



ST. JOSEPH'S COLLEGE

READING • BERKSHIRE



GCSE Options Booklet 2022



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Dear Parents and Year 9 Students

Welcome to 'Options 2022', your guide to how to negotiate the curriculum for Years 10 and 11. This booklet will set out clearly those subjects which are compulsory for all students and those where choices will need to be made. The decision regarding which of these optional subjects should be studied is an important one and every student is advised to spend time carefully considering the options. We hope that this booklet will provide important information concerning the breadth of subjects available and provide the basis for a sensible and informed choice. Each Head of Department has set out a brief summary of the course (based on the information available at the time of writing), the examination structure and the likely demands on a student.

In making these choices, I hope very much that each student's selection will take into account their strengths and talents, together with their enjoyment and fulfilment in a subject. Breadth and balance should be maintained so as to ensure that future career and further education options are kept open for as long as possible.

In addition to parents and students discussing the choices, please can I encourage each student to talk to his or her teachers to find out as much as they can about the various subjects. Please remember the subjects chosen will form a central part of the programme of study for the next two years, so they should not be chosen in haste.

Of course, a student's time at school is not simply about academic work and examinations. To get the most out of College life, every student is encouraged to get involved in our wide range of sporting, cultural, spiritual and other activities. These provide physical exercise, challenge and build confidence. A commitment in these areas is a key contribution to academic progress.

Very occasionally, in discussion with teachers and Miss Woods, Deputy Head Academic, a student might opt to take one fewer GCSE subject.

Without doubt the basis for a happy and fruitful time at school is to get the academic side of life right. Making the correct choice for GCSE should certainly put each student on the path to achieving this.

If you have any questions then do contact the tutor, the Head of Department or Miss Woods.

Yours sincerely,

Laura Stotesbury
Head

Careers and Choices

YOUR CAREER

Have you considered what future career path you would like to follow yet? Do you know all the possible career routes available to you? In Year 9 we will help you discover what career possibilities might be right for you. Having some understanding will help you to choose your option subjects, even if you feel it is too early to have a definite career plan.

YOUR CHOICE

Some key subjects are compulsory in the curriculum to make sure you have a balanced education, but you also have some choice. If you have an idea of a career path then make sure you select the subjects required to pursue that career. At the same time, allow for some flexibility should you change your mind. It is also important to choose subjects you like and those in which you feel you can achieve your best results.

YOUR GUIDANCE

The Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHEE) and tutor programme in Year 9 will provide opportunities for guidance and discussion about potential careers, the labour market in the UK, and option choices.

You will also have a number of lessons focused on careers and will spend time with your tutor thinking about your career options and possible routes into further education.

In addition, you will take part in an Options Talk, which is designed to explain in detail how the options process works here at St Joseph's, as well as outline the considerations that you need to bear in mind in order to make the right choices for your needs and potential future pursuits.

You will also have the opportunity to undertake a psychometric careers questionnaire, which helps to establish a range of careers compatible with your talents and interests, and which creates a personalised profile. Information on the subjects and qualifications required is then provided and you can access this resource from home.

In order to ensure that you make an informed choice about your future career plans, you will carry out extensive research on different careers and routes into a particular industry, including entry requirements, job descriptions, pay and potential job prospects, both in the UK and abroad.

The world of careers is constantly changing. We make sure that you have access to the latest and most accurate information on all aspects of careers guidance by subscribing to top quality websites which both you and your parents can access.

YOUR DECISION

This may be the first time you have been asked to make such important decisions about your education. Make sure you are well informed by finding out as much as you can about each subject choice and your career possibilities. Remember, you will be the one studying the subjects you have chosen and it is your choice, your career and your future.

RECOMMENDED WEBSITES

nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk

www.careersadviceforparents.org

www.prospects.ac.uk

www.ucas.com

www.icould.com

Core subjects

English Language	6
English Literature	7
Mathematics	8
Religious Studies	9
Science	10

GCSE English Language



WHY STUDY ENGLISH LANGUAGE?

English GCSE is a requirement for nearly all educational options at Post 16. More importantly, well-honed skills in both reading for meaning, and writing for different purposes and audiences, are essential in all future career paths.

COURSE OVERVIEW / WHAT WILL I STUDY?

You will study a range of both modern fiction extracts alongside a range of nineteenth century and twenty-first century non-fiction extracts in order to hone your reading for meaning skills. You also work hard on developing proficient writing skills in a range of styles.

ASSESSMENT

Examination Board	Specification Code
AQA	8700

You will sit two papers:

Paper 1: Explorations in creative reading and writing:

Section A: You answer four questions on a fiction extract. You are required to demonstrate analytical and evaluative skills.

Section B: You write a response to a creative writing task.

Paper 2: Writers' viewpoints and perspectives:

Section A: You answer four questions on two non-fiction extracts; one will be a nineteenth century text and the other will be a modern extract. You are required to demonstrate analytical, evaluative and comparative skills.

Section B: You write a response to a persuasive writing task.

Non-examination unit

N.B. This is an obligatory part of the course.

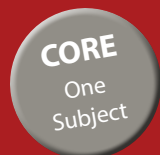
Unit 3: Speaking and listening

You are required to give a 3-5 minute speech on a chosen topic and to answer questions in detail on the topic.

HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

Mrs S Donald

GCSE English Literature



WHY STUDY ENGLISH LITERATURE?

Studying English Literature gives us a comprehensive understanding of not only how to skilfully interpret layers of meaning in a range of texts, but also gives us a firm grounding in our literary and cultural heritage.

COURSE OVERVIEW / WHAT WILL I STUDY?

You will study a range of texts including a Shakespeare text, a nineteenth century novel (for example Jekyll and Hyde, Jane Eyre or Pride and Prejudice), modern drama (for example An Inspector Calls) and a range of poems (AQA Poetry Anthology).

ASSESSMENT

Examination Board	Specification Code
AQA	8702

You will sit two papers:

Paper 1: Shakespeare and the nineteenth century novel:

Section A: You answer one question on a Shakespeare play (Macbeth).

Section B: You answer one question on either: Jekyll and Hyde, Jane Eyre or Pride and Prejudice.

Paper 2: Modern texts and poetry:

Section A: You answer one question on the play An Inspector Calls.

Section B: You answer one question (in two parts) on two poems from the AQA Power and Conflict Poetry Anthology.

Section C: You answer one question (in two parts) on two unseen poems.

HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

Mrs S Donald

GCSE Mathematics



WHY STUDY MATHEMATICS?

You will learn to:

- Develop fluent knowledge, skills and understanding of mathematical methods and concepts
- Acquire, select and apply mathematical techniques to solve problems
- Reason mathematically, make deductions and inferences and draw conclusions
- Comprehend, interpret and communicate mathematical information in a variety of forms appropriate to the information and context

Whilst Mathematics is an important subject in its own right, it also supports many other subjects at GCSE and especially A Level. Students gaining a high grade in this IGCSE should have the basic skills required to study A Level Mathematics or any of the sciences in the Sixth Form.

COURSE OVERVIEW / WHAT WILL I STUDY?

The course content is broken down into four main areas:

- Number
- Algebra
- Geometry and Shape
- Probability and Statistics

ASSESSMENT

Examination Board	Specification Code
Edexcel	4MA1

You will sit the Edexcel Specification A, Mathematics International GCSE (IGCSE).

There will be two papers, each two hours long. They have no discernible difference in content and are equally weighted. Students may use a calculator on both papers. It is expected that all students sit the Higher Tier papers, and so access grades 4-9.

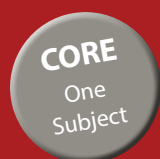
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Mathematics clinic runs on a Wednesday after school.

HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

Mr R Shuttleworth

GCSE Religious Studies



WHY STUDY RELIGIOUS STUDIES?

- Develop knowledge and understanding of religions and non-religious beliefs, such as atheism and humanism and understanding of religious teachings, and sources of wisdom and authority, including reading of key religious texts, other texts, and scriptures
- To engage with questions of belief, value, meaning, purpose, truth, and their influence on human life
- To reflect on and develop values, beliefs and attitudes in light of learning and contribute to preparation for adult life in a pluralistic society and global community
- Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of two religions
- Understand the influence of religion on individuals, communities and societies
- Understand significant common and divergent views between and/or within religions and beliefs
- Apply knowledge and understanding in order to analyse questions related to religious beliefs and values

COURSE OVERVIEW / WHAT WILL I STUDY?

Roman Catholic Christianity (Paper 1)

Beliefs and Teachings

Practices

Sources of Wisdom and Authority

Forms of Expression and Ways of Life

Judaism (Paper 2)

Beliefs and Teachings

Practices

Philosophy and Ethics (Paper 3)

Arguments for the Existence of God

Religious Teachings on Relationships and Families in the twenty-first century

ASSESSMENT

Examination Board	Specification Code
Edexcel	1RA0

You will sit three exams at the end of Year 10.

Roman Catholic Christianity: 1 hour 45 minute exam (worth 50% of the final grade)

Judaism: 50 minute exam (worth 25% of the final grade)

Philosophy and Ethics: 50 minute exam (worth 25% of the final grade)

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

We will run after school revision coming up to mocks and final exams, plus weekly lunchtime drop in sessions for one-to-one support.

HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

Mr J Cunningham

GCSE Science



WHY STUDY SCIENCE?

Science is investigative, relevant and dynamic. The aim is to provide a sound foundation for all students and it is an essential qualification for over 30% of careers. Following science can lead to future work associated with genetic engineering, forensics, medical physics, nursing, telecommunications, biotechnology as well as more traditional areas such as engineering, technology and medicine.

Furthermore, science enables you to have a greater understanding of the world around us.

COURSE OVERVIEW / WHAT WILL I STUDY?

You will be prepared for the **Combined Science: Trilogy Award**. This is part of the compulsory core curriculum for all students.

Alternatively, you can choose to take **Triple Science** using **one** of your option choices. If you choose Triple Science you will study the three sciences, and take two examinations each in Physics, Chemistry and Biology at the end of Year 11. This option is reserved for the more able scientists and pupils who wish to choose this option should be achieving an **A** or **A/B** grade in their end of topic Science tests in Year 9, and should check with their Science teachers in advance.

ASSESSMENT

Examination Board	Specification Code
AQA	Combined: 8464
	Triple: 8461, 8462, 8463

Combined Science: Trilogy Award

There will be six exams; two Biology, two Chemistry and two Physics.

This is a double award: equivalent to two GCSEs. You will receive two grades.

Triple Science

There will be six exams; two Biology, two Chemistry and two Physics. Each exam is 30 minutes longer than those in the Trilogy Award.

You will receive an individual grade per subject for a total of three GCSEs.

There is no coursework.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

STEM Club runs weekly and features interesting talks from teachers, pupils and visiting speakers.

HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

Mr D Leese

Optional subjects

Fine Art	12
Computer Science	13
Drama	14
Food Preparation and Nutrition	15
French	16
Geography	17
Graphic Communication	18
History	19
ICT	20
Latin	21
Music	22
Physical Education	23
Spanish	24
Programmable Systems (Electronics)	25

GCSE Fine Art



WHY STUDY FINE ART?

GCSE Art is about having an adventurous and enquiring approach to the visual world and developing the skills to express it. You will develop an understanding of past and contemporary art and design and be able to produce a personal response embracing a range of ideas.

You could go on to take an AS or A Level in Art, or a Vocational A Level in Art and Design or a related subject. If you know the area of art, craft or design you want to specialise in, you could study for a National Certificate or National Diploma in Art and Design.

You may wish to take GCSE in Art to form the basis of a future interest, or you might wish to go into a job where it is useful to have had experience of art, craft and design, or where you will need to use some of the skills developed during this course. These might include careers in such fields as advertising, marketing, design, architecture, publishing and the media.

The study of Art can help you develop transferable skills, which you can take into any career or job.

COURSE OVERVIEW / WHAT WILL I STUDY?

The skills you will develop doing GCSE Art will be varied. You will develop the skills to investigate, analyse and experiment, as well as expanding your imaginative powers and the skills to express your ideas, feelings and meanings. You will also develop an understanding of the language and conventions of art and design and an understanding of the place of art, craft and design in history and in society.

ASSESSMENT

Examination Board	Specification Code
AQA	8202

The GCSE course is made up of two parts.

Component 1: A personal portfolio in Art and Design (worth 60% of the final grade).

Component 2: An externally set assignment which includes a preparation period and results in a 10 hour timed task (worth 40% of the final grade).

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

You will be provided with a course handbook which outlines all of the steps you will need to take in order to meet the assessment objectives. You will be required to complete a lot of practical work outside of your timetabled lessons, whether that is at home or in the Art Department at lunch times and after school.

HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

Mr R Zawitowski

GCSE Computer Science



WHY STUDY COMPUTER SCIENCE?

Computer Science develops your understanding of the main principles of problem solving using computers. You can apply your understanding to develop computer-based solutions to problems using algorithms and a high-level programming language.

Computer Science and ICT are not the same subjects. ICT is designed to help you learn how to use modern computer technologies. However, Computer Science teaches students how to design and develop computer-based solutions. Therefore, Computer Science is aimed at students who are problem solvers and can think analytically.

Understanding the principles in Computer Science provides you with the underpinning knowledge required for many other subjects in science and engineering, and the skills learnt can also be used in everyday life.

COURSE OVERVIEW / WHAT WILL I STUDY?

The course aims to develop:

- Computational thinking, that is thinking about what can be computed and how, and includes consideration of the data required
- Understanding of the main principles of solving problems by using computers
- Understanding that every computer system is made up of sub-systems, which in turn consist of further sub-systems
- Understanding of the component parts of computer systems and how they interrelate, including software, data, hardware, communications and people
- Skills necessary to apply understanding to solve computer-based problems using a high-level programming language

ASSESSMENT

Examination Board	Specification Code
Cambridge IGCSE	0984

Paper 1 - Computer Systems: 1 hour 45 minutes (worth 50% of final grade)

Paper 2 - Algorithms, Programming and Logic: 1 hours 45 minutes (worth 50% of final grade)

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

As a part of the STEM Club, Computer Science activities are incorporated into club activities throughout the year. Furthermore, Computer Science students are enrolled into a national competition called Cyber Centurion, which is a networking, defence and cyber-security challenge.

HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

Mr G Lindner

GCSE Drama



WHY STUDY DRAMA?

Drama is a unique subject in many regards, not least in the collaborative nature of the learning involved. Students studying drama will work with their peers to create theatre, taking shared responsibility for the outcome. You will study theatre as an art form; its cultural and historical relevance; the creative processes of significant drama practitioners, directors and theatre companies, and significant dramatic literature from the theatrical canon.

Whilst Drama as a subject in its own right offers you the chance to perform, create, direct and design, it also develops crucial skills for the future: the ability to work collaboratively with others; to reflect purposefully on your own work and skills; to analyse and evaluate with detail and precision. You will perform extracts from challenging texts working on diction, expression, intonation and how to convey meaning and create impact alongside developing character and stagecraft.

COURSE OVERVIEW / WHAT WILL I STUDY?

The GCSE Drama course comprises three components:

Component 1: 'Understanding Drama' is focused on knowledge and understanding of drama and theatre. You will study the elements of drama and understand theatre as a medium. You will study one set text of a choice of six significant and influential pieces of dramatic literature. You will also analyse and examine the work of live theatre makers.

Component 2: 'Devising Drama' is a practical unit, in which you create your own original piece of theatre.

Component 3: 'Texts in Practice' is a practical unit, in which you perform two extracts from one text, chosen by the teacher and approved by the exam board.

ASSESSMENT

Examination Board	Specification Code
AQA	8261

GCSE Drama is assessed through one written exam which is 1 hour 45 minutes long. The exam is open book (worth 40% of the final grade).

Further assessment comes in the form of two performance exams: one internally marked and one externally marked by a visiting examiner (worth 60% of the final grade).

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

You will participate in a number of theatre trips over the two years and take part in at least one workshop with a visiting theatre company or practitioner.

There are additional extra curricular activities that may support you in your studies including: Speech and Drama exams (LAMDA) and school productions.

HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

Miss M Bicknell

GCSE Food Preparation and Nutrition



WHY STUDY FOOD PREPARATION AND NUTRITION?

Food Preparation and Nutrition is a starting point for many careers and a good foundation for further education courses concerned with nutrition and diet, food safety, quality control, product development and food science. Careers in the food industry include: new product development; food scientist; production management; quality assurance management and marketing.

COURSE OVERVIEW / WHAT WILL I STUDY?

This exciting course offers a wide range of food related topics for study and includes practical work to support the knowledge base. Both theory and practical skills are assessed during the course which ensures you develop a thorough understanding of nutrition, food provenance and the working characteristics of food materials.

Food preparation skills are integrated into five core topics:

- Food, nutrition and health
- Food science
- Food safety
- Food choice
- Food provenance

ASSESSMENT

Examination Board	Specification Code
AQA	8585

Written exam: 1 hour 45 minutes Worth 50% of the final grade.

Non-exam assessment Worth 50% of the final grade.

Task 1: Food investigation

Your understanding of the working characteristics and functional properties of foods is assessed through practical work and report writing. Practical investigations are a compulsory element of this non-exam assessment (NEA) task.

Task 2: Food preparation assessment

You will prepare, cook and present a final menu of three dishes in three hours, planning in advance how this will be achieved.

HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

Mrs A Halloran

GCSE French



WHY STUDY FRENCH?

Do you enjoy holidays in the sun and on the slopes?
Would you like to show employers in today's international workplace just how broad your horizons are? Are you keen to demonstrate your academic potential to universities?
Might you one day have a product or service to sell all over the world? Might your scientific or economic research one day be facilitated by international collaboration? Are food, art or international relations your interests? Could your employer be looking both for communicative competence in a foreign language and evidence that you are an experienced language learner, who would pick up other languages easily? Then, with 200 million speakers in more than 40 countries worldwide, French is for you!

COURSE OVERVIEW / WHAT WILL I STUDY?

The aims of the French GCSE course are to equip you to understand the spoken and written language and use them confidently to communicate with French-speaking people, in social and professional contexts.

You will build on the French you already know, listening to and reading about lots of French speakers' experiences and opinions before adapting the language they use to help you communicate your own. There will be lots of lively, challenging and motivating activities to enable you to learn the vocabulary and constructions you will need. You will be able to access the online resources used in class at home too.

ASSESSMENT

Examination Board	Specification Code
AQA	8658

Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing are assessed at the end of the course, each by one examination.

You will do the Foundation Tier (Grades 1-5) or Higher Tier (Grades 4-9) papers, according to ability.

Weighting of Assessment: 25% Listening, 25% Speaking, 25% Reading, 25% Writing.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Class work and homework will be complemented by small group tuition with our French assistant. There will also be opportunities to exchange information and views with students in our partner school in France, watch films and visit the country.

HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

Mrs J Spence

GCSE Geography



WHY STUDY GEOGRAPHY?

Geography is the study of Earth's landscapes, people, places and environments. It is, quite simply, about the world in which we live. Geography at St Joseph's harnesses the natural inquisitiveness of our pupils for the world around them. It provides you with a toolbox of skills to interpret your world whilst being aware of your responsibilities as a global citizen. We create a welcoming, enjoyable environment that strives to make the outside world come alive within our community. Geography complements a wide range of subjects at GCSE due to the large range of transferable skills and contemporary knowledge that is developed. Upon completion of this two year course, you will have the skills and experience to progress onto A Level and beyond.

COURSE OVERVIEW / WHAT WILL I STUDY?

You will travel the world from your classroom, exploring case studies in the United Kingdom, higher income countries, newly emerging economies and lower income countries. Topics of study include climate change, poverty, deprivation, global shifts in economic power and the challenge of sustainable resource use. You are also encouraged to understand your role in society, by considering different viewpoints, values and attitudes. In Paper 3 you will be examined on your geography fieldwork experience and will tackle an issue evaluation on a contemporary topic sent to you 12 weeks before the examination.

ASSESSMENT

Examination Board	Specification Code
AQA	8035

The course is entirely assessed by examinations.

Paper 1: Living in the physical environment (worth 35% of the final grade)

Paper 2: Challenges in the human environment (worth 35% of the final grade)

Paper 3: Geographical applications (worth 30% of the final grade)

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Two days of fieldwork will be undertaken in contrasting environments. The department is a member of both the Royal Geographical Society and the Geographical Association. Additional support and revision sessions are run throughout the year when required.

HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

Mr D Watkins

GCSE Graphic Communication



WHY STUDY GRAPHIC COMMUNICATION?

You will be introduced to a variety of experiences exploring a range of graphic media, techniques and processes, including both traditional and new technologies.

You will explore relevant images, artefacts and resources relating to a range of graphic communication from the past and from recent times, including European and non-European examples, which should be integral to the investigating and making process. Responses to these examples will be shown through practical and critical activities which demonstrate your understanding of different styles, genres and traditions.

COURSE OVERVIEW / WHAT WILL I STUDY?

You are required to work in one or more area(s) of Graphic Communication such as those listed below. You may explore overlapping areas and combinations of areas:

- Communication graphics
- Design for print
- Advertising and branding
- Illustration
- Package design
- Typography
- Multi-media
- Motion graphics
- Signage
- Exhibition graphics

ASSESSMENT

Examination Board	Specification Code
AQA	8203

The GCSE course is made up of two parts.

Component 1: A personal portfolio in Art and Design (worth 60% of the final grade).

Component 2: An externally set assignment which includes a preparation period and results in a 10 hour timed task (worth 40% of the final grade).

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

You will be provided with a course handbook which outlines all of the steps you will need to take in order to meet the assessment objectives. You will be required to complete a lot of practical work outside of your timetabled lessons, whether that is at home or in the Art Department at lunchtimes and after school.

HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

Mr R Zawitowski

GCSE History



WHY STUDY HISTORY?

It is hard to deny the importance of learning from history. This specification enables you to study different aspects of the past, so you can engage with key issues such as conflict, understand what drives change and how the past influences the present.

COURSE OVERVIEW / WHAT WILL I STUDY?

Paper 1: Understanding the modern world:

Section A: Period Studies

- 1B Germany, 1890-1945: Democracy and dictatorship

Section B: Wider world depth studies

- Conflict and tension, 1918-1939

Paper 2: Shaping the Nation

Section A: Thematic Studies

- 2A Britain: Health and the people: c1000 to present day

Section B: British depth studies including the historic environment

- Elizabethan England, c1568-1603

ASSESSMENT

Examination Board	Specification Code
AQA	8145

Paper 1: Understanding the modern world (two hours and worth 50% of the final grade)

Paper 2: Shaping the nation (two hours and worth 50% of the final grade)

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The History Department offers a visit to Berlin to assist in enriching the syllabus, and opportunities to visit London on study days. History Club is available to all students who wish to deepen their understanding of various topics and revision booster sessions are offered in the lead up to examinations.

HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

Ms M Flanagan

GCSE ICT



WHY STUDY ICT?

ICT gives you the essential computer skills used in the work environment as well as computer skills that you can use immediately in your other subjects.

ICT is a fast changing subject and the course has been revised to reflect the latest developments. The course is modern, has a high degree of practical work and is relevant to future studies and employment with the vast majority of jobs making use of computer technology.

COURSE OVERVIEW / WHAT WILL I STUDY?

You will learn practical ICT skills including: website design, databases with relationships, spreadsheets, desktop publishing and mail merge.

You will learn about a range of computer hardware, computer networks, the internet and its impact on society.

ASSESSMENT

Examination Board	Specification Code
Edexcel IGCSE	4IT1

One practical three hour examination (worth 50% of the final grade)

One 90 minute written examination (worth 50% of the final grade)

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

ICT is about how to use computer systems. We are also offering Computer Science which is more about how computer systems are designed.

ICT projects form part of the STEM Club activities which happen throughout the year. ICT students can enrol into the national Cyber Centurion competition, which is a cyber-security competition to defend network security.

You may get additional support at lunchtimes.

HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

Mr S Phillippo

GCSE Latin



WHY STUDY LATIN?

Are you fascinated by how the Romans lived, what they did and thought, by the stories they told, and by the aspects of our civilisation and language we have inherited from them? Do you like solving puzzles? Are you a language detective; do you enjoy piecing together meaning by looking hard at the clues in the word endings and thinking of English words Latin has given us? Are you keen to demonstrate your mental agility and courage to universities and employers? Could your employer be looking for evidence that you are an experienced learner of a challenging language, who would pick up other languages easily? Then Latin is for you!

COURSE OVERVIEW / WHAT WILL I STUDY?

You will be building on what you have learned of the Latin language and Roman civilisation in Years 8 and 9. You will gradually extend your knowledge of vocabulary, grammar and the way the Romans lived, and, in Year 11, will read some Latin literature.

In preparation for the language exam, you will have lots of practice in reading Latin. You will be given a vocabulary list to learn. Any words that do not feature on that list will be translated for you in the exam.

You will read and examine Latin prose literature. Tasks include translation, comprehension questions, and demonstrating understanding and appreciation of character, plot and style.

You will explore Roman civilisation by studying English translations of short Latin texts and archaeological evidence of the way Romans lived, including on a visit to a Roman site.

ASSESSMENT

Examination Board	Specification Code
OCR	J282

Paper 1: Latin Language (90 minutes and 50% of the final grade)

Paper 2: Latin Prose Literature (60 minutes and 25% of the final grade)

Paper 3: Roman Civilisation in English (60 minutes and 25% of the final grade)

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

There will be opportunities to visit Roman sites.

HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

Mrs J Spence

GCSE Music



WHY STUDY MUSIC?

The most important reasons for studying Music are that you enjoy it and have an aptitude for it. Whilst essential for entry into music courses for professional musicians and teachers, this subject can also lead to many related careers in the leisure industry, media and business, and is useful in Primary School teaching and music therapy. The discipline of learning an instrument can refine your study skills and concentration in many other areas.

COURSE OVERVIEW / WHAT WILL I STUDY?

GCSE Music consists of three components: listening, performing and composing.

Listening includes not only traditional styles but also film and popular music. Theory is learnt through listening activities. All musical tastes are explored and you are encouraged to develop your own musical interests. The listening element of the syllabus is assessed by one paper which is the only written examination in Music GCSE.

The same principles apply in **Performance**. You will perform instrumentally or sing, both solo and in small ensembles. The course is designed for candidates of all abilities so everyone is able to participate at their own level. Performance is assessed by the Head of Music towards the end of Year 11.

Composing is the only section of the syllabus with assessed coursework. Two compositions are submitted at the end of Year 11. One piece is to a brief set by the examination board, the other can be a free choice by you.

ASSESSMENT

Examination Board	Specification Code
Edexcel	1MU0

Paper 1: Performing - internally assessed (worth 30% of the final grade)

Paper 2: Composing - internally assessed through coursework (worth 30% of the final grade)

Paper 3: Listening - externally assessed written paper (worth 40% of the final grade)

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Termly trips to concerts and lunchtime recitals and workshops by visiting professionals within school support your learning.

After school support sessions for composition are available in Year 11.

HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

Mrs M Kesel

GCSE Physical Education



WHY STUDY PHYSICAL EDUCATION?

Students who enjoy sports performance will thrive in this GCSE subject. The topics relate to you as a performer and can help you understand how to train and perform better in your sport. Practical sessions will teach you more challenging skills and give you a wider range of sporting performance.

COURSE OVERVIEW / WHAT WILL I STUDY?

Theoretical Topics: the human body and movement in physical activity; physical training; health and well-being; sports psychology; sports technology and data analysis; sport in society.

Practical Sessions: these run alongside Senior Games to include indoor climbing, netball or football and athletics or tennis.

ASSESSMENT

Examination Board	Specification Code
AQA	8582

Paper 1: The human body and movement in physical education (1 hour 15 minutes and worth 30% of the final grade)

Paper 2: Socio-cultural and well-being in physical activity and sport (1 hour 15 minutes and worth 30% of the final grade)

Non-exam assessment: Practical performance in physical activity and sport, in front of an external moderator (worth 40% of the final grade)

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

You must perform in three different sports, one must be a team game and one must be an individual activity.

You will be encouraged to compete in regular inter-school competitions as well as at club level in your favoured sport.

HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

Mrs H Beechey

GCSE Spanish



WHY STUDY SPANISH?

- It is the second most spoken language in the world
- Over 400 million people throughout the world have Spanish as their native language
- Having studied Spanish GCSE gives you the edge and makes you stand out from the crowd when applying for university and jobs

Employers value Spanish as it shows that you are flexible, open-minded and confident. Spanish develops your social, communication and problem-solving skills. It also enhances knowledge of Hispanic culture, people and lifestyle.

COURSE OVERVIEW / WHAT WILL I STUDY?

The course is divided into three main subject areas, called Themes. They are as follows:

- Identity and culture: family and friends, technology, free time, customs and festivals
- Local, national, international and global areas of interest: home town and region, social issues, global issues, travel and tourism
- Current and future study and employment

Some of the skills that we develop are reading, learning vocabulary, writing and translation skills, grammar knowledge, listening, dealing with authentic texts and speaking.

ASSESSMENT

Examination Board	Specification Code
AQA	8698

GCSE Spanish has Foundation Tier (grades 1-5) and Higher Tier (grades 4-9).

Paper 1: Listening

Paper 2: Speaking

Paper 3: Reading

Paper 4: Writing

Each paper is worth 25% of the final GCSE grade.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

There are weekly lessons with the Spanish assistant, a GCSE Spanish Conference in London and a residential trip to Spain, as well as extra-curricular events such as Spanish Film Club or Tapas and Friends. A Spanish Clinic session takes place every week.

HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

Ms B Lovelock

Cambridge Nationals Engineering Programmable Systems (Electronics)



WHY STUDY ENGINEERING PROGRAMMABLE SYSTEMS (ELECTRONICS)?

We live in a world surrounded by electronic products, computers and gadgets. Wouldn't it be great to find out how they work, understand how they were designed and then build on this experience to develop your own electronic systems and products? This course is a great introduction to the world of engineering for any prospective engineer or scientist.

COURSE OVERVIEW / WHAT WILL I STUDY?

You will learn about a wide range of electronic components including digital electronics, Peripheral Interface Controllers (PICs), Integrated Circuits (ICs). This will be done through practical tasks including the use of CAD, circuit simulation software, PCB design and soldering.

There is also a theory module understanding electronic components. Coursework will have practical elements and written parts which evidence the students' understanding.

ASSESSMENT

Examination Board	Specification Code
OCR Cambridge Nationals	J824

1 hour 15mins exam R047: Principles of electronic and programmable systems (worth 40% of the final grade)

Two controlled assessments:

R048: Making and testing electronic circuits (worth 30% of the final grade)

R049: Developing programmable systems (worth 30% of the final grade)

Marked as Pass, Merit, Distinction and Distinction* - equivalent to a GCSE

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

St Joseph's has a well-equipped technology room, which includes PCs with CAD software, a PCB Engraver, Laser Cutter and 3D printer in addition to hand tools for making circuits.

HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

Mr S Phillippo

Making Your Choice

Now that you have had the opportunity to find out about the GCSE subjects available, you are in a position to tell us which subjects you are interested in.

This information is important to us in planning the final option blocks, curriculum and timetable for Year 10. Most students will take the core subjects; English Language, English Literature, Mathematics, Religious Studies and double-award Science, and will then take an additional four subjects from within the option blocks. We recommend that these options include a language and a humanities subject in order to keep some breadth in your studies, but this is optional.

A preliminary choices form will be sent home after the options breakfast in the spring term. When making your choices we will ask for five preliminary choices, in order of preference. It

may not be possible to accommodate your particular subject combination, which is why it is important that you choose five subjects you would be happy taking at GCSE and that you rank your choices from 1 to 5. We will build the option blocks to accommodate as many pupil choices as possible, and we will try to ensure that you are able to take four of your five choices. Information about the due dates for your choices will be included on the letter.

Final option blocks will be published by the end of the spring term, and final choices will be made early in the summer term, after the parent consultation evening. There may be the opportunity to make changes in the September of Year 10; you will need to speak to Miss Woods about any proposed changes you wish to make at that point.

ST JOSEPH'S COLLEGE, READING

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