



GCSE Options Booklet

2026-2027

Subjects

Art & Design

Business Studies

Classical Civilisation

Computer Science

Drama

English Language*

English Literature*

French

Geography

History

Latin

Maths*

Music

Science*

Sociology

Spanish

* = Compulsory subject



Core

English Literature

English Language

Maths

Science





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

- One literature fiction text

Section B: Writing

- Descriptive or narrative writing

How is it assessed?

- Written exam: 1 hour 45 minutes
- 80 marks
- 50% of GCSE

Exam Paper 2: Non-Fiction Texts

What's assessed?

Section A: Reading

- 2 non-fiction texts (including a 19th Century literary non-fiction text)

Section B: Writing

- Writing to present a viewpoint

How is it assessed?

- Written exam: 1 hour 45 minutes
- 80 marks
- 50% of GCSE





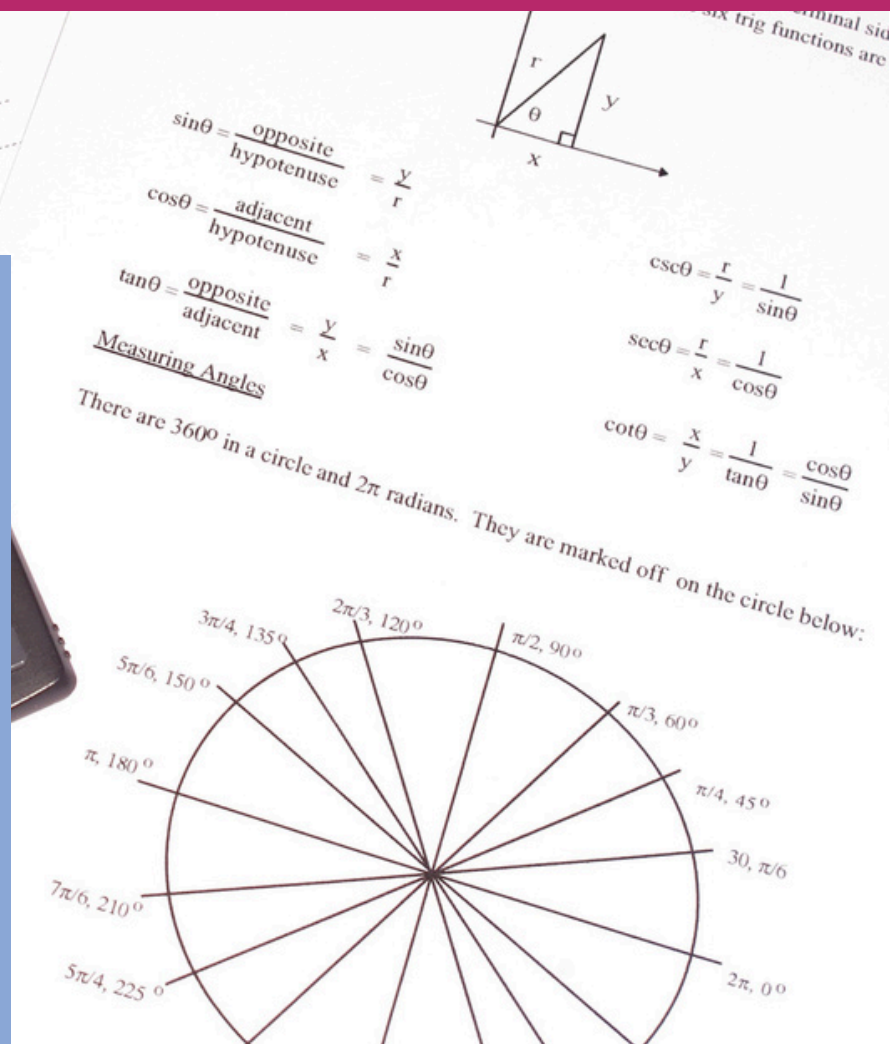
Maths

Maths iGCSE is one of the core qualifications every student must have. More than just a school subject, Mathematics is the underlying language of the universe. It is the ultimate transferable skill; the art of learning to think critically and master complex problem solving. These attributes are highly sought after by employers, opening doors to high-demand careers in fields such as software development, finance, architecture, and engineering.

Course Overview

Topics covered:

Number and the number system
Integers, fractions and decimals
Set language and notation
Powers, roots and standard form
Algebra
Equations, formulae and identities
Inequalities
Sequences, functions and graphs
Differentiation
Geometry
Properties of shapes and angles
Mensuration and calculation
Vectors and transformations
Trigonometry
Statistics
Probability



Examinations

Students will sit iGCSE exams at either Foundation or Higher Level. The Foundation Tier allows students to achieve Grades 1 to 5. Students aiming for the higher grades will take the Higher Tier, reaching Grades 4 to 9. The iGCSE qualification consists of two equally weighted written examination papers at either level. Each is 2 hours long and worth 100 marks: Paper 1 and Paper 2. Calculators are allowed for both papers we teach to Casio fx-85GT CW+; there is no Non-calculator examination.

[Edexcel iGCSE 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. Students 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

Examinations

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
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Chemistry Paper 1 1h 45mins 50% weighting	Paper 2 1h 45mins 50% weighting
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Physics Paper 1 1h 45mins 50% weighting	Paper 2 1h 45mins 50% weighting
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Specification Links

Edexcel: [Combined science](#)

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



Computer Science

Computer Science is a fast-growing field unlocking careers in Tech, Engineering, Finance, and beyond. It fosters problem-solving, creativity, and critical thinking. By studying Computer Science, you'll be ready to shape a future of innovation and opportunity.

Course Overview & Examinations

Paper 1: Principles of Computer Science (Theory paper)

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

This paper will assess:

- Topic 1: Computational thinking
- Topic 2: Data
- Topic 3: Computers
- Topic 4: Networks
- Topic 5: Issues and impact

Paper 2: Application of Computational Thinking (Python Programming)

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

This paper will assess:

Topic 6: Problem solving with programming.

Note: Students are required to make Python programming a committed and regular hobby to build fluency.

What will you learn in Computer Science GCSE?

During this GCSE, you'll develop a strong foundation in several key areas:

- **Algorithms:** Understand what algorithms are, how they work, and their role in solving problems.
- **Problem Solving:** Learn how to decompose and abstract problems, using computational thinking.
- **Programming:** Develop high-level coding skills to write, test, and debug Python programs.
- **Data Representation:** Study binary, hexadecimal, data storage, and compression.
- **Networks:** Learn about network architecture, network threats, and cybersecurity.
- **Impacts and Issues:** Explore the ethical, legal, and environmental impacts of modern computing.
- **The Science Link:** Apply mathematical logic and explore the Physics of computer architecture and microelectronics.

[Edexcel Computer Science Link](#)





Arts

Art & Design

Drama

Music



Examinations

Component 1 is internally assessed and work is then externally moderated. Assessment for **Component 2** is by an external examiner. Students perform their play and are marked on that performance. **Component 3** is a 1 hour 45 minutes written exam.



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

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. Learners must explore practical and relevant critical and contextual sources such as the work of historical and contemporary artists and the different purposes, intentions, and functions as appropriate to their own outcomes.

Examinations

Unit 1: Portfolio

60% of qualification: 120 marks

**Art & Design Exam Board
Link**

Unit 2: Externally Set Assignment

40% of qualification: 80 marks

Part 1: Preparatory study period

Part 2: 10 hour period of sustained focus work*





Drama

Students will have the opportunity to develop and perform their own original devised work, exploring a variety of performance skills and practitioner styles, as well as the writing of published playwrights. Set texts and written responses will require students to articulate how they would perform in certain roles, and design for certain scenes, putting practical work at the heart of this course. A GCSE in drama equips students with valuable, transferable skills beyond acting. It fosters confidence, teamwork, and strong communication abilities, which are beneficial for higher education and the workplace.

Course Overview

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.

Examinations

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 Practice

- 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

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

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 notation software to record and develop ideas.

Examinations

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

Please note that the weekly one-hour composition session is delivered by a specialist in-house teacher and incurs an additional termly charge. To ensure they can fully engage with the course, students should demonstrate a good standard of performance in at least one instrument or voice (approximately Grade 4 to 5 or above level). Students will also need to maintain ongoing one-to-one instrumental/singing lessons and have a grasp of theory comparable to Grade 5. Private lessons are available at Knightsbridge School for an additional fee; please consult the Head of Performing Arts [for more information.](#)

[**Music Exam Board Link**](#)



Humanities

Business Studies

Geography

History

Sociology



Business Studies

If you want a real insight into the way the Business world works, GCSE Business Studies 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 Studies 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.

Examinations

Theme 1: Investigating small business (50% of GCSE) This unit introduces students to the main concepts of business studies 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.

[Edexcel Business Studies Link](#)



History

History at GCSE is, quite simply, a marvellous subject. Students focus on some of the key international events of recent world history, as well as exploring the moments in Britain and Europe's past that influence the modern world, particularly within our popular thematic study.

History provides students with a range of skills which will serve them well throughout adult life. Beyond honing the ability to present their views in analytical writing, young Historians will be challenged to engage with the controversial and the misunderstood. They will develop their ability to 'read between the lines', place their own life experiences within a historical context, and will gain an understanding of the global politics of the modern world.

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

Examinations

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



Geography

Geography at GCSE level is a relevant and fascinating subject which will afford students with the ability to think critically about the world around them.

Throughout GCSE Geography, students shall examine a number of contemporary world issues such as climate change, poverty, deprivation, global shifts in economic power and the challenge of sustainable resource use. Through studying GCSE Geography students shall gain an understanding of the complex human and physical processes which have shaped the world around us, all the while being challenged to consider their own role in shaping the world around them.

Course Overview and Assessment

Course overview/what will I study?

1. Living with the physical environment:
 - The challenge of natural hazards
 - The living world
 - Physical landscapes of the UK
2. Challenges in the human environment
 - Urban issues and challenges
 - The changing economic world
 - The Challenge of resource management
3. Geographical applications and skills
 - Issue evaluation
 - Fieldwork

Assessment

Paper 1: Living with the physical environment.

A written examination that is 1 hour and 30 minutes long. It has 88 marks and is worth 35% of the GCSE

Paper 2: Challenges in the human environment.

A written examination that is 1 hour and 30 minutes long. It has 88 marks and is worth 35% of the GCSE

Paper 3: Geographical applications

A written examination that is 1 hour and 30 minutes long. It has 76 marks and is worth 30% of the GCSE.



Classical Civilisation

Classical Civilisation is a fascinating subject that explores the myths, literature, history, and art of the ancient world, offering insight into cultures that shaped modern society. It develops valuable skills like analysis, critical thinking, and communication, and provides a strong foundation for further studies in the Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences.

Curriculum and Assessment

Component 1: Students study Myth and Religion or Women in the Ancient World and conduct a comparative study of ancient Greece and Rome, and combine literary and visual/material sources.

Component 2: Students study one of the following themes and undertake both an in-depth cultural study and a study of related literature:

- The Homeric World
- Roman City Life
- War and Warfare

The OCR certificate in Classical Civilisation consists of the following

Component 1: Thematic study, 50% , 1 hour 30 minutes written paper

Component 2: Literature and Culture, 50%, 1 hour 30 minutes written paper

[OCR Classical Civilisation Link](#)



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 & Examinations

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.



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Languages

French

Spanish

Latin



Languages

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 and 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 of 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.

Course 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

Examinations

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

Latin GCSE offers a unique opportunity to explore the language, literature, and culture of ancient Rome while developing key skills in translation, analysis, and comprehension. Knowledge of Latin enhances English language skills, strengthens reasoning abilities, and develops a wide range of transferable skills, including clarity of thought, attention to detail, problem-solving, and analytical skills. The study of Latin provides a strong foundation for further studies in the Arts, Humanities, Sciences, Law, Medicine, Architecture, and Modern Languages. Famous individuals who studied Classics include J.R.R. Tolkien, J.K. Rowling, Boris Johnson, Sigmund Freud, and Thomas Jefferson, to name a few.

Curriculum Overview & Assessment

Component 1: 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.

Section A:	Section B: Grammar (10 marks)
Comprehension 1 (20 marks)	
Translation (35 marks)	
Comprehension 2 (35 marks)	

Component 2: Latin Literature and Sources Students study a group of texts on Heroes and Villains or Roman Dinner and should be able to analyse and respond to aspects of literary style, including elements such as choice of words and word order, sound effects, rhythm in verse passages, and common literary devices. They should also demonstrate an awareness of the cultural and social context of the topics and be able to select and evaluate evidence from across the theme to respond to an extended evaluative question.

Component 3: Roman Civilisation Students should be able to demonstrate knowledge of Slavery in the Roman World or Roman Festivals and Worship, analyse and respond to ancient source material, and evaluate evidence from across the topic to answer an extended evaluative question.

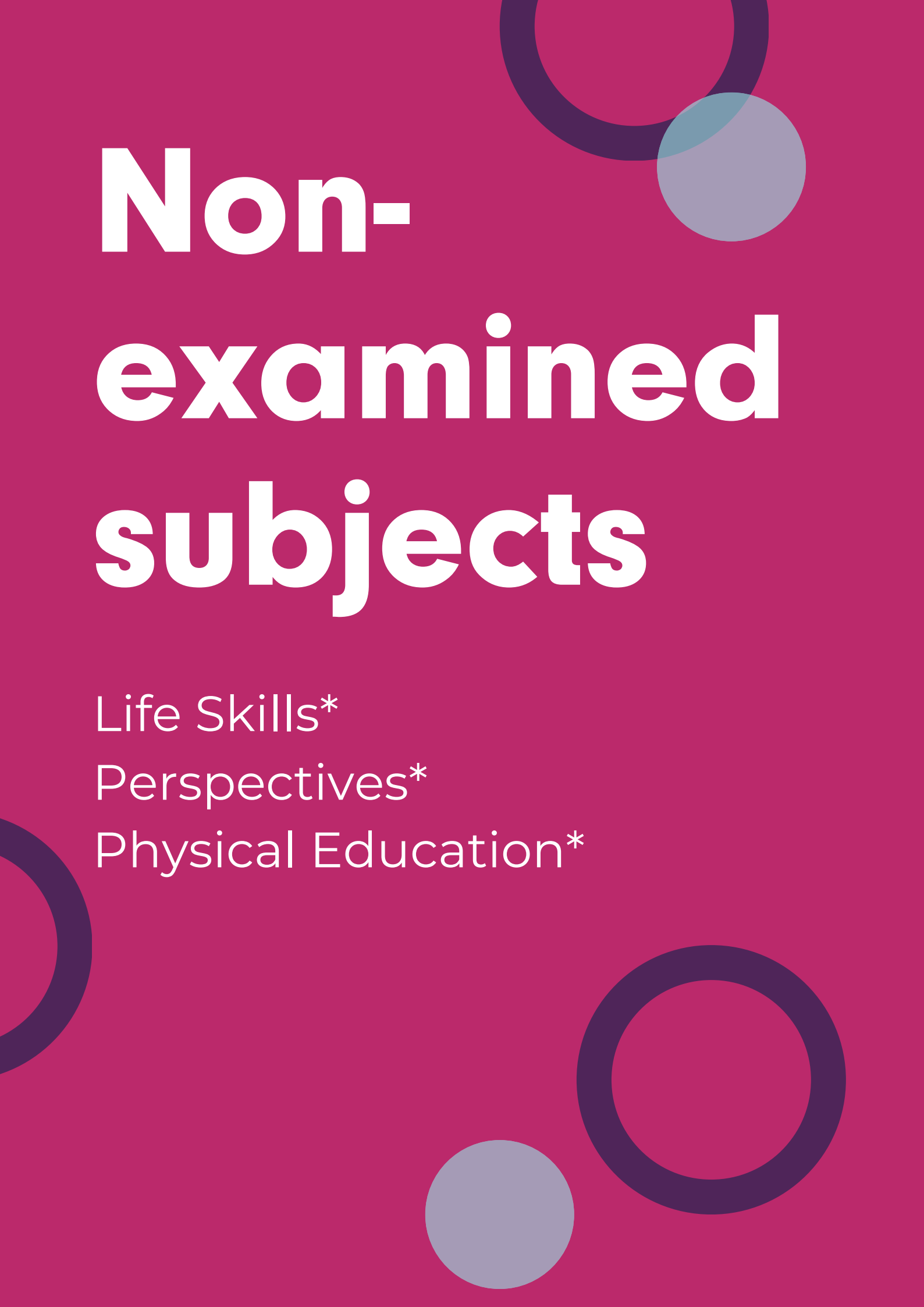
The WJEC certificate in Latin Language consists of the following:

Language: 50%, examination lasts 1hr and 30 mins.

Literature: 30%, examination lasts 1 hr and 15 mins.

Roman Civilisation: 20%, examination lasts 1 hr.

[WJEC exam LINK](#)



Non- examined subjects

Life Skills*

Perspectives*

Physical Education*



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 themselves, others and the world around them. Key subjects which help us achieve this are Life Skills, Perspectives and Physical Education. 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.



Physical Education

We believe that physical education is essential to the development of the whole child. It provides the opportunity to promote self-esteem, confidence and build character strengths including perseverance, resilience, teamwork and leadership. Within Year 10 and 11 students develop their theoretical knowledge and apply this practically in a leadership and coaching role. Sports Leadership is a recognised qualification nationally and at Knightsbridge School we give students the opportunity to coach and lead students in our junior school and locally within the Borough of Kensington and Chelsea.



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SCHOOL**



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