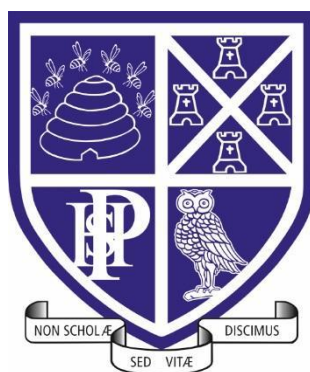


Plymouth High School for Girls

“For life, not school, we learn”



Year 9

GCSE Options Booklet

2024

Plymouth High School for Girls aims to be an outstanding grammar school for the 21st century remaining true to the philosophy of the school's motto:

'For life, not school, we learn'

We intend our Year 10 and 11 curriculum to:

Promote a culture of high aspiration enabling personal and academic success

Prepare students to think confidently and independently

Provide an outstanding education for all, the key to this being high quality teaching

Provide enjoyment, excitement and challenge for all, stimulating an enthusiasm for lifelong learning

Prepare students to become active citizens, equipped to succeed in a world of rapid change

January 2024

Dear Parents, Carers and Year 9 Students

I am delighted to write this introduction to our Options Booklet for Year 9 who have reached a very important stage in their school career. By September 2024 they will have begun their Key Stage 4 GCSE courses which will lead on to further education and/or training post-16. The time has now come for us to provide you with information and guidance about the curriculum during Years 10 and 11.

During Key Stage 3 (Years 7, 8 and 9), it is the policy of the school to provide every student with a broad and balanced education and the Key Stage 3 curriculum has been designed to provide students with important knowledge, understanding and skills. In Key Stage 4, many subjects remain compulsory in order to continue this breadth and balance in preparation for their future lives.

In Key Stage 4 students can exercise a degree of choice about their personal curriculum. Details of each subject are enclosed in this booklet. We firmly believe that young people learn best and will succeed when they are motivated and following courses which allow them to pursue their individual talents, interests and aspirations. Students will no doubt be guided by this and will receive detailed guidance from subject staff, tutors and Mrs Longford, our careers advisor.

On the 18th January there will be an evening event dedicated to guide students and families through the process of making their important choices. On the 25th and 1st February there will be a parents evening for you to see how your child is progressing and their suitability for the subject at GCSE.

Please ensure the online application is completed by **Thursday 8th February**. We will do our best to ensure that every student is able to pursue the subjects of their choice, but when this is not possible, we will discuss alternatives with parents and students.

Best wishes

Miss Tess Taylor
Head of Year 9

Thinking, Teaching and Learning

At Plymouth High School for Girls, we integrate cognitive science and metacognition into our teaching and learning approach. Collaborating with the University of Exeter, we are currently working towards becoming an accredited 'Thinking School'.

Cognitive science is about understanding how the brain learns and retains information. Making this the focus of our classroom practice allows us to tailor our learning activities to maximise your potential. Metacognition empowers you to think about your thinking and developing essential habits like self-awareness, goal-setting and regular reflection.

We use a variety of thinking, teaching and learning strategies which benefit from proven cognitive science and metacognitive research, including:

- **Edward De Bono's Thinking Hats** encourage students to approach problems from different perspectives, enhancing creativity, decision-making, and fostering a well-rounded approach to learning.
- **Tony Ryan's Thinkers Keys** unlock creative thinking by encouraging students to generate alternative ideas, explore different possibilities, and think outside the box, leading to innovative problem-solving and the development of a flexible mindset.
- **David Hyerle's Thinking Maps** are helpful tools that help students visually organise their thoughts, make connections between ideas, and think more clearly
- **Art Costa's Habits of Mind** introduce important skills like problem-solving, critical thinking, and effective communication, helping students become confident and adaptable learners who are ready to succeed in school and in life.

Aligning perfectly with our motto "for life, not school, we learn", these approaches equip you with lifelong learning skills that extend far beyond your time in school. We are dedicated to ensuring that you receive the best possible education, one that prepares you to thrive in an ever-changing world.

Mr D Britz-Colwill
Assistant Headteacher

Year 10 Courses

In Year 10 the majority of students will study 9 or 10 subjects for GCSE. They will additionally spend some periods of each week on other compulsory elements of the curriculum. Students will, therefore, follow a curriculum which is both broad and balanced, thus giving them the widest possible range of opportunities for subsequent career decisions.

Compulsory Elements and Core Subjects:

- English Language
- English Literature
- Mathematics
- Biology, Chemistry and Physics

- Religious Education
- Physical Education
- Personal, Social, Health Education and Citizenship (PSHE)
- Careers education and work experience

Students will first be asked to select **ONE** from the following subjects:

- History
- Geography
- French
- German
- GCSE Computing

Students will then choose **THREE** subjects from the following:

- History
- Geography
- GCSE Religious Studies
- Art
- Drama
- Music
- GCSE P.E.
- Computing
- Design and Technology
- Food Preparation and Nutrition
- French
- German

Please note that students can only select ONE technology due to the nature of the written examination that the students sit.

After consulting with your subject teachers, would you please complete the online application service by **8th February 2024**.

Compulsory Curriculum Content 2024-2025



Work Experience is an important practical step towards career action planning. It is a scheme designed to let you feel what it is like to be at work while you are still at school.

The idea behind work experience is to provide you with the opportunity to explore the world of work and, at the same time, find out about yourself, your talents, personality and skills.

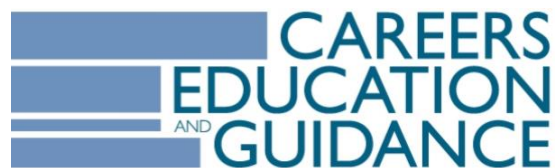
It is also an important part of your full-time education and brings together many of the things you have learnt in your subject lessons. You can then begin to think realistically about the education and training opportunities which are best suited to you. The experience of a work placement may also give you some surprising insights into the nature of work and so provide you with useful pointers to your eventual career. Ultimately, work experience is likely to increase your motivation to work to your full potential in school in order to achieve your goals.

What will it involve?

Work experience will involve a considerable amount of effort on your part if you are to gain the maximum benefit from it. You will be expected to spend time considering the skills you would like to practise and develop and, if possible, to select your own placement in an area of employment which is of genuine interest to you. You will need to draft letters to employers in the Autumn Term of Year 10, demonstrating your commitment and enthusiasm for the placement. Throughout the process of selecting a placement you will be expected to listen carefully to instructions and abide by the deadlines. Prior to taking up your placement, you will be asked to attend a brief interview with the employer and this will be your opportunity to discuss your targets and expectations for the week. There will be important forms to be signed and returned to school before your placement commences.

Finally, you will be expected to record your progress in the placement, and to write an assessment as to how well you felt you performed during the week. On returning to school, you will have an opportunity to share your experiences with your year group. As a result of your work experience you will be in a much better position to take charge of your own career development through research, forward planning and setting objectives for Year 11 and beyond.

Work experience takes place in the summer term of Year 10, during the School's Curriculum Enrichment week. Please note that it is the expectation that work experience takes place within the Cornwall, Devon and Torbay area. Placements which are set up further afield will incur an additional charge due to insurance and checking procedures.



All students will be given the opportunity to meet with Mrs Longford for careers guidance on an individual basis.

Year 10

By the end of this year, you will be able to:

- Take charge of your own career development through research, forward planning, setting objectives and recording your progress
- Write a curriculum vitae
- Write an Action Plan to set challenging goals for Year 11
- Participate successfully in Work Experience. You will discuss your aspirations for Work Experience and draw up a detailed Action Plan for the week (Enrichment Week)
- You will be encouraged to participate in Enterprise activities in School and to learn about work through Vocational Contexts in the different subject areas
- You will have been introduced to the main concepts involved in enterprise and entrepreneurship
- Take part in a Debrief Session; working in career teams to explore and reflect on the main skills required for that job sector. Write a presentation focusing on the skills and personal qualities needed for the career, using examples from their own experience.

Year 11

The aim of the Careers Programme is to prepare you for making the transition to the next stage of your education, but you will be encouraged to research and plan to the age of 19 and beyond. You will be expected to use Unifrog to research Higher Education Courses, and to seek advice from tutors and Mrs Longford as appropriate. You may need to research Vocational (work related) courses at this time. This will equip you to make appropriate, well-informed decisions about courses of study.

- You may have the opportunity to participate in a career's convention
- You will learn about the options open to you in Years 12 and 13
- You will discuss interview technique and learn how to conduct yourself at an interview
- You will revise and update your CV
- You will be encouraged to seek further Work Experience if it is appropriate to your chosen path of study

Every student in Year 11 will be offered a Careers Interview with Mrs Longford. Careers Interviews take place individually, or in small groups, as appropriate, with some students choosing to wait until Year 12.

Compulsory Rotation Subjects

In addition to Core, Option and other compulsory elements such as PE, students will also study a block of work in RE and PSHE/Citizenship. These elements of the curriculum ensure that all KS4 students at PHSG receive a broad and balanced education and fulfil the requirements of statutory guidance.

The three elements will be taught on a rotation with approximately 12 lessons in each area being taught across the year. On completion of one block of work each group will rotate onto their next subject. The rotation will be repeated in Year 11.

These short courses are not certificated.



Religious Education

Head of Department – Miss T McAuliffe

All students in full time education are entitled to Religious Education. The subject area provides students with the opportunity to ask and be asked challenging questions about what it means to be human, issues of right and wrong, the nature of reality and belief about God.

Religious Education at KS4 will build on learning in KS3 in these areas. Students will be able to explore some of the ethical issues making the news, such as looking at the issues of prejudice and discrimination, religious teaching on the matter and also examining the issue of extremism. Students will have the opportunity to think carefully about the topics and develop and present their own views.

Those opting for GCSE Religious Studies will find that this compulsory unit will enhance their GCSE studies.

PSHE & Citizenship

Head of Department - Mrs C Lewin

Why study PSHE & Citizenship?

At 14 - 19 the philosophy driving the PSHE programme is to provide our young people with balanced factual information on a range of issues which may now, or in the future, directly affect them. We aim to develop well rounded, thoughtful, responsible young adults who are able to play a full and active role in our modern technological society.



Citizenship education is provided through a combination of opportunities in a range of subject areas (in particular RE), whole school and suspended timetable activities and through the students' involvement in the life of the school and wider community. It gives students the knowledge, skills and understanding to enable them to become informed, active and responsible members of local, national and global communities. It enables them to address real life issues and shows them how they can make a difference. The strands developed at Key Stage 3 are revisited and extended at Key Stage 4 & Key Stage 5.

What will you study?

In year 10 you will study

- First Aid (CPR), drug education, road safety, E-safety, well women, growth mindset and revision techniques.
- Citizenship, government and parliament; work and careers.

If you require further detail to support lessons at home, please contact Mrs C Lewin.

Where will it lead?

PSHE & Citizenship can make a unique contribution towards our students' education and the development of their personal and social skills. It promotes their moral, social and cultural development making them more self-confident and responsible both in and beyond the classroom. It helps them to become informed, thoughtful and responsible citizens who are aware of their duties and rights. The skills they develop will enable them to reflect on issues, take part in discussions, and play an active part in the life of their schools, neighborhoods', communities and the wider world.

Physical Education

Head of Department – Mrs A Pickles



All students in full time education are required to participate in Physical Education lessons. We aim to make them enjoyable and beneficial. We aim to ensure that all girls at Plymouth High School are fully aware of the importance of health-related fitness, educating them to be healthy and to have the opportunity to develop the skills to maintain basic fitness and well-being.

This complements the academic curriculum as a healthy body is essential to support a healthy mind. It helps to let off some steam during the week, enabling a fresher attitude to class work.

A good grounding in a range of activities is essential for active participation in later life, stimulating an interest in sport and physical recreation for fitness, self-esteem and social activity. Apart from the opportunity to perform, the syllabus also enables students to have the knowledge and understanding to be a more informed spectator and provides the initial opportunity to assume the roles of coach, umpire or referee.

The Key Stage 4 syllabus introduces students to a wide range of activities, aiming to stimulate a lifelong interest in sport and physical activity. Students are given the opportunity to opt to follow a stream of activities each year, including: Health and Fitness, Dance or Sports Leadership, Individual Competitor and Team Games. Activities are then tailored as far as possible to each group to enable students to follow a curriculum of activities suited to their interests.

In order to provide the best opportunities for our students, we make the most of facilities across Plymouth accessing:

- YMCA Centre for use of the fitness suite and exercise classes
- Life Centre for climbing
- Mount Batten for rowing
- Plymbridge Woods for mountain biking
- Zumba and aerobics instructors
- Plymouth University sports hall

This allows students to make links with clubs and facilities across the city encouraging further physical activity away from school.

Core and Option Subjects

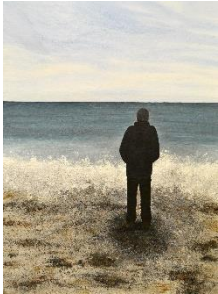
Art

Head of Department - Mr T Varrall

Exam Board - AQA

Assessment - Coursework 60% Exam Project 40%

Why study GCSE Art?



GCSE Art & Design at Plymouth High is an exciting and enriching course that builds on the Art knowledge and skills learned in Key Stage 3. The course provides a solid foundation for students wishing to pursue a wide variety of creative career paths, teaching core skills, experiences in a wide range of media and a deep understanding of Art theory. Through two challenging and exciting projects (a coursework project and an exam project) you will be given the skills to develop your own ideas and run your own project independently, to “read” artwork by others and to apply your learning to your own work.

The course

The Year 9 students undertake a “GCSE-style” foundation year where we investigate a number of artists and their techniques in a series of mini-projects that all sit under the title: Human:Nature. This foundation year can be very useful; not only does it help students develop key skills, but if the work is of a high enough standard it can contribute towards their GCSE coursework (Personal Project). The three mini-projects are connected either to the natural world or to the man-made urban environment. A design based on the bizarre natural work of Katie Scott and photomontages of Beth Hoeckel; a clay hand sculpture inspired by Kate MacDowell; and a lino print inspired by print maker Clare Curtis. Students opting for GCSE will then complete three more mini-projects at the start of Year 10: sketching from the urban environment inspired by Laura Oldfield-Ford, using Photoshop to create a digital graphic design inspired by Olivier Kugler and stylising photography into an acrylic painting learning from Georgia O’Keeffe.

By Easter in Year 10, students will have completed six mini-projects in their GCSE Personal Project, all using very different processes and visual language. Students will build their personally-led stage of the project based on one of the mini-project pathways and have until the end of January in Year 11 to develop their own artwork through independent study. Here the role of the teacher changes to being one of a coach – supporting students to make their own critical decisions to enable them to move their

project forward to higher and higher heights. This allows students to introduce artists and techniques of their own, to make artwork that they care about and are proud of.

The Personal Project is worth 60% of the final mark, with the exam project (ESA – externally set assignment) making up the remaining 40%. The ESA is a completely personal project – the exam board will provide us with a title which all students must use as a starting point at the start of February in Year 11. The titles are usually very vague, allowing students to create in a huge variety of directions. Students then have eight weeks to develop their idea in art lessons and in their own time, preparing and then creating a final piece in a 10 hour exam, taken over two school days.



The Art & Design course is ideal for you at this point in your education, allowing you to explore and test your skills, discover your own potential and develop confidence in your ideas and ability. It also allows you to use art to discuss your world, to engage with who you are and how you fit into the world. The course requires guts and determination from the start, but is as enjoyable as it is challenging. You will learn and have fun, while creating a solid foundation for a bright future in many creative directions in exciting, growing industries.

Computer Science

Lead teacher – Mr P Richards

Exam Board - OCR

Assessment - 100% Exam

Why study GCSE Computing?

Computer Science opens doors to your future. You are already familiar with the use of computers and related technology, this course gives insight into what goes on “behind the scenes”. The course will develop your critical thinking, analysis and problem-solving skills through the study of computer programming. You will also have the chance to do some in-depth research and practical work.

What will you study?

The three unit course is designed to give you an in-depth understanding of how computer technology works.

		Marks	Duration	Weighting
Component 01	Computer Systems <ul style="list-style-type: none">· Systems architecture· Memory and Storage· Computers, networks, connections and protocols· Network security· Systems software· Ethical, legal, cultural and environmental impacts	80	1 hour 30 minutes	50% of the Total GCSE
Component 02	Computational Thinking, Algorithms and Programming <ul style="list-style-type: none">· Algorithms· Programming fundamentals· Producing robust programs· Boolean logic· Programming languages and IDE's	80	1 hour 30 minutes	50% of the total GCSE
Component 03	Programming Project <ul style="list-style-type: none">· Programming techniques· Design· Development· Effectiveness and efficiency· Technical understanding· Testing, evaluation and conclusions		Approx. 20 hours	

If you take GCSE in Computing and then go on to study the subject at A level or university, you'll have an advantage over fellow students who are picking up the subject at these higher levels. The increasing importance of information technologies means there'll be a growing demand for professionals who are qualified in this field.

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Design and Technology

Head of Department: Mrs G Young (currently Miss Roughton Deputy Headteacher is overseeing D&T in light of Mrs Young's maternity leave)

Exam Board - Edexcel

Assessment - 50% Coursework 50% Exam

Why study GCSE Design and Technology?

GCSE Design and Technology (Edexcel examination board) will prepare students to participate confidently and successfully in an increasingly technological world. It is useful for those with direct interest in the subject as well as those with other interests and aspirations. Students can benefit from the many transferable skills inherent in this course of study which are highly desired by higher education and employers. It is an inspiring, rigorous and practical subject in which learners use creativity and imagination to develop their design ideas both independently and as part of a team; solving problems and making critical decisions that build their ability to learn and adapt. The UK's creative industries contribute almost £90bn net to GDP and employment in this sector is growing faster than any other. There is a shortage of workers to fill these posts and these jobs are also among the least likely to be lost to automation. Students will gain awareness and learn from wider influences on Design and Technology including historical, social, cultural, environmental and economic factors. Students will get the opportunity to work creatively when designing and making and apply technical and practical expertise.

The GCSE will be assessed in two ways:

- A substantial design and make task worth 50% of the overall GCSE
This will include: investigation, designing, making and analysing and evaluation
Projects will be based on a contextual challenge provided by the Examination Board in June of Year 10
- A final examination which is also worth 50% of the overall GCSE

There are three different areas you can choose to work in:

Graphics

We are constantly surrounded by graphical communication. The Graphics course aims to encourage students to be able to design and make products using creativity and originality, using a range of graphic and modelling materials. Students will be enthused and challenged by the range of practical activities possible. They will be encouraged to learn to use, understand and apply colour and design

through images, to develop spatial concepts, and to understand graphic materials and their manipulation. They will design and make product(s) using graphic media and new technologies to prepare them for the world of work.



During Year 10 the course will cover basic technical drawing and graphical communication skills and a number of mini-projects such as packaging, leaflets, logos and advertising. They will complete an industry led project in the winter term to consolidate knowledge learnt in the first term. The major project for GCSE will begin during the summer term of Year 10.

A wide range of techniques and media are used, ranging from: basic design drawing with pencils, use of colour, computer imagery, 3-D modelling and advertising practices. The materials used for these projects can be various paper, card and board but can also consist of plastics such as: acrylic, correx or polypropylene, ICT and CAD / CAM (Computer aided design / computer aided manufacture) also play a key part in this GCSE. The project is supported by a folio which shows the development of the project from concept to finished article and also looks at moral issues and industrial practice.

If you require further information about the course, please contact Mrs Young or Mss Roughton

Resistant Materials

Resistant Materials is primarily involved with creative design and development of products produced using plastics, metals and wood, although other elements can be incorporated such as electronics. Look around at the new and trending products on the market today. The designers focus has moved more and more towards innovation and creativity, this is the key to developing a career in product design and a multitude of other careers where being creative and enjoying the development of the latest innovations from the concept to the market place will bring success.



In Year 10, students will undertake a series of quick projects focusing on building skills, knowledge and technique. They will gain experience with alternative materials and build their problem-solving skills. After the first term they will undertake an industry led project, providing them with the chance to

explore different techniques and learn the core construction techniques that will enable them to be successful throughout Year 11. We encourage students to try new things, develop sketching and or computer graphic skills and help them to discover the real world of product design.

During the course students will explore: 3D printing, computer controlled routing using a CNC router and laser cutter and machine tools. Much of the folio work focuses on the why, when and how specific materials are used so that you can develop as an independent designer.

If you have any questions about the course then please feel free to contact Mr Watson
Darren.Watson@phsg.tsat.uk

Textiles

Textiles offer students the opportunity to be introduced to a variety of experiences with the chance to be innovative, exploring a range of textile media, techniques and processes, including both traditional and new technologies. The textile and clothing (T&C) industries form a major part of manufacturing production, employment and trade in many countries with the UK having more than 79,000 businesses employing over 340,000 people. There is a huge range of career roles available from designers, technologists, quality controllers and engineers. Many of these careers offer wider opportunities where you will travel and learn about business as well as transferable skills such as project management and decision making. This GCSE allows you to use your creative flair and ability to generate ideas and concepts to solve existing problems and invent new products for the new and changing world.



In Year 10, students will undertake a series of quick projects focusing on building skills, knowledge and technique. They will gain experience with alternative materials and build their problem solving skills. After the first term they will undertake a series of industry led projects, providing them with the chance to explore different decorative techniques and learn the core construction techniques that will enable them to be successful throughout Year 11. This will include trips to professional facilities such as Plymouth college of art and the printery as well as visits from those working in the industry. We will then move onto a construction project where students will complete a folder of key techniques, which they will take with them throughout their time in the subject. Computer aided design and manufacturing skills are taught and students are encouraged to utilise this into various projects undertaken so that their skills are stretched and developed. An understanding of the textile industry aids this.

During the summer term students will embark on their final coursework where students undertake an extended design and make task based on a context that will be set by the examination board producing an imaginative and original design. Past projects have included students producing: children's clothing, fashion clothing, sport clothing, theatre costumes and interior furnishings.

If you have any questions about the course, please email Mrs Young Gemma.Young@phsg.tsat.uk or Miss Roughton Donna.Roughton@phsg.tsat.uk

Where will it lead?

The Product Design course at A Level offers a natural progression from GCSE studies in Graphics, Resistant Materials or Textiles. It is intended to be of interest to a wide range of candidates including those who are intending to directly follow a higher education course or career in Design and Technology, as well of those with other interests and aspirations who can benefit from the many transferable skills inherent in the study at A Level.

Food Preparation and Nutrition (Exam board – Eduqas)

Food Preparation and Nutrition GCSE -This course focuses on the building of practical cooking skills so the students will cook most weeks producing: pastry dishes, bread products, meat, vegetable and fruit dishes. They will learn and understand the scientific principles underpinning preparation and cooking processes e.g. how and why yeast works, gelatinisation of starch, enzymic browning and why egg whites become more stable with the addition of an acid. To investigate and understand these principles the students will complete scientific food experiments.



Nutrition is the other main area of study where the students will learn about: protein, carbohydrates, fat, vitamins and minerals in relation to accepted healthy eating guidelines. This also includes: menu planning, individual dietary requirements and dietary related health issues.

There are 2 formal Non-Examined Assessments:

- NEA 1 is the 8-hour food science task completed in September of Year 11 (15% of total mark)
- NEA 2 is a 12-hour assessment with a different brief set by the exam board each year, culminating in the planning and production of three different dishes served with accompaniments. NEA 2 is completed in Year 11 beginning in November and ending in March. (35% of total mark)

In June of Year 11 there is a 1 ¾ hour written examination paper. (50% of total mark)

If you have any questions about the course then please feel free to contact Mrs Brown Penny.Brown@phsg.tsat.uk

Where will it lead?

This specification builds on subject content which is typically taught at Key Stage 3 and provides a suitable foundation for the study of WJEC Level 3 Food, Science and Nutrition, and other food-related courses at either AS or A level. In addition, this specification provides a coherent, satisfying and worthwhile course of study for learners who do not progress to further study in this subject.

Drama

Head of Department - Miss C Crouch

Exam Board - Edexcel

Assessment - 40% Devising 20% Scripted 40% Written Exam

Why study GCSE Drama?

GCSE Drama provides opportunities to develop confidence and creativity. The subject draws on your imagination and enthusiasm through its practical content. It provides plenty of opportunities to work with others, exploring various ideas and issues on a variety of themes. It helps you become more articulate when expressing ideas and provides you with the freedom to discuss and develop thoughts and opinions in a supportive environment.

What will you study?



Unit 1: 40% of the qualification This unit is internally assessed and externally moderated.

Devising

Students are required to use a variety of stimulus material to create their own piece of theatre and it is assessed through a live performance and written work. The written work is an evaluation of the process done under exam conditions and the portfolio of evidence, which is 900 words, should set out

their developmental process and evaluate their final production.

Unit 2: 20% of the qualification. This unit is externally assessed by a visiting examiner.

Performance from Text

Students will choose and perform two key extracts from a published text. The text is not prescribed by the examination board and so can be from any play that interests and inspires them.

This unit is assessed by a visiting examiner.

Unit 3: 40% of the final qualification

Theatre Makers in Practice

Written examination of 1hr and 30 minutes

Section A - This section consists of one question broken into six parts (both short and extended answers) based on one extract from a performance text that they have studied. They will write about how a text can be realised in performance-from 'page to stage.' It is a closed book examination.

Section B - Is a live Theatre evaluation. (Students are required to see as much live theatre as possible and we provide as many opportunities for this as we can) This section consists of two questions requiring students to analyse and evaluate a live theatre production they have seen.

They are permitted to take theatre evaluation notes of up to a maximum of 500 words in to the examination with them.

Where will it lead?

There are opportunities to study Drama and Performing Arts at A Level and then at university, leading to careers in teaching, acting, stage management, technical advice, set design and many more. At the very least you should emerge at the end of Year 11 with a greater belief in yourself and an ability to communicate successfully with others.

English Language and English Literature

Head of Department – Mrs S Blunden-Currie

English Language

Exam Board - AQA

Assessment - 100% Exam

The AQA English Language GCSE comprises two examinations and an internally assessed Spoken Language component.

Paper One: Explorations in creative reading and writing (50% of total mark)

This one hour forty-five-minute examination comprises two sections. Section A requires students to respond to four questions which focus on language, imagery, structure. Section B requires students to write creatively (either a narrative or a descriptive) using an image as a stimulus.

Paper Two: Writers' viewpoints and perspectives (50% of total mark)

This one hour forty-five-minute examination focuses on comparing two texts concerning similar subjects. There are four questions. Section B requires students to write a non-fiction piece, typically a letter, a magazine article, a newspaper article, or an online piece such as a blog entry or a travel guide.

Spoken Language: non-exam assessment

This is a compulsory element of the course. Students will be asked to present information and ideas in spoken presentations and listen and respond to others.

English Literature

Exam Board - AQA

Assessment - 100% Exam

The AQA English Literature GCSE comprises two closed book examinations.

Paper One: Shakespeare and 19th-century novel (50% of total mark)

This examination is one hour and forty-five minutes. Both sections are "extract-based". Students are required to analyse the extract provided and then explore the focus of the question elsewhere in the text. The two texts will be *Romeo and Juliet* (Shakespeare) and *A Christmas Carol* (Dickens)

Paper Two: Modern text and poetry (50% of total mark)

In this two hour and fifteen minute examination, students must answer a question on *An Inspector Calls* (Priestley), the question will either be on a character or a theme. The second section concerns poetry. Students will study 16 poems from the Love and Relationships anthology. There will also be two questions on unseen poetry.

Geography

Head of Department – Mr L Graves

Exam Board - AQA

Assessment - 100% Exam



Why study GCSE Geography?

The study of Geography provides awareness, knowledge and understanding of a changing and interconnected world. Geography is for the student that wants to better understand the world around them. It provides a *unique bridge* between the humanities and natural sciences.

Geography students:

Develop their knowledge of the world and the physical and human processes operating in it

Learn to appreciate different cultures in this country and abroad

Gain a good understanding into sustainability and into their responsibilities towards the issue

Geography helps to develop intellectual, practical and social skills including:

Numeracy and literacy, mapping, ICT, fieldwork, problem solving and decision making, team work, citizenship, communication and enquiry.

Fieldwork is a compulsory part of any GCSE Geography specification. This will be at the end of Year 10 studying Coastal Environments and at the beginning of Year 11 studying regeneration of Urban areas. This will require some basic, yet obvious, equipment such as a waterproof coat, trousers that are not leggings or jeans and sensible shoes. Please be mindful of this when choosing the subject.



What will you study?

AQA: Living with the Physical environment	Challenges in the Human Environment	Geographical application
The Challenge of Natural Hazards The Living World Physical landscapes of the UK	Urban issues and challenges The changing economic World The challenges of resource management	Issue Evaluation Fieldwork
35% 88 marks 1 hour 30 minutes written paper	35% 88 marks 1 hour 30 minutes written paper	30% 76 marks 1 hour 15 minutes written paper

Where will it lead?

The study of GCSE Geography is relevant to most careers and higher education. Some jobs which need GCSE Geography include: surveying, town and country planning, civil engineering, landscape architecture, transport and tourism, estate management, cartography, exploration. It can be combined successfully with many other subjects at A Level and is recognized by universities both as an Art and a Science.

If you want to find out more about GCSE Geography, please ask your teacher.

History

Head of Department – Mr R Mallard

Exam Board - Edexcel

Assessment - 100% Written Exam

Why study GCSE History?

Students find this an exciting and stimulating course which gives a greater understanding of the world around us and every opportunity is taken to draw parallels between material studied, and contemporary events that dominate the news today. Students have already begun the GCSE topics in both Year 8 and Year 9 so have a head start.



The new GCSE course, covers aspects of 20th Century History such as the Cold War and Nazi Germany and also encourages a far broader study of History across a range of periods, including Elizabethan England as well as a period study of Crime and Punishment over time.

History students will develop skills such as:

- *Selection of information:* virtually every job requires you to read and select the most important facts
- *Analysis:* improves your thinking skills by sorting and ranking your information into most to least important reasons
- *Problem solving:* asking and finding out why things happen
- *Evaluation of source material:* trains you to spot whether newspapers or reports you might read at work are reliable or not
- *Interpretation:* understanding why historians have different opinions of the same events


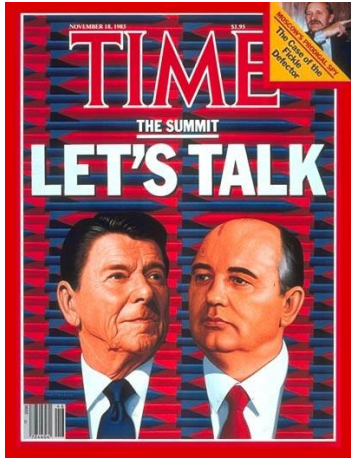

Structuring your thinking and writing about these complex issues: means you will be able to transfer these skills into producing reasoned arguments, **important in most jobs.**

History is useful because:

- Not only do you learn about the world around you today and why it is as it is but you also develop skills you can transfer into virtually any job. Employers very much respect History GCSE
- Above all History is fascinating, rich and enjoyable

Where will it lead?

History GCSE is highly thought of by employers as it shows you can cope with large amounts of information and have developed good analytical skills, which you can express clearly in fluent writing. You do not have to pursue a career that is directly related to history such as an archivist; many journalists, advertising executives, bankers and even accountants have history degrees.

<p style="text-align: center;">Paper 1 1 hour 15 minutes exam 30%</p> <p>Crime and Punishment in Britain 1000-present</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How the nature of crime changed over time • How the nature of law and order have changed over time • How the nature of punishment has changed over time from trial by ordeal, witchcraft to abolition of the Death Penalty <p>Historic Environment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Study of Whitechapel and the Jack the Ripper murders between 1870-1900 	<p style="text-align: center;">Paper 2 1 hour 45 Minutes exam 40%</p> <p>Early Elizabethan England 1558-1588</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Religion and Mary Queen of Scots • Foreign threats and the Armada • Society in England <p>The Cold War 1941-91</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The origins of the Cold War • Cuban Missile Crisis, the Berlin Wall and Prague • Gorbachev, Reagan and the end of the Cold War 	<p style="text-align: center;">Paper 3 1 hour 20 minutes exam 30%</p> <p>Weimar and Nazi Germany 1918-39</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Weimar Republic – the legacy of WW1 and the fight for survival • Hitler's rise to power – why and how did Hitler become chancellor in 1933 • How did the Nazis control Germany? • What was life like for people living in Nazi Germany? 
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It is not just the knowledge of history which will help you; the skills you develop are just as highly regarded.

You can combine History with most A-Level subjects; many scientists take it to broaden their studies. **If you want to find out more about History GCSE, please ask your teacher.**

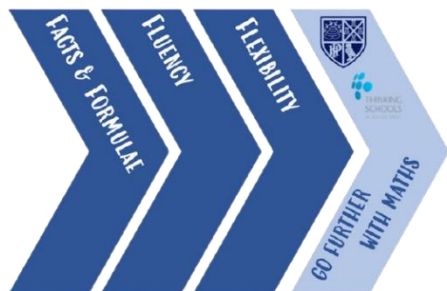
Mathematics

Head of Department - Mrs G Freeman-Alford

Exam Board – Edexcel (Higher)

Assessment - 100% Written Exam

Why study GCSE Mathematics?



In all cultures and across the centuries mathematics has been a core subject in schools and universities. It has an inner beauty and majesty capable of stimulating the imagination. It is the universal language used to describe and understand the world we live in. It possesses a rich core of puzzles and problems that continue to entertain and bemuse.

The GCSE course continues the mathematical work started in Years 7-9 under the national curriculum, using specific GCSE Higher text books, additional texts and supplementary tasks. The five areas of mathematics covered are:

- Number
- Algebra
- Ratio and Proportion
- Geometry and Measure
- Handling Data

Students are all expected to apply demonstrated routine methods (fluency) and to be able to solve problems by thinking and working flexibly. All lessons involve opportunities and demonstrations to develop skills in problem solving success.

Homework is set on a weekly basis and is fully supported by linked help videos and the opportunity to contact a teacher for help.

Knowledge banks are provided for every half term, supporting long term memory by making clear the facts and formulae that need to be retrieved over time.

Quizlet (website) is used to help students self-quiz on the facts and formulae they should remember for each half term.

Students each need a modern scientific calculator, as well as pencil, purple pen, ruler, protractor, and an eraser.

The course is comprised solely of traditional examination. The examinations not only test the core mathematical concepts but also the applications of mathematical concepts in different scenarios. It is anticipated that all of the girls will follow the Edexcel specification for mathematics at the Higher Tier

The aim of these examinations is to encourage students to:

- Develop a positive attitude to Mathematics
- Meet appropriately challenging work
- Apply mathematical knowledge and understanding to real life functional problems
- Think and communicate mathematically- precisely, logically and creatively
- Appreciate the place and use of Mathematics in society
- Apply mathematical concepts to situations arising in their own lives
- Understand the interdependence of different branches of Mathematics
- Acquire the skills needed to use technology such as calculators and computers effectively
- Acquire a firm foundation for further study

Achieving the highest grades demonstrates competence that allows you to understand the mathematical content of many other subjects. Many, if not most, A Level subjects are made more accessible through gaining a high grade in GCSE mathematics.

For all those who gain the highest grades at GCSE the opportunity exists to take A Level mathematics. Any individual taking an A Level in mathematics will have a most enriching and enjoyable experience and will be well placed to take a multitude of paths into the future. It is one of the most useful A Levels that an individual could consider taking.

Modern Foreign Languages

French and German

Head of Languages - Mrs H Walsh

Exam Board - AQA

Assessment - 100% Exam (Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing)

Why study GCSE Language?



The stronger you become in a foreign language, the more you can do with it. You can have a conversation, buy things, surf the net and enjoy books and films or simply win an argument. After two or three years, you've already developed a reasonable vocabulary and are able to form sentences in three different tenses. With more time and practice, you will begin to find yourself more confident and independent. Travel abroad is more interesting when you can speak the language and simple things like shopping and having a meal are easier.

What will you study?

French and German – AQA specification

There are three themes:

- Identity and Culture
- Local, National, International and Global Areas of Interest
- Current and Future Study and Employment

There will be four exams at the end of Year 11 in Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing, each carrying 25% of the overall marks.

Where will it lead?

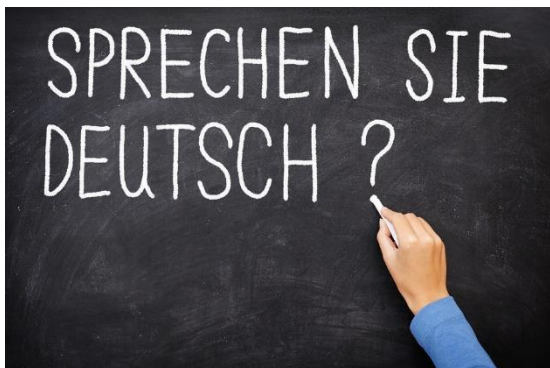
With one or more languages, you immediately widen your choices. You can choose to carry on learning, following an A' level course or going into vocational training in leisure and tourism or business. Even if you do not keep up languages in KS5, you will have developed the study skills to learn a new language, perhaps at university. If you do decide to go on to university and choose a subject with a language added, you will spend a year abroad in your third year of study. Here are just a few jobs where languages are important: accountant, air hostess, computer games designer, engineer, journalist, marketing manager, tourist guide. For those of you who love languages, jobs in translation, interpreting, business, teaching, international law are all open to you. You will find your skills are in demand and are a lasting source of pleasure.

According to an article published in THE INDEPENDENT:

German and French are ranked 1st and 3rd for getting you the highest paid jobs in Great Britain.

As an economic powerhouse the demand for German has risen as a corporate language and is in high demand in a range of industries, particularly banking as well as pharmaceuticals and medicine. Due to the rise in demand for German it has been identified as a language which will increase your salary

negotiating powers and will give you an advantage with one of the many German companies that operate throughout the world. **French** is spoken in over 40 countries and is becoming extremely useful as certain French speaking Africa countries gain more leverage on the business world stage. It is also extremely useful dialect in Europe as French is one of the three procedural languages of the European Union, and is the sole language used in the Court of Justice of the European Union.



Music

Lead Teacher – Mrs K Marcer

Exam Board - OCR

Assessment - 30% Portfolio 30% Practical 40% Exam

Why study GCSE Music?

"I would teach children music, physics, and philosophy; but most importantly music, for the patterns in music and all the arts are the keys to learning." – Plato



The benefits of studying Music have long been catalogued: it improves academic skills, it develops physical skills, it cultivates social skills, it refines discipline and patience, it boosts self-esteem and it introduces students to other cultures, while the entire time fostering individual taste and creativity. The Music Department currently follows the OCR specification for GCSE Music, whose details are set out below.

Component 01/02: Integrated portfolio (30% of total marks)

Students develop their understanding of performance and composition through exploration of their own instrument within styles and genres of their choosing.

They demonstrate their playing skills and abilities by practising and performing a piece musically, accurately and with appropriate interpretation. In the composition element of this component, they demonstrate knowledge of composition techniques within a free composition of their choice using musical elements and resources, including specific instrumental and technology techniques.

Component 03/04: Practical component (30% of total marks)

Students develop their skills and understanding of performance and composition. The focus of the performance aspect of this component is on the demands of performing with an ensemble. Students are also required to compose a piece of music appropriate for one of the areas of study in response to a set brief.

Component 05: Listening and appraising (40% of total marks)

This component focuses on areas of study including Film music, Rhythms of the World (specifically Africa, India and the Mediterranean), The Conventions of Pop Music (rock & roll, rock anthems, ballads and contemporary solo artistes) and The Concerto through time (Baroque, Classical and Romantic music). Students demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of musical elements, contexts and language through listening to pieces of music from these categories, and answering questions about them. Knowledge and understanding are tested via a final written examination.

Although not a requirement for taking GCSE Music, it will be very much to your advantage if you are already having instrumental or singing lessons, or if you perform as part of a music group in or out of school.

GCSE Physical Education

Head of Department – Mrs A Pickles

Exam Board - AQA

Assessment - 40% Practical 60% Exam

Why study GCSE PE?

The GCSE PE course will appeal to students who take part in sport and recreation outside of school and want to know more about the key body systems and how they impact on health, fitness and performance in physical activity and sport. Students will develop knowledge and understanding of the psychological factors that can affect performers and the socio-cultural factors that impact on sport.

What will you study?

Content	What is Assessed	How Assessed?	Weighting
Theory The human body and movement in physical activity in sport	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Anatomy and Physiology• Movement Analysis• Physical Training	Exam: 1 hour 15 minutes (78 marks)	30%
Theory Socio-cultural influences and well-being in physical activity and sport	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sports psychology• Socio-cultural influences• Health, fitness and well-being• Use of data	Exam: 1 hour 15 minutes (78 marks)	30%
Practical Practical performance in physical activity and sport	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Performance in 3 different physical activities in the role of player/performer (one in a team activity, one in an individual activity)• Analysis and evaluation of performance to bring about improvement in one activity	Practical assessment	40%

Theory

Both exam papers contain a mixture of multiple choice/objective test questions, short answer questions and extended answer questions.

Practical

The practical element of the course (40%) will allow students to develop their skills/techniques/tactics and look at how they learn skills. During the 2 year syllabus, students will cover Netball, Badminton, Climbing, Athletics and Trampolining with the grades from the top 3 activities being put forward for moderation. In addition to the activities covered within school, students can also be assessed using DVD evidence of sports in which they participate in outside of school. The activity list can be found on www.aqa.org.uk. Please see Mrs Pickles if you would like further information.

Attendance to an extra-curricular club will be a compulsory expectation of this course.

Where will it lead?

The GCSE in Physical Education can provide a route to further study and is ideal preparation for the A level PE course. The course also develops key skills that employers look for and can lead to further training in areas such as physiotherapy, the Armed Forces, leisure and recreation, teaching, the fitness industry and sports coaching.



GCSE Religious Studies

Head of Department - Miss T McAuliffe

Exam Board - AQA

Assessment - 100% Written Exam

Why study Religious Studies?

For good or for ill, religion has been and still is a force to be reckoned with. Not only has religion been directly or indirectly responsible for some of the bloodiest times in our history, it has also enriched our lives with a wealth of music, art, culture and academic discipline.

Whether you are sympathetic to religion or are one of those who would rather see religion eliminated, we ignore religion at our peril. Sadly, in today's information-saturated world, precious few people have stopped to really develop an informed understanding of 'Religion' with its many faces.

By studying Religious Studies, you will begin to develop the skills of clear, critical thinking and evaluation whilst learning about and also learning from the world's religions. You will have to examine your own values and attitudes and fundamental questions concerning the meaning and purpose of life. These skills will be infinitely transferable, providing you with an ability to make better decisions based on reason and to evaluate arguments and it will also improve your literary and expressive powers.

Where will it lead?

Studying GCSE Religious Studies will be excellent preparation for continuing to study the subject at A level and beyond. The subject is very compatible with other subjects such as English, History and Government and Politics. It is, not only, a good partner for the above subjects and similar, but it also compliments subjects of a mathematical and scientific nature.



What will you study?

Students opting for GCSE Religious Studies will be following the AQA Religious Studies specification. Full details of this draft specification can be found here:

<http://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/religious-studies/gcse/religious-studies-a-8062/subject-content>
The GCSE course comprises two components:

Component	Topics for Study
The Study of Religious Beliefs and Teachings & Practices:	Hinduism Beliefs and teachings: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ideas about the nature of God and existence• Beliefs about the nature of human life Practices: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Worship and festivals• Lifestyle Judaism Beliefs and teachings: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Key beliefs• The covenant and the mitzvot Practices: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The synagogue and worship• Family life and festivals
Thematic Studies (Examining a variety of Christian perspectives and other world views)	Students answer 4 questions from: Relationships and families: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sex, marriage and divorce• Families and gender equality Religion and life: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The origins and value of the universe• The origins and value of human life The existence of God and revelation: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Philosophical arguments for the existence of God• The nature of the divine and revelation Religion peace and conflict: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Religion, violence, terrorism and war• Religion and belief in 21st century conflict Religion, crime and punishment: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Religion, crime and the causes of crime• Religion and punishment Religion, Human rights and social justice: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Human rights• Wealth and poverty

Sciences (Biology, Chemistry and Physics)

Head of Science - Mr A Waite

Exam Board - AQA

Assessment - 100% Exam

10 Big Ideas

You will continue to master the **ten big scientific ideas** at GCSE that you have been studying since Year 7.

Science has been improving the lives of humans for thousands of years. Biologists have cured plagues with the development of vaccines and have discovered a common ancestry for all life through our genes. Physicists have developed ideas that ensure planes fly and that space probes can travel to distant planets. Chemists have developed synthetic materials with incredible properties by understanding and controlling complex chemical reactions. Scientific discoveries are inspired by curiosity and imagination and are then confirmed and improved (or rejected) by an evidence-based method. This 'scientific method' rejects ideas that lack evidence, such as alchemy, homeopathy or the idea that the Earth is flat. This same method also embraces changes to existing theories when reliable new evidence is discovered.

Science has also increased the complexity of our lives and has presented moral and ethical questions. Just because something is scientifically possible, should we do it? We also live in a world full of information from sources such as the internet, but much of it is inaccurate and unscientific. We hope that mastering these ten big ideas will equip you with the knowledge, understanding and skills such that you can spot fact from fiction and live healthy and prosperous lives.

Separate Sciences

All students study the Separate Sciences, studying for GCSEs in Biology, Chemistry, and Physics to provide an in-depth learning of key scientific principles of each subject.

Exams in the sciences

Students will sit six examinations: two in Biology, two in Chemistry and two in Physics. These courses qualify students to take A Levels in Biology, Chemistry and Physics, so long as you achieve grade 6 or higher.

Biology

THREE of the 10 Big Ideas focus on the biological sciences, and features the following specific themes:

- Life processes depend on molecules whose structure is related to their function
- The fundamental units of living organisms are cells, which are organised into tissues and organs
- Organisms form populations, communities and ecosystems which interact
- Living organisms are interdependent and show adaptations to their environment

- Life is dependent on photosynthesis where plants transfer solar energy into chemical energy
- Organic compounds are used in cellular respiration to allow the other chemical reactions of life
- The chemicals in ecosystems are continually cycling through the natural world
- The characteristics of a living organism are influenced by its genome and its environment
- Evolution occurs by natural selection and is responsible for all organisms' shared ancestry.

Exams	Duration
<p>Paper 1:</p> <p>Big Ideas covered: ORGANISMS and ECOSYSTEMS</p> <p>Topics:</p> <p>1: Cell biology 2: Organisation 3: Infection and response 4: Bioenergetics</p>	1 hour 45 minutes
<p>Paper 2:</p> <p>Big Ideas covered: ORGANISMS, ECOSYSTEMS and GENES</p> <p>Topics:</p> <p>5: Homeostasis and response 6: Inheritance, variation and evolution 7: Ecology</p>	1 hour 45 minutes

Chemistry

THREE of the 10 Big Ideas focus on the chemical sciences, and features the following specific themes:

- Matter is composed of tiny particles called atoms
- There are about 100 different naturally occurring types of atoms called elements
- Elements show periodic relationships in their chemical and physical properties
- These properties can be explained in terms of the atomic structure of the elements
- Atoms bond by either transferring, or by sharing electrons
- The shapes of molecules giant structures affect the way they behave
- There are barriers to reaction so reactions occur at different rates
- Chemical reactions take place in only three different ways:
 - Proton transfer
 - Electron transfer
 - Electron sharing
- Energy is conserved in chemical reactions so can be neither created or destroyed.
- Materials can be extracted from unrefined sources in the ground and used for industrial and commercial processes

Exams	Duration
<p>Paper 1:</p> <p>Big Ideas covered: MATTER, REACTIONS and EARTH</p> <p>Topics:</p> <p>1: Atomic structure and the periodic table 2: Bonding, structure, and the properties of matter 3: Quantitative chemistry 4: Chemical changes 5: Energy changes</p>	1 hour 45 minutes
<p>Paper 2:</p> <p>Big Ideas covered: MATTER, REACTIONS and EARTH</p> <p>Topics:</p> <p>6: The rate and extent of chemical change 7: Organic chemistry 8: Chemical analysis 9: Chemistry of the atmosphere 10: Using resources</p>	1 hour 45 minutes

Physics

SIX of the 10 Big Ideas focus on the physical sciences, and features the following specific themes:

- The use of models, as in the particle model of matter or the wave models of light and of sound
The concept of cause and effect, for example, between:
 - Force and acceleration
 - Between changes in atomic nuclei and radioactive emissions
- 'Action at a distance' and 'the field' in analysing electrical, magnetic and gravitational effects
- That differences between pressures or temperatures or electrical potentials, drive change
- That proportionality is an important aspect of many models in Physics
- That physical laws and models are expressed in mathematical form.

Exams	Duration
<p>Paper 1:</p> <p>Big ideas covered: FORCES, ELECTROMAGNETISM, ENERGY, WAVES, MATTER and EARTH</p> <p>Topics:</p> <p>1: Energy 2: Electricity 3: Particle model of matter 4: Atomic structure</p>	1 hour 45 minutes
<p>Paper 2:</p> <p>Big Ideas covered: FORCES, ELECTROMAGNETISM, WAVES and EARTH</p> <p>Topics:</p> <p>5: Forces 6: Waves 7: Magnetism and electromagnetism 8. Space physics</p>	1 hour 45 minutes