

**GCSE Courses & Curriculum**  
**2023-2025**

## INTRODUCTION

It is hard to believe that the time has come for you to make the choices that will start to define the way that your educational path will follow, but at the same time, it is hugely exciting, too.

In this booklet you will find information relating to the Key Stage 4 curriculum at St Gabriel's.

Options are a pivotal time in your education and provide an opportunity for you to develop further your academic interests, so embrace the next few weeks with the enthusiasm that you have for all that you do. Use the information evening as a time to discover and question. Find out what a GCSE in Computer Science is all about, learn what is expected of you in History or Geography — explore all the options that are open to you.

***Ricki Smith, Principal***

I am delighted to be your Director of Studies as you begin to look into your GCSE choices and to consider the range of subjects that we offer at Key Stage 4. Whilst you will be familiar with the majority of these subjects, there will also be the opportunity for you to consider subjects that you have not yet met. Please use this evening and the coming weeks to speak to your subject teachers, your tutor and myself as you begin the process of choosing your options for the next two years.

In Years 10 and 11, you will study towards a minimum of 9 GCSEs; 5 core subjects (\* in the subject pages), a Modern

Foreign Language and 3 option subjects. You will also have Physical Education lessons which are non-examined. The majority of students will have a study period once a week with the exception being students who wish to study Ancient Greek as an additional GCSE. All GCSE examinations will be assessed at the end of Year 11.

When there are a small number of students opting for a given subject, we reserve the right to withdraw the subject or to replace some of the teaching time with a designated private study activity. In these rare circumstances, we will contact you as soon as possible to discuss any arrangements that may be made.

Alongside your GCSE choices, you will continue to take part in our PSHE programme. This is delivered by form tutors and enhanced by visiting speakers, and incorporates comprehensive careers education and guidance, which is reinforced by Morrisby testing and Unifrog.

Do not be daunted by this decision making process; there are lots of people from whom you can get advice — just ask! Take into account your strengths and weaknesses, be informed and then make decisions on what you are interested in studying, while trying to keep as many future career paths open to you as possible. If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to come and speak to me.

***Anna Chicken, Director of Studies***



## KEY STAGE 4 CURRICULUM

As you are already aware, this is a very important time in your education. Now is the time to seek guidance and advice from a wide range of sources to ensure that you take the best possible combination of subjects. These will need to be chosen to play to your strengths and to ensure that any potential career paths are kept open.

Your form tutor plays a pivotal role in the GCSE process, delivering the PSHE programme; giving advice and guidance where necessary, and providing the first point of contact for any parental concerns. Subject teachers will offer impartial advice as to the subject's suitability for you, especially with respect to possible career paths and the subject's demands.

When choosing your options make sure you have a good balance of subjects. Whilst we will do our utmost to ensure your choices are met, on occasions this may not be possible. In this event, Mrs Chicken will meet with you to discuss the best way forward.

If you have any questions about any part of this process, please do not hesitate to speak to Mrs Chicken or myself.

***Emma Hammons, Head of Upper School***

### Key Dates

- 18 January: GCSE Options Evening**  
PSHE sessions during the first half of the Spring Term will guide students through the decision-making process.
- 7 February: Year 9 Parents' Evening (Online)**  
An opportunity for further discussion about option choices with subject teachers.
- 20 February:** Deadline for the return of the GCSE option choices form to tutors. Students should indicate their first choice option subjects.

In the **Summer Term**, a letter will be sent home confirming each student's GCSE option choices.

**Students wishing to change their choices after 20 February should contact Mrs Chicken, Director of Studies, immediately.**





## KEY STAGE 4 CURRICULUM

### What Do I Choose?

- The core subjects are compulsory: English Language, English Literature, Mathematics and Science
- A Modern Foreign Language is also compulsory (French, Mandarin Chinese or Spanish)
- Choose three further subjects from the list opposite as well as a reserve choice.

The option blocks will then be arranged to ensure that as many pupils as possible are able to take their first three subject choices. This may not always be possible, which is why a reserve choice is also necessary. We will confirm options at the start of the Summer Term.

- Classical Greek is available as an additional GCSE option choice. If you wish to study this subject, please talk to Mr Ives.

### GCSE Option Subjects

- Art & Design: Fine Art
- Art & Design: Photography
- Art & Design: Textile Design
- Business
- Classical Civilisation
- Classical Greek
- Computer Science
- Dance
- Design & Technology
- Drama
- Food Preparation & Nutrition
- French
- Geography
- History
- Latin
- Mandarin Chinese
- Music
- Physical Education
- Religious Studies: Philosophy & Ethics
- Spanish

### Staff Contact Details

Mrs A Chapman Vice-Principal	viceprincipal@stgabriels.co.uk
Mrs A Chicken Director of Studies	achicken@stgabriels.co.uk
Mrs E Hammons Head of Upper School	ehammons@stgabriels.co.uk
Mrs Jenny Shillaw Deputy Head of Lower School	jshillaw@stgabriels.co.uk

Mrs K Hastings (9S)	khastings@stgabriels.co.uk
Miss B Connor (9T)	bconnor@stgabriels.co.uk
Mrs N Weight (9G)	nweight@stgabriels.co.uk







## ART & DESIGN: FINE ART

### Examination Board & Specification:

WJEC Eduqas Art & Design: Art Craft & Design (endorsed)

### Head of Department:

Mr Paul Spurrett (pspurrett@stgabriels.co.uk)

### Aims of the course are to encourage students to:

- Actively engage with the process of art and design using a wide range of creative media
- Become confident in taking risks and learning from mistakes, when exploring and experimenting with ideas, materials, tools and techniques
- Develop cultural knowledge, understanding and application of art techniques, in historical and contemporary contexts
- Develop ideas, plan, produce and evaluate products
- Develop creative skills through learning to use imaginative and intuitive powers when exploring and creating outcomes which are original and individual
- Understand art, craft and design processes, associated equipment and safe working practices.

### General Description and Course Content:

Students undertaking Fine Art will have the opportunity to explore practical and relevant critical and contextual sources such as the work of historical and contemporary fine artists and the different purposes, intentions and functions of fine art as appropriate to their own work.

This course offers students the opportunity to explore their creative, artistic talents through a wide range of different mediums, exploring traditional and contemporary practices. These could include: drawing, painting, sculpture, printmaking, mixed media, printed or dyed materials, textile work, ceramics, jewellery, photo transfer onto fabric or other media and digital image making. Observational drawing is a key element and forms the basis of their work, leading to experimentation which will culminate in sophisticated final outcomes. Students are able to draw inspiration from a range of cultures and art periods/styles, bringing together different disciplines. Students are encouraged to think outside the box, exploring the unknown, to enable them to create end products which have challenged them both technically and creatively.

### Assessment:

**Coursework 60%:** Four terms, completed by end of Christmas holidays of the second year of the course.

**Examination 40%:** Eight weeks preparation time, which is followed by a 10 hour examination.

### Expectations for independent study:

The Art Department runs a number of activities and visits both in and out of school time. Students are able to work in the art rooms during the lunch break and after school. Visits to museums and galleries are considered to be an important part of the GCSE course.

### Is GCSE required in order to study this subject at A level?

Yes.



# ART & DESIGN: PHOTOGRAPHY

## Examination Board and Specification:

WJEC Eduqas Art and Design: Photography

## Head of Department:

Mr Paul Spurrett (pspurrett@stgabriels.co.uk)

## Aims of the course are to:

- Actively engage with the design process, using a range of photographic media and technique, showing understanding of the photographic processes and equipment
- Become confident in taking risks and learning from mistakes, when exploring and experimenting with ideas, materials, tools and techniques, using safe working practices.
- Develop cultural knowledge, understanding and application of photographic techniques, in historical and contemporary contexts
- Develop ideas, plan, produce and evaluate products
- Develop creative skills through learning to use imaginative and intuitive powers when exploring and creating outcomes which are original and individual.

## General Description and Course Content:

Work should form a means of personal enquiry and expression involving the selection and manipulation of images. Students must employ creative approaches which go beyond mere observation and recording. They are encouraged to work with film and digital technologies. Work with black and white film and a manual camera forms the basis of the course. Students learn to use this camera, develop film, print using the negatives, and explore the addition of colour to black and white prints with Toning and Colorvir. Digital work is carried out alongside the darkroom work. We create digital negatives, print with these in the darkroom, use Photoshop to manipulate images and combine black and white with colour by scanning negatives. Students are encouraged to work in three dimensions, and move on from the flat image. Work can include: documentary, studio, and/or location photography, photo-journalism and experimental imagery.

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

**Film-based Photography:** Students will be expected to develop knowledge and understanding of: the use of light in photography; film types and film speeds; viewpoint;

composition; focus; shutter speed; exposure, and darkroom techniques. In addition, students will experiment with the image through computers, scanners and computer software and explore the work of artists and photographers as inspiration.

**Digital Photography:** Students will be expected to develop knowledge and understanding of the use of light; pixel and digital processing; viewpoint; composition; focus; shutter speed; exposure; the use and qualities of Photoshop; connections between students' digital work and the work of others, linking to their own work, and the use of a range of source material, software and hardware in the generation and development of ideas and final outcomes.

**Materials required:** Students will need a manual SLR film camera and a digital SLR. Due to the cost and unavoidable wastage, students have to buy their own photographic paper and film. We can acquire these items at reduced cost. Chemicals will be provided.

## Assessment:

**Coursework 60%:** Four terms, completed by end of Christmas holidays of the second year of the course.

**Examination 40%:** Eight weeks preparation time followed by a 10 hour examination.

## Is GCSE required in order to study this subject at A level?

Yes.











# ART & DESIGN: TEXTILE DESIGN

## Examination Board & Specification:

WJEC Eduqas Art & Design: Textile Design

## Head of Department:

Mr Paul Spurrett (pspurrett@stgabriels.co.uk)

## Aims of the course are to encourage students to:

- Actively engage with the process of art and design using textile media
- Become confident in taking risks and learning from mistakes, when exploring and experimenting with ideas, media and techniques
- Develop cultural knowledge, understanding and application of textile art techniques, in historical and contemporary contexts
- Develop ideas, plan, produce and evaluate products
- Develop creative skills through learning to use imaginative and intuitive powers when exploring and creating outcomes which are original and individual
- Understand the art, craft and design processes, associated equipment and safe working practices.

## General Description and Course Content:

This course offers students the opportunity to explore their creative abilities through the medium of textiles. Students will have the opportunity to explore a wide range of media and techniques including: free-machinery, transfer printing, appliqué, reverse appliqué, silk printing, block printing, batik, dyeing, weaving, embellishing, felting, constructed textiles and heat-based processes. Students will also explore fashion design, including making their own commercial and experimental pattern-based garments.

Students will select a topic which is of personal significance to them, in discussion with art staff. They will be encouraged to explore a wide range of historical and contemporary textiles as well as study the functions of textiles products in the real world.

Students will also learn about the career opportunities available within the textiles industry, including: fashion design, textile design, theatrical costume design, fashion illustration, fashion forecasting, fashion journalism, millinery, footwear design, textile buying and colour consulting.

## Assessment:

**Coursework 60%:** Four terms, completed by end of Christmas holidays of the second year of the course.

**Examination 40%:** Eight weeks preparation time followed by a 10 hour examination.

## Expectations for independent study:

Students will have the opportunity to participate in a study visit to enrich their experiences, knowledge of artists and to gather first-hand research. In the past we have visited New York, Paris and Florence.

Students will also attend gallery and museum visits during their course and participate in a local screen-printing workshop, creating professional outcomes using their own designs.

## Is GCSE required in order to study this subject at A level?

No, but it is strongly recommended as practical skills will not be as developed as those who do study at GCSE level.



# BUSINESS

## Examination Board & Specification:

AQA Business 8132

## Head of Department:

Faye Hodges fhodges@stgabriels.co.uk

## Aims of the course are to encourage students to:

- understand business concepts, business terminology, business objectives, the integrated nature of business activity and the impact of business on individuals and wider society
- apply knowledge and understanding to contemporary business issues and to different types and sizes of businesses in local, national and global contexts
- develop as enterprising individuals with the ability to think commercially and creatively to demonstrate business acumen, and draw on evidence to make informed business decisions and solve business problems
- develop as effective and independent students, and as critical and reflective thinkers with enquiring minds
- use an enquiring, critical approach to make informed judgements
- investigate and analyse real business opportunities and issues to construct well-argued, well-evidenced, balanced and structured arguments, demonstrating their depth and breadth and understanding of business
- develop and apply quantitative skills relevant to business, including using and interpreting data. A sound grasp of numeracy is essential.

## General Description and Course Content:

Students apply their knowledge and understanding to different business contexts ranging from small enterprises to large multinationals and businesses operating in local, national and global contexts. Students develop an understanding of how these contexts impact on business behaviour.

Students will apply their knowledge and understanding to business decision making including:

- the interdependent nature of business activity, influences on business, business operations, finance, marketing and human resources, and how these interdependencies underpin business decision making
- how different business contexts affect business decisions

- the use and limitation of quantitative and qualitative data in making business decisions.

Our specification requires students to draw on the knowledge and understanding to:

- use business terminology to identify and explain business activity
- apply business concepts to familiar and unfamiliar contexts
- develop problem solving and decision making skills relevant to business
- investigate, analyse and evaluate business opportunities and issues
- make justified decisions using both qualitative and quantitative data including its selection, interpretation, analysis and evaluation, and the application of appropriate quantitative skills.

## Assessment:

2 Equally weighted 2 hour exams

The exams will measure how students have achieved the following assessment objectives.

- AO1: Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of business concepts and issues.
- AO2: Apply knowledge and understanding of business concepts and issues to a variety of contexts.
- AO3: Analyse and evaluate business information and issues to demonstrate understanding of business activity, make judgements and draw conclusions.

## Expectations for independent study:

Students will have the opportunity to participate in a study visit to enrich their experiences. Students will participate in financial education workshops, as well as enterprising group projects.

## Is GCSE required in order to study this subject at A level?

No, but it is strongly recommended to consider a KS4 Business specification in the run up to selecting A-Level Business in our sixth form.

# CLASSICAL CIVILISATION

## Examination Board & Specification:

OCR Classical Civilisation (J199)

## Head of Department:

Mr Marc Ives (mives@stgabriels.co.uk)

## Aims of the course are to:

Give a broad classical education to students, who should be able to tackle historical, literary and philosophical concepts and be able to make comparisons between the ancient and the modern world. This is not nearly as difficult as it sounds, with the Colosseum a good forerunner of modern sporting stadia; the politics of Rome or Greece providing many parallels to the Houses of Parliament, and the literature of Ovid or Homer still being used as inspiration for many contemporary films, plays and books. (Think, *The Song of Achilles*, *Troy* or even *The Hunger Games*).

## General Description and Course Content:

The course is split into two components, Myth and Religion (50%) and Roman City Life (50%). Students are expected to be able to write essays and answer context questions for both components.

## Assessment:

Both components are assessed through a 90 minute examination.

## Expectations for independent study:

There are so many books on the classical world that it is impossible to be prescriptive as to what students should read. The department is happy to advise and would certainly recommend that students spend some of their time reading classical material for fun. However, the best way to do this is to take a trip to a good bookshop and have a browse around the Classical section.

The Classics Department has always enjoyed bringing the ancient world to life. There is no better way to do this than to visit the ancient sites: Pompeii (2014), Sicily (2013 & 2018) and Greece (2016 & 2023).

## Is GCSE required in order to study this subject at A level?

No.



Sicily 2018



# CLASSICAL GREEK

## Examination Board and Specification:

OCR Greek (J292)

## Head of Department:

Mr Marc Ives (mives@stgabriels.co.uk)

## Aims of the course are to:

Enable students to feel confident in reading texts that were written over 2,500 years ago in their original form. Ultimately, the aim is to give students the opportunity to consider studying the subject for A level. However, it should also be something that is fun, not only because of the intellectual challenge, but due to the nature of the subject matter, which can encompass anything from the Trojan and Persian Wars to the legend of Odysseus returning home or the myths of Heracles. It should also be remembered that Greek is the ancient language that is, of all languages, most similar to its modern counter-part, and that approximately 25% of words in the English language have Greek derivatives; orchestra, chaos, atom, anaphylactic, paediatrician or theatre, just for starters.

## General Description and Course Content:

Students are required to answer questions on original Classical Greek literature and to do pieces of unseen translation. The literature is studied from the end of Year 10 and the unseen translation is based on a vocabulary list which students are given at the start of Year 10.

## Assessment:

There are three examinations: an unseen translation paper (mythology and history) worth 50% of GCSE and two set text papers worth 25% each. The set texts for examination in 2025 will be chosen from Herodotus, Xenophon, Homer and Euripides.

## Expectations for independent study:

It is impossible to achieve a good grade in Greek without having a very disciplined approach to work. The vocabulary list can be tested in lessons, as can the set text, but the only way to learn either of these is by putting in the hours outside of lesson time. It should also be pointed out that Greek is intellectually demanding and should only be attempted by the brave.

The Classics Department has always enjoyed bringing the ancient world to life. There is no better way to do this than to visit the ancient sites: Pompeii (2014), Sicily (2013 & 2018) and Greece (2016 & 2023).

## Is GCSE required in order to study this subject at A level?

Yes.



Greece 2016: Epidauros

# COMPUTER SCIENCE

## Examination Board & Specification:

AQA Computer Science (8525)

## Head of Department:

Mr John Mannion (jmannion@stgabriels.co.uk)

## Aims of the course are to:

- Develop the students' understanding of current and emerging technologies and how they work
- Apply this knowledge and understanding in a range of contexts
- Acquire and apply knowledge, technical skills and understanding of the use of algorithms in computer programs to solve problems using programming.

## General Description and Course Content:

Students will use Python 3 and SQL to develop skills and good practice in programming. Preparation for the first examination paper includes the designing, writing, testing and refining of program code based on tasks set by the school's Computer Science Department. These tasks will not be externally assessed.

- Topic 1: Fundamentals of algorithms  
Topic 2: Programming  
Topic 3: Fundamentals of data representation  
Topic 4: Computer systems  
Topic 5: Fundamentals of computer networks  
Topic 6: Cyber security

Topic 7: Relational databases and structured query language (SQL)

Topic 8: Ethical, legal and environmental impacts of digital technology on wider society, including issues of privacy

## Assessment:

The course will include two written assessments. Paper One tests computational thinking and programming skills and covers topics 1 and 2. It lasts for two hours and counts for 50% of the marks available for the qualification. Paper Two lasts for one and three quarter hours and covers topics 3 – 8. It counts for 50% of the marks available for the qualification.

## Expectations for independent study:

Students are encouraged to tackle a variety of programming tasks using Python 3, SQL and also acquire an understanding of AQA's version of pseudocode.

## Is GCSE required in order to study this subject at A level?

Yes.



Coding for Girls event at Vodafone's Newbury headquarters (August 2019)



# DANCE

## Examination Board & Specification:

AQA GCSE Dance 8236

## Head of Department:

Mrs Katie Hastings (khastings@stgabriels.co.uk)

## Aims of the course are to:

- Actively engage in the process of dance in order to develop as effective and independent learners and as critical and reflective thinkers
- Develop the skills, knowledge and understanding of a range of dance styles
- Develop physical, technical and expressive skills in order to communicate choreographic intention and develop as performers
- Develop the skills, knowledge and understanding of choreography in order 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
- Develop knowledge and understanding of health, fitness and safe working practices relevant to performing and choreographing dances.

## General Description and Course Content:

The course content includes dance as a part of a healthy lifestyle, safe practice in dance, dance techniques, the history of dance and choreographical skills. Students study a minimum of six short professional dance works.

## Assessment:

### Component 1: Performance and Choreography

Performance:

- You will learn four set phrases and perform two as a solo (approximately 1 minute)
- The other two set phrases will become part of a duet or trio performance (approximately 3—5 minutes)

Choreography:

- Either a solo or group choreography of between 2—3 minutes, choreographed in response to a range of stimuli chosen by the exam board
- The practical component is marked out of 80 and is worth 60% of the overall GCSE Grade

### Component 2: Dance Appreciation

- Knowledge and appreciation of the choreographic processes and performing skills
- Critical appreciation of your own work
- Critical appreciation of six short professional dance works
- 40% of the overall GCSE grade and is assessed through a 90 minute written exam.

## Expectations for independent study:

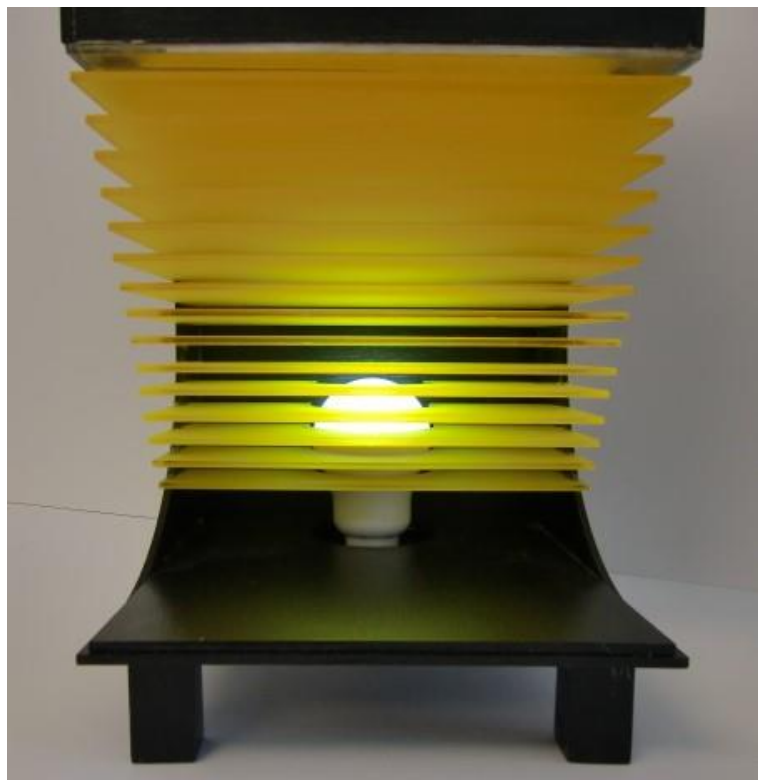
Students of dance will participate in dance clubs within school and are automatically enrolled as members of the school dance company. There is no expectation that GCSE dance students will take dance examinations outside of school.

## Is GCSE required in order to study this subject at A level?

Yes.







Year 11 Controlled Assessment Practical Outcomes

# DESIGN & TECHNOLOGY

## Examination Board & Specification:

AQA Design & Technology (8552)

## Head of Department:

Mrs Jennifer Knott (jknott@stgabriels.co.uk)

## Aims of the course are to:

- Develop realistic design proposals as a result of the exploration of design opportunities and user's needs, wants and values
- Use imagination, experimentation and a combination of ideas when designing
- Develop the skills to critique and refine their own ideas whilst designing and making
- Communicate design ideas and decisions using different media and techniques, as appropriate for different audiences at key points in their designing
- Develop decision making skills, including the planning and organisation of time and resources when managing their own project work
- Develop a broad knowledge of materials, components and technologies and practical skills to develop high quality, imaginative and functional prototypes
- Be ambitious and open to explore and take risks in order to stretch the development of design proposals, avoiding clichéd or stereotypical responses
- Consider the costs, commercial viability and marketing of products
- Demonstrate safe working practices in design and technology
- Use key design and technology terminology including those related to: designing; innovation and communication; materials and technologies; making; manufacture and production; critiquing, values and ethics.

## General Description and Course Content:

The following topics are taught through a variety of practical tasks and theory lessons: new and emerging technologies, energy storage and generation, modern and smart materials, mechanical devices, using and working with materials, stock forms, types and sizes, commercial manufacturing processes, quality control, selecting appropriate tools, equipment and processes, CAD/CAM, effective communication of design ideas, investigation, primary and secondary data, prototype development, selection of materials and components, tolerances, systems approach to designing, materials and their working properties, sources and origins of materials.

As part of the course, students are also offered the opportunity to visit the Design Museum and V&A Museum

in London and also the Mini production plant to learn about the modern manufacturing systems.

## Assessment:

The written examination (50% of total marks) comprises three sections:

- Section A: Core technical principles
- Section B: Specialist technical principles
- Section C: Designing and making principles

The non-exam assessment (50% of total marks and approximately 30-35 hours). A single design and make project selected from a range of contextual challenges set by the examination board. Students are required to demonstrate the design process through the production of a portfolio of design work consisting of research, design idea generation, modelling, testing, development of a solution, making of the final product and testing and evaluation.

## Expectations for independent study:

Students will be required to undertake independent research as a basis for the controlled assessment and in preparation for the written examination. It would also be beneficial if students kept abreast of future developments in technology and design.

## Is GCSE required in order to study this subject at A level?

Yes, studying this course at GCSE level is advisable as it will set the student up with the majority of the skills and knowledge needed to progress onto the A level course with competency.





# DRAMA

## Examination Board and Specification:

AQA Drama (8261)

## Head of Department:

Mrs Ruth Chaplin (rchaplin@stgabriels.co.uk)

## Aims of the course are to:

- Encourage candidates to actively engage in the process of dramatic study in order to develop as effective and independent learners and as critical and reflective thinkers with enquiring minds
- Encourage students to work imaginatively and creatively in collaborative contexts, generating, developing and communicating ideas
- Give students the opportunity to reflect on and evaluate their own work and that of others
- Develop and demonstrate competence in a range of practical, creative and performance skills
- Develop a basis for the students' future role as active citizens in employment and society in general, as well as for the possible further study of drama
- Consider and explore the impact of social, historical and cultural influences on drama texts and activities.

## General Description and Course Content:

People often assume that GCSE Drama is a course for aspiring actors, but the skills developed are much more far-reaching. It is widely recognised that Drama can make an enormous contribution to personal development. Today's employers are looking for mature, confident, creative people who can communicate effectively and work as part of a team - precisely the qualities and skills that Drama develops. GCSE Drama is practical, rewarding and fun!

The course gives students the opportunity to understand different points of view, to form their own opinions, to listen purposefully and to develop their language and communication skills. They are also given responsibility for planning and research and will experience working to a real deadline - the arrival of an audience. In addition, GCSE Drama develops per-formance techniques and gives students an under-standing and appreciation of drama as an art form and of its place in our culture.

Guidance is also provided on the theatrical skills students will need to work on. In the practical components, students may specialise in performing, lighting, sound, set, costume and/or puppets.

## Assessment:

**Component 1: Understanding Drama.** 40% of GCSE.  
Written examination: 1 hour 45 minutes. Open book.

**What is assessed?** Knowledge and understanding of drama and theatre; study of one set play from a choice of six, and analysis and evaluation of the work of live theatre-makers.

**Component 2: Devising Drama.** 40% of GCSE.  
Practical. Marked by teachers and moderated by AQA.

**What is assessed?** Process of creating devised drama; performance of devised drama (students may contribute as performer or designer), and analysis and evaluation of own work.

**Component 3: Texts in Practice.** 20% of GCSE.  
Practical. Marked by AQA.

**What is assessed?** Performance of two extracts from one play (students may contribute as performer or designer). Free choice of play but it must contrast with the set play chosen for Component 1.

## Expectations for independent study:

Candidates should take an interest in theatre and performance, and see as much professional theatre as possible.

**Is GCSE required in order to study this subject at A level?**

Yes.



## ENGLISH LANGUAGE\*

### Examination Board and Specification:

AQA English (8700)

### Head of Department:

Mrs Natalie Weight  
(nweight@stgabriels.co.uk)

### Aims of the course are to develop students' ability to:

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

### General Description and Course Content:

English Language is taught in conjunction with English Literature. All examinations are taken at the end of Year 11, with two papers for Language that focus on either fiction or non-fiction.

### Assessment:

All texts in the examination will be unseen.

#### Paper 1: Explorations in Creative Reading & Writing

Written examination: 1 hour 45 minutes. 50% of GCSE

**Section A: Reading:** One literature fiction text. One short, two longer and one extended comprehension question. 40 marks (25%)

**Section B: Writing:** Descriptive or narrative writing. One extended writing question. 40 marks (25%)

#### Paper2: Writers' Viewpoints & Perspectives

Written examination: 1 hour and 45 minutes. 50% of GCSE

**Section A: Reading:** One non-fiction text and one literary non-fiction text, which are linked by theme. One short, two longer and one extended comprehension question. 40 marks (25%)

**Section B: Writing :** Writing to present a viewpoint. One extended writing question. 40 marks (25%)

### Expectations for independent study:

Students should ensure they read good quality newspapers and non-fiction texts, such as autobiographies, as well as quality fiction.

### Is GCSE required in order to study English at A level?

Yes.



# ENGLISH LITERATURE\*

## Examination Board and Specification:

AQA English Literature (8702)

## Head of Department:

Mrs Natalie Weight

(nweight@stgabriels.co.uk)

## Aims of the course are to develop students' ability to:

- Read a wide range of classic literature fluently and with good understanding, and make connections across their reading
- Read in depth, critically and evaluatively, so that they are able to discuss and explain their understanding and ideas
- Appreciate the depth and power of the English literary heritage
- Write accurately, effectively and analytically about their reading, using Standard English
- Acquire and use a wide vocabulary, including the grammatical terminology and other literary and linguistic terms they need to criticise and analyse what they read.

## General Description and Course Content:

English Literature is taught in conjunction with English Language. All examinations are taken at the end of Year 11, with two papers for Literature that cover the three genres of poetry, drama and prose.

## Assessment:

All assessments are closed book: any stimulus material

required will be provided as part of the assessment.

## Paper 1: Shakespeare and the 19<sup>th</sup> Century Novel

Written examination: 1 ¾ hours. 40% of GCSE

**Section A:** Shakespeare. Students will answer one question on their set play, currently *Romeo & Juliet*. They will write in detail about an extract and then about the play as a whole.

**Section B:** The 19<sup>th</sup> Century novel. Students will answer one question on their set novel, currently *A Christmas Carol*. They will write in detail about an extract and then about the text as a whole.

## Paper 2: Modern Texts and Poetry

Written examination: 2 ¼ hours. 60% of GCSE

**Section A:** Modern Texts: One essay question on set modern text, currently *An Inspector Calls*.

**Section B:** Poetry: One comparative question on two poems from the set anthology.

**Section C:** Unseen Poetry: One question on an unseen poem and one question comparing unseen poems.

## Expectations for independent study:

Students should be prepared to read around the contexts of the texts being studied as well as reading good quality fiction to support their interpretations of text.

## Is GCSE required in order to study English at A level?

Yes.





# FOOD PREPARATION & NUTRITION

## Examination Board and Specification:

AQA Food Preparation & Nutrition (8585)

## Head of Department:

Mrs Jennifer Knott (jknott@stgabriels.co.uk)

## Aims of the course are to:

- Demonstrate effective and safe cooking skills by planning, preparing and cooking using a variety of food commodities, cooking techniques and equipment
- Develop knowledge and understanding of the functional properties and chemical processes as well as the nutritional content of food and drink
- Understand the relationship between diet, nutrition and health, including the physiological and psychological effects of poor diet and health
- Understand the economic, environmental, ethical, and socio-cultural influences on food availability, production processes, and diet and health choices
- Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of functional and nutritional properties, sensory qualities and microbiological food safety considerations when preparing, processing, storing, cooking and serving food
- Understand and explore a range of ingredients and processes from different culinary traditions (traditional British and international), to inspire new ideas or modify existing recipes.

## General Description and Course Content:

This new Food Preparation & Nutrition GCSE is an exciting and creative course, which focuses on practical cooking skills to ensure students develop a thorough understanding of nutrition, food provenance and the working characteristics of food materials. At its heart, this qualification focuses on nurturing students' practical cookery skills to give them a strong understanding of nutrition.

Food preparation skills are integrated into five core topics: Food, nutrition and health, Food science, Food safety, Food choice and Food provenance

## Assessment:

**Written examination:** 50% of GCSE. Comprises of two sections that test theoretical knowledge of the specification subject content:

**Section A:** Multiple-choice questions structured to reflect the sections of the specification.

**Section B:** Contains five questions varying in styles of approach and content.

**Non Examination Assessment:** 50% of GCSE. Students will undertake one food investigation report and one food preparation assessment.

**Food investigation (15%).** Students write a report (1,500 – 2,000 words) on their understanding of the scientific principles that underpin the preparation and cooking of food.

**Food preparation assessment** (written, electronic portfolio) (35%). Students will plan, prepare, cook and present a three-course menu within 3 hours.

## Expectations for independent study:

In addition to homework, students are encouraged to keep abreast of relevant news around food production, technology and nutrition. Students should be encouraged to cook regularly at home to further develop their practical skills.

## Materials required:

Students are required to bring in ingredients and suitable containers for the dishes they cook. Basic store cupboard ingredients (e.g. oil, salt, pepper) are provided.

## Opportunities for further study in Sixth Form:

Students in Sixth Form can undertake the in-house Sixth Form Cookery Course (8 three hour after-school sessions). Students do not have to have taken GCSE Food Preparation & Nutrition to participate in this course.



# FRENCH

## Examination Board and Specification:

AQA French 8658

## Head of Department:

Miss Sarah Ferretti (sferretti@stgabriels.co.uk)

## Aims of the course are to:

- Develop language skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing) in a variety of contexts
- To build on the KS3 study and prepare students for further study at A level.

## General Description and Course Content:

The course content consists of three themes, each covering four topics:

### Theme 1: Identity & Culture

Me, my family & friends; technology in everyday life; free-time activities, and customs & festivals in French-speaking countries/communities.

### Theme 2: Local, National, International & Global Areas of Interest

Home, town, neighbourhood & region; social issues; global issues, and travel & tourism.

### Theme 3: Current & Future Study & Employment

My studies; life at school/college; education post-16, and jobs, career choices and ambitions.

## Assessment:

GCSE French has a Foundation Tier (grades 1–5) and a Higher Tier (grades 4–9). Students must take all four question papers at the same tier. All question papers are

externally assessed.

**Paper 1: Listening.** Written exam: 35 minutes (Foundation Tier), 45 minutes (Higher Tier). 40 marks (Foundation Tier), 50 marks (Higher Tier). 25% of GCSE. Each exam includes 5 minutes' reading time of the question paper before the listening stimulus is played.

**Paper 2: Speaking.** Non-exam assessment. 7-9 minutes (Foundation Tier) + preparation time. 10-12 minutes (Higher Tier) + preparation time. 60 marks for both Foundation Tier and Higher Tier. 25% of GCSE.

**Paper 3: Reading.** Written exam: 45 minutes Foundation Tier, 1 hour (Higher Tier). 60 marks for both Foundation Tier and Higher Tier. 25% of GCSE.

**Paper 4: Writing.** Written exam: 1 hour (Foundation Tier), 1 hour 15 minutes (Higher Tier). 50 marks at Foundation Tier and 60 marks at Higher Tier. 25% of GCSE.

## Expectations for independent study:

Students are expected to learn vocabulary on a weekly basis. It is important to practise the new language acquired in lessons regularly throughout the week. Resources and links to recommended websites, which will help students consolidate listening and reading skills and acquire and practise grammar, are available on Office 365. GCSE clinics run in extra-curricular time and students are also supported by the Modern Foreign Language assistants.

## Is GCSE required in order to study this subject at A level?

Yes.





# GEOGRAPHY

## Examination Board and Specification:

AQA Geography

## Head of Department:

Mrs Rebecca Harvey (rharvey@stgabriels.co.uk)

## Aims of the course are to:

Develop a variety of skills, including literacy and numeracy, communication, graphical and cart-ographical skills; technological skills, including ICT and GIS; interpersonal skills through debate and discussion; problem-solving skills, and independent learning. These skills are highly transferable and help to keep options open for A level study, university and beyond.

## General Description and Course Content:

With the rapid growth of the world's population, and an increasing awareness of the strains this puts on our planet, we need a greater understanding of our world. Geography encourages us to explore the interactions between humans and the physical landscape, and examines the ways in which we are affecting the future of planet earth. By examining case studies and examples on both global and local scales geographers endeavour to find a sustainable solution — to improve people's standard of living, but at the same time ensuring the safe development of the planet for future generations.

## Course content:

### Living with the physical environment

- The challenge of natural hazards
- Physical landscapes in the UK
- The living world

### Challenges in the human environment

- Urban issues & challenges
- Changing economic world
- Challenge of resource management

## Fieldwork

Fieldwork is an integral part of the Geography GCSE course. Students will participate in two days of fieldwork, one investigating human geography and one physical geography. This is then examined in Paper 3.

## Assessment:

**Paper 1:** Living with the physical environment (90 minutes)  
35% of GCSE

**Paper 2:** Challenges in the human environment (90 minutes)  
35% of GCSE

**Paper 3:** Geographical applications (75 minutes) 30% of GCSE

## Expectations for independent study:

Students will be issued with a reading list with a breadth of content, to encourage them to look beyond the topics covered and understand the variety of geography. They will also be expected to keep up-to-date with current geographical issues in the media. Girls will be encouraged to research any topics that interest them beyond the specification.

## Is GCSE required in order to study this subject at A level?

No, but preferred.



Geography GCSE Fieldwork in Dorset

# HISTORY

## Examination Board and Specification:

Edexcel Modern World History (1HI0)

## Head of Department:

Mrs Jennifer Shillaw (jshillaw@stgabriels.co.uk)

## Aims of the course are to:

By the end of the course, you will be able to research independently, summarise effectively and write clearly. You will be able to weigh up evidence and think analytically. You will also have a good understanding of some big historical themes including: how war changed over time, how monarchies operated, how dictatorships were established and maintained, how countries fell out with one another – and were able to repair relations. Above all, you will have a better understanding of the world around you... making you a more informed and interesting person!

## General Description and Course Content:

There are three units:

**Paper 1: Medicine Through Time, c1250 - Present.** Key periods include Medieval England, the medical Renaissance period, medicine c1700-1900 and medicine in modern Britain. The topics cover ideas about the causes of disease and illness as well as methods of prevention and treatment.

**Paper 2: The Cold War 1945-90, Henry VIII and his Ministers 1509-40.** The first part of the paper covers the superpower rivalry between the USA and Russia between 1945 and 1990. Topics include the origins of the Cold War, the Hungarian Uprising, the Cuban Missile Crisis and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. The second part of the paper covers the political and religious upheaval that took place in the reign of Henry VIII. Topics include the rise and fall of Wolsey, Anne Boleyn and Thomas Cromwell.

**Paper 3: Weimar and Nazi Germany 1918-39.** The rise of the Nazis and the nature of Nazi rule. Topics include the police state, propaganda, the indoctrination of children and the treatment of German Jews.

## Assessment:

Assessment: All of the units test historical knowledge and writing skills. In addition, Paper 1 tests source skills and Paper 3 tests the student's ability to evaluate the arguments of historians.

## Expectations for independent study:

Wider reading (a list will be issued to students at the beginning of the course); learning key terms, names, dates and vocabulary for regular tests.

**Is GCSE required in order to study this subject at A level?**

No, but preferred.



GCSE & A level students at the Menin Gate



# LATIN

## Examination Board and Specification:

OCR Latin (J282)

## Head of Department:

Mr Marc Ives (mives@stgabriels.co.uk)

## Aims of the course are to:

The aims of the course are varied according to one's perception as to the value of education. If one wants the straight down the line academic benefits, these include an ability to problem solve, a greater understanding of English grammar, an improved comprehension of the Romance languages, the skills to be able to read original texts (unadulterated: Latin and Greek are the only languages at GCSE that require students to answer questions on the language in its original literary form), and many other things. However, learning is valuable simply for itself, and Latin aims to foster this belief that every society needs a strong and erudite cultural foundation.

## General Description and Course Content:

Students are required to answer questions on original Latin literature and to do pieces of unseen translation. The literature is studied from the end of Year 10 and the unseen translation is based on a vocabulary list which students are given at the start of Year 10.

## Assessment:

There are three examinations: one unseen translation paper (mythology and history) worth 50% of GCSE and two set text papers worth 25% each. The set texts for examination in 2025 will be chosen from Virgil, Ovid, Apuleius and Cicero.

## Expectations for independent study:

It is impossible to achieve a good grade in Latin without having a very disciplined approach to work. The vocabulary list can be tested in lessons, as can the set text, but the only way to learn either of these is by putting in the hours outside of lesson time. The Classics Department has always enjoyed bringing the ancient world to life. There is no better way to do this than to visit the ancient sites: Pompeii (2014), Sicily (2013 & 2018) and Greece (2016 & 2023).

## Is GCSE required in order to study this subject at A level?

Yes.



Sicily 2013: Year 10 at the Temple of Segesta

# MANDARIN CHINESE

## Examination Board and Specification:

AQA Chinese (Spoken Mandarin) 8673

## Head of Department:

Miss Sarah Ferretti (sferretti@stgabriels.co.uk)

## Aims of the course are to:

- Develop language skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing) in a variety of contexts
- To build on the KS3 study and prepare students for further study at A Level.

## General Description and Course Content:

The course content consists of three themes, each covering four topics:

### Theme 1: Identity & Culture

Me, my family & friends; technology in everyday life; free-time activities, and customs & festivals in Chinese-speaking countries/communities.

### Theme 2: Local, National, International & Global Areas of Interest

Home, town, neighbourhood & region; social issues; global issues, and travel & tourism.

### Theme 3: Current & Future Study & Employment

My studies; life at school/college; education post-16, and jobs, career choices and ambitions.

## Assessment:

GCSE Chinese (Spoken Mandarin) has a Foundation Tier (grades 1–5) and a Higher Tier (grades 4–9). Students must take all four question papers at the same tier. All question papers must be taken in the same series and will be externally assessed.

**Paper 1: Listening.** Written exam: 35 minutes (Foundation Tier), 45 minutes (Higher Tier). 40 marks (Foundation Tier), 50 marks (Higher Tier). 25% of GCSE. Each exam includes 5 minutes' reading time of the question paper before the listening stimulus is played.

**Paper 2: Speaking.** Non-exam assessment. 7-9 minutes (Foundation Tier) + preparation time. 10-12 minutes (Higher Tier) + preparation time. 60 marks for both Foundation Tier and Higher Tier. 25% of GCSE.

**Paper 3: Reading.** Written exam: 45 minutes Foundation Tier, 1 hour (Higher Tier). 60 marks for both Foundation Tier and Higher Tier. 25% of GCSE.

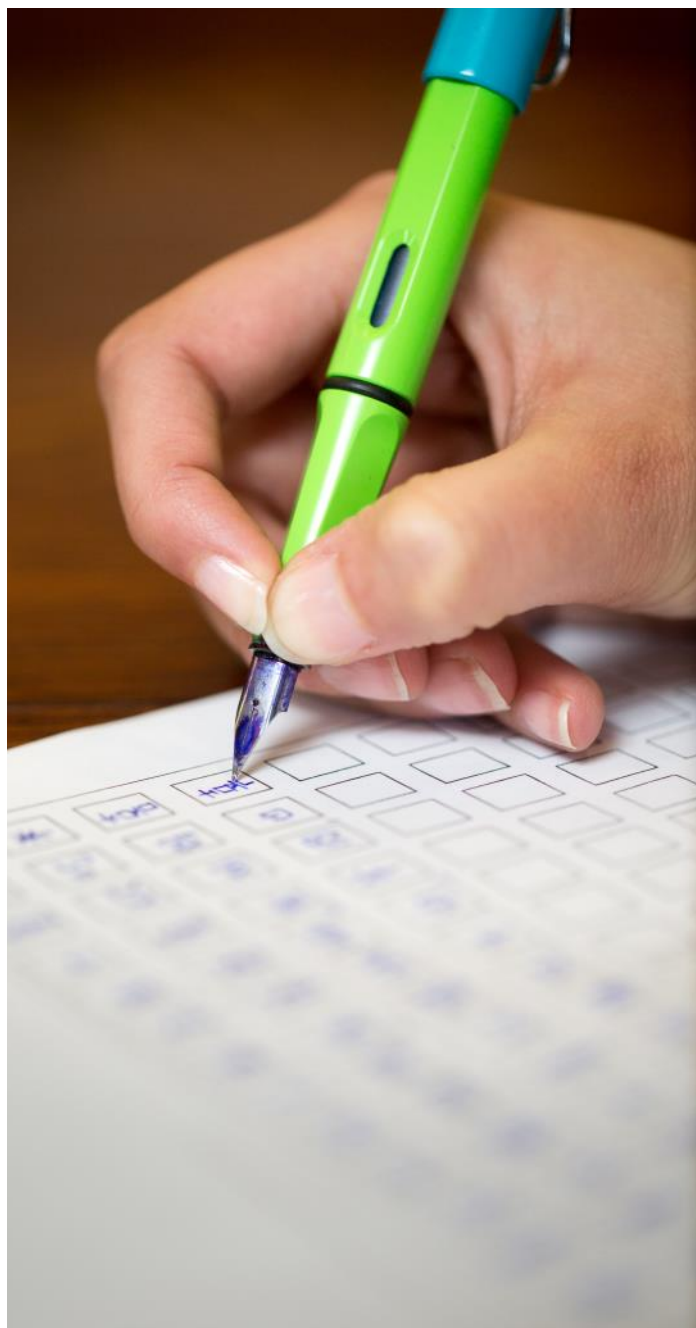
**Paper 4: Writing.** Written exam: 1 hour (Foundation Tier), 1 hour 15 minutes (Higher Tier). 50 marks at Foundation Tier and 60 marks at Higher Tier. 25% of GCSE.

## Expectations for independent study:

Students are expected to learn vocabulary on a weekly basis. It is important to practise the new language acquired in lessons regularly throughout the week. Resources and links to recommended websites, which will help students consolidate listening and reading skills and acquire and practise grammar, are available on Office 365. GCSE clinics run in extra-curricular time and students are also supported by the Modern Foreign Language assistants.

## Is GCSE required in order to study this subject at A Level?

Yes.





# Edexcel GCSE (9-1) Maths: need-to-know formulae

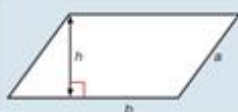
[www.edexcel.com/gcsemathsformulae](http://www.edexcel.com/gcsemathsformulae)

## Areas

Rectangle =  $l \times w$



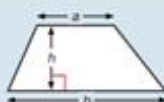
Parallelogram =  $b \times h$



Triangle =  $\frac{1}{2} b \times h$



Trapezium =  $\frac{1}{2} (a + b)h$



## Volumes

Cuboid =  $l \times w \times h$



Prism = area of cross section  $\times$  length



Cylinder =  $\pi r^2 h$



Volume of pyramid =  $\frac{1}{3} \times$  area of base  $\times h$



## Circles

Circumference =  $\pi \times$  diameter,  $C = \pi d$

Circumference =  $2 \times \pi \times$  radius,  $C = 2\pi r$

Area of a circle =  $\pi \times$  radius squared  $A = \pi r^2$



## Pythagoras

### Pythagoras' Theorem

For a right-angled triangle,  
 $a^2 + b^2 = c^2$



### Trigonometric ratios (new to F)

$\sin x^\circ = \frac{\text{opp}}{\text{hyp}}$ ,  $\cos x^\circ = \frac{\text{adj}}{\text{hyp}}$ ,  $\tan x^\circ = \frac{\text{opp}}{\text{adj}}$



## Quadratic equations

### The Quadratic Equation

The solutions of  $ax^2 + bx + c = 0$ ,  
where  $a \neq 0$ , are given by  $x = \frac{-b \pm \sqrt{b^2 - 4ac}}{2a}$

## Compound measures

### Speed

$\text{speed} = \frac{\text{distance}}{\text{time}}$



### Density

$\text{density} = \frac{\text{mass}}{\text{volume}}$



### Pressure

$\text{pressure} = \frac{\text{force}}{\text{area}}$

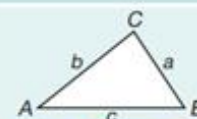


## Trigonometric formulae

Sine Rule  $\frac{a}{\sin A} = \frac{b}{\sin B} = \frac{c}{\sin C}$

Cosine Rule  $a^2 = b^2 + c^2 - 2bc \cos A$

Area of triangle =  $\frac{1}{2} ab \sin C$



Foundation tier formulae

Higher tier formulae

# MATHEMATICS\*

## Examination Board and Specification:

Edexcel 1MA1 (9-1)

## Head of Department:

Mrs Vicci Vaughan ([vvaughan@stgabriels.co.uk](mailto:vvaughan@stgabriels.co.uk))

## Aims of the course:

GCSE Mathematics is designed to equip each student with

- Fluent knowledge, skills and understanding of mathematical methods and concepts and the ability to acquire, select and apply mathematical techniques to solve problems
- Reason mathematically, make deductions and inferences, and draw conclusions
- Comprehend, interpret and communicate mathematical information in a variety of forms appropriate to the information and context.

## General Description and Course Content:

The course will cover the topics in the areas of number, algebra, ratio, proportion and rates of change, geometry and measures, probability and statistics.

Concepts and techniques will be introduced to students and will be developed through problem solving. Students will need to build fluent and flexible recall of formulae and their application in questions that will require the synthesis of multiple ideas. Solutions to problems will require students to communicate their reasoning and final conclusions clearly.

## Assessment:

Students will sit a final examination that consists of three papers, each 90 minutes long and each worth 80 marks. One paper is non-calculator and the other two allow candidates to use a calculator.

There are two tiers of entry – Foundation and Higher, with grades 1 – 5 (a good GCSE pass) available on the Foundation paper and grades 4-9 awarded on the Higher paper. Decisions about final tier of entry are not usually made until later in Year 11.

## AQA Level 2 Certificate in Further Mathematics (8365)

For those students in Set 1 who show a confident understanding of the Higher GCSE content, may study additional topics that are part of the syllabus for the Further Mathematics qualification.

These students will sit two further papers at the end of Year 11 to achieve this additional qualification.

## Expectations for Independent Study

In addition to the two homework tasks that are set each week, students should be prepared to spend time reviewing previously studied topics to build fluent and accurate recall of formulae and techniques, or to consolidate their understanding of topics where they feel less confident. Successful mathematicians build their knowledge throughout the course; asking for help from their teachers, or using resources such as textbooks, revision guides and websites to practice and develop their skills.

## Is GCSE required in order to study this subject at A Level?

Yes



# MUSIC

## Examination Board and Specification

AQA Music (8271)

### Head of Department:

Miss Caroline Woodhouse ([cwoodhouse@stgabriels.co.uk](mailto:cwoodhouse@stgabriels.co.uk))

### Aims of the course:

Students will deepen their musical understanding of a wide range of music from four main areas of study including the classical western tradition, pop, rock, jazz and blues, traditional folk, world and fusion music. They will build upon their knowledge of music theory and refine their instrumental/vocal skills in solo and ensemble settings including creating their own arrangements and curating bespoke performance opportunities. Students will also build confidence as composers by developing a range of techniques and approaches to create and record their own music. Throughout the course students will develop valuable skills in analysis, interpretation, improvisation, creative thinking, project management, leadership and presentation.

### General Description and Course Content:

The GCSE Music course has practical music making at its heart with performance and composition elements (60%) completed prior to the end of course examination (40%).

**Area of Study 1:** Western Classical Music 1650 - 1910

**Area of Study 2:** Popular Music

**Area of Study 3:** Traditional Music

**Area of Study 4:** Western Classical 1910 onwards

Students who love music and wish to study the GCSE course will need to demonstrate that they will be able to perform to at least Grade 4 standard (they do not need to

have taken a formal examination) by the end of the course.

### Assessment:

**Performance (30% of total marks)** – minimum of 4 mins recorded performance including one solo and one ensemble performance.

**Composition (30% of total marks)** – creation of two compositions which last a minimum of three minutes. One in response to a set brief and the other a free composition.

***Performance and Composition elements are internally marked and externally moderated.***

Written Paper (40% of total marks) – 1 1/2 hour listening paper marked by an external examiner. Students will identify musical elements, context and notations from the four areas of study and answer questions appraising two set study pieces.

### Expectations for Independent Study

Students who are keen musicians will already be adding to their learning through their instrumental/vocal lessons and regular rehearsals. GCSE candidates are also expected to take part in at least one school ensemble to support the performance skills element of their course. The facilities and expertise of music staff are readily available during the school day and many students find great enjoyment investing some extra time in their performing and composing activities.

### Is GCSE required in order to study this subject at A Level?

Not essential, if performing/theory skills are sufficiently high.



# PHYSICAL EDUCATION

## Examination Board and Specification:

AQA Physical Education (8582)

## Head of Department:

Mrs Verity Brazendale (vbrazendale@stgabriels.co.uk)

## Aims of the course:

This qualification is linear with students sitting all their exams and submitting all their non-exam assessment at the end of the course. GCSE Physical Education is comprised of both practical and theoretical elements. The course is 60% theory and 40% practical and is designed to show that candidates are able to plan, perform and evaluate physical activities by demonstrating their knowledge, skills and understanding of a range of physical activities.

## General Description and Course Content:

The theoretical side of the course looks at applied anatomy and physiology, movement analysis, physical training, use of data, sports psychology, socio-cultural influences, health, fitness and wellbeing.

## Assessment:

### Paper 1: The Human Body and Movement in Physical Activity and Sport (30%)

Written exam: 1¼ hours. A mixture of multiple choice/objective test questions, short answer questions and extended answer questions. Areas examined: applied anatomy and physiology, movement analysis, physical

training and use of data.

### Paper 2: Socio-cultural and Well-being in Physical Activity and Sport (30%)

Written exam: 1¼ hours. A mixture of multiple choice/objective test questions, short answer questions and extended answer questions. Areas examined: sports psychology, socio-cultural influences, health, fitness and wellbeing and use of data.

**Practical (30%):** Practical performance in **three** different physical activities in the role of player/performer (one in a team activity, one in an individual activity and a third in either a team or in an individual activity). For each of their three activities, students will be assessed in skills in progressive drills (10 marks per activity) and in the full context (15 marks per activity).

**Coursework (10%):** Analysis and evaluation of performance to bring about improvement in one activity. Assessed by teachers and moderated by AQA, students will be assessed on their analysis and evaluation of performance to bring about improvement in one activity.

## Expectations for independent study:

Use the media to learn about current affairs related to sport, health and fitness. Research National Governing Bodies via their websites. Extra curricular involvement in sporting clubs and teams in and out of school.

## Is GCSE required in order to study this subject at A level?

No, but preferred.





# RELIGIOUS STUDIES: PHILOSOPHY & ETHICS

## Examination Board and Specification:

AQA Religious Studies Spec A (8062)

## Head of Department:

Mr Alan Beverly (abevery@stgabriels.co.uk)

## Why are we here? What is the right thing to do? How do Buddhists and Christians view the world?

### Aims of the course are to:

- Provide girls with space to debate and develop their own views on religion, spirituality and the wider world
- Allow students to reflect on ultimate questions about the meaning and purpose of life
- Help girls understand the extraordinary diversity of views held by religious people
- Help girls develop argumentative written skills. Can you back up your views?

### General Description and Course Content:

The course is split into two parts:

**Part 1:** Understanding religious beliefs and practices. Two very different belief systems are studied, Buddhism and Christianity.

**Part 2:** Investigating four themes on modern ethical and philosophical issues. The themes (with some example questions included) are as follows:

- **Religion & Life.** What are the origins of the universe? What value does the Earth have? Are euthanasia and abortion acceptable? What might happen after we die?
- **Relationships & Families.** Should men and women have different roles? What do religious people really think about homosexuality? Is contraception only a good thing? What does the institution of marriage mean today?

- **Crime & Punishment.** Is the death penalty ever justified? What would a fair justice system look like? Why do some people keep committing crime? Should prisons be harsh or should they rehabilitate criminals?
- **The Existence of God & Revelation.** Is there any good evidence for the existence of a God? What caused the Universe to exist? Why is there something rather than pure nothingness? Can science and religion work together?

### Assessment:

At the end of Year 11 students sit two written exams, each lasting 1¾ hours. Questions range from very brief through to a 12 mark **evaluative** question where students write approximately four paragraphs (or much more if you want), so no full-length essays. Girls will take a test at the end of each topic to check they are heading in the right direction.

### Expectations for independent study:

Students who are interested in the world around them will naturally boost their learning in Religious Studies, as it is always in the news! In 2021, Trump supporters waved 'Jesus Saves' signs during their violent storming of the Capitol building, huge protests in Argentina led to the (92% Roman Catholic) country legalising abortion, and a school in London hit headlines after threatening legal action against a Muslim pupil whose skirt was 'too long'.

### Is GCSE required in order to study this subject at A level?

No, but preferred.



## SCIENCE\*

### Examination Board and Specification:

AQA Combined Science Trilogy (Double Award) (8464) or GCSE Biology (8461), GCSE Chemistry (8462) and GCSE Physics (8463)

### Head of Department:

Miss Jessica Hammett (jhammett@stgabriels.co.uk)

### Aims of the course are to:

Provide a coherent, relevant and engaging science qualification with opportunities for progression and preparation for A level.

### General Description and Course Content:

In Year 9, all girls follow Biology, Chemistry and Physics as separate subjects, introducing elements of GCSE courses. In Year 10 and Year 11, all girls will study Science as a core subject by either completing the Trilogy qualification or the Separate Science route. The over-arching topics studied are the same for both courses (see below) but girls taking the Separate Science route will cover more content in the same time allocation as those studying Trilogy. The Science Department will recommend the best route through for your daughter after testing in the first term of Year 10.

**Biology:** cell biology, organisation, infection & response, bioenergetics, homeostasis & response, inheritance, variation & evolution and ecology.

**Chemistry:** atomic structure & the periodic table, bonding, structure & the properties of matter, quantitative chemistry, chemical changes, energy changes, the rate & extent of chemical change, organic chemistry, chemical analysis, chemistry of the atmosphere and using resources.

**Physics:** forces, energy, waves, electricity, magnetism & electromagnetism, particle model of matter, atomic structure and space physics.

### Assessment:

The Trilogy course provides Higher Tier and Foundation papers to suit candidates of all abilities. The A\* - G grades have been replaced with a 9-1 award for Biology, Chemistry and Physics and a grading scale from 9-9, 9-8 through to 1-1 for Trilogy (Double Award).

Trilogy will be examined by six 1 ¼ hour papers: two biology, two chemistry and two Physics. Each examination will be weighted equally (16.7% of the grade) and will contain multiple choice, structured, closed, short answer and open response questions.

There is no controlled assessment (coursework) but students will be required to complete a set number of experiments and investigations which will be examined in each paper.

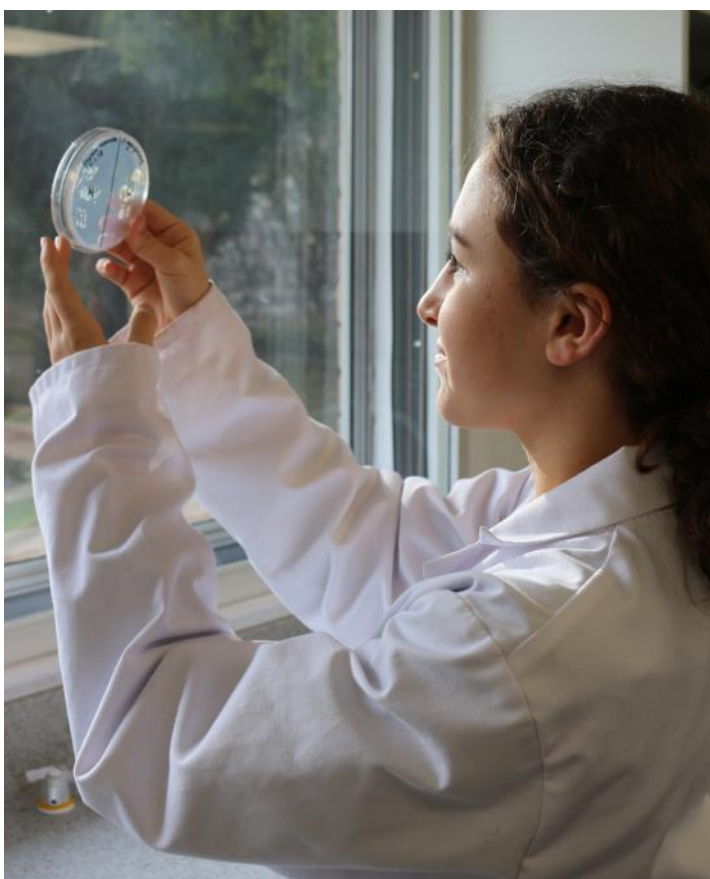
Separate Sciences will each have two examination papers in each subject (Biology, Chemistry and Physics) designed to assess knowledge and understanding from different topics within each separate subject. Each paper will last 1¾ hours and be weighted equally (50% of the final grade). Questions will contain multiple choice, structured, closed, short answer and open response questions.

### Expectations for independent study:

Students are required to actively participate and become engaged with their course. They can use their Kerboodle login to access resources and checklists for each topic and as a valuable revision guide. Students will be encouraged to watch documentaries and to research and extend their knowledge base. Separate Science students will be expected to show independence and motivation in their approach to new topics, home-reading and revision skills.

### Is GCSE required in order to study Biology, Chemistry or Physics at A level?

Yes. Both Trilogy Higher Level and Separate Science are an excellent basis for embarking on the A level course of study and we encourage active dialogue with staff in A level Science choices.





# SPANISH

## Examination Board and Specification:

AQA Spanish 8698

## Head of Department:

Miss Sarah Ferretti (sferretti@stgabriels.co.uk)

## Aims of the course are to:

- Develop language skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing) in a variety of contexts
- Build on the KS3 study and prepare students for further study at A level.

## General Description and Course Content:

The course content consists of three themes, each covering four topics:

**Theme 1: Identity & Culture.** Me, my family & friends; technology in everyday life; free-time activities, and customs & festivals in Spanish-speaking countries/communities

**Theme 2: Local, National, International & Global Areas of Interest.** Home, town, neighbourhood & region; social issues; Global issues, and travel & tourism

**Theme 3: Current & Future Study & Employment.** My studies; life at school/college; education post-16, and jobs, career choices and ambitions.

## Assessment:

GCSE Spanish has a Foundation Tier (grades 1–5) and a Higher Tier (grades 4–9). Students must take all four question papers at the same tier. All question papers are externally assessed.

**Paper 1: Listening.** Written exam: 35 minutes (Foundation Tier), 45 minutes (Higher Tier). 25% of GCSE. Each exam includes 5 minutes' reading time of the question paper before the listening stimulus is played.

**Paper 2: Speaking.** Non-exam assessment. 7-9 minutes (Foundation Tier) + preparation time. 10-12 minutes (Higher Tier) + preparation time. 25% of GCSE.

**Paper 3: Reading.** Written exam: 45 minutes (Foundation Tier), 60 minutes (Higher Tier). 25% of GCSE.

**Paper 4: Writing.** Written exam: 1 hour (Foundation Tier), 75 minutes (Higher Tier). 25% of GCSE.

## Expectations for independent study:

Students are expected to learn vocabulary on a weekly basis. It is important to practise the new language acquired in lessons regularly throughout the week. Resources and links to recommended websites, which will help students consolidate listening and reading skills and acquire and practise grammar, are available on Office 365. GCSE clinics run in extra-curricular time and students are also supported by the Modern Foreign Language assistants.

## Is GCSE required in order to study this subject at A level?

Yes.



## PSHE & CORE PHYSICAL EDUCATION

### Personal, Social & Health Education, Citizenship & Key Skills

All students in Year 10 and Year 11 continue to receive PSHE lessons which are delivered primarily by their form tutor during periods 1 and 2 on Monday mornings. Among the subject areas covered are study skills; careers; economics and personal finance; relationships and sex education, and wellbeing & health education. Citizenship, at local, national and international level, is also included in the programme. Students will also participate in a community link visit, where they will organise and run an activity for members of the local community.

In addition to sessions delivered by the form tutor, the Head of Upper School, the school counsellor and specialist speakers talk to the students about issues such as mental and sexual health, drugs awareness and the court system. The school also works with Elevate Education to deliver sessions on revision and examination technique.

Careers education forms a large part of the PSHE programme during Year 10 and Year 11. All students in Year 11 undertake Morrisby testing and receive 1:1 feedback on possible education and career choices. The school subscribes to Unifrog, a careers platform that allows students to explore every university course, apprenticeship and college course in the UK plus other global opportunities such as European and US undergraduate courses.

### Core Physical Education

The PE Department has designed a broad and balanced core Physical Education curriculum which inspires and

enables young people to take part in physical activity and fosters a lifelong interest in health and wellbeing.

We understand that confidence and self-esteem are directly linked to participation rates and so our teaching staff tailor the curriculum to meet the needs of every pupil.

Students take part in a range of activities from individual sports to team and competitive activities. Skills are developed and ability is nurtured. There is also the opportunity to use the local gym during PE in Year 11.

Students who are more able have access to more challenging activities and training and also have one-to-one mentoring with staff who have first hand experience in developing international sports talent.

### Extra-Curricular Physical Education

Students have the opportunity to take part in an extensive extra-curricular sports programme. There are sessions before school, after school and at lunchtime daily.

There is a strong inter school fixture list and many students enjoy representing the school in teams such as Hockey, netball, tennis, athletics, rounders, cricket, football and gymnastics. Training for these teams takes place at lunch time and after school and there is also a fitness training sessions for team players and sports scholars before school.

Specialist coaches also come into deliver more bespoke activities such as climbing, fencing, gymnastics, trampolining and Judo.





## ENRICHMENT

### Private Study

The purpose of private study is to help students to develop the skill of working independently. This time should be used to read around their subjects and to consolidate their learning. Students take responsibility for managing their own time, however, guidance is available from a member of staff, if needed. The periods are supervised but it is possible for students to use resource areas, such as the ICT Suite and the Library.

### Duke of Edinburgh Award

The Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme is about developing young people's skills for life and work. In addition to literacy and numeracy skills, the UK Commission for Employment and Skills and the CBI define the skills and attitude that make someone employable as: self-management, problem solving, team working and communication. All of these skills are developed during the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme. A 'can do' approach underpins success in working life by helping you to be resilient and adapt to changing situations around you. An independent survey of major employers rated the DofE as the most important extra-curricular activity young

people could do at school, even above work experience. ([www.DofE.org/go/impact](http://www.DofE.org/go/impact))

St Gabriel's offers students aged 14+ the opportunity to undertake the Duke of Edinburgh's Award. Bronze Award in Year 9, Silver Award in Year 10 and Gold Award in the Sixth Form. Pupils will achieve their award by completing a personal programme of activities in four sections; volunteering, physical, skills and expedition. Gold has the additional residential section.

For further details on the Duke of Edinburgh Awards Scheme, visit [www.dofe.org](http://www.dofe.org) or contact Mrs Cockar for more information.

### Preparing for life in the Sixth Form

To help make the decision on A Level options, Year 10 and Year 11 girls have the opportunity to have a taster day in the Sixth Form and each student meets with the Head of Sixth Form, to discuss post-16 options.



## Student Investor Challenge

All students in Year 10 and above have the opportunity to take part in the Student Investor Challenge. This competition introduces students to the concept of shares and the UK stock market. In teams of four, students invest their virtual money in a set of stocks in two portfolios:

- The Active Investor Portfolio which allows teams to trade every day.
- The Strategic Investor Portfolio which only allows a limited number of trades per month, encouraging long term thinking.

Teams have a virtual £100,000 to invest in each portfolio using data closely mirroring the FTSE. Teams are required to invest the full amount of cash they have, as teams keeping more than £15,000 in cash in either portfolio will be subject to a daily Windfall Tax. Once registered, teams can access a whole host of extra information on the Student Investor website to help them make good investment decisions. The live competition runs from October to the end of January with the top teams in the country going forward to subsequent rounds of the competition.

## Advice

### Consider the Issues:

Which subjects do I have to take?  
How many subjects am I able to choose?

### Gather Information

Do I know the content of all subjects?  
Are there any completely new subjects?  
What methods of study are required?

### Ask for Advice

Consult parents, subject teachers, careers teachers/ advisers and people in possible career area.  
Ask whether choice suits possible career area.

### Look at the Alternatives

Would other choices suit my career choice better?  
Am I making choices that will allow me to change my mind?  
Are my choices making a balanced programme?  
Could I do certain subjects outside examinations?

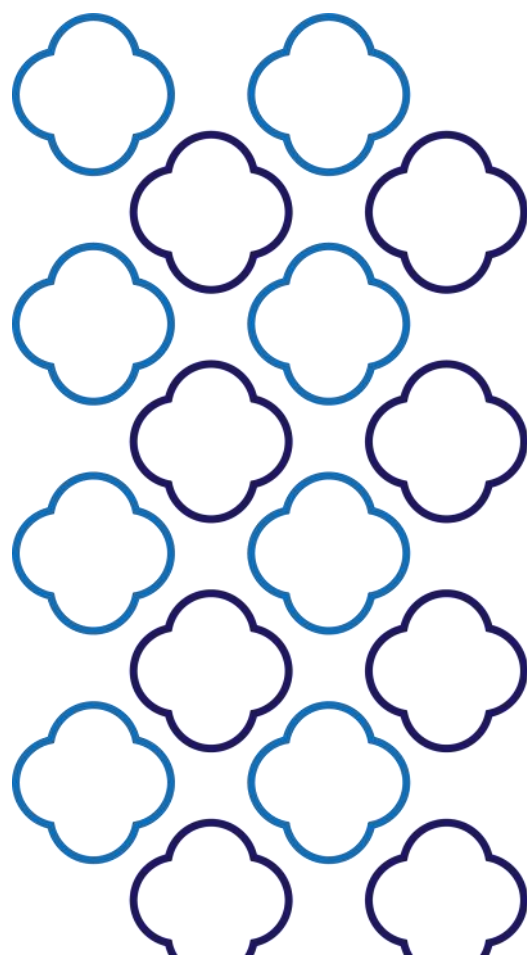
### Decide & Evaluate

Are these choices my own personal decision?  
Do these suit my learning style?  
What strengths and skills do I have for various subjects?  
Am I happy with my choices, or do I have any questions that still need answering?

If I decide to change my choices after 20 February, I must let Mrs Chicken know immediately.







# ST GABRIEL'S

Sandleford Priory  
Newbury, Berkshire  
RG20 9BD

01635 555680  
[info@stgabriels.co.uk](mailto:info@stgabriels.co.uk)  
[stgabriels.co.uk](http://stgabriels.co.uk)

