

**MERCHANT
TAYLORS'
SCHOOLS**

For Boys and Girls
aged 4 to 18 years



Merchant Taylors' Girls' School



Options GCSE

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Information Booklet 2018





MERCHANT TAYLORS' SCHOOLS

For Boys and Girls
aged 4 to 18 years

This booklet has been prepared to assist you in your choice of GCSE subjects. At this time in your school career you are being asked to make a decision, namely which subjects you will continue to study in Years 10 and 11. The decision is an important one and you must discuss it with your parents and listen to the advice offered by your teachers. Please read this booklet carefully and if you are unsure of anything you should ask for help.

Timetable for Choices

1. In January you will have a meeting with Miss Tyndall / Mrs Miller.
2. On Tuesday 30th January at 5.00pm - 8.00pm you are invited, with your parents, to attend a Parents' and Option Choices Evening.
3. You must make your choice of subjects by 9am Tuesday 6th February. The enclosed form must be completed and returned to your form teacher or Mrs Miller by this date.

It is very important that during this period you seek help and advice from your teachers. If you have a particular career in mind you must check with the careers staff that you have chosen the correct subjects.

Remember - it may not be possible to change subjects once you have made your choice.

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GCSE SUBJECTS

Everyone must study the following three subjects:-

MAIN CORE

English, English Literature, Mathematics

In order to have a balanced curriculum, everyone must also study a **MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGE**, a **HUMANITIES** subject and **SCIENCE**.

SCIENCES

You must select either

COMBINED SCIENCE : TRILOGY – This counts as two options

OR THREE SEPARATE SCIENCES – This counts as three options

MODERN LANGUAGES

You must select at least **ONE** from French, German, Spanish

HUMANITIES

You must select at least **ONE** from:

Classical Civilisation

Geography

History

Religious Studies

OPTIONS

The options available are:

Art, Craft & Design

Drama

Food Preparation & Nutrition

Computer Science

Latin

Music

Physical Education

Classical Civilisation

Geography

History

Religious Studies

French

German

Spanish

If you have chosen Combined Science : Trilogy then you choose a further **4 subjects** (of which one must be a modern foreign language and one must be a humanity).

If you have chosen Physics, Chemistry and Biology then you choose a further **3 subjects** (of which one must be a modern foreign language and one must be a humanity).

Our timetable structure allows for up to 9 GCSE subjects. The grades you achieve at GCSE are more important than the number of GCSEs you take.

Please note:

- a) It may only be possible to offer some of the subjects listed if there is sufficient demand.
- b) It may not be possible to offer every combination. It is for this reason we ask you to choose a reserve subject.

GCSE OPTIONS

Main Core	Science	Modern Foreign Languages	Humanities	Options
<p>English</p> <p>English Literature</p> <p>Mathematics</p>	<p>Combined Science : Trilogy</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Physics + Chemistry + Biology</p>	<p>French</p> <p>German</p> <p>Spanish</p>	<p>Classical Civilisation</p> <p>Geography</p> <p>History</p> <p>Religious Studies</p>	<p>Art, Craft & Design</p> <p>Drama</p> <p>Food Preparation & Nutrition</p> <p>Computer Science</p> <p>Latin</p> <p>Music</p> <p>Physical Education</p> <p>Classical Civilisation</p> <p>Geography</p> <p>History</p> <p>Religious Studies</p> <p>French</p> <p>German</p> <p>Spanish</p>
3	2 or 3	1	1	2 or 1



NON-EXAMINATION SUBJECTS

It is important for your general education that you follow courses in non-examination subjects. You will have lessons in:-

Personal Social Health and Economic Education (PSHEE)

Physical Education

Religious Studies

(Information relating to these three areas is available on page 38 of this booklet).

GROUPINGS

You will be taught in groups across the year for English.

You will be set for Mathematics.

For all other subjects your groupings will depend upon your choice of subjects.

HOMEWORK

At the start of Year 10 you will be given the homework allocation for each subject. In some subjects you will still have to hand your homework in the next day, in others you may be given an extended period of time to complete the work. It is obviously very important that you organise your time very carefully and meet any given deadlines.

You will be examined in all subjects after the Easter holidays of Year 10. All of these examinations will be internal school examinations.

Mock examinations will take place during Year 11.

REMEMBER:- Years 10 and 11 are important. Choose the right subjects and more importantly **WORK HARD!**

GCSE GRADES

GCSE results will be graded on the new 9 - 1 scale, with 9, 8 and 7 replacing the A* and A, 6 and 5 equivalent of a grade B and 4 being a pass grade C.

All the information in this booklet is correct at the time of printing and is provided in good faith.

The School reserves the right to make any amendments as necessary.

English and English Literature

What does GCSE English offer me?

All MTGS students are entered for both subjects and gain two GCSE grades at the end of the two year course. Both courses offer important skills for the future. We expect our students to be confident speakers, sensitive listeners, enthusiastic readers and thoughtful writers by the end of GCSE. Students should become confident critics of literary texts by the end of the two year course and need to be actively engaged with their texts.

Course breakdown and assessments

Two GCSE qualifications are taught within English lessons. We are following the linear Eduqas specifications. There are no Controlled Assessments. GCSE English Language allocates 20% of the marks for the written examinations to accurate spelling, punctuation and grammar and has moved from grades to levels from 9 to 1. Both examinations are untiered and will take place at the end of the two year course.

GCSE English Language involves reading 20th Century Literature, Creative Prose Writing, Transactional / Persuasive writing and compulsory questions to test reading and understanding of an article, website, speech or advice sheet. Spoken Language will be reported on as part of the qualification but it will not form part of the final mark and grade and involves providing a presentation, including responses to questions and feedback.

GCSE English Literature involves an extract question and an essay question on a Shakespeare text. Students will study *Romeo and Juliet*, *Macbeth*, *Othello*, *Much Ado About Nothing* or *Henry V*. The examinations also include unseen poetry and a set anthology of poetry from 1789 to the present day. There will be two questions based on this selection, one of which will involve comparison, students also study a post 1914 Drama text and 19th Century Prose text.

If I do not take this subject at GCSE can I take it up again at Advanced Level?

You cannot study English Literature or the Combined English Language and English Literature courses at Advanced Level without GCSEs in both subjects. It is worth noting that other subjects will also want pass grades in GCSE English Language.

Beyond GCSE

We offer two courses, (i) English Literature and (ii) Combined English Language and English Literature, at Advanced Level. Both subjects combine coursework and an examination paper. They also link well with other humanities subjects such as Classical Civilisation and History, improve communication skills and develop essay skills and the ability to structure an argument. Possible future careers include Publishing, Journalism, Advertising, Law, Teaching, Public Relations, Television, Radio and Human Resources.



Mathematics

What does IGCSE Mathematics offer me?

IGCSE Mathematics provides the essential numerical, algebra, geometric and data handling skills that underpin a vast number of subjects. The problem-solving skills that are developed can be applied in every other area, improving your general thinking skills as well as your mathematical ones.

Course Breakdown and Assessments

IGCSE (International GCSE) is compulsory for all girls. The specifications encourage students to think and reason mathematically and to develop confidence in their use of Mathematics.

The specification is divided into three areas:

- Number and Algebra
- Shape, Space and Measures
- Handling Data

The specification (code 4MA1) can be found on Firefly

<http://www.edexcel.com/quals/igcse/igcse09/maths/mathsA/Pages/default.aspx#>

If I do not take this subject at IGCSE can I take it up again at A-level?

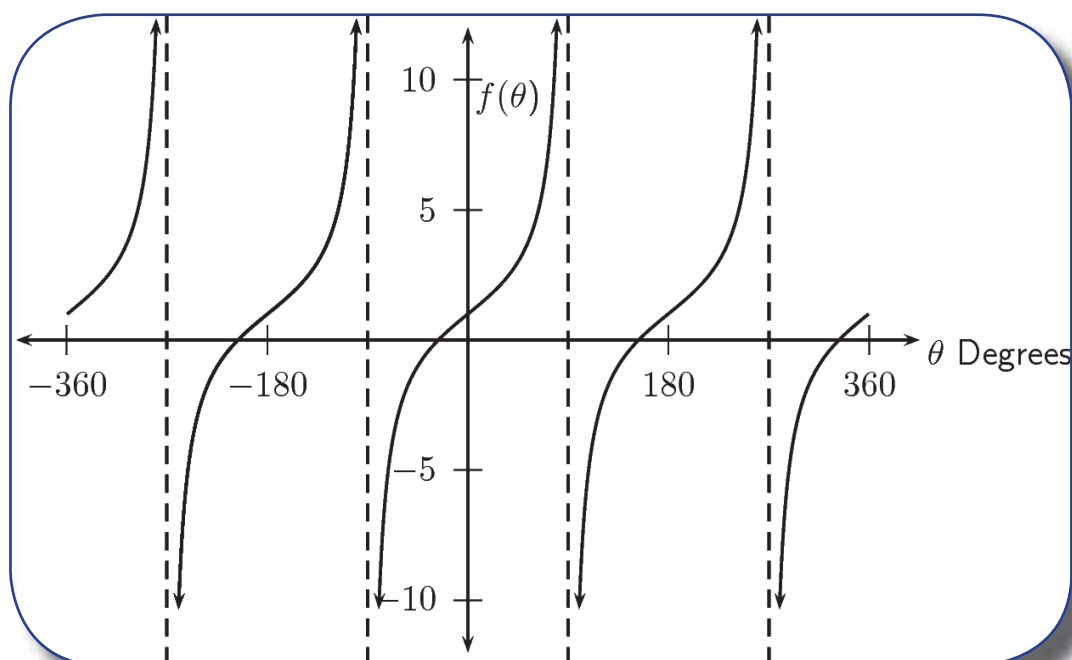
Mathematics is compulsory.

Beyond GCSE

You will almost certainly find A level too much of a challenge if you do not attain at least a grade 7 at IGCSE. A Mathematics A level is strongly recommended for most scientific degree courses – a number of ex-pupils have attested that they would have struggled without it.

Any Further Information

Mathematics is setted in Years 10 and 11 but the intention is for every student to sit the Higher Tier at the end of Year 11.



Biology



What does GCSE Biology offer me?

A two year course with terminal examinations – allowing maximum time and depth of study over two years.

Course Breakdown and Assessments - 8461/AQA Certificate in Biology

- This allows pupils to understand the scientific processes in Biology, whilst also implementing practical and investigative work.
- Topics include tissues, organ systems, genetic variation, homeostasis, proteins and enzymes, microscopy, cell cycle.
- Skills developed also include data presentation and handling, following investigation design and experimental observation.
- 2 written papers are taken, each of 1 hour 45 mins, as terminal examinations at the end of Year 11. Each is worth 50% of GCSE total. [web aqa.org.uk/subjects/science/gcsebiology/8461](http://web.aqa.org.uk/subjects/science/gcsebiology/8461).
- There is no practical controlled assessment, but the knowledge and understanding of a number of required practicals are tested in the written papers.

If I do not take this subject at GCSE can I take it up again at A Level?

Biology GCSE is the preferred route to A Level, although pupils who take the Combined Science (Trilogy) option may also be eligible if they obtain a grade of 7-9.

Beyond GCSE

Grade requirements 7-9 at GCSE; 7-9 in Biology and Chemistry elements of Combined Science and minimum of grade 5 in Mathematics; useful for very many scientific university courses / vocational courses. The former includes Medicine, Dentistry, Veterinary Science, Biochemistry, Physiology and Biomedical Science. The latter includes Nursing, Physiotherapy and Radiography.

Any Further Information

- Often taken with A Level Chemistry, but sits well with humanities subjects and language at A level.
- Critical thinking Year 10/11 'extension' sessions and scientific studies Lower Sixth / Upper Sixth Harrison Group – extra-curricular ethical, scientific, extension discussions.
- A number of students base their EPQ research project (for A level) on a biological / medical idea.
- A group of most able students will tackle the challenging National Olympiad Competition.
- In February, a number of Lower Sixth students represented the department at a Biology conference at Liverpool University.
- Outdoor Ecology work still forms part of A level study.

Chemistry



What does GCSE Chemistry offer me?

GCSE Chemistry occupies a central position amongst the sciences. Almost any science-based course or career (whether in the Food Industry, Health Care, Environmental Control, the Chemical or Pharmaceutical Industries) requires a basic qualification in Chemistry. The terminal assessment is designed to ensure the maximum amount of time to teach the syllabus.

Course Breakdown and Assessments

- 8462 GCSE Chemistry
- 2 written papers are taken, of 1 hour 45 minutes, each as terminal examinations at the end of Year 11.
- There is no assessed practical element. Each written paper constitutes 50% of the qualification including questions that are multiple choice, structured, closed short answer and open response.
- For a PDF version of the draft specifications see <http://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/science/gcse/chemistry-8462>
- General topics: Atomic structure and the periodic table, Bonding, structure, and the properties of matter, Quantitative chemistry, Chemical changes, Organic chemistry, Chemical analysis, Energy Changes, Rate of Reactions, The Atmosphere and Using Resources.

If I do not take this subject at GCSE can I take it up again at A-level?

Chemistry GCSE is the preferred route to A Level.

Beyond GCSE

Grade requirements 7-9 in GCSE Chemistry or 7-9 in Combined Science (Trilogy) option and minimum of grade 5 in Mathematics. Chemistry is essential for Medicine, Dentistry, Veterinary Science, Biochemistry, Physiotherapy and Biomedical Sciences. Also useful for many other scientific (Biological Sciences, Radiology, Nursing) and non-scientific (Law, Journalism, Archaeology, Geological Sciences) university and vocational courses.

Any Further Information

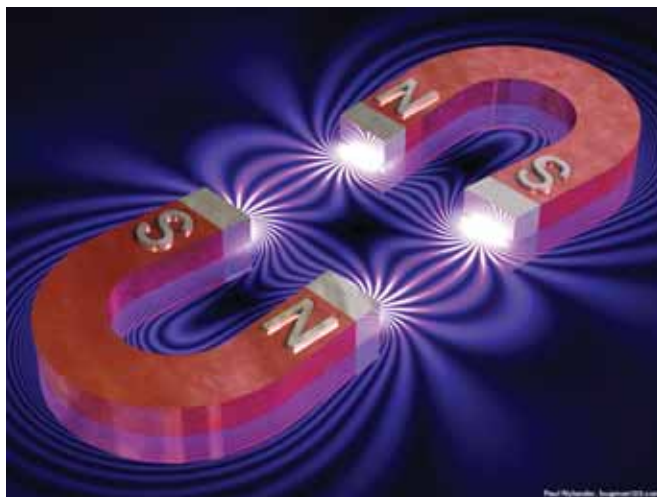
'Top of the Bench' inter-school competition run by the Royal Society of Chemistry, at Liverpool University.

Chemistry Olympiad opportunities.

Young Analyst Competition for L6 students (country-wide competition).

Cambridge Chemistry Challenge (run by Cambridge University) for L6 student.

Physics



What does GCSE Physics offer me?

GCSE Physics topics are designed to engage and stimulate students in Physics whilst teaching them fundamental, transferable skills. The course covers a wide range of topics, many of which can be applied to everyday life. Students are encouraged to learn and ask about the fundamental laws that govern natural phenomena, and take part in a number of practical investigations. From the subatomic level to the life cycle of a star the Physics course offers a glimpse of the amazing world in which we live.

Course Breakdown and Assessments

- GCSE AQA Physics GCSE.
- 2 papers of 1 hour 45 mins terminal exams.
- www.aqa.org.uk/science/ab/gcsephysics.
- Physics 8463.
- General subjects: Forces, Energy, Waves, Electricity, Particle Model of Matter, Atomic Structure, Magnetism and Electromagnetism and Space.

If I do not take this subject at GCSE can I take it up again at A-level?

Physics GCSE is the preferred route to A-level.

Beyond GCSE

To study A level Physics at Merchant Taylors' Girls' School grade requirements are 7-9 in both GCSE Physics and Mathematics. 7-9 in Trilogy is also accepted instead of Physics.

Studying Physics at A Level is useful in many subjects but is particularly important for the following degrees / careers:

Physics, Astrophysics, Medical Physics, Geophysics, Natural Sciences, Engineering, Medicine, Architecture, Computer Science.

Any Further Information

Physics is crucial to understanding the world around us, the world inside us, and the world beyond us. It is the most basic and fundamental science. Physicists are problem solvers, their analytical skills make physicists versatile and adaptable so they work in interesting places.

Combined Science : Trilogy



What does GCSE Combined Science : Trilogy offer me?

- GCSE Combined Science : Trilogy provides learners with a Key Stage 4 Science course, whether you intend to study science further or not.
- The qualification is linear and this means that you will sit all your exams at the end of Year 11.
- The qualification will be graded on a 17 point scale. 1-1 to 9-9, where 9-9 is the best grade. It is worth 2 GCSE grades.

Course Breakdown and Assessments

- There are 6 papers: two Biology, two Chemistry and two Physics papers.
- Each paper is worth 70 marks and is worth 16.7% of the GCSE marks.
- Each paper is 1 hour and 15 minutes
- Foundation and Higher tier are available for each paper.

Practical Assessment

Practical work is at the heart of science. During the course you will carry out a number of required practicals for each of the three science subjects. These are designed to enable you to develop skills in the use of a variety of apparatus and techniques and to enable you to develop your investigative skills.

Questions in the written exams will draw on the knowledge and understanding you have gained by carrying out the practical activities. These questions will count for at least 15% of the overall marks for the qualification.

Beyond GCSE

Progression to study at A-Level is possible providing entry requirements are met. These are usually grade 7-9 in Science and Mathematics.



Biology



Chemistry



Physics



Science

Art, Craft & Design

What does GCSE Art, Craft & Design offer me?

You have the opportunity to explore a wide range of processes and media from printmaking and textiles to video and animation. You develop important analytical and practical skills as well as creative thinking, ICT and communications skills.

Course Breakdown and Assessments

We offer the AQA Art, Craft & Design syllabus. Coursework consists of a portfolio project which runs from September in Year 10 to Christmas in Year 11. This comprises of sketchbook and practical work including research, development, experimentation and realisation of personal ideas (60%). For the final 10 hour timed examination there is an unlimited preparation time where students respond to the externally set task (40%).

If I do not take this subject at GCSE can I take it up again at A Level?

This is a possibility and can be discussed with your teachers.

Beyond GCSE

Most A Level students achieve an A grade (or above) at GCSE. Art is a very vocational subject and many A Level art students go on to do a Foundation course at college before applying to Art School for a degree course. Recent candidates have gone on to study Art at Central St Martins, London, Graphic Design at Glasgow School of Art and Architecture at Liverpool University.

Any Further Information

The Art course of GCSE offers students the possibility to work with a range of visiting artists and designers, through the Vitreum Art Gallery and our resident printmakers scheme. There is usually one field trip for the course to either London or Yorkshire Sculpture Park.

Careers

Many of the skills developed in Art can be easily transferable. Apart from being an artist, designer, film maker or architect, students can apply their skills to careers in TV, the media and many creative industries such as advertising and marketing.

www.aqa.org.uk



Classical Civilisation

Examination Board: OCR Syllabus Code: J199

What does GCSE Classical Civilisation offer me?

Classical Civilisation at GCSE provides an opportunity for students to develop insights and personal response to the life and times of the ordinary people who lived in ancient Greece and Rome. The course offers a good balance of literary and visual sources, both Greek and Roman. Greek and Roman civilisations played a vital part in the development of language, thought and culture of modern Europe. Learning about how people lived, what they thought important and what they achieved in the Ancient World will help you to make sense of the modern one.

Course Breakdown and Assessments

We get to consider a variety of topics concerning the history, culture and daily life in Greece and Rome. We do this through some of the world's greatest literature, through historical accounts and physical sources. Each of the two components has a couple of choices which carry an equal weighting of 50%. Please ask your teacher to find out which topics we will be studying during your GCSE course.

Component		Marks	Topic	Possible Choice
Group 1	90 mins	90	Thematic Study	
J199/11				Myth and Religion
J199/12				Women in the Ancient World
Group 2	90 mins	90		
J199/21				The Homeric World
J199/22				Roman City Life

If I do not take this subject at GCSE can I take it up again at A Level?

Yes.

Beyond GCSE

Further Study: All are welcome to study Classical Civilisation at A Level and many find it provides that missing ingredient to sixth form study. It is a popular subject because of the variety of topics, excellent grades achieved and its reputation for academic rigour. Each year students love the subject for its own merits and find it a good compliment for their other humanities or a perfect contrast to their sciences.

Possible careers: Classical Civilisation promotes an ability to develop and sustain a reasoned argument whilst tackling unfamiliar and sometimes alien concepts – this really does help you develop essential transferable skills. Recent Classicists from MTGS have gone on to study a variety of subjects at university (Medicine, Law, Psychology, Biomedical Sciences, Dentistry, Egyptology, Electrical and Electronic Engineering and, of course, Classical Civilisation).

Any further information

The department also extends the learning process beyond the classroom by leading trips to Italy, Greece and London. Trips to museums, sites and plays are also offered when available.



Sunset in Greece



Walking down a street in Pompeii



Athena statue at Liverpool museum



Roman Baths



Outside the house of Caecilius

Temple of Jupiter overshadowed by Vesuvius



Museum trips

Drama

What does GCSE Drama offer me?

The best reason for choosing the course is because you enjoy doing drama - if you are willing to work hard, then you will succeed!

Drama is a practical subject and it involves looking at people's thoughts, their feelings and their relationships with each other and the world around them. We can explore the lives of others and, perhaps, make sense of our own.

Some of you will already enjoy performing and this may be your main reason for choosing the subject; for others, performance may be their least favourite aspect of the course and they may be more interested in designing costumes, set or even learning about lighting and sound. Everyone will have the chance to find something to interest and challenge them with an equally important part to play, whatever the project.

Drama is not just about acting; there are other important skills to learn involving the technical and design elements of a play. Many students start with one area of interest but quickly explore others; think how useful it is for a costume designer to understand the problems an actor may face on stage, for example, when designing the costumes for a drama performance.

It is a requirement of the course that you see live theatre performances; visits will be arranged by the Department and it is an expectation that you attend these – failure to do so will restrict your opportunities in the written examination and put you at a disadvantage.

Course Breakdown and Assessments

AQA GCSE Drama [8261]

The subject content for GCSE Drama is divided into three components (in the practical components students may specialise in performing, lighting, sound, set, costume and/or puppets):

Component 1 Understanding Drama 80 Marks 40% of GCSE

What's assessed

- Knowledge and understanding of drama and theatre
- Study of one set play from a choice of six
- Analysis and evaluation of the work of live theatre makers

How it's assessed

- Written exam: 1 hour and 45 minutes
- Open book

Questions

- Section A: multiple choice (4 marks)
- Section B: four questions on a given extract from the set play chosen (46 marks)
- Section C: one two part question (from a choice) on the work of theatre makers in a single live theatre production (30 marks)

Component 2 Devising Drama (practical) 80 marks 40% of GCSE

What's assessed

- Process of creating devised drama
- Performance of devised drama (students may contribute as performer or designer)
- Analysis and evaluation of own work

How it's assessed

- Devising log (60 marks)
- Devised performance (20 marks)

This component is marked by teachers and moderated by AQA.

Component 3 Texts in Practice (practical) 50 marks 20% Of GCSE

What's assessed

- Performance of two extracts from one play (students may contribute as performer or designer)

[Free choice of play but it must contrast with the set play chosen for Component 1]

How it's assessed

- Performance of Extract 1 (25 marks) and Extract 2 (25 marks)

This component is marked by AQA

Specification: <http://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/drama/gcse/drama-8261>

Beyond GCSE

The arts are the UK's third largest industry, so a range of careers exist in this field. There are many things you can go on to do with a GCSE in Drama. It is excellent preparation for A Level Theatre Studies, as well as many other A Level courses. You may wish to take GCSE Drama for its own sake or for a career in the arts. It is likely that you will choose a career where you will need some of the skills developed during the course, these may include careers in the field of medicine, retail, travel, tourism, sales, law, marketing or any career that involves meeting people face to face and making presentations. The study of drama will help you develop transferable employability skills which you can take into any career in the future and, despite many preconceptions, it is widely respected for this reason.

Any Further Information

Please speak to Mrs Bayes or to those students currently pursuing the GCSE course; have a look at the AQA website (link above).





History

What does GCSE History offer me?

You will learn lots of skills which are TRANSFERABLE

- Dealing with large amounts of information and summarising the important points
- Analysing information to see if it is trustworthy, biased, useful
- Using information to reach balanced judgements
- Writing coherent reports or essays which show your point of view and have solid evidence to support your argument
- Working as part of a group to discuss and share opinions to help you form your own
- Working independently which will encourage you to think for yourself and become mature in your judgements

Course Breakdown and Assessments

AQA History 8145 www.aqa.org.uk

Paper 1: Understanding the Modern World (Written Paper – 1 hour 45 mins – 84 marks – 50%)

Section A: Period Study: 1B Germany 1890-1945: Democracy and Dictatorship

Section B: Wider World Depth Study: Conflict and Tension 1894-1918

Paper 2: Shaping the Nation (Written Paper – 1 hour 45 mins – 84 marks – 50%)

Section A: Thematic Study: 2B Britain: Power and the People: c1170 to the present day

Section B: British depth study including the historic environment: Elizabethan England, c1568-1603

If I don't take this subject at GCSE can I take it up again at A-level?

Useful skills are acquired at GCSE level which you will help when you start your A level course, and a small part of the content of the GCSE course is studied at A2 level. However, we find that enthusiasm, interest and hard work can make up for this, and each year we have girls who realise what they have missed, and who do extremely well at A Level.

Beyond GCSE

Historians make good journalists, lawyers, managers, business advisors, diplomats, civil servants and even politicians. Many girls who know they are going to study the sciences, choose History as something to contrast with their other subjects as it is an academically rigorous subject, highly regarded by universities and employers.

Any Further Information

Girls studying GCSE History will have the opportunity to visit First World War Battlefields and Imperial War Graves in Belgium and Northern France



World War 1 Trenches



Nazi Germany



MTGS wreath laid at Thiepval Memorial



Charles I



Battlefields Trip



Queen Elizabeth I



Richard II and the Peasants' Revolt



Chartists Demonstration



Margaret Thatcher and the Miners' Strike

Food Preparation and Nutrition

What does GCSE Food and Nutrition offer me?

Food and nutrition are key issues for society. This exciting new course will allow you to improve your cooking skills at the same time as developing your understanding of nutrition and food science. You will also develop a range of transferable skills including report writing, ICT skills, data analysis and scientific enquiry.

By studying this course you will:

- develop effective and safe cooking skills and know how to plan, prepare and cooking a variety of ingredients using different cooking techniques and equipment;
- work with a range of ingredients and processes from different culinary traditions to inspire new ideas or modify existing recipes.
- understand the functional properties and chemical characteristics of food and develop your knowledge of the nutritional content of food and drinks;
- understand the relationship between diet, nutrition and health;
- understand the economic, environmental, ethical and socio-cultural influences on food availability, production processes, diet and health choices.

Course breakdown and assessment

Component 1: Principles of Food Preparation and Nutrition (50% of the qualification)

A written examination: 1 hour 45 minutes

Topics covered:

- Food commodities
- Principles of nutrition
- Diet and good health
- The science of food
- Where food comes from
- Cooking and food preparation

Component 2: Food Preparation and Nutrition in Action

This non-examination content will be completed during class time.

It is internally assessed and externally moderated.

Assessment 1: Food Investigation Assessment (15% of the qualification)

Assessment 2: Food Preparation Assessment (35% of the qualification)

The full specification can be viewed at www.eduqas.co.uk/qualifications/food-preparation-and-nutrition

Beyond GCSE

Careers related to food and nutrition include: dietetics, bio-medics, food technology, product development, hospitality, journalism, medicine, environmental health, marketing and public relations.

There are a number of degrees that are directly related to food and nutrition including: Nutrition and Dietetics, Food marketing and Nutrition, Nutritional Biochemistry and Hospitality management.

Further information

The British Nutrition Foundation website www.nutrition.org.uk provides more information about careers related to food and nutrition.



Computer Science



What is GCSE Computer Science?

This is a new and challenging course that will allow you to develop computer programming skills that will be examined within a Non-Examination Environment. You will be able to undertake the development of a computer program which you will have designed, written and tested to solve a problem. There is also another module which focuses on theoretical aspects of Computer Science ranging from algorithms and computer systems to cyber security and the impact of digital technology.

Course breakdown and assessment

Component 1 – Non-Examination Assessment (This is under review)

The non-exam assessment (NEA) assesses a student's ability to use the knowledge and skills gained through the course to solve a practical programming problem. Students will be expected to follow a systematic approach to problem solving, consistent with the skills taught during the course. This element carries 20% of the final mark. Students will produce an original report outlining this development for submission to the examination board.

Component 2 – Computational Thinking (2 x Written Examinations)

This module is assessed by two written examinations at the end of Year 11 and carries 80% of the final mark at GCSE. Topics (see below) are taught in theory lessons and are examined in the written papers.

1. Fundamentals of algorithms
2. Programming
3. Fundamentals of data representation
4. Computer systems
5. Fundamentals of computer networks
6. Fundamentals of cyber security
7. Ethical, legal and environmental impacts of digital technology on wider society, including issues of privacy
8. Aspects of software development

If I do not take this subject at GCSE can I take it up again at A-Level?

Whilst this is not impossible, you would be required to spend a significant amount of time outside of classroom based learning to acquire the technical programming skills needed to develop your system.

Beyond GCSE

A GCSE in Computer Science is an attractive qualification and should be considered by students as a complimentary qualification enabling them to develop a wide range of problem solving skills that are applicable to further study or in the world of work.

Any further information

The Examination Board that we shall be using is AQA.

Please contact Mr J Power, Head of Computer Science. j.power@merchanttaylor.com

Latin

Examination Board: OCR Syllabus Code: J282

What does GCSE Latin offer me?

Studying Latin promotes attention to detail, problem solving and sensitivity to language which enables students to foster an appreciation of nuance whilst, at the same time, developing their capacity to process increasingly complex sentence structure. Students will become sufficiently competent in Latin language to offer reasoned responses to comprehension and translation exercises of an unseen passage and to discuss the points of style in a verse and a prose set text. This is a true testament to your academic prowess.

Course Breakdown and Assessments

Latin at GCSE builds on the language work undertaken in Year 9 and offers pupils the opportunity of reading some of Europe's oldest literature in the original language.

Unit		Marks	Title	Details	
J282/01 Compulsory	1 hr 30 min	100	Language	Comprehension & translation of unseen material	50%
J282-/02-/03 Optional	1 hr	50	Prose Literature	Comprehension of author such as Livy, Pliny or Caesar.	25%
J282-/04-/05 Optional	1 hr	50	Verse literature	Comprehension of author such as, Virgil, Ovid or Catullus	25%
J282/06 Optional	1 hr	50	Literature and Culture	Responding to sources on aspects of culture and social life	25%

If I do not take this subject at GCSE can I take it up again at A Level?

No, although many universities offer the language to beginners who are studying a Classics related degree.

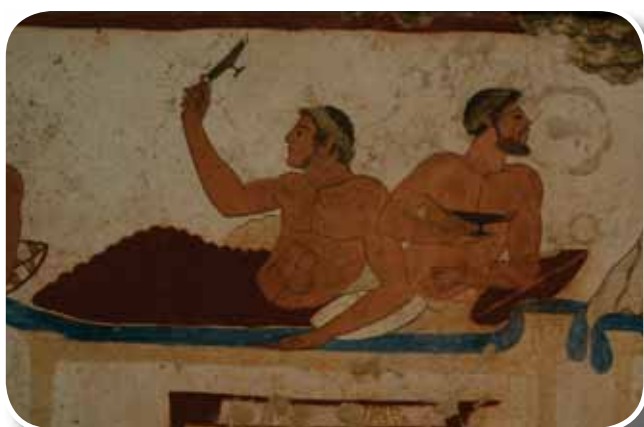
Beyond GCSE

Further study: It is expected that you will achieve at least a level 7 in order to progress to studying Latin at A Level. Latin is one of the most respected subjects because of its traditional academic rigour and is highly regarded by the top universities.

Possible careers: Latin is the perfect indicator to future employers of your intelligence, adaptability and powers of reasoning. With Latin under your belt you'll stand out from the other applicants in the modern competitive workplace.

Any further information

The department also extends the learning process beyond the classroom by leading trips to Italy, Greece and London. Trips to museums, sites and plays are also offered when available.



Playing 'Kotabos' at a symposium



Sounion temple

Modern Foreign Languages

GCSE French Linear Full Course

AQA specification code 8658

What does GCSE French offer me?

You will be able to develop the four skills you acquired at KS3 and develop your confidence and analytical competence through learning the language.

In addition to your two double lessons, you will have a speaking lesson every week in a smaller group with a native French speaker.

You will study a range of topic areas:

- Identity and Culture.
- National, International and Global areas of interest.
- Current and future study and employment.

For further information about the French specification: aqa.org.uk/gcse-French

Assessments

GCSE French has a Foundation tier (grades 1-5) and a Higher Tier (grades 4 – 9)

You must enter for all four skills at the same tier. All question papers must be taken in the same series.

Paper 1 Listening

What is assessed:

Understanding and responding to different types of spoken language.

How it is assessed:

- 35 minutes at Foundation Tier
- 45 minutes at Higher Tier

Each examination includes 5 minutes to read the question paper before the listening recording is played.

40 marks at Foundation and 50 marks at Higher

25% of the total GCSE marks.

Paper 2: Speaking

What is assessed:

Communicating and interacting effectively in speech for a variety of purposes.

How it is assessed:

- Speaking test : 7 – 9 minutes at Foundation Tier (plus preparation time)
- Speaking test 10 – 12 minutes at Higher Tier (plus preparation time)
- 60 marks for each tier
- 25% of the total GCSE marks

Paper 3: Reading

What is assessed:

Understanding and responding to different types of written language, including literary texts.

How it is assessed:

- 45 minutes at Foundation Tier
- 1 hour at Higher Tier
- 60 marks for both tiers
- 25% of the total GCSE marks

Paper 4 : Writing

What is assessed:

Communicating effectively in writing for a variety of purposes.

How it is assessed:

A written examination:

- 1 hour at Foundation Tier
- 1 hour 15 minutes at Higher Tier
- 50 marks for Foundation and 60 marks at Higher Tier
- 25% of the total GCSE marks

You will not be able to take French to A level if you have not studied it at GCSE but many universities offer language courses from scratch to A level and beyond.

GCSE German Linear Full Course

AQA specification code 8668

What does GCSE German offer me?

You will be able to develop the four skills you acquired at KS3 and develop your confidence and analytical competence through learning the language.

In addition to your two double lessons, you will have a speaking lesson every week in a smaller group with a native German speaker.

You will study a range of topic areas:

- Identity and Culture.
- National, International and Global areas of interest.
- Current and future study and employment.

For further information about the German specification: aqa.org.uk/gcse-german

Assessments

GCSE German has a Foundation tier (grades 1-5) and a Higher Tier (grades 4 – 9)

You must enter for all four skills at the same tier. All question papers must be taken in the same series.

Paper 1 Listening

What is assessed:

Understanding and responding to different types of spoken language.

How it is assessed:

- 35 minutes at Foundation Tier
- 45 minutes at Higher Tier

Each examination includes 5 minutes to read the question paper before the listening recording is played.

40 marks at Foundation and 50 marks at Higher

25% of the total GCSE marks.

Paper 2: Speaking

What is assessed:

Communicating and interacting effectively in speech for a variety of purposes.

How it is assessed:

- Speaking test : 7 – 9 minutes at Foundation Tier (plus preparation time)
- Speaking test 10 – 12 minutes at Higher Tier (plus preparation time)
- 60 marks for each tier
- 25% of the total GCSE marks

Paper 3: Reading

What is assessed:

Understanding and responding to different types of written language, including literary texts.

How it is assessed:

- 45 minutes at Foundation Tier
- 1 hour at Higher Tier
- 60 marks for both tiers
- 25% of the total GCSE marks

Paper 4 : Writing

What is assessed:

Communicating effectively in writing for a variety of purposes.

How it is assessed:

A written examination:

- 1 hour at Foundation Tier
- 1 hour 15 minutes at Higher Tier
- 50 marks for Foundation and 60 marks at Higher Tier
- 25% of the total GCSE marks

You will not be able to take German to A level if you have not studied it at GCSE but many universities offer language courses from scratch to A level and beyond.

GCSE Spanish Linear Full Course

AQA specification code 8698

What does GCSE Spanish offer me?

You will be able to develop the four skills you acquired at KS3 and develop your confidence and analytical competence through learning the language.

In addition to your two double lessons, you will have a speaking lesson every week in a smaller group with a native Spanish speaker.

You will study a range of topic areas:

- Identity and Culture.
- National, International and Global areas of interest.
- Current and future study and employment.

For further information about the Spanish specification: aqa.org.uk/gcse-Spanish

Assessments

GCSE Spanish has a Foundation tier (grades 1-5) and a Higher Tier (grades 4 – 9)

You must enter for all four skills at the same tier. All question papers must be taken in the same series.

Paper 1 Listening

What is assessed:

Understanding and responding to different types of spoken language.

How it is assessed:

- 35 minutes at Foundation Tier
- 45 minutes at Higher Tier

Each examination includes 5 minutes to read the question paper before the listening recording is played.

40 marks at Foundation and 50 marks at Higher

25% of the total GCSE marks.

Paper 2: Speaking

What is assessed:

Communicating and interacting effectively in speech for a variety of purposes.

How it is assessed:

- Speaking test : 7 – 9 minutes at Foundation Tier (plus preparation time)
- Speaking test 10 – 12 minutes at Higher Tier (plus preparation time)
- 60 marks for each tier
- 25% of the total GCSE marks

Paper 3: Reading

What is assessed:

Understanding and responding to different types of written language, including literary texts.

How it is assessed:

- 45 minutes at Foundation Tier
- 1 hour at Higher Tier
- 60 marks for both tiers
- 25% of the total GCSE marks

Paper 4 : Writing

What is assessed:

Communicating effectively in writing for a variety of purposes.

How it is assessed:

A written examination:

- 1 hour at Foundation Tier
- 1 hour 15 minutes at Higher Tier
- 50 marks for Foundation and 60 marks at Higher Tier
- 25% of the total GCSE marks

You will not be able to take Spanish to A level if you have not studied it at GCSE but many universities offer language courses from scratch to A level and beyond.



Music

What does GCSE Music offer me?

The AQA GCSE Music specification has been designed to enable candidates to enjoy and appreciate the benefits of being involved in playing music, making music, listening to music critically and importantly understanding how musical terminology is applied to a range of pieces of different genres and eras.

Course Breakdown and Assessments

There are three components:

- **Component 1:** Understanding music [40%] which involves a 1½ hour listening and written exam
- **Component 2:** Performing music [30%] which involves music performance [solo performance and an ensemble performance.] The minimum time is 4 minutes, of which a minimum of one minute must be ensemble performance]
- **Component 3:** Composition [30%] which involves two pieces: a composition to a brief and a free composition. The combined time for these two pieces is a minimum of 3 minutes

Go to this link to read the GCSE specification:

<http://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/music/specifications/AQA-8271-SP-2016.PDF>

If I do not take this subject at GCSE can I take it up again at A Level?

Yes, although the candidate should ideally be of a Grade 5 standard or above on their instrument or voice as well as working towards or have passed Grade 5 Music Theory [ABRSM].

Beyond GCSE

The Music Department advises that in order to study A Level Music a student should be at Grade 5 or above in both performance and Music Theory.

Music is admired and respected amongst higher education institutions and the work place.

Its benefits are numerous: self-discipline, team work, developing self-awareness and confidence, problem solving, encourage creativity through listening, composing and performing, as well as promoting good health and well-being.

Destinations of leavers in recent years include Oxbridge, Royal Northern College of Music, Lancaster University, and, Central School of Speech and Drama.

Any Further Information

The Music Department offers numerous opportunities for performance. GCSE Music students are expected to take advantage of the various extra-curricular activities such as Senior Chamber Choir, MTGS Choir and Orchestra, Wind Orchestra, String Ensemble and other groups. There are opportunities to perform in school and in the wider community. The main message here is that you learn by doing: practical performance enhances musical technique, understanding of notation and very importantly aural skills.



Physical Education

What does GCSE Physical Education offer me?

For the Physical Education enthusiast the OCR GCSE PE Course offers an exciting opportunity to take your sporting knowledge and performance onto to higher levels and gain an academic qualification in Physical Education.

The GCSE PE course enables PE students to participate in a number of different types of physical activity and, in different roles within physical activities, through practical performance.

It also requires the students to underpin their practical performances with theoretical knowledge of the anatomical, physiological and psychological demands of physical activity and how these factors affect physical competence.

The PE students will also learn how to use methods of practice to improve their performance in physical activity and the importance of being physically active as part of a balanced, healthy lifestyle.

Students studying GCSE PE should have an active involvement in sport on a regular basis either in school or outside of school and must be committed to practical performance. GCSE PE students should also be competent in science.

Playing for a school or club team or weekly involvement in a sports activity is a must for a GCSE PE student as 40% of their marks will come from Component 3 where there is a performance assessment in three activities and an analysis and evaluation written assignment.

Course Breakdown and Assessments

The GCSE PE Course comprises 3 components as detailed below, spread over two years.

Component 1: Physical Factors Affecting Performance

Anatomy and Physiology

Physical Training

Component 2: Socio-Cultural Issues and Sports Psychology

Sports Psychology

Socio-cultural Influences

Health, Fitness and Wellbeing

Component 3: Performance within Physical Education

Performance Practical in Three Activities – one team and one individual sport and one other

Analysis and Evaluation of a Performance (AEP)

Components 1 and 2 are assessed by written examination papers and Component 3 is a Non-Exam Assessment (NEA) and is internally assessed and externally moderated.

The written papers are designed in manageable bite-size chunks rather than massively long papers, thus aiding our teaching and our candidates' revision.

Components 1 and 2 are worth 60% of the final mark and Component 3 is worth 40%.

The GCSE PE course blends practical work with rigorous academic study and contains modules that work very well alongside science with some time spent on studying anatomy and physiology, health and fitness and the effects of training and leads well into course in psychology with the psychology of human performance under scrutiny. Students will also be engaged in philosophical discussion and will have to work closely with others during Component 3.

The course is linear in nature with all marks submitted for Component 3 at the end of Year 11 in addition to two 1 hour examination papers on Components 1 and 2 sat at the end of Year 11.

If I do not take this subject at GCSE can I take it up again at A-level?

Students who wish to study Physical Education at A Level do not have to have completed the GCSE PE course but studying it at GCSE first does support the higher academic qualification at A2.

Beyond GCSE

Beyond GCSE students can study Physical Education at A level. Degree courses related to Physical Education are popular at university but many Physical Education students go on to study degree courses which are unrelated to Physical Education.

Any Further Information

For further information please check the MTGS PE Departmental website.



Religious Studies

What does GCSE Religious Studies offer me?

- You will learn how to present a logical argument both orally and in written work. You will do this by weighing up evidence and reaching your own conclusion.
- You will become aware of some key contemporary moral issues such as euthanasia, war, animal experimentation, capital punishment and the different religious and moral perspectives on these issues.
- You will have an understanding of some of the central beliefs and practices of Christianity and Islam, and become aware of how these beliefs and practices impact upon the life of a believer and the community.
- You will learn to be sensitive to the beliefs, values and traditions of others.
- You will develop your listening skills. This is essential for any further education course and chosen career.

Course Breakdown and Assessments

The department follows the AQA GCSE Religious Studies A syllabus.

In Year 10 students study the beliefs and practices of Christianity and Islam.

In Year 11 students study four ethical themes from a religious perspective. These themes include the sanctity of life, abortion, euthanasia, relationships and families, peace and conflict and crime and punishment.

Assessment is by written examination.

Two examination papers will be taken at the end of Year 11.

There are no controlled assessments.

If I do not take this subject at GCSE can I take it up again at A Level?

Although GCSE Religious Studies is a good foundation for A level it is possible to follow the course without it.

Beyond GCSE

Religious Studies provides a good background for any career where an understanding of people is an asset. Universities and employers like to know that applicants have thought about themselves and their place in the world. The skills gained from studying Religious Studies will be of benefit in professions such as law, the medical professions, social work, teaching, broadcasting, civil service, probation work and marketing.





Non-Examination Subjects

PSHEE - Personal, Social, Health and Economic education

In Year 10 PSHEE is taught by specialist staff in small groups. The course is designed to give students the skills to achieve well, make a positive contribution to society, be healthy and stay safe. The topics covered in PSHEE include Post 16 choices and CV writing, Current Affairs and Politics, Emotional Well-Being, Money and Banking and Sex Education. Each topic is taught for a double period a week, on a six week rotation.

Discussion plays a major part in PSHEE as students develop their own opinions and begin to formulate their path to adulthood. The course is developed further in Year 11, with a similar approach.

Religious Studies

In Years 10 and 11 each girl participates in a Religious Studies course which covers a wide range of contemporary personal, social and international issues and which relates the topics to the perspective of Christianity and other world faiths. The girls are given an opportunity to develop an understanding of religious concepts, the role of religion in life and the relationship between religious belief and practice. Topics include family relationships, prejudice and equal opportunities, work and leisure, poverty and wealth, justice, peace and conflict, responsibility and environmental matters.

Physical Education

The Physical Education programme is designed to meet the needs of all girls in helping them to develop into responsible, healthy young people, with a keen sense of enjoyment, an awareness of the importance of an active lifestyle and a feeling of co-operation with fellow pupils.

On entry into Merchant Taylors' Girls' School, all pupils experience the full range of traditional Physical Education activities which include Games (hockey, netball, badminton, tennis and rounders), Gymnastics, Dance, Swimming and Athletics. All of these activities are available for girls in Years 10 and 11 to study in greater depth alongside an extensive range of new activities that form the Key Stage 4 Options Programme in Physical Education.

At the start of Year 10 and again at Year 11 our girls have the opportunity to choose from a dozen or more activities to create their own Key Stage 4 Options Programme in PE. Each activity they choose is studied for a half-term block of time and so our girls will experience four activities in the autumn and spring terms and two in the summer term.

Games and sport are becoming an increasingly important part of a healthy lifestyle. As pupils grow in maturity and gain more hours of free time for leisure, they need to acquire sufficient competence in a balanced but representative selection of worthwhile activities. The school has a variety of girls with a divergence of ability, aptitude and interest in Physical Education. By having a very pupil centred approach to our planning of the KS4 Options Programme, we hope that our girls will be excited and enthusiastic in their work in PE. We also hope that the additional activities like Trampolining, Handball, Lacrosse, Indoor Hockey, 5-side football, Basketball, Volleyball, Table Tennis, Self Defence, Aerobics, Pilates, and Yoga will provide them with further positive experiences in PE which they will enjoy and look to pursue in their own leisure time.

The following activities are offered to all pupils in lessons and many are further extended within the Physical Education Extra-Curricular Programme;

Hockey, Cross Country, Handball, Netball, Table Tennis, Swimming, 5-side Football, Dance, Basketball, Lacrosse, Fitness (Aerobics/Step Aerobics/Gymnastics, Fitness Suite/Pilates/Yoga), Lacrosse, Indoor Hockey, Badminton, Self Defence, Badminton, Volleyball, Trampolining, Athletics (summer term), Tennis (summer term), Rounders (summer term)

By the end of KS4 the girls should be able to:

- Show increased knowledge, improved competence and safe performance in a variety of activities.
- Understand and undertake different roles in each activity.
- Develop and apply their own criteria for judging performance.
- Prepare, carry out and monitor personal programmes for an active and healthy lifestyle.
- Have the confidence and knowledge to use community resources where appropriate.
- Develop a positive image of sports women.
- Use their knowledge of the benefits of physical fitness to help them to maintain an active and healthy lifestyle throughout their lives.

Pupils who want to progress to competitive sport have the opportunity to train and compete in the following sports for school: Hockey, Netball, Cross Country, Swimming, Badminton in the winter with Athletics, Tennis and Rounders in the summer.

