

### Key Stage 4 Curriculum Booklet





# The spirit of GES



Key Stage 4 is the phase of secondary education that leads to the set of GCSE examinations taken at the age of 16.

As they enter Year 10, students are ready to engage with ideas, knowledge and research in a way that deepens their understanding of the complexities and wonders of our world. At the same time, they continue to develop the attributes of curiosity, collaboration, community, creativity and commitment that will be essential for life in a rapidly changing and increasingly interconnected global society. Whilst continuing to study a broad range of subjects, they make choices to suit their individual skills, interests and talents. This is a period in which students begin to think deeply about their own identity, their values, their place in the world, and the directions in which life might take them.

Our secondary school is going from strength to strength. With the help of an extraordinarily talented team of staff and a wonderful group of students, we have built a truly stimulating learning environment and community of enquiry. We are excited to be launching the Key Stage 4 curriculum described in this booklet, which will in turn lead on to an innovative and wide-ranging A-Level Diploma programme for post-16 studies. Come and join us on this journey of learning, discovery and fun!

TIM MEUNIER, HEAD





# Taking the next step



At GES, Key Stage 4 (Years 10 and 11) is an important and challenging phase of our students' education. With this transition, they take a big step towards adulthood. The qualifications awaiting them at the end of Year 11 are a key part of their development, and achieving them will challenge them in a variety of different and interesting ways.

KS4 requires students to step up and to demonstrate their determination, intelligence and resilience. GCSEs and IGCSEs are designed to play a large part in shaping future educational and career opportunities: they pave the way to our GES A-Level Diploma programme at Key Stage 5 (Years 12 and 13).

Students at GES work hard, take responsibility for their own learning and are organised. Not only do we encourage our students to focus on their studies, but we also help them to maintain a healthy balance in their lives though finding time to exercise, pursue interests and sleep. We believe that achieving this life/work balance is a key life skill and essential to a successful and happy future.

CATHERINE PEART, DEPUTY HEAD







### Introduction

The General Certificate of Secondary Education, or GCSE, is a set of externally assessed exams sat by all secondary school students in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, usually at the age of 16. Each GCSE qualification is in a particular subject, and stands alone, but a suite of such qualifications is widely accepted around the world as the record of achievement at the age of 16. There is not a fixed number of examinations that have to be taken, but in order to show evidence of a broad and balanced education, students generally sit a minimum of English, maths, science, history or geography, an ancient or modern foreign language, and one other subject.

There are five examination boards that offer GCSE qualifications, four of which are available in England. The IGCSE is an international version of the same qualification: the level of challenge and grading system are the same, but the content in subjects such as history and geography has a rather more global perspective. Between 2015 and 2018, all GCSEs underwent a significant programme of modernisation and reform, and IGCSEs are following suit. GCSEs are now graded on a 9 – 1 scale, include more challenging content, and most subjects have moved away from coursework. Assessment is now generally carried out via examinations at the end of Year 11. Studies for GCSE generally take place over two or three years, starting in Year 9 or Year 10.

Many international schools offer just the IGCSE examinations – and often through a single examination board. At GES, we have allowed Heads of Department the flexibility to select the GCSE or IGCSE course that they feel is most interesting, stimulating and relevant to our context.

#### Why do we study GCSEs at GES?

Our GCSE programme encourages focused study of a rigorous academic curriculum. Targeting success in examinations at the end of Year 11 allows you to develop your independent study skills, take responsibility for your education, develop maturity and self-motivation, improve time management and learn how to manage pressure and deadlines. These are key skills that will help you to excel not only in the courses that you will take at KS5 (post-16), but also at university and in the world of work.

OLD GRADES	NEW GRADES
<b>A</b> *	9 8
Α	7
В	6 5
С	4
D	3
E	2
F	1
G	'
U	U

#### Which subjects are studied at GES?

A combination of IGCSEs and GCSEs in nine subjects, all taught by specialist teachers. The seven examined subjects that all students will take are:

- English Language
- English Literature
- French
- Geography
- History
- Mathematics
- Science\*
- \* Biology, Chemistry and Physics 'Double Award' – equivalent to two GCSEs.

The combined science course provides a broad education in science and scientific literacy for all students, and also enables those who wish to continue their science studies post-16 to do so.

This broad base of core subjects ensures a holistic and rounded education, keeping doors open and preparing our students for any future path that they may choose. In addition, one subject is chosen from each of the two groups below:

#### Option Group 1

- Computer Science
- German
- Spanish

#### **Option Group 2**

- Art & Design
- Drama

Computing, Physical Education and Sport, and PSHCE (Personal, Social, Health, Citizenship and Economic Education) are also mandatory elements of the GES core curriculum. Although unexamined, these courses are fundamental parts of a rounded education.

#### How do I make these choices?

Try to choose option subjects that you are genuinely interested in and will enjoy. Find out as much as you can about the subject before making your choice – you are about to dedicate two years to studying it! Talk to your teachers, parents and other people who know you well for guidance, and do not be afraid to ask questions if you are not sure.

#### How are they assessed?

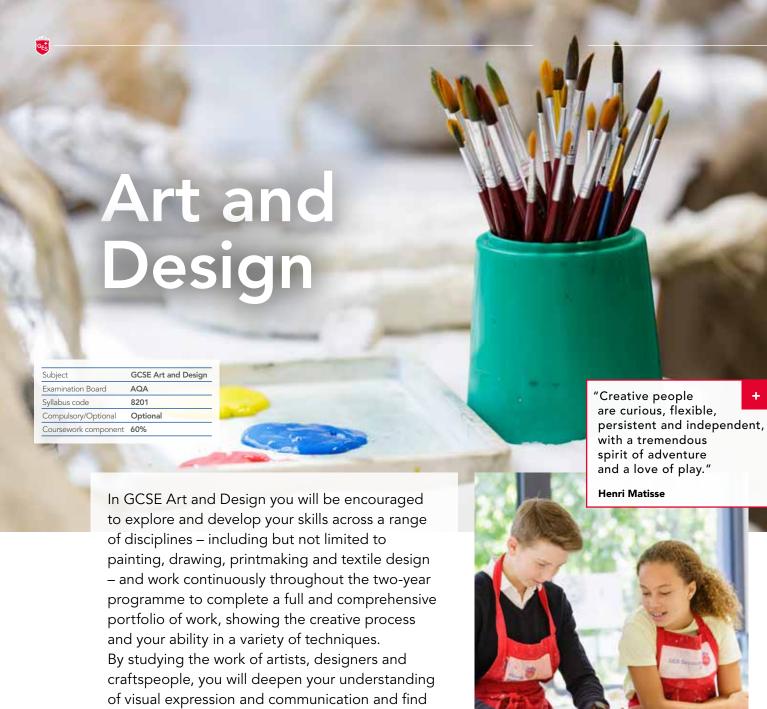
GCSEs and IGCSEs are assessed either by examination, or by a combination of examinations and coursework (assignments completed during the course of study but not under exam conditions).

#### How are they graded?

Students are awarded a grade in each subject on a scale from 9 to 1, with 9 being the highest grade and 1 being the lowest. This system has been introduced recently; for reference, these grades compare with the former grade structure (A-G) as indicated in the table opposite.

The dotted line on the table indicates that we consider grades 4 and above as a satisfactory level of achievement: pupils who do not achieve this level in English and/or mathematics GCSE will be required to continue studying these subjects beyond the age of 16.

Additionally, most UK universities require at least a grade 4 or 5 in English and mathematics. Of course, this is just a minimum requirement; pupils aiming for entry to the most prestigious and competitive universities around the world often achieve grades 8 or 9 in all of their subjects.



#### **Course Assessment**

#### Coursework

Over two years, you will develop an extensive portfolio of work for assessment, guided by selected themes used to explore a range of media and techniques. This will account for 60% of the overall grade.

#### Externally set assignment

The examination board provides a selection of titles from which you will choose one as your starting point. With approximately two months to prepare, you will create preparatory sheets to use as guidance during an exam period of focused study (ten hours over two days). During this time you will produce a final piece for submission, along with the preparatory sheets, for final assessment. This will account for 40% of the overall grade.

#### Skills for the future

The core competencies developed through the study of this course – curiosity, persistence, discipline, collaboration and creativity – are essential skills for any career, and if you can arrange, present and display material in a way that is aesthetically pleasing, you may have an advantage.

This subject is also important for applying to study a wide range of art-related courses from fine art painting, architecture and sculpture to graphic design, illustration, theatre/film/television costume and set design, web and software design, industrial design and photography. It is also useful in the fields of art history, museum and gallery conservation and curation, to name but a few!

Finally Art and Design fills the soul. The freedom to experiment and work with your hands awakens your imagination and offers an escape into peaceful work flow.

inspiration for your own work.



## Computer Science

This course will introduce you to the core principles of computer science and develop your problemsolving and computational thinking skills. Building on knowledge of visual programming languages (such as Scratch) you will study widely used textual programming languages such as Python, Java and HTML as well as emerging trends in computing technologies and their impact on individuals, society and the environment. You will also learn about systems, networks, the Internet and web technology, as well as the ethical, legal and ownership issues related to the development of new technologies.

You will learn to apply computational thinking in context, for example, spotting and executing data journalism stories, using pattern recognition to identify gender balance in movies, and even using data abstraction to compare tweets from celebrities.

Subject	GCSE Computer Science
Examination Board	Edexcel
Syllabus code	1CP1
Compulsory/Optional	Optional
Coursework component	N/A





#### Assessment

Assessment is in the form of two examinations and a programming project, which does not count towards your final grade but must be completed to fulfil the requirements of the qualification.

**Paper 1:** Principles of Computer Science (1 hour and 40 minutes): 50%

**Paper 2:** Application of Computational Thinking (2 hours): 50%

#### Skills for the future

Knowledge and understanding of how technology works will be invaluable to you whatever path you choose next, and the technical and problem-solving skills you gain are highly transferable to other subjects (such as mathematics, science and engineering) as well as to a number of careers. In addition, should you wish to continue studying computer science, the rigorous approach to the subject at GCSE level will enable you to transition smoothly to the next level.



## Computing

(non-examined)

Subject	Computing (non-examined)
Examination Board	N/A
Syllabus code	N/A
Compulsory/Optional	Compulsory
Coursework component	N/A

You will spend an hour each week studying computing (regardless of whether or not you elect for computer science).

The course explores how digital technology impacts on the lives of individuals, organisations and society.

You will learn about both current and emerging digital technologies and the issues raised by their use in a range of contexts. An awareness of the inherent risks of using ICT and the features of safe, secure and responsible practice will also be developed.

Units of work covered in this subject will include graphic design, music technology, e-safety, components & networks, algorithms and sequencing. Microsoft Office and web authoring software will also be used extensively to enable you to present your work professionally across the curriculum at Key Stage 4 and beyond.

#### Assessment

This unit of work will not be formally assessed.

#### Skills for the future

This course will ensure that you become digitally literate, able to express yourself and develop your ideas through information and communication technology – essential skills for inhabitants of a digital world and for the workplace of the future.





#### Assessment

### Written examination: 1 hour and 45 minutes (40%) – Understanding Drama

This paper tests your knowledge and understanding of how drama and theatre are developed and performed by testing your understanding and knowledge of a set play and your ability to analyse and evaluate live theatre and the work of others.

### Practical and coursework portfolio (40%) – Devising Drama

In this practical assessment component, you will be assessed on three key areas:

- Your ability to create and develop ideas for communicating meaning in theatrical performance;
- Your application of theatrical skills in realising artistic intentions in live performance;
- Your ability to analyse and evaluate your own work.

#### Texts in practice (20%) - Practical

You will be assessed on your ability to interpret texts, create and communicate meaning, and apply theatrical skills to realise artistic intentions in live performance through two tasks:

- Study and present a key extract (monologue, duologue or group performance);
- Study and present a second key extract (monologue, duologue or group performance) from the same play.

#### Skills for the future

Drama develops teamwork, decision-making, communication and presentation skills, as well as helping to build confidence – all of which are invaluable and highly relevant both to future study and the world of work.





Subject	GCSE English Language
Examination Board	AQA
Syllabus code	8700
Compulsory/ Optional	Compulsory
Coursework component	None







You will continue to develop the essential skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening. By reading a wide range of fiction and non-fiction texts from the 19th-21st centuries, as well as other types of writing such as reviews and journalism, you will learn to understand, analyse and evaluate texts in order to identify bias, themes, genre and perspective.

You will also learn how to write and speak effectively and coherently for different purposes and audiences. Through the development of your reading and writing skills, you will improve your use of formal, standard English, grammar, punctuation and spelling, expand your vocabulary and knowledge and understanding of grammatical terminology, as well as linguistic conventions for reading, writing and spoken language.

#### Examination

You will sit two examinations:

Paper 1: Explorations in Creative Reading and Writing

(1 hour and 45 minutes)

Paper 2: Writers' Viewpoints and Perspectives

(1 hour and 45 minutes)

There is also an unexamined component on Spoken Language that focuses on public speaking and listening skills.

#### Skills for the future

A qualification in English Language demonstrates that you have the key skills - reading, writing, speaking and listening - fundamental skills for any future studies or profession. English can literally take you anywhere!





canon of English Literature including Shakespeare's Macbeth, Orwell's Animal Farm, Stevenson's The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde, Priestley's An Inspector Calls and a fantastic Power and Conflict poetry anthology. You will examine some key global themes and analyse many aspects of life, society and the human condition. Our critical reading will be focused on plot, character, theme, genre and structure. You will also enrich your understanding of the text by exploring the writer's social, historical and cultural context.

"Once you allow yourself to identify with the people in a story, then you might begin to see yourself in that story even if on the surface it's far removed from your situation. This is one great thing literature can do – it can make us identify with situations and people far away."

Chinua Achebe

You will learn to distinguish between what is stated explicitly and what is implied, and the impact and effect of this, as well us studying the writer's craft – evaluating choices with regards to language, form and structure using linguistic and literary terminology – and comparing and contrasting different texts.

Finally, you will develop your ability to produce formal, academic and well-structured writing for a range of purposes, such as to argue, evaluate and analyse, using detailed textual references.

#### Course Assessment

#### Examination

You will sit two examinations:

Paper 1: Shakespeare and the 19th Century Novel

(1 hour and 45 minutes)

Paper 2: Modern Texts and Poetry
(2 hours and 15 minutes)

#### Skills for the future

You will develop your ability to analyse critically and communicate clearly – both vital skills for your future studies and a wide range of careers. Moreover, by studying texts about all aspects of life, society and the human condition, you will develop empathy for a range of different perspectives, become more aware of your context, and hopefully better navigate your way through life.



French

The French courses at GES are suited to all learners: whether you are in the early stages of your French learning or are already a fluent speaker, we ensure we meet your individual needs and offer you the support and challenge you need to make the maximum progress you can.

Subject	GCSE French
Examination Board	AQA
Syllabus code	8658
Compulsory/Optional	Optional
Coursework component	None

You will focus on becoming an independent, self-reflective linguist and will develop your communication, written, translation and comprehension skills. All students will sit the internationally recognised GCSE qualification, but this is just part of the course. You will also study literature at a level suited to your learning, develop your research skills, and explore the richness and breadth of the Francophone world in depth. We embed French learning throughout our school life and you will be encouraged to use French outside of the classroom, making the most of life in the Francophone world!

#### Assessment

You will sit four equally weighted examinations:

**Listening** (45 minutes): Students respond to a range of listening activities in English and the foreign language.

**Speaking** (10–12 minutes plus preparation time): Students complete a role-play, a response to a photograph and have a conversation related to the GCSE topics.

**Reading** (1 hour): Students respond to a range of written texts and complete a translation from the foreign language into English.

**Writing** (1 hour and 15 minutes): Students complete two writing tasks and a translation from English into the foreign language.

"If you talk to a man in a language he understands, that goes to his head. If you talk to him in his own language, that goes to his heart."

Nelson Mandela



#### Skills for the future

Linguists are very sought after because they have such a breadth of skills. In addition to linguistic knowledge, you will become equipped to think critically, solve problems, make decisions, take risks, be flexible and think creatively. Linguists appreciate diversity and have a keen awareness of social responsibility. You will also have an enhanced understanding of your own language and become a great communicator, equipped for life in a globalised world.

# German and Spanish

GCSE German and Spanish will enable you to become an active, independent and resilient language learner, who enjoys and values the importance of languages in our global society.

The courses focus on empowering competent language learners, who have a real understanding of key grammar, as well as a wide vocabulary and the ability to manipulate the language for their own uses. You will explore the rich cultures of our languages in great depth and we place great importance on connecting with the German- and Spanish-speaking worlds.

The courses complement the French course perfectly as the skills gained and exam techniques align. You will learn to speak spontaneously, translate, write accurately and at length and access challenging audio and written texts. All this will be taught through current and relevant topics, such as technology, sport, education, social media and social and global issues. In such a way our pupils will be equipped for a future of multilingual living.

#### Assessment

You will sit four equally weighted examinations:

Listening (45 minutes): Students respond to a range of listening activities in English and the foreign language.

Speaking (10–12 minutes plus preparation time): Students complete a role-play, a response to a photograph and have a conversation related to the GCSE topics.

Reading (1 hour): Students respond to a range of written texts and complete a translation from the foreign language into English.

Writing (1 hour and 15 minutes): Students complete two writing tasks and a translation from English into the foreign language.

#### Skills for the future

With the increasingly global nature of our world, there has never been a more important time to become a linguist – and the more languages the better! You will develop invaluable skills for life, including communication, improved memory, multi-tasking, perceptivity, problem-solving and creativity. These will not only make you an invaluable asset to any workplace, but you will also be able to enrich your life experiences by travelling and connecting with other cultures and people and accessing incredible world literature and philosophy.



Subject GCSE German or GCSE Spanish

Examination Board AQA

Syllabus code 8668 (German), 8698 (Spanish)

Compulsory/Optional Optional

Coursework component None

#### G<sub>E</sub>S

"The study of geography is about more than just memorising places on a map. It's about understanding the complexity of our world, appreciating the diversity of cultures that exists across continents. And in the end, it's about using all that knowledge to help bridge divides and bring people together."

**Barack Obama** 

## Geography

Subject IGCSE Geography

Examination Board Edexcel

Syllabus code 4GE1

Compulsory/Optional Compulsory

Coursework component 60%

Geography at IGCSE level involves learning about the world and your place within it, as well as current environmental and humanitarian challenges. You will expand your understanding of geographical processes and of the impact of change and complex people—environment interaction, topics that are at the heart of determining our planet's future.

You will also develop your competence in using a wide range of geographical investigative skills and approaches, becoming well-practised in forming and supporting your opinions with evidence and case studies and making decisions based on your findings.

#### Assessment

You will sit two examination papers (there is no coursework component):

**Paper 1:** Physical Geography (1 hour and 10 minutes)

**Paper 2:** Human Geography (1 hour and 45 minutes) The papers will contain a variety of question types including multiple-choice, short and extended answer questions, graphical and data questions, and fieldwork questions.

#### Skills for the future

The skills you develop in geography are transferable to just about any and every other subject: literacy (communication and teamwork); technical skills (research and analysis); and numeracy. Geographers are known for their ability to apply theories to real-world places, people and environments and are therefore highly sought after in a number of professions.





You will develop the skills, methods and conceptual understanding used by historians in their arguments: the interplay of change and continuity; the complexity of causation and human motivation; the relationship between evidence and interpretation; and the provisional nature of the significance accorded to different people, events and developments.

#### Assessment

You will sit two written examinations, and there is no additional coursework.

Paper 1: Depth Studies (1 hour and 30 minutes)

**Paper 2:** Investigation and Breadth Studies (1 hour and 30 minutes)

#### Skills for the future

The disciplinary skills of a historian can lead anywhere: the ability to analyse critically and communicate are invaluable in a wide range of subjects and careers. Moreover, studying history encourages us to ask and answer important questions about our increasingly complex world.

This course has been designed specifically for international schools, with content that examines diverse periods in history and events of global significance. You will focus on the twentieth century and the major ideas, events, conflicts and trends that have shaped the world we live in today. In particular, you will examine the changing role of international organisations – an area of study that will be greatly enhanced by our community and locality.



Mathematics

Mathematics is not a discrete set of facts but a vast interrelated web of ideas and strategies, which build on top of each other to enable you to solve increasingly complex problems as your understanding of the subject grows.

Subject	GCSE Mathematics
Examination Board	AQA
Syllabus code	8300
Compulsory/Optional	Compulsory
Coursework component	0%

You will already have a good idea of what GCSE maths will consist of because you have learned to work with number, algebra, geometry and statistics. At GCSE level, you will spend less time working solely on number, and more time making links between algebra and geometry.

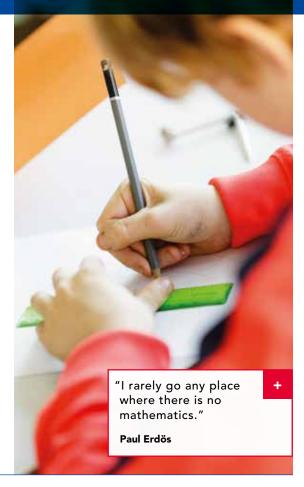
For example, you will learn to use graphs to solve quadratic equations, use algebra to find the base radius of a cone and learn to think of trigonometric ratios as functions.

#### Assessment

You will sit three exams, each lasting 1 hour 30 minutes, which will enable you to demonstrate the wide range of mathematical skills you have developed over the past ten or more years.

#### Skills for the future

Mathematicians are key individuals in a wide variety of roles in today's world because of their ability to spot patterns, think abstractly and to generalise concepts. People who have studied maths at university occupy top positions at companies from Google and Facebook, UBS and Deloitte to Aston Martin. As high-tech industries grow, these will be ever more in demand. After GCSE, you can progress to A-level mathematics, where you will develop your skills and knowledge still further, apply them to problems in physics, and work with large sets of data.







This programme will support you in fulfilling your academic potential and staying safe and healthy, both physically and mentally. It aims to prepare you for life and work beyond the classroom. You will develop the knowledge, skills and attributes that will help you to respond when faced with critical opportunities and challenges, both now and in the future.

This course follows the guidance of the British PSHE Association and is built around three core themes:

- Health and Wellbeing
- Relationships
- Living in the Wider World

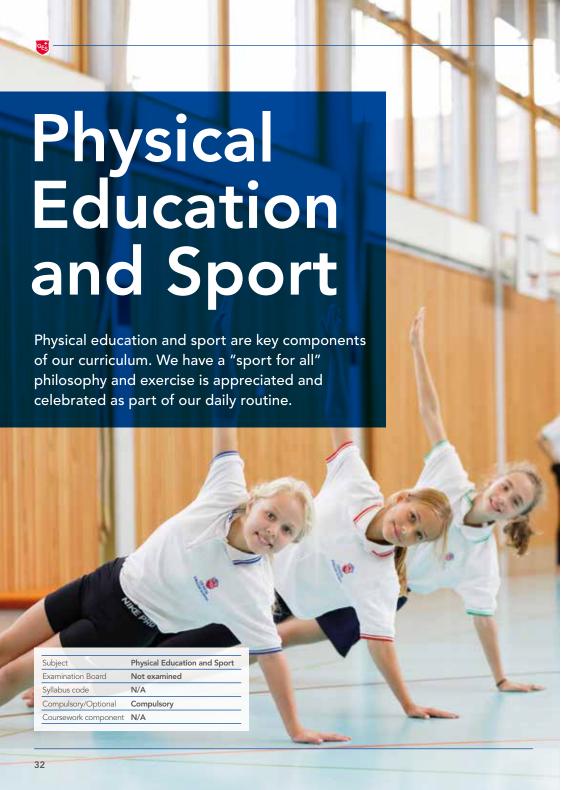
You will also explore options for further study and careers in more detail, as well as engaging in work experience.

#### Assessment

There is no formal examination for this course but rather ongoing internal assessment.

#### Skills for the future

You will develop the skills that will help you ensure that your future will be safe, healthy and happy!



Throughout Key Stage 4, you will have a weekly PE lesson of 1 hour and 30 minutes, with the option of two one-hour sports sessions after school, all led by a specialist teacher.

You will participate in a broad range of sports, including invasion, net and wall, striking, and fielding games, as well as gymnastics and athletics.

#### Assessment

You will be assessed continuously throughout the course on areas such as your developing physical and mental capacity, your ability to replicate accurately, your performance in the various sports, your ability to make and apply decisions, and your choices about a healthy and active lifestyle. There is no examination or formal assessment.

#### Skills for the future

Enjoying a broad and balanced range of physical activities is essential for a healthy and active life and helps equip you with the ability to show initiative and develop teamwork and leadership skills. The ability to reflect on your own performance and the performance of others is another skill that will be useful in many aspects of your future studies and work.

"Lack of activity destroys the good condition of every human being, while movement and methodical physical exercise save it and preserve it."

Plato





Science

Subject	Combined Science: Trilogy
Examination Board	AQA
Syllabus code	8464
Compulsory/Optional	Compulsory
Coursework component	N/A

Scientific understanding is at the heart of human development and is vital to the world's future prosperity. You will study the three core scientific disciplines of biology, chemistry and physics to achieve a 'double GCSE' award (two grades). It will help you appreciate the complexity and diversity of the natural world through a knowledge and understanding of the methods, processes and uses of physical, earth and life science.

"Education is not the learning of facts, but the training of the mind to think."

Albert Einstein

This course is deliberately hands-on and rooted in the belief that curiosity about the natural world, insight into how science works and an appreciation of its relevance to everyday living is what motivates you to learn. You will use an enquiry-based approach and tackle 16 core practical experiments that will further your understanding of the value of observation, research, modelling and scientific method for investigating real-life questions.

#### Assessment

You will sit six papers in total: two biology; two chemistry; two physics, each 1 hour and 15 minutes long and each representing 16.7% of the GCSE double award.

#### Skills for the future

The theoretical and conceptual parts of this course will enable you to develop skills in researching, interpreting data, classifying, analysing and above all critical thinking. Furthermore, practical science will nurture skills such as observing and making informed inferences from what you observe, precision in measuring, predicting and hypothesising, reflecting, questioning and communicating.

This double award will also enable you to progress directly to A-levels in any of the three science disciplines, providing a gateway to the multitude of university courses and opportunities in physical, environmental and life sciences.



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