

CHANGE

Stowe



GCSE Courses Guide

2025-2027

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Foreword

In January, your children will start their GCSE courses and prepare for exams which are taken at the end of the Fifth Form. We teach a foundation course in the first term of the Third Form to provide a broad range of subjects and an introduction to general academic themes. This is a conscious decision to avoid premature specialisation, before pupils make their GCSE choices. Stoics would be overloaded if they continued with the same number of subjects up to GCSE level and it is important that their efforts are not spread too thinly and, therefore, some choices must now be made.

The aim of this Guide is to set out clearly the curriculum options at Stowe and provide some background to our tutorial support and monitoring systems. It also contains information about the careers education and guidance that is available to support Stoics throughout this important phase of their education.

GCSEs are an important foundation for subjects studied at a higher level and inculcate a strong work ethic, the beginnings of independent learning and the experience of revising for and taking more challenging external examinations. Many universities, especially the Russell Group of leading UK universities, now look closely at GCSE grades and the breadth of an applicant's interests and achievements.

Each subject offered at Stowe is described in detail in the following pages in order to assist Parents and Stoics to make the right choices. If you have any questions, your Houseparent, Tutor or the relevant Head of Department will be delighted to help. This booklet should be kept for reference throughout the GCSE period.

Academic Progress Grades will be sent to you twice a term with a Tutor's report on your son or daughter's progress. We also have Fourth and Fifth Form Parents' Meetings in the Lent Term. In addition, members of the Common Room are happy to talk to Parents at any time if you have specific concerns - it is always better to deal with issues as they arise instead of waiting for the next report or meeting.

I hope that the first months at Stowe have been fulfilling, with your son or daughter making the most of the many opportunities that Stowe has to offer.



Dr Anthony Wallersteiner, Head



Choices

Head of Lower School: Rhea Stafford-Smith

Stowe's GCSE curriculum provides a broad combination of subjects to cater for all abilities and aptitudes.

Pupils must choose one subject from each option column (see next page), which will be in addition to English, Mathematics, and the three Sciences.

All Stoics will study for both English Language and English Literature IGCSEs during their timetabled English lessons. Some international pupils may be recommended to study and be entered for the English as a Second Language (ESL) qualification in addition to their core English curriculum (this would be chosen as the Column 1 option).

Pupils whose native or additional language is Chinese, Russian, Italian, Japanese or Turkish have the opportunity to take an additional GCSE in their language at the end of the Fourth or Fifth Form. Additional lessons with language Tutors can be arranged through the Head of Additional Foreign Languages (AFL).

Stoics will continue studying Biology, Chemistry and Physics over six lessons in their core curriculum, which will lead to a Double Award worth two IGCSE qualifications. However, pupils with a real strength and passion for Science may opt to choose the Triple Science option from Column 4. Please consult the Science pages of this booklet for more details.

All pupils must choose at least one previously studied language in their options, and we encourage at least one subject from the humanities. This is to ensure breadth in choices and to make sure Stoics' options for A Level choices and beyond are open and varied.

All pupils continue to follow a programme of Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE), as well as working through the Skills Development Framework with their personal Tutor in the tutorial lesson once a week. These lessons are very important for personal growth and support all aspects of learning, but do not result in a qualification.

It is important to note that there is no change in the curriculum past this point until Stoics enter the Sixth Form. The decisions made now lead to GCSE examinations at the end of the Fifth Form (Year 11) and have important implications for Sixth Form subject choices; please see each subject's page for further information. Any requests for a curriculum change from January will need to be approved by the relevant Head of Department and the Head of Lower School and are subject to availability in sets.

Whilst in general it is best for a Stoic to continue with the subjects in which they feel most confident, it is not usually possible to take a subject at A Level which has not been taken for GCSE (other than those subjects which are provided only at A Level). Furthermore, certain GCSE subjects are prerequisites for entry into some higher education courses and career fields. Stoics are generally advised to keep open as many fields as possible at this stage. Pupils and Parents should be aware that, at Stowe, there are mandatory entry grade requirements for some A Levels e.g. grade 7 or higher in the relevant subject(s) at GCSE.

In the second half of the Michaelmas Term, Third Form pupils will attend an assembly about making informed GCSE choices and what to consider. Third Form Tutors will meet with each member of their Tutor group to discuss their provisional GCSE choices and to ensure that the number and balance of GCSE subjects is appropriate. Tutors will be in regular contact with Parents to answer questions; this allows time for queries about careers and/or university entrance qualifications to be addressed.

Parents are invited to a presentation on GCSE choices on Friday 22 November (Exeat pick-up) in the Ugland Auditorium, with an electronic recording being made available for those who cannot make it in person. Parents should then discuss possible GCSE options at the Subject Teacher Meetings that follow in the Drayson Sports Hall (and online for international parents).

GCSE Curriculum

Provisional Option Columns for 2025-2027

Stoics must choose only one subject from each of the Options 1-4, including a Language.

Please note that the columns may change.

Greek is subject to viability.

Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4
Choose one from	Choose one from	Choose one from	Choose one from
Art	Art	Art	Art
Computer Science	Computer Science	Design	Design
Design	Drama	Drama	Drama
English as a Second Language (ESL)	Geography	German	French
French	History	History	Geography
Music	Latin	Religious Studies	Religious Studies
Spanish	Music	Spanish	Triple Science
Sports Science	Religious Studies	Sports Science	



Futures Education and Guidance

Head of Futures: Dr Gordon West

Futures Advisor: Luciane Guntner

Futures Education forms a continuous thread throughout a pupil's time at Stowe.

Futures Education aims to provide a framework within which each pupil can develop the self-awareness and experience necessary to make balanced decisions at each stage during their time at School and, we hope, after they leave.

In the Third Form pupils are introduced to the career website 'Unifrog' which is a one-stop-shop where pupils can easily explore their interests, then find and successfully apply for their next best step after School and college. 'Unifrog' helps pupils to explore their key interests and which career paths they can take to reach their goals. 'Unifrog' is used to raise self-awareness and help decision-making in the build-up towards making GCSE option choices during the Michaelmas Term.

During the Fourth Form all Stoics continue to use 'Unifrog', this time as a Careers Guidance programme, using the personality types from the

Myers-Briggs Type Indicator. The results suggest career and higher education courses, which will assist the eventual choice of A Levels.

In the Fifth Form, all Stoics take an interest and personality questionnaire which is based on John Holland's theory of personality and job choices. Holland identified six categories of personality, and the careers associated with them. As no person's personality fits neatly into just one category; individual interests profile shows which of the six categories a person is closest to, and one can explore the corresponding careers and subjects. The individual results are available to each Stoic, together with other information designed to help preliminary decisions about A Level courses. Advice on subject combinations for particular courses are available from the Futures Team and Heads of Sixth Form.

Work Experience is an important part of career exploration. Stoics spend some time on this at the end of the Fifth Form, the objective being to relate experience to potential career options. Every encouragement is given to schedule regular individual meetings with the Futures Advisor during a pupil's time at Stowe.



Lower School Tutorial System

Head of Lower School: Rhea Stafford-Smith

Head of Third Form: Rhea Stafford-Smith

The Tutor's Role

It is a Tutor's responsibility and role to oversee their Tutees' academic and personal development as a whole. As part of this process, a Tutor provides a vital communication link between Houseparent, Teaching Staff, Parents and Stoics. The Tutor should be the first point of contact for communication regarding academic progress of your son/daughter.

Building a positive Tutor/Tutee relationship is imperative. Tutors meet with their Tutees three times in the week; planning the week ahead and reflecting on achievements or concerns as they arise. One of these sessions is a timetabled 55 minute 'tutorial' lesson, offering more time for deeper discussions and reflections on how each Stoic is developing as a Change Maker. Tutors help their Tutees in achieving a healthy balance of academic and extra-curricular activities and in managing their time effectively and efficiently. Throughout the Lower School, the Tutorial Programme also aims to provide a foundation in Futures Education, as previously described.

Tutors are key members of the pastoral support teams in the Houses, providing many opportunities for both formal and informal contact with Tutees through the supervision of prep and social time. Tutors will also attend performances and sports matches where possible, to strengthen the bond with their Tutees.

Monitoring Academic Performance

Twice a term, pupils receive Academic Progress Grades (APGs) from each of their subject teachers, together with either a Tutor or Houseparent report. Regular assessment grades allow potential problems to be noted as they arise and pave the way for discussions between Tutors, Teachers and Parents. Individual action plans are agreed which support and closely monitor further academic progress.

At all levels of the School, we would like Parents to feel involved in their child's education. Please feel welcome to discuss any matter related to your child's progress directly with the Tutor.



Art

Head of Department: Katherine Loudoun
Exam Board & Course Code: OCR J171

Art GCSE requires an enquiring mind and love of new ideas.

A real passion for the visual world and curiosity about art and artists is very important when studying Art GCSE. It helps if drawing skills are good, and pupils should have a creative mind and be prepared to experiment with imagery, materials and ideas to produce ambitious and exciting works of art. In addition to formal lesson time, to achieve a top grade, activity time and weekends should be spent in the Watson Art School to complete the weekly preps.

Content

This is an exciting course which guides and supports pupils through a broad range of approaches and techniques including the use of:

- Acrylic and oil paint, watercolour and ink
- Photography (including digital and darkroom techniques) and the creative use of IT
- Printing (etching, lino, screen, collagraph, mono and gelli printing)
- Collage, mixed media and mark making with a range of materials, both conventional and alternative
- Sculpture (casting, mould making, carving, construction and ceramics)

The emphasis will be on recording from direct observation and experience in order to analyse or interpret source material. Encouragement is given to develop ideas, personal responses and aesthetic understanding to a high level. The use of sketchbooks is essential to prepare ideas and document the various processes.

A vital and integral part of the course aims to develop knowledge of Fine Art. Visits to galleries will play an important role in helping to make significant connections with the pupil's own practical work.

The GCSE course at Stowe is currently delivered over the three years of the Third, Fourth and Fifth Forms, starting in the Lent Term of the Third Form.

The Art Department follows the OCR Art specification which requires pupils to create a portfolio of work containing one sustained project and a selection of further work. This allows pupils more time for experimentation in the early part of the course, building skills and confidence, before producing a unit of work for formal assessment in the later stages of the course.

During the Third Form, teachers will set thematic projects which will create a model for the assessed work produced in the Fourth and Fifth Forms. These projects will guide pupils towards the production of exciting personal sheets, sketchbooks and portfolios which also fulfil the assessment objectives.

The Board will issue an 'Externally Set Task' just after Christmas in the Fifth Form, with the Controlled Assessment held just after the Easter holidays. The coursework unit will be worth 60% of the course and the externally set task will be worth 40%.

Classics

Head of Department: **Gavin McCormick**

Latin

Exam Board & Course Code: WJEC C990PA

Content

Latin studied up to GCSE at Stowe concentrates on mastering the language, along with an opportunity to sample a compelling and broad-ranging blend of the literature, art and culture that underpinned Roman life. The course is specifically designed to be pupil-friendly, with a step-by-step approach to the grammar and a highly accessible syllabus for studying the cultural elements.

Assessment

The course is assessed at the end of the Fifth Form by sitting the WJEC/Eduqas GCSE exams. This qualification comprises three components, assessed by three separate papers and the individual scores are aggregated to form a final overall mark graded 9-1.

Component 1 (Latin Language) involves assessment tested by translation and comprehension including some multiple choice questions. Uncomplicated questions and defined vocabulary lists facilitate accessible and enjoyable language study that offers a highly beneficial linguistic foundation in its own right as well as a solid preparation for Latin beyond GCSE.

Component 2 allows pupils to focus on a particular theme of Roman life through studying prescribed images and brief excerpts of original Latin literature. For example, the current theme to be examined explores Roman attitudes to the countryside.

Component 3 allows pupils to focus on a specific work of prose or verse literature. Brief excerpts of the original Latin are interwoven with short passages of English translation to deliver a continuous narrative, examined via short-answer comprehension questions, longer literary-criticism questions, and a single essay encompassing the whole work. Recent examples include Ovid's account of the myth of Perseus and Pliny's account of the eruption of Mount Vesuvius.

Benefits of Latin

Latin pupils continue to be very highly prized by employers who recognise the language's outstanding benefits in the development of written and verbal communication, critical analysis and persuasive thinking. As well as being an ideal complement to other Languages, History, Literature and Philosophy, it also offers an excellent foil for both the Sciences and Social Sciences.

Classical Greek

Exam Board & Course Code: OCR J292

Content

If we inherit much of our culture and language from the Romans, the same is also true of the Greeks. Within a few centuries the Greeks invented the origins of much that underlies our western culture, from democracy to philosophy to theatre - and more besides. The key to understanding this is through their language and literature. The elegance, flexibility and precision of the Greek language makes it highly enjoyable and rewarding to learn, while the stories read for GCSE can include some of the popular myths, the exciting adventures of Odysseus' epic voyages, or episodes from the turbulent history of Ancient Athens. As with Latin, defined vocabulary lists are provided in advance, so the examination is fully manageable for those prepared to learn.

Assessment

The OCR GCSE Classical Greek specification (J292) comprises three components. The first consists entirely of language work, with translations and comprehensions based on stories from history and mythology. In addition, there are two literature components covering a range of prose and verse authors, with texts frequently adapted from the original language to aid accessibility.

Wherever possible, Greek at Stowe is taught on-timetable within the normal School lesson structure; where programming constraints prevent on-timetable delivery, it is instead taught off-timetable both during activity time and before or after lessons.

Benefits of Greek

Classical Greek combines excellently not only with Latin, but also with a huge range of other subjects spanning the humanities, science and social science. Greek at GCSE and A Level lends significant weight to a pupil's academic standing and is an impressive record both on UCAS university applications (where it opens up some of the most highly-respected degrees) and on CVs. Above all, Classical Greek is a highly enjoyable and dynamic subject which will appeal to those who relish intellectual challenge and reward.

Prior Requirements: Latin and Greek

Although it is possible to undertake Latin or Classical Greek GCSE having never studied it before the Third Form, this is an exceptionally challenging undertaking, particularly for Greek, and is therefore not recommended.

Computer Science

Head of Department: Ebo Acquah
Exam Board & Course Code: AQA 8525

Life without computers is almost unimaginable.

"Is there an app to...?" We all ask this question more often than we can imagine. By doing so, we are asking whether someone has been creative enough to build something on the computer to solve our problems. Why not consider being a part of that change and solve problems?

Just look around you - how close to a computer are you right now? How often do you use a computer? Life without computers is almost unimaginable.

Computer Science is not just about writing code for a computer. There is far more to it than that. Just look at artwork, or the surround sound and special effects that go into all the multimillion-pound video games. Watch any modern film and the special effects will show countless examples of computing in action. The music you listen to has been engineered, compressed and transmitted all thanks to computers. Read any eMagazine and it is obvious that even traditional professions such as journalism have embraced the technological revolution and are using computers to create a new kind of content.

From Instagram to the latest apps, creativity is central. Stop being a consumer of software and start designing your own. If you can spot a gap in the market, and sometimes think, "I wish I could find an app to..." then maybe you could be the next Mark Zuckerberg.

Why Choose Computer Science?

A GCSE in Computer Science will give you a fantastic set of skills. But even more than this, it will give you the skills you need for any career. If you want to become a Software Developer, Engineer, Dentist, Architect, Engineer, Music Producer, Mathematician, Sports Coach, Music or Film Director, the list is endless, then Computer Science is one of the best places to start.

Digital Literacy: In today's technology-driven world, having a strong understanding of computer science concepts is crucial for digital literacy. It will help you navigate and understand the digital tools, software, and devices that are an integral part of modern life.

Problem-Solving Skills: Computer Science encourages logical thinking, analytical reasoning, and problem-solving skills. You will learn to break down complex problems into smaller, manageable parts and develop step-by-step solutions, which can be helpful with your other subjects.

Creativity and Innovation: Computer Science fosters creativity by providing you with the tools to create applications, games, websites, and more. It empowers you to bring your ideas to life and innovate in the digital space.

Future Career Opportunities: Technology is a rapidly growing industry with a multitude of career paths. Even if you don't plan to become a programmer, skills gained from studying Computer Science can be applied in fields like data analysis, cybersecurity, user experience design, business analysis, product management and more.

Coding Skills: Learning to code equips you with a practical skill that is in demand across various industries. Coding proficiency can enhance problem-solving abilities and open up opportunities for freelance work, projects, or internships.

Critical Thinking: Computer Science encourages critical thinking by teaching you how to evaluate different solutions, weigh pros and cons, and make informed decisions about the best approach to solving a problem, which is useful for many subjects, including history and literature.

Mathematical Concepts: Many topics involve mathematical concepts like logic, patterns, and algorithms. This can help you strengthen your mathematical skills and see real-world applications of mathematics.

Interdisciplinary Connections: It has connections to all the other subjects including mathematics, physics, engineering, and art. This interdisciplinary nature allows you to see how technology intersects with different fields.

Assessment: Two papers of equal weighting.

Paper 1: Computational Thinking and Programming Skills

What is assessed: Computational thinking, code tracing, problem-solving, programming concepts.

Paper 2: Computing Concepts

What is assessed: Theoretical knowledge and SQL programming skills.

Design

Head of Department: Martin Quinn
Exam Board & Course Code: Edexcel IDT1

Design and Technology (Product Design) (1DT0)

Design and Technology (D&T) is an established, challenging and creative area of the curriculum, where Stoics can forge and maintain close comparisons with the practices and processes found in the world of Product and Industrial Design, Graphics, Architecture and Engineering. The design process is explored from a simple concept sketch on paper through Computer-Aided Design (CAD) and on to a developed prototype ready for commercial viability. Design is a subject of application and requires Stoics to apply related knowledge from many disciplines including art, mathematics, history (timelines of design and technological development), as well as to generate an awareness of cultural diversity with regard to the designing of products in a world market.

The subject aims to foster this application of knowledge, skills and understanding in order to facilitate the design and manufacture of innovative products that address real needs. In this respect, Design is a unique subject that requires and promotes the combined use of academic, technological and practical skills through a wide range of differing media.

The Department wants Stoics to approach their design work with a divergent and creative state of mind; to realise products that not only function very well, but that also stimulate the emotions in terms of aesthetic appeal.

The course enables Stoics to:

- Apply a range of intellectual, technical and creative skills to solving problems
- Design and manufacture their own innovative products
- Develop a wide range of skills (in both design and manufacture) that can be applied across other subjects and ultimately be applied in the real world of employment
- Analyse, synthesise and improve upon existing designs and products

Component 1:

Principles of Design and Technology

Written Exam: 50% of the total GCSE

Regular theoretical lessons are integrated into the course to ensure that experiences learned in the workshops are supported and extended through formal teaching. Stoics are assessed regularly in order to impart vital examination experiences, as well as gauging the level of knowledge and understanding.

The modern designer must have a good working knowledge of the use of ICT and systems and control technology in the design and manufacture of products. They must also be aware of the important contributions of designers from the past which may provide inspiration for future design. Creativity, diversity and a willingness to challenge existing solutions are all encouraged and pupils will follow a core content with specific extended areas.

Topic 1: All Aspects of Design in Society

Topic 2: Metals

Topic 3: Papers and Boards

Topic 4: Polymers

Topic 5: Systems

Topic 6: Textiles

Topic 7: Timbers

Component 2:

Independent Design and Make Project

Externally Assessed: 50% of the total GCSE

Pearson Edexcel will set a contextual challenge in June of the calendar year preceding the year in which the qualification is to be awarded.

Stoics will then work on a design portfolio (A3) that explores a range of problems. Working through the design process, they will manufacture products, prototypes, models and solutions that address the situation highlighted at the project outset. Ideas are communicated using a variety of drawing techniques that include sketching, rendering, technical drawing, image manipulation, digital film and video, desktop publishing and CAD. Stoics manufacture their products from quality materials in an environment well equipped to meet exacting standards of accuracy and innovation.

The portfolio of work will be assessed under the following four areas:

Part 1: Investigate

Part 2: Designing a Prototype

Part 3: Making a Prototype

Part 4: Testing and Evaluating the Design

Drama

Head of Department: **Simon Miller**
Exam Board & Course Code: **AQA 8261E**

Drama is a challenging and creative course that requires open-mindedness, dedication and the desire to work collaboratively with others.

The AQA GCSE Drama course balances theory and practice providing opportunities for pupils to participate in the creation of drama as performers and designers, experimenting with a wide range of theatrical conventions and styles. Through practical exploration pupils develop an awareness and understanding of contemporary professional theatre practice, as well as theatre history. As a further component of the course, pupils will enjoy opportunities to attend live theatre performances or watch theatre on demand to develop skills as informed and thoughtful audience members.

In addition to formal lessons, pupils are required to devote some activity time to attend rehearsals in preparation for performance. These are often some of the most rewarding and fulfilling aspects of the course as they enable pupils to gain practical experience of creating theatre as part of a company and to develop acting and/or design skills.

The subject aims not only to develop performance and design skills, but to foster a sense of enquiry and innovative thinking. A unique subject, Drama promotes the development of academic, practical and inter-personal skills simultaneously.

Component 1: Understanding Drama **40% of the total GCSE**

What is assessed:

- Knowledge and understanding of drama and theatre
- Study of one set play
- Analysis and evaluation of live theatre

How it is assessed:

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

Component 2: Devising Drama (practical) **40% of the total GCSE**

What is assessed:

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

How it is assessed:

- Devising log
- Devised performance

Component 3: Texts in Practice (practical) **20% of the total GCSE**

What is assessed:

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

How it is assessed:

- Performance of extract 1 (20 marks) and extract 2 (20 marks)

English as a Second Language (ESL)

Head of Department: Vlasta Pickering Polláková
Exam Board & Course Code: Edexcel 4ES1

Overview

The IGCSE in ESL (English as a Second Language) is a language-focused qualification specifically designed for international pupils. The course provides pupils with an excellent opportunity to refine their written, analytical and comprehension skills, which in turn helps to improve their performance in other GCSE subjects.

Content

The Edexcel IGCSE tests Reading, Writing and Listening skills through two examination papers. It is a single tier examination, and assessment takes place in the June examination series. An optional speaking test is endorsed separately.

Paper 1: Reading and Writing 100 marks (2 hours)

Two thirds of the total International GCSE

Reading (50 marks)

Passages will be taken from a variety of sources, including fiction, and may include factual information, explanation, opinions and biographical writing.

Part 1: Skimming and scanning skills.

Part 2: Read for both gist and detail.

Part 3: Read for both gist and detail, follow a line of argument or discussion, identify attitudes and opinions in the text.

Part 6: Read for details to be included in the summary writing (see Writing section below).

Writing (50 marks)

Part 4: Short piece of writing in response to a given situation - the writing can take the form of a letter, email or postcard.

Part 5: Factual piece of writing based on own knowledge and interests - the writing can take the form of a report or article.

Part 6: Respond to one or two short texts, approximately 500 words in total, and produce a summary for a given purpose and reader.

Paper 2: Listening

40 marks (50 minutes)

One third of the total International GCSE

Part 1: Listening to short extracts; identifying the item, place or event being described.

Part 2: Listening for detailed information.

Part 3: Following a discussion or argument; identifying attitude and opinions of speakers; following instructions.

Part 4: Listening to a complex argument or discussion; understanding the overall message; identifying attitudes and opinion.

Aims

The aim of the Edexcel International GCSE in English as a Second Language (ESL) is to refine English language competence through realistic and contextualised tasks based on authentic texts.

On completion of the Edexcel IGCSE ESL course, pupils should be able to:

- Produce clear, detailed texts on a wide range of subjects and explain a viewpoint on a topical issue, giving the advantages and disadvantages of various options.
- Understand a wide variety of complex reading texts on both concrete and abstract topics, recognising implicit meaning and adapting their own style and speed of reading to different texts and purposes.
- Write well-structured texts using an appropriate style, highlighting relevant salient issues, expanding and supporting points of view with supporting arguments and showing controlled use of organisational patterns, connectors and cohesive devices.
- Develop the skills necessary for further study in English.

Relevant pupils may complete this IGCSE subject instead of IGCSE English or as an extra qualification to enhance their overall grade profile.

English Language and Literature

Head of Department: Nicola Borman

All pupils will receive compulsory instruction in English, starting their IGCSE studies in the Third Form. Pupils will study for two separate IGCSEs: English Language and English Literature. Pupils study the IGCSE Literature texts while simultaneously developing the skills needed for the English Language exam.

Support, Extension and Enrichment

The English Department works closely with the Skills Department, the Library and the ESL Department to deliver an integrated approach to the study of English. We offer an exciting range of enrichment activities, including Stowe Journalism, Stowe Radio, the Literary Society, and various writing competitions. Trips to theatre productions of set texts are arranged when possible.

English Language

Exam Board & Course Code: Edexcel 4EA1

The English Language IGCSE is assessed by a written paper (60% of the grade) and coursework (40% of the grade). It is graded on a scale of 9-1, with 9 being the highest grade.

Examination: Non-Fiction Texts and Transactional Writing

The exam is 2 hours and 15 minutes. 90 marks are available.

Section A: Reading (45 marks)

A mixture of short- and long-answer questions related to a non-fiction text from Part 1 of the Pearson Edexcel International GCSE English Anthology and one previously unseen extract. Candidates will be provided with the anthology text in the examination.

Section B: Transactional Writing (45 marks)

One writing task from a choice of two, involving a given audience, form or purpose.

Coursework: Poetry and Prose Texts and Imaginative Writing

Assignment A: Poetry and Prose Texts (30 marks)

One essay question based on any three poetry or prose texts from Part 2 of the Pearson Edexcel International GCSE English Anthology. At least one poetry text and one prose text must be discussed in the assignment.

Assignment B: Imaginative Writing (30 marks)

One imaginative writing task.

English Literature

Exam Board & Course Code: Edexcel 4ET1

The English Literature IGCSE is assessed by a written paper (60% of the grade) and coursework (40% of the grade). It is graded on a scale of 9-1, with 9 being the highest grade.

Examination: Poetry and Modern Prose

The exam is 2 hours. 90 marks are available. It is closed book: no texts are allowed to be taken in.

Section A: Unseen Poetry (20 marks)

One essay question exploring the meaning and effects created in an unseen poem. The poem will be reproduced in the question paper.

Section B: Anthology Poetry (30 marks)

One essay question from a choice of two, comparing two poems from Part 3 of the Pearson Edexcel International GCSE English Anthology.

Section C: Modern Prose (40 marks)

One essay question from a choice of two, on each of the set texts.

Coursework: Modern Drama and Literary Heritage Texts

Assignment A: Modern Drama (30 marks)

One essay response to a teacher-devised assignment on the studied text.

Assignment B: Literary Heritage Texts (30 marks)

One essay response to a teacher-devised assignment on the studied text.

French

Head of Department: **Fanny Leluan**
Exam Board & Course Code: **AQA 8658**

French GCSE aims to develop an awareness of the French-speaking world and French culture.

As well as being one of the official languages of the EU, French is spoken by around 200 million people and is the official language in 32 countries. Career opportunities for those with good linguistic ability are rapidly expanding, whatever the profession they may ultimately choose to follow. French GCSE aims to prepare pupils to take their place in a multilingual global society, by providing a thorough yet engaging course where pupils build on their grammar and lexis and develop an awareness of the French-speaking world and French culture.

Content

The AQA GCSE French course is designed to assess pupils' comprehension and communication skills in French, balancing the development of both passive understanding (listening and reading) and active linguistic abilities (speaking and writing). The emphasis is placed on practical communication and authentic language use, alongside building a robust foundation in French grammar and vocabulary.

The course will provide pupils with the opportunity to:

- Develop their ability to understand spoken and written French from a variety of authentic sources.
- Engage confidently in conversations and express themselves clearly in both spoken and written French.
- Gain insight into French and francophone cultures through a variety of topics, including daily life, traditions, and global issues.
- Prepare for further language studies, be it A Level or beyond, including study abroad opportunities.

Assessment Structure

The GCSE French course is linear, meaning that all assessments take place at the end of the two-year course. The four key linguistic skills - listening, speaking, reading, and writing - are evaluated through four separate exam papers, each contributing to 25% of the final grade.

Assessments are set in the context of three themes:

- Theme 1: People and Lifestyle
- Theme 2: Popular Culture
- Theme 3: Communication and the World Around Us

Exam Breakdown

Paper 1: Listening

Understanding and responding to spoken extracts comprising the defined vocabulary and grammar for each tier, plus dictation of short, spoken extracts.

Paper 2: Speaking

Using clear and comprehensible language to undertake a role-play/carry out a reading aloud task/talk about visual stimuli.

Paper 3: Reading

Understanding and responding to written texts which focus predominantly on the vocabulary and grammar at each tier. Inferring plausible meanings of single words when they are embedded in written sentences. Translating from French into English.

Paper 4: Writing

Writing text in the language in a lexically and grammatically accurate way in response to simple and familiar stimuli. Translating from English into French.

Grading and Tiers

The GCSE will be graded on the 9-1 scale, with 9 being the highest grade. The course is available at both Foundation (grades 1-5) and Higher (grades 3-9) levels. All pupils must take all four exams at the same tier. While we encourage pupils to aim for the Higher Tier, individual cases will be reviewed after mock exams, and recommendations will be made in consultation with the Head of Department to ensure the best outcome for each pupil.

Study Abroad and Cultural Exposure

To further enhance pupils' linguistic skills and cultural understanding, a study trip to a French-speaking country is typically organised during the course. This experience allows pupils to immerse themselves in authentic language environments and practise their skills in real-world contexts. While not compulsory, it is highly recommended, especially for those considering continuing French beyond GCSE.

Additionally, pupils are encouraged to engage with French culture through various mediums, such as films, music, and news, to deepen their appreciation and understanding of the language's cultural background.

Preparing for the Future

The AQA GCSE French course lays a solid foundation for further studies in French, whether at A Level or through university courses. It also equips pupils with skills that are highly valued in various professional fields, such as international business, diplomacy, tourism, and education.

Geography

Head of Department: **Becky Stanworth**
Exam Board & Course Code: **Edexcel 4GE1**

Geography is about trying to make sense of the world we see around us.

The word geography literally means writing about the world. Geography is about trying to make sense of the world we see around us. Why are settlements where they are? How does global trade work? What causes a volcanic eruption? These are all questions in which Geographers are interested. Geography is a broad-based subject that will give you a range of important literary and numerical skills and it is highly valued by universities and employers alike.

Content

The IGCSE course will follow the Edexcel IGCSE Exam Board specification. Outline details are below:

Paper 1: Physical Geography

Written Exam: 1 hour 10 minutes

40% of the total IGCSE (70 marks)

- River Environments
- Hazardous Environments

Including fieldwork from one of these topics.

The questions are a mixture of multiple-choice, short-answer, data-response and open-ended questions.

Paper 2: Human Geography

Written Exam: 1 hour 45 minutes

60% of the total IGCSE (105 marks)

- Economic Activity and Energy
- Urban Environments

Including fieldwork from one of these topics.

Also:

- Global Issues: Fragile Environments and Climate Change

The questions are a mixture of multiple-choice, short-answer, data-response and open-ended questions.

Aims

The aims and objectives of this qualification are to enable pupils to:

- Apply and build on the fundamental building blocks of geographical knowledge.
- Actively engage in the process of geographical enquiry to develop as effective and independent learners, and as critical and reflective thinkers with enquiring minds.
- Develop their knowledge and understanding of geographical concepts and appreciate the relevance of these concepts to our changing world.
- Develop a framework of spatial awareness in which to appreciate the importance of the location of places and environments at a range of scales.
- Appreciate that people have different views of, and attitudes to, the world, its environments and its issues.
- Acquire, develop and apply practical geographical enquiry skills.
- Undertake geographical investigations that include both primary and secondary data collection, presentation and analysis, drawing conclusions, and evaluating the whole geographical investigation.
- Develop and apply their learning to the real world through fieldwork.
- Develop their awareness of global issues and recognise the challenges of moving towards a sustainable future.

German

Head of Department: Alice Tearle
Exam Board & Course Code: AQA 8662

German GCSE aims to develop an awareness of the German-speaking world and its culture.

Germany, as well as being a key financial player in the EU, has a population of nearly 84 million people, and German is spoken natively by 96 million people, making it the most widely spoken native language of the EU. Being able to speak German will therefore make you far more employable both in the UK and abroad and can benefit your future career. Additionally, many UK universities and international institutions have language GCSE requirements for entry.

Course Overview

The AQA GCSE German course is designed to assess pupils' comprehension and communication skills in German, balancing the development of both passive understanding (listening and reading) and active linguistic abilities (speaking and writing). The emphasis is placed on practical communication and authentic language use, alongside building a robust foundation in German grammar and vocabulary.

The course will provide pupils with the opportunity to:

- Develop their ability to understand spoken and written German from a variety of authentic sources.
- Engage confidently in conversations and express themselves clearly in both spoken and written German.
- Gain insight into the German speaking world through a variety of topics, including daily life, traditions, and global issues.
- Prepare for further language studies, be it A Level or beyond, including study abroad opportunities.

Assessment Structure

The GCSE German course is linear, meaning that all assessments take place at the end of the two-year course. The four key linguistic skills - listening, speaking, reading, and writing - are evaluated through four separate exam papers, each accounting for 25% of the final grade.

Assessments are set in the context of three themes:

- Theme 1: People and Lifestyle
- Theme 2: Popular Culture
- Theme 3: Communication and the World Around Us

Exam Breakdown

Paper 1: Listening

Understanding and responding to spoken extracts comprising the defined vocabulary and grammar for each tier, plus a short dictation.

Paper 2: Speaking

Using clear and comprehensible language to undertake a role-play/carry out a reading aloud task/talk about two photos.

Paper 3: Reading

Understanding and responding to written texts which focus predominantly on the vocabulary and grammar at each tier. Inferring plausible meanings of single words when they are embedded in written sentences. Translating from German into English.

Paper 4: Writing

Writing text in a lexically and grammatically accurate way in response to simple and familiar stimuli. Translating from English into German.

Grading and Tiers

The GCSE will be graded on the 9-1 scale, with 9 being the highest grade. The course is available at both Foundation (grades 1-5) and Higher (grades 3-9) levels. All pupils must take all four exams at the same tier. While we encourage pupils to aim for the Higher Tier, individual cases will be reviewed after trial exams, and recommendations will be made in consultation with the Head of Department to ensure the best outcome for each pupil.

Educational Visit and Cultural Exposure

To further enhance pupils' linguistic skills and cultural understanding, a two-week reciprocal exchange with our partner school Landheim in Schondorf (Bavaria) is organised in the Fourth Form. This experience allows pupils to immerse themselves in authentic language environments and practise their language skills in real-world situations. Whilst not compulsory, it is highly recommended, especially for those pupils considering continuing German beyond GCSE.

Additionally, pupils are encouraged to engage with German culture through various mediums, such as films, music, and news, to deepen their appreciation and understanding of the language's cultural background.

Preparing for the Future

The AQA GCSE German course lays a solid foundation that prepares pupils well for A Level. It also equips them with skills that are highly valued in various professional fields, such as international business, diplomacy, tourism, and education.

History

Head of Department: Dominic Green
Exam Board & Course Code: Edexcel 4HI0

Studying IGCSE History forms a foundation of skills that are crucial for both future study and for wider development.

Benefits of History

The study of History has a wide variety of benefits for pupils. We aim to develop enjoyment of the subject by following a course that is engaging and relevant. The rich content also provides an excellent platform for A Level studies.

IGCSE History is well-respected for the skills that it develops. Pupils will need to write in depth, explain key events and form an argument. They are assessed over two exams. The longer answers require an explanation of events across extended periods of time so invaluable skills in essay writing and analytical thinking are developed by pupils throughout the course.

Studying IGCSE History therefore provides pupils with an excellent academic qualification, but also forms a foundation of skills that are crucial for both future study and for wider development.

The department also organises a regular optional trip to Berlin, which provides an excellent foundation for the course.

Course Outline

The History Department follows the Edexcel International GCSE History course.

The content introduces pupils to a range of 20th Century cultures, societies and approaches to History. Social, political, cultural, economic and military histories are all explored and build a good foundation for further study.

Paper 1

50% of the total IGCSE (90 minutes)

- A World Divided: Superpower Relations, 1943-1972
- Development of Dictatorship: Germany, 1918-1945

Paper 2

50% of the total IGCSE (90 minutes)

- Russia and the Soviet Union, 1905-1924
- Changes in Medicine, c1848-c1948

Paper 1 Content

- The problems experienced by Germany after the First World War and the rise of Hitler
- Life in Nazi Germany, the Holocaust and the German experience of the Second World War
- The origins of the Cold War and the development of rivalry throughout the 1950s
- The Thaw, Berlin Crisis, Cuban Missile Crisis, Czechoslovakian Crisis and Détente

Paper 2 Content

- Tsarist rule in Russia and the February Revolution
- The October Revolution and the Bolsheviks
- Discoveries and advancements in Medicine in the 19th Century
- The affect of changing government policy and the two World Wars on Medicine

Please note that for the International GCSE course pupils do not complete a controlled assessment or coursework.

Mathematics

Head of Department: Mikkel Møller

Exam Board & Course Code: Edexcel 4MA1H

Mathematics will offer pupils an appreciation of the importance of mathematics in society, employment and study.

Content

All Stoics are prepared for the IGCSE syllabus from Edexcel.

Assessment

The IGCSE aims to develop a knowledge and understanding of mathematical concepts and techniques, while providing pupils with a foundation in mathematical skills for further study in the subject or related areas.

Pupils will enjoy using and applying mathematical techniques and concepts, and become confident in using mathematics to solve problems. It will offer pupils an appreciation of the importance of mathematics in society, employment and study.

The Mathematics IGCSE is assessed as one final exam split into two papers - calculators are allowed on both papers. All sets will be entered for the Higher Tier (grade range 9 to 3). In some circumstances individual pupils may be entered for the Foundation Tier (grade range 5 to 1).

Papers

Each paper is two hours long and has equal weighting. 100 marks are available in each paper.

Further Mathematics (Extension)

Pupils in the top set will be expected to cover some extension material and will be introduced to the Level 2 certificate in Further Mathematics from AQA. They will have the option of sitting the exam in the Summer after completing their IGCSE.

The Further Mathematics qualification allows the very able pupils the opportunity to follow an extension of topics from IGCSE, as well as introducing topics from A Level Mathematics, acting as a valuable bridge between the two. The course is assessed in two papers of equal weight. Each paper consists of 80 marks and is tested in one hour and 45 minutes. Paper 1 is a Non-Calculator paper and Paper 2 is a Calculator paper. Passes are graded from 4-9. This module allows those wishing to do Further Mathematics for A Level to start from a more prepared base, while also allowing those following the single A Level course an introduction into an accelerated course.

Philosophy

Pupils are also encouraged to develop an appreciation of mathematics beyond the IGCSE syllabus. They are introduced to a wide range of topics, including some history of mathematics, through class discussions, problem solving, investigative work and personal research, as well as opportunities to listen to speakers throughout the year to help broaden their view on the applications of mathematics. Every year the Maths Department runs an Inter-House Maths competition where pupils will be challenged to use their problem solving skills. In addition to this, high attaining pupils are encouraged to take part in the UKMT Maths Challenges, with other opportunities for further competitions.

Music

Head of Academic Music: Emma Bryden
Exam Board & Course Code: WJEC 3660QS

Our course opens up the world of music.

Our popular and highly inclusive Eduqas GCSE Music course opens up the world of music, to find out why certain songs and pieces are the way they are. Music has always played a significant part in life at Stowe, and many Stoics have gone on to have successful music careers. Old Stoic musicians include Harry Gregson-Williams (the composer of 'Chicken Run', 'Shrek' and 'Gladiator 2'), award-winning composer Howard Goodall, and singer/songwriter Dylan. Pupils study everything from Music for Film to Rock and Pop and Classical. They also get the opportunity to compose their own music, and develop their skills in performing the music they enjoy. The course allows for all styles of music to be explored including Classical, Popular and Jazz.

It is advisable for pupils wishing to take this GCSE to be at least Grade 3 standard on one instrument before embarking upon the course. The most advanced pupils are able to follow Stowe's GCSE Music extension course alongside the Eduqas GCSE to further develop and challenge their musical analysis skills and prepare to undertake higher music theory grades.

Unit 1: Performing (30%)

60 marks

Assessment

- One solo piece (of at least one minute)
- One ensemble piece (of at least one minute)
- Internally assessed
- Externally moderated
- Four minutes combined duration

Unit 2: Composing (30%)

60 marks

Assessment

- Two compositions: one to a brief set by Eduqas and another free composition
- Internally assessed
- Externally moderated
- At least three minutes combined duration

Through this unit pupils will develop their skills in composing and/or arranging.

Unit 3: Listening and Appraising (40%)

80 marks

Assessment

- Written Paper: 1 hour 15 minutes
- Externally set and assessed

Section A - Pupils will be expected to:

- Answer questions related to the four areas of study
- Complete one short melody or rhythm dictation exercise
- Complete an extended response comparing and evaluating the musical elements, contexts and language of a set work against one unfamiliar piece of music

Areas of Study:

1. Musical Forms and Devices
2. Music for Ensemble
3. Film Music
4. Popular Music

Religious Studies

Head of Department: Francesca Holloway
Exam Board & Course Code: AQA 8062MA

Religious Studies provides an opportunity for pupils to engage with a variety of topical questions around belief, values, meaning, purpose and truth.

Religion and Philosophy have always been, and continue to be for us today, powerful driving forces in society for good and ill. They affect us all, whether or not we are believers. A knowledge of religion is needed to inform our own political and social understanding, to enlighten the subtleties of literature, and to aid our understanding of history. Beyond this, the study of Religious Studies and Philosophy is a fascinating one, interesting for its own sake and useful in that it sharpens the mind and provides an insight into the study of ideas and their accompanying debates. It forces you to examine your own ideas and raises questions where before you thought there were none. The focus on developing analytical skills means that Religious Studies qualifications are held in high regard by universities and employers.

This course provides an opportunity for pupils to engage with a variety of topical questions around belief, values, meaning, purpose and truth.

Pupils will be able to reflect on and develop their own values, beliefs and attitudes in light of what they have learnt. There will be a range of relevant and contemporary themes to study that will promote awareness of modern-world issues and engagement within the classroom. These themes include: matters of life and death, the value of the world, crime and punishment and religion, peace and conflict. Pupils will also have the opportunity to explore Philosophy of Religion; with a topic focusing on a range of arguments for and against the existence of God.

Pupils will be challenged and inspired, whilst developing valuable skills sought after by universities and employers.

AQA Religious Studies

The exam consists of two papers that are one hour and 45 minutes in length and are worth 50% each of the final grade. There is no coursework or controlled assessment.

Paper 1: Study of Religions: Beliefs, Teachings and Practices of Christianity and Islam

- Two compulsory five-part questions will be set on each religion
- Each five-part question is worth 24 marks, with 12 marks for AO1 and 12 marks for AO2
- The structure of the five-part questions will be identical across all religions; marks will be allocated as follows: 1, 2, 4, 5 and 12
- In each five-part question, AO1 is tested in the first four questions; AO2 is assessed through the 12 mark question

Paper 2: Thematic Studies

Pupils must answer questions on four religious, philosophical and ethical themes: Religion, Peace & Conflict; Religion, Crime & Punishment; Religion & Life; The Existence of God & Revelation.

- One compulsory five-part question will be set per theme
- Each five-part question is worth 24 marks, with 12 marks for AO1 and 12 marks for AO2
- The structure of the five-part questions will be identical: marks will be allocated as follows; 1, 2, 4, 5 and 12
- In each five-part question, AO1 is tested in the first four questions; AO2 is assessed through the 12 mark question

Science

Head of Department: James Tearle

Science is taught at Stowe by subject specialists in modern, well-equipped laboratories, all housed in the purpose built Worsley Science Centre.

The Academic Staff are supported by a full team of Technicians and Laboratory Assistants as a great deal of emphasis is placed on practical work. Extensive use of ICT is made by both teachers and pupils to enhance the delivery of science. Extra support is provided outside of lessons via daily science clinics and a wealth of extra material is available via our virtual learning environment.

All Stoucs will continue to study all three Sciences, i.e. a balanced Science course, through to GCSE via either the Triple or Double Science courses. Stowe follows the Edexcel International GCSE Science syllabus and all exams take place in the Summer of the Fifth Form.

Stoucs who show strength in Science can opt to follow the Triple Science course by using one of their GCSE options to do so. This will lead to three separate IGCSEs in Biology, Chemistry and Physics, and is delivered through nine lessons a week (three per subject).

Stoucs whose strengths or interests lie elsewhere will follow the Double Science course using six lessons a week (two per subject). The syllabus is separated into discrete areas of Biology, Chemistry and Physics, all of which are taught by subject specialists from these departments.

Double Award Science

Exam Board & Course Code: Edexcel 4SD1

The Double Award Science qualification is equivalent to two full IGCSEs. The syllabus material in Double Science is the same core material from each of the separate Biology, Chemistry and Physics IGCSEs.

Assessment

There is no coursework element. Instead, Double Award IGCSE has required practicals integrated into the course. The skills developed through these and other experiments will be assessed in the examinations.

Summary of Double Award Science content: (Edexcel IGCSE Double Science Syllabus)

Biology

- Living Organisms
- Nutrition and Respiration
- Movement of Substances

- Co-ordination and Control
- Reproduction and Inheritance
- Ecology and the Environment
- Use of Biological Resources

Chemistry

- Atomic Structure and the Periodic Table
- Bonding, Structure and the Properties of Matter
- Quantitative Chemistry
- Chemical Changes
- Energy Changes
- Chemical Analysis
- The Rate and Extent of Chemical Change
- Organic Chemistry

Physics

- Forces
- Energy
- Waves
- Electricity
- Magnetism and Electromagnetism
- Particle Model of Matter
- Atomic Structure
- Space Physics

Examinations

There are three examinations, one each in Biology, Chemistry and Physics. This is the same Paper 1 that is sat by those who take Triple Science. Each exam is two hours and worth 110 marks. Questions are multiple choice, short answer, calculations and extended open response.

Those who choose to take Triple Science will sit an additional exam in each Science. These exams are one hour and 15 minutes long and are worth 70 marks.

Double Award Science does allow progress on to the A Level Sciences. Pupils wishing to take an A Level Science are required to achieve a grade 7-7 or better in Double Award.

The Sciences

Exam Board: Edexcel

Biology

Head of Department: Louise Carter
Course Code: 4Bi1

Biology is a subject of immense interest to most pupils. Wide ranging in its scope, the subject encourages pupils to ask questions about themselves and the world in which they live.

Amongst the main aims of the Edexcel International GCSE Biology course is the hope that each pupil will develop a concerned and informed awareness of relationships between living organisms, of relationships between organisms and their environment, and the effect of human activities on these relationships.

Above all, the aim is to promote a respect for all forms of life. The course provides a worthwhile educational experience for all and is a suitable preparation for careers which require knowledge of biology.

This course will provide important foundation material supporting further study of Biology at A Level.

Chemistry

Head of Department: Dr Alexandra Waine
Course Code: 4CH1

Increasingly, modern chemistry is focusing on a detailed understanding of the processes at a molecular level, in living systems on the one hand and the structure and properties of exciting new materials on the other.

Knowledge of a wide range of everyday chemicals and materials used in the home, in agriculture and in industry is still required and plenty of practical experience is provided during the course. Calculations based on chemical formulae and equations also form an important part of the chemistry syllabus.

The Edexcel International GCSE Chemistry course provides a stimulating educational journey that pulls together many skills and draws from a wide range of topics. It is good preparation for anyone considering any A Level or degree course that involves chemistry.

Chemistry occupies a central position between the physical and biological sciences, and is an essential requirement at A Level for many university courses such as Medicine, Veterinary Science, Chemical Engineering and some life sciences.

Physics

Head of Department: Paul Thompson
Course Code: 4PH1

"In the beginning there was nothing, which exploded." (Terry Pratchett)

The Edexcel International GCSE Physics course is a fascinating introduction to the fundamental study of the universe, matter and interactions. This revised course has removed some of the more outdated content, and replaced it with advanced, relevant and interesting topics that enable pupils to gain a better understanding of our world and the laws of physics, while also providing a good preparation for A Level for those pupils who are considering this option.

It is easy to be left behind in a technological world that is changing fast. A grasp of basic physics provides the necessary understanding that will enable active participation in this dynamic world. At Stowe we make full use of the latest applications to make Physics a highly up-to-date and more relevant subject. It is an exciting time, as physics plays an increasingly important role in our everyday lives.

Applications of physics are studied in each topic, to ensure relevance in the subject matter. Whether there is a wish to study Physics to a further level or not, pupils acquire a better understanding of the changes that are occurring around them and learn to analyse the beauty of the world and our place in the universe.

"There is no science in this world like physics. Nothing comes close to the precision with which physics enables you to understand the world around you." (Neil deGrasse Tyson)

Spanish

Head of Department: Julio Morales-Shearer
Exam Board & Course Code: AQA 8692

Studying Spanish at GCSE gives learners the opportunity to develop their understanding of not only the Spanish language, but also the Hispanic World.

With approximately 400 million native speakers, Spanish is the world's second most widely spoken first language, second only to Mandarin Chinese. It is a language of global importance, and proficiency in Spanish opens doors to a variety of career and cultural opportunities. As part of our educational philosophy, all pupils are required to study at least one language at GCSE level. Additionally, many UK universities and international institutions have language GCSE requirements for entry.

Course Overview

The AQA GCSE Spanish course is designed to assess pupils' comprehension and communication skills in Spanish, balancing the development of both passive understanding (listening and reading) and active linguistic abilities (speaking and writing). The emphasis is placed on practical communication and authentic language use, alongside building a robust foundation in Spanish grammar and vocabulary.

The course will provide pupils with the opportunity to:

- Develop their ability to understand spoken and written Spanish from a variety of authentic sources.
- Engage confidently in conversations and express themselves clearly in both spoken and written Spanish.
- Gain insight into Hispanic cultures through a variety of topics, including daily life, traditions, and global issues.
- Prepare for further language studies, be it A Level or beyond, including study abroad opportunities.

Assessment Structure

The GCSE Spanish course is linear, meaning that all assessments take place at the end of the two-year course. The four key linguistic skills - listening, speaking, reading, and writing - are evaluated through four separate exam papers, each contributing to 25% of the final grade.

Assessments are set in the context of three themes:

- Theme 1: People and Lifestyle
- Theme 2: Popular Culture
- Theme 3: Communication and the World Around Us

Exam Breakdown

Paper 1: Listening

Understanding and responding to spoken extracts comprising the defined vocabulary and grammar for each tier, plus dictation of short, spoken extracts.

Paper 2: Speaking

Using clear and comprehensible language to undertake a role-play/carry out a reading aloud task/talk about visual stimuli.

Paper 3: Reading

Understanding and responding to written texts which focus predominantly on the vocabulary and grammar at each tier. Inferring plausible meanings of single words when they are embedded in written sentences. Translating from Spanish into English.

Paper 4: Writing

Writing text in the language in a lexically and grammatically accurate way in response to simple and familiar stimuli. Translating from English into Spanish.

Grading and Tiers

The GCSE will be graded on the 9-1 scale, with 9 being the highest grade. The course is available at both Foundation (grades 1-5) and Higher (grades 3-9) levels. All pupils must take all four exams at the same tier. While we encourage pupils to aim for the Higher Tier, individual cases will be reviewed after trial exams, and recommendations will be made in consultation with the Head of Department to ensure the best outcome for each pupil.

Educational Visit and Cultural Exposure

To further enhance pupils' linguistic skills and cultural understanding, a study trip to Spain for a week is typically organised during the course in the Fifth Form. This experience allows pupils to immerse themselves in authentic language environments and practise their skills in real-world contexts. While not compulsory, it is highly recommended, especially for those considering continuing Spanish beyond GCSE.

Additionally, pupils are encouraged to engage with Hispanic culture through various mediums, such as films, music, and news, to deepen their appreciation and understanding of the language's cultural background.

Preparing for the Future

The AQA GCSE Spanish course lays a solid foundation for further studies in Spanish at A Level. It also equips pupils with skills that are highly valued in various professional fields, such as international business, diplomacy, tourism, and education.

Sports Science

Head of Department: Andrew Jackson
Exam Board & Course Code: AQA 8582

The Sports Science course is designed to enable pupils with a strong interest in physical education and sport to gain a deeper understanding of the subject, both at a practical and theoretical level.

It is hoped that through the enjoyment of taking part in physical activities, pupils will be able to apply this interest in the classroom and potentially future careers.

Requirements for GCSE Candidates:

- Pupils are assessed in three different sports; therefore, it is strongly advised that candidates play all three sports to an 'A' team level (or equivalent depending on the sport/activity) and compete regularly. Pupils will be accepted onto the course based on their practical ability (worth 40% of the course), which is assessed by the Sports Science Department.
- Quite often video evidence will be required as part of the candidate's assessment. It will be the responsibility of the pupils to collect and submit this to the Head of Department by the February Half Term in the Fifth Form.
- Pupils should have a keen interest in sport generally and want to understand what factors influence elite sporting performance.

AQA Assessment Objectives

The examination will assess ability to demonstrate:

- Physical performance, including an ability to interrelate planning, performing and evaluating whilst undertaking activity.
- Analysis and improvement of their own and others' performance.
- Knowledge and understanding of the factors affecting performance.
- Knowledge and understanding of the health and safety aspects of physical activity, including the advantages and risks associated with a range of training strategies and techniques.
- Knowledge and understanding of the reasons for participating in physical activity.

Assessment

Theory (60%) - Two 78 mark written papers

Both exam papers are made up of multiple choice, short answer and extended answer questions.

Paper 1: Human Body and Movement in Sport

Including applied anatomy and physiology, movement analysis, physical training and the use of data.

Paper 2: Socio-Cultural Influences and Well-Being in Sport

Including sports psychology, socio-cultural influences, health, fitness and well-being and the use of data.

Non-Exam Assessment (40%)

Practical performance in three sports (30%) and an analysis of performance piece of coursework (10%).

Practical Performance

Assessment is on performance of three different activities, one of these must be a team sport and one must be an individual sport. The third sport may come from either list.

Team Activity

Football, Badminton, Basketball, Cricket, Dance, Handball, Hockey, Lacrosse, Netball, Rowing, Rugby, Squash, Sailing, Table Tennis, Tennis, Volleyball or Water Polo.

Individual Activity

Boxing, Athletics, Badminton, Canoeing, Cycling, Golf, Dance, Diving, Figure Skating, Gymnastics, Equestrian, Rock Climbing, Sailing, Rowing, Sculling, Skiing, Snowboarding, Swimming, Table Tennis, Tennis, Trampoline or Windsurfing.

Analysis of Performance

Pupils complete a piece of written coursework in which they need to analyse, understand and correct areas of weakness in their performance in one chosen sport. Pupils have to apply the physiological, psychological and cultural aspects learned in the theory side of the course.



We are Change Makers