

GCSE Options Booklet



KNIGHTSBRIDGE
SCHOOL



Art & Design
Business
Computer Science
Drama
English Language*
English Literature*
French
Geography
History
Latin
Maths*
Music
Religious Studies
Science*
Sociology
Spanish

Core*

English Literature*

English Language*

Maths*

Science*

*Compulsory subject



English

At GCSE, English becomes two subjects: English Literature and English Language. You will get two separate GCSE grades and qualifications at the end of Year 11.

Where could English take you next?

- The key English skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening are required in all academic courses and all careers.
- The study of English develops confidence.
- The study of English can provide a life-long love of literature.
- You will achieve critical skills that are applicable in a wide range of contexts.

Over the course of year 10 and 11, you will study the following texts in full:

- A Christmas Carol by Charles Dickens
- An Inspector Calls by J.B. Priestley
- Macbeth by William Shakespeare
- Power and Conflict Anthology by Various Poets

English Literature

The English Literature course will test the following skills:

- Comprehension skills: how well can you infer information about plot, character, events and settings?
- Critical Reading: how well do you consider different ways of interpreting a text? Does the historical context of a text help you come to your own informed opinion?
- Analytical skills: how well can you analyse how writers use language, form and structure?
- Comparison skills: how well do you compare and contrast texts that you have studied?

[English Literature AQA Exam Board LINK](#)

[English Language AQA Exam Board LINK](#)



English Literature

Examinations

Exam Paper 1: Shakespeare (Macbeth) and 19th Century novel (A Christmas Carol)

- written exam: 1 hour 45 minutes
- 64 marks
- 40% of Lit GCSE

Section A: Shakespeare: students will answer one question on their play of choice. They will be required to write in detail about an extract from the play and then to write about the play as a whole.

Section B: The 19th-century novel: students will answer one question on their novel of choice. They will be required to write in detail about an extract from the novel and then to write about the novel as a whole.

Exam Paper 2: Modern Text (An Inspector Calls) and Poetry (Power and Conflict and Unseen)

- written exam: 2 hour 15 minutes
- 96 marks
- 60% of Lit GCSE

Section A: Modern texts: students will answer one essay question from a choice of two on their studied modern prose or drama text.

Section B: Poetry: students will answer one comparative question on one named poem printed on the paper and one other poem from their chosen anthology cluster.

Section C: Unseen poetry: Students will answer one question on one unseen poem and one question comparing two unseen poems.



English Language

Examinations

The English Language course develops your reading and writing skills. The final exams will test:

- Your ability to retrieve information from a range of different texts.
- Your ability to comment on the overall structure of a text
- Your ability to analyse a writer's use of language.
- Your ability to compare the content of two different texts.
- The overall structure of your writing: how well you can plan and paragraph.
- Your ability to use different types of sentences.
- The breadth of your vocabulary
- Your accuracy with spelling and grammar.

There are two papers which ask you to look at different types of text.

Paper 1 asks you to read and comment on an extract of fiction and write a piece of descriptive or narrative writing.

Paper 2 asks you to read and comment on an extract from non-fiction text and write to present your viewpoint on a topic.

The structure of the exams is below:

Exam Paper 1: Creative Reading and Writing	
What's assessed? Section A: Reading <ul style="list-style-type: none">• One literature fiction text Section B: Writing <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Descriptive or narrative writing	How is it assessed? <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Written exam: 1 hour 45 minutes• 80 marks• 50% of GCSE
Exam Paper 2: Non-Fiction Texts	
What's assessed? Section A: Reading <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 2 non-fiction texts Section B: Writing <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Writing to present a viewpoint	How is it assessed? <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Written exam: 1 hour 45 minutes• 80 marks• 50% of GCSE





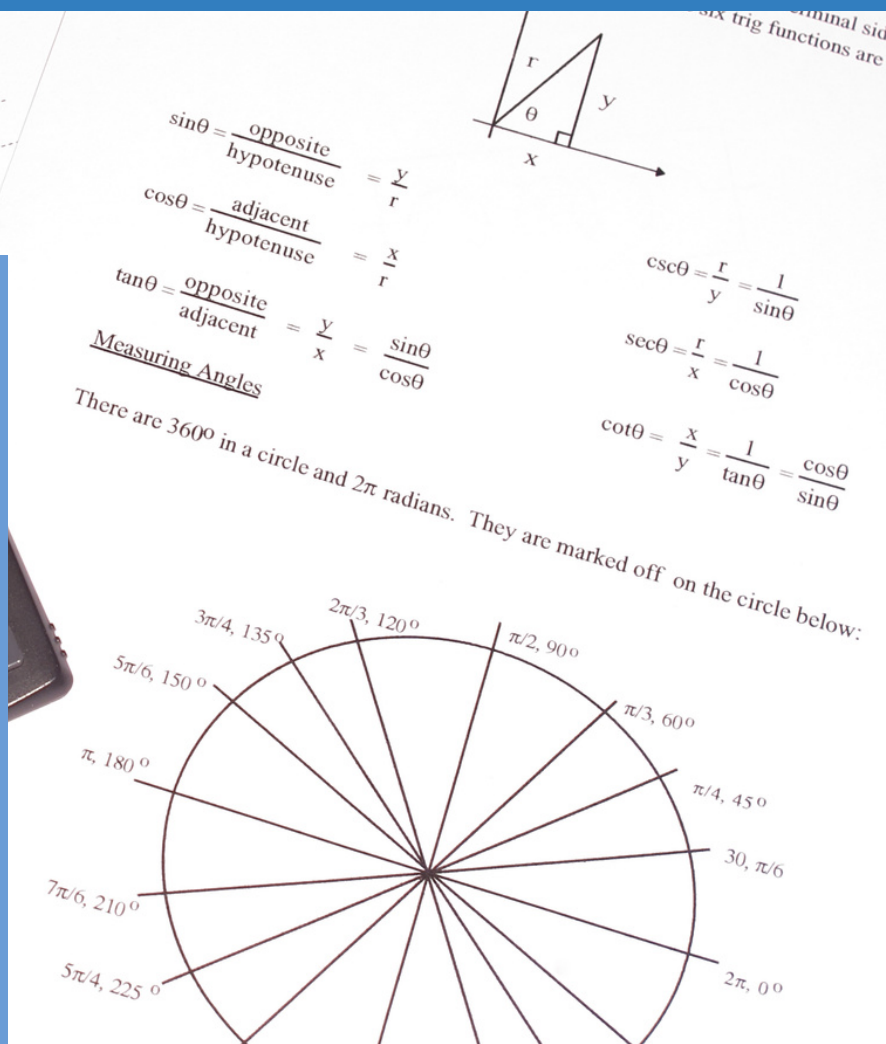
Maths

Maths GCSE is one of the core qualifications every student must have. The study of mathematics can provide access to a wide range of careers and offer further study opportunities. These careers can include policing, teaching, nursing and anything in the fields of science and engineering. Whichever direction you want to head in, you will need the knowledge and skills this course will teach you.

Course Overview

Topics covered:

Number
Structure and calculation
Fractions, decimals and percentages
Measure and accuracy
Algebra
Notation, vocabulary and manipulation
Graphs
Solving equations and inequalities
Sequences
Ratio, proportion and rates of change
Geometry and measure
Properties and constructions
Mensuration and calculation
Vectors
Probability
Statistics



Assessment

Students will sit exams either at Foundation or Higher Level. All students will study the Foundation Tier which allows students to get Grades 1 to 5. Students aiming for the higher grades will take the Higher Tier reaching Grades 4 to 9. The qualification consists of three equally weighted written examination papers at either level. Each is 90 minutes and 80 marks: Paper 1 (Non-calculator), Paper 2 and 3 (both calculator).

[Edexcel GCSE Maths Link](#)

Sciences

Combined Science or Single
Sciences*

Computer Science



Science

Students discover an understanding of natural phenomena, stimulating curiosity and fascination for finding out why things happen in the way they do. Children study methods of enquiry and investigation focusing on the applications and implications of science and technology.

Careers linked to science are wide ranging including engineering, medicine, health and disease, technology, pharmacology, space exploration and much more...!

Course Overview

Single Science:

Students study Biology, Chemistry and Physics in depth as 3 separate GCSE subjects and receive 3 GCSE grades.

Combined Science:

Students study a combination of Biology, Chemistry and Physics topics and receive 2 GCSE grades.

Topics Covered:

Biology

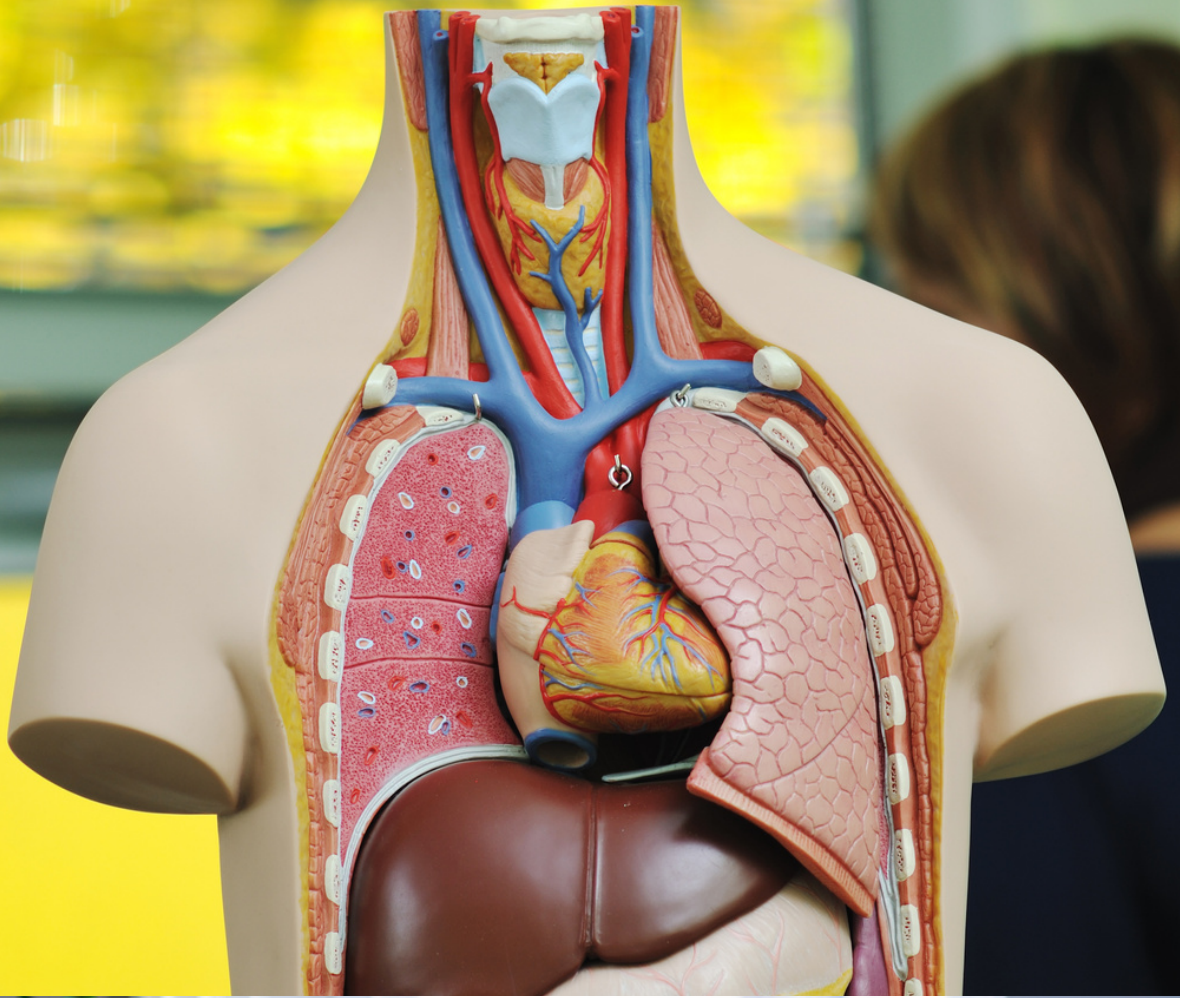
Cells and control
Genetics
Natural selection and genetic modification
Health, disease and the development of medicines
Plant structures and their functions
Animal coordination, control and homeostasis
Exchange and transport in animals
Ecosystems and material cycles

Chemistry

States of matter and mixtures
Chemical changes
Extracting metals and equilibria
Groups in the periodic table
Rates of reaction and energy changes
Fuels and Earth science

Physics

Motion and forces
Conservation of energy
Waves
Light and the EM spectrum
Radioactivity
Forces doing work
Forces and their effects
Electricity and circuits
Magnetism and the motor effect
Electromagnetic induction
The particle model
Forces and matter





Science

Assessment

Combined Science Option:

Paper 1: Biology 1
1h 10mins
16.67% weighting

Paper 2: Biology 2
1h 10mins
16.67% weighting

Paper 3: Chemistry 1
1h 10mins
16.67% weighting

Paper 4: Chemistry 2
1h 10mins
16.67% weighting

Paper 5: Physics 1
1h 10mins
16.67% weighting

Paper 6: Physics 2
1h 10mins
16.67% weighting

Single Science Option:

Biology

Paper 1
1h 45mins
50% weighting

Paper 2
1h 45mins
50% weighting

Chemistry

Paper 1
1h 45mins
50% weighting

Paper 2
1h 45mins
50% weighting

Physics

Paper 1
1h 45mins
50% weighting

Paper 2
1h 45mins
50% weighting

Specification Links

Edexcel: [Combined science](#)

Single Sciences: [Biology](#), [Chemistry](#), [Physics](#)



Computer Science

Why study Computer Science?

GCSE Computer Science will develop your understanding of problem solving with various industries from banking, software engineering to computer programming with opportunities for you to be a computer scientist. The course will provide you with opportunities to study across the globe.

Course Overview & Assessment

Paper 1: Principles of Computer Science

Written examination: 1 hour and 30 minutes
50% of the qualification
75 marks

Topic 1 - computational thinking (algorithms)
Topic 2 - Data (binary, data representation, data storage)
Topic 3 - Computers – (hardware, software, programming languages)
Topic 4: Networks (networks and security)
Topic 5: Issues and impact – emerging trends, ethical, legal and ownership issues.

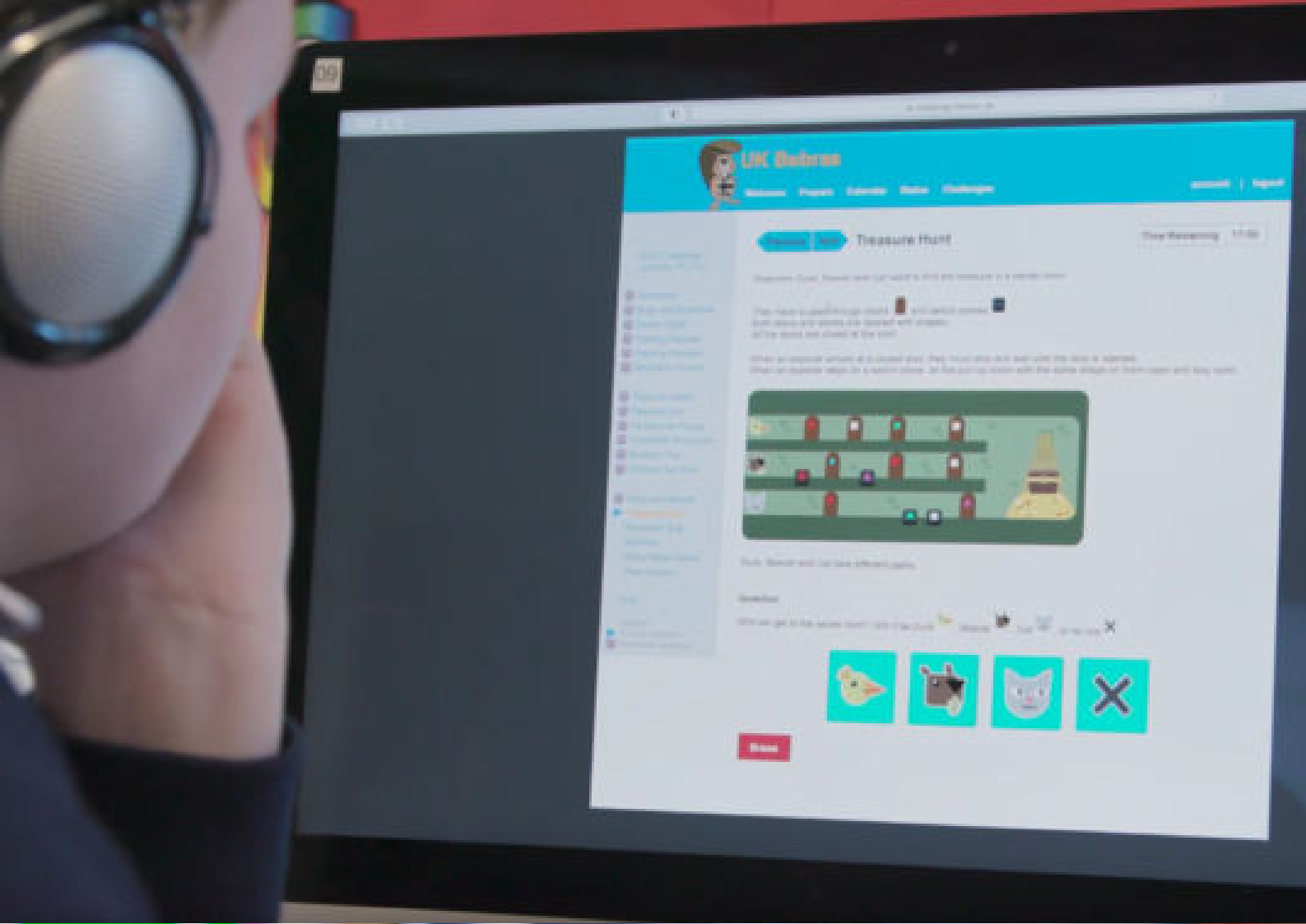
Paper 2: Application of Computational Thinking

Onscreen examination: 2 hours
50% of the qualification
75 marks

This paper will assess Topic 6: Problem solving with programming. The main focus of this paper is: ● understanding what algorithms are, what they are used for and how they work in relation to creating programs ● understanding how to decompose and analyse problems ● ability to read, write, refine and evaluate programs.

Courses based on this specification should enable students to:

- build on their knowledge, understanding and skills established through the computer science elements of the programme of study for computing at Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4
- enable students to progress into further learning and/or employment
- understand and apply the fundamental principles and concepts of computer science, including abstraction, decomposition, logic, algorithms, and data representation
- analyse problems in computational terms through practical experience of solving such problems, including designing, writing and debugging programs
- think creatively, innovatively, analytically, logically and critically
- understand the components that make up digital systems, and how they communicate with one another and with other systems
- understand the impacts of digital technology on the individual and to wider society
- apply mathematical skills relevant to computer science



Arts

Art & Design

Drama

Music



Art & Design

Why study Art & Design?

Art, Craft and Design promotes learning across a variety of experiences and through various processes, tools, techniques, materials and resources to generate different kinds of evidence of working and outcomes. The emphasis is on an increased breadth of approach commensurate in demand with the depth of other specialist titles.

Course Overview

Possible areas of study include:

- Drawing
- Installation
- Lens and light-based media
- Mixed Media
- Land Art
- Printing
- Painting
- Sculpture
- Textiles.

Work is not limited to one area of study.

Students are required to develop and apply relevant subject-specific skills in order to use visual language to communicate personal ideas, meanings and responses. They must, over time, reflect critically upon their creative journey and its effectiveness in relation to the realisation of their personal intentions. Students can work entirely in digital media (including digital photography) or entirely in non-digital media, or in a mixture of both, provided the aims and assessment objectives are met.

Assessment

Unit 1: Portfolio 60% of qualification: 120 marks

Unit 2: Externally Set Assignment 40% of qualification: 80 marks

Part 1: Preparatory study period

Part 2: 10 hour period of sustained focus work*

[Art & Design Exam Board Link](#)





Drama

Why study Drama?

In GCSE Drama, you have the opportunity to develop performance skills, or design skills including set design, sound and puppetry. You will be equipped with confidence and experience that will enable you to you to excellent communicators!

Course Overview & Assessment

The subject content for GCSE Drama is divided into three components:

1. Understanding drama: Learn about set plays and live theatre production
2. Devising drama: choose to be assessed as either a performer, lighting designer, sound designer, costume designer or puppet designer and create a performance for an audience
3. Texts in practice: develop ability to interpret texts, create and communicate meaning, realise artistic intention in text-based drama.

Assessment

Understanding drama

- Assessed through an exam at the end of Year 11. The exam is worth 40% of the grade and tests:
- 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

Devising drama

- Assessed through a devising log and a live performance and worth 40% of the exam. You will be assessed on:
- Process of creating devised drama
- Performance of devised drama (students may contribute as performer or designer)
- Analysis and evaluation of own work

Texts in Practise

- Performance of two extracts from one play (students may contribute as performer or designer)
- This coursework is worth 20% of the final grade

[Drama Exam Board Link](#)





Music

Why study Music?

GCSE Music allows you to explore a wide range of musical styles and contexts. You will develop core skills in musical performance, composition and musical understanding whilst reflecting on how music is used in the expression of personal and collective identities.

Course Overview & Assessment

The Subject content is divided into the three components:

- Understanding music (exam): Study of the Western classical tradition 1650–1910, Popular music, Traditional music, and Western classical tradition since 1910.
- Performing music (coursework): Develop performance practice on chosen instrument or voice resulting in a final performance as a soloist and part of an ensemble.
- Composing music (coursework): Learn composition skills before creating two contrasting pieces of music using music technology to record and develop ideas.

Assessment

- **Understanding music**

You will sit an exam at the end of Year 11 that assesses your listening skills and contextual understanding. The exam is worth 40% of your final grade. The exam paper includes listening exercises and written questions using excerpts of music.

- **Performance**

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

This coursework is worth 30% of your final grade.

- **Composition**

Create two compositions, one to a brief and another free choice. This coursework is worth 30% of your final grade

[Music Exam Board Link](#)



Humanities

Business

Geography

History

Religious Studies

Sociology



Business

Why study Business?

If you want a real insight into the way the Business world works, GCSE Business is a great starting point. The course will give you an overview of the way real-life businesses operate and will equip you with the skills and knowledge needed for the world of business. The course content is relevant for a range of careers within industry, but also teaches vital skills needed across the curriculum.

Course Overview

Business analyses and evaluates the decisions that firms have to make in order to achieve their business objectives. The course focuses on starting and running your own business in Year 10 and will cover topics such as marketing and financing your own Business. In Year 11 the course focuses on managing and building larger businesses and will cover topics such as motivating and managing employees and the role of the economy.

Assessment

Theme 1: Investigating small business (50% of GCSE) This unit introduces students to the main concepts of Business including marketing, cash flow, managing staff, legislation and many more. The exam will consist of short and extended-writing questions.

Theme 2: Building a Business (50% of GCSE) Theme 2 examines how a business develops beyond the start-up phase. It focuses on the key concepts, issues and decisions used to grow a business, with an emphasis on aspects of marketing, operations, finance and human operations. It also considers the impacts of the economy and globalisation. The exam will consist of short and extended-writing questions.

There is no controlled assessment; the course will be assessed entirely by exam. A strong aptitude in Maths is required, as 10% of the subject marks are allocated to quantitative skills.



Geography

Why study Geography?

Geography at GCSE is a relevant and fascinating subject which has a number of advantages for students wishing to know more about the world around them. Some of the benefits of studying GCSE geography include:

Enquiry-based learning – the specification content is framed by geographical enquiry questions that encourage an investigative approach to each of the key ideas. As part of this enquiry process, students are encouraged to use integrated geographical skills, including appropriate mathematics and statistics, in order to explore geographical questions and issues.

Provides an engaging real-world focus – students are encouraged to make geographical decisions by applying their knowledge, understanding and skills to real-life 21st-century people and environment issues.

Course Overview and Assessment

Course overview/what will I study?

Component 1: Global Geographical Issues

Component 2: UK Geographical Issues

Component 3: People and Environment Issues – Making Geographical Decisions

Assessment

1. An externally-assessed written exam with three 30-mark sections.

Section A: Hazardous Earth

Section B: Development dynamics

Section C: Challenges of an urbanising world.

2. An externally-assessed written exam with three sections. Section A: The UK's evolving physical landscape Section B: The UK's evolving human landscape Section C: Geographical investigations.

3. An externally-assessed written exam with four sections. Section A: People and the biosphere Section B: Forests under threat Section C: Consuming energy resources Section D: Making a geographical decision.



History

Why study History?

History at GCSE is, quite simply, a marvellous subject. Students focus on some of the major international events of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries and develop an understanding of how these events have shaped the world that we live in today. Life doesn't really get any better.

History equips students with a plethora of skills which are of use within the modern world. For instance, they will need to be analytical and critical and will learn to question everything that they read, see and hear. They will develop a working understanding of the History of the Twentieth Century, and this will, in turn, allow them to understand global politics and relationships today.

Course Overview

Thematic and Historic Environment

Warfare and British society, c1250–present and London and the Second World War, 1939–45.

Period Study and British Depth Study

Henry VIII and his ministers, 1509–40 and Superpower relations and the Cold War, 1941–91

Modern Depth Study

Weimar and Nazi Germany, 1918–39

Assessment

Paper 1: Written examination: 1 hour and 15 minutes, 30%* of the qualification, 52 marks (16 for the historic environment, 36 for the thematic study)

Paper 2: Written examination: 1 hour and 45 minutes, 40%* of the qualification, 64 marks (32 for the period study and 32 for the British depth study)

Paper 3: Written examination: 1 hour and 20 minutes, 30%* of the qualification, 52 marks

[Edexcel History Link](#)



Religious Studies

Why study Religious Studies?

Religious Studies gives students an appreciation of different cultures, beliefs and worldviews. It engenders an open-minded curiosity about how we experience the world and choose to live in it.

Religious Studies develops skills in self-reflection, curiosity, critical thinking and communication. It enables students to enter careers in the Arts and Humanities.

Course Overview and Assessment

The course asks students to compare two religions, in the case Christianity and Buddhism.

Component 1: Beliefs teaching and Practices

Component 2: Thematic studies (four of six)

Theme A: Relationships and families.

Theme B: Religion and life.

Theme C: The existence of God and revelation.

Theme D: Religion, peace and conflict.

Theme E: Religion, crime and punishment.

Theme F: Religion, human rights and social justice

Assessment

Two written exams, one on each component. Each written exam:

1 hour 45 minutes

96 marks, plus 3 marks for spelling, punctuation and grammar (SPaG)



Sociology

Why study Sociology?

Sociology is the study of our fascinating society – how it works, why it works, and how it could change. Sociology gives students the opportunity to understand the key events of our time and how they are influenced by the forces and institutions that shape the modern world.

Sociology gives students important academic skills, including; analytical thinking, reasoning and research skills.

It also equips students with a better understanding of the social world, including; reasons for social differences, the role of social hierarchies, social institutions and exercise of social power.

This in turn allows students to better understand their own experiences, recognising their role in society and developing motivation to change society for the better.

Course Overview & Assessment

Course overview/what will I study?

1. The sociological approach
2. Social structures, social processes and social issues
3. Families
4. Education
5. Crime and deviance
6. Social stratification
7. Sociological research methods

Assessment

Component 1: The Sociology of Family and Education

Component 2: The Sociology of Crime and Deviance and Social Stratification

Two written exams, one on each component. Each written exam:

- Written exam: 1 hour 45 minutes
- 100 marks

Questions: Section A has two multiple choice questions followed by a range of short and extended responses.

[AQA Sociology Link](#)

Languages

French

Spanish

Latin



French and/or Spanish

Why study a language?

- Speaking more than one language allows you to communicate and connect with more people and create friendships in our international city.
- There is a higher demand for professionals with linguistic skills and speaking more than one language gives you a competitive advantage.
- Learning languages creates more connections in your brain and improves your cognitive and problem solving skills.
- It deepens your understanding of other cultures, increasing empathy, tolerance and widening your perspective of the world.
- Travelling is easier as it opens doors to discovering more things and communicating better with the locals.
- French is the only language spoken in five continents and one the most spoken foreign languages in London.
- French is the language of arts and culture and one of the two official languages of the United Nations, NATO, UNESCO and other international organizations.
- France and Spain have strong links with the UK and they are both popular holiday destinations for many UK residents.
- Spanish is the second most spoken language in the world and the most spoken language in the Americas.
- Spanish is considered one of the easiest languages to learn and it has similarities with French, Italian and Portuguese.

Curriculum Overview

Themes:

- My personal world
- Lifestyle and wellbeing
- My neighbourhood
- Media and technology
- Studying and my future
- Travel and tourism

We encourage pupils to take a language at GCSE, choosing between either French or Spanish. For talented linguists, early entry can also be an option.



French & Spanish

Assessment

All papers draw on vocabulary and structures across all the themes and topics.

Paper 1: Speaking in French/ Spanish

25% of the qualification

Students are assessed on their ability to speak using clear and comprehensible language for a range of audiences and purposes, in different contexts, which are relevant to their current and future needs and interests. There are three tasks; reading aloud a short text, undertaking a role play, describing a picture stimulus and discussion.

Paper 2: Listening and understanding in French/ Spanish

25% of the qualification

Section A: Students are assessed on their understanding of standard spoken French/Spanish by one or more speakers, across a range of formal and informal contexts, and in familiar and unfamiliar settings.

Section B: Dictation. Students are assessed on their ability to transcribe spoken French/Spanish into written French/ Spanish.

Paper 3: Reading and understanding in French/Spanish

25% of the qualification

Students are assessed on their understanding of written texts across a range of formal and informal contexts, and in familiar and unfamiliar settings.

Paper 4: Writing in French/Spanish

25% of the qualification

Students are assessed on their ability to communicate effectively through writing in French/Spanish for different purposes and audiences. Students are required to produce responses of varying lengths and types to express ideas and opinions and translate into French/Spanish.





Latin

Why study Latin?

Latin is a unique and engaging subject which leads to the development of a wide range of transferable skills from clarity of thought and attention to detail to problem solving and analytical thinking. A knowledge of Latin can be useful for careers in Medicine, Law, Architecture and many others. Famous people who studied Classics include J.R.R Tolkien, J.K. Rowling, Boris Johnson, Sigmund Freud and Thomas Jefferson to name a few.

A knowledge of Latin enriches many aspects of the curriculum and is the foundation for modern languages such as French, Spanish and Italian.

Curriculum Overview & Assessment

LANGUAGE

This is a compulsory component. Students build their knowledge of vocabulary and linguistic structures and should become familiar with the vocabulary in the defined vocabulary list and prescribed syntax. A restricted vocabulary list and restricted grammar list will be provided for the translation of the English to Latin sentences. Section A will include a translation (30 marks), a comprehension (20 marks) and grammar questions or English to Latin translation (10 marks). Section B will include a translation (50 marks) and a comprehension (20 marks).

PROSE AND VERSE LITERATURE

Students study a set text or group of texts, totalling between 110 and 120 lines in length. Learners will be asked to translate a short passage of the set text from Latin to English and answer comprehension questions. They will also be required to answer analysis questions and write an extended response which draws upon material from the set text.

The WJEC certificate in Latin Language consists of the following

- Core Latin Language- 67%, examination lasts 1 hr 15 mins.
- Additional Latin Language - 33%, examination lasts 45 mins.

[WJEC exam LINK](#)

Non- examined subjects

Life Skills*

Perspectives*



Compulsory non-examined subjects

At Knightsbridge School, we are proud to provide an all-round education for our pupils, ensuring that they continue to grow in understanding about themselves, others and the world around them. Two key subjects which help us achieve this are Life Skills and Philosophy, Religion and Ethics. They are statutory, but are not examined.

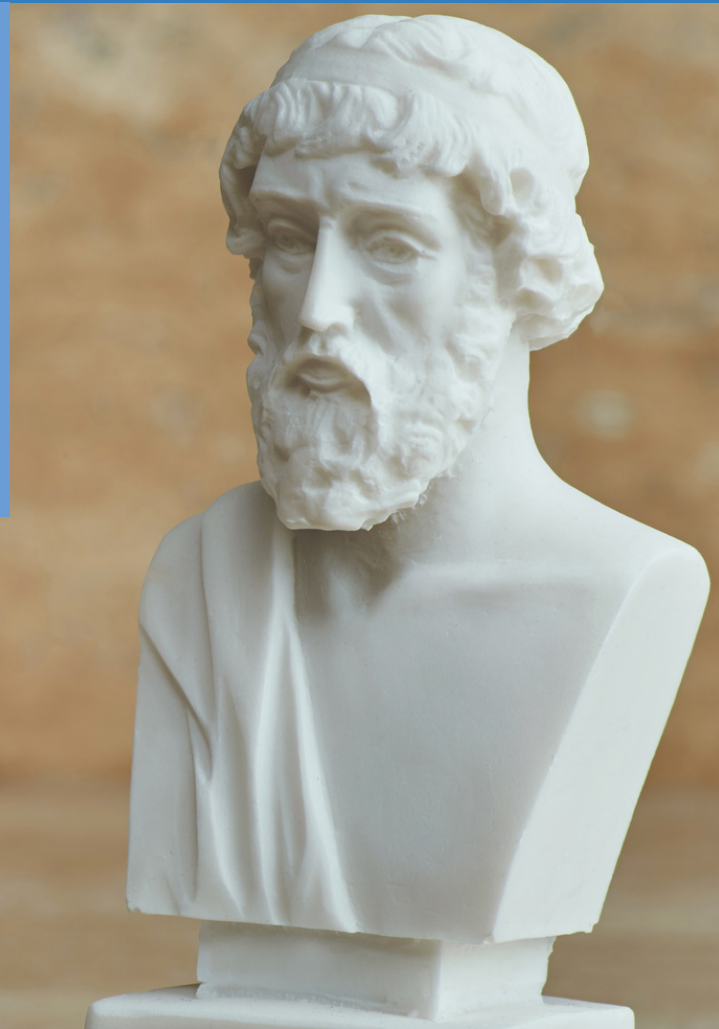
Life Skills

Life Skills is a combined PSHE & RSHE Curriculum. It covers important areas in personal, social, relationship, sex and health education and is divided into three main areas; Keeping Healthy and Safe, Living in the Wider World and Relationships & Identity.

The curriculum is designed in collaboration with the school safeguarding teams to provide a protective syllabus that supports students in keeping themselves and their peers emotionally and physically safe, on and offline.

Perspectives

It can often feel that we live in a polarised world where miscommunication and lack of understanding are common. In order to understand the world we need to understand where our thinking comes from. Society is influenced by religion, cultural traditions, globalisation, political movements and much more. Perspectives allows pupils the opportunity to study, analyse, compare, distinguish and explain the cultural and religious references that have shaped our thinking.





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