



Downe House



I/GCSE Options

Study period 2018 - 2020

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I/GCSE YEARS

Creating a broad and balanced curriculum for the future

Introduction

Entering the I/GCSE years gives you your first significant opportunity to design your own curriculum. This is a very important time and it is therefore essential to spend time researching, discussing and considering the options open to you and their implications for your studies at 16+, for higher education and beyond. You will receive plenty of advice from your teachers, your Academic Tutor, your Housemistress and the Higher Education Department. The Head of Upper School and Director of Higher Education and Options Adviser will be talking through your option choices with you in the Lent Term.

The Curriculum

Your I/GCSE curriculum should be broad and balanced in order that you keep as many opportunities open as possible. This is the reason that, whilst there are many opportunities to choose subjects, there is also a protected core of subjects studied by every girl. These are subjects which universities and employers normally expect, as they show that you have acquired a good range of fundamental skills across a variety of subjects.

Core Subjects

English (including English Literature)

Mathematics

Science (at least two sciences, but usually three sciences)

A Modern Foreign Language

Physical Education (non-examined)

Religious Studies (examined or non-examined)

Building your Curriculum: the Number of IGCSEs/GCSEs

When you are choosing your GCSEs consider very carefully what is a manageable workload. Most pupils will sit nine with some taking ten and, in exceptional cases, eleven. However, remember that it is not the quantity of I/GCSEs that you have that matters but rather the quality of the I/GCSEs that you gain and the fact that you leave enough time and energy for your other interests that is important. In addition to excellent academic qualifications, employers and universities also want to know that you have a range of interests and skills. It is important to take advantage of the many opportunities open to you.

Religious Studies General

It is a requirement at Downe House that all pupils receive some form of Religious Education. During the Remove, Lower Fourth and Upper Fourth, Religious Studies is taught alongside other curriculum subjects with a similar time allowance. In the Lower and Upper Fifth years girls are offered the option of a GCSE course leading to a qualification in Religious Studies (see Religious Studies GCSE). Pupils who do not opt to continue with their academic study of religion therefore need to continue with Religious Studies in a non-examined context.

The course runs for one lesson a week throughout the Lower and Upper Fifth years and involves the study of a variety of religious beliefs and practices alongside looking at current issues involving ideas of religion, morality and philosophy. The course is taught by members of the Religious Studies Department.

Alterations to I/GCSE qualification grading

I/GCSEs have altered their grading system as a result of the government review into national qualification standards. The chart below outlines an approximate equivalence between the previous I/GCSE grading system and the new qualification. This process of phased change began in September 2015 and will continue until September 2018.

NEW GCSE GRADING STRUCTURE										
9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	U	
					<div style="border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 50%; padding: 10px; display: inline-block;"> 4 = C and above and above </div>					
					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Broadly the same proportion of students will achieve a grade 4 and above as currently achieve a grade C and above. ■ Broadly the same proportion of students will achieve a grade 7 and above as achieve an A and above. ■ The bottom of grade 1 will be aligned with the bottom of grade G. 					
		A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	U
CURRENT GCSE GRADING STRUCTURE										

All subjects at Downe House will be graded according to the new 9-1 system, apart from Chinese.

The Process for Making a Choice

Mid January – The Higher Education department advise you on how to go about creating your I/GCSE programme. This will include explaining how choices made now will have some bearing on possible careers in the future, and how to create a balanced programme.

End of January – You will be given the I/GCSE choices booklet in your PSHE lessons and subject staff will talk to you about the I/GCSE courses in your lesson time, so that you know what each subject involves and the demands of controlled assessments (coursework). During this period, in your Careers lessons (as part of your PSHE programme), you will have discussions about subject choices and careers.

Beginning of March – Your parents have the opportunity to discuss your choices with your Academic Tutor and teachers at the annual Parents' meeting. You will discuss your provisional choices with your Academic Tutor and Housemistress. You will then be asked to fill in your proposed options on the form with your Academic Tutor.

At the end of the Lent Term – A form showing proposed choices is sent to your parents for their final approval.

The Right Choice

As long as the timetable allows, you will be able to make minor alterations to your choice of subjects. It is important to make the choice that is right for you and therefore you will have the opportunity to talk through your choices with your Housemistress. Your Academic Tutor is also on hand to help you in your decision making as are the Higher Education Department, the Academic Deputy and Head of Upper School.

In Conclusion

This is an exciting time and we want you to enjoy your I/GCSEs and have a good foundation on which to build further study. With a carefully created profile of subjects and extra-curricular activities you should be able to move on to your Pre-U/AS/A2 with confidence, having thoroughly enjoyed these two years.



Mrs Emma McKendrick
Headmistress



Mrs Anna Dourountakis
Head of Upper School

English Language and English Literature

English Language

Examination Board	AQA
Specifications	GCSE English Language English 8700
Website	www.aqa.org.uk

The specification enables pupils to develop the skills they need to read, understand and analyse a wide range of different texts covering the 19th, 20th and 21st century time periods as well as to write clearly, coherently and accurately using a range of vocabulary and sentence structures. It offers the attraction of two equally-balanced papers, relating reading sources to the topic and theme of writing tasks. The reading sources act as stimulus materials for writing tasks, providing pupils with a clear route through each paper.

Each paper has a distinct identity to better support high quality provision and engaging teaching and learning. **Paper 1, Explorations in Creative Reading and Writing**, looks at how writers use narrative and descriptive techniques to engage the interest of readers. **Paper 2, Writers' Viewpoints and Perspectives**, looks at how different writers present a similar topic over time. Our approach to spoken language emphasises the importance of the wider benefits that speaking and listening skills have for pupils.

English Literature

Examination Board	AQA
Specification	GCSE English Literature 8702
Website	www.aqa.org.uk

The specification takes a skills-based approach to the study of English literature that is consistent across the genres of prose, poetry and drama. The assessment strategies support pupils' achievement in an untiered, **closed book** context through the use of extract-based questions in the assessment of the 19th-century novel and the Shakespeare plays. Question papers and mark schemes have been designed to help support inspirational literature teaching.

There are two papers. For **Paper 1, Shakespeare and the Nineteenth-Century Novel**, a play by Shakespeare such as *Romeo and Juliet* is studied as well as a substantial novel such as *Pride and Prejudice*. For **Paper 2, Modern Texts and Poetry**, a classic text from the twentieth century such as *An Inspector Calls* is studied as well as a selection of verse from 1789 to the present day; pupils also prepare for a task that invites comparisons between two unseen poems.

Mrs Johanne Harrington
Head of English

Mathematics

Examination Board
Specification
Website

Edexcel
International GCSE Mathematics (Specification A- 4MA1)
www.edexcel.com

Course Content

The Edexcel International GCSE provides a thorough grounding in Mathematics, whether you are intending to progress to further study in Mathematics or are looking for a final qualification. It builds on the topics covered in the Lower School and covers a wide range of mathematical knowledge and skills. These are grouped into four areas:

- Number
- Algebra
- Geometry
- Statistics

You will use a lot of what you learn in International GCSE mathematics in the other GCSEs/IGCSEs that you study, for example in Science you may be asked to use formulae and solve equations, in Geography you will need to read charts and diagrams and use statistics, and in Design and Technology you will need to use measures and make scale drawings.

In Mathematics you will use a range of techniques to assist your learning, including whole class tuition, group work, investigative projects and the use of computers as an aid to study. During the course you will be taught to use numerical skills in a purely mathematical way and also in real life situations, use algebra to set up and solve problems, demonstrate manipulative skills and use graphs. You will also develop your understanding of ideas of space and shape, basic ideas of probability and use a range of statistical techniques.

The course is examined by two written papers, offered in the January and June of each year; there is no controlled assessment (coursework) requirement. Each paper is two hours long and worth 50% of the total marks, and you might be asked to solve a problem about anything that you have studied on either paper. You will be expected to have access to a suitable, scientific calculator for both papers.

Generally, you will be entered for the Higher Tier examination, which gives access to grades 9 to 4 (with 3 allowed). However, occasionally the Foundation Tier examination, which gives access to grades 5 to 1, might be considered to be more appropriate.

Mr Robert Barnes
Head of Mathematics

FSMQ Additional Mathematics

Examination Board	OCR
Specification	Additional Mathematics (6993)
Website	www.ocr.org.uk

Course Content

This course is a post GCSE (level 3) qualification in Mathematics, and is known as a Free Standing Mathematics Qualification. The content includes some of the content of Higher Tier GCSE/International GCSE, with the remaining content being a subset of the GCE AS Mathematics units, and consists of four areas in Pure Mathematics,

- Algebra
- Co-ordinate Geometry
- Trigonometry
- Calculus

each of which is used to support a recognised branch of Applied Mathematics. The course is examined by a single 2 hour written paper, offered in the Summer of each year, for which access to a suitable scientific calculator is expected; there is no controlled assessment (coursework) requirement. The examination is graded as though it was an AS unit, with pass grades A to E. This course provides an excellent preparation for studying Mathematics in the Sixth Form, as well as providing a worthwhile and enriching course in its own right. If you do not go on to study Mathematics at A-level, this course counts for UCAS points on a University application.

Likely Candidates

The course is designed for those pupils who have a thorough knowledge of the content of the Higher Tier GCSE/International GCSE and who have achieved, or expect to achieve a grade A*. It is intended as an enrichment course for the most able mathematicians and is only open to pupils in Division One. The aims of the course are:

- To introduce pupils to the power and elegance of advanced mathematics;
- To allow pupils to experience the directions in which the subject is developed post-GCSE;
- To develop confidence in using mathematical skills in other areas of study.

For those who decide not to pursue Mathematics at A level, you will gain a good grounding in the more advanced techniques that will be useful in support of other subjects such as the Sciences, Economics or Geography.

Mr Robert Barnes
Head of Mathematics

Modern Languages

Having the ability to speak a foreign language opens up a whole host of possibilities for a girl's future, whether it be in the world of engineering, medicine or business – to name but a few - and the communication skills that are integral to learning a language will be invaluable to the pupils in other areas of life and study.

All pupils must study at least one language to GCSE. Although it is expected that a number of pupils may choose to study two languages to this level. The languages on offer are Chinese, French, German, Italian, and Spanish. At this point pupils have studied French for two or more years and Chinese, German, Italian and Spanish for one. Nearly all pupils study French at GCSE and many choose to study French and one other language or two from Chinese, German, Italian or Spanish. It is also possible to study Chinese, German, Italian or Spanish on its own.

Pupils in their GCSE year have four lessons and two pieces of Prep per week. The aim of each course is to enable pupils to communicate effectively and successfully in their chosen language or languages. Pupils learn to extract information from authentic sources and we use a wide range of material including magazines, newspapers, textbooks, audio and videotapes and of course, the Internet. There are many opportunities for the pupils to practise and develop their language skills in class: in small groups, in conversation lessons with the language assistants and in our new, fully equipped ICT Language Resource Centre. The aim is to enable the pupils to give information and to express their ideas and opinions in written form, taking part in task-based and creative writing exercises. Grammar is seen as an integral part of the course and supports all the pupils' language skills enabling them to communicate accurately and effectively.

We encourage all pupils to take the opportunity to take part in educational trips organised by the school or independent organisations and spend time in the country where the language of their choice is spoken. In addition the Department tries, where possible, to provide opportunities to communicate online, via Skype or other online platforms, with pupils of their age in the target language country.

Mrs Jane Basnett
Head of Modern Languages

Chinese

Examination Board
Specification
Website

Edexcel GCSE
Pearson Edexcel Level 1/Level 2 GCSE (9 - 1) in Chinese
www.edexcel.com

Course Summary- Higher Tier

Paper 1: Listening and understanding in Chinese: A 45 minute paper that tests a variety of comprehension skills and requires a variety of verbal and non-verbal responses.

Paper 2: Speaking in Chinese: A 10-12 minute exam (not including 12 minutes preparation time). The exam consists of a role play, a discussion based on a photo stimulus and a general conversation based on two of the topics they have studied.

Paper 3: Reading and understanding in Chinese: This examination lasts 65 minutes and requires pupils to understand and respond to different types of written language. There will be a variety of questions both in English and in Chinese requiring verbal and non-verbal responses in both languages. The final section of this paper is a translation from Chinese into English.

Paper 4: Writing in Chinese: A one hour and 25 minute examination testing the ability to communicate effectively on paper. Pupils will write longer passages about two topics from a choice of four. There is also a translation exercise, from English into Chinese.

GCSE Chinese helps pupils explore a wide range of topics, from celebrations and festivals, through getting by as a tourist in China to international campaigns and events. Pupils will learn about Chinese culture through a range of interesting topics, which will add to pupils' understanding of the language and country.

Questions across all four language skills are set in common contexts, addressing a range of relevant contemporary and cultural themes. They are organised into five themes, each broken down into topics and sub-topics. The five themes are:

1. Identity and culture
2. Local area, holiday, travel
3. School
4. Future aspirations, study and work
5. International and global dimension.

Mrs Jane Basnett
Head of Modern Languages

French and Italian

Examination Board	AQA
Specification	French 8658/Italian 8633
Website	http://www.aqa.org.uk

Course Summary

The skills are equally weighted and are tested separately as follows:

Paper 1: Listening: A 45 minute paper that tests a variety of comprehension skills and requiring a variety of verbal and non-verbal responses.

Paper 2: Speaking: A 10-12 minute exam (not including preparation time). The exam consists of a role play, a discussion based on a photo stimulus and a general conversation.

Paper 3: Reading: This examination lasts one hour and requires pupils to understand and respond to different types of written language. There will be a variety of questions both in English and in the target language requiring verbal and non-verbal responses in both languages. The final section of this paper is a translation from the target language into English.

Paper 4: Writing: A one hour and 15 minute examination testing the ability to communicate effectively on paper. The examination is made up of three sections. The first section is a structured writing task responding to four bullet points in 90 words. The second question is an open-ended writing task of 150 words. Finally, pupils need to complete a translation from English into the target language.

Topic areas include: Identity and culture, local, national, international and global areas of interest and current and future study and employment.

Mrs Jane Basnett
Head of Modern Languages

German and Spanish

Examination Board Specification	Edexcel IGCSE German 4GN0 Spanish 4SP1
Website	www.edexcel.com

Course Summary

The skills are tested separately as follows:

Unit 1: Listening: A 35 minute paper that tests a variety of comprehension skills.

Unit 2: Reading and Writing: A one hour and 45 minutes paper externally set and marked by the exam board. The reading section will contain a variety of comprehension tasks, including longer written answers that demonstrate an ability to manipulate the language. Two written pieces, one of 60-75 words testing the ability to communicate and a longer piece of 130-150 words testing your linguistic ability and accuracy. Additionally, this paper also includes a 10 mark grammar question.

Unit 3: Speaking: 10 minutes. A presentation and discussion of a picture – chosen by you and a conversation on two topic areas randomized by the exam board. The assessment is carried out by your teacher and assessed by the exam board. The Speaking Assessment is separately endorsed.

Topic areas include: home and abroad, education and employment, house, home and daily routine, the modern world and environment and finally, social activities, fitness and health.

Mrs Jane Basnett
Head of Modern Languages

Sciences

Examination Board Specifications	Biology, Chemistry and Physics - Edexcel International GCSE Biology 4BI1 Chemistry 4CH1 Physics 4PH1
Websites	www.edexcel.com

Pupils are strongly advised to study all three sciences at IGCSE, in order to ensure they keep options open to them, with regard to courses in the Sixth Form and at University. However, it is possible for pupils to take two Sciences at IGCSE, following discussions with their tutor, the Head of Science, the Head of Upper School and the Careers Department.

The Edexcel International GCSE specification is followed in each of the three sciences. These qualifications are accepted by universities and employers as excellent proof of knowledge and understanding. Successful candidates gain lifelong skills, including:

- confidence in a technological world, with an informed interest in scientific matters
- an understanding of how scientific theories and methods have developed, and continue to develop, as a result of groups and individuals working together
- an understanding that the study and practice of science are affected and limited by social, economic, technological, ethical and cultural factors
- an awareness that the application of science in everyday life may be both helpful and harmful to the individual, the community and the environment
- an awareness that the application of science in everyday life may be both helpful and harmful to the individual, the community and the environment
- knowledge that science overcomes national boundaries and that the language of science, used correctly and thoroughly, is universal
- an understanding of the usefulness (and limitations) of scientific method, and its application in other subjects and in everyday life
- a concern for accuracy and precision
- an understanding of the importance of safe practice
- improved awareness of the importance of objectivity, integrity, enquiry, initiative and inventiveness
- an interest in, and care for, the environment
- an excellent foundation for advanced study in pure sciences, in applied sciences or in science-dependent and vocational courses e.g. Medicine, Veterinary Science and Engineering.

Pupils begin their study of the Edexcel International GCSE courses in Biology, Chemistry and Physics at the beginning of the Upper Fourth, and continue through the Lower and Upper Fifth. A specialist teaches each subject. Pupils are taught in sets in Lower and Upper Fifth, so that they can work at a pace and level suited to their ability.

The Edexcel International GCSEs in Biology, Physics and Chemistry are linear qualifications. Two written examinations are taken in each subject at the end of the upper fifth.

Miss Christina Pugsley
Head of Science and Head of Biology

Art and Design

Examination Board	AQA
Specification	Fine Art 8202
Website	www.aqa.org.uk

Component 1: Portfolio of Work

A portfolio that shows explicit coverage of the four assessment objectives. It must include a sustained project evidencing the journey from initial engagement to the realisation of intentions and a selection of further work undertaken during the pupil's course of study.

Assessment.

No time Limit

96 Marks

60% of GCSE

Non – exam assessment (NEA) set and marked by the school and moderated by AQA during a visit.

Moderation will normally take place in June.

Component 2: Externally Set Assignment

Pupils respond to their chosen starting point from an externally set assignment paper relating to their subject title, evidencing coverage of all four assessment objectives.

Assessment

Preparatory period followed by 10hours of supervised time

96 Marks

40% of GCSE

Non – exam assessment (NEA) set and marked by the school and moderated by AQA during a visit.

Moderation will normally take place in June.

The Fine Art course is suited to pupils who enjoy creative activities and who are enthusiastic about developing their artistic skills. Pupils need to have a genuine interest in the subject and an independent approach is encouraged.

Through different themes pupils will be introduced to a variety of experiences exploring a range of fine art media, techniques and processes, including both traditional and new technologies.

They will explore relevant images, artefacts and resources relating to a range of Fine Art, from the past and from recent times, including European and non-European examples which will be integral to the investigating and making process. Responses to these examples will be shown through practical and critical activities which demonstrate the pupils' understanding of different styles, genres and traditions.

During the course the pupils visit the National Gallery and Tate Modern or Tate Britain.

Pupils will need to be aware of the four assessment objectives to be evidenced in the context of the content and skills presented and of the importance of process as well as product.

Drawing will be explored for different purposes and needs and emphasis will be placed on observational work. Sketchbooks and work journals will form an important part of the course and will be used as a means of recording material, preparing ideas and collecting information.

The Art rooms are open in the evenings and at the weekends and many pupils make good use of the facilities in their own time to add to their controlled assessments (coursework).

Mrs Sally Scott
Head of Art

Classical Greek

Examination Board	OCR
Specification	J292
Website	www.ocr.org.uk

Greek studies require good learning and analytical skills, and are highly regarded qualifications, sought after for the rigour and breadth of knowledge they produce. Downe House prides itself on being able to offer a full range of Greek Studies.

Greek complements subjects such as History, English and Modern Languages, and this GCSE is appreciated by both universities and employers for the skills it imparts of clear-thinking and precise use of words. Pupils thinking of studying subjects ranging from Medicine to Law would particularly benefit from a study of this subject, where both logic and precision of thought are essential attributes.

Course

Pupils take up a starter course in the Upper Fourth to give them a taster of this traditional subject. The first year of the Classical Greek GCSE course is spent mainly on acquiring linguistic knowledge and skills, many of which are shared in common with Latin. Pupils also learn about the culture and history of Ancient Greece so that they are learning the language in context rather than in isolation. From this we progress to the study of real Greek literature.

The department has a track record of excellent results in the subject.

Papers

The examination in Greek consists of three papers. One hour and a half paper tests understanding of the language by passages for unseen translation and comprehension, including the option to translate from English into Greek. The other two papers are one hour each and focus on short prepared texts (one prose, one verse), testing knowledge of content, historical context and literary style. Pupils will read adapted (and some un-adapted) Greek literature, and will acquire an appreciation of style and literary content. A defined vocabulary list, shorter than that for the Latin GCSE, is prescribed; there will be no controlled assessments (coursework).

Beyond

A-Level Greek gives excellent preparation for many oversubscribed courses at university. Apart from pupils of Classics and Archaeology, modern linguists, historians, theologians, as well as scientists will all find Greek a great support to their studies. Pupils of Classics enjoy success in a huge variety of careers from journalism to accountancy, and from management to publishing. Because the study of Classical languages promotes both analytical rigour and sensitivity to art, it gives the pupil an enviable preparation for life after school.

Mrs Lydia Dakin
Head of Classics

Computer Science

Examination Board
Specifications
Website

AQA
GCSE Computer Science (8520)
www.aqa.org.uk

At Downe House we are looking to provide a balanced but challenging Computer Science course. The specification we have chosen recognises the well-established methodologies of computing, alongside the technological advances which make it such a dynamic subject. The specification includes a computational thinking exam to provide an academically challenging programme of study for pupils of all ability levels. The pupils that complete this course will be equipped with the logical and computational skills necessary to succeed at A-level, the workplace or beyond.

Subject content

1. Fundamentals of algorithms
2. Programming
3. Fundamentals of data representation
4. Computer systems
5. Fundamentals of computer networks
6. Fundamentals of cyber security
7. Ethical, legal and environmental impacts of digital technology
8. Aspects of software development
9. Non-exam assessment

Assessments

Paper 1: Computational thinking and problem-solving	Paper 2: Written assessment	NEA Non-exam assessment
What's assessed Computational thinking, problem solving, code tracing and applied computing as well as theoretical knowledge of computer science from subject content 1–4 above.	What's assessed Theoretical knowledge from subject content 3–7 above.	What's assessed The non-exam assessment (NEA) assesses a pupil's ability to use the knowledge and skills gained through the course.
How it's assessed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Written exam set in practically based scenarios: 1 hour 30 minutes • 80 marks • 40% of GCSE 	How it's assessed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Written exam: 1 hour 30 minutes • 80 marks • 40% of GCSE 	How it's assessed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report: totalling 20 hours of work • 80 marks • 20% of GCSE
Questions A mix of multiple choice, short answer and longer answer questions.	Questions A mix of multiple choice, short answer, longer answer and extended response questions.	Tasks The development of a computer program along with the computer programming code itself.

Mr Gareth Bouwer
Head of Computing and ICT

Design and Technology

Examination Board
Specification
Website

AQA
Design & Technology 8552
www.aqa.org.uk/8552

This specification is concerned with the activity of designing and making using resistant materials such as woods, metals and plastics. The emphasis during this course is on the design and manufacture of products. The Lower Fifth year will consist of a variety of focused tasks, which will enable you to enhance your theoretical knowledge whilst building on your practical skills.

During the Summer term, you will commence your chosen piece of controlled assessment (coursework) and it will be submitted at the end of the Lent term in the Upper Fifth. A list of projects will be set by the examination board and you are free to choose and design your own solution to a set problem. Projects will require an A3 design folder and a product that clearly demonstrates your ability.

Aims of the subject:

- To enable you to combine your designing and making skills with knowledge and understanding in order to design and make quality products.
- To encourage you to consider the effects and implications of technological activity.
- To develop your Design and Technology skills through a range of activities which involve a variety of contexts, materials and processes leading to a practical result.
- To encourage your critical and aesthetic abilities, enabling you to evaluate products.

Assessments:

Written exam: 2 hours accounting for 50% of GCSE

Controlled assessment (coursework): A single project chosen from a list of set tasks accounting for 50% of GCSE.

Requirements for study:

Most importantly, you should be excited by the opportunities open to you when studying this subject. It will prepare you for tomorrow's rapidly changing technologies where there will be many opportunities for designers to intervene creatively and improve the quality of life.

Design and Technology is a subject that allows you to combine intellectual, creative and practical skills. Design is one of the most individual and fulfilling professions. Resistant Materials is an enjoyable GCSE course and can provide a good starting point for those interested in pursuing a career within the design industry.

Mr Iain Kent
21C/ Resistant Materials

Art and Design: Textile Design

Examination Board
Specification
Website

Ed Excel
Art & Design: Textile Design 1TE0
<http://qualifications.pearson.com>

Aims

Textile Design is a versatile practice that involves the creation, selection, manipulation and application of a range of materials such as fibres, yarns and fabrics, and processes such as weaving, knitting, stitching and printing to create innovative designs and products.

Textile Design at GCSE will enable students to learn how to gather source material, how to draw inspiration from collected imagery and to develop ideas through the exploration of techniques. Final outcomes will be created tailored to student's individual ideas and concepts, be it a fashion product or a printed range of fabrics.

Areas of study

Work must demonstrate integrated knowledge, understanding and skills.

Work is not limited to one area of study and students could develop work in **at least one** of the following areas of study.

- Constructed textiles
- Digital textiles
- Dyed fabrics
- Printed fabrics
- Fashion design
- Installed textiles
- Soft furnishings
- Stitched and/or embellished textiles.

Knowledge, understanding and skills in Textile Design

There are many skills, techniques, materials, processes and concepts that are essential to all areas of study in Textile Design.

- The use of formal elements and visual communication through a variety of approaches - Drawing, photography, collating primary and secondary images, artist/designer research
- The use of observational drawings and mark making to record from sources and communicate ideas, this includes fashion illustration
- To be aware of characteristics of materials such as natural and synthetic, functionality, recyclability and sustainability
- Properties of colour, texture and light
- The effects and creative potential of combining and manipulating different two-dimensional and three-dimensional materials and media
- The use of digital and/or non-digital applications.

Drawing and other materials processes

All students must use drawing to support the development process within each chosen area of study. However, students are not required to demonstrate technical mastery of drawing skills unless this is relevant to their area of study.

Assessment

Component 1: Personal Portfolio

60% of the qualification

Content overview

Students create a personal portfolio of work that demonstrates the knowledge, understanding and skills. The teacher is free to devise any theme(s), project(s) or task(s) appropriate to our students and resources. They may each have a separate focus or be interconnected.

This component allows students opportunities to:

- Develop and explore ideas
- Research primary and contextual sources
- Experiment with media, materials, techniques and processes
- Present personal response(s) to theme(s) set by the centre.

Component 2: Externally set assignment/practical exam

40% of the qualification

72 marks (18 marks for each of the four Assessment Objectives)

Content overview

The Externally Set Assignment (ESA) represents the culmination of the GCSE course as it draws together all the knowledge, understanding and skills developed in Component 1.

Students must present personal response(s) to an externally set broad-based thematic starting point, set by Pearson in the ESA paper.

This component allows students opportunities to:

- Develop and explore ideas
- Research primary and contextual sources
- Experiment with media, materials, techniques and processes
- Present personal response(s) to the externally-set theme.

Career/Further Education Possibilities:

Fashion Design, Fashion Marketing, Fashion Promotion, Fashion Journalism, Fashion Buying, Styling, Fashion Journalist/Editor, Costume and Design, Fashion Forecasting, Fashion Photography, Fashion Merchandising, Textiles Design, Footwear Fashion, all can be found on the link below.

Miss Amy Majerski
Head of Textiles

Drama

Examination Board	AQA
Specification	8261
Website	www.aqa.org.uk

GCSE Drama is a varied course that offers the opportunity to study many areas of theatre and includes both practical and theoretical perspectives. It is suited to pupils who are enthusiastic and interested in all aspects of preparing and presenting drama for performance, and in developing skills in the written analysis of performance. Acting talent is not essential, however, pupils should be prepared to explore and build on their natural ability. The skills and understanding acquired in the Lower School should provide a solid foundation for the GCSE years.

The course provides opportunities to study, observe, devise and perform many forms of drama from classical to contemporary. Theatre visits are an important and enjoyable part of the course, and pupils will enjoy a range of theatre across the course with termly theatre visits and performances by professional companies at Downe House.

The flexibility and diversity of the course should, after two years, provide each pupil with greater self-confidence, a broader appreciation and understanding of drama and theatre, enhanced communication skills and the ability to work effectively as part of a team. It is important to highlight that Drama should not involve a considerable amount of work outside of lesson and prep time. This should only occur in the two weeks leading up to a practical assessment. For the rest of the year, all work can be successfully managed in the allocated time.

The subject as a whole provides an outlet for the expression of creativity and individuality in an open practical environment. It is a widely recognised tool to develop confidence and build upon communication techniques which are key life skills. It is anticipated that the valuable skills developed in this course will help to prepare a pupil for life at school and beyond.

In the GCSE Drama course:

- Plays are explored and studied to see ways in which playwrights express their ideas about themes and topics
- Performance work is analysed to see ways in which performers and designers communicate meaning to an audience
- Pupils can work to develop performance, technical and design skills
- Pupils are involved in a range of performance and practical options exploring a variety of performance styles
- Pupils work to develop skills in the written analysis and evaluation of drama; their own work and the work of others.

Assessment

This course has two types of assessment:

- 60% (120 marks) practical work (60 marks) and supporting written journal (60 marks)
- 40% (80 marks) 1 hour 45 minute written examination.

Drama Course Summary

	What's Assessed	How It's Assessed
COMPONENT ONE: UNDERSTANDING DRAMA 40%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Knowledge and understanding of drama and theatre - Study of one set play from a choice of six - Analysis and evaluation of the work of live theatre makers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Written exam: 1 hour and 45 minutes Open book - 80 marks <p>Questions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Section A: multiple choice (4 marks) - Section B: four questions on a given extract from the set play chosen (44 marks) - Section C: one question (from a choice) on the work of theatre makers in a single live theatre production (32 marks)
COMPONENT TWO: DEVISING DRAMA (PRACTICAL) 40%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Process of creating devised drama - Performance of devised drama (pupils may contribute as performer or designer) - Analysis and evaluation of own work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Devising log (60 marks) - Devised performance (20 marks) - 80 marks in total - This component is marked by teachers and moderated by AQA
COMPONENT THREE: TEXTS IN PRACTICE (PRACTICAL) 20%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Performance of two extracts from one play (pupils may contribute as performer or designer) <p>The play must be in contrast with the set play chosen in Component One.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Performance of Extract 1 (20 marks) and Extract 2 (20 marks) - 40 marks in total - This component is marked by AQA.

Miss Kyia Grandi
Acting Director of Performing Arts

Food General

Please note that this subject has no formal qualification or examination.

Course Outline

This course extends over the Lower and Upper Fifth years and is a non-examination course. There is a double lesson each week and the pupils are divided into groups of no more than ten. The pupils work individually and will cook a variety of dishes. If the pupils are considering continuing with cookery in the sixth form, this course provides a good grounding for the Leith's course, but is not a requirement.

Aims of the course

Allow the pupils to work individually so that almost all lesson time will be devoted to practical work.

- To build on the practical skills learnt in the first three years in food.
- To introduce skilful and demanding dishes.
- To encourage speed and organisation in the kitchen.
- To develop an understanding and need for safe working practices.
- To develop a love and enthusiasm for foods from all around the world.
- To foster a critical and analytical approach to the choice of labour saving devices.
- To improve the pupils' ability to plan and prepare balanced meals.
- To develop an understanding of the relationship between health and diet and its application to various circumstances.
- To increase the awareness of eating patterns and dietary of different groups in a changing society.
- To develop the understanding of the cost of a wide range of foods so that they are able to budget affectively.
- To improve the pupils' ability to adapt or modify recipes to suit different situations and needs.
- To improve the pupils' knowledge of food labelling and marketing of foods. So that they become more discerning consumers.
- To make the pupils more aware of recycling, re-using and reducing packaging to improve environmental concerns.
- To make sure that the pupils consider moral and social issues e.g. Fair Trade; grow your own projects, using local sustainable foods.

Miss Seema Singh

Head of Design and Technology

Geography

Examination Board	AQA
Specification	A (8035)
Website	www.aqa.org.uk

The AQA 8035 specification for Geography GCSE includes contemporary and stimulating content and aims to be innovative, relevant and interesting. The very up to date nature of the content matches the aim of giving a clear overall view of our world in the 21st century. The course content focuses on geographical processes and has an equal balance of themes within human and physical geography. We choose topics which we know pupils will find interesting, challenging and relevant to their own experiences. There is also continuity from their prior work in Geography.

Our studies will allow for pupils' personalised and independent learning, and will help them to develop a very wide range of skills for communication, use of graphs and maps, application of ICT and GIS, interpersonal, business and problem-solving contexts, and also literacy and numeracy skills.

Assessment is through the main themes of the course, which are examined in three written papers, assessing the topics in human and physical geography along with geographical skills (through fieldwork) as follows:

Paper 1: Living with the Physical Environment. This paper will be separated into three sections.

Section A: The challenge of natural hazards. (Pupils will have to answer all questions in this section)

Section B Physical landscapes in the UK. (Pupils will answer two out of three questions in this section)

Section C The living world. (In this section there will be one compulsory question and then a choice of one out of two further questions)

This Paper will comprise 35% of the GCSE marks and will contain multiple-choice, short answer, levels of response, extended prose question types. The exam will be 1 hour 30 minutes long.

Paper 2: Challenges in the Human Environment. This paper will be separated into three sections.

Section A: Urban Issues and Challenges. (Pupils will have to answer all questions in this section)

Section B: The Changing Economic World. (Pupils will have to answer all questions in this section)

Section C: The Challenge of Resource Management. (In this section there will be one compulsory question and then a choice of two out of three further questions)

This Paper will comprise 35% of the GCSE marks and will contain multiple-choice, short answer, levels of response, extended prose question types. The exam will be 1 hour 30minutes long.

Paper 3: Geographical applications

This paper replaces the previous fieldwork unit in past GCSE syllabuses.

Pre-release resources will be made available from 15 March in the year of the exam. Pupils will study these in class with their teacher in preparation for Section A. Pupils have to take part in two days of fieldwork, one of these will have a human geography emphasis and the other a physical/environmental geography emphasis. Section B will test the pupils on their ability to recall how they carried out these investigations and also their findings.

Section A: 1 Issue evaluation (Pupils will answer all questions in this section)

Section B: Fieldwork (Pupils will answer all questions in this section)

This Paper will comprise 30% of the GCSE marks and will contain multiple-choice, short answer, levels of response, extended prose question types. The exam will be 1 hour 30 minutes long.

The geography course encourages an enquiry-based approach to learning, and gives the department a chance to choose our own world exemplars within each study theme. Geography at GCSE has always enabled the acquisition of knowledge and an understanding of current events, leading pupils to make well-informed judgements about environments. With our use of a very wide range of resources for learning we feel certain that pupils should be inspired, motivated and challenged by our studies.

This specification provides a very good foundation for further study of geography or related subjects, for A Level Geography, other Principal Subjects and for the Global Perspectives and Independent Research elements of Sixth form studies. Our primary aims in teaching the subject for GCSE have always been to make our studies motivating, enjoyable and interesting - and to allow pupils to attain very high grades in a nationally popular and well-regarded subject.

Miss Kathryn Rawlinson
Head of Geography

History

Examination Board	AQA
Specification	GCSE History (8145)
Website	www.aqa.org.uk

The aims of the syllabus are to:

1. Stimulate interest in and enthusiasm about the past
2. Promote an understanding of the modern world and Britain's contribution to it
3. Promote the acquisition of knowledge and understanding of human activity in the past; specifically, aspects of the Medieval, Early Modern and Modern periods at international, national and local level
4. Ensure that the candidates' knowledge is rooted in an understanding of the nature and use of historical evidence
5. Promote an understanding of the nature of cause and consequence, continuity and change, similarity and difference
6. Provide a sound basis for further study and pursuit of personal interest
7. Encourage the development of linguistic and communication skills.

The topics studied are:

Paper 1: Understanding the Modern World (studied in the L5 year)

This part of the course involves the study of some key aspects of twentieth-century world history, following on from the U4 course which covers International Relations and Germany from 1900-1939. Pupils will study Russia from 1894-1945, covering the collapse of the Tsarist regime, the Russian Revolution and the rise of Stalin. They will also study the origins and early stages of the Cold War from 1945-1972, investigating how the rise of communism brought the USSR and Eastern Europe into conflict with the West.

Paper 2: Shaping the Nation (studied in the U5 year)

This part of the course focuses on British history. Pupils will undertake a thematic study tracing the development of democracy in Britain from Magna Carta to the present day, and a depth study on the reign of Edward I (1272-1307) which focuses on the development of British identity. As part of the depth study pupils also undertake a study of a specified historical site in context.

Assessment:

There are two externally assessed papers.

Paper 1: Understanding the Modern World. Candidates answer one question on the Period Study (Russia, 1894-1945) and one question on the wider world Depth Study (Conflict and tension between East and West, 1945-1972), in 1 hour 45 minutes.

Paper 2: Shaping the Nation. Candidates answer one question on the Thematic Study (the development of democracy in Britain) and one question on the Depth Study (the reign of Edward I, 1272-1307) which also requires knowledge and understanding of the specified historical site, in 1 hour 45 minutes.

It is hoped that the course will enable pupils to have a better understanding of the world in which we live, together with an awareness of the need to handle information critically. It goes without saying that study of History GCSE provides an important grounding for those considering study of the subject in the sixth form and beyond, but this course also provides a valuable grounding in democratic institutions which will be extremely useful for those considering Politics in the sixth form and Politics or International Relations at university. Above all, we seek to foster in our pupils those qualities which are an integral part of being an informed, adult citizen.

Mr William Lane
Head of History and Politics

Latin

Examination Board	OCR
Specification	J282
Website	www.ocr.org.uk

Course

The Latin GCSE course is a continuation of the course studied in the UIV. Its aims are to enable pupils to read Latin competently, to appreciate some of the literature in the original language and to acquire some understanding of the civilisation within which it was produced.

The course requires the development of language skills, with the practice of both direct translation and comprehension work. A selection of verse from some of Rome's best poets, such as Virgil, Ovid and Horace are set for detailed study for the verse examination and passages from authors such as Tacitus, Pliny and Cicero are similarly studied in detail for the prose paper. In addition, the course instils some knowledge of the life, history and customs of the Roman people and encourages pupils to appreciate the similarities with, and differences from, their own civilisation, and the influence of one on the other.

There are no controlled assessments (coursework) in this subject, as all topics are covered in the examination.

The three papers taken are:

Unit J282/01 Latin Language

Unit J282/02 Latin Prose Literature

Unit J282/05 Latin Verse Literature

Qualities

The Latin GCSE course helps to enrich one's understanding of modern languages, including English, and also provides a direct link to the thoughts and beliefs of the ancients through the study of their literature. The thought processes required for translation skills involve both logic and the ability to render a foreign language into good English. There will also be the option to translate from English into Latin. Therefore an aptitude for languages, an imaginative sympathy for the past, an appreciation of literature, and an open and enquiring mind are the qualities this course will foster.

Latin complements subjects such as History, English and Modern Languages, and this GCSE is appreciated by both universities and employers for the skills it imparts of clear-thinking and precise use of words. Pupils thinking of studying subjects ranging from Languages, History, English Literature, Art History, Medicine and Law would particularly benefit from a study of this subject, where both logic and precision of thought are essential attributes or where art and literature continually draw inspiration from the Classics.

Mrs Lydia Dakin
Head of Classics

Music

Examination Board
Specification
Website

Edexcel
1MU0
www.edexcel.com

The Edexcel GCSE Music course provides an exciting opportunity for pupils to explore a range of musical styles whilst developing a solid understanding of the key musical disciplines; performance, composition and musical appraisal.

Structural Summary

The course is divided into three basic units.

Unit	Requirements	Weighting	Assessment Method
Component 1: Performing	One solo performance	30%	Internally marked
	One ensemble performance		Externally moderated
Component 2: Composing	Two compositions	30%	Internally marked
			Externally moderated
Component 3: Musical appraisal	A 105 minute written paper based on the areas of study including Music for Stage and Screen, Vocal Music, Fusions and Instrumental Music.	40%	Externally assessed

The skills involved in each of these units are closely related and the complete course content is defined by four Areas of Study, each of which includes two set works. These works will be the subject of the examination in Unit 3 and will provide the basis for one of the compositions created for Component 2.

Area of Study	Set Works
1. Instrumental Music 1700-1820	J.S. Bach: 3 rd Movement from Brandenburg Concert no. 5 in D major L. van Beethoven: 1 st Movement from Piano Sonata no. 8 in C minor 'Pathetique'
2. Vocal Music	H. Purcell: Music for a While Queen: Killer Queen (from the album 'Sheer Heart Attack')
3. Music for Stage and Screen	S Schwartz: Defying Gravity (from the musical Wicked) J Williams: Main title/rebel blockade runner from the soundtrack to Star Wars Episode IV: A New Hope
4. Fusions	Afro Celt Sound System: Release (from the album 'Volume 2: Release') Esperanza Spalding: Samba Em Preludio (from the album 'Esperanza')

Detailed Requirements

Unit 1: Performing Music

Candidates must give two performances: one as a soloist and the other as a member of an ensemble. Each performance must last a minimum of one minute, with a combined duration of at least four minutes. The performances, each worth 30 marks, are recorded and marked internally, before being submitted to EdExcel for moderation.

There is a free choice over the music performed and recordings will take place in the UV year. To achieve the highest marks, the pieces selected should be equivalent to approximately ABRSM Grade 5 standard.

Unit 2: Composing Music

By the end of the Lent Term of the second year, candidates will have completed two contrasting compositions. These pieces will total a minimum of three minutes of music and will be submitted for assessment as both a written score and a sound recording. As in Component 1, the work is internally assessed and externally moderated.

One composition will respond to a brief set by Edexcel. The brief will relate to the areas of study covered in preparation for the Unit 3 examination. This might mean adopting a technique found in one of the set works, writing in the same form as one of the set works, or writing in the style of one of the set composers. The second composition is free, i.e. not related to a set brief. Candidates can draw inspiration from set works as well as their own interests.

Unit 3: Music – Listening and Appraising

Candidates sit a 105-minute written paper in the final term of the second year. The paper, which is worth 80 marks, is divided into two sections. Section A (68 marks) requires candidates to respond to extracts from their set works, played on a CD during the examination. In Section B (12 marks) candidates will be required to compare an extract from one of their set works with an extract from an unfamiliar, but related work.

Teaching Structure

All pupils receive two double lessons each week, one on composition and one in preparation for the Unit 3 examination. A small amount of weekly preparation is set in each case. Pupils also work closely with their instrumental and/or vocal teachers in preparing the performances for their Component 1 submissions.

Dr Charlotte Exon
Director of Music

Religious Studies

Examination Board OCR
Specification Religious Studies (J625)
Website www.ocr.org.uk

This is a full course GCSE which will be taught over two years with the examination taken alongside other i/GCSEs at the end of the Upper Fifth year.

We will follow OCR Religious Studies which allows a study of two religions (In our case Buddhism and Christianity) along with four Philosophical and Ethical studies which are examined from a Christian perspective.

The GCSE is constructed as follows:

Christianity (J625/01)	1 hour examination	25%
Buddhism (J625/05)	1 hour examination	25%
Study Four of Philosophical/Ethical Areas from a Christian Perspective (J625/07):	2 hour examination	50%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relationship and Families • The Existence of God • Religion, Peace and Conflict • Dialogue between Religious and Secular Beliefs 		

This is an exciting course which enables pupils to examine and question their own and others' belief systems as well as having a strong emphasis the forming their own views. The study of Christianity and Buddhism allows pupils to compare a wide range of contrasting religious viewpoints, and the course on the whole covers key ideas in philosophical and ethical thinking.

We use a variety of approaches, including workbooks, videos, group work, presentations, visiting speakers and visits to places of worship. There is an excellent record of examination success in this subject at Downe House. It is our aim to stretch our pupils to attain the highest possible results whilst providing interesting, stimulating and fast-paced lessons.

GCSE Religious Studies provides an excellent foundation for any combination of subjects in the sixth form and this new course links particularly well with our Pre-U Theology and Philosophy examination. Religious Studies is academically rigorous and develops a unique set of key skills including recalling, selecting, organising and deploying knowledge, describing, analysing and explaining the relevance and application of religious ideas as well as evaluating a range of responses.

If you are interested in knowing more about the course then please speak to any member of the Religious Studies Department.

Mr Matthew Hall
 Head of Religious Studies

Notes



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