section A

Analysis of a Shakespeare text: MacBeth

Paper 1: Section B

A post 1914 British novel such as '*Animal Farm*', '*Lord of the Flies*' or '*An Inspector Calls*

Paper 2: Section A

19th Century fiction such as '*Jane Eyre*', '*A Christmas Carol*' or '*Pride and Prejudice*'

Paper 2: Section B

Poetry (taken from the GCSE Edexcel anthology) and Unseen contemporary poems

Our Team

Mrs Z Carpenter-Kay
Head of Department



Mr F O'Rourke



Mrs S Jones



Ms S Bucklar



Mr D Whittington

+ 2 additional
staff members
not listed

MATHEMATICS

Exam Board - Edexcel

The Exam

The exam consists of 3 papers which are all 90 minutes long:

Paper 1 - Non-Calculator

Paper 2 - Calculator

Paper 3 - Calculator



Students will be following EDEXCEL GCSE in Mathematics (1MA1) syllabus. They will be entered for the Higher tier. The Higher tier enables them to achieve grades 9 to 4 (where 9 is the highest grade) and tests the whole of the National Curriculum including Further Material, functional skills and quality of written communication. There will also be an emphasis on problem solving and questions will be set both in mathematical and non mathematical contexts.

The final assessment involves three examinations only, one non-calculator and two calculator papers. Each examination is 1 hr 30 minutes in duration. The three examinations carry equal weighting and each assess content from the five topic areas: (1) Number, (2) Algebra, (3) Ratio, proportion and rates of change, (4) Geometry and measures, (5) Probability and Statistics. There is no coursework or controlled assessments.

Students are expected to provide a suitable electronic scientific calculator and a standard set of geometrical instruments



Mrs K Bumby
Head of Biology

Dr T Sweet
Head of Chemistry

Mr J Castillo
Head of Physics

COMBINED SCIENCE (TRILOGY)

Exam Board - AQA

The Exam

The exam consists of 6 papers:

Biology - 2 papers, each 1hr 15 mins long

Chemistry - 2 papers, each 1hr 15mins long

Physics - 2 papers, each 1hr 15mins long

Our current Year 9 students started their science GCSE courses at the beginning of the academic year. In Years 10 and 11, students will continue to be taught by three teachers who will each be subject specialists. Due to GCSE option choices and timetable changes, science groups will be reorganised for the start of Year 10 and students may have different teachers to those they currently have in Year 9.

At the end of the course in Year 11, students will sit six examinations, two per science subject; these examinations will not only assess students' subject knowledge and understanding, but also their investigative skills developed during their normal science lessons. Students will be awarded two GCSE grades.

If students choose this course, they will be able to go on to do any science A level.

Due to the extra time triple scientists receive, they can expect to finish the course after February half term whereas double scientists will be covering the specification until close to the exam leave in the summer. In this extra time triple scientists will revise topics and hone exam techniques.

Our Team

Mrs D Bloomfield
Head of Religion,
Philosophy & Ethics



Miss R Thompson



Miss K Williams

RELIGIOUS STUDIES

Exam Board - AQA

The Exam - AQA Syllabus A

There are 2 papers, both 1hr 45mins long. these are made up of two components:
Component 1: Study of Religion
Component 2: Thematic studies

THE VALUE OF RELIGIOUS STUDIES

Religious literacy is increasingly important in our interconnected, global society. Religious Studies develops those skills which are needed in the study of any academic subject e.g. the ability to find out information, to use a variety of enquiry techniques and to handle and interpret evidence. A skill particularly developed by Religious Studies is an ability to understand and interpret the views of people who are from different traditions and cultures.

Religious Studies helps pupils to form their own beliefs and commitments, to be more critically aware of the beliefs of others and to develop a greater awareness of personal and social relationships. It will therefore be useful for careers that involve contact with and understanding of others. A qualification in Religious Studies is a very good background for social work, medicine, counselling, the civil service, business management, local government, the police, prison and probation work, legal work, journalism, teaching and personnel management in industry.

The GCSE in Religious Studies aims to help pupils to:

1. understand a major part of human history and cultural heritage both in this country and worldwide,
2. describe and discuss the views of belief systems they may or may not share
3. develop their own personal beliefs and values,
4. form their own judgments.

It will encourage respect for moral and legal obligations and a concern for fairness and justice in society. It also contributes to international understanding in the world and to community relations within Britain.

To gain a GCSE, students study two units, with each unit accounting for 50% of the total marks. Attainment is through two examinations of one hour and forty-five minutes at the end of year 11. Within the examinations, each theme has a common structure of one five-part question of 1, 2, 4, 5 and 12 marks.

We will follow the AQA Syllabus A course. The units are 'The Study of Religions' and 'Thematic Studies':

The Study of Religions:

Christianity

- Key Beliefs
- Jesus Christ and Salvation
- Worship and Festivals
- Role of the Church in the Community

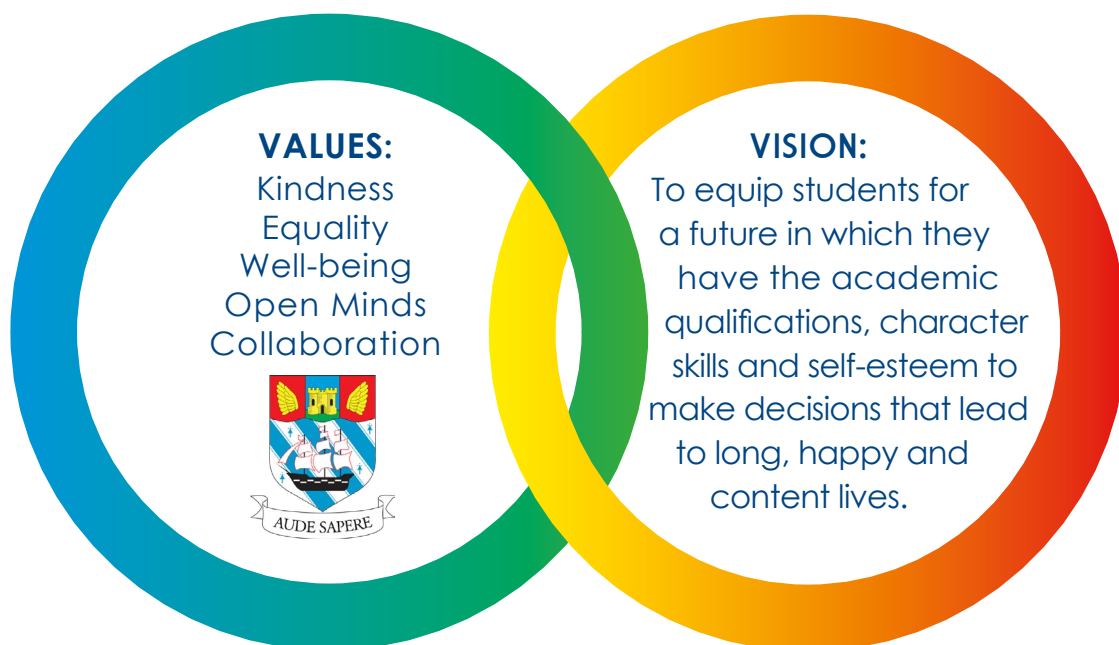
Judaism

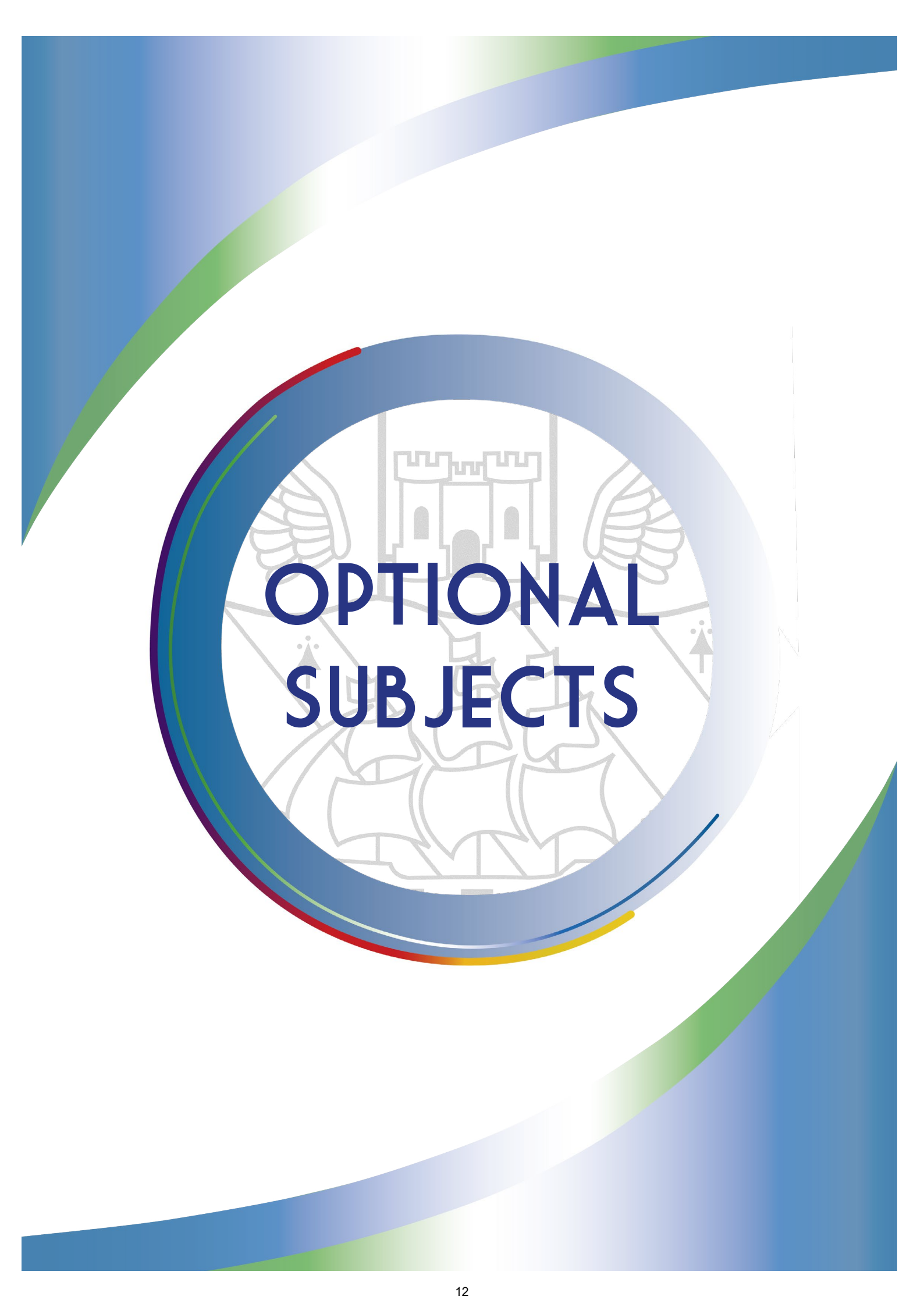
- Key Beliefs
- Covenant and the Mitzvot
- Synagogue and Worship
- Family life and Festivals

Thematic Studies:

1. Theme A: Relationships and families.
2. Theme B: Religion and life.
3. Theme E: Crime and Punishment
4. Theme F: Religion, human rights and social justice.







OPTIONAL SUBJECTS

HUMANITIES OPTION

Our Team

Mrs N Gardner
Head of Department



Mr A Magee



Mrs F Herbert



Mrs H Wilkinson

GEOGRAPHY

Exam Board - AQA

The Exam

Assessment is in three components, which make up three papers, each 1 hr 30mins long:

Paper 1: Living in the Physical Environment

Paper 2: Challenges in Human Environments

Paper 3: Geographical Application

THE VALUE OF GEOGRAPHY

Geography helps young people to:

- Develop a very wide range of transferable skills.
- Develop a knowledge and understanding of geographical concepts and appreciate how they are relevant to our changing world.
- Develop spatial awareness and appreciate the importance of the location of places and environments from local to global.
- appreciate differing news of the world, in terms of environment, societies and cultures.
- Understand the significance of values and attitudes to the development and resolution of issues.
- Develop responsibility as a “global citizen” and learn how to contribute to a future that is both sustainable and inclusive.
- Develop and apply learning to the real world through fieldwork.
- Use geographical skills, appropriate technologies, enquiry and analysis.

CAREERS

Studying Geography can lead to many and varied career paths which include: surveying/civil engineering; cartography; hydrologist; hazard management; leisure/recreation management; environmental scientist; teaching; meteorologist and many other roles within organisations such as the National Trust.

WHAT DOES THE GCSE IN GEOGRAPHY INVOLVE?

There are three components in the specification (AQA):

Component 1: Living in the Physical Environment

- Hazards – volcanoes, earthquakes and tropical storms
- The living world – tropical rainforests and cold environments
- The physical geography of the UK – rivers and coasts

Written examination: 1 hour 30 minutes with a variety of question types (1-9 marks)



Component 2: Challenges in Human Environments

- Urban issues and challenges – Inequality and opportunities in Bristol and Rio de Janeiro
- The changing economic world – population, development gap and globalisation in the UK and Nigeria
- Resource management (energy, water and food) – in-depth focus on food

Written examination: 1 hour 30 minutes with a variety of question types (1-9 marks)

Component 3: Geographical Application

- Geographical fieldwork. Human fieldwork with a trip to Bristol and Physical fieldwork at Dawlish Warren.
- Decision-making exercise based on pre-release material

Written examination: 1 hour and 30 minutes with a variety of question types including a decision-making task (1-12 marks)

There is also the opportunity to go on a fieldtrip to Iceland (Optional)

Geography is a subject which:

- Provides an engaging and **real-world focus**
- Is **relevant** to the world you live in, and to your future
- Provides you with a better understanding of the problems facing our planet such as **climate change**
- Encourages you to discuss **current affairs**
- Focuses on the challenges of a rapidly increasing world population
- Involves **fieldwork** including a trip to Bristol - it gets you out of the classroom into the real world.
- Is studied through **investigation and discussion**, not just listening and reading
- **Cares** and **understands** about the **environment** and **people** across the globe

Our Team

Ms R North
Head of Department



Mrs A Saunders

+ additional
staff member
not listed

HISTORY

Exam Board - Edexcel

The Exam

There are 3 papers, each covering different themes and periods of History

Paper 1: Thematic Study and Environment - 1hr 20mins long, worth 30% of the GCSE

Paper 2: Period Study and British Depth Study - 1hr 45mins long, worth 40% of the GCSE

Paper 3: Modern Depth Study - 1hr 20mins long, worth 30% of the GCSE

THE VALUE OF HISTORY

History is the subject on the curriculum which addresses itself most directly to the question of how our present society and its social and cultural attitudes, has emerged from the past. We hope that by studying a wide breadth of both British and international History the students at this school will be better equipped as citizens to make the informed judgements that are necessary for participation in the democratic process. We further hope that a study of World History will better help them to appreciate the background to the disputes that occurred in the past between America and the Soviet Union and the difference between democratic and non-democratic systems of government. Perhaps the best reasons, however, for opting for History at this stage derive from a combination of genuine interest in the subject and a perception that the student is likely to do well.

CAREERS

History is highly regarded as a Humanities subject and blends in easily with other disciplines. People in all walks of life have degrees or qualifications in History. Recent statistics from Bristol University showed that graduates ended up in such varied careers as the Civil Service, Accountancy, the Navy, Management, Journalism, Advertising, Teaching and Law. An Historian therefore does not become a narrow specialist.

For those pupils who are considering a future course in History at 'A' level or who are considering taking a degree in subjects such as Law, Politics or History at University our current GCSE course provides a good grounding in the techniques and skills required for these disciplines.

WHAT DOES THE GCSE IN HISTORY INVOLVE?

The main elements to the course offer a breadth across several periods of history as well as both British and international studies:-

Paper 1: Thematic study and historic environment - Medicine in Britain, c1250–present

- c1250–c1500: Medicine in medieval England
- c1500–c1700: The Medical Renaissance in England
- c1700–c1900: Medicine in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Britain
- c1900–present: Medicine in modern Britain

A study of the historic environment: The British sector of the Western Front, 1914–18:

- injuries, treatment and the trenches

30% of the total GCSE, Combination of knowledge and source based questions

Paper 2: Period study and British Depth study - Depth study: The reigns of Richard I and King John 1189–1216

- Life and government in England
- Wars that England was involved in, including the Crusades
- King John and his downfall

Period study: Superpower relations and the Cold War, 1941–91

- The origins of the Cold War, 1941–58
- Cold War crises, 1958–70
- The end of the Cold War, 1970–91

40% of the qualification, Questions assess student knowledge and understanding of the two periods

Paper 3: Modern Depth study

Weimar and Nazi Germany, 1918–39

- The Weimar Republic 1918–29
- Hitler's rise to power, 1919–33
- Nazi control and dictatorship, 1933–39
- Life in Nazi Germany, 1933–39

30% of the qualification, Questions are a combination of knowledge, sources and interpretations

School Trips

As part of the course students will have the opportunity to participate in a four day residential to the WWI Battlefields of France and Belgium in the summer term of Year 10. This is a superb trip and of direct relevance to Paper 1. Student feedback has been extremely positive about the experience.

FREE CHOICE OPTION

Our Team

Mr S Smedley
Head of Department



Mrs Z Malone



Miss E Wildman

ART & DESIGN

Exam Board - Cambridge OCR (Oxford, Cambridge and Royal Society of Arts)

The Exam

Assessment is in two parts:

Portfolio/Coursework - to be submitted by Christmas of yr11 (February half-term at the latest), 60% of mark

Externally Set Task - given out in January of yr11 for research and preparation. The final piece is completed in 10 hours just after Easter of yr11, 40% of mark

THE VALUE OF ART AND DESIGN

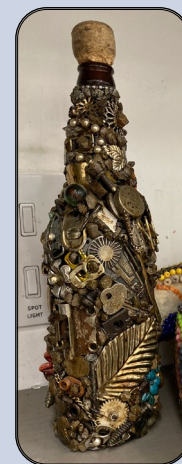
The educational value of the processes of creative learning is by no means limited to a "gifted" minority. Indeed, the ability to interpret the world, to organise ideas, to develop strategies for the practical resolution of open-ended problems - the qualities of imaginative thinking, mental and practical agility and adaptability, are vital aspects of any pupil's preparations for an increasingly challenging and changing world.

By the same token, the cultivation of judgement and discrimination in a learning context where there is no given "right" or "wrong" is of crucial importance for all kinds of "real life" transactions.



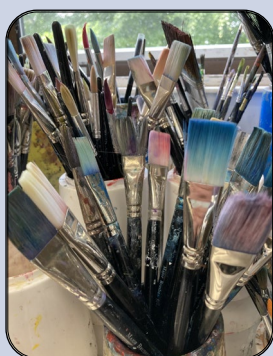
CAREERS

Looking ahead there are numerous career opportunities in art and related areas. Courses in further and higher education range from architectural courses, fine art degrees, to specialist design courses in fashion, textiles, graphic design, illustration, interior design, furniture design, product design, animation, television and theatre design, art teaching, administration and many more.



WHAT DOES THE GCSE IN ART INVOLVE?

Focusing closely on Fine Art as a subject, it is generally accepted that in a man-made environment where visual messages constantly flow into the conscious and subconscious mind; visual 'literacy' - the ability to interpret visual stimuli, and to communicate visually - is as significant as numeracy or literacy in spoken or written languages. Moreover, department staff are firm in their belief that Art is as 'academic' a subject as any other on the curriculum and wish to dispel any lingering myth that the subject represents a 'soft' option. Of no less importance is the intense personal satisfaction derived from the act of making - potentially - a life-long source of enrichment.



Our experience indicates that the aims and benefits outlined above are promoted and enhanced by the GCSE Fine Art course. The Art Department offers OCR courses, and the students are entered for the Fine Art option (J171).

Much of the classroom work will develop from activities and skills with which most students are already familiar. However, there is naturally a degree of enhanced expectation in certain areas and these may be summarised in the following ways:-

- Students are offered the opportunity of taking much more responsibility for their own programmes of work. Whilst the staff continue to offer a structured framework of activity, individual students may diverge in their approach to the set project. Work proceeds on a flexible basis and through a continuous processes of evaluation.

- It is expected that staff and students will, where possible, make direct use of the 'real' world outside the classroom. This will include a visit to a major gallery of national importance in Year 10. With this in mind, the distinctions between classwork and homework become blurred and the resources of home, neighbourhood and the larger environment take on greater significance.



- Students will look at ways in which other artists have approached themes and issues which are under investigation in class. Discussions take place on the role of art and design in wider society. Students should make visual presentations based upon their research and in support of their own creative work.

FREE CHOICE OPTION

Mrs J Potter
Head of Department



BUSINESS STUDIES

Exam Board - Edexcel

The Exam

The exam consists of two papers, both of which are 1hr and 30mins long

Paper 1: Investigating Small Business - 50% of mark

Paper 2: Building a Business - 50% of mark

<https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/edexcel-gcses/business-2017.html>

THE VALUE OF BUSINESS STUDIES

There is no doubt that business decisions have an important impact on us all as consumers, employees and citizens. If we are able to understand the forces which influence these decisions then we place ourselves in a much stronger position in our everyday lives.

Business GCSE seeks to offer a **lively and relevant insight** into business activities and therefore to help students to **understand the world around them** and **prepare them for the world of work**.

In addition, GCSE Business is a useful introduction for those students wishing to take Business or Economics at 'A' level.

CAREERS

Business decisions form the basis of every day life in most careers, even those which would not necessarily be associated with a subject such as business studies. Traditional careers would include: Accountancy; Marketing; Management; Human Resources and Business Analysts. Anyone who aspires to run their own business, regardless of the nature of that business would benefit greatly from the subject matter of the GCSE.

Through studying Business, students will be better prepared for the world of work and will have a deeper understanding of the decisions made by firms; helping them as future employees, potential employers and as a general stakeholder in society. Students will gain an ability to think commercially and will be given opportunities develop business acumen and management skills, which can benefit them in whatever career

WHAT DOES THE GCSE IN BUSINESS INVOLVE?

Business GCSE examines the activities of local, national and international enterprises with the help of real world case studies. These case studies seek to answer a wide range of practical questions on all aspects of business including:

- Enterprise and Entrepreneurship
- Spotting a business opportunity
- Business aims and objectives
- Revenue, costs and profit
- Breakeven analysis
- Cash flow
- Sources of small business finance
- Franchising
- Location decisions
- Marketing
- Viral advertising and the use of social media
- Business Plan
- Technology and business
- Introduction to the economy
- Growing a business
- Ethics, the environment, and business
- Globalisation
- Choosing suppliers
- Recruitment and motivation of employees

There are 2 assessment units:-

Unit 1 Investigating small business. This paper is worth 50% of the overall mark.

Unit 2 Building a business. This paper is worth 50% of the total mark.

Both papers require a mixture of multiple – choice, short - and extended answers and data response questions.

The course assessment will together not only assess students' knowledge and understanding of business activities but will also enhance skills of numeracy, literacy, IT, investigation, selection and interpretation of data.

Students will therefore have the opportunity to learn subject specific skills and to apply appropriate areas of expertise developed in other areas of the curriculum. Through studying Business at GCSE, **students can gain a much better understanding of the social, economic and political environment in which they live.** It is a subject which can be combined, like Economics, with a variety of other disciplines at A-level and, as such, can provide **an essential practical foundation for a wide range of academic, professional and business careers.**

FREE CHOICE OPTION

Mr P Meehan
Head of Department



Mrs J Potter

COMPUTER SCIENCE

Exam Board - Edexcel

The Exam

The exam consists of 2 papers:

Paper 1: Principles of Computer Science - 50% of the total mark, 1hr 30mins long

Paper 2 : Application of Computational Thinking - 50% of the total mark, 2hrs long

THE VALUE OF COMPUTER SCIENCE

The GCSE Computer Science course is intended to be of interest to a wide range of students, including those with other interests and future aspirations. You will benefit from the many transferable and essential skills developed through the study of Computer Science, including:

- Problem solving and logical reasoning
- Analytical and computational thinking
- Designing, modelling, and evaluating solutions
- Reflection, communication, and teamwork
- Evaluating criteria and testing solutions
- Understanding the impact of technology on society

Studying Computer Science will help you develop valuable skills for life, including:

- Logical reasoning and precision
- Innovation and creativity
- Resilience and independence
- Clear and structured thinking
- Effective communication of complex ideas

CAREERS

Computing is of enormous importance to the economy, and the role of Computer Science as a discipline continues to grow rapidly. It underpins developments in science, engineering, medicine, finance, entertainment, and communication.

This course teaches you to become an author of computational solutions, rather than simply a user of digital technology. Many of the jobs you may apply for in the future do not yet exist, and Computer Science equips you with the skills needed to adapt to new technologies and solve unfamiliar problems.

WHAT DOES THE GCSE IN COMPUTER SCIENCE INVOLVE?

The course builds upon the knowledge, understanding, and skills developed during **Key Stage 3 Computing**, while also introducing a **theoretical framework** that explains how computers, networks, and software systems work. It encourages you to think critically, understand the relationship between **software designers and users**, and recognise the role of computational thinking in the modern digital world.

You will gain a strong understanding of how computers work, and you will learn how to design, write, and troubleshoot programs that solve real-world problems. The course offers opportunities to explore how information is represented, processed, and communicated in a variety of contexts.

Course Structure and Assessment

Paper 1 – 1CP2/01: Principles of Computer Science

This paper assesses your understanding of the fundamental principles of computer science, including:

- Computational thinking
- Data representation
- Computer systems
- Networks
- Cyber security
- Ethical, legal, cultural, and environmental issues

The examination consists of a mixture of:

- Multiple-choice questions
- Short-answer questions
- Extended-response questions

Paper 2 – 1CP2/02: Application of Computational Thinking

This paper focuses on problem solving and programming. You will be required to apply your knowledge and skills to practical scenarios, including:

- Designing algorithms
- Writing, testing, and refining programs
- Using variables, selection, iteration, and data structures
- Understanding program logic and structure

Students will answer questions using:

- Pseudocode, and/or
- A high-level programming language they have studied (normally Python)

All questions on this paper are mandatory and are designed to assess your ability to **think computationally and apply programming techniques** to solve problems

FREE CHOICE OPTION

Miss J Abbott
Head of Department



DRAMA

Exam Board - AQA

The Exam

The exam consists of 3 components:

Component 1: Understanding Drama - Written exam, 1hr 45mins, 40% of Mark

Component 2 : Devising Drama - Devising log and performance, 40% of mark (course-work)

Component 3: Texts In Practice - Performance of two extracts from the same play. 20% of mark (visiting examiner)

THE VALUE OF DRAMA

The course allows students to develop their skills in performance, oral communication, research and creative processes. It is relevant for all students who wish to pursue a career in drama or media as well as those that require the skills of public speaking, teamwork, respect for deadlines, creative problem solving, the ability to work under pressure, self-discipline, leadership, respect for colleagues and confidence!



CAREERS

Drama can support career choices in many different creative industries as well as film and stage. Careers can include: actor; writer; screenwriter; film director; film producer; costumer; photographer; theatre designer and casting director. Drama also supports those who may choose careers which have prominent speaking roles as it helps to instill confidence in public speaking and supports the development of speaking techniques which engage audiences.

WHAT DOES THE GCSE IN DRAMA INVOLVE?

This course allows opportunities for students to:

- Develop performance skills to a high level.
- Create their own performance pieces from a variety of stimuli.
- Explore and perform different play texts.
- Analyse and evaluate 'live' theatre.

Year 10

During Year Ten, students work on acquiring fundamental performance skills, whilst creating exciting and sustained practical pieces. They study the work of practitioners Brecht and Stanislavski. Accompanying the performance element of the course, students develop their written ability to analyse and evaluate drama. They study a variety of texts from a practical point of view, which they then write about in the written exam at the end of Year Eleven. The majority of the work is practical, with students performing a number of pieces during this year in preparation for assessments at the end of Year Ten, and throughout Year Eleven. Students will have the opportunity to see several 'live' performances throughout the course to enable them to develop an appreciation of performance skills in action. Where possible, workshops from outside companies are arranged.

Year 11

Practical Course Work (60%)

In Year Eleven, students create two practical coursework pieces for assessment: one scripted piece on a chosen text (20% of GCSE) and one devised piece, developed from a stimulus (40% of GCSE).

Written Examination (40%)

Drama students sit the written examination at the end of the Year Eleven. The students develop their practical writing skills throughout the course and will undertake written assignments alongside practical projects



FREE CHOICE OPTION

Our Team

Ms H Brown
Head of
Department



Mrs P Smedley-Mathé



Ms R Stacey



Mr D Barbot



Miss J Boyd



Ms J Bee



MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

SPANISH AND FRENCH

Exam Board - Edexcel

The Exam

The exam for all languages consists of 4 components:

Paper 1: Speaking - 25% of the total mark, duration 10 - 12 mins approximately

Paper 2: Listening and Understanding - Written exam, 25% of the total mark, 1 hour long

Paper 3: Reading and Understanding - Written exam, 25% of the total mark, 1 hour long

Paper 4: Writing - A variety of written tasks, 25% of the total mark, 1hr 20mins long

THE VALUE OF MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

In a world where communication is a highly required key skill, the knowledge and understanding of languages gives students a range of opportunities for both study and future work prospects. Studying a language opens minds to new experiences and cultures. Many Global organisations and charities have French as their official language (EU, UN, UNESCO, Médecins Sans Frontières). More than 220 million people speak French globally, and there are around 636 million Spanish speakers in the world. Both are official languages of the UN. Learning a language equips students with useful transferrable skills and looking forward to A level and beyond, is considered to be a real asset when applying for university courses and when entering the employment market.

CAREERS

A GCSE in one or more languages can be the initial stepping stone to a number of interesting careers where knowledge of a language is an advantage. This includes: translator, journalist, teacher, media roles, charity roles, politics, finance and Law. Languages are also useful in business situations such as importing goods, customer services, buying and merchandising. It also opens up opportunities for overseas study and work.

WHAT DO THE GCSEs IN SPANISH AND FRENCH INVOLVE?

In Year 10, students will continue with French or Spanish. In both languages candidates will be entered for the GCSE examination administered by Edexcel. Although there are two levels of entry at Key Stage 4, Foundation and Higher Tier, we will be working towards the Higher Tier thus allowing access to the top GCSE grades.

Students beginning their GCSE courses in September 2025 be the second year group to take the new Languages GCSEs, which will be examined for the first time in summer 2026.

Final assessment will happen at the end of the course and will involve:

Paper 1: Speaking	25% of GCSE	Approx 10 - 12 minutes Reading aloud Role Play Picture task and conversation
Paper 2: Listening and Understanding	25% of GCSE	60 minutes Listening Comprehension Dictation
Paper 3: Reading and Understanding	25% of GCSE	60 Minutes Reading Comprehension Translation into English
Paper 4: Writing	25% of GCSE	1 hour 20 mins Written Tasks Translation into French/Spanish

The new GCSE courses are an exciting change, and they aim to focus on the important ways that languages foster communication, broaden perspectives, introduce new cultures and develop students into global citizens. These aims are what we build our curriculum around and students will spend their lesson time developing their comprehension, verbal and written communication skills within the context of the target language culture.

The French department will be offering an immersion trip to support students' studies in school, which will allow them to put their skills into action in real life situations and to learn about the culture and society of France.

Looking ahead to the Sixth Form, we offer courses in A-Level French and Spanish. Many pupils have successfully continued their foreign language studies to A-level and beyond. Indeed, A Level languages are viewed as excellent facilitating subjects by universities.

FREE CHOICE OPTION

Our Team

Mrs N Hagland
Head of Department



Mr L Moore



Music

Exam Board - AQA

The Exam

The exam consists of a formal exam with written answers and a Non-Exam Assessment:

Examination: Listening and Appraising test, worth 40% of total mark, 1hr 30mins long

Non-Exam Assessment: Composing and Performing, Worth 30% each of the total mark

THE VALUE OF MUSIC

Studying music is a fantastic opportunity to develop creative skills through composition and performance opportunities, as well as gaining a well-rounded understanding of how music works through the exploration of iconic pieces from a range of genres.

Students explore and develop self-reflection and evaluation processes, reflecting on personal musical preferences, confidence-building through performance, effective discussion around team work and respectful expectations of audiences, music groups that mix year groups and vary social interactions, tolerance and respect shown through mixed ability groups, historical music eras and other cultural events explored (e.g. Black History Month).

Music helps students to become independent thinkers and understand that their personal preferences may not always match those of others. This helps develop empathy, tolerance and respect for others around them and in the wider community.

CAREERS

This is an ideal course if you wish to go on to study AS/A2 Music, Performing Arts, Music Technology and as preparation for vocational courses in the music industry. Music teaching at Primary and Secondary levels, as a Community musician or as a private tutor for a particular instrument; working as a professional performer, as a session musician or in an orchestra; working as a sound engineer in the world of media eg: TV, film, theatre and radio.

The skills which students develop throughout the Music GCSE course indicate to employers and universities an ability to work and co-operate in a team; the dedication and hard work required to achieve a high level of ability on an instrument or voice; evidence that you are a well-rounded individual. In addition to this, UCAS now recognises formal examinations from Grade 6 and above and attribute UCAS points for these.

WHAT DOES A GCSE IN MUSIC INVOLVE?

Students explore four Areas of Study (AoS). Through their exploration, students will develop an understanding of the organisation of sounds. Areas of Study for the whole specification are based on key periods and styles of music:

Area of study 1: Western classical tradition 1650 – 1910.

Area of study 2: Popular music.

Area of study 3: Traditional music.

Area of study 4: Western classical tradition since 1910.

Component 1: Understanding Music 40%

The listening exam is split into two parts. The first part focuses on pupils responding to questions set using musical listening examples. The second part of the exam requires pupils to answer two questions based on the set works from the areas of study.

Component 2: Performing Music 30%

Solo performance and Ensemble performance. The total length of performances must be a combined minimum time of four minutes. Performances are recorded rather than performed live, so there are plenty of opportunities to polish and perfect!

Component 3: Composing Music 30%

Two compositions to be submitted: **Composition 1:** Composition to a brief, **Composition 2:** Free composition. Compositions are written in any style and for any group of instruments that you are most comfortable with, from pop songs and folk music to percussion pieces and string quartets!

Students should be committed to at least one instrument (this includes voice) and can demonstrate a performance standard of Grade 3. This may be achieved through sitting formal exams, or simply by having dedicated a significant amount of time to practicing the instrument. **Having sat formal graded exams is not a requirement of the course. If students would like to see if their skills fit the criteria, they should arrange a session with Mrs Hagland to showcase their chosen performance speciality.**

A range of extra-curricular activities are available to students. Those studying GCSE Music should prioritise these to widen their musical understanding and to further develop their practical skills:

- **Further performance opportunities:** to live audiences, in ensembles (particularly important for those who usually perform as soloists).
- **Concert participation:** students can experience first-hand how a concert runs effectively and the work that goes behind its success by participating in a music group that will perform at these events.
- **Opportunities to lead music groups:** students can gain fantastic skills through leading groups for other musicians. GCSE Music students often go on to running our Year 7 Choir in Year 12 as well as leading other groups based on their specialism.
- **Widening repertoire:** students may discover new pieces of music that they wish to use for other performance opportunities.

FREE CHOICE OPTION

Our Team

Miss E Dyke
Head of Department



Mr A Hulbert



Mrs S Greaves



Miss C McIlwrath

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Exam Board - AQA

The Exam

The exam consists of 2 formal exams with written answers and a Non-Exam Assessment:

Paper 1: The Human Body and Movement in Physical Activity and Sport - 30% of the total mark, 1hr 15mins long

Paper 2: Socio-cultural Influences and Well-being in Physical Activity and Sport - 30% of the total mark, 1hr 15mins long

Non-Exam Assessment: Practical Performance in Physical Activity and Sport - 40% of total mark, assessed by teachers and moderated by AQA

THE VALUE OF PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Participation in a wide variety of activities offers students the opportunity to develop physical competence, confidence and the ability to perform in a range of physical activities. Through this they learn how to co-operate and collaborate with others, as part of a team, understanding fairness, resilience, and equity of play to embed long lasting values. The lessons enable them to improve physical, mental and social health and have an understanding of each aspect of health. Students develop the confidence and interest to get involved in exercise, sports and activities out of school and in later life, and understand and apply the long-term health benefits of physical activity.

CAREERS

The GCSE builds a solid foundation for future steps, from A Level to university/further training, and on to the jobs market. Students develop highly transferrable skills which are highly desirable in many professions, as well as the ability to work and make decisions alone and as an effective team member. As well as the possibility of becoming a professional sports person, some of the many related careers include: sports coach, physiotherapist, sports therapist, remedial massage, and teacher. Other examples of related careers include sports media (TV, commentator, presenter, writer) and event organisation.

WHAT DOES A GCSE IN PHYSICAL EDUCATION INVOLVE?

Paper 1: The human body and movement in physical activity and sport

What's assessed:

- Applied anatomy and physiology
- Movement analysis
- Physical training Use of data

How it's assessed:

- Written exam: 1 hour 15 minutes
- 78 marks
- 30% of GCSE

Questions

- Answer all questions.
- A mixture of multiple choice/objective test questions, short answer questions and extended answer questions.

Paper 2: Socio-cultural influences and well-being in physical activity and sport

What's assessed:

- Sports psychology
- Socio-cultural influences
- Health, fitness and well-being
- Use of data

How it's assessed:

- Written exam: 1 hour 15 minutes
- 78 marks
- 30% of GCSE

Questions

- Answer all questions.
- A mixture of multiple choice/objective test questions, short answer questions and extended answer questions.

Non-exam assessment: Practical performance in physical activity and sport

What's assessed:

- Practical performance in three different physical activities in the role of player/performer (one in a team activity, one in an individual activity and a third in either a team or in an individual activity).
- Analysis and evaluation of performance to bring about improvement in one activity.

How it's assessed:

- Assessed by teachers
- Moderated by AQA
- 100 marks 40% of GCSE

Questions

- For each of their three activities, students will be assessed in skills in progressive drills (10 marks per activity) and in the full context (15 marks per activity).
- Students will be assessed on their analysis (15 marks) and evaluation (10 marks) of performance to bring about improvement in one activity.

Anyone considering taking this subject will need to be able to perform in a team activity and an individual activity to a good level and be able to maintain and improve these throughout the course. Activities performed to a high standard outside of school i.e. skiing, horse riding, swimming, may also be offered although video evidence would have to be collected.

TRIPLE SCIENCE FREE CHOICE OPTION

Our Team

Mrs K Bumby
Head of Department



Dr D Halliday



Mrs N LeFlaive



Mrs S Faro



Mrs J Kittow

BIOLOGY

Exam Board - AQA

The Exam

The exam consists of 2 papers:

Paper 1: Written Exam - 50% of the total mark, 1hr 45mins long

Paper 2: Written Exam - 50% of the total mark, 1hr 45mins long

WHAT DOES THE GCSE IN BIOLOGY INVOLVE?

Instead of following the GCSE Combined Science: Trilogy course, which is offered as a Core Subject, students can use an option choice to take three separate science GCSEs, one of which is Biology.

Due to the extra time triple scientists receive, they can expect to finish the course after February half term whereas double scientists will be covering the specification until close to the exam leave in the summer. In this extra time triple scientists will revise topics and hone exam techniques. In addition to the Biology topics covered in the GCSE Combined Science: Trilogy course, students will study the following extension topics:

Culturing microorganisms; monoclonal antibodies; plant hormones and diseases; the brain; the eye; the control of body temperature; advantages and disadvantages of asexual and sexual reproduction; DNA structure; cloning; evolutionary theories; speciation; extinction; the impact of environmental change; energy flow between trophic levels; decomposition; food production.

TRIPLE SCIENCE FREE CHOICE OPTION

Our Team

Dr T Sweet
Head of Department



Dr J Cattell



Mrs H Greenaway



Mrs K Carpenter-Kay

CHEMISTRY

Exam Board - AQA

The Exam

The exam consists of 2 papers:

Paper 1: Written Exam - 50% of the total mark, 1 hr 45mins long

Paper 2: Written Exam - 50% of the total mark, 1 hr 45mins long

WHAT DOES THE GCSE IN CHEMISTRY INVOLVE?

Instead of following the GCSE Combined Science: Trilogy course, which is offered as a Core Subject, students can use an option choice to take three separate science GCSEs, one of which is Chemistry.

Due to the extra time triple scientists receive, they can expect to finish the course after February half term whereas double scientists will be covering the specification until close to the exam leave in the summer. In this extra time triple scientists will revise topics and hone exam techniques. In addition to the Chemistry topics covered in the GCSE Combined Science: Trilogy course, students will study the following extension topics:

Transition metals; nanoparticles; further calculations involving the mole in titrations and gases, atom economy and percentage yield; organic Chemistry, including the reactions of the alkenes, alcohols, and polymer; chemical and fuel cells; chemical analysis by ion identification and spectroscopy; the Haber process and NPK fertilisers; The uses of materials, such as polymers, ceramics, alloys and composites, and corrosion and its prevention.

TRIPLE SCIENCE FREE CHOICE OPTION

Our Team

Mr J Castillo
Head of Department

Dr L Cotton

PHYSICS

Exam Board - AQA

The Exam

The exam consists of 2 papers:

Paper 1: Written Exam - 50% of the total mark, 1hr 45mins long

Paper 2: Written Exam - 50% of the total mark, 1hr 45mins long

WHAT DOES THE GCSE IN PHYSICS INVOLVE?

Instead of following the GCSE Combined Science: Trilogy course, which is offered as a Core Subject, students can use an option choice to take three separate science GCSEs, one of which is Physics.

Due to the extra time triple scientists receive, they can expect to finish the course after February half term whereas double scientists will be covering the specification until close to the exam leave in the summer. In this extra time triple scientists will revise topics and hone exam techniques. In addition to the Physics topics covered in the GCSE Combined Science: Trilogy course, students will study the following extension topics:

Moments, levers and gears; pressure and pressure differences in liquids; changes in momentum; reflection of waves; sound waves; waves for detection and exploration; lenses; visible light; black body radiation; insulation, fuses and circuit breakers; static electricity; loudspeakers; induced potential, transducers and the National Grid; gas pressure; hazards and uses of radioactive emissions and of background radiation; nuclear fission and fusion; space physics (solar system, stars, orbital motion and satellites; redshift).



CAREERS EDUCATION AND WORK AWARENESS

The school is well aware of the important career decisions facing pupils during their school life and, as a result, careers education features as a regular part of the curriculum, formal and informal teaching occurs in Years 7 -13 and the material covers such topics as self-development, career management and career exploration, all of which prepare students for the choices they must make and the world of work beyond school. The aim of the careers programme is to provide pupils with information and ideas in as varied an approach as possible incorporating the use of outside agencies and employers, past pupils, role play, video films and careers literature of all kinds and resources on the Internet.

In the main school the task of teaching lessons is spread widely amongst a number of staff. In Year 7, 8 and 9 the careers curriculum is delivered as part of the WellBeing module in PSHE, in addition the Career Leader undertakes an important role before the options choices with an assembly and optional workshops. This is particularly important at the time of the selection of Year 10 GCSE options and helps to support pupils as they make their choices.

Within the careers programme there are dedicated careers modules that ensure pupils have access to **CareerPilot**, **ICOULD** and the **UNIFROG** programs and these have proved to be very useful in widening pupils' awareness of career opportunities, linking subject interests and abilities.

Apart from lessons, other careers facilities such as the Careers and Enterprise Centre exist to help the pupils in the school. In addition to the numerous career websites, careers literature and information is available in school. All pupils have access to a qualified Careers and University Adviser. The Adviser has many years' experience with grammar school pupils, and works extensively with years 11, 12 and 13. She will be available at the Year 9 Options choice evening, to discuss career or university issues.

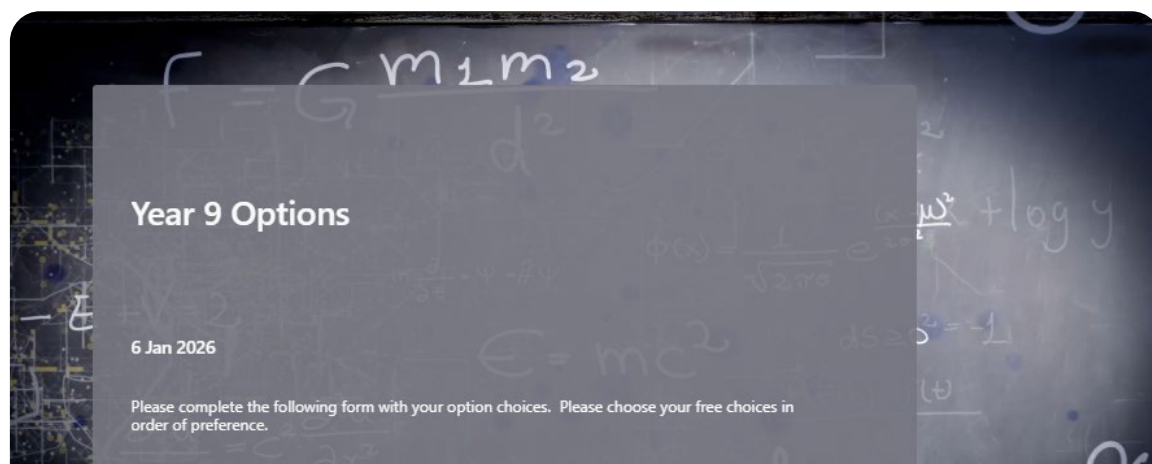
Year 9 pupils can request a one-to-one careers interview with our qualified careers adviser if they wish. In year 10 pupils are encouraged to visit various places of work and to arrange work experience. Work experience is also encouraged throughout year 11 and the Sixth Form. In addition, attempts are made to hold meetings between staff and employers in schemes to promote 'Links with Industry'.

In addition to the Careers and Enterprise Centre, the main school library provides access to a range of careers materials including video films and computer programmes including **ICOULD**, **UNIFROG**, **CareerPilot** and other **INTERNET** facilities. Pupils should make use of these in their free time.



MAKING THE OPTION CHOICES

Your child will have access to a form to enable us to collect their choices.



1. Surname *

Enter your answer

2. First Name *

Enter your answer

They will be guided to make their choices through the form.

1. They must choose one humanity from their humanities choice
2. They will be prompted to make 3 free choices separately and should be careful not to choose the same subject twice as students are able to opt for a Humanity in their free choice and if they do so, this must be different to their first Humanity choice.
3. Students should choose one reserve subject, although if there are any problems with their first choice subjects Mr O'Rourke will speak to the student and communicate with parents.

PLEASE NOTE: GCSE option subject viability is dependent on sufficient student numbers. If your first choice of option subject does not receive adequate interest and therefore cannot run, your reserve choice(s) will be used. However, unless Mr O'Rourke tells you to the contrary all your first choices will have been allocated.

**Option choices to be submitted by 3.30pm on
Friday 13th February 2026**

STUDENT STATEMENT OF ENTITLEMENT CAREERS EDUCATION AND GUIDANCE

As a student at Torquay Girls' Grammar School, you will be entitled to participate in a comprehensive Careers Education programme, which will be implemented from Year 7 onwards. The programme will be delivered through the rotation in your wellbeing lessons, Computing & IT lessons and tutorials.

- develop ideas and awareness of self in relationship to abilities, aptitudes, interests, attitudes, values, skills, strengths and limitations;
- participate in suitable learning opportunities which will explore, process, test and record these ideas;
- acquire knowledge and awareness of opportunities, qualifications, routes ahead, occupational structures, progression, implications of choices;
- access these opportunities through Open Days, interviews, careers conventions, admission systems;
- identify strategies and tools for putting self-awareness and opportunity awareness together in order to make informed and reasoned choices (self-development, career exploration and career management)

Through the Careers Resources held within the School and those available through **Unifrog** and **ICould** (as well as through the **CareerPilot** website from the University of Bath), the School's commitment is to provide you with information that is:

- freely available
- accessible
- up-to-date
- accurate
- unbiased
- comprehensive
- of high quality
- at an appropriate level

You will have the opportunity to learn about the world of work which is linked to the curriculum.

Individual guidance will be available from specialist careers staff and professional advisers which is:

- impartial and free from institutional bias
- available at key decision times
- confidential

