



Hitchin Girls' School



**Key Stage 4
Option Choices Booklet 2021**

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Choosing your future - preparing for Year 10

Dear Year 9 Student,

You have reached a very important stage in your school career. During your first three years at Hitchin Girls' School, you followed a curriculum based on the Key Stage 3 National Curriculum and all students followed a similar programme of study. At Key Stage 4 however, in line with your growing maturity, you will face option choices and have the opportunity to create an individual learning plan. This booklet is designed to help you contemplate the most appropriate route forward and to give you information about the experiences that await you in Year 10.

Few students at the age of 14 have a definitive idea of the career path they are likely to pursue, so it is advisable to choose a broad and balanced curriculum and keep your options open. The Key Stage 4 National Curriculum still contains compulsory areas of study, covering key areas such as Mathematics, Science, English and Physical Education although even within these subject areas there may be an element of choice regarding the depth of study. This area of learning is referred to as 'The Core'. In addition, you are able to opt for extra subjects, some of which you may never have tried before, so it is important to research as much as you can before making your decision. This could include reading the subject information carefully, talking to older students, to teachers, to family and friends and also to the Careers Advisory Service. Also, look carefully at the advice page for further assistance and note the names of the people who are able to guide you.

The curriculum on offer is designed to ensure you receive an appropriate balance of core subjects and opportunities to specialise, in order to maximise your abilities and set yourself challenging goals. This will enable you to face the demands placed on you by an ever-changing world.

I hope you enjoy this stage of your learning journey.



J. Crowther

Deputy Headteacher

What will my timetable look like?

All students study 'The Core'. This comprises:

GCSE English Language

GCSE English Literature

GCSE Mathematics

GCSE Combined Science (equivalent of 2 GCSEs)

Physical Education (this can be GCSE Full Course/PE leadership or non-examined PE)

Core Philosophy and Ethics (non-examined)

Learning 4 Life (non-examined)

In addition, students have the opportunity to select courses depending on the most appropriate route for their aspirations and attainment levels.

Option Routes – The number of GCSEs selected depends on the route chosen:

Blue Route	This includes 'The Core' plus 4 additional GCSE subjects, one of which may be the option to convert Combined Science to Triple Science.
Green Route	This includes 'The Core' plus 3 additional GCSE subjects and the Skills Package

Note: Triple Science is available as an option to any student on the Blue route providing that a current working grade of a 6 has been achieved in Science by the end of Year 9. All triple science choices will be subject to review by the Deputy Head and the Head of Science.

Personalised Programmes

In cases where a Green route is selected one option block is given over to our Skills Package. Within the package additional support in literacy and numeracy will be provided. There will also be the opportunity to develop more general skills as well as study skills. Further information on this programme is available later in the booklet on page 50.

Options Available

In making your option choices, it is sensible to aim to choose from across the different curriculum areas.

Sciences

Triple Science

Computer Science

Expressive Arts

GCSE Art & Design

GCSE Dance

GCSE Drama

GCSE Music

GCSE Physical Education (Full course)

Foreign Languages

GCSE French

GCSE Spanish

GCSE Latin

Technology

Only one option may be selected from 3D Products/Graphics/Textiles

GCSE Design & Technology: 3D Products

GCSE Design & Technology: Graphics

GCSE Design & Technology: Fashion and Textiles

GCSE Food Preparation and Nutrition

Humanities

GCSE Ancient History

GCSE Geography

GCSE History

Other

Cambridge National Level 2 Health and Social Care

Cambridge National Level 2 Interactive Technologies

GCSE Business

GCSE Media Studies

GCSE Religious Studies

GCSE Sociology

Process and rules to follow when choosing your options

- Choices will be made via SIMS Options online
- You need to choose a PE option
- You need to choose which option subjects to follow.

You will first need to select a subject from the list below:

GCSE Triple Science
GCSE Computer Science
GCSE French
GCSE Latin
GCSE Spanish
GCSE Ancient History
GCSE History
GCSE Geography

- You then need to select your remaining subjects in priority order 1-3 (Blue Route) and 1-2 (Green Route). These choices will be made from the full list of subjects which does include those already listed above.
- Complete and submit the options by the deadline: January 29th
- Record your choices at the back of this booklet

For our options process we try to offer as much free choice as possible, however, there are some rules to choosing options that you must follow:

1. Students following the Blue or Green routes must select at least one subject from the following list (Hence why we make this your first choice):

GCSE Triple Science
GCSE Computer Science
GCSE French
GCSE Latin
GCSE Spanish
GCSE Ancient History
GCSE History
GCSE Geography

2. If students choose to study a Technology subject they can only select one from 3D Products, Graphics and Textiles.

Changes in Education

The Government introduced a new measure for school and student performance in its White Paper of October 2010 – this measure is The English Baccalaureate (EBacc). The EBacc is a measure which is achieved by gaining a GCSE qualification, at grade 5 or higher, in English, Mathematics, Science, a Humanities subject and a Modern Foreign Language. We have organised our option choices so that the ‘wrap around qualification’ called the EBacc is available to all our students. Furthermore, the rules we have in place for choosing options do benefit students in ensuring that there is a breadth of study in the choices they make.

On 19 July 2017, the Government published its response to the consultation on ‘Implementing the English Baccalaureate’. This response outlined the current Government’s ambition to achieve the following:

- *75% of year 10 students in state-funded mainstream schools will start to study GCSEs in the EBacc combination of subjects by September 2022 (Year 7 intake 2019).*
- *90% of year 10 students studying GCSEs in the EBacc subjects by 2025 (Year 7 intake 2022).*

Students are currently under no obligation to select the additional options to fulfil this measure, although in the interest of effective guidance, we feel it is important to advise you that some universities may look more favourably towards students having this suite of qualifications due to the balanced curriculum it provides. That said, the requirements of universities are varied. If you are considering university it is important that you consider what courses you may have an interest in following at degree level and ensure that you are choosing options that facilitate this. It is also important to remember that universities will require a minimum grade, currently a grade C (a Grade 4 under the new system), in both English and Mathematics.

The **Russell Group**, which represents 24 leading UK universities, currently publish the following guidance on pre-16 qualifications:

Pre-16 qualifications and university entry

The GCSE or other standard level entrance requirements for individual degree courses are quite varied. In some cases, a particular subject or grade is required at standard level if it isn't being offered at Advanced Level.

The summary below gives an idea of some of the GCSE requirements that you might come across for certain degree courses. Remember that these are only examples. It's important to check university websites for detailed requirements before applying.

- Applicants to study Medicine, Dentistry and Veterinary Science are usually required to have very good GCSE results in Maths, Science and English.*
- Applicants to study Teacher Training are required to have a minimum grade 4 in GCSE Maths, Science and English. Some universities may ask for a minimum of grade 5.*
- For a degree in English, universities often look for applicants to have a GCSE in a modern or classical language.*
- For a Business degree, sometimes a grade 6 or above, or more often at least a grade 5, in GCSE Maths is required.*
- A grade 6 in Maths is often required for a degree in Psychology, and a grade 6 in Science may sometimes be required.*
- To study a science subject at university (including Biology, Chemistry or Physics) applicants who are not offering Maths at advanced level will often need to have achieved a minimum of a grade 6/7 in Maths at GCSE.*

More information can be found via: <https://www.informedchoices.ac.uk/>

Measuring progress and grades at GCSE

As I'm sure you are aware, you will receive the new grades in all of your GCSEs.

The grades A*-G will no longer be used, instead the 'grades' that will be awarded will be the numbers 9-1. In this new grading scale 9 is the highest grade and 1 is the lowest. A '4' will be considered comparable to a C grade, whilst the government has indicated that they would like our students to reach a grade '5' as they believe it will bring our children

in line with international standards. On the next page is a release from Ofqual detailing these changes:

Nine things you should know about 9 to 1 GCSE grades

- 9 GCSEs in England are being reformed and will be graded with a new scale from 9 to 1, with 9 being the highest grade.
- 8 New GCSE content will be more challenging.
- 7 Fewer grade 9s will be awarded than A*s.
- 6 English language, English literature and maths will be the first to be graded from 9 to 1 in 2017.
- 5 Another 20 subjects will have 9 to 1 grading in 2018, with most others following in 2019. During this transition, students will receive a mixture of letter and number grades.
- 4 The new grades are being brought in to signal that GCSEs have been reformed and to better differentiate between students of different abilities.
- 3 In the first year each new GCSE subject is introduced, broadly the same proportion of students will get grades 1, 4 and 7 and above as would have got grades G, C and A and above respectively in the old system.
- 2 Regulators in Wales and Northern Ireland are not introducing the new 9 to 1 grading scale as part of the changes to GCSEs in their jurisdictions.
- 1 You can see how the 9 to 1 grades compare with the A* to G scale in the infographic on the right.



New grading structure	Current grading structure
9	
8	A*
7	A
6	B
5 STRONG PASS	
4 STANDARD PASS	C
3	D
2	E
1	F
	G
U	U

As a school our performance is now measured in terms of progress and attainment, in the students' best 8 subjects. As a school we welcomed this change as we firmly believe that students should be encouraged and supported to achieve their absolute potential in every subject they study whilst having access to an appropriate, broad and balanced curriculum.

Timeframe for making my decisions and preparations so far

The key dates are as follows:

<u>Date</u>	<u>Activity</u>
Week commencing 4th January:	Option talks
Week commencing 11th January:	Issue of Options Booklet
Wednesday 13th January:	Options Evening – (remote)
Wednesday 20th January:	Year 9 Parents' Evening
Thursday 21st January:	Option forms 'go-live'
Friday 29th January:	Deadline for return of Option choices
Summer Term	You will be notified of the finalised option blocks and your timetable will be confirmed during this term

Advice Page

GCSE options are an exciting prospect. You can choose to continue with those subjects which interest you most – but take care! Your decisions will lead to a two year commitment and lay the foundations for what you do after Year 11, so a lot of thought and discussion is needed. **Consider what you are good at, what you enjoy and what subjects you may need in the future.**

These DOs and DON'Ts may help you:

DO		DON'T	
✓	Do get as much advice as you can. If you don't know something, ASK. Talk to your parents, tutor, subject teachers, or Careers Service and especially to our Year 10 students.	☐	Don't think you are expected to know at this stage what you want to do later in life; the curriculum is constructed to keep open as many doors as possible.
✓	Do find out as much as possible about the courses on offer: what will you learn and how? Consider whether you prefer coursework and independent learning.	☐	Don't choose a course because your friend is choosing it; you might find yourselves in different groups.
✓	Do try to choose those subjects you are <u>good at</u> or <u>enjoy</u> , since this will improve your chance of success.	☐	Don't choose a course because you like the teacher you have now; you may have a different teacher in Year 10.
✓	Do decide yourself: it is <u>you</u> who will be studying your chosen subjects for the next two years. It is <u>your</u> future you are considering.	☐	Don't rush to complete your choices - think carefully and pick a subject for positive reasons after conducting research.
✓	Do consider how much independent learning is required outside the classroom.	☐	Don't worry if you can't fit everything in. Some subjects can be picked up again in the Sixth Form. IF IN DOUBT, FIND OUT. Ask somebody from the list of key personnel.

Key members of staff who can offer support and guidance

For subject specific queries it is always helpful to talk to the specific Head of Department/member of staff:

Ancient History	:	Mrs. K. Rowe
Art & Design	:	Mrs. S. Wallace
Biology	:	Mrs. K. Pearce
Design & Technology	:	Mr. S. Ferguson
Drama	:	Mr. K. Balfe
English & Media	:	Mrs. S. Batchelor
Geography	:	Miss E. Johns
History	:	Mr. S. Hanse
Computing, Business & IT	:	Mrs. E. Symeou
Mathematics	:	Mr. B. Alison
Modern Foreign Languages	:	Mr. J. Dellar
Music	:	Miss. E. Scott
PE	:	Miss. C. Evans
Philosophy & Ethics	:	Mr B. Adams
Physics	:	Mr. A. Jackson & Mr. A. Goldring
Science / Chemistry	:	Mr. C. Horner
Social Sciences	:	Mrs. E. Edwards

With general enquiries about the routes, your future aspirations and useful subject combinations, it is helpful to contact the following:

Deputy Headteacher	:	Mr. J. Crowther
Assistant Headteacher	:	Mrs. S. Mills
Head of Sixth Form	:	Ms. T. Stojko
Head of Year 9	:	Mrs. C. Gunns
Head of Austen House	:	Ms. C. Gunns
Head of Bronte House	:	Mrs. T. Lowe
Head of Curie House	:	Mrs. E. Taylor
Head of Pankhurst House	:	Mrs. K. Rowe
Head of Frank House	:	Mrs. N. Renfrew
Head of Jewel House	:	Miss M. Roy
Head of Rosa House	:	Mrs. K. Rowe
Head of Teresa House	:	Mrs C. Hone

Independent Careers Advisor : Mrs. R. Ward & Mr. A. Whittle
North Herts. Connexions Service : Mrs. L. Ayres

Form tutors, who know you well, are also ideally placed to provide guidance and support:

9A : Mr. B. Alison
9B : Mrs. S. Batchelor
9C : Miss R. Chowdhury
9P : Mr. K. Balfe
9F : Mrs. G. East and Mrs. S. Corish
9J : Mr. M.Lynn and Mrs. S. Corish
9R : Mr. A. Goldring
9T : Miss E. Johns

Further Research

Careers Guidance & Education

Our new school Careers Zone website has just been launched and is available to students via their school Gmail login. The link to the site is found under the Careers Guidance and Education section of the school webpage. Our Careers Zone has been designed to be user friendly and to enable pupils to enjoy researching their careers options in an easy and accessible way. On the Careers Zone we have provided links to careers sites with searches, videos and quizzes to help pupils find out about hundreds of different careers and thousands of course choices.

Year 9 students are being introduced to this site in careers guidance lessons in bubbles of 8 students. In these lessons students are also introduced to the Job Explorer Database (JED) which is an engaging and motivating on-line resource, offering an insight into many careers and the world of work.

JED is available on our Careers Zone. It is user friendly and enables pupils to do simple job searches, look at similar job groups together and search for job matches to subjects taken at GCSE.



Looking ahead, Higher Ideas is also available on our Careers Zone and is a platform which provides independent information about thousands of course choices at hundreds of universities and colleges. Students can select from a list the A levels they are planning to take and this will create a list of suggested courses, for example.

Unifrog is a database which has comprehensive information on apprenticeships, university college courses as well as other career opportunities. Students will be introduced to this over the forthcoming year and will have their own student login.

All students have access to a Careers Advisor for impartial guidance. Year 9 students are seeing independent Careers Advisers in small bubble groups. During these sessions students are guided and supported to explore jobs and courses in order to enable informed subject choices for GCSE. Careers guidance in bubbles have started to take place already, with the majority of year 9 being seen in January. Students will be informed about their session via an email.

Should you require any further information about our careers programme at Hitchin Girls' School, please contact Ruth Ward via email: ruth.ward@hgs.herts.sch.uk

Ruth Ward (Careers Co-ordinator/ Adviser)

Introduction to Subject Information

The following pages provide information on the content, method of study and assessment, alongside guidance on the types of opportunities opened up beyond GCSE Level.

In order to assist in swiftly viewing the information, each subject has a box at the top of the page, entitled 'Information at a Glance'. This indicates which Examination Board is being selected and the course code. If you wish to see the full subject specification and examples of past papers, you can visit the Examination Board's website. It also indicates the method of assessment in current usage and uses a system of coding where the following applies:

C	=	Non examined assessment (Coursework)
W	=	Written Summative Examination Paper
P	=	Practical Assessment
M	=	Modular Approach

Controlled Assessment is no longer a feature of GCSEs, however, some GCSE courses still have elements that are internally assessed. These elements are referred to, officially, as 'non-examined assessments'. Other courses such as the Cambridge National still refer to internally assessed tasks as coursework. These courses will have specific requirements and guidelines as to how the tasks should be completed and you should ask the subject teachers for further information about this aspect of assessment.


Finally, a system of rating using clock symbols is used to illustrate the probable degree of independent learning required. This indicates how much homework and additional study teachers would expect a successful student to undertake. Three clocks indicate a great deal of independent work is needed and is suitable for students with strong time management skills. This occurs in open ended, practical, project based subjects. Two clocks would indicate a fair amount of additional work, some of which may be directed. One clock would indicate some directed homework, but probably less on average than the majority of other subjects. If your time management skills are not very strong, you may wish to consider carefully the respective demands on your time from selecting certain subject combinations.

GCSE qualifications are now assessed in a linear format, meaning that written examinations are taken during the summer of Year 11. Where a course is identified as being of 'modular' structure this reflects the structure of the syllabus and its delivery and not the opportunity for modular exams to be taken at points throughout the course.

The details of the specifications and courses on offer presented in this booklet are accurate at the time of writing, December 2020. If there are changes to any of the courses published within this booklet, you will be provided with current information on the details of the course and the format of assessment when you start the course in September.

THE CORE

GCSE English Language (9-1) 8700

Information At A Glance
Exam Board: AQA
Assessment Method: W
Independent Study Rating: 

Course Content and Skill Development

The papers will include three unseen extracts: one 19th Century, one 20th Century and one 21st Century. Students will be asked to analyse the extracts and answer a series of questions on them. For the writing section, the focus is on technical accuracy, composition, organisation and effect. Students will develop the skills needed to write creatively and to offer viewpoints and perspectives. 20% of the marks will be awarded for spelling, punctuation and grammar. There is also a spoken language endorsement which will require students to deliver a presentation on a topic of their choice.

Method of Study

Students will develop skills learnt at Key Stage Three. They will write in different styles and for different purposes and audiences. They will develop skills in technical accuracy and using more sophisticated structures in writing. Students will also develop reading skills and close analysis of language, reading for implied meaning and understanding nuances of meaning.

Assessment Structure

The English Language GCSE will also be examined through two examinations at the end of year 11. Both papers will be 1 hour and 45 minutes each and will carry 50% of the final marks each. Both papers will have a reading and a writing section.

Whilst not contributing to the overall grade, the Spoken Language Endorsement NEA is a mandatory part of the course and students will be awarded a Pass, Merit or Distinction which will be printed on their certificate.

Opportunities beyond Year 11

Students may choose to study A Level English Literature or English Language and Literature.

THE CORE

GCSE English Literature (9-1) 8702
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Information At A Glance
Exam Board: AQA
Assessment Method: W
Independent Study Rating: 

Course Content and Skill Development

For English Literature, students will study a range of texts, including: a Shakespeare play, a nineteenth century novel and a poetry anthology. There will also be sections on unseen poetry and unseen extracts from prose texts in the examination. Therefore, a key focus will be skills based and ensuring students have the confidence and ability to analyse texts independently. Text choices include: 'Animal Farm' by George Orwell, 'An Inspector Calls' by J.B. Priestley, 'Romeo and Juliet' or 'Macbeth' by Shakespeare, 'A Christmas Carol' by Charles Dickens and 'Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde' by Robert Louis Stephenson. Final text choices will be made by individual class teachers.

Method of Study

Students will study texts in a variety of forms. They will focus on reading for meaning and close study of the texts. Students will develop skills in analytical essay writing throughout the two-year course. They will focus on close analysis of language and structure, as well as close analysis of themes and characterisation.

Assessment Structure


The English Literature GCSE will be examined through two examinations at the end of Year 11. Paper 1 will be 1 hour and 45 minutes and will form 40% of the final qualification. Paper 2 will be 2 hours and 15 minutes and will form 60% of the final qualification.

Opportunities beyond Year 11

Students may choose to study A Level English Literature or English Language and Literature.

THE CORE

GCSE MATHEMATICS (9-1) 1MA1
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Information At A Glance
Exam Board: Pearson Edexcel
Assessment Method: W
Independent Study Rating: 

Course Objectives

To develop fluent knowledge, skills and understanding of mathematical methods and concepts. To acquire, select and apply mathematical techniques to solve problems. To reason mathematically, make deductions and inferences and draw conclusions. To comprehend, interpret and communicate mathematical information in a variety of forms appropriate to the information and context.

Course Content

The course extends mathematical study in the following areas:

- Arithmetic and its application to realistic problems.
- Algebraic concepts and its use in problem solving.
- Geometric properties of 2D and 3D shapes.
- Graphs to support real-life situations and data presentation.
- Trigonometry and Pythagoras and their application to practical problems.
- Ratio and Proportion.
- Statistical concepts of data collection, presentation and interpretation.
- Problem solving and functional approaches to Mathematics.

Method of Study

- Teacher led instruction of processes and techniques.
- Class discussion of concepts and methods.
- Individual practice of skills in class and essentially for homework.
- Paired, group and teamwork; plenty of problem solving.
- Regular use of ICT in school and from home (MyMaths [and other] websites).

Assessment Structure

The GCSE Mathematics examination will consist of two tiers of entry: Higher for the majority of students, and Foundation. The Linear GCSE course is taken by everyone and it is completed with 3 written exams at the end of Year 11 and there is no coursework or controlled assessment element.

The Higher tier enables grades 9–4; The Foundation tier enables grades 5-1.

Some students will be given the opportunity to study for additional mathematical exams which are aimed to complement their GCSE.


Opportunities beyond Year 11

Both Mathematics and Further Mathematics can be studied beyond GCSE. A Level Mathematics is not just a valuable qualification on its own, but it supports and combines well with many other subjects and is vital for several of them. Any scientific or financial course depends upon mathematics and the skills developed are highly transferable.

THE CORE

Combined Science

GCSE Gateway Combined Science (9-1) (Double Award) J250
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Information At A Glance
Exam Board: OCR
Assessment Method: W
Independent Study Rating: 

Course Content and Skill Development

The KS4 Science course begins in Year 9. In Year 10 all students follow the Combined Science modules. These introduce topics such as genetics, atomic structure, forces and matter. These are followed using a mixture of practical work, investigation and discussion. In Year 11, students continue to build up their knowledge; there are topics on organ systems, chemical reactions and radioactivity. This science course gives all of the background required for students who may wish to take biology, chemistry or physics at A level.

Method of Study

Class practical work
Class discussion
Data analysis
Group work and presentations

Assessment Structure

The course is completely linear, so all the examinations are taken at the end of Year 11. There are six examinations each of 1 hour 10 minutes each (two biology, two chemistry and two physics). There are a core set of practicals that will need to be completed but no marks are required by the examination board. The papers will test aspects of the practical work done over the three years. Students will receive two grades each between 9-1.

For example:


9/9
9/8
8/8
8/7

The 9/9 grade being higher than the 9/8.

Opportunities beyond Year 11

Combined Science students can take Biology, Chemistry or Physics at Advanced Level. It is not necessary to have taken Triple Science to access these courses. These courses lead to a wide variety of Degrees and employment in the medical, environmental and research industries, to name but a few.

THE CORE

PHILOSOPHY & ETHICS Core Course	Information at a glance
	Exam Board: None
	Assessment Method: Teacher assessed
	Independent Study Rating: 

Course Content and Skill Development

The course is one you will do even if you do not choose to take Philosophy and Ethics as one of your options subjects. Every student will have one hour a week of P+E in Year 10, which will still provide the opportunity to develop the debate and written skills which have a benefit across the curriculum and for further study. Students will develop the skills needed to reason through arguments logically and to engage with relevant current debates in religion, politics, philosophy and ethics.

Topics which will be studied include social justice, abortion, euthanasia, medical ethics, environmental ethics, crime and punishment and animal rights. As we are not following a rigid external curriculum, we will also be able to adapt to particular student interests in order to ensure the course is exploring the issues in which classes are most interested.

As we study these issues throughout the course, we will aim to develop skills of debate and discussion; critical thinking; conceptual analysis and ethical reasoning.

Method of Study

Discussions
Debates
Presentations
Film clips
ICT
Group work
Games
Case Studies


Assessment Structure

The course will be assessed by staff through a range of styles including debate skills assessment, written answers and peer assessment. These will however be **informal** assessments rather than the end of topic tests done at KS3.

Opportunities beyond Year 11

Students can go on to study Philosophy and Ethics at Advanced Level. Philosophy and Ethics is a highly respected field, which leads into a wide range of university qualifications and careers that require good verbal and reasoning skills such as journalism, law, medicine and politics. It is also beneficial for careers that involve a good understanding of people such as nursing, psychology, social work, police work and counselling.

THE CORE

PHYSICAL EDUCATION Non Examination	Information At A Glance
	Exam Board: None
	Assessment Method: Teacher Assessment
	Independent Study Rating: 

Course Content and Skill Development

The non-examination course is for students who, during their core PE lessons, do not want to undertake an examination course in this subject. The course content aims to develop the student's understanding of a healthy, active lifestyle through a variety of activities, encouraging independent participation in physical activity and developing self-knowledge of likes and dislikes, with a view to the student developing a lifelong positive relationship with physical activity and fitness.

Method of Study

Students are expected to be fully active in the practical components of the course. They will undertake two practical lessons per week in a variety of activities that will be taught in modules of approximately six hours.

In Year 10 and 11, the students will cover work in Trampolining, Netball, Badminton, Basketball, Volleyball, Benchball, Dodgeball, Fitness activities including Fit to Run, Fitness to Music, Pilates, Yoga, Circuits and use of the Fitness Suite, Rounders, Cricket and Tennis.

Assessment Structure

The course is teacher assessed and the student will be expected to start to develop regular exercise habits outside of school.

Opportunities Beyond Year 11

The student will be encouraged to take part in at least one physical activity independently in their own time and carry this on after Year 11.


THE CORE

**PHYSICAL
EDUCATION:
SPORTS LEADERSHIP
LEVELS 1 AND 2**

Information At A Glance

Exam Board: Sports Leaders UK

Assessment Method: W P

Independent Study Rating: 

Course Content and Skill Development:

The Sports Leadership course requires students to develop their knowledge and understanding of leadership styles and skills through participation in sport and physical activity.

Year 10 – Leadership Level 1

Unit 1: Establishing Leadership Skills.

Unit 2: Plan and assist in leading and reviewing sport /physical activity.

Year 11 – Leadership Level 2

Unit 1: Developing Leadership skills.

Unit 2: Plan, lead and evaluate sport/physical activity sessions.

Unit 3: Assist in planning and leading a sports/physical activity event.

Unit 4: Lead sport/physical activity sessions linked with the school.

Unit 5: Lead sport/physical activity sessions within the community.

Method of Study

Students are expected to be fully active in the practical components of the course as well as continue to engage in physical activity in their own time. They will undertake two lessons of practical work per week and will be expected to maintain a leadership Learner Evidence Record. They will take part in a variety of group activities as well as be expected to undertake independent tasks. During lessons, students will have the opportunity to lead each other in Year 10, and go into local primary schools in Year 11. Additionally, throughout both courses students will have opportunities to lead at local primary school sporting festivals and extra-curricular activities in school. In Year 11 they will be required to complete 10 hours of voluntary leadership in a sporting context in their own time, in order to achieve the Level 2 Award.

Assessment Structure

Level 1 (Year 10) - one hour of assessed leadership. Completion of a comprehensive written Learner Evidence Record.


Level 2, (Year 11) - three hours of leadership, plus an additional 10 hours of voluntary sports leadership. Completion of a comprehensive written Learner Evidence Record.

Opportunities beyond Year 11

The course will enable students to continue to take Sports Leadership awards in the Sixth Form and can also encourage students to go on to acquire National Governing Body coaching awards outside of school in their individual sports.

THE CORE

GCSE PHYSICAL EDUCATION (Full Course) (9-1) 1PE0

Information At A Glance
Exam Board: Pearson Edexcel
Assessment Method: W P
Independent Study Rating: 

Course Content and Skill Development

The Full Course in Physical Education requires students to develop their knowledge and understanding of physical activity in relation to a balanced healthy lifestyle, and includes a practical component. It comprises of four components:

Component 1: Written paper to examine:

- Applied Anatomy and Physiology
- Movement Analysis
- Physical Training
- Use of Data

Component 2: Written paper to examine:

- Health, Fitness and Wellbeing
- Sports Psychology
- Socio-cultural issues
- Use of Data

Component 3: Practical examination:

This unit comprises the assessment of performance in three activities or sports (1 team activity, 1 individual activity and 1 from personal choice - team or individual).

Component 4: Personal Exercise Programme:

This will examine the student's ability to plan, carry out and effectively evaluate a training programme for themselves.

Method of Study

Students are expected to be fully active in the practical components of the course as well as continue to engage in physical activity in their own time. They will undertake one theory and one practical lesson per week (with an additional lesson every two weeks) but will be required to consider the application of theory to practice at all stages of the course. They will take part in a variety of group activities as well as be expected to undertake independent tasks.

Assessment Structure

The course is assessed in the following ways:

- Component 1: Written examination (1 hour 45 minutes) = 36% of final mark.
- Component 2: Written examination (1 hour 15 minutes) = 24% of final mark.
- Component 3: The performance of three physical activities will be assessed in school and examined by an external assessor = 30% of the final mark.
- Component 4: The Personal Exercise Programme will be assessed in school and examined by an external assessor = 10% of the final mark.

Opportunities beyond Year 11

The course will enable students to continue to A Level Physical Education. Qualifications in Physical Education play a significant role in careers involving sport, leisure and coaching. This course combines well with many other subjects at Key Stage 4, introducing a more in-depth theoretical understanding to practical performance. It has strong links with all GCSE Science courses.

THE CORE

LEARNING 4 LIFE

Course Content and Skill Development

This course aims to give students the knowledge, skills and strengths required to help them develop as individuals, manage their relationships and live rewarding, healthy and positive lives. It is also about understanding how they can play an effective role in society at local, national and international levels by becoming informed, thoughtful and responsible citizens who are aware of their duties and rights. By following the programme students will work both independently and collaboratively enabling them to gain confidence in expressing their personal opinions on a variety of topics and respecting the views and thoughts of others.

This is a modular course with one lesson every two weeks covering the following topics:

Year 10

- Study Skills and Stress Management
- Sexual Relationships
- Homelessness
- Banking
- LGBT
- Role of government

Year 11

- Politics, Law and Order
- Study Skills
- Parenting
- Money Management
- Careers

Method of Study

The course uses a wide variety of methods as highlighted below to explore the different personal, social, health and citizenship based topics and associated concepts and points of view:

- Discussions
- Media clips
- Outside speakers
- Individual, pair and group work
- Presentations


Assessment Structure

This is a non-examined course and students do not have any homework or coursework.

Opportunities beyond Year 11

We hope that the students will continue to refer to the course content and use the skills they have gained throughout their lives.

GCSE ANCIENT HISTORY (9-1) J198
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Information At A Glance
Exam Board: OCR
Assessment Method: W
Independent Study Rating: 

Course Content and Skill Development

The course is made up of two period studies and two depth studies:

- **J198/01: Greece and Persia.** We undertake a compulsory period study focusing on the Persian Empire under Cyrus the Great, Cambyses II, Darius I and Xerxes I. We explore the major developments and issues associated with this period. We choose one from a choice of three depth studies: either *From Tyranny to Democracy, 546-483 BC*, or *Athens in the Age of Pericles, 462-429 BC* or *Alexander the Great, 356-323 BC*. We will develop a critical use of ancient source material to help students investigate and assess historical questions, problems and issues.
- **J198/02: Rome and its neighbours.** The compulsory period study focuses on the kings of Rome and the early Roman Republic, with an emphasis on the most exciting and interesting events and characters. We choose one from a choice of three depth studies: either *Hannibal and the Second Punic War, 218-201 BC*, or *Cleopatra: Rome and Egypt, 69-30 BC* or *Britannia: from conquest to province, AD43-c.84*.

We develop an understanding and appreciation of the society and values of the Ancient World, using analysis and evaluation of source material.

Method of Study

- Discussions
- Individual work
- Group work
- Creative work
- Independent research
- Presentations

Assessment Structure


Both modules are examined papers of 1 hour 45 minutes duration; you sit them in the summer of Year 11. The papers are un-tiered, covering an ability range of 9 to 1.

Opportunities beyond Year 11

You can study Classical Civilisation at AS and A2 Level, and at university.

Possible careers include accountancy, administration, archaeology, civil service, law, museum work, teaching, librarianship and IT.

GCSE ART AND DESIGN (9-1) J170

Information At A Glance
Exam Board: OCR
Assessment Method: C P
Independent Study Rating: 

Course Content and Skill Development

This course is about having an adventurous and enquiring approach to art and design and developing the skills to express it. You will develop an understanding of past and contemporary art and design and produce personal responses, embracing a range of ideas. You will gain a working knowledge of the materials, practices and technology of art and design. You will be following a course which teaches fine art, graphic design, photography and 3D design. You then select from these disciplines an area/s to specialise in during later Year 10 and Year 11.

Method of Study

You will be taught through teacher led exercises and independent research and experimentation in a range of media and processes, including painting, ceramics, printmaking, photography and digital media. Short projects will enable you to build a portfolio of your strongest work. You will be encouraged to keep a homework sketchbook to research, record and experiment. From this book you will develop and realise ideas in class, through presentation, planning sheets and final outcomes.

Assessment Structure

This is a two component qualification:

- Component 01: Portfolio. (60%) You will be given scenarios or stimuli as starting points to develop a portfolio of work.
- Component 02: OCR Set Task. (40%) You formulate a personal response to a set question, chosen from an early-release paper, followed by a ten hour practical test.

Opportunities Beyond Year 11

You could go on to take an AS or A Level in Art & Design or a related subject. If you know the area of art, craft or design you want to specialise in, you could study for a National Certificate or National Diploma in Art & Design.

You may wish to do a GCSE in Art & Design for its own sake, perhaps to form the basis of a future interest. Or you might wish to go into a job where it is useful to have had experience of art, craft and design, or where you will need to use some of the skills developed during this course. Such jobs are numerous and might include fields such as advertising, marketing, design (particularly Fashion and Graphics), architecture and media. **There is a growing demand in the creative sector, particularly in the successful UK games industry, for employees who have a STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, ART and Maths) background.** Careers in the creative sector have the benefit of being far less likely to become automated in the future, meaning skilled artists and designers will be in demand long after robots have taken many other jobs over. Whichever path you choose, the study of Art and Design can help you develop transferable skills, such as inventiveness, visual presentation and cultural awareness, which are valued in any career or field of study.


GCSE BUSINESS (9-1)

1BS0

Information At A Glance

Exam Board: Pearson Edexcel

Assessment Method: W M

Independent Study Rating: 

Course Content and Skill Development

This exciting and popular KS4 option gives you an insight into the world of business, learning for the first time what makes businesses successful, how to build a small business and the factors that influence how successful a business and their products or services are. Some of the topics we will study are listed below:

- The world of small businesses.
- What makes a successful business person?
- How to develop an idea, spot an opportunity, and turn that into a successful business.
- How to make a business effective and manage money well.
- How the world around us affects small businesses and all the people involved.
- How businesses promote themselves and keep customers happy.
- How economic events and actions of Governments impact on businesses.

Method of Study

Through use of resources on Google Classroom, research and practical tasks you will continue to develop investigative skills and improve your ability to communicate and explain your ideas to others. Through the use of case studies you will learn how to be a creative thinker, how to make decisions and work with numbers to solve business problems. Using presentations and classroom discussions, we will frequently discuss regular business topics that appear in the daily news.

Assessment Structure


Theme 1 - Investigating Small Business (**1BS0/01 - Exam**) worth 50% of the final grade.

Theme 2 - Building a Business (**1BS0/02 - Exam**) worth 50% of the final grade.

Opportunities beyond Year 11

This course can help you prepare for further and higher education, through a range of routes e.g. AS/A2 Levels and vocational courses. Through gaining an insight into business, you are better informed when you join the world of work. However, this course could lead to a business-related profession such as accountancy, law, marketing or the leisure and tourism industry. Or you could start your own business!

**GCSE COMPUTER
SCIENCE (9-1) 8525**

Information At A Glance
Exam Board: AQA
Assessment Method: C W P M
Independent Study Rating: 

Course Content and Skill Development

This course is engaging and practical, encouraging creativity and problem solving. It encourages students to develop their understanding and application of the core concepts in **computer science**.

Learning focuses around the following strands:

- 3.1 Fundamentals of algorithms
- 3.2 Programming
- 3.3 Fundamentals of data representation
- 3.4 Computer systems
- 3.5 Fundamentals of computer networks
- 3.6 Cyber security
- 3.7 Relational databases and structured query language
- 3.8 Ethical, legal & environmental impacts of digital technology on wider society

The course requires logical thinking to be able to problem solve. Whilst this is a skill you will continually develop, if you feel confident solving puzzles or thinking 'outside of the box' to design a solution, you should enjoy the practical nature of this course.

Method of Study

Class practical work, group work, problem solving activities, class discussion and presentations.

A key part of the qualification is developing programming skills and you will learn how to design, write, test and evaluate programs written in a text-based programming language. The programming language studied is Python.

Assessment Structure

Paper 1 – Computational Thinking and Programming Skills – 50%

Written exam, 2 hours, assessing topics 3.1 and 3.2 above


Paper 2 – Computing Concepts – 50%

Written exam, 1¾ hours, assessing topics 3.3 to 3.8 above

Opportunities beyond Year 11

We live in a world that is governed by the use of digital devices – being able to program 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.

GCSE DANCE
(9-1) 8236

Information At A Glance
Exam Board: AQA
Assessment Method: W P
Independent Study Rating: 

Course Content and Skill Development

The course comprises two components of work.

Component 1a: PERFORMANCE. This requires students to firstly perform two set phrases through a solo performance (approximately 1 minute) and secondly perform in a duo or trio (3 ½ minutes).

Component 1b: CHOREOGRAPHY. This requires students to choreograph either a solo (2 – 2 ½ minutes) or a group composition (3 – 3 ½ minutes).

Component 2: DANCE APPRECIATION. This requires students to explore the theoretical nature of dance, in a formal examination, with an emphasis on:

- i. The knowledge and understanding underpinning the choreographic process and performance skills.
- ii. A critical appreciation of their own work and of professional works.

Method of Study

In practical lessons students will be required to perform and accurately replicate movement as well as improvise and create their own phrases and compositions. They will be expected to address a range of dance styles. They will have the opportunity to observe, discuss and evaluate their own dances and chosen professional works. Visits to see live performances will occur alongside the use of professional workshops when possible. In order to fulfil the choreography component students will need to dedicate time outside of lessons. In theory lessons, they will be expected to engage in discussion work and presentations.

Assessment Structure


The course is assessed in 2 ways:

- External assessment of performance and choreography. (60% of the total marks)
- A 1 hour 30 minutes written paper (40% of the total marks)

Opportunities beyond Year 11

The course can lead onto further studies in Performing Arts or Dance at a variety of levels. It is also possible for the course to lead onto Advanced Level Physical Education. The course is a valuable component in careers involving Performing Arts and combines well with other subject areas, including Music and Drama. It introduces a practical and physical dimension into a student's programme of study where students may appreciate a more expressive rather than competitive challenge.

GCSE DESIGN & TECHNOLOGY Subject Focus – 3D Products (9-1) 8552
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Information At A Glance
Exam Board: AQA
Assessment Method: C P W
Independent Study Rating: 

Course Content and Skill Development

Design and Technology is a subject that develops a broad understanding of Technology, with applied knowledge of Science and Mathematics, whilst developing an appreciation of good design within the ‘made’ environment. The course will require the students to apply their knowledge to create varied, interesting and exciting three-dimensional products. Designing and making is focused within contexts that are relevant to society today such as social and environmental issues, along with sustainability and emerging new technologies. This GCSE extends the learning in all Design & Technology subjects studied at KS3, with a specialist focus in 3D Products.

Method of Study

This subject’s learning style revolves around designing and practical work. Students will work creatively and imaginatively to design improved and exciting products. Drawing upon inspirational and iconic design pieces the students will apply their knowledge and concept of fashion, style and proportion to their own designs. Students must develop excellent skills in management and organisation using all the equipment in the relevant subject areas and ICT within the design studio. Students are challenged to produce prototypes or working models using a range of traditional, new and smart materials. Supporting work documenting the progress and development of their products will be evidenced in a design folder.

Assessment Structure


- Written Paper: 50% of the total marks.
- Section A : **Core** questions covering a **broad** subject knowledge of Design and Technology principles – similar to that studied at KS3.
- Section B : **In depth** questions from chosen **specialist** subject areas of timbers, metals and plastics.

Non-examined assessment (Coursework): This is a single 40 hour design-and-make activity worth 50% of the total marks. Students must produce a perceptive design folder, including CAD work, detailing the development of a made outcome. The design task is set by the exam board each year, allowing grades 9-1.

Opportunities beyond Year 11

D&T can be followed through to A level Product Design at Hitchin Girls’ School. This can lead to a design foundation at college, a Product Design BA Degree or a more scientific Engineering/Architecture BSc Degree. Career options are incredibly wide, designing creative iconic objects, advertising campaigns, Mechanical/Aerospace/civil Engineering, Architecture and everything in between. Time and resources management, the ability to work independently with commitment and motivation, to overcome problems and react positively to criticism are just some of the personal and employability skills that are transferable to all areas of study. Subjects complementing this subject include Physics, Art & Design and Media studies.

GCSE DESIGN & TECHNOLOGY Subject Focus – Graphics (9-1) 8552

Information At A Glance
Exam Board: AQA
Assessment Method: C P W
Independent Study Rating: 

Course Content and Skill Development

Design and Technology is a subject that develops a broad understanding of Technology, with applied knowledge of Science and Mathematics, whilst developing an appreciation of good design within the ‘made’ environment. The course will require the students to apply their knowledge to create varied, interesting and exciting three-dimensional products. Designing and making is focused within contexts that are relevant to society today such as social and environmental issues, along with sustainability and emerging new technologies. This GCSE extends the learning in all Design & Technology subjects studied at KS3, with a specialist focus in Graphics.

Method of Study

This subject’s learning style revolves around designing and practical work. Students will work creatively and imaginatively to design improved and exciting products. Drawing upon inspirational and iconic design pieces the students will apply their knowledge and concept of fashion, style and proportion to their own designs. Students must develop excellent skills in management and organisation using all the equipment in the relevant subject areas and ICT within the design studio. Students are challenged to produce prototypes or working models using a range of traditional, new and smart materials. Supporting work documenting the progress and development of their products will be evidenced in a design folder.

Assessment Structure

Written Paper: 50% of the total marks.

Section A : **Core** questions covering a **broad** subject knowledge of Design and Technology principles – similar to that studied at KS3.



Section B : **In-depth** questions from chosen **specialist** subject areas of Paper and Board.

Non-examined assessment (Coursework): This is a single 40 hour design-and-make activity worth 50% of the total marks. Students must produce a perceptive design folder, including CAD work, detailing the development of a made outcome. The design task is set by the exam board each year, allowing grades 9-1.

Opportunities beyond Year 11

D&T can be followed through to A level Product Design at Hitchin Girls’ School. This can lead to a design foundation at college, a Product Design BA Degree or a more scientific Engineering/Architecture BSc Degree. Career options are incredibly wide, designing creative iconic objects, advertising campaigns, Mechanical/Aerospace/civil Engineering, Architecture and everything in between. Time and resources management, the ability to work independently with commitment and motivation, to overcome problems and react positively to criticism are just some of the personal and employability skills that are transferable to all areas of study. Subjects complementing this subject include Physics, Art & Design and Media studies.

GCSE DESIGN & TECHNOLOGY Subject Focus – Fashion Textiles (9-1) 8552

Information At A Glance
Exam Board: AQA
Assessment Method: C P W
Independent Study Rating:  

Course Content and Skill Development

Design and Technology is a subject that develops a broad understanding of Technology, with applied knowledge of Science and Mathematics, whilst developing an appreciation of good design within the ‘made’ environment. The course will require the students to apply their knowledge to create varied, interesting and exciting three-dimensional products. Designing and making is focused within contexts that are relevant to society today such as social and environmental issues, along with sustainability and emerging new technologies. This GCSE extends the learning in all Design & Technology subjects studied at KS3, with a specialist focus in Fashion Products & textile products.

Method of Study

This subject’s learning style revolves around designing and practical work. Students will work creatively and imaginatively to design improved and exciting products. Drawing upon inspirational and iconic design pieces the students will apply their knowledge and concept of fashion, style and proportion to their own designs. Students must develop excellent skills in management and organisation using all the equipment in the relevant subject areas including ICT. Students are challenged to produce prototypes or working models using a range of traditional, new and smart materials. Supporting work documenting the progress and development of their products will be evidenced in a design folder.

Assessment Structure

Written Paper: 50% of the total marks.

Section A : **Core** questions covering a **broad** subject knowledge of Design and Technology principles – similar to that studied at KS3.

Section B : **In depth** questions from chosen **specialist** subject areas of fibres and fabrics.

Non-examined assessment (Coursework): This is a single 40 hour design-and-make activity worth 50% of the total marks. Students must produce a perceptive design folder, including CAD work, detailing the development of a made outcome. The design task is set by the exam board each year, allowing grades 9-1.

Opportunities beyond Year 11

Career options in the design world are incredibly wide and varied, designing everything from homeware products, high street fashion collections, or exciting new innovative wearable technology. Design & Technology can be followed through to A Level Fashion and Textiles at Hitchin Girls’ School. This in turn can pave the way for a 'hands on' BA Degree in design, a more scientific degree such as Bsc Textile Engineering or, if you are more drawn towards the business side of fashion, perhaps BSc Fashion Management and Marketing. The management of time and resources, ability to work independently

with commitment and motivation, to overcome problems and react positively to criticism are just some of the personal and employability skills that are transferable to all areas of study.


Subjects complementing this subject include Business, Geography, Art & Design and media studies. This does not mean you have to do one of these to join our GCSE D&T-Textiles course, but they work well in combination as some of the topics /skills overlap.

GCSE DRAMA (9-1) J316

Information At A Glance

Exam Board: OCR

Assessment Method: C W P M

Independent Study Rating: 

Course Content and Skill Development

The course has been designed to be a practical, engaging and creative specification. It will provide opportunities to understand and create drama as a practical art form in which ideas and meaning are communicated to an audience through informed artistic choices. It will allow learners to study drama in an academic setting, examining this art form and applying their knowledge and understanding to the process of creating and developing drama and to their own performance work.

Method of Study

Create and develop ideas to communicate meaning for theatrical performance.

Apply theatrical skills (acting, improvising and designing) to realise artistic intentions in live performance.

Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of how drama and theatre is developed and performed.

Analyse and evaluate your own work and the work of others.

Assessment Structure

Component 01 / 02: 30% *Devising Drama*

Students explore a stimulus provided by the exam board. They will work in groups to create their own devised drama based on their exploration. Students can work as either performers (01) or designers (02) creating a portfolio and a final performance.

Component 03: 30% *Presenting and Performing Texts*

Students explore a text and perform two scenes to a visiting examiner. Students can work as either performers or designers completing a pro forma and a final performance showcase.

Component 04: Written Exam 40% *Drama: Performance and Response*

Section A contains questions based on the study of a full text from a list set by the exam board.

Section B contains an extended response analysing and evaluating live theatre.

Opportunities Beyond Year 11


You could go on to take an AS or A2 in Drama and Theatre Studies or study another course in the Performing Arts. You may wish to take GCSE Drama for its own sake, or you might wish to go into a job where it is useful to have had experience of drama or its skills. This might include such fields as retail, travel and tourism, sales and marketing, journalism, teaching or any career that involves working with people face to face.

GCSE FOOD PREPARATION AND NUTRITION (9-1) C56081

Information at a glance

Exam Board: WJEC Eduqas

Assessment Method: C W P

Independent Study Rating: 

Course Content and Skill Development

This exciting new course from WJEC offers a GCSE in Food Preparation and Nutrition. It will equip learners with the knowledge, understanding and skills required to cook and also to apply the principles of food science, nutrition and healthy eating. Following this qualification will encourage learners to cook and enable them to make informed decisions about food and nutrition in order to be able to feed themselves and others affordably and nutritiously, now and later in life. It will allow the students to understand the huge challenges that we face globally to supply the world with nutritious and safe food. This GCSE builds upon the work studied at KS3 and due to the course content makes it an ideal partner for Science, Geography, Health & Social Care and Physical Education.

Areas of Content

- **Food Preparation Skills:** Students will be required to use general practical skills and knife skills to prepare and produce a wide range of food products.
- **Food, Nutrition and Health:** Students will learn about macro and micro nutrients. Specifically they will learn their function in the body, their main sources and the effects of deficiency or excess.
- **Food Science:** Students will research why food is cooked. They will explore different cooking methods and examine the functional and chemical properties of food and nutrients.
- **Food Safety:** Students will research food spoilage and contamination whilst discussing the positive use of microorganisms in food production. They will explore how food should be stored and apply their knowledge of food safety when preparing and cooking food.
- **Food Provenance:** Students will discuss factors affecting food choices related to religion, culture, ethical and medical conditions. They will study traditional British food and international cuisine.


Assessment Structure: Examination and Coursework

- **Written Examination (50%):** Un-tiered, paper comprising of short response and long answer essay questions.
- **Non Examined Unit 1 (15%):** Food investigation - 1,500–2,000 word report including photographic evidence of the practical investigation.
- **Non Examined Unit 2 (35%):** Food preparation assessment - after completing research students will prepare, cook and present a final menu of two or three dishes within a single period of no more than three hours.

Opportunities beyond Year 11

Post-16 Food courses are available to study in the Sixth Form. Students who study this subject gain organisational skills, increased practical capability and a sound preparation for higher education courses at a wide range of universities. Careers based in the food industry are varied and can be related to new product development, management, environmental health, marketing or retailing, media or education. Students who prefer a scientific career may opt for university courses and careers in food science and technology, sports science, hotel and catering management, quality or risk management or dietetics and nutrition.

GCSE FRENCH (9-1) 8658

Information At A Glance
Exam Board: AQA
Assessment Method: W
Independent Study Rating: 

Course Content and Skill Development

The course content is based upon the following three areas of experience: Identity and Culture; Local, national, international global areas of interest; Current & future study and employment.

The content has been updated for the new GCSE specification to make topics more relevant and accessible and to allow students to develop awareness and understanding of the culture and identity of countries and communities where French is spoken.

The course also aims to develop high level language skills both for immediate use and to prepare students for further language study.

Students will respond to a wide range of authentic spoken and written material, adapted and abridged, including extracts from literary texts.

The four skill areas of Listening, Reading, Writing & Speaking remain.

Method of Study

- Students will follow the “Tricolore” French GCSE course.
- Reading material will be taken mainly from this resource.
- Listening practice on CD/Moodle/Google-Classroom and private study material.
- Role play, pair work and whole class discussion to extend speaking skills in class.
- ICT to support practice in all four skills.

Assessment Structure

- Assessment in Listening, Reading, Speaking & Writing – grades 9-1.
- All four skills are equally weighted (25% each).
- All four skills are tested by a terminal examination at the end of Year 11 and there is no controlled assessment or coursework.

Opportunities beyond Year 11

- The course can lead to Advanced Level study in French.
- Study of a foreign language equips you with a range of essential life skills that employers value.
- Languages combine well with other subjects as many Higher Education courses include a ‘study abroad’ option.
- In today’s global economy, increasing numbers of employers actively seek applicants with knowledge of a foreign language.

GCSE GEOGRAPHY (9-1) 8035
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Information At A Glance
Exam Board: AQA
Assessment Method: W
Independent Study Rating: 

Course Content and Skill Development

Geography will help you understand the changing world you live in. Your course is equally divided between human and physical geography and you can study topics including; tropical storms, earthquakes, urban issues, the living world, glaciation, climate change, poverty, UK landscapes, global population issues and the challenge of sustainable resource use. Places are important and you will explore a range of real-life examples from Antarctica to the Amazon and everywhere in between!

Your Year 9 Geography course has included GCSE content, so you have already made a head start on the course. This material will be revised at the end of Year 10 and 11. The assessments you complete through Year 9 are all at GCSE standard already – so your achievement in these is a good indication of progress at GCSE level. With work on exam technique and more revision we are confident of your ability to succeed.

You will be able to use a range of skills including communication, literacy, numeracy, map skills, ICT and problem solving. These important transferable skills will be developed throughout the course and will help you with other subjects you are studying.

Method of Study

You will learn through a variety of activities as we think that it is important to vary the tasks we do in Geography to help you learn more effectively. Some of the work you do will include group discussion, project work, research, presentations, games, ICT, fieldwork, model-making, videos, music and maybe even cake! Fieldwork is important and the examiners require you to undertake two contrasting fieldwork experiences, these are carefully linked to the topics you are studying.


Assessment structure

You will be assessed in three exams at the end of Year 11; two lasting 90 minutes each assessing your understanding of Physical and Human Geography and a third exam of 75 minutes examining your fieldwork experiences as well as your ability to evaluate a geographical issue – for this exam there is a pre-release document which we use in school prior to the exam so you are familiar with the context of the questions.

Opportunities beyond Year 11

You might choose to study Geography at AS level or, perhaps, related subjects such as Travel and Tourism BTEC at college. Geography is a useful qualification because it bridges the sciences and humanities, therefore showing you have a range of skills which employers and universities value. Geography graduates from university have amongst the lowest unemployment rates upon graduating. Geography keeps your options open and is considered a good qualification for a range of careers. We have had students leave HGS and enter a number of careers including medicine, law, architecture, veterinary science, media, economics, investment banking, farming and biology to name but a few!

HEALTH & SOCIAL CARE Cambridge National Level 2 J811

Information at a glance
Exam Board: OCR
Assessment Method: C W M
Independent Study Rating: 

Course Content and Skill Development

The course gives essential knowledge and develops the skills needed by anyone considering working in the health, social or childcare industry. Students undertake:

Two mandatory units:

- Unit RO21 - Essential values of care for use with individuals in care settings
- Unit RO22 - Communicating and working with individuals in health, social care and early years settings

Two optional units;

- Unit RO25 - Understanding life stages
- Unit RO23 - Understanding body systems and disorders

Method of Study

Students will through a variety of activities including:

- Teacher presentations
- Discussion and group work
- Documentaries
- Primary research such as interviews and physiological data collection
- Secondary research using IT
- Practical work including role play and caring for electronic babies
- Visiting speakers to meet Health and Social Care professionals and gain an understanding and appreciation of what their work entails


Assessment Structure

Unit RO21 - 1 written paper of 1 hour	25%
Units RO22, RO23 and RO25 - coursework assignments	75% (25% each)

Opportunities beyond Year 11

This course is ideal preparation for progression to more detailed study of Health, Social Care and Early Years. Students can progress to Level 3 Health and Social Care and related subjects and some may go on to work or train in a specialised area of Health, Social Care or Early Years often midwifery, nursing, physiotherapy, teaching, social work, social care or early years settings.

GCSE HISTORY (9-1) 8145
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Information At A Glance
Exam Board: AQA
Assessment Method: exam
Independent Study Rating: 

Course Content and Skill Development

- Britain: Health and the people: c1000 to the present day.
- Elizabethan England 1568-1603: Queen, government and religion, challenges to Elizabeth at home and abroad, Elizabethan society.
- Conflict and tension between East and West, 1945-1972.
- America, 1920-1973: Opportunity and inequality.

Method of Study

- Analysing a range of historical source evidence.
- Discussion of concepts.
- Presentations and debate.
- Enrichment opportunities: A visit to Berlin in Germany is currently offered to Year 10 to visit a number of significant historical sites from the Nazi and Cold War eras.
- Use of ICT: Research and presentation skills are developed.


Assessment Structure

- **Paper 1:** Conflict and tension between East and West (The Cold War), 1945-1972
- America, 1920-1973: Opportunity and inequality. **1 hour 45 minutes exam.**
- **Paper 2:** Period study and British depth study: Elizabethan England, 1568-1603 and Britain: Health and the people: c1000 to the present day.
- **1 hour 45 minutes exam.**
- One tier grades available from 9 to 1.

Opportunities beyond Year 11

- History is a highly regarded qualification for virtually any field of work.
- The subject is especially suitable for anyone considering careers in law, journalism, writing or teaching.
- History combines well with many subjects and offers students the opportunity to reflect and analyse.

Information Technologies Cambridge National Level 1/2 J808
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Information At A Glance
Exam Board: OCR
Assessment Method: C W P M
Independent Study Rating: 

Course Content and Skill Development

The qualification is made up of two units:

Unit 1: Understanding tools, techniques, methods and processes for technological solutions

Students develop their knowledge and understanding of different hardware and software applications and the tools and techniques used to select, store, manipulate and present data. They also explore the various risks associated with the collection, storage and use of data, including legal, moral, ethical and security issues, and how such risks can be mitigated.

Unit 2: Developing technological solutions

Students create a technological solution that processes data and communicates information, following the phases of the project life cycle using different hardware and software technologies to create an integrated technological solution. They develop practical skills such as carrying out a SWOT analysis, creating GANTT charts, developing online surveys, and presenting data through web-based technologies.

Method of Study

Practical Work, Group Work, Class Discussion, Presentations.

Practical work will focus largely on using software such as the Microsoft Office suite (Word, Powerpoint, Excel, Access) as well as Google apps (Docs, Sheets, Slides).

Assessment Structure

Understanding tools, techniques, methods and processes for technological solutions – external written paper (worth 50%)

Developing technological solutions – coursework task (worth 50%)

Opportunities beyond Year 11

The Cambridge National in Information Technologies improves students' knowledge of the digital environment and their confidence with IT. They learn about data management issues and develop practical skills by planning and creating an integrated technological solution to communicate information. Data Manipulation and Project Management are vital skills for success in employment and higher education and are among the key transferable skills required by employers. Future pathways could include further vocational IT qualifications as well as industry-standard IT qualifications.

GCSE LATIN

(9-1) C990PA & C990PB

Information At A Glance

Exam Board: WJEC Eduqas

Assessment Method: W

Independent Study Rating: 

Course Content and Skill Development

- **Latin Language (50% of the course).** We continue to study the Cambridge Latin Course, up to the end of Book 4. We develop vocabulary and grammar and translate increasingly complex stories, as well as some simple translations of English into Latin. We continue learning about life in the Roman Empire, with a focus on daily life, Roman Britain, the Roman army, entertainment and leisure, and the city of Rome.
- **Latin Literature (30% of the course).** We study a selection of texts in their original Latin. The themes are *Travel by Land and Sea* and *Superstition and Magic*. We develop an understanding and appreciation of original Latin texts by analysis and evaluation. This is an 'open book' paper, where the texts and vocabulary are available in the GCSE examination.
- **Either: Latin Literature – Narratives (20% of the course).** We study a text by a single author, with an additional passage of English. There is a choice of verse or prose narrative. The current authors are Ovid (*The Flood*, in Latin and English) and Pliny (*The Eruption of Vesuvius*, in Latin and English). We develop an understanding and appreciation of the texts by analysis and evaluation. This is an 'open book' paper, where the texts and vocabulary are available in the GCSE examination.
- **Or: Roman Civilisation (20% of the course).** Topics are *Daily Life in a Roman Town* and *Roman Britain*. We will study a range of primary sources for the chosen topic and develop the skills required to answer an extended evaluative question.

Method of Study

- Discussions
- Individual work
- Group work
- Independent research
- Creative work
- Presentations

Assessment Structure


This is a linear qualification where all papers are examined at the end of Year 11.

Opportunities Beyond Year 11

You can study Latin at A Level, and at university.

Possible careers include accountancy, administration, archaeology, civil service, law, museum work, teaching, librarianship and IT.

GCSE MEDIA STUDIES (9-1) C680QS
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Information At A Glance
Exam Board: WJEC Eduqas
Assessment Method: C W P
Independent Study Rating: 

Course Content and Skill Development

Media develops a student's enjoyment of media texts, in addition to developing a framework for critical analysis of the meanings and the contexts. The course will involve explorations of a range of media forms including newspapers, radio news/current affairs programmes, advertising, video games, magazines, television genres, film marketing and music videos. Students will develop their understanding of media language, issues of representation, media industries and audiences.

Method of Study

- Class discussion
- Group work
- Written analytical essays
- Presentations / mini lessons
- Visits where relevant
- Practical work
- Independent research


Assessment Structure

- 70% Examination – two papers
- 30% Non-examined assessment

Opportunities beyond Year 11

This course allows for easy progression to A Level Media Studies. Many of the skills learnt are transferable to other subjects and study at a higher level as well as opportunities within the industry, such as: journalism, film-making, creative media and design.

GCSE MUSIC (9-1) 1MU0
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Information at a glance
Exam Board: Pearson Edexcel
Assessment Method: C W P
Independent Study Rating: 

Course Content and Skill Development

The course comprises 3 units. In unit 1, students will develop their performing skills in both solo and ensemble context. This unit encourages students to develop their creative thinking, self-confidence, and self-motivation. Unit 2 explores the technical and creative skills required for composing. Unit 3 will develop students' listening and appraising skills through the study of music across a variety of styles and genres.

Method of Study

Students will be given opportunities to rehearse and refine performances in their chosen style. They will explore a range of compositional starting points and investigate a range of ideas to develop them into completed pieces of music.

Students will undertake class discussion of musical concepts and ideas.

Students are required to take part in extra-curricular music activities in school as part of this course, in order to support the development of aural skills.


Assessment Structure

1. Performing: One solo and one ensemble performance of the students own choice. Performances will take place in lesson time for most students. This accounts for 30% of the course. The total time for performing must be over 3 minutes with a minimum of 1 minute for solo and ensemble pieces.
2. Composing: Two assessed compositions independently researched in or out of school but produced under supervised classroom sessions. This accounts for 30% of the course. The total time for both pieces must not be at least 3 minutes.
3. Listening and Appraising: A written paper with questions on 8 set works studied throughout the course and unfamiliar pieces of music. This accounts for 40% of the course.

Opportunities beyond Year 11

Students can consider pursuing this subject at A Level and beyond at University or a music conservatoire. Listening skills and analysis skills link closely to analysis undertaken in subjects such as English and History, along with the skills required to produce an analytical essay.

GCSE RELIGIOUS STUDIES A
(Philosophy and Ethics)– **FULL**
COURSE (9-1) 8062

Information at a glance
Exam Board: AQA
Assessment Method: W M
Independent Study Rating: 

Course Content and Skill Development

The course is made up of key components: Component 1 - The study of religions: beliefs, teachings and practices. Component 2 – Thematic studies.

Component 1 covers a detailed study of the beliefs, teachings and practices of both Christianity and Buddhism which will include studying about worship, festivals, key figures and social role of religion. We approach the study of religion critically and open-mindedly, focusing on them both as repositories of knowledge and embodied traditions.

Component 2 covers four themes which will also apply the religious content from the religions studied in component 1. The theme options include relationships and families; religion and life (issues such as abortion, euthanasia and animal rights); the existence of God and revelation; religion, peace and conflict; crime and punishment; human rights and social justice.

As we study these issues throughout the course, we will aim to develop skills of debate and discussion; critical thinking; conceptual analysis and ethical reasoning.

Method of Study

Discussions + debates
Presentations
Film clips
ICT
Group work
Games
Case Studies

Assessment Structure

The course is assessed by 2 exams:


Paper 1 – The Study of Religions – students answer 4 five part questions, two on each of the religions covered. 1 hour 45 minutes – sat in the June of Year 11.

Paper 2 – Thematic Studies – students answer 4 five part questions, one on each of the themes that have been covered. 1 hour 45 minutes – sat in the June of Year 11.

Opportunities beyond Year 11

Students can go on to study Philosophy and Ethics at Advanced Level. Philosophy and Ethics is a highly respected field, which leads into a wide range of university qualifications and careers that require good verbal and reasoning skills such as journalism, law, medicine and politics. It is also beneficial for careers that involve a good understanding of people such as nursing, psychology, social work, police work and counselling.

GCSE Separate Sciences (Triple Award) (9-1) Bi- J247, Ch-J248, Ph-J249

Information At A Glance
Exam Board: OCR
Assessment Method: W
Independent Study Rating: 

Course Content and Skill Development

This course allows students to gain separate qualifications in Biology, Chemistry and Physics. The early work at KS4 is common to that taken by Combined Science students so is started in Year 9. Since it covers more material than Combined Science, it counts as one of the subjects from the list of choices on the options sheet. The extra material in this course is not essential for progress to Advanced Level, and students taking Combined Science are just as successful in Year 12. However, for students who really enjoy Science, this course enables them to study the subject in a greater depth and has produced excellent results in the past.

Method of Study

- Class practical work
- Class discussion
- Data analysis
- Group work and presentations

Assessment Structure


The course is linear with all 6 papers taken at the end of Year 11. Each paper is 1 hour 45 minutes in duration. There are a core set of practicals to be completed by the end of the course but no marks are reported to the exam board. The papers will test aspects of the practical work done over the three years. Students will receive one grade each between 9-1.

Opportunities beyond Year 11

Triple Science students can take Biology, Chemistry or Physics at Advanced Level. These courses lead to a wide variety of degrees and employment in the medical, environmental and research industries, to name but a few. Students with Science degrees are highly sought after in many other areas such as accounting, sport and journalism, because an understanding of scientific principles shows the ability to think logically, apply principles and predict the effects of change.

Please be aware that students should be on track for a minimum attainment of a grade 6 (following their end of year mock examinations) in Science if they wish to apply for this option. It is also recommended that students are studying higher tier in Mathematics. They should discuss their Science option with their Science teachers if they need any advice.

GCSE SOCIOLOGY (9-1) C200QS
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Information at a glance
Exam Board: WJEC Eduqas
Assessment Method: W M
Independent Study Rating: 

Course Content and Skill Development

Sociology is the study of society and sociologists are interested in explaining why society works the way it does and the extent to which our behaviour, experiences and life chances are shaped by our social class, age, gender and ethnicity. You will study topics including education, families, crime and deviance, mass media, power and social inequality and consider questions such as the reasons for different rates of achievement at school focussing on economic circumstances, parental interest and teacher expectations. Also, the role of the family in society, including looking at reasons for the growth in the divorce rate and the consequences of this. Investigating the rise in violent crime in inner city areas in recent years and the extent to which media influences such as ‘gangsta rap’ can be held responsible for it.

Sociology makes us challenge many of our ‘taken for granted’ assumptions about the world and forces us to look at things in new ways. It is inherently interesting and extremely relevant to the lives of young people.

Method of Study

You will learn through a variety of activities including teacher presentation with discussion, group work, research projects, presentations, visiting speakers and documentary screenings.


Assessment Structure

There are two modules which each have an examination of 1 hour 45 minutes, both of which are taken at the end of Year 11.

Opportunities beyond Year 11

Sociology is a well-respected academic discipline. It is useful for a number of careers including law, teaching, social work, journalism, television, the police, nursing, the civil service as well as the world of business in general.

GCSE SPANISH
(9-1) 8698

Information At A Glance
Exam Board: AQA
Assessment Method: W
Independent Study Rating: 

Course Content and Skill Development

The course content is based upon the following three areas of experience: Identity and Culture; Local, national, international global areas of interest; Current and future study and employment.

The content has been updated for the new GCSE specification to make topics more relevant and accessible and to allow students to develop awareness and understanding of the culture and identity of countries and communities where Spanish is spoken.

The course also aims to develop high level language skills for both immediate use and to prepare students for further language study.

Students will respond to a wide range of authentic spoken and written material, adapted and abridged, including extracts from literary texts.

The four skill areas of Listening, Reading, Writing & Speaking remain.

Method of Study

- Students will follow the “Viva” Spanish GCSE course
- Reading material will be taken mainly from this resource.
- Listening practice on CD/Moodle/Google-Classroom and private study material
- Role play, pair work and whole class discussion to extend speaking skills in class
- ICT to support practice in all four skills

Assessment Structure

- Assessment in Listening, Reading, Speaking & Writing – grade 9-1
- All four skills are equally weighted (25% each)
- All four skills are tested by terminal examination at the end of Year 11 and there is no controlled assessment or coursework

Opportunities Beyond Year 11

- The course can lead to Advanced Level study in Spanish
- Study of a foreign language equips you with a range of essential life skills that employers value
- Languages combine well with other subjects as many Higher Education courses include a ‘study abroad’ option
- In today’s global economy, increasing numbers of employers actively seek applicants with knowledge of a foreign language

The Skills Package

Students following the Green option route will have one option block given over to our Skills Package. Each year we review the content of the package in order to ensure that it best suits the needs of the students in these routes to support their studies of English and Mathematics whilst also offering the opportunity to develop study skills and other more general skills.

English and Mathematics

Both English and Mathematics are allocated 2 periods per fortnight for the skills classes. These groups are small and focus on developing and securing key concepts and skills required for success at GCSE.

General Skills

One period per fortnight will be allocated as a general skills/study period. During this time students will learn about methods of effective study, how to organise themselves and how to effectively revise and prepare for their exams. In addition to this, in Year 10, students will follow the iDEA course, aiming to achieve a bronze or silver award. The Inspiring Digital Enterprise Award, known as iDEA is an international award. It is the digital and enterprise equivalent of The Duke of Edinburgh's Award.

In Year 11, in addition to study skills, students will also learn about the skills needed in applying for Sixth Forms and colleges and preparing for an interview.

Time will also be given towards completing assignments and revision for exams as appropriate.

Progression Beyond GCSE

We are part of the Hitchin Schools' Sixth Form Consortium and, as such, there is a wide range of courses available to you Post-16. Further details are provided in the Sixth Form Prospectus available at www.hgs.herts.sch.uk. Please note, in order to access Hitchin Girls' Sixth Form it is a requirement to have attained a minimum of five Grade 9-4 GCSEs or equivalent including English and Maths at Grade 4 or above. Some courses will have additional entry requirements and all have a recommended GCSE Average Points Score (APS).

The courses on offer for 2021-23 are as follows:

BTEC and Technical Courses

L3 BTEC National Diploma in Business (Double Award)
L3 Applied Diploma in Criminology
L3 BTEC & L3 Technical in Health & Social Care
L3 Applied Diploma in Food Science & Nutrition
L3 BTEC in IT
L3 BTEC in Music Technology (Sound Engineering or Music Performance)
L3 BTEC in Performing Arts (Acting)

A Level Courses

Art & Design	Biology
Business	Chemistry
Classical Civilisation	Computer Science
Drama & Theatre	Economics
English Language and Literature	English Literature
Fashion & Textiles	Film Studies
French	Geography
German	History
Latin	Mathematics
Mathematics – Further	Media Studies
Music	Philosophy & Ethics
Photography	Physical Education
Physics	Politics
Product Design	Psychology
Sociology	Spanish

Enrichment Studies

Community Sports Leadership - Level 2
Higher Sports Leadership - Level 3
Extended Project Qualification

Notes Page:

Record of your submitted choices:

Blue route students:

Ebacc Option	
Option Choice 1	
Option Choice 2	
Option Choice 3	

PE Option	
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Green route students:

Ebacc Option	
Option Choice 1	
Option Choice 2	
	The skills package

PE Option	
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