

BISHOP'S
STORTFORD
COLLEGE

ESTD 1868

A Guide to GCSEs

2025—2027



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Academic Curriculum

for Lower Fifth and Upper Fifth to GCSE 2025—2027

Core subjects studied by all

English language and English literature
Mathematics
Double or triple science

Optional subjects

Art
Computer science
Design and technology
Drama
Ethics, philosophy and theology
ESOL*
French
Geography
German
History
Latin
Learning support**
Music
Spanish

*ESOL offered to students at the recommendation of this department.

**For some pupils the Learning Support Department may recommend a reduction in the number of GCSE subjects taken, being replaced by further structured support sessions.

Pupils will study a maximum of 10 GCSE subjects. The options system gives pupils a free choice of four options, for those taking triple science, and five options for those taking double science. However, design and technology, Latin, music (or grade 3 on an instrument), French, German and Spanish may only be chosen by those already studying the subject in our Fourth Form.

We recommend that all pupils study triple science and a modern foreign language, while recognising that this pathway may not be ideal for some pupils. Likewise, pupils should carefully consider the balance of their subject choices to ensure a broad curriculum experience that best suits their individual talents, interests and ambitions.

If a pupil has a specific career in mind, they should seek the advice of the Higher Education and Careers Department and/or their tutor, before making their final subject choices.

Having indicated their preferred choices, we then try to fit every combination into the timetable. It may not be possible to offer a specific option combination; if this is the case you will be contacted individually to discuss alternatives. Please bear in mind that once we fix the blocking structure for timetabling, based on pupils' option choices, we may not be able to facilitate requests to change subjects at a later date.



ART AND DESIGN

Syllabus: Pearson Edexcel –
Fine Art 1FA0

Course Leader: C. Munck

The fine art route will enable pupils to explore a range of two or three-dimensional approaches to their studies either as free-standing or related experiences.

Work produced for this specification will demonstrate the use of formal elements and creative skills, and give visual form to individual thoughts, feelings, observations and ideas. Pupils will show evidence of trying to extend their own and others' ways of seeing the world. They will use the visual language of the discipline sensitively and thoughtfully to support their intentions.

For all disciplines, pupils should:

- undertake visual research using primary and secondary sources and record observations, experiences and ideas in appropriate ways. Primary sources must include first-hand experience of original work,
- develop and realise ideas and outcomes, exploring and reviewing possible solutions and modifying work appropriately,
- understand and use appropriately and safely a range of materials, equipment, processes and techniques in two and/or three dimensions, using information and communication technology where appropriate,
- know and understand a range of work, from contemporary practice, past practice and different cultures, so they are able to demonstrate an understanding of continuity and change in art, craft and design.

The disciplines associated with this GCSE are painting and drawing, printmaking, sculpture, ceramic design, interior, product or environmental design, jewellery, constructed textiles, dyed textiles, printed textiles, woven textiles, knitted textiles, fashion, photography, film and video, advertising, illustration, packaging and typography.

Assessment

Component 1: Personal Portfolio requires students to create a portfolio within specified art and design disciplines, demonstrating creative exploration, research, experimentation, and personal responses, constituting 60% of the qualification, with internal marking and external moderation.

Component 2: Externally Set Assignment, making up 40% of the qualification, requires students to develop and present a personal response to a thematic starting point provided by Pearson, with preparatory studies and a 10-hour focused session under exam conditions, with internal marking and external moderation.

COMPUTER SCIENCE

Syllabus: AQA — Computer Science, 8525

Course Leader: F Ssemwanga



GCSE computer science is a rigorous, fascinating and intellectually challenging subject. We live in a digital age, with computers playing a role in almost every major aspect of life. The use of computers is transforming society, and students studying computer science are at the heart of this change.

Computer science is an incredibly diverse subject that opens up a vast world of possibilities, including the study of robotics, cryptology, data analysis, data modelling and computer games design. Students will develop an understanding of the main principles of problem-solving using computers. They apply their understanding to develop computer-based solutions to problems using algorithms and high-level programming languages. They also develop a range of technical skills, as well as the ability to test, document and evaluate computing solutions.

Today virtually all workers need to be confident operators of digital devices. However, there is a growing need for people to know more than simply how to use a device. There is a need for power users, people who know how to customise these devices, and for developers. Developers are people who can invent, create and develop software to drive the apps that have become a part of our everyday life.

The course:

Computational thinking and programming skills

- Fundamentals of algorithms
- Programming

Computing concepts

- Fundamentals of data representation
- Computer systems
- Fundamentals of computer networks
- Cyber security
- Relational databases and structured query language (SQL)
- Ethical, legal and environmental impacts of digital technology

Assessment

There are two written examination papers and no coursework.

Paper 1. Computational thinking and programming skills: 2 hours, worth 50% of the marks.

Paper 2. Computing concepts: 1 hr 45 minutes worth 50% of the marks.

In addition, students will engage in practical programming using Python.

What can you do with GCSE computer science?

We live in a world that is governed by the use of digital devices – being able to program them, as well as use them is a shortage skill in the UK. However, computer science is not just for people that want a career in the IT and computer industry – the skills and techniques you learn can be useful in any workplace. The creative and technical skills you learn are relevant to a host of careers in a range of sectors from arts and graphics-based roles through to engineering, finance and business. Future pathways could include A Level computing, vocational IT qualifications or Industry-standard IT qualifications, degree courses in computing, engineering and science.

The most important aspect of computer science is problem solving, an essential skill for life. Most people go into computing to make a difference: creating a game that entertains millions of people, designing a system that makes an aspect of everyday life easier, protecting our country from attack, or developing a solution that improves medical care. It is an area where creativity and logic meet and produce great things.



DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

Syllabus: Eduqas (WJEC) Entry
Code: C600QS

Course Leader: J. Trant

This Eduqas (WJEC) GCSE (1-9) in design and technology offers an unique opportunity for learners to identify and solve real problems by designing and making products or systems. Through studying GCSE design and technology, learners will be prepared to participate confidently and successfully in an increasingly technological world.

Key transferable skills

In addition to subject specific skills pupils will learn key transferable skills in the following areas: Independent management of work, ICT skills (CAD, Excel, CNC, Illustrator), critical evaluation, project planning, collaboration in teams, budgeting and basic coding.

The Lower Fifth

In the first year of GCSE pupils will complete tasks in a wide range of materials on diverse problems focused on product design, engineering and architectural briefs.

The Upper Fifth

In the final year of GCSE pupils will complete their Unit 2 design and make task and prepare for the Unit 1 paper through a range of design activities and the preparation of case study material.

Unit 1: Design and technology in the 21st Century

(Written examination: 2 hours, 50% of qualification). A mix of short answer, structured and extended writing questions assessing candidates' knowledge and understanding of product design.

Unit 2: Design and make task

(Non-exam assessment: approximately 35 hours, 50% of qualification). A sustained design and make task guided by WJEC design contexts, assessing candidates' ability to:

- identify, investigate, analyse and outline design possibilities
- design and make prototypes and evaluate their fitness for purpose

Pupils are free to work in any material area.

Pupils will submit their work at the end of the spring term for marking and moderation. Their work will then feature in the product design show in the summer term.

Prior learning and progression

There are no previous learning requirements for this specification and it provides a coherent, satisfying and worthwhile course of study for creative learners.

IGCSE ESL AND CAMBRIDGE ADVANCED

Syllabus: Cambridge IGCSE (9–1) English as a Second Language (Count-in Speaking) (0991)

Course Leader C. Edmunds

The Cambridge IGCSE ESL and Cambridge English: Advanced (CAE) Curriculums are a fantastic opportunity for students to further develop their English language knowledge and skills. Both courses last for two years, with examinations taking place at the end of their Upper Fifth year.

The IGCSE ESL Examination is a B1/B2 exam designed to interest, challenge and engage learners through a range of topics including environment, history and technology. Students develop practical communication skills in reading and writing, listening and speaking.

The main aims of this course are:

- develop learners' ability to use English effectively for the purpose of practical communication,
- develop learners' awareness of the nature of language and language learning skills,
- develop transferable skills to complement other areas of the curriculum,
- promote learners' personal development and enjoyment.

Reading and writing

(2 hour examination worth 50%)

- Presented with a variety of texts
- Learn to select relevant details
- Understand the difference between what is directly stated and implied
- Practice writing for different purposes

Listening

(50 minute examination worth 25%)

- Listen to a range of spoken material including talks and conversations

Speaking

(10–15 minute examination worth 25%)

- Engage in conversations on a variety of topics
- Develop their skills in responding to different situations and audiences with a degree of accuracy and clarity.



The C1 Advanced Examination

The C1 Advanced, formerly known as Cambridge English: Advanced (CAE) Examination is an in-depth, high-level qualification that shows you have the language skills that employers and universities are looking for. It is generally accepted at UK universities as proof of English language ability and is also widely accepted across Europe. At the highest level, students can receive 32 UCAS points, the equivalent of an A Level.

The main aims of this course are to:

- develop your proficiency in reading comprehension and critical thinking,
- develop your ability to produce coherent, well-structured and accurate pieces of writing,
- develop active listening, effective notetaking and the ability to extract key information while understanding the overall message,
- develop fluency, coherence, vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation and interaction with others,
- develop the ability to express opinions, engage in discussions, and respond appropriately to different prompts.

Reading and Use of English

(1 hour 30 minutes examination)

- Deal confidently with different types of texts such as fiction, newspapers and magazines
- Test your use of English with different types of exercises
- Control your choice of grammar and vocabulary

Writing

(1 hour 30 minutes examination)

- Create two different pieces of writing, such as essays, letters/emails, proposals, reports and reviews

Listening

(40 minute examination)

- Follow and understand a range of spoken materials such as interviews and presentations

Speaking

(15 minute examination)

- Take part in a conversation by answering and asking questions

Students will be notified by their teacher if they are expected to take ESOL examinations and which course they take will be decided in consultation with their teacher, based on their level of entry into Lower Fifth.



DRAMA

Syllabus: WJEC Eduqas –
Drama C690QS

Course Leader D. Potter

The creative benefits of GCSE drama

GCSE drama develops you as a confident, creative and assured character within solo, team and leadership scenarios. You will gain experience of the history of classic plays, practitioners and culture as you explore social context. You will travel to participate in contemporary live theatre performance experiences. You will be given creative freedom in groups to devise your own drama performances as well as performing classical theatre scripts. You will work with professional theatre companies in residence and be given the opportunity to take part in drama trips to the Edinburgh Fringe Festival and abroad.

The course has three components:

Component One: Devising theatre [40% of qualification]

You will devise a play in response to a stimulus. You may choose to act or contribute a theatre design skill. You will perform your devised play in front of a live audience which will be marked by your teacher. You will also create supporting evidence, which focuses on three significant moments in the process and write an evaluation of the final piece and your contribution to the group.

Component Two: Performing from a text [20% of qualification]

You will be assessed on either your acting or design skills, in two extracts from a published play. You will perform the scenes in front of a live audience.

Component Three: Interpreting theatre [40% of qualification]

In Section A of a 90 minute open book written examination you will be assessed on your ability to analyse one set text as an actor, designer and director and in Section B you will write a review of a theatre production you have seen during the course.

Skills required of drama students

Students are expected to develop a sophisticated approach to taking on roles, and analysing and evaluating the work of directors, designers, and actors. Drama empowers pupils with the skills of leadership, teamwork, communication, and creativity. The course requires a mature approach to problem solving, thinking 'outside of the box', as well as developing their organisation and time management.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Syllabus: Edexcel —
International GCSE English
Language 4EA1

Course Leader: C. Bond

In English pupils are entered for both English language and English literature. Though pupils are working towards two separate and equally weighted IGCSE qualifications, each with their own examinations and coursework requirements, these subjects are taught side by side within the same groups and lessons. These IGCSE qualifications are increasingly popular and very well-respected qualifications. Both employers and university admissions tutors see them as academically rigorous and stimulating, particularly in light of the rapidly changing modern world, in which the analytical and communication skills developed through the courses are essential. One of the major advantages of IGCSE over other GCSE courses is that it allows pupils to complete traditional coursework rather than being assessed solely by examination.

Course content

There are three main strands to the course as follows:

Reading – pupils will develop a range of reading strategies and will be introduced to a range of literary, non-fiction and media texts. They will be taught to evaluate how writers use language, structure, and presentational features for effect, to explore layers of meaning and to compare different texts and their purposes.

Writing – pupils will be taught to write for a range of purposes and audiences and in a number of different formats, e.g. descriptive writing, persuasive writing, writing to entertain.

Speaking and Listening – pupils will present on a topic of their choice, listen to questions and respond using standard English.

Teaching

Over the two year duration of the course pupils will be introduced to a broad array of engaging and stimulating texts from a range of different contexts.

Texts will be explored through a variety of means including class discussion, personal study, re-creative writing and drama-based activities. Pupils will be encouraged to think independently and to arrive at their own considered and sophisticated responses to texts and ideas. In their writing pupils will be challenged to develop a mature and sophisticated personal written style and their creativity will be nurtured.

Assessment

Pupils will sit one terminal examination at the end of the Upper Fifth which will be worth 60% of the final mark. This paper will assess pupils' reading and writing skills. Pupils will be asked to respond to two non-fiction texts, one of which they will have studied in class and one of which will be unseen. One question will ask pupils to compare these two texts. Pupils will also be asked to complete a piece of transactional writing e.g. a speech or an article. Coursework will be 40% of the marks and will consist of two pieces: one essay on three anthology texts, and one personal and imaginative piece of non-fiction writing. Speaking and listening will be assessed separately through the Life Skills programme and will come as an endorsement on the IGCSE certificate.

ENGLISH LITERATURE

Syllabus: Edexcel —
International GCSE English
Literature 4ET1

Course Leader: C. Bond

Course content

In terms of assessment, pupils will study four texts: one drama text, one novel, a collection of poetry and a literary heritage text. The breadth of texts covered and the skills developed will provide a strong platform from which to approach A Level study of literature, should pupils choose to pursue this path – and we hope they will! As the College also offers the Edexcel A Level in literature, there is then a clear path between the two qualifications in terms of assessment criteria making it more familiar to the pupils of the IGCSE.

Teaching

Texts will be explored through a variety of means including class discussion, personal study, re-creative writing and drama based activities. Pupils will be encouraged to explore different interpretations of the texts studied, to think independently and to arrive at their own considered and sophisticated response, and to consider the relevance of their messages to the pupils' own experiences of the world around them. Texts will be related to their contexts of production and reception and pupils will develop their knowledge of the literary tradition and cultural contexts from which texts are drawn. Pupils will develop their skills of analysis and will be taught how to produce sophisticated written responses to challenging literary texts. Wherever possible our classroom teaching will be complemented by extra-curricular activities and relevant theatre trips etc.

Assessment

Pupils will be assessed by one terminal examination which is worth 60%. This requires pupils to respond to an unseen poem, write a comparative essay on two poems studied in the anthology and write one essay on a prose text that they have studied. The remaining 40% of the marks will be determined by a coursework portfolio of two responses, one on a modern drama text and one on a text from the literary heritage list. Texts such as *Things Fall Apart*, *Macbeth* and *A View from the Bridge* are typically covered.



ETHICS, PHILOSOPHY AND THEOLOGY

Syllabus: AQA — Religious Studies, 8062A

Course Leader: J. Molyneux

Throughout history, humanity has always grappled with the question of whether we have a purpose on this earth and how we should live a good life. This course is a fantastic opportunity to explore how people think, what motivates them, and how they have responded to these essential questions. Over the two years pupils will consider how religion and more secular societies have helped people in their quest to solve some of these problems, and will equip them with the knowledge and skills to think rigorously on ethical, philosophical and theological issues in today's society.

In addition to learning about the key tenants of the largest global faiths, developing a rich understanding of their philosophical and ethical foundations, pupils will develop the key skills of analysis and evaluation, leading them to be able to justify their own views on contemporary issues. Importantly the course welcomes pupil interpretation and opinions on these challenging questions, encouraging the questioning of the status quo. As such, the subject will suit anyone who is keen to learn, wishes to discover more about diverse topics such as people, logic, history and culture. As it is a subject which challenges preconceptions, and is ideal for those seeking stimulating, and lively discussion on a wide range of issues.

The course:

Thematic studies: Ethics

Religion and Life: Why is life considered so important? When do we truly become human? What is our relationship with the planet? Why does something exist rather than nothing?

Religion, Peace and Conflict: When is it right to kill and when is it right to be pacifist? Is terrorism in

the name of truth ever right? Who has a duty to protect innocent civilians?

Religion, Crime and Punishment: What is the purpose of punishment? Is our current legal system effective? Should we have the death penalty? Who should we punish and who should we forgive?

Thematic Studies: Philosophy

Existence of God and Revelation: Does God exist and if so how has God revealed himself in the world? Can we trust this revelation? If not, how valid are the alternative explanations?

Theology: Religious teaching beliefs and practices

Pupils will explore how Christianity and Islam came to be the leading religions in the world, their stories, their relationship with politics and power, their influence on individuals, and their solutions to questions of meaning and purpose.

Assessment

There are two written examination papers and no coursework.

Paper 1. Religious teachings, beliefs and practices: 1 hr 45 mins worth 50% of marks.

Paper 2. Thematic studies: 1 hr 45 mins worth 50% of marks.

What can you do with GCSE religious studies?

This subject is an excellent subject to support many others through its promotion of critical reasoning as well as provision of cultural awareness. As such this subject opens many doors with pupils from this course going onto many different and diverse subjects whether with a more humanities or science focus with natural paths including law, medicine, maths, marketing, business and psychology to name but a few.



GEOGRAPHY

Syllabus: AQA — Geography,
8035

Course Leader: N. Tether

Outline

The course aims to provide a relevant and dynamic insight into geographical processes and how they shape our world. In presenting this course the Geography Department is committed to delivering the most up-to-date content in a style that is both stimulating and challenging. In this context we expect our pupils to enjoy the scope of the material they cover in geography, the insights it can provide into understanding the world around them and the sheer contemporary nature of the issues they will tackle.

Course structure

Paper 1 Living with the physical environment:
35% of total marks.

Paper 2 Challenges in the human environment:
35% of total marks.

Paper 3 Geographical applications:
30% of total marks.

Subject content

Paper 1 Living with the physical environment

Natural hazards: tectonic hazards, tropical storms, extreme weather in the UK and climate change.

Physical landscapes in the UK: river landscapes in the UK and their management, coastal landscapes in the UK and their management.

The living world: ecosystems, tropical rainforests and hot deserts.

Paper 2: Challenges in the human environment

Urban issues and challenges: Urban change in cities such as London and Lagos leads to a variety of social, economic and environmental opportunities and problems that need to be managed in a sustainable way.

The changing economic world: There are global, national and local variations in economic development and quality of life that have profound impacts on people living in places like Nigeria and the UK.

The challenge of resource management: The global distribution of food, water and energy resources is uneven, creating challenges, opportunities and conflicts that need to be managed.

Paper 3: Geographical applications

Issue Evaluation: This section contributes a critical thinking and problem-solving element to the assessment structure. The assessment will provide pupils with the opportunity to demonstrate geographical skills and applied knowledge and understanding by looking at a particular issue(s) derived from the content of Papers 1 and 2.

Fieldwork: This part of the assessment will allow pupils to express their understanding of how fieldwork can be used to investigate and answer important geographical questions.

In summary, geography GCSE provides an exciting opportunity to engage with some of the most challenging issues facing society, while also highlighting the awe and wonder of the planet we all share.



HISTORY

Syllabus: Cambridge —
International GCSE History
0977

Course Leader: T. E. Stuart

Core content:
International relations since 1919

Depth study:
Germany, 1918—1945

This syllabus has been specially chosen in the belief that, in order to make sense of the present, all pupils need an understanding of key aspects of twentieth century history.

IGCSE history is wide-ranging, covering political, economic and social themes, as well as a mixture of regions, from Europe to North America, Asia and the Middle East. In particular, there is an emphasis on questions of peace and war: what factors determine which state of affairs exists at any time, and why have outcomes varied so dramatically over the past hundred years?

The course is skills-based and the techniques developed, such as the ability to explain causes and consequences, or to evaluate evidence, are vitally important to any objective understanding of the complex problems facing the world today. Many types of source material, including government papers, propaganda, television documentaries, photographs, cartoons, letters, diaries and feature films, are examined. Pupils learn to assess these critically, distinguishing fact from opinion, and identifying strengths and weaknesses, before arriving at an informed judgement.

In short, this course is not only aimed at pupils curious to know more about the past; it is intended, too, for those keen to improve their analytical skills. We expect our IGCSE historians to display inquiring minds, a good work ethic and an enthusiasm to succeed. We have a proud record of success in public examinations and large numbers of our pupils continue with history in the Sixth Form.

Formal assessment at IGCSE is in three parts – Paper 1, Paper 2 and Coursework, as follows:

Paper 1 (2 hour examination worth 40%) tests knowledge and understanding of the core content and the depth study,

Paper 2 (1 hour 45 minute examination worth 30%) tests pupils' ability to interpret and evaluate historical evidence related to the core content,

Coursework (worth 30%) provides an opportunity for pupils to demonstrate their abilities outside timed conditions. Pupils complete one assignment on the depth study. The department has a wide range of resources to help pupils with their work, including an excellent Library. Coursework is marked internally, but moderated externally.



LATIN

GCSE Latin is the study of the ancient Roman world through its language, literature and wider civilisation. This gives students a unique perspective on modern life, which owes so much to Roman culture – from the obvious (architecture and hygiene) to the more unusual (fast food and advertising).

Students fine-tune and build upon their existing Latin language, acquiring transferable skills of exceptional attention to detail and logical problem-solving. They also develop a linguistic mastery invaluable both for their written English and for the study of other modern European languages.

Latin is synonymous with scholarship, and is highly respected by Russell Group universities and prestigious employers alike. It is a great way to set yourself apart from the herd.

Uniquely among GCSE subjects, Latin students use their language skills to read original literary texts, accessing for themselves the 2,000-year-old thoughts and beliefs of Roman writers, in the exact words they wrote.

Students also study an aspect of Roman culture in English, covering a wider range of literary and also visual sources (paintings, mosaics, sculptures) to bring their studies to life.

Course Content

GCSE Latin is made up of three components, all of which are assessed by written examination at the end of the course.

Component 1: Latin language [50%]

Comprehension and translation skills lie at the heart of this paper, with a fixed defined vocabulary list of 440 words. Students will study the language in both Lower and Upper Fifth.

Component 2: Latin literature and sources [30%]

In the Upper Fifth, we will be studying either “Heroes and Villains” (a selection of Latin texts and sources on Romans good and bad), or “Come Dine with me!” – a selection of Latin texts and sources on food and dining in the Roman world. Students will study the texts in the original Latin, together with passages already translated into English to extend the storyline. They will be assessed on their ability to understand, analyse and evaluate the text.

Component 3: Roman Life [20%]

In the Lower Fifth, we study a prescribed theme such as Roman Family Life or the City of Rome. A wide variety of prose and verse literary extracts explore the theme, complemented by a range of other ancient sources such as paintings, mosaics, sculptures, buildings, and graffiti.

Who would enjoy GCSE Latin?

- Students with a passion for English, literature, modern languages.
- Students with a passion for ‘notational’ languages: maths, music, computer programming.
- Students with a passion for history who recognise the value of understanding Western cultural heritage.
- Those who want to stand out from the crowd and dare to be different...

MATHEMATICS

Syllabus:
Edexcel —
International
GCSE
Mathematics
4MA1

Course Leader:
M. McGrath

Entry tiers

Most pupils aim for the higher tier; a few pupils, after discussion, may be encouraged to take the foundation tier where they will be able to access more, enjoy more, engage and achieve better.

Higher grades available:

9 – 4 with a grade 3 allowed if a pupil just falls below the grade 4 boundary.

Foundation grades available: 5 – 1

Grades 4 and 5 are roughly equivalent to the old grade C; the new higher tier papers cover six grades instead of five, allowing for more differentiation at the top end so it should be harder to achieve a grade 9 than the old A*.

Assessment objectives weighting in higher tier

		% in International GCSE
AO1	Demonstrate knowledge, understanding and skills in number and algebra: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • numbers and the numbering system • calculations • solving numerical problems • equations, formulae and identities • sequences, functions and graphs 	57—63%
AO2	Demonstrate knowledge, understanding and skills in shape, space and measures: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • geometry and trigonometry • vectors and transformation geometry 	22—28%
AO3	Demonstrate knowledge, understanding and skills in handling data: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • statistics • probability 	12—18%
		100%



Content

The detailed topics can be found on-line at <https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/edexcel-international-gcses/international-gcse-mathematics-a-2016.html>.

The four main areas are:
number, algebra, geometry, statistics

Written examination papers

(there is no assessed coursework)

Two papers, each taking two hours, will be sat by all candidates in the Upper Fifth.

Calculators are allowed in both papers. Each paper contributes half of the total marks, which go towards the final grade.



FRENCH

Syllabus: AQA Specification 8652

Course Leader: M-L. Cunin

Why study this subject?

Did you know that more than 200 million people speak French on the five continents? Today an ability to speak French and English is not only an advantage on the international job market thus making you more employable but also a great way to make friends and explore new cultures. French is the third most used language on the internet and an ability to understand French offers an alternative view of the world via various communication tools.

Following a course in French should encourage you to:

- develop a love of the language and the ability to communicate effectively in French through speaking and writing,
- develop the ability to listen to, read and understand and interpret the language,
- develop your knowledge and understanding of French grammar,
- develop your knowledge of Francophone countries.

What will you study?

The French GCSE is a dynamic, highly motivating course which strives to enthuse pupils and enable them to communicate effectively in the target language. The GCSE course is divided into three broad themes and each broad theme is divided into sub-themes including youth culture, lifestyle, customs and traditions, home and locality, France and French-speaking countries, global sustainability, education, world of work and jobs and future plans.

How will you be assessed?

This is a linear qualification in which all assessments must be taken at the end of the course. There will no longer be controlled assessment. The qualification is made up of the four skills; *listening, speaking, reading and writing*. Each of the four skills are equally weighted.

Is there anything special about French at Bishop's Stortford College?

Communication is essential and we have a full time French 'assistante', who works closely with all GCSE pupils in order to encourage a greater level of accuracy and a more spontaneous level of French. Our newly renovated language lab offers pupils the opportunity to really hone their listening and speaking skills.

We also feel that the opportunity to visit the country of study is essential. GCSE pupils are able to take part in the French stay programme to Nantes, France. This provides them with the opportunity to not only improve their language skills but also develop their knowledge of this Francophone country. Furthermore, the school library boasts an excellent range of French DVDs and magazines.

We encourage all pupils to develop their cultural interests during the course. We feel that learning a language at Bishop's Stortford College provides pupils with an excellent foundation to develop their language skills post GCSE.

GERMAN

Syllabus: AQA GCSE
German 8662

Course Leader: A. Geissler



Why continue to learn German?

After English, German is Europe's second most widely spoken language. An English native speaker with German in their portfolio is a rare and very marketable person..

Aims of the course

- To develop your ability to communicate effectively in German through speaking and writing,
- to develop your ability to listen to, read and understand German,
- to develop your knowledge and understanding of German grammar,
- to develop your knowledge and understanding of the countries and communities where German is spoken,
- to enhance your cultural awareness.

What will you study?

You will study German within a range of topics: youth culture, lifestyle, customs and traditions, home and locality, Germany and German-speaking countries, global sustainability, education, world of work, jobs and future plans.

The four skills of reading, writing, listening and speaking you have been studying up to the Fourth Form will be further consolidated and developed across the breadth of the GCSE specification.

As well as the textbook, you will be using material from a variety of sources including current video materials, language software such as Education Perfect and Wordwall.

How will you be assessed?

Each of the four skills of speaking, listening, reading, and writing contributes towards your final grade with the following weighting:

Listening 25%, Speaking 25%, Reading 25%, Writing 25%.

All four skills will be examined at the end of the two-year course.

How can you immerse yourself fully in your German experience so as to get the most out of the course?

In June the Lower Fifth Germanists undertake either a short project investigating German art and artists at the Tate Art Gallery, London, or they create their own short film in German: language, insight and inspiration gained during these tasks enhance both the spoken and written papers in the final examinations.

Most importantly at the end of the first year of the course all of our GCSE German students will have the opportunity take part in our German Exchange, which has been running for over 25 years. Our visit to Heikendorf near Kiel in the north of Germany is a highlight of the two years and a unique opportunity to experience Germany, its language and culture first-hand. Not only will you be able to host a German student here, but you will also experience life in a German family, attend a German school and visit historical cities in one of the most beautiful parts of the country. The exchange will boost your linguistic skills in German but also develop greatly valued soft- and transferable skill such as communicative confidence, cultural open-mindedness, and intellectual curiosity. Life-long friendships are regularly formed during the exchange.

In the U5th, to further enrich your learning experience, you will be invited to attend the German Society evenings, where we enjoy German food, whilst discussing topical issues relating to Germany and its culture and play games using the target language. These events are often attended by Germanists from other local schools and, once a year, by the visiting students from our partner school in Heikendorf.

There is the excellent opportunity to return to Germany at the end of U5th, this time to the former capital city of Bonn, for a one-day cultural, historical, and linguistic immersion experience. The visit is envisaged as an introduction to important aspects of the exciting and relevant A level curriculum.

SPANISH

Syllabus: AQA — Spanish
8692

Course Leader: R. Bravo



¡Bienvenidos!

Why Spanish?

Learning a foreign language at GCSE is an opportunity to open a door on a different world. Spanish is currently spoken by 329 million people worldwide across 44 countries, each with their own unique and extraordinary culture.

Our aims

Studying Spanish will encourage pupils to:

- foster a passion for the language and culture,
- develop communication skills in both Spanish and their first language,
- develop reading, listening, and speaking skills which can be used both in the study of languages and across the curriculum,
- explore Spanish grammar, and in doing so, develop understanding of their own first language,
- widen their interest in international travel, culture, history, film and the arts.

What is the course like?

The GCSE course provides opportunities to use language skills within authentic and meaningful contexts, creating independent learners with strong communication skills who are able to manipulate the language and express their own interests.

The course is divided into three key themes: people and lifestyle, popular culture, communication and the world around us.

What are the exams like?

The pupils are assessed in four equally weighted final examinations:

- *reading* (understanding and responding to different types of written language),
- *writing* (communicating effectively in writing for a variety of purposes),
- *speaking* (communicating and interacting effectively in speech for a variety of purposes),

- *listening* (understanding and responding to different types of spoken language).

Clinics are offered ahead of speaking exams with experienced Sixth Form coaches to support students' speaking practice and boost your confidence, it is always great fun!

What is special about the Spanish Department?

In the Spanish Department, we think it is of utmost importance that pupils have the opportunity to use the Spanish language as much as possible within authentic and natural contexts. For this purpose, we run a five-day residential stay with families, as well as an e-pal project where students can email and have real communication with native students their age. The BSET debating competition is a fabulous event where our students demonstrate their knowledge, fluency and show off their strong debating skills. We also run photocard description, Education Perfect and word association competitions, which showcase out students' talent, knowledge and creativity.

We are lucky to have a full time Spanish native assistant, and you will practise your Spanish on a weekly basis, in pairs, groups or individually. It really helps your confidence!

Extension and cultural tasks are available on Firefly and we revise vocabulary using Quizlet and Education Perfect in lessons. For those wanting to know more about film and literature, there are many resources in the Library, Clickview as well as authentic articles and documentaries.

¡Nos vemos en GCSE!

Sra. Bravo y Sra. Estrella

MUSIC

Syllabus: Edexcel — Music
1Mu0

Course Leader: I. Núñez



GCSE music is an ideal course for many pupils who play an instrument or sing and also enjoy listening to music. This new course is stretching and rewarding for all types of pupils, who will develop their musical ability through performing (component one, 30%), composing (component two, 30%) and listening and appraisal through four areas of study. The qualification caters for a wide range of interests; a variety of works are studied from Bach and Beethoven to Queen, the Star Wars soundtrack and the musical Wicked!

Pupils are required:

- to develop and demonstrate their musicianship skills through performing, composing and appraising,
- to perform one solo piece and one ensemble piece,
- to compose one free composition and one to a set brief,
- to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of musical elements, musical contexts and musical language through study of an engaging range of set works.

Component	Overview	Assessment
Performing Internally assessed and externally moderated	2 performances: Solo – minimum: 1 minute Ensemble – minimum: 1 minute Together total minimum of 4 minutes <i>Grade 4–5 standard is recommended.</i>	30%
Composing Internally assessed and externally moderated	2 compositions: 1 to set brief – minimum: 1 minute 1 free composition – minimum: 1 minute Together total minimum of 3 minutes	30%
Appraising 1hr 45mins Examination paper	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instrumental Music 1700–1820 • Vocal Music • Music for Stage and Screen • Fusions 	40%

Technical elements are taught through the set works to show real examples of how features are used within different types of music. Building on this, and by using practical methods, pupils are encouraged to take a more all inclusive view of their knowledge, performance and compositional skills. Pupils will also develop critical and creative thinking, cultural, aesthetic and emotional awareness, and the ability to make music individually and as part of a group.

GCSE music is a stimulating course in its own right, but also provides a solid grounding for further study at A Level and beyond. All instruments and voices are accepted and performance can be in any style of music chosen by the candidate.

THE SCIENCES

All pupils will be taught biology, chemistry and physics as separate disciplines and will have the opportunity to take them as separate subjects. All three subjects follow Edexcel's International GCSE specifications. All courses are linear in nature with a series of examinations taken at the end of the final year. All courses encourage pupils to be inspired, motivated and challenged by following a broad, coherent, practical, satisfying and worthwhile course of study. They provide an insight into and experience of how science works, stimulating pupils' curiosity and encouraging them to engage with science in their everyday lives and to make informed choices about further study and about career choices. Pupils also have the option of completing double award science.





THE SCIENCES

BIOLOGY

Syllabus: Edexcel –
International GCSE
Biology 4BI1

Course Leader:
S. McPeake

This specification aims to sustain and develop an enjoyment and interest in the study of living organisms. In doing so, pupils will learn about the unifying patterns and themes of biology while acquiring the knowledge and understanding of facts, concepts and principles and the skills needed to use them in real-life applications. This course encompasses a broad range of practical activities with a focus on the development of experimental and investigative skills based on correct and safe laboratory techniques.

Qualification Content

Section 1: The nature and variety of living organisms

Section 2: Structures and functions in living organisms

Section 3: Reproduction and inheritance

Section 4: Ecology and the environment

Section 5: Use of biological resources

Assessment

This is a linear course with no coursework or controlled assessment components. Pupils will be examined at the end of the Upper Fifth by means of two papers. Studying International GCSE biology will provide the basis for the study of A Level biology and can lead to a large number of science related subjects as well as medical fields.



THE SCIENCES

CHEMISTRY

Syllabus: Edexcel —
International GCSE
Chemistry 4CH1

Course Leader:
C. Bannister

For several years we have taught the Edexcel International GCSE in chemistry. This is a course that prioritises the important concepts and principles of chemistry that gives our pupils the best possible foundation in their science education, whether they are just going to study to GCSE or whether they are thinking of going on to study A Level and beyond.

The IGCSE course satisfies our wishes in all of:

- the emphasis on the core principles of the subject,
- plenty of relevant and interesting practical work,
- more time to study topics without the distraction of unnecessary coursework.

Evidence from IGCSE chemistry grades in recent years at the College, show it is as accessible a course as the standard GCSE and the higher grades just as likely to be obtained.

The course is linear with two examination papers at the end of Year 11:

A core 2 hour paper – assessing all of the subjects key skills,

An extension paper of 1 hour – examining the subject in more depth.

The content of the qualification is as follows:

Section 1: Principles of chemistry,

Section 2: Chemistry of the elements,

Section 3: Organic chemistry,

Section 4: Physical chemistry,

Section 5: Chemistry in industry,

The IGCSE course at the College is both stimulating and enjoyable as well as providing pupils with a secure grounding in the important principles and key skills of chemistry.



THE SCIENCES
PHYSICS

Syllabus: Edexcel —
 International GCSE Physics,
 4PH1

Course Leader: J. Hutchings

All our pupils are studying the Edexcel International GCSE qualification. The International GCSE in physics aims to impart a systematic body of scientific knowledge and skills as well as fostering an appreciation of the practical nature of physics. Pupils will develop experimental and investigative skills based on safe, correct laboratory techniques, and learn about scientific methods and how to form hypotheses and design experiments to test them. The emphasis of the course is much more focussed on how things work, rather than the global and environmental issues that surround them.

Key subject aims:

To impart a systematic body of scientific knowledge and the skills needed to apply this in new and changing situations in different contexts - domestic, industrial and environmental.

To foster an appreciation of the practical nature of physics, and develop experimental and investigative skills based on correct and safe laboratory techniques.

To develop pupils' appreciation of the importance of accurate experimental work and reporting to scientific method.

To enable pupils to form hypotheses and design experiments to test them.

To give pupils the skills to evaluate, in terms of their scientific knowledge and understanding, the benefits and drawbacks (including social, environmental and economic) of scientific and technological developments.

To enable pupils to select, organise and present information clearly and logically, using appropriate scientific terms and conventions.

Qualification content:

Section 1: Forces and motion,

Section 2: Electricity,

Section 3: Waves,

Section 4: Energy resources and energy transfer,

Section 5: Solids, liquids and gases,

Section 6: Magnetism and electromagnetism,

Section 7: Radioactivity and particles.

Assessment:

The course is linear, with no coursework or controlled assessment aspects.

At the end of the Upper Fifth year, the pupils will take two papers – a two hour paper assessing all of the key skills, and an extension paper that examines the subject in more depth.

The International GCSE is designed to produce strong physicists with very good practical skills and a deep understanding of the subject – something the department strongly feels is the correct aim for any pupil.



DOUBLE AWARD SCIENCE

The science (double award) is worth two International GCSEs and covers all three sciences. Pupils cannot opt to study one or two sciences separately. Each of the sciences is taught by subject specialist teachers. The double award option covers the same broad topics as the separate science international GCSEs, but up to approximately two-thirds of the content overall.

The international science (double award) course emphasises scientific knowledge, the application of science and the scientific process. It will equip pupils with a good understanding of each of the three science disciplines.

Pupils will learn about unifying patterns and themes in science and use them in new and changing situations. They will acquire knowledge and understanding of scientific facts, terminology, concepts, principles and practical techniques. The course provides an opportunity to apply the principles and concepts of science, including those related to the applications of science, to different contexts. Pupils will develop an appreciation for the practical nature of science, developing experimental and investigative skills based on correct and safe laboratory techniques. The course will include a number of required practicals. Pupils will be encouraged to analyse, interpret and evaluate data and experimental methods, drawing conclusions that are consistent with evidence from experimental activities and suggesting possible improvements and further investigations. Pupils will find questions linking to these experiments in the final examination.

Qualification content:

Biology topics

- The nature and variety of living organisms
- Structure and functions in living organisms
- Reproduction and inheritance
- Ecology and the environment
- Use of biological resources

Chemistry topics

- Principles of chemistry
- Inorganic chemistry
- Physical chemistry
- Organic chemistry

Physics

- Forces and motion
- Electricity
- Waves
- Energy resources and energy transfer
- Solids, liquids and gases
- Magnetism and electromagnetism
- Radioactivity and particles
- Astrophysics

Assessment

At the end of Upper Fifth pupils will sit three 2-hour written examinations, each worth 33.3% of the total mark.



Bishop's Stortford College,
School House, Maze Green Road,
Bishop's Stortford, Hertfordshire, CM23 2PQ

Telephone: +44 (0)1279 838575

Email: general.enquiry@bishopsstortfordcollege.org

www.bishopsstortfordcollege.org