

# GCSE Course Guide

2026-2028



Halliford  
School  
SHEPPERTON

*Awarded a Significant Strength for  
Pupil Leadership - ISI November 2025*



# Contents

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|   |    |
|---|----|
| Foreword by the Headmaster .....          | 3  |
| Welcome by the Deputy Head Academic ..... | 4  |
| Introduction .....                        | 5  |
| How do I choose my GCSE subjects .....    | 6  |
| English Language .....                    | 7  |
| English Literature .....                  | 8  |
| Mathematics .....                         | 9  |
| Further Mathematics .....                 | 10 |
| Biology .....                             | 11 |
| Chemistry .....                           | 12 |
| Physics .....                             | 13 |
| Combined Science: Trilogy .....           | 14 |
| MFL – French, German and Spanish .....    | 15 |
| Art and Design .....                      | 16 |
| Business Studies .....                    | 17 |
| Classical Civilisation .....              | 18 |
| Computer Science .....                    | 19 |
| Design and Technology .....               | 20 |
| Drama .....                               | 21 |
| Geography .....                           | 22 |
| History .....                             | 23 |
| Latin .....                               | 24 |
| Music .....                               | 25 |
| Physical Education .....                  | 26 |
| Religious Studies .....                   | 27 |

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# Foreword

by The Headmaster

Welcome to the GCSE Course Guide for 2026-2028. As you look towards moving into Year 10 next September, you will be embarking on an exciting time in your education. It will be the first opportunity for you to start focusing on the subjects in which you are most interested. With this choice can come a degree of confusion and uncertainty, but please rest assured that the staff at Halliford School are very experienced in guiding our students through this process and helping you make the right choices.

The decisions you will make as you choose your GCSE courses are very important ones and may well have an impact on future studies. Therefore, it is important that you make the choices wisely and listen to the advice on offer from your teachers and parents. As the examinations system in the UK has changed a great deal, experience shows us that universities are paying close attention to the grades that you achieve at GCSE, and so it is even more important than ever to make the right choices.

There is no doubt that GCSEs are rigorous qualifications, and there is a real focus on terminal examinations at the end of the two years to assess your performance. This is why we have been preparing you for this process in your Year 9 Study Skills course.

This guide contains a great deal of information about how to make your choices, which choices are available and lots of information on the content of each course. Please take time to read it carefully and discuss any queries you have with your tutor and subject teachers.

On Tuesday 10th February, we will host our Year 9 GCSE Options Evening when all the Heads

of Department will be available to discuss each of their subjects with you and your parents. Following this evening, you will then be asked to make your initial choices.

As you know, we offer many opportunities at Halliford outside the classroom, and it will be important for you to continue to take part in and perhaps even lead some of the co-curricular activities the School offers. Taking part in these teams and clubs helps to develop you as a character and provides you with vital skills that are highly prized by universities and future employers. At Halliford School, we want you to be a truly rounded person and remember to work hard but also play hard.

Please know that your tutor, teachers, and I are here to help and guide you throughout this process. I wish you every success in your GCSE courses and look forward to seeing you grow in confidence and make excellent progress in the coming terms.

Good luck.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'James Davies'.

**James Davies**  
**Headmaster**



# Welcome

by **The Deputy Head Academic**

We hope that as a result of a broad curriculum and wide-ranging co-curricular programme, our students will discover subjects about which they are passionate. The end of Year 9 represents a shift from breadth to depth as, at GCSE, subjects are studied in more detail. Subjects also have more time associated with them. This combination of depth and time allows for the development of detailed expertise and mastery of the skills involved.

The options evening represents an important point in your son's development, as they finish a common curriculum and begin to choose which subjects they would like to study more independently.

Halliford is a small school. One of the benefits of this is that we can build our timetable around the choices of the boys. As such, boys can, in theory, choose any combination of the optional subjects we offer.

Regardless of which subjects are selected by your son, we hope to inspire, challenge and support them by having high expectations and holding them to this standard.

A combination of good guidance, independent choice and excellent provision should allow your son to achieve the best possible outcomes at the end of their GCSE journey.

I wish you the very best in the options process. If you have any questions about the subjects, please contact the relevant teachers or Heads of Departments directly. If your question is about the process itself, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R Fulford'.

Richard Fulford  
**Deputy Head Academic**



# Introduction

## Which GCSE subjects are compulsory?

All students at Halliford School will study the following GCSE courses:

- English Language
- English Literature
- Mathematics
- Biology, Chemistry, Physics or Combined Science - Trilogy
- A Modern Foreign Language – with a choice of French / German / Spanish
- Games – there continues to be a weekly compulsory games afternoon once a week for all students.
- PSHE

## Which GCSE subjects can I choose from?

- Art and Design
- Business Studies
- Classical Civilisation
- Computer Science
- Design and Technology
- Drama
- French – if you wish to study two languages, then you should select French as one of your options and the other modern foreign language as your compulsory language.
- Geography
- History
- Latin
- Music
- Physical Education
- Religious Studies

## How does the choices process work?

We offer an initial free choice of all subjects so that we can strive where possible to offer the best series of subject combinations to our students. Clearly though, the demands of timetabling will mean that particular combinations of subjects will not be possible in a few cases. We will construct our timetable based on student choices and aim to meet as many combinations as possible.

You will initially be asked to choose three subjects from the list of courses along with a reserve subject, should your initial choices not be possible. Once we have received your choices, for the purpose of timetabling, the option subjects will be arranged into three blocks which are given an equal time allocation of four periods per week.

Once the students have chosen their GCSE options, the timetable and 'option blocks' are constructed. Following this, if you wish to alter your choices (in discussion with and approval from the Deputy Head Academic), not all selections will be possible as two of the newly desired choices may be taught at the same time.

In some subjects, not taking a subject at GCSE will not preclude a suitable student from taking up this subject again at A Level, subject to the permission of the Head of Department. The School also reserves the right to veto any classes where there are insufficient numbers to warrant a particular choice.

Initial subject choices must be returned to the Deputy Head Academic, no later than Thursday 26th February.



# How do I choose my GCSE subjects?

Your choice of GCSE subjects should be determined by four important factors:

- **Your ability and/or aptitude for all your chosen subjects**
- **Your interest and enthusiasm for all your chosen subjects**
- **The relation of your chosen subjects to each other**
- **Your plans for higher education and a career**

Some of you already have a clear idea of your chosen career and therefore of the subjects you might want to choose for GCSE. For most of you, the subjects you are good at will also be the ones you like, and they will, therefore, probably combine well with each other. However, many of you have not yet decided on a career path, and for you, the choice can be bewildering. You can find details of the content and assessment procedures of these courses in this booklet.

You should consult as widely as possible before making any

decision. Heads of Department will offer you advice on your ability in the subject and will give you further details on the course content and nature of assessment. Your tutor will give you an overall picture of your academic programme and should be the first point of contact for you and your parents.

For the vast majority of students, the best advice is to be guided by subjects that you find most interesting and which will present you with the greatest chance of success at the end of Year 11. This will provide you with the best chance to make the next successful transition into the Sixth Form. You should choose your option subjects carefully, as changing your option choices in Year 10 will result in you having to catch up with written work and previous assignments, independently. Changes after the end of September are not possible due to the amount of work missed, and choices are subject to the approval of your teachers and only possible where there are spaces in a class.

## Beyond the Classroom

### Games

In Years 10 and 11, students continue their involvement in sport in a range of different competitive and recreational activities. Games options in Year 10 include rugby, football, and cricket. In Year 10, teams are entered for the Middlesex Cup, the NatWest Schools Cup, a variety of Rugby 7s competitions and the Surrey County Cup for Cricket.

In Year 11, students join the Sixth Form to compete in the Super 7 series in rugby, football, and cricket at senior level. Other activities on offer include health-related fitness, basketball, netball, badminton, squash, golf, swimming, and volleyball.

### PSHE

In Years 10 and 11, students follow a PSHE programme which is comprised of study skills, citizenship, careers, religious studies, and health education. The course is designed to make students more aware of their environment and the people around them.

### Careers Education and Guidance

Careers education and advice is delivered by visiting speakers, work experience, resources in the Learning Resource Centre and visits to careers conventions. There are close links with

the Careers Service in Staines, and the Careers Consultant is a regular visitor.

In Year 11, students have the opportunity to take part in careers advice from our independent careers guidance counsellor.

### Learning Support

Some students will qualify for extra time or the assistance of a reader or scribe in their examinations or other special access arrangements. The school's SEND Policy runs in tandem with the requirements of the Joint Council of Qualifications (JCQ) to ensure that these students are not substantially disadvantaged.

Learning Support is offered in a variety of ways. Staff at Halliford School are trained in the delivery of Quality First Teaching, which ensures that lessons are suitably differentiated to meet the students' learning needs. Where a student needs individual or small group additional support, this can be arranged. In a small number of cases, students may be allowed to study one fewer GCSE subject at the discretion of the Deputy Head Academic. For those students who require additional support, there may be an additional charge.

If you think additional help to support your son's learning is necessary and you are not receiving this, please contact the Head of Learning Support (SENDCo) or the Deputy Head Academic.

# English Language

**Exam Board: Pearson Edexcel**  
(4EA1A/ 4EA1B)

## Overview

*Students will read a range of texts that are engaging and diverse. The texts include poetry and prose, as well as non-fiction texts. Students will read and respond to material from a variety of different resources. They will be able to make comparisons between texts and analyse the ways in which writers achieve their effects. Students will also be able to construct and convey meaning in written language, matching style to audience and purpose.*

*Students at Halliford School take the International GCSE (IGCSE) in English Language.*

## What will I learn?

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

- Read a wide range of texts fluently and with good understanding
- Read critically and use knowledge gained from wide reading to inform and improve their own writing
- Write effectively and coherently using Standard English appropriately
- Use grammar correctly, punctuate and spell correctly
- Acquire and apply a wide vocabulary alongside knowledge and understanding of grammatical terminology, and linguistic conventions for reading, writing and spoken language
- Listen to and understand spoken language and use spoken Standard English effectively

## Assessment

In English Language GCSE, students are taught in sets. There are three higher mixed ability sets and one support set.

**Mixed Ability Sets:** Paper 1 and Paper 2 (No Non-Examined Assessment)

**Support Set:** Paper 1 and Non Examined Assessments in Poetry and Imaginative Writing.

## Examination:

**Paper 1:** Non-fiction and Transactional Writing. Exam - 2 hours and 15 minutes. 60% of final mark.

**Paper 2:** Poetry, Prose and Imaginative Writing. Exam - 1 hour and 30 minutes. 40% of the final mark.

## What can it lead on to?

English Language GCSE is designed to help students develop reading, writing and analytical skills, all of which are highly transferable to various situations. A good understanding of the use of the English Language is key to the future success of Hallifordians, who will need a GCSE in English Language to be able to study at any British university.

Almost all career paths will require students to be able to read and assimilate information, to write reports and make presentations and to understand and respond to information presented in a range of different styles and registers. These are the skills they learn through the study of English Language at GCSE level. A good GCSE in English Language will also prepare students well for the study of English Language and many other subjects at A Level.



## WHAT I ENJOYED ABOUT THIS SUBJECT

### Sam

*"Studying English Language gave me a strong foundation that I still use in Upper Sixth. One of the key strengths of the course was exploring a wide range of prose and non-fiction texts, which helped me understand how writers use language differently depending on the purpose and audience. The creative writing element was particularly valuable, as it encouraged me to write imaginatively and experiment with different styles and formats, such as articles, speeches and memoirs."*

# English Literature

Exam Board: Pearson Edexcel  
(4ET1B)

## Overview

*English Literature will broaden and develop learners' skills and encourage them to read and respond to a wide range of literary texts. They will appreciate the writer's craft and find enjoyment in reading literature.*

*Students at Halliford School take the International GCSE (IGCSE) in English Literature.*

## What will I learn?

Students will read a range of texts that are engaging and diverse. They will engage and develop their ability to read, understand and respond to a wide range of literary texts from around the world. Students will develop an appreciation of the ways in which writers achieve their literary effects and develop the skills needed for literary study.

Students will explore, through literature, the cultures of their own and other societies and find enjoyment in reading literature and understanding its influence on individuals and societies.

## Assessment

The setting is the same as for English Language, however, all sets complete the following process of assessment.

### Examination:

Paper 1: Poetry and Modern Prose (60% of Literature Grade)

- Section A – Unseen Poetry: one 20-mark essay question exploring the meaning and effects created in an unseen poem. The poem will be reproduced in the question paper.
- Section B – Anthology Poetry: one 30-mark essay question from a choice of two, comparing two poems from Part 3 of the Pearson Edexcel International GCSE English Anthology.
- Section C – Of Mice and Men: one 40-mark essay question from a choice of two on each of the set texts.

### Non-Examined Assessment:

Modern Drama - An Inspector Calls by J.B. Priestly (20% of Literature grade)

Literary Heritage Texts - Macbeth by William Shakespeare (20% of Literature grade)

## What can it lead on to?

English Literature broadens students' potential prospects and enables them to develop valuable analytical and oral skills that are desirable to employers and universities, in addition to affording them the pleasure of studying well known literary texts in depth. It also provides a good foundation for the study of English Literature and other essay-based subjects (such as History or Religious Studies) at A Level.

Former students from Halliford School have gone on to read English Literature at Exeter University and Sussex University.



## WHAT I ENJOYED ABOUT THIS SUBJECT



### Johnny

*"The GCSE Literature course was incredibly enjoyable because it deepened my understanding of characters and themes, rather than just the plot. I loved exploring such a range of engaging novels and plays, from the tension and moral questions in An Inspector Calls to the dramatic intensity of Macbeth and the emotional depth of Of Mice and Men. I also appreciated being encouraged to develop my own interpretations of these texts and consider how different writers create meaning."*



# Mathematics

**Exam Board: Pearson Edexcel  
(Specification A) (4MA1)**

## Overview

*Mathematics uses its own language, made up of numbers, symbols and formulas, to explore the rules we need to measure or identify essential problems like distance, speed, time, space, change, force, and quantities. Studying Mathematics helps us find patterns and structure in our lives. Mathematics helps us put a price on things, create graphics, build websites, build skyscrapers, and generally understand how things work or predict how they might change over time and under different conditions.*

*Students at Halliford School take the Pearson Edexcel International GCSE (IGCSE) in Mathematics.*

## What will I learn?

The aims and objectives of this qualification are to enable students to learn:

- Number
- Algebra
- Graphs
- Shape and Space
- Data Handling
- Differentiation – tangents, turning points
- Set theory

Topics on the course include:

- Arithmetic Series
- Completing the square
- Trigonometric graphs
- Transformations of graphs

## Assessment

Two equally weighted papers, each worth 50% of the final mark. There is no coursework.

**Foundation Tier:** 2 X 2-hour Calculator papers

Grades possible: 5 – 1

**Higher Tier:** 2 X 2-hour Calculator papers

Grades possible: 9 – 3

## What can it lead on to?

GCSE Mathematics is a basic entrance requirement for many degree courses and, of course, provides the foundation for the study of Mathematics at A Level.

Students with a GCSE and/or A Level in Mathematics can go into a variety of different careers such as: Accounting, Medicine, Engineering, Forensic Pathology, Finance, Business, Consultancy, Teaching, I.T., Games Development, Scientific Research, Programming, the Civil Service, Design, Construction and Astrophysics to name just a few.



## WHAT I ENJOYED ABOUT THIS SUBJECT

### Lucas

*"The IGCSE Mathematics course at Halliford School is incredibly interesting, encouraging you to develop your problem-solving skills through engaging questions of varying difficulty on topics such as differentiation and factorisation. They start easy, and as you progress, they become longer and less obvious, and through practice, you learn to see the path to find a satisfying ending. It rewards practice and understanding!"*

# Further Mathematics

## (Level 2 Certificate)

Exam Board: AQA  
(Course code : 8365)

### Overview

*This qualification fills the gap for high achieving students by assessing their higher order mathematical skills, particularly in algebraic reasoning, in greater depth, thus preparing them fully to maximise their potential in further studies at A Level. It offers the opportunity for stretch and challenge that builds on the Key Stage 4 curriculum and is intended as an additional qualification to the IGCSE Mathematics, rather than as a replacement. The content assumes prior knowledge of the Key Stage 4 Programme of Study and covers the areas of algebra and geometry, which are crucial to further study in the subject, in greater depth and breadth. This qualification places an emphasis on higher order technical proficiency, rigorous argument and problem solving skills. It also gives an introduction to calculus and matrices and develops further skills in trigonometry, functions and graphs.*

*You can find out about this qualification at [aqa.org.uk/maths](http://aqa.org.uk/maths)*

### What will I learn?

- Number
- Algebra
- Coordinate Geometry (2 dimensions only)
- Calculus
- Matrix Transformations
- Geometry

### Assessment

**Paper 1:** Non-Calculator

1 hr 45 mins, 80 marks

**Paper 2:** Calculator

1 hr 45 mins, 80 marks

Questions: A mix of question styles, from short, single-mark questions to multi-step problems. The mathematical demand

increases as the student progresses through the paper.

### What can it lead on to?

The AQA Level 2 Certificate in Further Mathematics is an untiered Level 2 linear qualification for learners who:

- either already have, or are expected to achieve, grades 7, 8 or 9 in GCSE Mathematics
- are likely to progress to A Level study in Mathematics and possibly Further Mathematics.

Although not an essential pre-requisite for A Level study, this course gives students a taste of what A Level study will entail should they choose to take this subject in the Sixth Form. This course has proved hugely helpful for students who were wavering with their A Level subject choices.



### WHAT I ENJOYED ABOUT THIS SUBJECT

#### Jack

*"Further Mathematics is a fascinating subject, in which you study many topics that are not in the Mathematics course, such as matrices, tangents and normals. It also offers greater complexity for students who want to be challenged beyond the regular GCSE curriculum, and is a valuable starting point for those who wish to study Mathematics at A Level, given the substantial overlap between the two courses."*

# Biology

**Exam Board: AQA (8461)**

## Overview

*The study of Biology connects us to the world we are living in and reminds us of our interactions with all other life forms. It develops awareness of the significance of unique fauna and flora and distinctive ecosystems. It provides opportunities to learn about the processes of all living things. What students learn is directly relevant to our species and the environment.*

## What will I learn?

The main topics covered within the GCSE Biology course are:

- Cell biology
- Organisation
- Infection and response
- Bioenergetics
- Homeostasis and response
- Inheritance, variation, and evolution
- Ecology

Practical work is a key feature of the GCSE Biology course. You will undertake a minimum of 8 required practical activities to further your understanding and enjoyment wherever possible.



## Assessment

There are 2 examinations at the end of the course, after which students are awarded a grade 9 – 1.

**Paper 1:** 1 hour 45 minutes, 100 marks. 50% of the GCSE. Topics 1 – 4

**Paper 2:** 1 hour 45 minutes, 100 marks. 50% of the GCSE. Topics 5 – 7

Both papers have a range of structured closed short answers and longer open response questions. The required practical tasks are examined in the written papers.

## What can it lead on to?

Through the study of Biology, you will gain problem solving, analytical and evaluation skills. These skills are transferable to a range of A Levels, apprenticeships, and professions. Universities and future employers look at your GCSE Biology result even if you are not looking to study the subject beyond Key Stage 4.

Biology is a key subject for lots of STEM careers including nursing, dentistry, forensic science, psychology, physiotherapy, botany, environmental science, zoology, geology, oceanography, pharmaceuticals, energy, teaching, science writing, genetics, and research.



## WHAT I ENJOYED ABOUT THIS SUBJECT

### Max

*"Biology was my favourite subject at GCSE as it covered interesting topics such as genetics and ecology. I particularly loved the dissections, especially the liver and heart. It was fascinating to see the complex structures up close and understand how they function. The hands-on experience made the subject easier to understand and very engaging."*

# Chemistry

**Exam Board: AQA (8462)**

## Overview

*Through studying GCSE Chemistry you will gain an appreciation of many real life applications of Science, including every day, industrial and environmental aspects. You will build upon the fundamentals of Chemistry (atoms, bonding and moles) studied in Year 9 to learn about how and why reactions take place. You will also learn about a wide range of chemicals and materials used in the home, in agriculture and in industry.*

## What will I learn?

The main topics covered within the GCSE Chemistry course are:

- Atomic structure and the periodic table
- Bonding, structure and the properties of matter
- Quantitative chemistry
- Chemical changes
- Energy changes
- The rate and extent of chemical change
- Organic chemistry
- Chemical analysis
- Chemistry of the atmosphere
- Using resources

Practical work is a key feature of the GCSE Chemistry course. You will undertake a minimum of eight required practical tasks, but we aim to use practical activities to further your understanding and enjoyment wherever possible.

## Assessment

There are two examinations at the end of the course after which you will be awarded a grade 9 – 1.

**Paper 1:** 1 hour 45 minutes, 100 marks. 50% of the GCSE; Topics 1 – 5

**Paper 2:** 1 hour 45 minutes, 100 marks. 50% of the GCSE; Topics 6 – 10

A range of question types will be used in both papers, including multiple choice, short answer and those that require extended responses. The required practical tasks are examined in the written papers.

## What can it lead on to?

Through the study of Chemistry, you will gain problem solving, analytical and evaluative skills. These skills are transferable to a range of A Levels, apprenticeships, and professions. Universities and future employers look at your Chemistry GCSE result, even if you are not looking to study the subject beyond Key Stage 4.

Chemistry is an essential requirement at A Level for many degree courses such as Medicine, Veterinary Science and Chemical Engineering. Some Geography, Psychology and Earth Science degrees may require a mix of Science subjects, and Chemistry can be one of them.

The study of Chemistry opens many doors career-wise and can also lead to careers in Sports Science and the financial sector.



## WHAT I ENJOYED ABOUT THIS SUBJECT

### Ryan

*"Taking GCSE Chemistry really helped me understand how things work at a deeper level; it made science feel more relevant. I especially enjoyed the practical work, as doing experiments helped everything make sense and made lessons more engaging. It also gave me the confidence and skills I needed to cope with A Level Chemistry, particularly problem-solving and practical techniques."*



# Physics

**Exam Board: AQA (8463)**

## Overview

*Have you ever wondered why the sky is blue? Or how the sun generates heat and light? Or even what special relativity has to do with electromagnetism? Physics is crucial to understanding the world around us, the world inside us and the world beyond us. It encompasses the study of the universe from the largest galaxies to the smallest subatomic particles.*

## What will I learn?

The main topics covered within the GCSE Physics course are:

1. Energy
2. Electricity
3. Particle model of matter
4. Atomic structure
5. Forces
6. Waves
7. Magnetism and electromagnetism
8. Space physics

Practical work is a key feature of the GCSE Physics course. You will undertake a minimum of 8 required practical tasks, but we aim to use practical activities to further your understanding and enjoyment wherever possible.



## Assessment

There are two examinations at the end of the course after which you will be awarded a grade 9 – 1.

**Paper 1:** 1 hour 45 minutes, 100 marks. 50% of the GCSE; Topics 1 – 4

**Paper 2:** 1 hour 45 minutes, 100 marks. 50% of the GCSE; Topics 5 – 8

Both papers have a range of multiple choice, structure, closed short answer and open response questions. The required practical tasks are examined in the written papers.

## What can it lead on to?

The Study of Physics will allow you to develop great problem solving, communication, organisation, interpersonal, numeracy and research skills. These skills are transferable to a range of A Levels, apprenticeships, and professions.

Physics is an essential requirement at A Level for many courses such as engineering, astronomy and computer science. It can be useful in careers such as finance, architecture, forensic science or even games designing.

The study of Physics really opens your opportunities and is seen as one of the most challenging and rewarding subjects to study.



## WHAT I ENJOYED ABOUT THIS SUBJECT

### Lucas

*"Studying GCSE Physics taught me that the universe is not just full of answers—it is full of questions waiting to be explored. Physics GCSE was genuinely interesting, and the teaching at Halliford made every lesson feel like uncovering another piece of how the world truly works."*

# Combined Science - Trilogy

Exam Board: AQA (8464)

## Overview

*We are true to our Prospectus and are academically ambitious for your son. As such, all Year 9 students begin their GCSE study on the GCSE separate science courses. At the start of Year 10, we will make the decision with you and your son as to whether they should continue with the separate sciences or move over to the Combined Science Course.*

## What will I learn?

### Biology

1. Cell Biology
2. Organisation
3. Infection and response
4. Bioenergetics
5. Homeostasis and response
6. Inheritance, variation, and evolution
7. Ecology

### Chemistry

8. Atomic structure and the periodic table
9. Bonding, structure, and the properties of matter
10. Quantitative chemistry
11. Chemical changes
12. Energy changes
13. The rate and extent of chemical change
14. Organic chemistry
15. Chemical analysis
16. Chemistry of the atmosphere
17. Using resources

### Physics

18. Energy
19. Electricity
20. Particle model of matter

21. Atomic structure
22. Forces
23. Waves
24. Magnetism and electromagnetism

In addition, practical work is a key feature of the GCSE Trilogy course. You will undertake a minimum of 21 required practical tasks, but we aim to use practical activities to further your understanding and enjoyment wherever possible.

## Assessment

There are six examinations at the end of the course, two in each of the Sciences, after which you will be awarded two grades between grades 9 – 1. Each Science will be examined using the following structure for their two papers.

**Paper 1:** 1 hour 15 minutes, 70 marks.

**Paper 2:** 1 hour 15 minutes, 70 marks.

A range of question types will be used, including multiple choice, short answer and those that require extended responses. The required practical tasks are examined in the written paper.

## What can it lead on to?

The Trilogy Award is an alternative route to studying separate Sciences and students will come out with 2 GCSEs in Science. Students who follow this route are still able to go on to study Science at A Level.



## WHAT I ENJOYED ABOUT THIS SUBJECT

### Jack

*"Switching from Separate Science to AQA Combined Science actually made the whole subject so much more enjoyable for me. It allowed me to focus on fewer topics and apply more detail to them. If I had not made the switch, I would not have been able to access the higher grade in my GCSE."*

# MFL - French, German and Spanish

**Exam Board: Pearson Edexcel**  
(1FR1, 1SP1, 1GN1)

## Overview

*Because of the ever-increasing need for workers with competence in at least one European language, Halliford School, as with all other independent secondary schools, insists on its students continuing to GCSE in at least one foreign language.*

## One or two languages?

If your son at present is studying just one language in Year 9, then he must choose that one language which he will study through to GCSE. If your son is studying two languages in Year 9, he can choose to continue with both languages to GCSE, or just continue with one of them. If your son has a gift or a love for both languages he really should continue with both languages.

## What will I learn?

The authentic situations and stimuli of the course will enable students to see language in context and learn about the culture of the target language country. It is an engaging and inspirational course of study that will enable students to use the target language effectively, independently and creatively, so that they have a solid basis from which to progress to A Level or employment. Questions across all four language skills are set in common contexts, addressing a range of relevant contemporary and cultural themes. They are organised into six broad thematic contexts:

- My personal world
- Lifestyle and wellbeing
- My neighbourhood
- Media and technology
- Studying and my future
- Travel and tourism

## Assessment

**Paper 1:** Speaking (internally conducted, externally assessed – 25% of the total qualification)

**Paper 2:** Listening and Dictation in the target language (25% of the total qualification)

**Paper 3:** Reading and understanding in the target language (25% of the total qualification)

**Paper 4:** Writing in the target language (25% of the total qualification).

Students must complete their speaking assessment in April/ May and all other assessments in May/ June in any single year. Each paper is available at Foundation tier or Higher tier. Students must be entered for a single tier across all papers.

## What can it lead on to?

Whatever you are planning to do later in life, you are bound at some stage to need a foreign language, whether it is for business or holiday use. A foreign language gives us access to another culture, and our lives take on a new dimension. The more languages you know, the easier others become, and it is one of the few subjects which are easier to learn when you are young!

The skills that students acquire through the study of modern foreign languages (such as self-discipline, the ability to memorise information, the ability to apply rules logically and methodically) are highly prized by universities and employers and lead to a wide range of career opportunities from the Civil Service to engineering, medicine or financial services.

## WHAT I ENJOYED ABOUT THIS SUBJECT



### Rohan

*"Learning languages at school has really equipped me to build relationships and talk to people from a wide range of cultures, which is so rewarding! It has given me access to opportunities for future travel and careers, and it will make it easier to feel at home in new places. I took French and Spanish at GCSE, and I am now continuing with French at A Level, which adds a global perspective to everything I am studying."*

# Art and Design

Exam Board: Pearson Edexcel  
(1FA0)

## Why study Fine Art?

*On average 97% of Halliford boys who take Art GCSE gain a grade 7 or above.*

*Art is suitable for all with an interest in learning about and practising Art and Design and essential for those intending to pursue an interest in one of the many and varied careers in the creative industries.*

## What skills will I develop in this course?

You will have the opportunity to learn various techniques and develop a working knowledge of materials, practices, and technology in your chosen discipline. You will be encouraged to develop the skills to interpret and convey ideas and feelings and develop your imagination and creative powers and your experimental, analytical, and documenting skills. You will also develop a specialist vocabulary and an understanding of the place of Fine Art in history and contemporary society.

## Assessment

Component 1: Personal Investigation, worth 60%. This will comprise of several projects together with workshops and homework. The aim is to produce a portfolio of coursework documenting your ideas, exploration, technical ability, as well as final outcomes.

Component 2: Externally Set Assignment, worth 40%. This will comprise of one project starting at the beginning of February. There will be a 10-hour controlled assessment at the end of the course in April and will be held over two days in the Art Studios.

## Where could Fine Art take you?

GCSE Art and Design is a prerequisite for further study at A Level and other further and higher education. Students from our courses have gone on to study product design, fashion, textiles, glass, ceramics, fine art, graphic design, interior architecture, game design and advertising. There have been many students that

have pursued architecture and have been successful in gaining places at highly selective universities including Edinburgh College of Art, Wimbledon College of Arts and St Martin's School of Art. In addition to those that have gone into further art and design study many others have been successful in gaining a place on courses such as engineering, business, and management.

## What activities enrich this subject?

The activities that enrich art are photography, drawing workshops, art exhibitions and keeping abreast with fine art through magazines such as Ceramics Review, Crafts, Art Quarterly, and weekend newspaper supplements.



## WHAT I ENJOYED ABOUT THIS SUBJECT

### Hugo

*"GCSE Art allowed me to develop my creativity through experimenting with a wide range of materials, both familiar and new. The Art Department were incredibly encouraging and supported me in building a diverse portfolio that included photographic work and experimental textiles. Visiting the Fragile Beauty Exhibition at the V&A was a particular highlight, as it broadened my understanding of contemporary photography. I thoroughly enjoyed the experience, and the skills I gained will be invaluable moving forward."*



# Business Studies

**Exam Board: Pearson Edexcel  
(1BS0)**

## Why study this subject?

*Business Studies GCSE is suitable for all students who enjoy:*

- *Communicating and explaining your ideas*
- *Thinking creatively and making decisions*
- *Working with numbers to solve business problems*
- *Learning about the world of business through real and relevant local and international brands*

## What will I learn?

You will study two main themes:

- 1. Investigating a Small Business:** This looks at key business concepts, issues and skills involved in starting and running a business. It focuses on the role of the entrepreneur and the importance of finance within a business.
- 2. Building a Business:** This looks at how a business develops beyond start up. It looks at the decisions used to grow a business with an emphasis on marketing, operations, finance, and human resources.

## Assessment

**Theme 1** – 90-minute final exam (50% of final qualification)

**Theme 2** – 90-minute final exam (50% of final qualification)

Each paper is divided into three sections: Section A – 35 marks, Section B – 30 marks and section C – 20 marks.

Each paper will consist of calculations, multiple choice, short answer, and extended writing questions. Section B and C will be based on business contexts.

## What can it lead on to?

Students who take GCSE Business Studies frequently go on to take Business Studies or Economics at A Level. Nearly all students will end up either working in a firm or running their own – so some knowledge of how a business works can be invaluable in the future.

Finally Business Studies has many transferable skills. It will improve your decision making skills and your proficiency with numbers and planning. In addition it enables you to develop your powers of analysis and evaluation as well as your ability to deal with intellectual ambiguity.



## WHAT I ENJOYED ABOUT THIS SUBJECT

### George

*"Through studying Business Studies at GCSE, I learnt about different aspects of business, such as entrepreneurship and business growth, topics which I have found most interesting. The Business Studies course provided me with a helpful insight into the real world, which sets it apart from other subjects, and so I feel more prepared for the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead after school."*

# Classical Civilisation

Exam Board: OCR (J199A)

## Why study this subject?

*Have you ever wondered about the ancient times before the advent of Christianity? If you have a curious mind and enjoy literature, history, and archaeology then Classical Civilisation is for you!*

## What will I learn?

You will have a chance to do an in-depth study of Homer's *The Odyssey* and the world in which this poem would have been written.

In addition, the course has an exciting new element called *Myth and Religion* which examines the ancient stories of the Gods and the importance of worship and sacrifice in ancient Greece and Rome.

If you study Classical Civilisation you will gain a broad knowledge and understanding of a range of literary and cultural materials from the classical world and the ability to use these to acquire knowledge and understanding of aspects of the classical world.

Furthermore, you will use your knowledge, in conjunction with your analytical and evaluative skills, to gain insight into the classical world from the literary and material culture studied. You will also develop an awareness of how classical sources reflect issues relevant both in the classical world and today, such as questions of gender, belief, sexuality, and citizenship.

## Assessment

Two external examinations taken at the end of the two-year course:

1. **The Homeric Word:** 1 hour 30 minutes, 90 marks = 50%
2. **Myth and Religion:** 1 hour 30 minutes, 90 marks = 50%

## What can it lead on to?

Classical Civilisation has been designed to provide learners with a broad, coherent, and rewarding study of the culture of the classical world. It offers learners the opportunity to study elements of the literature and visual/ material culture of the classical world and acquire an understanding of their social, historical, and cultural contexts.

You can go on to study Classics in further detail at A Level and at university. Some students have a passion for storytelling and therefore enjoy this course because they get to study Homer's wonderful action adventure tale! Other students yearn to study archaeology and what better start is there than by examining the ancient civilisations of Greece and Rome in this GCSE course?



## WHAT I ENJOYED ABOUT THIS SUBJECT

### Cassius

*"GCSE Classics was challenging, but it was always so interesting and engaging. I particularly enjoyed the architectural elements of the course, including the comparison of Greek and Roman temples. One main highlight was travelling to Greece and seeing the artefacts and ancient sites in the flesh, which made it all come to life."*

# Computer Science

**Exam Board: OCR (J277)**

## Why study this subject?

*Computers are playing an ever-increasing role in society and studying Computer Science is an excellent way to learn how to interact in the digital society of the future. This subject is a far-reaching discipline that offers employment and research opportunities in a wide variety of fields. Graduates have excellent career prospects with a constant demand and high starting salaries. This subject is also an excellent choice for students considering further or higher education as it develops logical reasoning, analysis and problem-solving skills. Computer Science is ideal for students with an aptitude or interest in the subject and should be the first choice for those who wish to take their studies in the subject further, or who are considering Computing as a career option.*

## What will I learn?

- What goes on at component level
- How to program using Python
- Operating systems
- Programming concepts such as variables, selection (IF), sequence and iteration (loops)
- How text, images and sound are represented inside computers using only 1s and 0s
- Using algorithms either in the form of flow charts or pseudocode to design computer systems
- How computers communicate across networks
- Computer hardware and software including the use of logic gates and Von Neumann architecture
- Flowcharting
- How to stay safe from cyber security threats
- Encryption
- Ethical and environmental issues
- How computers are affecting society
- The Internet
- Storage devices
- Memory
- CPU architecture

## Assessment

**Written examination 1:** Computer Systems, 90-minute exam = 50%

**Written examination 2:** Programming, 90-minute exam = 50%

**Grades possible 9 – 1**

## What can it lead on to?

Computer Science is a far-reaching discipline that offers deep and rewarding employment or research opportunities in a wide variety of fields. In fact, there are very few areas of human endeavour that are not becoming computerised.

Career possibilities include software development, engineering, cyber security analyst, robotics, forensics, artificial intelligence, information systems management, database administrator, systems analyst, game design, cloud architecture, technical author, software testing, helpdesk manager, networks engineer, military applications, encryption, web design, business information systems, research, teaching and training, hardware design and development.



## WHAT I ENJOYED ABOUT THIS SUBJECT

### Will

*"GCSE Computer Science was an engaging and rewarding subject that allowed me to explore how technology works beneath the surface. Mr Lyons provided excellent resources and introduced creative and exciting ways to learn, using a wide range of videos to keep lessons engaging and offering real world context throughout. The course combined maths, problem solving and coding, essential skills in today's increasingly digital world. Studying Computer Science helped me understand how modern systems operate and gave me practical experience in writing programs and tackling real computational challenges. It also opened the door to many future career paths, offering valuable skills that will remain important throughout my education."*

# Design and Technology

**Exam Board: Pearson Edexcel  
(1DT0F)**

## Why study this subject?

*Design and Technology is a broad subject that allows students to apply what they have learnt in a wide range of subjects and apply it in practical terms. It is a fun, yet technical subject, that embeds knowledge, techniques, and practices from a wide range of subjects, including art and design, business, computer science and geography.*

## What will I learn?

The GCSE in Design and Technology enables students to understand and apply iterative design processes through which they explore, create, and evaluate a range of outcomes. The qualification enables students to use creativity and imagination to design and make prototypes (together with evidence of modelling to develop and prove product concept and function) that solve real and relevant problems, considering their own and others' needs, wants and values. It gives students opportunities to apply knowledge from other disciplines, including mathematics, science, art and design, computing, and humanities.

Students will acquire subject knowledge in design and technology that builds on Key Stage 3, incorporating knowledge and understanding of different materials and manufacturing processes in order to design and make, with confidence, prototypes in response to issues, needs, problems and opportunities. Students learn how to take design risks, helping them to become resourceful, innovative, and enterprising citizens. They should develop an awareness of practices from the creative, engineering and manufacturing industries.

Through the critique of the outcomes of design and technology activity, both historic and present day, students should develop an understanding of its impact on daily life and the wider world and understand that high-quality design and technology is important to the creativity, culture, sustainability, wealth and wellbeing of the nation and the global community.

## Assessment

**Component 1:** Written examination: 1 hour and 45 minutes = 50% of the qualification and 100 marks.

**Component 2:** Non-examined assessment, 50% of the qualification and 100 marks.

## What can it lead on to?

A subject like Design and Technology lends itself to a wide range of careers such as product design, architectural technology, automotive engineering, civil engineering, building services, construction, electrical engineering, mechanical engineering, and mechatronics to name just a few.



## WHAT I ENJOYED ABOUT THIS SUBJECT

### Humphrey

*"The Design and Technology GCSE empowers you to turn ideas into reality, blending creativity with functionality to solve real-world problems. Studying Design and Technology at Halliford School allows you to develop your understanding of how to use the iteration process to create and design products to fit an ever-changing world, where you are encouraged to take risks and demonstrate problem-solving skills."*



# Drama

**Exam Board: OCR (J316B)**

## Why study this subject?

*Drama is an excellent subject to study for students pursuing any profession which would involve public speaking, creativity and working with customers. In Drama, students are given the opportunity to work collaboratively with other students and take charge of the direction of their learning. It is a fun course which gives you the freedom to be a performer or designer of theatre and explore the issues that you find relevant.*

## What will I learn?

### DRAMA: PERFORMANCE AND RESPONSE

#### What's assessed?

- 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

#### How it's assessed?

- Written exam: 1 hour and 30 minutes
- 80 marks 40% of GCSE

### DEVISING DRAMA

#### What's assessed?

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

#### How it's assessed?

- Devising log
- Devised performance
- 60 marks in total 30% of GCSE

### PRESENTING AND PERFORMING TEXTS

#### What's assessed?

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

- Free choice of play but it must contrast with the set play chosen for Component 1

#### How it's assessed?

- 60 marks in total 30% of GCSE

## Assessment

### In Year 10:

- A live performance of their devised work and a Devising log to compliment the work

### In Year 11:

- A live performance in front of an examiner
- A written exam on a play text studied and a live theatre performance

## What can it lead on to?

Studying GCSE Drama can lead to A Level Theatre Studies and a degree in that subject. Career options include (but are not limited to):

- Actor/ Director/ Theatre Designer
- Teacher/ Lecturer
- Youth and Community Worker/ Social Worker
- Journalist
- Director of PR/ Marketing

The confidence and performance skills you will acquire through the study of Drama will support you in any future career where you will need to meet people or make presentations.



## WHAT I ENJOYED ABOUT THIS SUBJECT

### Josh

*"GCSE Drama is a high-energy, creative and collaborative subject where every lesson brings something new. I have been able to work closely with others, developing exciting ideas, building characters, and exploring a wide range of topics through to practical performance. From physical theatre to devised work, we experiment with a range of styles and techniques to help you express yourself in unique and powerful ways. Drama gives you the freedom to think creatively, solve problems as a team, and push your imagination further than you thought possible. Whether you love performing, creating, or simply discovering new ways to communicate, GCSE Drama gives you the space and confidence to bring your ideas to life."*

# Geography

Exam Board: OCR (J386)

## Why study this subject?

*GCSE Geography is a subject that offers students a comprehensive understanding of the world around them. It is not just about learning locations or natural features but also about understanding the intricate dynamics of our world - why things happen, who is responsible, and who is affected.*

*The course promotes critical thinking, encouraging students to question and explore various aspects of the world, from natural hazards and ecosystems to urban futures.*

Fieldwork is a key component, providing practical experience and a different perspective on learning. Currently, the Department takes students to the River Tillingbourne in the Surrey Hills to measure different river characteristics. The second field trip studies the East End of London to explore the London Docklands redevelopment around Canary Wharf and compare the quality of life with that of the surrounding areas.

Moreover, the skills acquired in GCSE Geography, such as data interpretation and critical thinking, are highly transferable and sought after in many fields. These skills enable students to navigate our fast-changing, dynamic world, making them attractive candidates for future studies and careers.

In essence, GCSE Geography equips students with the tools to understand complex issues at a variety of scales and the impact of our actions as humans on the planet, making it a valuable stepping stone to a multitude of opportunities. It is a subject that cultivates informed, engaged, and empathetic individuals ready to make a difference in the world.

## What will I learn?

At the end of the course there are three exams that are generally broken down into Physical Geography topics (Our Natural World), Human Geography topics (People and Society) and Geographical skills and application (Geographical Exploration).

## Assessment

**Examination 1:** Our Natural World; 1 hour and 15 minutes = 35%

**Examination 2:** People and Society; 1 hour and 15 minutes = 35%

**Examination 3:** Geographical Exploration; 1 hour and 30 minutes = 30%

## What can it lead on to?

Studying Geography at GCSE opens a world of possibilities. This highly respected academic subject is recognised for its comprehensive coverage of diverse topics, making students attractive candidates for future employers and universities. The skills acquired, such as the use of ICT, data interpretation and critical thinking, are transferable and highly sought after in numerous fields.

Geography can pave the way to a multitude of careers, such as Business Management, Economics, Politics, Engineering, Law, and Computer Science; the opportunities are vast. The ever-increasing need for critical thinkers and empathetic individuals in our society means that students of Geography stand out. They are equipped with the tools to understand complex local, regional and global issues and the impact that we as humans have on the planet.



## WHAT I ENJOYED ABOUT THIS SUBJECT

### James

*"Choosing Geography for GCSE was the best way to connect what I learn to the real world. It is not just about maps and places—it is about understanding why things happen, from natural disasters to global trade. Geography has opened my eyes to issues like climate change and sustainability, and made me think about how we can make a difference. Most importantly, it develops the skills every employer is looking for—problem-solving, analysis, teamwork, and digital expertise through tools like GIS and data technology. If you want a subject that is exciting, relevant and gives you a competitive edge for the future, Geography is the one."*

# History

**Exam Board: Pearson Edexcel  
(1H10FR)**

## Why study this subject?

*Studying GCSE History will help you to develop a greater understanding of the world in which we live. An understanding of the past is imperative in order to understand the present, and the forces that have helped to shape it. However, the most important reason for a student to study GCSE History is because they have enjoyed it as a subject in Years 7 – 9 and would like to develop and build on their historical knowledge in more depth.*

## What will I learn?

The History GCSE course builds on the approach to the study of History taken in Key Stage 3. It seeks to further develop a passion for the subject by providing students with a broad experience of different historical periods and themes. Over the two-year course, students will therefore study four discrete topics spread over three exam papers.

In Year 10, we start with a development study, Medicine Through Time, c.1250 to present, in which we cover almost 1000 years of history, using the theme of medicine to help us understand key historical periods. We follow this with an in-depth study on Weimar and Nazi Germany, 1918-1939, in which we study Germany in the 1920s followed by the rise of the Nazis, and then life in Nazi Germany in the 1930s.

In Year 11, we again study two contrasting options. We start with Early Elizabethan England 1558-88, and learn about Elizabethan government and religion, challenges to Elizabeth and Elizabethan Society in the age of exploration. We then learn about the Cold War from 1941 to 1991 from the origins of the Cold War, through its main crises and to its end with the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991.

## Assessment

Three separate written examinations sat at the end of Year 11:

**Paper 1** – Thematic Study and Historic Environment – ‘Medicine in Britain c1250 – present’ = 30%

**Paper 2** – Period Study and British Depth Study – ‘Superpower Relations and the Cold War 1941-91’ and ‘Early Elizabethan England 1558–88’ = 40%

**Paper 3** – Modern Depth Study – ‘Weimar and Nazi Germany 1918–1939’ = 30%

## What can it lead on to?

A qualification in History provides the basis for a wide variety of professions and careers and can offer students a stepping-stone to a diverse range of employment opportunities. The subject aims first and foremost to equip students with an analytical mind capable of developing an independent, fact-based perspective, and communicating clearly through the construction of a coherent written argument. For this reason, a GCSE in History has been useful to students who have gone on to make a career in law, the Civil Service, politics, academia and the media.



## WHAT I ENJOYED ABOUT THIS SUBJECT

### Ewan

*“History is a brilliant choice for GCSE as it provides you with the unique opportunity to discover and learn from a wide range of topics spanning centuries or sometimes only a few decades. Within this, it helps paint a picture of why the world is as it is today and the important events that helped shape it – such as how close we came to total destruction in the Cold War. My favourite part of the course was learning about Weimar and Nazi Germany, as I found it astonishing how such a modern, powerful European country could so quickly fall into tyranny. By taking GCSE History, you will learn to see the world differently, whilst also gaining valuable skills you will be able to use throughout your lives in a variety of careers. For example, I was able to develop stronger analytical writing skills and learn how to evaluate judgements, which also benefited me in other subjects like English and Geography. I chose to continue History at A Level without a doubt because of how thoroughly I enjoyed it, and I know there is so much more I can learn and improve on.”*

# Latin

Exam Board: OCR (J282G)

## Why study this subject?

*The study of Latin introduces students to a different time, a different culture and a different language which are at the same time amazingly familiar. It covers a breadth of areas appealing to almost any interest and this is one of its many attractions. As well as being enjoyable, the course develops a rounder and more knowledgeable student.*

Latin introduces students to some of the finest literature ever written. It is both fascinating and a source of enormous influence on European Civilisation. In fact, there is hardly any area of study on which Latin and the ancient world have not left their mark.

It connects well with almost every other subject, containing as it does, linguistic, literary, and historical/sociological aspects. The emphasis on logical thought and calculation will benefit the scientist and mathematician. The literary appreciation involved in the study of the set texts makes it a suitable companion for English and other literature-based subjects; it will also help students understand structures and vocabulary in their own language and to write with sophistication. The link with History is apparent and will help to reinforce the skills required for that particular subject, whilst the language and vocabulary skills gained will be invaluable to students' application in modern European languages, many of which descend from Latin.

## What will I learn?

The course combines language work, the study of a selection of Latin literature and culture. Students will continue with grammar learning using John Taylor's GCSE course book and students will begin the study of the prose set text from the Cambridge Latin Anthology. This will be stories about the life and times of the famous adulterer Messalina and also Pliny the Elder, with

particular focus on the eruption of Vesuvius. Students will also study aspects of Roman life from sources in translation, looking at Roman Entertainment and Roman Myths and Beliefs.

## Assessment

**50%:** A language paper containing unseen translation and comprehension exercises (1 hour 30 minutes)

**25%:** A prose set text paper called Latin Literature (1 hour)

**25%:** A sources paper called Literature and Culture (1 hour)

There is no coursework for GCSE Latin. A prescribed vocabulary list is provided to assist with the language paper in both the Higher and Foundation tiers.

## What can it lead on to?

The study of Latin at GCSE can lead onto anything you want. Universities and employers are looking for people who are not frightened of a challenge, can solve problems, think precisely and logically, and communicate clearly. The study of Latin will give you all these skills as well as an understanding of the Ancient World.



### WHAT I ENJOYED ABOUT THIS SUBJECT

#### Ethan

*"Latin as a GCSE subject is fantastic. It offers a range of skills to be learnt, from critical thinking to a strong understanding of the language in general. It covers a wide variety of topics, not limited to the language, including engaging with the world of the Romans and their literature, as well as pastimes such as chariot racing and gladiatorial combat."*



# Music

**Exam Board: Pearson Edexcel  
(1MU0)**

## Why study this subject?

- It enables creative learning
- It allows communication in a unique language
- It enables students to express themselves
- It broadens horizons
- It is varied and interesting and a journey of discovery
- It has links to real life
- It is academically rigorous, whilst also being 60% practical
- It is well respected by top universities
- It is fulfilling and challenging

## What will I learn?

The syllabus requires students to demonstrate their skills in performing (solo and ensemble) and composing and develops their understanding of a wide variety of musical genres including Instrumental and Vocal Music, Fusions and Music for the Stage and Screen. All the skills needed to complete the course are taught along the way, although it is expected that candidates choosing GCSE Music sing or play an instrument at grade 4 or above standard, enabling them to complete the GCSE with the best possible grade. If you have any doubts, these can be discussed with the Director of Music.

### Course requirements:

- Ability to perform on one or more instruments or voice
- An interest in learning how to compose your own music
- An interest in how music works across a wide variety of styles and genres

## Assessment

### Performing (30%)

- Solo performance (15%)
- Ensemble performance (15%)

### Composing (30%)

- Composition 1 (15%)
- Composition 2 (15%)

### Appraising

- Written exam (40%)
- Students learn the essence of musical style and genre through the study of 8 diverse set works. At the end of the course they will sit a 1-hour 45-minute paper consisting of short and long answer questions about the pieces studied and about unknown pieces of music. There is also a simple dictation exercise.

## What can it lead on to?

The music industry offers a huge range of opportunities in many different careers. Students who study GCSE Music will find plenty of opportunities when it comes to choosing a future path. With an awareness of musical genres and styles, performing, listening and composing skills and music technology proficiency, students will be well equipped to pursue a musical profession.

GCSE Music also offers a wealth of transferable skills relevant to ongoing musical and non-musical study as well as to future career development, including literacy, critical thinking, social skills and team working, leadership and communication, and time management and organisational skills.



## WHAT I ENJOYED ABOUT THIS SUBJECT

### Elijah

*"Studying GCSE Music introduced me to my love of writing music and some of my new favourite songs via the eight set works we studied. I liked that the course had a good mix of practical and written elements, with ample opportunity to show my love for performing music and to improve my analytical skills. I would highly recommend studying Music GCSE as I believe it is as welcoming to more casual musicians as it is adequately challenging to those already well seasoned in the subject."*

# Physical Education

Exam Board: Pearson Edexcel  
(1PE0)

## Why study this subject?

*The course builds upon the knowledge, understanding and sporting skills established in Key Stage 3 Physical Education. It will give students an opportunity to try new and exciting activities promoting an active and healthy lifestyle.*

*Students considering this option should be enthusiastic and committed participants in a range of physical education and games activities. They should be prepared to develop greater knowledge and understanding of activities to improve performance.*

## What will I learn?

The Theory of Physical Education:

### Component 1: Fitness and Body Systems

- Topics include applied anatomy and physiology, movement analysis, physical training and use of data

### Component 2: Health and Performance

- Health, fitness and wellbeing, sports psychology, sociocultural influences and use of data

## Assessment

**Component 1:** 1 hour 45-minute exam = 36% of qualification.

**Component 2:** 1 hour 15-minute exam = 24% of qualification.

**Component 3:** Practical Performance = 30% of qualification. Students will be assessed in three physical activities from a set list. One must be a team activity, one individual and one free choice.

**Component 4:** Personal Exercise Programme = 10% of qualification. Students will complete this as a coursework-based task.

## What can it lead on to?

Physical Education lends itself to a range of careers in sports and fitness as well as other industries that you may not have considered before. For example, many nutritionists, physical therapists, and chiropractors have an A Level and Degree in P.E. Some careers that you could consider doing with P.E. include: sports scientist, P.E. teacher, physiotherapist, professional sports person, sports coach/ consultant, sports policy at local and national level, diet and fitness instructor, and personal training, to name a few.



## WHAT I ENJOYED ABOUT THIS SUBJECT

### Freddie

*"GCSE PE was one of the most engaging subjects I took. I loved how the practical lessons pushed me to try different sports, while the theory helped me understand how the body works and how performance can improve. The mix of both really motivated me to continue into A-level PE and it never felt repetitive, and every lesson offered something new and exciting."*

# Religious Studies

Exam Board: AQA (8062MA)

## Overview

*Religious Studies is about exploring ideas, ethics, and the big questions that shape our world, not just religion. It is for anyone who wants to understand how beliefs and values influence society, law, and culture. You will examine issues such as human rights, medical ethics, and global conflict, developing skills in critical thinking, debate, and analysis. These skills complement subjects like English, History, Business, and Science and are highly valued by universities and employers.*

*Our department also offers Philosophy at A Level, and GCSE Religious Studies provides an excellent foundation for this subject.*

## What will I learn?

- Ethical decision-making and moral philosophy
- How beliefs shape law, politics, and global issues
- Contemporary debates on topics such as medical ethics, war, and equality
- Skills in argumentation, evaluation, and clear written communication

- **Medicine and Healthcare** – understanding cultural and moral perspectives
- **Media and Journalism** – interpreting ideas and shaping debate

Studying Religious Studies shows universities and employers that you can think deeply, argue persuasively, and understand diverse viewpoints. These skills are essential in today's world.

## Assessment

Two written exams at the end of Year 11 (each 1 hour 45 minutes).

## What can it lead on to?

Religious Studies is an excellent foundation for Philosophy A Level as well as subjects like Politics and Psychology. Beyond school, it supports careers in:

- **Finance and Business** – ethical decision-making and global awareness



## WHAT I ENJOYED ABOUT THIS SUBJECT

### Abs

*"I am considering studying Chemistry, Business and Philosophy for A Level, and Religious Studies has given me a real advantage in pursuing this path. It teaches you how to think clearly and explain ideas clearly, which helps in other subjects such as History and English, and being able to explain your ideas clearly is precisely what you need for A-level exams. We also look at real issues like medical ethics and technology, which makes science feel relevant. These skills will help me with my A Levels and later when I apply for university."*

# How to find us



**Halliford  
School**  
SHEPPERTON

Independent Senior Day School  
Boys 11-18 Years • Girls 16-18 Years

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