Dartford Grammar School for Girls

Key Stage 4
GCSE COURSE INFORMATION

2026-2029

A guide for Parents/Carers and Students



Working together to achieve academic excellence and personal potential

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GCSE Options 2026 - 2029

Introduction

Choosing your GCSEs is an exciting time as it is the first time in your education that you are making decisions on what you are wanting to study for the next three years of your school career. We hope that the information we have given you tonight has helped to inform you of how to approach any decisions and put you in the best position possible when finalising which subjects you would like to continue into Year 9. Questions to reflect on which should guide you towards making the right choices include;

- Which subjects do you really **enjoy**?
- Which are your **best** subjects?
- Which GCSE choices will give you the **broadest range of options** for A Levels?
- Which subjects will help you to get to the **top universities**?

Whilst making these decisions can be daunting, remember that you have access to lots of support, advice and guidance. Firstly, this booklet is the primary source of information for you; it contains details about all of the options subjects as well as the options process itself.

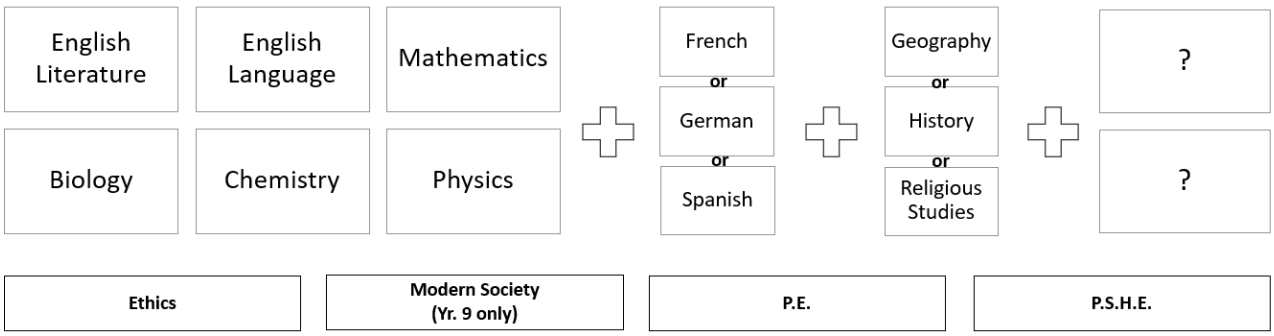
Secondly, you have the opportunity to speak to a range of people about what is available and also what is right for you. Our Curriculum Area Leaders, as well as students who are taking the different option subjects, are available at the Subject Fair tonight to talk to you about the various GCSE courses available and what studying them is like. Other important people you can talk to for advice in school include:

- Your Form Tutor who will have a good overview of your all-round abilities.
- Your subject teachers will be able to tell you whether you would really enjoy and thrive in their subject in Years 9, 10 and 11.
- Your Head of Year who can consider whether you have selected a good combination of subjects.
- Your parents/carers who know you best! Discuss your plans and thoughts with them.

Thirdly, and only once you have read all of the information, taken on board the advice and reflected on the three questions above, you need to make sure that you have made up your own mind and are comfortable with your choices. You should never make a choice because your friend is doing the subject or because you like the teacher.

Core Subjects

In Years 9, 10 and 11, all students study the following 'core' subjects which make up six of your ten GCSEs. These can be seen below. In addition, all students continue with a range of non-examined courses which include Ethics, Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHE), Physical Education and Modern Society (Year 9 only).



Compulsory Subjects

Our curriculum has been deliberately created to ensure that it remains as broad and deep as possible. As the previous diagram shows, you must select **at least one Modern Foreign Language** (French, German or Spanish and **one of the Humanities** (Geography, History or Religious Studies) as two of your options.

Languages are highly important for fostering excellent communication skills, strengthening literacy and building resilience. A GCSE in a modern foreign language (MFL) is highly regarded by employers and will offer you a competitive edge in an increasingly multilingual and multicultural world, making you highly attractive to higher education establishments, future employers and apprenticeship providers.

Similarly, a GCSE in one of Geography, History or Religious Studies is also very important as this will provide you with critical thinking and strategic skills, regardless of your future career path. Research carried out by the University of Oxford has highlighted that a qualification in a humanities subject opens a wide range of employment sectors to individuals in the future, and that the skills developed are highly valued and sought after by employers. These include critical thinking, strategic thinking, empathy, creative problem solving and the ability to synthesise and present complex information.

We believe that the knowledge and skills gained from studying at least one modern foreign language and one humanities subject will help every student to understand their place in our world, give them the confidence to be excellent communicators, cultural empathy around beliefs and traditions, appreciate the value of different landscapes and environments and understand the importance of learning from the past to shape a successful future.

Optional Subjects

Every student is able to choose two additional subjects that enable them to personalise their curriculum. Students should be reassured that it is very hard to choose subjects which would stop you from accessing your choice of subjects at A Level and beyond so when it comes to these final two choices, there is no right or wrong decision. With the exception of modern foreign Languages, you are not required to have a GCSE in any optional subjects in order to study it at A Level at DGGS; other criteria will, however, need to be met. For example, to study Art or Textiles at A Level without having studied the subject at GCSE, students would need to prove the necessary skills, such as providing a comprehensive portfolio of their own artwork. To study Psychology or Business at A Level, a student would need to have a grade 6 in Mathematics.

GCSE Option Blocks

The optional curriculum is divided into four blocks. All subjects in each block have lessons which are taught at the same time so students can only select **one** subject from **each** option block. This includes the two compulsory subjects (one modern foreign language and one of the humanities) as well as the two optional preferences.

Block A	Block B	Block C	Block D
Art Textiles	Art	Business	Art
Computer Science	Business	Computer Science	Computer Science
Drama	Design Technology	Dance	Drama
Geography	Geography	French	French
History	German	Food Preparation & Nutrition	Geography
Psychology	History	German	Physical Education
Religious Studies	Music	History	Psychology
Spanish	Religious Studies	Psychology	Spanish
	Spanish	Spanish	

The GCSE option blocks have been constructed following the initial option choices students completed in April and we have accommodated the first choices of all students. However, following your exploration of the subject fair we are aware that you may want to change your choices. This is why we ask all students to confirm their subject choices for a second time. Now the blocks are fixed it is important to remember that you can only take one subject in each block and this may influence final GCSE subject choices.

General advice and guidance

Some subjects are more popular than others. If a subject is over-subscribed, class teachers and the relevant Curriculum Area Leaders will be asked to recommend which students would be most and least suited to their subject. In this scenario, students with exceptional or positive Approach to Learning grades are more likely to secure a place on the course than students who have not demonstrated commitment during Year 8.

It is also important to note that whilst we will make every effort to run all of the courses on offer in the option blocks above, subjects that are selected only by a small number of students may not run in September.

Advice about making good choices

1. Select subjects that you **enjoy** or think you will enjoy.
2. Select subjects in which you do **well**. Take a close look at your last report.
3. Try to ensure there is **balance and variety**; this is often the best recipe for success.
4. Do not select a subject just because you like a particular teacher. There is no guarantee that he or she will teach your group next year.
5. Do not select a subject **just** because your parents/carers want you to, if you do not enjoy it or do not think you will enjoy it or do well. Remember, it's YOU who has to do the work over the three years.
6. Never select a subject simply because your friends are doing it! Now is the time to make up your own mind. They may also not be in your class.

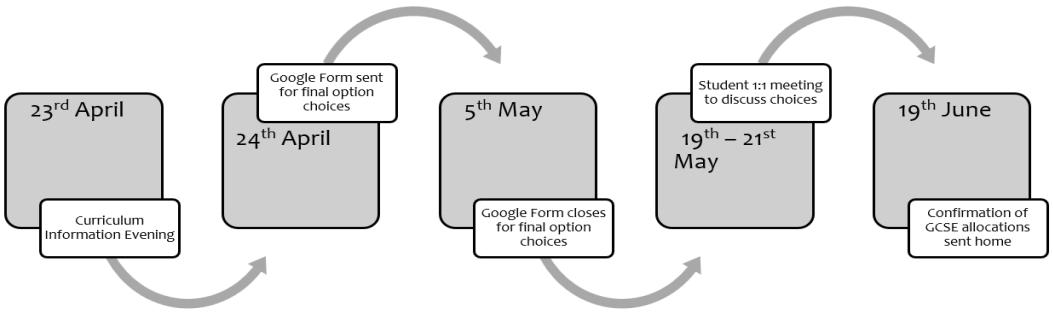
All students will be invited to a 1:1 meeting with a member of staff following completion of your options to discuss your choices. This will take place before the end of the term to ensure that the students have made sensible and well considered choices.

Advice for students: making plans for the future and studying at the top universities

The 'Russell Group' have produced a comprehensive and accessible guide to help students plan their personalised route to higher education at the most prestigious universities in the UK. Please visit the website the www.informedchoices.ac.uk for more details.

Finally, in order to finalise your choices, we will be sending out a Google Form tomorrow morning. This will be available on all student emails and Google Classroom. Every student needs to complete this and it is important to note that this will represent your **final** GCSE option choices. ***It is essential that this is completed by 4pm on Tuesday 5th May.***

Timeline



Finally, just a reminder that we are here to help you with your decisions. Ask questions and if you are worried about any aspect of the process, let us know.

Mrs R Kidd
Assistant Headteacher

Mr O Gilham
Head of Year 8

GCSE Subject Information

The remainder of the booklet contains all the information you need to understand about the exam specifications studied, GCSE content, skills required, how each GCSE will be assessed, post-16 links and career opportunities for all core, compulsory and optional subjects.



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English Language

Core Subject

EXAM BOARD: AQA	**COURSE REF: 8700**

Course content:
Reading literary fiction/non-fiction texts and other non-fiction texts, including pre-twentieth century texts.
Writing for different purposes including description, narration and to present a viewpoint.
Speaking in Standard English when presenting and responding to questions and feedback.

Personal skills required:
The following skills will be required during the course and in the final examinations:
Reading a wide range of texts and showing inference, interpretation and analysis of language; communicating effectively through writing using a sophisticated vocabulary, varied sentence constructions and accurate spelling, punctuation and grammar; speaking in Standard English.

How will I be assessed?
Two written examinations at the end of the course:

Paper 1: Explorations in Creative Reading and Writing. 1 hour 45 minutes – 50% of GCSE
Paper 2: Writers' Viewpoints and Perspectives: 1 hour 45 minutes – 50% of GCSE

Spoken Language: non-examination assessment by the teacher

What post-16 courses does this subject lead to?

- A Level English Literature
- A Level Media Studies
- Any other essay-based A level subjects

What career opportunities does this subject open up?
N.B: A Grade 5 in English Language will be necessary for most careers

- Law
- Business/Management
- Public Relations
- Administration
- Journalism/writing
- T.V./Film/Radio
- Advertising
- Publishing
- Editing
- Teaching

English Literature

Core Subject

EXAM BOARD: AQA	**COURSE REF. NO: 8702**

Course content:
Reading and analysing a Shakespeare play, a 19th century novel, a modern text, a poetry anthology and previously unseen poetry.

Personal skills required:
The following skills will be required during the course and in the final examinations:
Reading a range of prose, drama and poetry texts and showing inference, interpretation and analysis of language, form and structure; communicating effectively through writing using a sophisticated critical vocabulary, literary terminology and accurate spelling, punctuation and grammar; research and accurate note-taking.

How will I be assessed?
Two written examinations at the end of the course:
Paper 1: Shakespeare and the 19th Century Novel. 1 hour 45 minutes – 40% of GCSE
Paper 2: Modern Texts, Poetry and Unseen Poetry. 2 hours 15 minutes – 60% of GCSE

Both examinations are closed book and students will need to have a thorough knowledge of the texts they have studied, including learning quotations.

What post-16 courses does this subject lead to?

- A Level English Literature
- A Level Media Studies
- Any other essay-based A level subjects

What career opportunities does this subject open up?

- Law
- Business/Management
- Public Relations
- Administration
- Journalism/writing
- T.V./Film/Radio
- Advertising
- Publishing
- Editing
- Teaching

Mathematics

Core Subject

EXAM BOARD: Edexcel	**COURSE REF. NO: Mathematics (Higher) – 1MA1**

Course content:

This GCSE in Mathematics requires students to:

- Develop knowledge, skills and understanding of mathematical methods and concepts, including:
  - Number & Algebra: rearranging formulae, factorising, solving inequalities, indices and standard form, interpreting graphs of functions, sequences and formulae, solving inequalities, simultaneous equations, estimation and approximation, algebraic fractions, quadratic equations, irrational numbers, applying transformations to sketch graphs, rates of change and areas under graphs, proof, time series graphs.
  - Geometry & Measures: trigonometry, mathematical similarity, use of dimensions, transformations and loci, Pythagoras' theorem in three dimensions, length of circular arcs and areas of sectors or segments, surface area and volume of cylinders, prisms, pyramids, cones and spheres, advanced trigonometry, vectors, circle theorems.
  - Statistics & Probability: interpreting data, cumulative frequency, quartiles and interquartile range, box plots, sampling methods, probability of compound events, conditional probability, Venn diagrams and histograms.
  - Ratio, proportion and rates of change: rates of change with constant slope and calculating the gradient on a curved graph, simple ratio and using ratio in algebraic problems, proportion problems using direct and indirect techniques.
- Use their knowledge and understanding to make connections between mathematical concepts
- Apply the functional elements of mathematics in everyday and real-life situations

Personal skills required:

This course allows students to develop the ability to:

- Acquire and use problem-solving strategies; select and apply mathematical techniques and methods in mathematical, every day and real-world situations; reason mathematically, make deductions and inferences and draw conclusions; interpret and communicate mathematical information in a variety of forms appropriate to the information and context.

How will I be assessed?

All students will be following the syllabus for the higher tier course.
Regular testing throughout the three years of Key Stage 4 enables the students' progress to be monitored and to prepare them for the GCSE. Throughout each unit of work, there will be homework to help prepare for their formal assessments.

External assessments: Three examinations, each of 1 hour and 30 minutes, each worth 80 marks. Paper 1 is non-calculator, Papers 2 and 3 are calculator. Examinations are taken in the summer of Year 11. Possible grades will be 5 to 9 inclusive (on a scale of 1 – 9). There is no coursework component.

What post-16 courses does this subject lead to?

A Level Mathematics and Further Mathematics – a GCSE in Mathematics also leads on to a variety of A Level subjects such as Business, Economics, Physics, Chemistry, Biology, Computing, Geography and Psychology for example.

What career opportunities does this subject open up?

Most universities and colleges will ask for five GCSE grades 9 to 5, including English and Mathematics (as well as A levels or equivalent qualifications), so if you have any aspirations to go to university, Mathematics is essential. Jobs that require Maths: Actuary, Biologist, Civil Engineer, Climatologist, Doctor, Electrical engineer, Forensic Scientist (CSI), Stockbroker, not to mention Teacher. Visit http://weusemath.org/ for a more complete list.

Science: Biology, Chemistry and Physics

Core Subjects

EXAM BOARD: AQA	**COURSE REF. NO:** **Biology – 8461 Chemistry – 8462 Physics - 8463**

Courses studied:

Students will study the AQA suite of science courses over three years and be awarded three GCSEs, one in each of Biology, Chemistry and Physics at the end of Year 11. In each year they will study all three sciences.

Personal Skills required:

- Devise and investigate testable questions.
- Identify and control variables.
- Analyse, interpret and evaluate data.
- Use specialist equipment to take measurements.
- Handle and manipulate equipment with confidence and fluency.
- Recognise hazards and planning how to minimise risk.

To recall and apply the extensive content covered in Biology, Chemistry and Physics and use scientific vocabulary and terminology.

How will I be assessed?

All examinations will take place in the summer of Year 11. There will no longer be a centre assessed unit. Instead, compulsory practical's form part of the course and this practical element will be assessed through the external examinations, accounting for 15% of the final marks.

Course	Mode of Assessment	Weighting	Duration
Biology	External	100%	2 x 1 hour 45 minutes
Chemistry	External	100%	2 x 1 hour 45 minutes
Physics	External	100%	2 x 1 hour 45 minutes

What post-16 courses does this subject lead to?

Any Science based A level course and those linked to Social Sciences and some Humanities such as Psychology or Environmental Science

What career opportunities does this subject open up?

The careers listed below are considered the top ten Science job opportunities for the future.

Environmental scientists research issues relating to natural resources, plants, animals and humans. They use their findings to spread awareness about pollution and how it can be prevented.

Hydrologists study bodies of water and rainfall throughout the world. Their research helps other scientists, governments and businesses understand what pollutants are affecting the water supply.

Geoscientists (who are not hydrologists and geographers) study the characteristics of the Earth in an attempt to understand its origins and how it has evolved.

Medical scientists (who are not epidemiologists) study human health and diseases in order to develop treatments and discover preventative measures.

Biochemists and Biophysicists study how chemistry and physics affect living organisms, respectively.

Atmospheric scientists monitor the behaviour of the Earth's atmosphere in order to understand its role in the environment. Their work is gaining more visibility as they learn more about global warming, which has become a media and political focal point.

Materials scientists attempt to learn about the composition of natural and synthetic materials in order to enhance them or develop new ones. These materials, such as metals or plastic, can be found in everyday items or in large structures.

Physicists study the properties of matter and motion. This includes researching the universe's origin or developing new scientific tools, depending on their specialization.

Astronomers study the characteristics and behaviour of the sun, stars, galaxies and planets of the universe.

Biological scientists observe and study all forms of life, from microscopic organisms to humans, in order to better understand how these organisms develop and interact with their surroundings.

There is also a huge array of opportunities within the fields of the chemical industry, the various branches of engineering and a wide variety of medical careers. All of the Sciences result in acquisition of valuable transferable skills, much sought after in a host of other careers, from business and finance to politics.

Modern Languages: French, German and Spanish

It is expected that every student will study one language (French, German, or Spanish) at GCSE.
Students may enhance their linguistic skills and opt to study two languages

EXAM BOARD: AQA	**COURSE REF. Nos:** **French – 8652 German – 8662 Spanish – 8692**

The MFL GCSE specifications require students to understand and use language across a range of contexts, for a variety of purposes and with a variety of different audiences, including for personal, academic and employment-related use.
Students will be expected to understand different types of spoken and written language, to include:

- Recorded input from one or more speakers in public and social settings
- Recorded material from authentic sources and the media
- Relevant personal communication, public information, factual and literary texts

There will be a translation element from English into the Target Language and vice versa.

Language contexts are organised within the following broad themes:

- Identity and culture.
- Local, national, international and global areas of interest
- Current and future study and employment

Personal skills required:
Students will need to be prepared to allow at least two hours a week of independent learning time and have a motivation for language learning. They are encouraged to look for patterns within language and challenge themselves to express themselves in the target language as much as possible. Students need to show an interest in national and international current affairs and need to have some cultural awareness to be able to relate better to the language of their choice.

How will I be assessed?
The weighting for each of the four components i.e. Listening (A01), Speaking (AO2), Reading (AO3) and Writing (A04) is 25%.

There are no controlled assessments as part of the examination process; students will be assessed by way of a terminal examination. The speaking exam will still be conducted by the teacher and marked externally, alongside all other parts of the examination.

Students will have access to a full textbook, revision guides and language magazines, all of which will allow students to deepen their independent learning skills, understanding and knowledge. Watching TV programmes and listening to music or podcasts in the chosen language are of value to students studying languages. We encourage our students to take part in residential visits to the country of study in Year 9. We offer opportunities for day trips, and pen pal schemes.

We also ask students to make the most of the apps, websites and electronic resources made available to them in and outside school.

What post-16 courses does this subject lead to?
A Level French, German or Spanish

What career opportunities does this subject open up?
This course will give students a huge variety of career opportunities and future reputable university offers at national and international level.

With increased competitiveness and globalization, companies will value employees who are able to speak other languages and they will be prepared to reward their staff financially for their skills. Languages are without a doubt an asset to all students with ambition for an exciting career.

With skills in languages and cultural awareness, students will have the world at their feet.

Geography

It is expected that every student will study one of the humanities subjects (Geography, History or Religious Studies) at GCSE.

EXAM BOARD: AQA | **COURSE REF. NO: 8035**

Course content:

Geography covers a breadth of topics from both the human and the physical disciplines.

Living with the Physical Environment: this unit studies natural hazards (earthquakes, volcanoes and tsunamis), weather hazards (tropical storms) and extreme weather in the UK. It also considers climate change, ecosystems, tropical rainforests, hot deserts and cold environments. A focus is on the UK with coasts and rivers being studied (including processes and their impacts on humans).

Challenges in the Human Environment: this unit studies urban issues and challenges, the changing economic world, the differences between rich and poor countries, and the challenges that we face when dealing with resources combined with a rapidly growing population e.g. energy, food and water supplies.

Geographical Applications: this will require students to apply geographical knowledge to an issue within the course. Pre-release material will be given out 12 weeks prior to the exam and students will be questioned on this topic e.g. looking at conflicts, making informed decisions, using graphs/maps to extract data from, etc.

Fieldwork: this will be examined within the Geographical Applications paper. All students will be required to carry out fieldwork in two contrasting environments which will involve looking at physical and human geography. This will not be written up in the traditional way but will be used in preparation for exam questions on the fieldwork undertaken in Paper 3.

Personal skills required:

Students should be able to acquire and use geographical vocabulary and will have evaluative methods of data collection, presentation and analysis to draw conclusions. Students should be able to communicate in a variety of ways such as through graphical forms and extended writing. They can extract and interpret information from a range of resources, use new technologies such as GIS and make informed geographical decisions. They will be able to describe, analyse and interpret evidence, make decisions as well as draw and justify conclusions. There should be a willingness to carry out fieldwork outside of the classroom.

How will I be assessed?

This course will be examined at the end of the course Year 11 and will consist of three examinations.

Paper Title	Duration	Share of marks
Paper 1: Living with the Physical Environment	1 hr 30 mins	5%
Paper 2: Living with the Human Environment	1 hr 30 mins	35%
Paper 3: Geographical Applications	1 hr 15 mins	30%

What post-16 courses does this subject lead to?

Most Humanities, Science and Social Sciences A Levels. Many students study Geography alongside a range of subjects at A-Level as it complements most other subjects. Geography is regarded as a soft science developing skills that are essential for all disciplines.

What career opportunities does this subject open up?

Geography is such a diverse subject and welcomed by many employers due to the transferable skills it offers. Some job areas are more directly linked than others but it opens up to a range of jobs; not all can be mentioned here. Key ones include (alphabetically) Architect, Armed forces, Cartographer, Economist, Charity worker, Climatologist, Conservationist, Disaster Manager, Environment Engineering, Environment Protection Officer, Environmental Research, Environmental Health, Environmental Scientist, Event Management, Estate agent, Finance, Flood engineer, Geoscience, Government Risk Analyst, Insurance, Journalist, Lawyer, Media, Medicine, Meteorologist, Scientist, Social worker, Teacher, Transport or Town planner, Travel agent.

What extra-curricular opportunities does this subject have?

Field work is an integral part of Geography. As part of the course, we collect data in the local region in both a physical and a human environment: Tankerton and Stratford Olympic Park.

There is also the opportunity to go on a trip to Italy in Year 10.

History

It is expected that every student will study one of the humanities subjects (Geography, History or Religious Studies) at GCSE.

EXAM BOARD: Edexcel	**COURSE REF. NO: 1HI0**

Course content

Paper One: Thematic Depth Study with Historic Environment – Crime and Punishment through time, c1000—present with a Whitechapel Case Study

In **Year 9** we will cover the whole of the Paper One focusing on the evolution of Crime and Punishment and the impact both have on society. Terms 5 and 6 of Year 9 are given over to a study of Whitechapel during Industrial England looking at one of Britain most notorious serial killers 'Jack the Ripper', including a trip to Whitechapel to understand the complex nature of the police investigation.

Paper Two: Period Study and British Depth Study – The American West and Early Elizabethan England

In **Year 10** we cover the whole of Paper Two dividing the year into two, focusing first on the early settlement of the Western World and the challenges faced by settlers and Native Americans, before moving onto tracking the early issues Elizabeth I faced at the beginning of her reign through to some of her more controversial policies in an attempt to secure her international position at a time of fierce rivalry.

Paper Three: Modern Depth Study – Weimar and Nazi Germany, 1919-1939

In **Year 11** we dedicate the year to Paper Three looking at the transition of Germany from a downtrodden and struggling power after World War One to one of the most powerful nations under Adolf Hitler and his Nazi Party at the outbreak of World War Two.

Personal skills required:

- An interest in people in the broadest sense: their efforts to make a living, to lead a family life and to participate in the political life of their country; the relationships between the actions of governments and the lives of ordinary people; the ambitions of political leaders and the impact of these upon the lives of ordinary people
- An ability to assimilate a variety of information from a wide range of sources: texts, film, presentations, online, oral history, artefacts
- A willingness to work in a variety of styles: as an individual, in pairs, as part of a group carrying out a specific brief, as a member of the whole class
- A willingness to learn and understand factual information and to use it in response to specific questions

How will I be assessed?

All assessments will take place at the end of the course in Year 11. All assessments will be in the form of examinations.

Paper Title	Duration	DGGS-taught content	Share of marks
Paper 1: British Thematic Study with Historic Environment	1 hr 15 mins	Crime and Punishment	30%
Paper 2: British Depth Study and Period Study	1 hr 45 mins	Early Elizabethan England The American West	40%
Paper 3: Modern Depth Study	1 hr 15 mins	Weimar and Nazi Germany	30%

What post-16 courses does this subject lead to?

A Level History

What career opportunities does this subject open up?

Most. History is about the whole of life: politics, society, economics, science, the arts: the lot. History gives you the big picture. Even if you're doing a science degree, a good, solid humanity like history is worthwhile because it helps you maintain a range of skills which you might not otherwise be practising too much.

History provides school leavers and graduates with a wide range of transferable skills. Principally, students develop the ability to **understand and analyse issues and events** to a high level of competence. Other marketable skills include:

- A talent for clear expression, both oral and written
- Putting forward ideas and arguments in a concise manner
- Gathering, investigating and assessing material
- Basing conclusions on research and generating ideas
- Organising material in a logical and coherent way

Religious Studies

It is expected that every student will study one of the humanities subjects (Geography, History or Religious Studies) at GCSE.

EXAM BOARD: AQA Specification A	**COURSE REF. NO: 8062**

Course content:

GCSE Religious Studies is split into two key areas; the study of religion and the study of philosophical themes. These two key components will be studied across the three years of GCSE.

Unit 1: Study of religion: the beliefs, teachings and practices in relation to two religions.

E.g. Buddhism

- The Buddha's quest for enlightenment
- The Three Marks of Existence including that life is suffering, everything changes and there is no such thing as the self.
- The Four Noble Truths, different types of suffering and the ways to overcome it.
- The Wheel of Life including karma, rebirth and reaching nirvana.
- Meditation and practices such as the mindfulness of breathing.

E.g. Christianity

- The nature of God, such as omnipotence (all-powerful) and omnibenevolence (all-loving)
- Creation of the world and how compatible this is with science
- The importance of the afterlife, resurrection, judgement, heaven and hell
- The role of the individual, including religious experience and personal conscience
- The role of Jesus in modelling practices such as love for others and forgiveness

Unit 2: Study of philosophical themes in the modern world. Study of these themes involves applying the idea of Buddhists, Christians and non-religious views (e.g. atheism or humanism) to the issues studied. Example themes are:

- Religion and life: the origins of the universe; care for the environment; use of animals including for experiments and food; origins of human life; euthanasia and abortion; beliefs about life after death, etc.
- The existence of God; arguments for and against the existence of God, including cosmological and evil; different ways of understanding reality; miracles and visions; alternative explanations, etc.
- Religion, peace and conflict; violence, war, pacifism, terrorism; just war theory, holy war; the role of religion and belief in 21st century conflict and peace making; the concept of justice, etc.
- Crime and punishment; causes of crime; types of crime including hate crime; aims of punishment; capital and corporal punishment, etc.

Personal skills required:

- An open, critical mind. You must be able to evaluate the views of religion, others and yourself.
- A love of argument and discussion.
- The willingness to listen to other people's point of view.
- Be prepared to discuss and share ideas.
- To be able to produce a reasoned argument, supported by evidence, which reaches a justified conclusion.
- An ability to write your ideas logically.
- The accurate use and explanation of specialist term and concepts

How will I be assessed?

GCSE Religious Studies is assessed through two 1hr 45 exams, one on each unit, both taken at the end of Year 11. There is no controlled assessment.

What post-16 courses does this subject lead to?

The skills of selection, analysis, interpretation and evaluation are useful foundation skills for a course in A-Level Religious Philosophy and Ethics and other A Level courses that require the production of analytical and evaluative written work.

What career opportunities does this subject open up?

Students who take Religious Studies go on to follow a variety of successful career paths; any job which involves people and having an open mind about different ideas would welcome the skills of evaluation and analysis that Religious Studies develops e.g. medical profession, law, teaching, the civil service and the media.

Art and Design: Fine Art

Optional Subject

EXAM BOARD: AQA	**COURSE REF. NO: 8202**

Course content:

The Portfolio of Work

Students begin their creative journey by exploring themes set by the department, designed to build core skills and spark personal interest. Over time, they are encouraged to develop their own lines of enquiry, investigating a range of artists, movements, and cultures. They will experiment with a broad variety of materials and techniques to create refined, meaningful outcomes. Media explored may include:

- Painting and drawing
- Photography and film
- Ceramics, sculpture, and printmaking
- Installation and digital media

The Externally Set Assignment

In Year 11, students receive an exam paper with a choice of themes. They then embark on a sustained project, applying the skills developed in their portfolio to produce a thoughtful and creative response. The project culminates in a final piece created during a timed assessment under exam conditions.

Personal skills required:

To succeed in Fine Art, students should bring:

- Enthusiasm for the creative process
- Commitment to developing their skills
- An imaginative and open-minded approach
- The ability to reflect and analyse their own work and the work of other

How will I be assessed?

The course is divided into two parts:
Component 1: The Portfolio consists of at least two projects from artwork created over Key Stage 4.
Component 2: The Externally Set Assignment starts in Term 3 of Year 11, concluding with a timed test.

What post-16 courses does this subject lead to?

Post-16 Courses:

- A Level Art and Design
- BTEC Art and Design
- Foundation Diploma in Art and Design
- University-level Arts and Design pathways, including History of Art and Architecture

Relevant Degree Subjects:

- Fine Art, Illustration, Graphic Design
- Animation, Photography, Fashion, Textiles
- Architecture, Product Design, Furniture Design
- Interior and Set Design, Jewellery, Ceramics
- Web and Digital Media Design
- Media Production and Film

What career opportunities does this subject open up?

A qualification in Art and Design can lead to a wide range of creative careers across industries such as advertising, media, fashion, product development, design, architecture, and education.

Even for students who choose not to pursue a creative career, this course builds valuable transferable skills such as creative problem-solving, independent thinking, and visual communication — all highly valued in today's job market.

Creativity isn't just a skill — it's a mind-set that stays with you for life.

Art and Design: Textile Design

Optional Subject

EXAM BOARD: AQA	**COURSE REF. NO: 8204**

Course content:

The Portfolio of Work:

This exciting course is designed to stimulate individual creativity; to promote an understanding of contemporary and historical fashion and textiles and to develop our students' confidence in using a wide range of techniques, including:

- Appliqué and reverse appliqué
- Creative use of the sewing machine, embellishing machine and hand embellishment
- Freeform and experimental knitting
- Advanced felt-making
- Fabric manipulation
- Dyeing, including tie-dye, batik and heat transfer printing

Our students work on a series of projects (usually two each year), using themes set by the department.

The Externally Set Project:

The students choose a theme as a 'starting point', from a selection provided by the examination board. Using skills that they have acquired during the course and experience acquired from doing a mock, they explore a range of artists, designers and techniques, to develop ideas for a piece to be created during a timed test.

At the end of the course, our textiles students celebrate their achievements by presenting their pieces in our popular annual Fashion Show and exhibition spaces in the corridors of the school.

Personal skills required:

An enjoyment of working creatively; enthusiasm for textiles and fashion; the motivation to meet deadlines

How will I be assessed?

During the creation of the Portfolio, progress is continually assessed with feedback given during individual tutorials. There are regular deadlines, for more formal written feedback and guidance.
Marks are awarded for the Portfolio and the Externally Set Task.

What post-16 courses does this subject lead to?

A Level Art & Design – Textile Design, BTEC in Art & Design, Foundation Diploma in Art & Design

Degree courses including: Architecture, Advertising, Animation, Accessories and Jewellery Design, Graphics, Fashion Design, Fashion Journalism, Fashion Buying, Fashion Photography, Fashion Public Relations, Costume for Performance, Make-Up and Prosthetics for Performance, Technical Effects, Film, Theatre and Television Design, Promotion and Marketing, Interior Design, Interior Architecture, Illustration, Product Design, Photography.

What career opportunities does this subject open up?

A wide range of careers as indicated by the courses listed above. Former students of this school have gone on to work for companies such as T M Lewin, Pringle, Topshop, Topman and Evans, designing or buying. During her studies at the Royal School of Needlework, a former textiles student from DGGS worked on the embroidery of the wedding dress worn by HRH the Princess of Wales.

The visual and technical skills that our students develop are useful in a wide range of careers. Confident and effective visual presentation skills are a lifelong asset in any profession.

Business

Optional Subject

EXAM BOARD: AQA	**COURSE REF. 8132**

Course content:

- Business in the real world
- Influences on business
- Business operations
- Human resources
- Marketing
- Finance

Personal skills required:

There are many skills which will be an asset to this course including:

- Independent learning skills and the ability to show initiative
- Research and investigative skills
- Numeracy and literacy skills
- Communication skills
- Team working skills
- A good knowledge of, and interest in, current affairs would be useful

How will I be assessed?

The course will be assessed by external examination only:

- Paper 1: Influence of operations and human resource management on business activity.
- Paper 2: Influence of marketing and finance on business activity

Each paper lasts 1 hour 45 minutes and consists of multiple choice and short answer questions along with a case study requiring students to respond to data in a series of longer answer questions.

What post-16 courses does this subject lead to?

A GCSE in Business links well with the Business A level and can also lead to the Economics A level and the Certificate in Financial Studies qualification in the Sixth Form.

What career opportunities does this subject open up?

Students will be able to use their skills in many areas, including management, civil service, accountancy, law, advertising and media, financial services, healthcare and of course setting up and running their own businesses.

Computer Science

Optional Subject

EXAM BOARD: OCR	**COURSE REF. NO: J277**

Course content:

- Programming: Python, Algorithms, Problem-Solving.
- Computer Systems: Hardware, Software, Networks, Cybersecurity.
- Data Representation: Binary, Images, Sound, Compression.
- Impacts of Digital Technology: Ethics, Privacy, and Emerging Technologies.
- Practical Programming Project: Hands-on coding experience.

Computer Systems – Students will look at the components that make up a computer system, such as the CPU, memory and storage devices. They will learn about how computers use binary to represent all different types of information. This will help students to understand how music and video are stored on devices such as mobile phones. Students will learn about Computer networks and Network security, different types of software and its uses. Finally, about ethical, legal, cultural and environmental impacts of digital technology.

Practical programming – Students learn how to solve problems using the computer. This will involve them learning the 'python' programming language. By the end of the course they will be proficient computer programmers, able to write programs to solve problems.

Personal skills required:

- **Curiosity:** Interest in technology and how things work.
- **Problem-Solving Skills:** Enjoying challenges and finding solutions.
- **Logical Thinking:** Breaking down problems into smaller parts.
- **Resilience:** Willing to learn from mistakes and try again.

Students need to be good problem solvers and should have an interest in technology. They should be good at mathematics as this will help them to create better programs.

They need to be highly motivated and determined as some of the programs will be difficult to get working.

How will I be assessed?

Students will sit two examinations. There are 80 marks available for each examination paper and they are each worth 50% of the final GCSE qualification.

Paper 1 is on Computer systems. This is a non-calculator paper. All questions are mandatory. This paper consists of multiple-choice questions, short response questions and extended response questions. This paper is 1 hour and 30 minutes long.

Paper 2 is on Computational Thinking, Algorithms, and Programming. This paper focuses on practical programming skills and problem-solving techniques. This is a non-calculator paper. This paper has two sections: Section A and Section B. Students must answer both sections. All questions are mandatory. In Section B, questions assessing students' ability to write or refine algorithms must be answered using either the OCR Exam Reference Language or the high-level programming language they are familiar with. This paper is 1 hour and 30 minutes long.

What post-16 courses does this subject lead to?

Students will be able to study Computing at A level. This course is generally very well thought of by universities as it involves obtaining a deep understanding of computer science and an ability to break down problems. They could go on to study a university course on a range of subjects including, but not limited to, software engineering, computer game design, computer animation, web design, maths, engineering, science, computing, or Information Systems.

What career opportunities does this subject open up?

- **Careers:** Software Development, AI & Robotics, Cybersecurity, Data Analysis, Web Development.
- **Higher Education:** A-Level Computer Science, University Degrees, Apprenticeships.
- **Global Demand:** Technology roles are among the fastest-growing worldwide.

They will be able to use this in a wide variety of careers, such as web designer, software developer, computer games designer, project management, database developer, or any engineering or science-based career. Many scientific based careers require you to be able to solve problems and create your own software where nothing suitable currently exists. Computer science will give them these skills.

Computer science has also found its way into more creative subjects, such as music, art and animation. A combination of artistic flair and good computational thinking skills mean they will be in a position to use computers to bring ideas to life.

Dance

Optional Subject

EXAM BOARD: AQA	**COURSE REF. NO: J277**

Course content:

GCSE Dance is an excellent option subject to provide balance and variety within the whole range of choices available to students. It is an enjoyable course for those that like their Key Stage 3 Dance lessons.
It ensures students develop confidence while supporting their wellbeing in a practical and creative way.
Students will develop skills desired by future employers such as teamwork, confidence, communication, creativity and problem solving. These skills help students to become well-rounded and multi-skilled.
GCSE Dance make links with other subjects in a number of ways. Issues studied in other subjects can be embedded through the medium of creativity. Academic rigour is combined with creativity and physicality.

Year 9: Students will take part in regular Contemporary Dance technique classes which will focus on technical and performance skills for GCSE Dance. In Year 9, students will also study other styles of Dance, such as Street, Hip Hop, Samba and Capoeira. Students learn to write about performance and choreography alongside studio safety, health and diet. Students will have multiple opportunities to experience solo and group choreography alongside performance and written work to support all aspects of the GCSE.
Year 10: Students continue to study the anthology of professional works alongside taking the role of choreographer in practical lessons. Performance work becomes more complex and students will learn the set phrases needed for both performance tasks. Students will complete their Solo Performance and Duet/Trio Performance ready for Year 11.
Year 11: The GCSE Dance Scheme of Assessment is split into four key components. Students' performance examination will take place in the first term of Year 11. They will complete their final choreography and written examination towards the end of Year 11.

1. Written Paper (40%)
2. Performance: Solo and Duet/Trio (30%)
3. Choreography: Solo or Group (30%)

In addition to helping students acquire subject knowledge, GCSE Dance should:

- Promote fitness, a healthy lifestyle, team working and creativity
- Actively engage students in the process of dance in order to develop them as effective and independent learners and as critical and reflective thinkers with enquiring minds
- Develop students' skills, knowledge and understanding of a range of dance styles through the interrelated processes of performing, creating and appreciating dances
- Develop physical, technical and expressive skills through which students are able to communicate choreographic intention and develop their individual qualities as performers
- Develop students' skills, knowledge and understanding of choreography through which they are able to communicate ideas, thoughts and meaning drawn from a range of dance styles
- Develop a critical appreciation of dance in its physical, artistic, aesthetic and cultural contexts.

Personal skills required:

Those thinking of choosing GCSE Dance should have the confidence to perform in front of other people and enjoy being creative. Students should be achieving well at Key Stage 3.

How will I be assessed?

40% Written Exam (theory), 30% Performance (practical), 30% Choreography (practical).

What post-16 courses does this subject lead to?

A solid foundation for further studies in dance or performing arts, including A Level Dance and/or a career in Performing Arts. Any course where communication skills, problem solving skills, team work, critical evaluation, researching and creative thinking skills are required will welcome the skills developed when studying GCSE Dance.

What career opportunities does this subject open up?

There are many career paths beyond Performing Arts that are complemented by GCSE Dance. A range of skills are important for universities and employers. Career related pathways include performance, teaching, physiotherapy and Arts journalism but other non-related pathways would benefit from a subject like Dance. This course will help develop confidence, creativity, self-awareness and communication skills, vital for any profession, including Law and Medicine.

Design and Technology

Optional Subject

EXAM BOARD: Edexcel	**COURSE REF. NO: 1DTO / 1B**

Course content:

Students will acquire subject knowledge in design and technology that builds on their experience introduced during 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.

Personal skills required:

Throughout Key Stage 3 students have undertaken a wide range of exciting projects in Design and Technology, including CAD/CAM, Graphic Products, Electronics and Resistant Materials. Those who particularly enjoy the creative side of design and technology now have the opportunity to follow the course at GCSE.

How will I be assessed: The content is divided into two sections: core content and the material category- Paper and Boards.

Component 1: Core Content and Papers and Boards (50%)

The core content provides students with a breadth of study and the materials category provides students with a depth of study. It is assessed by way of an externally marked examination (1hr 45)

Component 2: Non-examined assessment (50%)

Students will undertake a project based on a contextual challenge. Students interpret how the brief will be solved and they approach this element independently, deciding for themselves how it will develop.

The project will test students' skills in investigating, designing, making and evaluating a prototype of a product. The task will be internally assessed and externally moderated. The marks are awarded for each part as follows:

1. Investigate - This includes investigation of needs and research, and a product specification
2. Design - This includes producing different design ideas, review of initial ideas, development of design ideas into a chosen design, communication of design ideas and review of the chosen design
3. Make - This includes manufacture, and quality and accuracy
4. Evaluate - This includes testing and evaluation.

What post-16 courses does this subject lead to?

A Level Product Design (subject to GCSE grades)

What career opportunities does this subject open up?

Architecture, dental technology, construction, technical work and management, naval architecture, civil engineering, automotive engineering and design, furniture-making and design, website design and management, landscape architecture. Work in multimedia and interactive media, software engineering, packaging, teaching, display and exhibition design, occupational therapy, fashion design, market research, graphic design, marketing, technical writing, interior design, publishing, product design, careers in theatre, sign making, trading standards, consumer protection, surface design, sales, technical support, home economist/consumer scientist, land-based engineering, environment, design engineering, engineering maintenance, materials science, medical engineering, events management and electrical engineering.

Drama

Optional Subject

EXAM BOARD: Edexcel	**COURSE REF. NO: 1DR0**

Edexcel GCSE Drama:

Year 9: In Year 9 students will start to look at theatre in a more complex way. They will continue to develop their performance skills through devised and scripted pieces but will also begin to look more in depth at directing, design and theatre's technical elements (making full use of the school's black box Drama Studio with lighting and sound equipment). Students will begin to look at different styles of theatre and influential theatre practitioners and will be introduced to their set text.

Year 10 and 11: In Years 10 and 11 students will continue to study influential practitioners and different styles of theatre through a variety of different topics. Students will also continue to explore and study their set text. As well as looking at it from a performance perspective, students must have a good understanding of the text's social and cultural context and begin to look at it from an actor, director and designer's point of view. Students will be continuing to develop their use of performance skills and drama conventions in order to create sophisticated and challenging pieces of practical work. Students will use play texts as well as creating and developing their own pieces of theatre using a range of stimuli.

Personal skills required:

Students should have a passion for and an interest in live theatre, whether this be in acting, directing, set design, costume, lighting, or sound design. Students must demonstrate a willingness to get involved in lessons and contribute to small group and whole class discussion. They should feel comfortable performing in front of others and be able to confidently express their ideas in written form. They must be self-motivated, organised, have good time management skills and be willing to attend rehearsals outside of lesson time. For their written paper, students need to evaluate a live production seen and therefore need to attend after school theatre visits.

This is a demanding subject that requires students to work both in and out of lessons in groups and therefore commitment and a passion for the subject are key.

How will I be assessed? The course has one controlled assessment, one practical and one written examination.

Component 1 - Devising (60 Marks - 40% GCSE) (NEA, examined by your teacher and externally moderated)

- **You will be given a choice of 3 stimuli and asked to devise a new play in response to this that is between 10-25 minutes in length, dependent on group size**
- **You must track the process of devising and format this into a portfolio. Your portfolio can be presented in a number of ways**
- **2,000 Word typed or hand written, 8-10-minute voice recording, A combination of the 2 above (1000 words and 4 minutes)**

Component 2 - Performance from Text (48 Marks - 20% GCSE)

This will be assessed by a visiting examiner

- **You will be asked to perform 2 key extracts from 1 contemporary play**
- **You will have a choice to perform a Group piece, Duologue or Monologue.**

Component 3 - Theatre Makers in Practice - (60 Marks - *40% GCSE*):

This is a written exam lasting 1 hour 45 minutes

Section A: 5 Questions on the Set Text, The Crucible

- **Question 1 & 2 - As an Actor**
- **Question 3 & 4 - As a Director**
- **Question 5 - As a Designer**

Section B: 2 Questions asking to Analyse and Evaluate a piece of Live Theatre that you have seen.

- **Question 1 - Analyse (Performance or Design)**
- **Question 2 - Evaluate (Performance or Design)**

The written paper requires students to write in a detailed and analytical way on the work they have studied and theatre they have seen.

What post-16 courses does this subject lead to?

This course would naturally lead into Drama and Theatre Studies A Level, then any university course where communication, problem solving, team work, critical evaluation, researching and creative thinking are required.

What career opportunities does this subject open up?

Performer, Stage Manager, Lighting or Sound Engineer, Costume and Set Design, Directing, Arts Administrator, Drama therapist, Teaching, the Media, Law, Medicine, Youth & Community Worker, Social Worker, Journalist.

Food Preparation and Nutrition

Optional Subject

EXAM BOARD: AQA	**COURSE REF. NO: 8585**

Course content:

Food Nutrition and Health: students will learn about macronutrients and micronutrients, their functions and main sources. They will learn about the effects of deficiency and excess and the related dietary reference values. Students will explore energy needs and how physical activity determines energy requirements, and the recommended % of energy from macronutrients needed. Students will explore the relationship between diet and health and how our nutritional needs change throughout our lives

Food Science: Students will learn why food is cooked and the different methods of heat transfer and their effect on the food. Students will be able to select appropriate preparation, cooking and serving methods and equipment. Students will learn the functional and chemical properties of carbohydrates, proteins and raising agents and how the conditions we put them in impacts their physical state.

Food Safety: Students will learn how to work safely in a kitchen to prepare, cook and serve food. They will have an excellent understanding of microorganisms and enzymes and the conditions that they need to thrive, how they are used in food and what foods are high risk. Students will gain an excellent knowledge of the sources of pathogenic bacteria and the symptoms of bacterial contamination and how to prevent it.

Food Provenance: - Students will learn about the environmental impact and sustainability of the food we eat, understanding how ingredients are grown, reared and caught and the environmental issues associated with seasonality, import and transportation of food and how to reduce food waste. Students will learn about primary and secondary processing of food and how these affect the sensory properties. Students need to know how milk, wheat and fruit are processed and how these are processed further to make bread, jam, cheese, yoghurt and pasta. Students will learn about the technological developments of our food including additives, fortification and how these can affect the efficacy of health benefits

Personal skills required:

Students taking this subject will have an enthusiasm and curiosity for all aspects of food; from nutrition and the benefits of healthy eating, food provenance to visual presentation, and scientific understanding. This is a creative and practical subject and students will be taught the basic skills of food preparation to make a variety of products which build in complexity over the three years. Students will be learning to explore a range and functions of ingredients and processes from different culinary traditions.

How will I be assessed?

- 50% of the course is assessed by written examination - 1 hour 45 minutes
- 50% of the course is assessed through non-exam assessments (NEAs)

The NEA work is divided into two different pieces:

***The Food Investigation Task* - 15%**

- This assesses students' understanding of the scientific principles underlying the preparation and cooking of food. Students will investigate the working characteristics, functional and chemical properties of ingredients and apply their findings to the preparation and cooking of food.

***The Food Preparation Task* - 35%**

- This assesses the planning, preparation, cooking and presentation of food. Students have to prepare, cook and present three dishes in 3 hours.

What post-16 courses does this subject lead to?

Whilst there is no food A level course, students are encouraged to explore food related degrees and careers such as Food Science and Nutrition. Required A level subjects which facilitate entry include Chemistry or Biology plus one from the following - Physics, Physical Education, Mathematics, Geography or Psychology A levels.

What career opportunities does this subject open up?

Food preparation and nutrition GCSE could lead to careers in Food Science and Product Development, Food Technology and efficient production of foods, food sourcing and understanding the effect of an increasing global population on demand for food, environmental health, food microbiology, food marketing, sensory sciences, quality management. It could also link with careers as a dietician, nutritionist or food engineer. Other possible career paths for which it may be directly useful include Social Work or Medicine.

Music

Optional Subject

EXAM BOARD: Eduqas	**COURSE REF. NO: *C660QS***

Course content:

Solo and ensemble performing with voice or any instrument. In Year 11, you will need to record two performances which must last between 4-6 minutes.

Compose two pieces of music, one based on a set brief and the other a brief of your choice. Both pieces together must last at least 3 minutes combined.

Listening Exam: eight questions from four areas of study, including two set works.

The four areas of study are:

- Area of study 1: Musical Forms and Devices (Baroque, Classical, Romantic Music)
- Area of study 2: Music for Ensemble (Jazz, Musical Theatre, Chamber Music)
- Area of study 3: Film Music
- Area of study 4: Popular Music.

Personal skills required:

We are looking for passionate and open-minded musicians who appreciate discussing musical styles from the past and present and from different cultures. You should be prepared to participate in a range of ensemble/class based composing and performance tasks with your voice/instrumental skills. If you enjoy listening to lots of different music and understanding how composers and songwriters create ideas, you would be suitable for GCSE.
Be prepared to further develop your practical skills as an instrumentalist or singer. You do not need to play multiple instruments, but should be proficient in one. It is recommended (although not a requirement) that you receive individual instrumental/vocal tuition; please request the 'DGGS Learn an Instrument' letter if you would like any support setting this up. Music grades are not essential for GCSE Music although they are very useful in predicting how well you are likely to do at GCSE Music.

We will encourage you to become involved in public performances throughout the year including our school concerts and productions, the Hanau Music Exchange, the Dartford Young Musician of the Year Competition, and assemblies. This seeks to enrich the course alongside our trips to concerts and the West End. It is expected GCSE Music students attend at least one weekly music club in order to strengthen reading and performing skills (Orchestra or Choir are recommended). GCSE Music is for a committed, all-round student, capable of being both academic and creative.

How will I be assessed?

Component 1: Performing

Non-exam assessment: internally assessed, externally moderated 30% of qualification. Two performances. One must be an ensemble, the other a solo or ensemble piece. Both pieces must last between 3-6 minutes in total.

Component 2: Composing

Non-exam assessment: internally assessed, externally moderated, 30% of qualification. Two compositions, one of which must be in response to a brief set by WJEC in Year 11 (You would be given 4 options).

Component 3: Appraising

Written examination: 1 hour 15 minutes. 40% of qualification. This component is assessed via a listening examination.

What post-16 courses does this subject lead to?

A level Music, A level Music Technology, Performing Arts, Arts Award and other Post-16 music qualifications

What career opportunities does this subject open up?

Performing, composing, music technology / sound recording and studio work, publishing, arts administration, events management, music therapy, teaching, instrumental / vocal tutor, conducting, events management, music in the media including television and film, concert hall management, stage management, accompanist, therapist, session musician, music journalist, arranger / orchestration, record producing, concert promoter, tour manager / coordinator, music librarian and entertainment within the industry.

Physical Education

Optional Subject

EXAM BOARD: AQA	**COURSE REF. NO: 8582**

Course content:

Examination Assessment (each paper worth 30% of total GCSE)

Paper 1: The human body and movement in physical activity and sport.

- Applied anatomy and physiology
- Movement analysis
- Physical Training
- Use of data
-

Paper 2: Socio-cultural influences and well-being in physical activity and sport.

- Sports psychology
- Socio-cultural influences
- Health, fitness and well-being
- Use of data

Non-Examination Assessment (40% of total GCSE)

Practical Performance comprised of 3 different practical performances (1 individual, 1 team and 1 other). (30%)
Performance analysis assessment - written evaluation to analyse strengths and weaknesses of one chosen sport followed by an action plan relating to improvements and theoretical knowledge. (10%)

Personal skills required:

- Be able to perform in three different sporting activities as a player/ performer. Must be able to perform in a team sport and in an individual sport plus one other. This will involve a high level of commitment to extra-curricular activities.
- Enjoyment of both the practical and theoretical aspects of sport.
- Independent learner to develop and improve practical coursework elements outside of lessons.
- Organised in order to meet homework and practical assessment deadlines

How will I be assessed?

60% Examination Assessment

Paper 1 and Paper 2

- Written exam: 1 hour 15 minutes each

40% Non-Examination Assessment

Practical: 30%

Written coursework: 10%

What post-16 courses does this subject lead to?

A Level Physical Education

BTEC Level 3 Nationals in Sport and, Sport and Exercise Sciences.

Level 3 NVQ in Sports Development or Leisure Management

What career opportunities does this subject open up?

Teacher of Physical Education, Leisure Management, Coaching, Teaching or Instructing Leadership, Physiotherapy, Personal Training, Occupational Health, Sports Journalism, Sports Psychology.

Psychology

Optional Subject

EXAM BOARD: AQA	**COURSE REF. NO: 8182**

Course content:
Topics are listed below with examples of questions considered:
Paper 1: Cognition and behaviour

- Memory: how can we assess how long memory lasts or how big it is?
- Perception: how do visual illusions work?
- Development: when and how do children learn the volume stays the same? What are learning styles and how can we criticise them?
- Research methods: why might the results of an experiment not be valid?

Paper 2: Social context and behaviour

- Social influence: why do people conform? Why do they obey orders?
- Language, thought and communication: what are the functions of eye contact and body language?
- Brain and neuropsychology: how can we scan the brain? What structures are there?
- Psychological problems: how can we treat depression and addiction?

Research methods may be assessed on all topic areas as well as the specific research methods section. Students will design and carry out their own research where possible to help develop these skills.

Personal skills required:
The ability to

- Apply a scientific method to people
- Think critically and evaluate research
- Apply knowledge to the 'real world'
- Make connections between topics and apply research methods

You also need commitment to work hard and revise regularly throughout the course since there is a lot of content to learn. (All students are currently issued with an AQA approved textbook to help with this.)

How will I be assessed?
There are two exams of 100 marks and 1hr 45mins, each worth 50% of GCSE.
Questions are multiple choice, short answer and extended writing (up to a maximum of 9 marks per question)
Assessment objectives and weightings are as follows:

- AO1 Knowledge and understanding 35%
- AO2 Application 35%
- AO3 Analysis and evaluation 30%

Research methods will make up at least 20% of the assessment; mathematical requirements at least 10%.

What post-16 courses does this subject lead to?
Psychology GCSE is useful, although not essential, for going on to study Psychology A Level. It would also be a useful foundation for studying Sociology A Level and complements other science subjects and mathematics.

What career opportunities does this subject open up?
Since psychology involves studying people's behaviour, it is useful for almost any job, but is particularly useful for careers which involve directly working with people. These could include medicine and related professions (provided the essential science subjects are also studied), education, social work, therapies, marketing, law, and personnel management.

Various different types of psychologists are recognised by the British Psychological Society (BPS) including Clinical, Occupational, Educational and Health Psychologists. All require further study after a Psychology undergraduate degree and useful careers information can be found at www.bps.org.uk.

Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance

Making informed GCSE choices during Year 8 is essential and it can be useful to have more information about the steps beyond GCSE in order to ensure the choices made are the best ones for you. The information below is designed to allow you to consider post-16 and post-18 options when deciding on your GCSE option subjects.

Although many parents/carers and students will feel the need to consider future occupation when making GCSE choices, it is not necessary to know what career you would like to follow in later life and not necessary to choose options directly related to a career. Many of your future aspirations will change as you develop and deciding now can add unnecessary pressure. The most important thing is that you choose and consider options that are varied, balanced and enjoyable and make the most of every opportunity open to you. It is important that your choices develop a broad range of skills as an individual to ensure you are well-rounded.

Choosing subjects, you feel passionate about and choosing those you are strong at means you are more likely to work hard and achieve well rather than choosing subjects you feel you should do. Your core curriculum ensures you have a balanced programme for the next stage of your education.

Post-16 Options
After your GCSEs, you will need to decide what programme you follow next. A significant majority of students taking GCSEs at Dartford Grammar School for Girls will progress to the next two years of the 7-year programme by continuing into the Sixth Form to study A Level qualifications. Entry into the Sixth Form at Dartford Grammar School for Girls is extremely competitive and requires a 52 points across 8 GCSE Subjects. and students are encouraged to work to the best of their ability to achieve this from the very beginning of Year 9. All students in the Sixth Form study 3 or 4 A Levels with other extension options chosen. The National Careers Service provides detailed information about all of the options open post-16 including T Levels, Vocational and Technical Qualifications should you wish to consider these in your decision making process.

Post-18 Options
After your Sixth Form experience, there will be many choices available to you. Dartford Grammar School for Girls has an extremely strong reputation for securing students places at the highest and most well-respected universities but this is not the only option. Some pathways available will allow you to continue the academic pathway, moving onto university or other higher level study, while others combine work and study, for example in Degree Level Apprenticeships, and some routes take you straight into employment. The National Careers Service provides students, parents and carers with more information about the pathways available post-18 should you wish to consider it when making your GCSE choices.

Careers Department
Ms Smith, Careers Lead, alongside Mrs Loyal, Senior Careers Lead and Assistant Headteacher, develop and leads the Careers Strategy ensuring that the school offers a coherent careers programme that meets all eight of the Gatsby benchmarks. By meeting these benchmarks, Dartford Grammar School for Girls is committed to preparing students for the next step of their journey.

Mrs Ives, Careers Advisor, offers impartial careers guidance to students, at all levels of their education. Alongside planning and leading activities for all year groups, she is the first point of contact for students, parents/carers, employers and other bodies relating to careers. She can be contacted by email and is located in the office near EN5.



Dartford Grammar School for Girls