

GCSE Options Booklet 2017—2019



Heathfield School, Ascot

Introduction

CHOOSING YOUR GCSES

After studying a range of subjects it can be a very difficult process trying to decide which subjects to pick for your GCSEs. This is when you begin to take the first steps to specialising your areas of study and it can feel a little daunting. Girls do worry that they will leave out something that will be crucially important to them later on in life. What is very important is that you pick subjects that you will enjoy as this will keep you motivated throughout the two year course.

CORE COURSES

In Forms IV and V, girls follow a chosen programme of study for your GCSE courses. Girls can take up to 10 GCSE examinations, studying a compulsory core of English, English Literature, Mathematics, Biology, Chemistry, Physics, and ideally at least one modern foreign language (usually French).

Girls will be set for Science. If you are in the top set with a particular strength in the Sciences you will be encouraged to take a GCSE in all 3 Sciences (triple award). The rest will take Combined Science (worth 2 GCSEs). Although triple award is an advantage if studying one of the Sciences at A Level, it is still possible to study A Level Science if the Combined Science award has been taken.

LANGUAGES

Girls are set for French and will be prepared to take Reading, Writing, Listening and Speaking examinations. There is the option for you to take Spanish in addition to French, Latin or Greek. This will be decided in conjunction with the Modern Foreign Languages department according to ability and experience.

OPTIONS

Girls choose **up to four** additional subjects from a range of eleven. The subjects are arranged in 'blocks' and no more than one option is taken from each block.

We will try to ensure that the widest range of subject combinations is possible, catering for the most popular choices. If you do not take a subject at GCSE it does not necessarily mean that you cannot pursue your interest in other ways or that you cannot take the subject later at A Level. Check the guide or ask the subject teacher for more details.

By mid-February we issue a provisional choices form which will be due in by Wednesday 22nd February 2017. This will allow us to ensure that the blocks we adopt will be suitable for as many girls as possible. After that the blocks will be finalised with the Final Options sheet issued. This will be due in by 6th March 2017. From this point forwards we are unable to change the blocks.

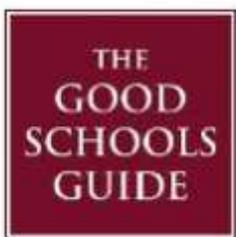
NON-EXAM COURSES

All girls follow a programme of Personal, Health, Social, Citizenship and Economic Education, which includes guidance on careers and a full PE programme.

We do ask you to think carefully before deciding on the number of options. If you have had support from Spectrum, or an extra language, or a number of Music lessons for example, it is advisable for you to choose subjects from a maximum of two out of the four blocks. This will also help with the possibility of timetabling your extra lessons into the school day rather than at the end of the day, for example. Doing 10 full GCSEs is very challenging and is certainly not for everybody. Even top universities do not expect applicants to have more than 8 or 9 grades, as long as they are good and include English, Maths, Science and a Modern Foreign Language.

It is far better to have fewer, higher grades than more GCSEs with lower grades.

There are several people available to you for advice and support whilst navigating the difficult options process, including your tutor, your Head of House, subject teachers and the Director of Studies. If you want to find out about courses at university then it is definitely worth seeking out Mr Hart, Director of Sixth Form or Mrs Millns, our Head of Careers.



TOP TEN TIPS FOR CHOOSING GCSES

1. Quality not quantity—eight or nine is usually plenty—make sure you can get the best results possible
2. Don't believe anyone who tells you GCSEs don't matter. The stiffer the competition for university places and jobs, the more you need good GCSEs to help you stand out
3. Choose subjects you are good at
4. Choose subjects your school is good at—ask about results
5. Think ahead—are there GCSEs you need to have in order to apply for certain A Levels or university courses? Take advice from Mrs Millns
6. Think about employment
7. Avoid choosing too many creative subjects—they can take up a lot of time
8. Make sure you take a language and a humanities subject
9. Once you have your list, take a look at it—what does it say about you?
10. Study what you love—make sure you study something that really excites you

CORE COURSES IGCSE MATHEMATICS

Exam Board: EDEXCEL

Aims

We encourage every girl to achieve your full potential in Mathematics. You will all take an active and enthusiastic role in your lessons, learning via a variety of different teaching styles and using a mixture of guided discovery, ICT and traditional methods. We aim to develop each girl's problem-solving skills and ability to think independently.

Specification

We are following the Edexcel Linear specification for the International GCSE Mathematics A. The specification aims to develop knowledge and understanding of topics covered in Form III and includes new topics that have not been covered before. The IGCSE course emphasises the importance of making connections between mathematical concepts and applying the functional elements of Mathematics to real life situations.

The course is split into the following six areas:

Numbers

- Encouraging the use of mental arithmetic, while becoming more competent in the use of a scientific calculator
- Being able to apply these methods to a range of real life and abstract problems

Algebra

- Modelling real life situations using algebra to solve problems
- Understanding how number operations underpin algebraic techniques

Geometry

- Exploring the properties of angles, circles and polygons
- Using these properties to solve problems in a real world context

Measures

- Applying the formulae for area, perimeter and volume of 2D and 3D shapes
- Extending these skills to include circles, cones and spheres

Statistics

- Calculating averages and the range of data presented in a variety of contexts
- Understanding that different types of data require different representations and being able to display the data appropriately

Probability

- Using fractions or decimals to represent probabilities
- Understanding complex problems involving multiple events and conditional probability

Assessment

The examination for this qualification consists of two papers, each worth 50% of the course and a calculator is permitted for both papers. The Higher Tier examination is sat at the end of Form V and gives access to grades 9 to 3. Some students, who are targeting a grade 5, may be offered the opportunity to take the Foundation Tier in January of Form V with the aim of sitting the Higher Tier at the end of the year if they achieve the Foundation's maximum grade of a 5.

Exam Board: AQA

English Language

The course aims to develop your ability to read with understanding, analyse and evaluate a wide range of texts, both literary and non-literary, including some from other cultures and traditions. Writing is focused on compositional skills, organising and structuring sentences grammatically and employing a variety of forms for different purposes. You should be able to develop ideas and communicate with the reader using a wide-ranging vocabulary and an imaginative, appropriate style. Although it is not an integral part of the award, there is also a spoken language component, which requires you to formulate, clarify and express ideas, adapt speech to a range of circumstances, and listen and respond appropriately to others.

Assessment

There are two examinations. The first paper is entitled “Explorations in Creative Reading and Writing”. Students explore one fiction text and write in a descriptive or narrative style.

The second paper is focused on “Writers’ Viewpoints and Perspectives”. You are required to analyse one non-fiction text and one literary non-fiction text. In addition, there is the opportunity to develop an extended piece of writing presenting a specific argument.

English Literature

The course helps you to explore your literary interests and develop an ability to understand, respond to and write about a wide range of texts, demonstrating an appreciation of the ways in which writers achieve their effects. You develop an awareness of social, cultural and historical contexts and the ways in which these influence works of literature. We follow a traditional course of study, including Shakespeare, other pre-twentieth century works and some modern literature, ensuring that you are given a firm grounding in the standard canon of English Literature. During the course you will nurture skills of critical analysis, which will be particularly valuable at A Level.

Assessment

There are two examinations. The first paper is based on “Shakespeare and the Nineteenth Century Novel”. Questions will require you to write about a specific extract and the play as a whole, so that an understanding of authors’ aims and methods is essential.

The second paper is slightly more extensive and accounts for 60% of the overall mark. Entitled “Modern Texts and Poetry”, you answer questions about either a modern prose or drama text, compare one poem with another from a cluster in the anthology and respond to two unseen poems.

The ability to read, understand, interpret and respond to the English language is central to all aspects of girls’ education at Heathfield. Therefore GCSE English Language and Literature courses are of vital importance. Most universities and employers insist on a high level of attainment in English Language in particular; our approach to the AQA course is designed to help you to meet this requirement but also to help you to appreciate and enjoy the English language in all its forms, while preparing you to relish A Level courses in English Literature. English Literature is a popular subject at A Level, which is a testament to the secure grounding in analytical essay writing and close reading skills that GCSEs in both English Language and English Literature provide at Heathfield.

Exam Board: AQA

Every student at Heathfield School is required to take Science. Students start to cover some of the GCSE content in the Third Form allowing those more able to access three separate Science GCSEs.

Biology, Chemistry and Physics GCSE (Triple Award)

All students in the top science set will be entered for the three separate science GCSEs. This will not involve any extra science lessons but will mean that content within the lessons will be covered at a faster pace. If a student is struggling it will be possible for you to move to the other Science GCSE course, where you will be accredited with a Combined Science GCSE worth 2 GCSEs. Much of the content is transferable as a large percentage of the work covered is common to both routes. All three GCSEs are assessed at the end of the year with 6 written papers in total (each 1 hour 45 minutes) taken at the end of the 2 year period. To replace controlled assessment (coursework) students are required to complete a set number of experiments, about which you could be asked in your papers. At the end of the course you are awarded a grade from 1-9 (9 being the highest).

Biology	Chemistry	Physics
Paper 1 Topics 1-4 (50%)	Paper 1 Topics 1-5 (50%)	Paper 1 Topics 1-4 (50%)
Paper 2 Topics 5-7 (50%)	Paper 2 Topics 6-10 (50%)	Paper 2 Topics 5-8 (50%)

Combined Science Trilogy (worth 2 GCSEs)

Students not taking the three separate Sciences will continue your study of the three sciences and will be examined in June of your Fifth Form year, when you will have to complete 6 written papers, two in each of the sciences, each one 1 hour 15 minutes. To replace controlled assessment, students are required to complete a set number of experiments which could be examined in your written papers. Girls at the end of the course are awarded 2 grades from 1-1 to 9-9. This creates a 17 mark spread, with the possibility of numbers being different e.g. 4-5. The option to take Foundation Tier remains which limits you to a maximum grade of 5-5. The decision about whether you take a Foundation paper is taken in Form V based on what is best for you, and is shared with your parents.

Combined Science		
Biology 1 - Topics 1-4 (16.7%)	Chemistry 1 - Topics 8-12 (16.7%)	Physics 1 - Topics 18-21 (16.7%)
Biology 2 - Topics 5-7 (16.7%)	Chemistry 2 - Topics 13-17 (16.7%)	Physics 2 - Topics 22-24 (16.7%)

After GCSE

Students who take Combined Science will still have the option of studying any of the Sciences for A Level providing you have achieved at least a grade B in your Science examinations. Students who have taken the sciences separately are required to have at least a B grade in the science which you wish to take. All students should also be proficient in Mathematics (Grade B or above) due to an increased amount in all the Science A Levels.

Exam Board: AQA

Reformed (First assessment in summer 2018)

The Modern Languages Department offers GCSE courses in French and Spanish.

Every student at Heathfield School is required to take French or Spanish at GCSE. Students in the top set are stretched beyond the normal GCSE level, using the expertise of native teachers and having plenty of oral practice. Foundation Tier students are encouraged to acquire the basic language skills required for success at GCSE; understanding grammar and the discipline of starting to think in another language, not to mention the confidence you gain from oral work, benefits other subjects a great deal. No matter what you want to study after your GCSE or what career you will choose, having modern foreign languages improves opportunities later in life.

All students take their language GCSE examinations in the Fifth Form, although fluent or near-fluent speakers may be allowed to sit your GCSE at the end of Form IV. We believe that it is usually better for you to wait if there is any doubt; the added maturity helps you to earn the elusive grade 9, which you might forego by rushing through the course. Although we aim to cater for all cases, it is not possible to enter the GCSE course as a complete beginner.

In addition to French and Spanish, other languages (currently Arabic, Chinese, German, Greek, Japanese, Portuguese and Russian) may be studied to GCSE Level as paid for extra lessons (subject to the availability of teaching time and a suitable teacher). Further details can be obtained from the Modern Foreign Languages Department.

The new GCSE specifications allow you to develop your ability and ambition to communicate with native speakers in speech and writing. Through studying a modern language, you should also broaden your horizons and develop new ways of seeing the world.

Both French and Spanish courses concentrate on developing the skills necessary to understand and communicate in the language. Vocabulary and grammar work are important parts of language learning and enable girls to perform well at GCSE, to prepare for the greater demands of A Level or further examinations and to be able to use your knowledge in a travel or work situation. Each syllabus aims to foster understanding and awareness of the relevant countries, their people and their way of life, to provide enjoyment and intellectual stimulation.

The GCSE course is a two year course. French and Spanish benefit from the same structure for the final examination. These qualifications are linear which means that you will sit all your language examinations at the end of the course. Each paper (Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing) counts for 25% of the overall marks. GCSE languages have a Foundation Tier (grades 1-5) and a Higher Tier (grades 4-9). At the end of the two years, a tier is chosen and all four question papers must be taken at the same tier. The new GCSE now includes translation from and into the target language which is assessed in the Reading and Writing examinations. Literary texts in the Reading assessment form part of the stimulus materials. The speaking assessment is conducted with the classroom teacher but marked externally.

Exam Board: Edexcel

General outline: GCSE Art and Design

The overarching theme for the coursework unit is 'Identity', which is broad and open-ended, permitting students to develop project ideas in an original and personal way.

Coursework:

This is divided into two projects over four terms. The first two terms in Fourth Form are spent focusing on Textiles, with a view to construct garments for the annual Fashion Show. The second two terms (summer term of Fourth Form and first term of Fifth Form) are dedicated to refining skills in Art and Design, which may include painting, sculpture, printmaking, digital art, and installation.

Skills are taught through a variety of workshops including:

Textiles – machine embroidery, felt-making, fine art, mixed media textiles, melting plastics, using vanishing fabric, print, applique, rusting, sculpture, garment construction for fashion and costume, painting on fabrics.

Art – print making, painting, drawing, Adobe Photoshop, mixed media, paper cutting, clay, wire, withy sticks, modrock, and wax.

Examination Unit:

The examination unit begins in the Lent term of Fifth Form and culminates in a 10 hour examination. The 10 hour examination is an opportunity to produce an outcome that best reflects your interests presented in your preparatory studies – this can be either Textiles or Art, or both. Throughout this unit, students will have the freedom to specialise in whichever area of Art and Design that you performed best in.

Core Skills:

Observational drawing, critical analysis and annotations, and portfolio presentation. In Fifth Form you are allowed to attend optional paid life drawing classes.

Assessment

Work is internally marked and externally moderated.

Coursework themes are set by the Art Department and the Examination theme is stipulated by the Exam Board Edexcel.

Coursework is worth 60% and the Examination Unit 40%.

What can this lead to?

There are many careers where visual communication, artistic and design skills play an important role.



Exam Board: Edexcel

Aims: The aim of this course is to provide an interesting and inspiring qualification which reflects the demands of a truly modern and evolving business environment that allows students to develop as commercially minded and enterprising individuals.

The qualification consists of two externally examined papers which must be taken in one sitting in May/June in any single year.

Theme 1 Investigating small business:

Written examination: 1 hour 30 minutes

50 percent of the qualification, 90 marks

Content overview:

Enterprise and entrepreneurship

Spotting a business opportunity

Putting a business idea into practice

Making the business effecting

Understanding external influence on business Assessment overview. The paper is divided into three sections:

Section A: 35 marks

Section B: 30 marks

Section C: 25 marks

The paper will consist of calculations, multiple choice, short-answer and extended writing questions.

Questions in Sections B and C will be based on business contexts given in the paper.

Calculators may be used in the examination.

Theme 2: Building a business: Written examination: 1 hour 30 minutes

50 percent of the qualification, 90 marks

Content overview

Growing the business

Making marketing decisions

Making operational decisions

Making financial decisions

Making human resource decisions

Assessment overview

The paper is divided into three sections:

Section A: 35marks

Section B: 30 marks

Section C: 25 marks

The paper consists of calculations, multiple choice, short-answer and extended-writing questions.

Questions in Sections B and C will be based on business contexts given in the paper.

Calculators may be used in the examination.

Business is a useful GCSE subject to take, both as a preparation for the A Level and out of general interest and, as such, you will become critically aware of current affairs. It helps to build skills that will be of practical use to you in later life. For example, you will be able to analyse a business scenario and form a justified recommendation/option. A good level of mathematical ability is required and questions also rely on reading comprehension and being able to write clearly and concisely.

Exam board: OCR

Classical Civilisation is a study of the civilisations and empires of the ancient world that have shaped and influenced humanity to the present time. The languages, politics, economics, religions and literatures of the western world and beyond owe much in particular to the ancient Greek and Roman civilisations. The subject is an enquiry into the past with which we have a shared cultural heritage. Students who like studying literature, history, religion, drama and culture will enjoy Classical Civilisation.

Topics studied at GCSE level include life in the city of Athens and Rome, Greek and Roman mythology and religion, archaeology of ancient Greece and Homer's epic poetry.

GCSE Classical Civilisation contains two examination papers. Each paper has equal weighting (50%) and each examination is one hour thirty minutes long.

Exam Paper 1: Thematic Study- Myth and Religion

Many learners come to Classical Civilisation due to a love of the mythology of the ancient world, and so this forms a central part of this thematic component. Learners will study myths regarding the role of the gods and heroes in the founding of Athens and Rome and the importance of Heracles/Hercules to both the Greek and Roman world. These are well known stories that learners will enjoy engaging with and studying in increased depth. Myth as a symbol of power will also be explored, as will ever-popular myths about the underworld.

Learners will also look at the role of religion in the everyday lives of ancient Greeks and Romans. The study of temples, sacrifice, festivals, death and beliefs in the afterlife will give a broad overview of religion in the ancient world, and provides opportunity for the study of a wide variety of material remains, including remarkable temples and works of art. Learners will be required to make informed comparisons between Greek and Roman ideas, including the characteristics of the different societies, and the impact of the different cultural contexts on the theme studied. You will also be expected to use literature and visual/material culture in conjunction with one another in order to inform your judgements, including discussion of why or how the sources may present things differently from each other.

Exam Paper 2: Literature and Culture- The Homeric World

The Greeks themselves recognised the world of Homer's poems as the cradle of Greek literature and civilisation, and this component provides the opportunity for the study of a fascinating period of history and a work of literature with great enduring appeal.

The Culture section involves a study of life in Mycenaean times. This is a very diverse area, allowing the study of particular sites, their archaeology and the valuable role they play in our understanding of the age. The Mycenaean Age is also rich in sculpture, frescos and jewellery, as well as the famous tombs and their accompanying treasure, meaning that learners can study a wide range of fascinating materials. Everyday life in Mycenaean times is also explored, allowing you to consider what life was like for real people in this period, rather than simply focusing on the exploits of epic heroes. However, since the exploits of epic heroes are one of the most popular areas of study for learners, Homer's *Odyssey* has been chosen to form the Literature half of this component. The selection of books chosen for study in this component combines the fantastical and enjoyable tales of Odysseus' journey, with those which give you a possible insight into everyday life, including aspects such as palace life and the lives of women. The final books, which focus on the battle between Odysseus and the suitors, are exciting in themselves and also pose interesting questions about revenge and punishment.

Extra- Curricular: You will have the opportunity to visit Classical sites and exhibitions to support classroom learning and even excursions abroad; the Classics department has run trips recently to Athens and Delphi and Rome and we aim to run a trip every two years.

GCSE CLASSICAL GREEK

Those who have studied Latin will benefit from and appreciate the option of Classical Greek which shares much of the same grammar although of course the alphabet is rather different. We begin with the symbols but move on using the course-book *Greek to GCSE* (by Taylor) to develop skill at reading Ancient Greek set in the context of Athens in the Fifth Century BC. As well as linguistic study of Greek, you will study topics including Greek Gods, Myth, Festivals and the City of Athens. Throughout, comparisons are made with the many English words which are derived from Greek.

The emphasis in the Fourth Form is on solid understanding of the language; in the latter part of the Fourth Form and the Fifth Form the focus shifts towards the reading and enjoyment of a selection of Greek verse and prose literature. The reading of literature is one of the delights of GCSE Greek and sets it apart from other languages studied at GCSE. The set-text authors include Herodotus, Lucian, Homer and Euripides.

The full OCR Classical Greek qualification is comprised of the following modules:

- Classical Greek Language (1 hour 30 minutes)
- Classical Greek Prose Literature (1 hour)
- Classical Greek Verse Literature (1 hour)

Extra- Curricular: You will have the opportunity to visit Classical sites and exhibitions to support classroom learning and even excursions abroad; the Classics department has run trips recently to Athens and Delphi and Rome and we aim to run a trip every two years.

GCSE COMPUTER SCIENCE - Provisional

Exam Board: OCR

The ubiquitous nature of computers means that there is very little in life that does not incorporate some computing element. This means there are very few jobs and careers that would not benefit from an understanding of how computers work and how they can be manipulated.

The IT Industry has been calling for more young people in the UK to be taught essential computational skills to prepare them for the technology industries of the future. In companies like Google, Microsoft and Apple, having a secure understanding of Computer Science can give you the edge, even if you have a less technical role such as Marketing or PR.

What will I study?

GCSE Computer Science will give you a broad understanding of the fundamentals of computer technology. You will look at the functions within hardware devices, how they communicate securely across different networks within the modern framework. You will look at mobile apps, websites and create computer programs, so there will be a significant amount of time spent on programming which will develop your problem solving skills, analysis and critical thinking.

What skills will I develop?

You will develop effective research skills as you practise finding reliable information from a variety of sources. You will need to be creative when working through the logic of your solutions and resilience to see that logic develop into working computer programmes. There will be opportunities to develop your team working skills as you work collaboratively, alongside an emphasis on independent learning. Time management will also be a key skill you will exercise to ensure you meet your deadlines. These skills, all invaluable to Computer Science, are highly transferable to your other subjects, making this GCSE both challenging and rewarding.

How will I be assessed?

The GCSE Computer Science course has three main components, two of which are assessed by examination: Computer Systems (40% of the GCSE) and Computational thinking, Algorithms and Programming (40% of the GCSE). The Programming Project (20% of the GCSE) is undertaken in lesson time as a controlled assessment.

Anything else?

Yes! This course will help you develop your understanding of current and emerging technologies – actually how they work and with that you can apply your knowledge to your future ventures. Also, you will be acquiring some great technical skills and problem solving abilities that you can transfer to any task you are presented with. You can use this amazing knowledge and understanding of computer technology, not just as a consumer, but also to become independent and discerning users of IT, able to make informed decisions about its use, and aware of the implications. Be prepared not only for directly related Computer Science roles like a software engineer, games designer, data analyst, web designer, mobile app developer but also for those that have not yet been defined!

iGCSE INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT) - Provisional

Exam Board: Edexcel

In a constantly changing world, students need to have the skills and knowledge to not only gather, process and manipulate data, but also the ability to adapt to the shifting technology needs of the future.

The IT Industry has been calling for more young people in the UK to be taught essential computational skills to prepare them for the technology industries of the future. In companies like Google, Microsoft and Apple, having a secure understanding of Computer Science can give you the edge, even if you have a less technical role such as Marketing or PR.

What will I study?

iGCSE ICT combines theoretical and practical study with a focus on the ability to use common software applications to solve problems, including spreadsheets, databases, interactive presentation software, web browsers and website design.

What skills will I develop?

In addition to developing effective research skills as you practise finding reliable information from a variety of sources, you will analyse, design, implement, test and evaluate ICT systems, ensuring that they are fit for purpose. There will be opportunities to develop your team working skills as you work collaboratively, alongside an emphasis on independent learning. Time management will also be a key skill you will exercise to ensure you meet your deadlines.

How will I be assessed?

The iGCSE ICT course has two main components assessed by external examination: 90 minute theory paper (50%) and a 3 hour online practical examination (50%).

Anything else?

You will also develop key skills in the practical use of business and professional software packages; core transferable skills across disciplines and industries. There is an iGCE A Level in this subject which allows for progression.

Exam Board: Eduqas (WJEC)

Aims

The study of Drama aims to nurture your creativity, personal growth, self-confidence, communication and analytical skills through the acquisition of knowledge, skills and understanding and the exercise of the imagination. It promotes your involvement in and enjoyment of drama as a performer, deviser, director and designer. It provides opportunities for you to attend professional and community dramatic performances and to develop your skills as an informed and thoughtful audience member.

Throughout the course, you will be given opportunities to participate in and interpret your own and others' drama. You will investigate the forms, styles, and contexts of drama and will learn to work collaboratively to develop ideas, to express feelings, to experiment with technical elements and to reflect on your own and others' performances.

Course Content

Component 1: Devising Theatre

40% of qualification. Internally assessed/externally moderated

The creation, development and performance of a piece of devised theatre. Assessed as actors or designers, you must produce a finished piece of theatre, together with a portfolio of supporting evidence and an evaluation of the final performance or design.

There are 3 stages to the component:

Devising from a stimulus and creating supporting evidence during the process

Realising the piece of theatre in front of an audience

Evaluating the final piece and your individual contribution to it

Component 2: Performing from a Text

20% of qualification. Externally assessed

The study of two extracts from the same performance text chosen by the centre. You will be assessed as an actor or designer and you will participate in one performance using sections of text from both extracts.

Component 3: Interpreting Theatre

40% of qualification. Written paper; 1 hour 30 mins

Section A: Set Text

A series of questions on ONE set text from a choice of five. You will be assessed in terms of showing your understanding of the processes involved in taking a play from page to stage.

Section B: Live Theatre Review

One question, from a choice of two, requiring analysis and evaluation of a given aspect of a live production seen during the course.

GCSE Drama clearly demands more than an enjoyment of acting; it also requires academic skills and a real interest in literature and theatre-making. By studying GCSE Drama, you will learn more about the subject and its contribution to social and cultural commentary and will come to appreciate that drama, whether intended for audiences or not, provides significant opportunities for expressing cultural and personal identity. The course will relate well to GCSE English and History. Whilst A Level Theatre Studies is more academically demanding, many students have taken the subject on into the Sixth Form and have been very successful. Former Theatre Studies students have earned places at RADA and LAMDA.

Exam Board: EDEXCEL A

Geography is an education for life and for living. The study of Geography leads to a sense of wonder about the world in which we live – the places, the people and the environment. It helps you to make sense of our complex and dynamically changing world. It explains where places are, how places and landscapes are formed, how people and their environment interact, how a diverse range of economies, societies and environments interconnect, and examines natural resources and their sustainable use.

The Geography Department is committed to inspiring the next generation of geographers enabling you to become skilled, knowledgeable and responsible citizens in an increasingly global society whilst being aware of your local community.

The GCSE course in Geography gives opportunities to:

- acquire knowledge and understanding of a range of places, environments and geographical patterns, on a number of scales from local to global, as well as an understanding of physical and human processes, including decision-making, which affect your development
- develop a sense of place and an appreciation of the environment, as well as awareness of the ways in which people and environments interact, the importance of sustainable development in those interactions, and the opportunities, challenges and constraints that face people in different places
- develop an understanding of global citizenship and the ways in which places and environments are interdependent
- acquire and apply the skills and techniques (including those of map work, fieldwork and information and communication technology) needed to conduct geographical study and enquiry
- learn how to ‘think like a geographer’

How will I be assessed?

There is a clear and coherent structure with three components – The Physical Environment, The Human Environment (together worth 70%), and Geographical Investigations: Fieldwork and UK Challenges (worth 30%).

The assessments are accessible for all abilities, with three externally examined papers that provide gradual progression in demand throughout the topics.

Engaging and manageable fieldwork tasks are aligned with the core content of the course so that the experience of fieldwork can reinforce and enlighten learning in the classroom, and learning in the classroom can underpin learning in the field.

This course provides an engaging real-world focus; you are encouraged to apply your knowledge and understanding to real-life 21st century UK challenges.

Girls studying Geography will find that the skills and strategies learned are compatible with many subject choices at A Level. Many careers readily acknowledge the diverse and cross-curricular approach Geography students can offer; geographers are highly employable. Inevitably, students appreciate their knowledge and understanding whilst travelling, especially during their gap year.

Exam Board: EDEXCEL

It is a common misconception that History involves writing lots of essays. In fact, the vast majority of examination questions carry a tariff of around 3-10 marks and therefore require a relatively short answer. The content and skills required for the examinations are taught in active and engaging ways to ensure that the learning process is fun and effective.

Choosing History at GCSE will provide you with plenty of opportunities for further progression. At colleges and universities, History is considered to be an academically rigorous subject and is therefore very highly regarded no matter what career path you wish to pursue in the future. Through the study of History you will gain vital key skills such as: problem solving, analysis of evidence, empathy and teamwork. These skills are essential not only for History and other subjects in schools, but for any career you may wish to pursue in the future. Therefore History can gain you entry into a wide range of careers, including television, radio, journalism, the police force, social work and the civil service.

In 2013 we introduced the History International GCSE (IGCSE), a highly respected alternative to the mainstream GCSE qualification which has been adopted by a number of prestigious independent schools. The History IGCSE is comprised of four units, all of which are assessed in two 1 hour 30 minute examinations. There is no controlled assessment.

Paper 1 covers units 1 and 2. It is the depth study paper and contains four different questions testing chronological understanding and the ability to explain cause and effect.

Paper 2 covers units 3 and 4. It includes a source based historical investigation and a breadth study focusing on 'change over time'.

Unit 1: A World Divided: Superpower Relations after the Second World War, 1943-72

This unit focuses on the changing relations between the superpowers after the Second World War up to the beginning of Détente.

Unit 2: A Divided Union: Civil Rights in the USA, 1945-74

This unit focuses on the period of hysteria and protest in the USA brought about by the Cold War, Vietnam War and black civil rights.

Unit 3: Russia and the Soviet Union, 1914-24

You will study the upheaval in Russia in this period which started with the Tsar being overthrown in 1917 and which resulted in the formation of the first Communist government in the world.

Unit 4: Conflict, Crisis and Change: China, 1900-1989

You will learn about a period of great change in Chinese history dominated by revolution, civil war and dictatorship. The focus will largely be on the impact of Chairman Mao and his successors' reforms on the Chinese people.

GCSE LATIN

Exam Board: OCR

Did you know that 60% of words in the English Language and 80% of words in the Romantic Languages derive from Latin? The Latin language is alive. At Heathfield you have the opportunity to acquire this language and reap the rewards of an education in the Classics.

A qualification in the Classics is an asset on one's Curriculum Vitae and will make an impression on university departments, when one is applying for and competing for a place at university.

The OCR GCSE Latin specification provides you with the opportunity of acquiring the knowledge of the language, literature, culture, politics, economy, legal system and religion of the Roman world. You will develop your skills in writing, translating, critical thinking, analysis, reflection, logic and organisation. In addition, you will have the opportunity to read and study some of the greatest and most influential writers of all time.

The Full OCR GCSE Latin qualification is comprised of the following papers:

Paper 1 Language (1 Hour 30 minutes)

Paper 2 Language 2 (1 Hour)

Paper 3 Prose Literature (1 Hour)

The Latin authors typically studied at GCSE include Virgil, Cicero, and Livy.

You will have the opportunity of visiting Classical sites and exhibitions to support classroom learning and even excursions abroad; the Classics department has run trips recently to Athens and Delphi and Rome and we aim to run a trip every two years.

GCSE MUSIC

Exam Board: EDEXCEL

Music GCSE is looked upon favourably by universities. It offers opportunities to play, compose, conduct, teach and direct so that, even if you do not take A Level, you will have developed a high level of skill and knowledge which will be extremely useful later – either directly in a career or indirectly as part of your leisure activities.

Key subject aims

The Edexcel GCSE in Music specification:

- Encourages you to be inspired, moved and challenged by following a broad, coherent, satisfying and worthwhile course of study.
- Develops broader life skills, including critical and creative thinking, aesthetic sensitivity, emotional awareness, cultural understanding, self-discipline, self-confidence and self-motivation.
- Enables you to engage actively in the study of music.
- Develops musical skills and interests, including the ability to make music individually and in groups.
- Enables you to understand and appreciate a range of different kinds of music.

The Edexcel GCSE in Music comprises three units:

Unit 1: Performing Music

This is internally assessed and requires one solo and one ensemble performance, worth 30% of the total marks.

Unit 2: Composing Music

This is internally assessed and requires two compositions, one to a set brief and one free composition, together lasting a minimum of three minutes, worth 30% of the total marks.

Unit 3: Music – Listening and Appraising

This is externally assessed by means of a 1 $\frac{3}{4}$ hour written paper and requires the candidate to have knowledge of eight set works, worth 40% of the total marks.

Teaching Approaches

A wide range of resources is available, including your own PCs running Sibelius 8 for composition. You will be encouraged to actively participate in groups such as Orchestra, Choir, Chamber Ensembles and student formed groups, performing in school concerts and culminating in a biennial European Tour. An annual trip is also arranged to an Orchestral Concert.

After GCSE

Music GCSE is excellent preparation for the A Level Course in Performing, Composing, Historical and Analytical Studies. Music graduates may become Teachers, Arts Administrators, Music Publishers, Performers, Music Therapists, Instrument Repairers, Music Journalists, Radio or Television Producers, Army Musicians or Sound Engineers, amongst other career options.



GCSE PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Board: OCR

Do you enjoy sport? Would you like to be rewarded for playing the sports you enjoy and are good at? In this course you will improve your knowledge and performance in a range of practical activities and will have a chance to learn about the principles and practices which lead to good performance. The course will help develop your confidence, self-esteem and sense of team spirit!

The specification has 3 Units:

Physical Factors Affecting Performance: Anatomy & Physiology

- Skeleton / Bones
- Muscles / Movement
- Joints
- Cardio Vascular System
- Effects of Exercise
- Components of Fitness
- Principles of Training
- Prevention of Injury

Socio-Cultural Issues & Sports Psychology

- Participation in Physical Activity
- Commercialisation & the Media
- Ethics: Drugs; Violence
- Classification of Skills
- Mental Preparation
- Types of Feedback
- Health, Fitness & Wellbeing

Practical Performance

- Analysing & Evaluating a Sport
- Performance in 3 Sports: one team; one individual; one other (a variety of sports)

ASSESSMENT:

Two written papers: each out of 60 marks and worth 30% each of total marks

Section A = multiple-choice questions worth 15 marks

Section B = short answer and extended response questions worth 45 marks

Practical Performance: Out of 80 marks and worth 40% of the total marks

GCSE RELIGIOUS STUDIES

Exam Board: OCR

The Religious Studies course leads to a full GCSE qualification. Students find the course both fascinating and intellectually stimulating. The aims of this specific course are to encourage you to be inspired and challenged by following a broad, satisfying and worthwhile course of study.

The course comprises of two components: Component Group 1 – Beliefs and teachings & Practices of two religions. Component Group 2 – Religion, philosophy and ethics in the modern world from a religious perspective. Topics include:

- Euthanasia and the right to die
- Abortion
- Issues of genetic manipulation
- The creation of life
- Relationships and families in the 21st century, sex, marriage, cohabitation and divorce
- Roles of men and women; equality; gender prejudice and discrimination

- 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 concepts of justice, forgiveness and reconciliation
- Dialogue within and between religions and non-religious beliefs – Atheism, Humanism, Secularism
- The existence and nature of God
- Life after death
- The nature of evil
- Christian and Islamic Festivals
- The meaning of Jihad

The components encompass religious studies (Islam and Christianity) and ethics; they have been chosen because we believe they equip pupils to lead constructive lives in the modern world as well as to adopt an enquiring, critical and reflective approach to the study of religious beliefs and practices.

You are prepared for external examinations, which are all taken at the end of Form V; there is no coursework. Examination questions include short response questions and discussion style essays.

The Religious Studies course will help you develop your ability to apply, analyse and evaluate the value of Christian and Islamic teachings in the modern context. The course as a whole enables you to identify and develop a good understanding of religious values; as individuals, you will also explore your own values and consider how to apply these in the 21st century.

Religious Studies is a thriving subject both nationally and at Heathfield. Many girls choose to continue on to A Level Religious Studies in the Sixth Form; some go on to select philosophical and theological courses at top universities including Oxford, Durham, Edinburgh and Newcastle. The knowledge, understanding and skills gained as a result of studying GCSE Religious Studies are invaluable to all pupils, making the subject a vital and exciting part of the core curriculum at Heathfield.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Girls in Form IV have three double periods a week. As well as the traditional sports you have covered, you now have a chance to experience 5 week blocks of the following sports: Badminton; Basketball; Fitness; Football; Hockey; Rugby

This helps to prepare you to make more informed decisions about the sports you choose in Form V and the Sixth Form.

Girls in Form V have two double periods a week and you may choose from the following sports: Aerobics; Athletics; Badminton; Basketball; Fitness; Golf; Football; Hockey; Lacrosse; Netball; Rounders; Swimming; Tennis; and Zumba.

The aim of these sessions is for you to experience a variety of sports and find one you feel confident to pursue when you have left school.



PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION

PSHE is taught in Forms I-UVI in one lesson per week. Lessons are supplemented by presentations from outside speakers and agencies. The aim of the course is to help you to:

- ◆ Lead confident, healthy and responsible lives as individuals and as members of society
- ◆ Gain practical knowledge and skills to help you live healthily and deal with the spiritual, moral, social, cultural and financial issues you face as you approach adulthood
- ◆ Reflect on your experiences and try to understand and manage responsibly a range of relationships, showing respect for others
- ◆ Believe in your ability to succeed and take responsibility for your learning and future choices
- ◆ Demonstrate personal and group responsibility in your attitudes to yourself and others
- ◆ Obtain and use different kinds of information, including the media, to form and express an opinion



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q. Do I have to do Triple Science if I want to do a Science subject at A Level?

A. No, but it may help you to make the transition to A Level work more easily. Many people have managed to do A Level sciences without Extra Science though – and many schools do not offer the Extra Science option.

Q. Do I have to do a subject at GCSE if I want to do it at A Level?

A. It helps, but is not always necessary. For example, you can resume your study of subjects like Art and Drama later on – assuming that you have maintained your interest through extra-curricular activities and can transfer skills from other GCSE subjects.

Q. Do GCSE choices affect my options at university – and maybe even my career?

A. Not unless you do something radical – and that is why we have a core of compulsory subjects! With the core you should be able to make most A Level choices and should have the GCSE qualifications requested by most universities and employers. Some students don't realise that without English, Mathematics and a Modern Foreign Language you may find that your options are limited later on. You should note that very competitive universities do not treat more 'creative / practical' subjects as the equals of more traditional 'academic' subjects if you are applying for an 'academic' course; if you have ambitions to study English at Oxford or Medicine at Cambridge then be careful about choosing more than 1 or 2 'creative / practical' subjects at GCSE. If this is the case a meeting with the Director of Studies or the Director of Sixth Form would be recommended to talk through your options.

Q. Do I need Drama GCSE to become an actress – or Art and Design to become an artist?

A. Not necessarily. For a few years you might develop your talent through LAMDA lessons or through extra-curricular Art. If you are good then there is always the option to study more formally later.

Q. My skills in English are not the best – I don't enjoy writing much and I find it difficult to think of a lot to say about things. What should I do for GCSE?

This is not an easy one. Unfortunately, most subjects are examined, at least in part, through the medium of the English language. We suggest that you make sensible choices of subjects but also seek to develop your skills by taking lessons with our SPECTRUM department. It will help us to timetable these lessons if you choose optional subjects from only 2 out of the 4 Blocks. Good subjects to consider might be Art and Design, PE, Music or Business Studies. Written work in these subjects tends to be broken down and more structured. Please ask for more personal advice.

Q. I want to give myself the best chance of getting into a competitive, academic course at university. What should I bear in mind when making my choices?

A. You may have heard about some of the concerns some universities have about the exams system. Because schools have more of an incentive to help students do well, more students are achieving the highest grades and it is therefore difficult for universities to tell which are the very brightest. One method that some universities are using is to compare the subjects in which their applicants earned their top GCSE grades. Rightly or wrongly, some universities believe that GCSEs in more traditional 'academic' subjects are worth more than those in more 'practical/ creative' subjects. You should consider whether you could do well in subjects like Triple Science, Geography, History, Spanish, Latin, Classical or Greek and, if you could, it might be safer to choose at least 3 of your options from this group.

Q. I really want to go to Art School. What should I do?

A. You should do Art GCSE if you possibly can and choose other subjects which you enjoy and which form a balance between being 'academic' and more 'practical / creative'. Typical choices might be Drama, Music or History, with Art.

Q. *Can I change my mind later?*

A. We would say that it is better to think things through carefully now and stick with your decision – unless something major happens. Remember that you may not be taught by the same teacher at GCSE, so your relationship with your existing teacher should not influence your choice of subjects. Also, GCSE work may be different, so if you find a topic you study in April less interesting you shouldn't suddenly decide that a subject you have enjoyed for three years is not for you. There may be more than one group at GCSE level, so don't worry too much about what your friends are choosing. Even if you do the same subjects as your friends, you may not be in the same class. You need to be independent and sensible, taking the long view about what is best for you, irrespective of short term and less important considerations. Take advice from teachers and parents. If there is a major reason then we can consider late requests – but if a subject is full at that stage, or if an option has already been discontinued because so few people chose it, then we cannot accommodate your choice. We cannot consider requests to do two subjects in the same block – it would be physically impossible for you to be in two classrooms at once!

Q. *Once I have made my choices I don't need to try in the subjects which I am dropping – right?*

A. Wrong! You always need to complete to the best of your ability things which you have started. It does not reflect well on you if you leave things half finished and neglected.

Q. *If I went to another school, wouldn't I be able to do any combination of subjects I liked?*

A. This is highly unlikely. All schools now run option-blocking systems of some sort and will ask you to make some choices; you would be very lucky if your preferences exactly matched what is available. Planning early helps schools to provide the best teaching and resources – by allowing you a free rein to make choices late and continually change your mind they would risk offering you a poorer education and, in fact, a misleading introduction to the adult world, which is all about making and having to live with choices.

Q. *I have never studied a language (or am really no good at it) – must I take it for GCSE?*

A. We would like everybody who possibly can to take a language at GCSE, because having a Modern Foreign Language is important to universities and later in life – and French is still the most popular second language in the UK and the other official language of the EU. Most of our trade is with EU countries – as a percentage, certainly much more than with Spanish-speaking South American countries. French speakers have many more job opportunities than those with just English. Further, French culture has had a close relationship with English culture over the centuries. French helps you to understand some aspects of English Language and Literature and History better. If everybody does the same language then we can set, and this helps you to have lessons appropriate to your ability and thus to do your very best.

If you have never studied French before, then we would like you to choose Spanish as an option if you have studied that. If you have never studied either, then you should consider having extra lessons in a language to catch up before deciding to abandon this part of your studies altogether. It may be appropriate to do so in some particular cases, but it is not advisable as a rule.

You also have the choice of studying an ancient language like Latin or Greek but you need to know that some universities (only London at time of writing) expect a Modern Foreign Language as part of their admissions criteria.

We are always ready to answer any other questions – just ask!



Heathfield School
Ascot