

SIMON LANGTON
GRAMMAR SCHOOL FOR BOYS



GCSE
OPTIONS

2026

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GCSE OPTIONS

The purpose of this booklet is to outline our Key Stage 4 curriculum and to explain the options that you have open to you for some of your GCSE subjects.

The first part of the booklet gives an overview of the curriculum you will follow for the next two years and general guidance on making option choices. The rest of the booklet contains some information about each GCSE subject, to give you an idea of the type of course you will be taking. By necessity, this information is brief and any further questions concerning the courses should be directed towards your current teacher, or the Subject Leader named under each subject. More general enquiries should be made to your Form Tutor or your Head of Year. For information, the examination details are also noted.

There is an options form at the back of this booklet which must be returned to your Form Tutor on **Monday 30th March**. Any forms handed in after this date will be given a lower priority. Before then, you and your parents/carers will be able to discuss your choices with your subject teachers at the Year 9 Options Evening.

Every effort will be made to ensure that you are able to pursue your choice of subjects but staffing and timetable constraints may mean a small number of students are not able to gain their preferred combination of subjects. This is why we ask for a reserve choice of option subject.

N.B. GCSE courses start in Term 6 of Year 9 and continue throughout Years 10 & 11. Students are expected to take all of their subjects through to the GCSE exams in the summer of Year 11.

Key contacts:

Director of Studies – Mr J Eagle – jeagle@thelangton.kent.sch.uk

Head of Year 9 – Mrs K Bennett – kbennett@thelangton.kent.sch.uk

THE KEY STAGE 4 CURRICULUM

At present you are taking 17 different courses. Most of these subjects can lead to a GCSE examination at the end of Year 11, but in practice it is not possible for a student to take all of them. So a choice has to be made as to which subjects you wish to continue studying for the next two years. **This choice is important because you will not be able to change your options after this stage.** It is wise to give some thought to the subjects you may wish to follow at A Level and even at university, as some future courses require a GCSE basis (further information about this can be found later in this booklet).

At the Langton, all students follow 9 GCSE courses, some of which are compulsory and some of which are optional, plus an additional 3 courses which do not lead to GCSE examinations but are of great benefit for the physical, personal, and intellectual development of our students.

COMPULSORY SUBJECTS

- **English Language and English Literature.** These are taught together, and in sets, although all students take the same examinations at the end of the course.
- **Mathematics.** This has been taught in sets since Year 8, with students able to move between sets at the end of each year. In addition to the GCSE, the top set covers some more advanced content. This is to broaden their mathematical experience and knowledge.
- **Science.** All Langton students take 'Triple Science': separate GCSEs in Biology, Chemistry, and Physics, with three separate specialist teachers, taught in sets.

(The sets in each of these subjects will be determined by the Year 9 examination results together with your Year 9 teacher's knowledge of your ability.)

- **Physical Education and Games**
- **Citizenship**
- **History of Ideas**

OPTION SUBJECTS

The remainder of your timetable is made up of three option subjects. Students should make a careful choice of which subjects they are most suited to and which will help their future educational plans.

- a) **Creative Subjects: Art, Design, Drama and Music** all offer a creative arts education and lessons are characterised by a split between practical and theoretical study. Each GCSE is a foundation for the arts courses offered in the Sixth Form. However, as creativity is such an important skill for future careers, we encourage all students to consider taking one of these subjects.
- b) We expect grammar school students to take a **Foreign Language.** This will be one of the languages (**French, Spanish, Mandarin, or Latin**) that is being studied in Y9. Some students take two foreign languages to GCSE and beyond.

- c) **Geography and History** are humanities subjects. Each can form a basis for studying A level and is also good preparation for studying other humanities A levels such as Politics.
- d) All students will complete their computing course in Year 9. This will give them a solid foundation for using computers in other subjects and in future workplaces. We offer a **GCSE course in Computer Science** for a small number of students who wish to specialise in this area.
- e) **Business and Economics** are available as new subjects that have not been studied in Key Stage 3. Either (**but not both**) can be chosen as an option subject. **NOTE: due to staffing constraints, there will only be one Economics class.** This means that the number of students taking the subject will be limited; if oversubscribed, places will be allocated based on overall performance in the Year 9 exams.

The standard options giving a broad curriculum would be

	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
(A)	CREATIVE SUBJECT	HISTORY or GEOGRAPHY	LANGUAGE
(B)	HISTORY or GEOGRAPHY	LANGUAGE	COMPUTER SCI or BUSINESS or ECONOMICS

However, for those who wish to specialise, the choices might look like one of the following:

Specialism		Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
LANGUAGES	(C)	LANGUAGE	LANGUAGE	HISTORY/GEOGRAPHY
HUMANITIES	(D)	HISTORY	GEOGRAPHY	LANGUAGE
TECHNOLOGY	(E)	DESIGN	COMPUTER SCI	another subject
CREATIVE	(F)	CREATIVE	CREATIVE	another subject

All option courses lead to a GCSE qualification. All the examinations will taken be in May and June of Year 11.

Timetable summary (number of hours of lessons per fortnight)

English (Language and Literature)	7
Mathematics	7
Biology	3
Chemistry	3
Physics	3
Option subject A	6
Option subject B	6
Option subject C	6
History of Ideas	2
PE & Games	4
Citizenship	2
Study period	1

J Eagle
Director of Studies

ADDITIONAL GCSEs

As detailed in the previous section, our standard curriculum comprises 9 GCSEs.

Additionally, it is possible for a student to take one additional GCSE on top of the standard nine.

There are two options for this additional GCSE:

- Ancient History
- Astronomy

You can read more about each subject later in this booklet.

It is only possible to take one of these two: you cannot take both Ancient History and Astronomy.

Taking an additional GCSE requires a very substantial additional commitment, as you would have to attend additional lessons that may take place in lunchtimes or after school, and also undertake a significant amount of additional homework in your own time. Therefore, these options are only suitable for those who have a particular interest in the subject and are willing and able to handle an enhanced workload throughout their GCSE years.

Capacity in both Ancient History and Astronomy is limited; if either subject is oversubscribed, places will be offered to students who have demonstrated in their end-of-year exam results the capacity to undertake additional study without affecting their performance in the standard curriculum.

9 to 1 GRADING

You will be studying for the (relatively) new “reformed” GCSE exams, which have been designed to have more challenging content and also a new grading system. You will already be familiar with 9 to 1 grading from the Langton’s internal reporting systems. Please note in particular that:

- grade 9 is the top grade and is significantly harder to achieve than the old A* grade
- grade 7 and above is equivalent to grade A and above in the old system
- grade 5 is considered to be a “strong pass”
- grade 4 is considered to be a “standard pass”, with grade 4 and above being equivalent to grade C and above in the old system. Students who do not achieve this in Mathematics and/or English Language are required to study these subjects and re-take the GCSE wherever they go for Post-16 education

GCSEs AND THE FUTURE

Grades

Good GCSE grades will give you more options for the future beyond Year 11.

Most Langton Year 11 students choose to stay with us for their Sixth Form education. Our Sixth Form admissions criteria are based on GCSE results, and require:

- a total of 50 points from GCSE grades (points calculated by simply adding up the grades)
- grade 6 or higher in the specific subjects to be studied at A level – although grade 7 gives a much better foundation for success at A level [further specific details are given in our Sixth Form Prospectus]
- grade 4 or higher in both English Language and Mathematics

Langton Year 11 students who meet these requirements are guaranteed a place in our Sixth Form if they wish to take it up.

Beyond A level, universities consider GCSE grades as part of their selection process and many courses have specific grade requirements. Similarly, apprenticeships are likely to require a certain standard at GCSE, with advanced apprenticeships typically requiring five good GCSE passes including English and Maths, while most employers will expect applicants to have at least good English and Maths at GCSE.

Note that it is a national rule that anyone who does not achieve a grade 4 in English Language or Mathematics in Year 11 is required to re-take that subject in the next year.

Subjects

Beyond the core compulsory subjects, it is very rare for any university course or employer to require you to have taken specific GCSE subjects – it is the overall grades that matter for your future, not the subjects you choose to study.

The main implication of your GCSE subject choices is the subject options they might lead to at A level, which in turn will set you up for particular university degree courses.

This is unlikely to be a restricting factor for you, but it would be sensible to:

- if you already have some idea of what degree course you might wish to pursue, make yourself aware of the required A level subjects, and make sure that you choose GCSE options that will enable you to follow this path
- if you don't have university plans at present, aim to keep your options open. For instance, if you do not study either History or Geography at GCSE, it will make it difficult (although not impossible) to study a "humanities" subject at university because you will not have developed the skills at GCSE to pursue A levels in these subjects and related ones such as Politics.

Although it is aimed at Year 11 students choosing their A levels, you can consult informedchoices.ac.uk for guidance on how A level choices relate to university courses. This website has been produced by the Russell Group – an organisation of 24 self-defined 'elite' universities. These are typically the sort of universities that Langton sixth formers aspire to study at, so their advice is likely to be of relevance to you.

ENGLISH

The English Department at the Langton follow the reformed 9-1 specifications offered by AQA. These are two, separate, GCSE courses leading to two final examination grades.

The Literature course consists of two examined components, and includes mandatory coverage of a play by Shakespeare, study of a nineteenth-century novel, plus exposure to a selection of poetry, modern drama, and a range of unseen poetry and prose extracts.

The Paper 1 examination tests responses to the novel and Shakespeare, and accounts for 40% of the marks for the overall qualification; Paper 2 is the longer, more taxing paper, which tests responses to the modern drama and poetry - weighing in at 60% of the overall qualification. The 8702 course is designed for candidates who read widely and who enjoy literature. It is therefore imperative that your son approaches the course in the right frame of mind: ready to work hard, keen to explore a range of texts from the English literary heritage, and capable of expressing personal responses to texts from different genres and literary eras.

Over the two years of the course, your son will study an eclectic range of modern and canonical poetry, with Shelley, Blake, Browning, Tennyson and Wordsworth rubbing shoulders, or sharing quills, with Heaney, Hughes, Armitage and Duffy. Our nineteenth-century prose selection includes Dickens' *A Christmas Carol*, Brontë's *Jane Eyre*, Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*, Shelley's *Frankenstein* (1831) and Stevenson's *Jekyll and Hyde*: your son will study one of these novels. Boys will also study Shakespeare's *Macbeth*. The modern drama text will be J. B. Priestley's *An Inspector Calls*, and there will be ample time for boys to indulge their passion for private reading.

The Language specification is a demanding but exciting experience, split into three distinct sections. Paper 1 ('Explorations in Creative Reading and Writing') tests a range of traditional skills such as language analysis, analysis of structural devices, and descriptive and narrative composition. This component accounts for 50% of the available marks. Paper 2 ('Writers' Viewpoints and Perspectives') tests comprehension, summary writing, analysis of rhetorical devices, close reading, and argumentative and persuasive writing, and is also worth 50% of the marks. Passages set in these two papers tend to average 500 words, and the majority are non-fiction texts taken from 20th- or 21st-century sources, sitting alongside nineteenth-century literary non-fiction sources. Given the primacy of non-fiction in these papers, your son is strongly advised to acquire good reading habits, and to expose himself to as much quality journalism and literary non-fiction as possible. Guidance with reading will of course be offered by individual English teachers and the school librarian.

The final component of the Language specification is the Speaking and Listening test – a mandatory but separately endorsed unit which consists of a formal presentation (delivered by the candidate) which should take around three minutes, followed by a Q+A phase of a further four to five minutes, during which the candidate will be asked questions relating to the topic of the main talk. A sample of representative oral performances are audio-visually recorded, before being submitted to an external AQA moderator for final grading. The speaking and listening grade will appear on the candidate's final GCSE certification, and passes at pass, merit and distinction are possible.

As you can see, the AQA GCSE is a very robust and academically-focused qualification, and one which promotes the acquisition of a range of essential skills which will help your son to become a skilled and confident user of Standard English in a range of contexts. These qualifications also help pupils prepare for literary study at A-Level, and encourage an appreciation of the written word which is likely to remain with them throughout their lives.

MATHEMATICS

Mathematics classes are divided into sets. Students' positions in appropriate sets will be reviewed at the end of Year 10.

All students, in all sets, will take the Edexcel Higher Tier GCSE 9-1 examination at the end of Year 11. The examination consists of three equally-weighted papers, one to be taken without a calculator and two non-calculator papers. There are no controlled assessments for GCSE Mathematics.

Set Zero

There is one set zero group and students will study both GCSE Maths and OCR Additional Maths. All exams will be taken at the end of year 11.

Set 1P and 1Q Students in Set 1 cover the work at a fast pace and study each topic in great depth. An emphasis is placed on developing strong algebra skills, in addition to the ability to problem solve, reason and communicate mathematically. Students are expected to show a particular flair for the subject and produce work of a consistently high standard. Grade 8/9 is the aim. Students in Set 1 will also study the Edexcel Extended Maths Certificate qualification.

Sets 2P and 2Q Students in Set 2 will follow the same syllabus and scheme of work as Set 1, but will not necessarily study the topics in such great depth. Grade 7 is the target grade for most students in this set.

Sets 3P and 3Q will comprise of smaller sets of students who typically find the subject difficult. They will follow the same scheme of work as the other sets, but with a greater emphasis on accurately carrying out routine procedures or set tasks requiring multi-step solutions. All students in this set are capable of achieving at least a grade 5. However, the target grade is usually a 6, though some will have a grade 7. In exceptional circumstances, a few students may be entered for the Foundation Tier examination but this decision will not be taken until after the Mock examinations in Year 11.

Homework is set twice a week and students are expected to complete tasks to good standard. Emphasis is placed on good understanding of concepts, methods and applications as well as on good presentation.

'A' Levels

- (a) Students who wish to study A level Mathematics in Years 12 and 13 will have to have achieved grade 7 or better at GCSE.
- (b) Students who wish to study Double Maths in Years 12 and 13 (i.e. Mathematics and Further Mathematics A levels) will usually have been in Set 0 or 1 in Year 11 and have obtained a grade 9.

SCIENCE

Science is a challenging and rewarding set of subjects, where students learn key scientific concepts in parallel with important life-skills. Students started the GCSE Science courses at the beginning of Year 9. In Term 6 of Year 9, students will be allocated to sets based on performance throughout the year, in addition to performance in the end of Year 9 exams, and sets will be reviewed at the end of Year 10.

Students will follow the AQA 9-1 specification, taking the Separate Sciences (higher tier) route which results in three GCSEs, one each for Biology, Chemistry and Physics. All sets are taught the full curriculum with the end goal being that all students are equipped to sit higher tier papers in the separate sciences at the end of the course. Within each set the pace of teaching is adapted to suit the needs of the boys in that set.

Lessons will be taught separately by subject specialists, as Biology, Chemistry or Physics. Students are provided with online access to the textbooks for each subject with physical copies of the textbooks being used during lessons. There is an opportunity to purchase a my-gcsescience.com account at a discounted rate to further support their learning.

All external exams will take place at the end of Year 11. Each subject will have two 1 hour and 45 minute exams, each worth 50% of the GCSE.

There is no formal practical skills assessment for students, although students will be expected to have completed some required practicals. Practical content will however be examined in the written papers. Practical questions will account for at least 15% of the overall marks.

The Science department also offers GCSE students the opportunity to enter some national competitions such as the prestigious British Physics Olympiad and Biology Challenge, giving our students the chance to prove themselves and gain recognition on a national level.

Dr T Lesworth (Director of Science)
Dr A Morris (Biology)
Dr S Phythian (Chemistry)
Mr S Bilclough (Physics)

AQA Biology 8461
AQA Chemistry 8462
AQA Physics 8463

LANGTON PLUS

Langton Plus (formerly History of Ideas) is a uniquely Langton programme. Between Year 7 and 9, you studied subjects far beyond the standard curriculum, to introduce new ways of thinking and new subject areas. Langton Plus is a key element in the making of a Langton student. We aim to broaden your cultural and intellectual horizons, encouraging you to understand how different ideas and disciplines have connected over time, and to become conversant with a range of key thinkers and cultural figures from the past. Increasingly it aims also to show you that our teaching staff are much more than subject teachers with a narrow specialism; they bring to you their wide range of experiences, knowledge and roles beyond the classroom, to inspire you to make bold choices for your future.

In Year 10, this takes the form of weekly talks and discussion. Each term an overall theme is explored from a variety of angles in weekly talks where you will be expected to participate in teacher-moderated discussion in small groups afterwards. Each term, a final session is devoted to reflection and discussion also.

The course is split into sections which thematically bring together the talks. The thematic areas are:

- Revolutions
- Building for the Future
- The Self
- Truth and Beauty
- Cultural Encounters

Some of the talks this year have been:

- Psychology and the Self
- Masculinity Re-Imagined
- The Scientific Revolution
- Are our Prisons working?
- Africa before Colonialism
- The Renaissance
- How to carry out a revolution
- Why do we need a government?

We aim to stimulate critical thinking whilst introducing a range of unfamiliar ideas from a wide range of subject areas, and to build knowledge that will help students to move forwards towards the Sixth Form, where this programme of challenge further extends. They also develop very valuable critical thinking skills which point the way towards Higher Education and analytical facility in their careers.

Dr P Easterbrook

CITIZENSHIP and PSHE

This course will develop and expand upon the topics studied during Key Stage 3. It will focus on the issues relevant to teenage Langton students in the modern world. We expect students to play a significant role in the shaping of their own learning in this subject.

The course will be structured around the 'Langton Attributes' as well as meeting the knowledge, understanding and skills defined in the programme of study for both Citizenship and PSHE Key Stage 4 in the National Curriculum.

Year 10 will begin with a 10 week course called .b (pronounced dotbee), which will introduce the students to the concept of mindfulness, and help them to explore their relationship with their thoughts and experiences. More information can be found at <https://mindfulnessinschools.org/what-is-b/b-curriculum/>

Example Topics

Citizenship - Rights and Responsibilities –Looking at what it means to be a citizen, debating whether the smacking of children is acceptable, investigating the justification for age rights

PSHE – Careers and work related learning – Investigating career paths, learning how to apply for jobs both now and in the future, understanding workers' rights and responsibilities.

There will be a range of formal and informal assessment methods used throughout the duration of the course and students will be expected to perform to an appropriate level.

The successful completion of this course is one requirement for entry into the school sixth form.

During the course students will be expected to ensure that learning also takes place outside of the classroom and we expect that they will involve themselves in extra-curricular activities both within school and throughout their wider communities.

Above all else, this subject will continue to support students' personal, social and academic development as they progress through the school.

Mr D Butler

ART

Art is a fantastic subject that students enjoy, and that complements other academic subjects. Every year our GCSE Art grades are excellent- last year over three-quarters of students gained grade 7 or higher, with no-one below a grade 5.

GCSE Art is intended to meet the needs of the following groups of candidates:

- those who enjoy Art and have shown a commitment to the subject in KS3.
- those who may wish to study subjects or take up careers for which an Art and Design background is relevant or helpful.

You will study a wide range of media and techniques in two and three dimensions. The work on the walls, and hanging from the ceilings in the art rooms, will give you an idea of the breadth of work that can be produced in the very creative GCSE. More and more students are also now working in digital media: using photography, making films and working with digital manipulation, such as Photoshop and exploring animation techniques. You will develop ideas, gaining knowledge and experience in order to develop your understanding of the creative process. This course allows maximum opportunity for individual exploration of a theme, encouraging personal creative directions and outcomes. Everyone will keep a sketchbook, which will include artwork, written pieces, annotations, scrapbook material and experiments with media and ideas.

You will also look at many different approaches and styles in Art, making critical judgements and relating connections with your own work.

The exam consists of two units:

- coursework (60%)
- examination (40%)

Examination papers are given to candidates twelve school weeks before the examination and students have this time to prepare their response prior to a 10 hour period in which to produce the piece. This is always good fun.

All work is marked internally and moderated externally.

BUSINESS

Your pathway to success!

Why Choose GCSE Business?

Are you interested in how businesses work, how products are made, how companies grow, and how money is managed? OCR GCSE Business will give you a solid understanding of the world of business and help you develop essential skills for your future career.

IMPORTANT: you cannot choose both Business and Economics – only one of them.

What Will You Learn?

- Business Basics: Understanding enterprises, entrepreneurship, and the economy.
- Marketing & Branding: How companies promote and sell their products.
- Finance & Money Management: Learn how businesses make profits and control costs.
- People & HR: Managing employees and business operations.
- Strategy & Growth: How businesses expand and compete successfully.
- Real-World Case Studies: Learn from successful companies and apply business theories.

Why This Course is Valuable?

- Develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills.
- Learn how real businesses operate and make decisions.
- Gain financial awareness and an entrepreneurial mindset.
- Improve communication, teamwork, and leadership skills.
- Boost your CV and open doors to A-Levels, apprenticeships, and future careers in business, finance, and management.

How is the Course Assessed?

- Paper 1: Business Activity, Marketing, and People (50%)
- Paper 2: Operations, Finance, and Influences on Business (50%)

Both papers are written exams, each lasting 1 hour 30 minutes.

Who is This Course For?

- Students who enjoy problem-solving and decision-making.
- Those interested in running their own business in the future.
- Anyone considering a career in finance, marketing, or management.
- Students who want to understand how the business world works!

Future Opportunities:

GCSE Business is a stepping stone to A-Levels in Business, Economics, and Accounting. It also leads to careers in banking, marketing, entrepreneurship, finance, and more! Students who take GCSE Business can go on to study Business Management, Finance, and Marketing at university. The subject is highly valued in apprenticeship programs, particularly in retail management, business administration, and accounting. Careers in consultancy, human resources, logistics, digital marketing, and corporate law are also possible with a strong foundation in business.

COMPUTER SCIENCE

In the last 50 years of the twentieth century, society saw a cultural shift away from manual work to more white-collar occupations. With the development of intelligent software it is likely we are to see many of these careers disappearing and the emergence of ones that require a person to analyse complex problems, plan and implement the programs to solve them.

Computer Science offers the student the opportunity to take the abstractions of Mathematics and bring them to life, to consider the large amounts of data created by the Science subjects, Geography, Sport and Finance and give them a meaning as well as the ability to develop a society changing product. As well as providing an excellent preparation for higher study and employment in the field of Computer Science, it will be excellent preparation for students who want to study or work in areas that rely on these thinking skills, especially where they are applied to technical problems.

This course has been developed to enable the student to learn how to look at a given scenario, to consider the issues appropriately and construct a solution that is well thought out and robust. It will give students a real in-depth understanding of how computer technology works. Students will no doubt be familiar with the use of computers and other related technology from their other subjects and elsewhere. Students who have taken a GCSE in Computer Science and who then progress to study the subject at A Level or university will have an advantage over their colleagues who are picking up the subject at these levels.

Due to the students studying Computer Science since Year 7, they have already had experience of 90% of the programming techniques specified in the GCSE syllabus. To allow the students to have a well-rounded understanding of the subject, the students study their new programming language, Python, using practical computing techniques. The department has designed the course so that the student has as many opportunities as possible to use their new theoretical knowledge in a practical situation.

Method of Assessment

Assessment and duration	Weighting	Description
Paper 1: Principles of Computer Science Written examination: 1 hour and 30 minutes 75 marks	50%	This paper consists of five compulsory questions, each one focused on one of the topic areas. The questions consist of multiple-choice, short-, medium- and extended-open-response, tabular and diagrammatic items.
Paper 2: Application of Computational Thinking Onscreen examination: 2 hours 75 marks	50%	This practical paper requires students to design, write, test and refine programs in order to solve problems. Students will complete this assessment onscreen using their Integrated Development Environment (IDE) of choice. They will be provided with: -coding files -a hard copy of the question paper -the Programming Language Subset (PLS) – as an insert in the question paper and in electronic format. Students should then answer the questions onscreen using Python 3. This assessment consists of six compulsory questions.

Mr G George

EDEXCEL 1CP2

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

What is the course about?

Students are given the opportunity to develop their 3-D problem solving skills to a high level through a range of challenges and tasks coupled with a variety of materials and technologies, including our specialist CAD-CAM equipment. The applied nature of the GCSE course provides students with ample opportunity for creativity and academic rigor. This is a challenging but rewarding course allowing for innovative and creative production of both conceptual and manufactured products.

Method of study:

Currently we explore the iterative design process through traditional sketching and rendering techniques and a variety of 3D modelling tasks. This leads onto the development of a new product which is then communicated by the production of a realistic product model using Computer Aided Design to visualise the student's concepts. We also delve into some of the material areas that students may not have previously experienced, with short making focussed task, in an effort to prepare fully for the assessed work. Towards the end of year 10 students will be asked to select the focus for their 'Iterative Design Challenge' from a theme given to them by their teacher. Evidence for assessment is compiled as an e-portfolio but produced in a wide range of software packages:

- **Full Adobe Suite** – Photoshop, Illustrator.
- **CAD** – Fusion 360 , Keyshot, 2D Design.
- **CAM** - 3D Printing, Laser Cutting, Cam machines.

Content Overview	Assessment Overview	
<p>'Core' knowledge of Design and Technology principles demonstrates learners' broad understanding of principles that all learners should have across the subject.</p> <p>'In-depth' knowledge allows learners to focus more directly on at least one main material category, or design engineering.</p> <p>15% of the paper will assess learners' mathematical skills as applied within design</p>	<p>Principles of Design and Technology* (01)</p> <p>100 marks 2 hours Written paper</p>	<p>50% of total GCSE (9–1)</p>
<p>This component offers the opportunity for learners to demonstrate understanding of and skills in iterative designing, in particular:</p> <p>The interrelated nature of the processes used to identify needs and requirements (explore). Creating solutions to meet those needs (create) Evaluating whether the needs have been met (evaluate).</p>	<p>Iterative Design Challenge* (02, 03)</p> <p>100 marks Approx. 40 hours Non-exam assessment</p>	<p>50% of total GCSE (9–1)</p>

Department Infrastructure:

The department has invested heavily in the latest technologies to support this new GCSE such as 66 PC's with industry standard CAD and graphics software, rapid prototyping machinery, laser cutter, CNC router, touch screen tablet computer and new workshop equipment.

Possible career paths:

The course leads comfortably into the Product Design A level which is excellent preparation for access into degree courses in **Product/Industrial Design, Product Engineering, Architecture, Engineering, Graphic Design, Car Design** and **Apprenticeships...**

Scholarship opportunities: Our best performing design students will have the opportunity to apply for the prestigious Arkwright scholarship.

For further information please contact **Mr Pledger** or visit <https://www.instagram.com/langtondesign/>

DRAMA

Why this course, and why now?

Drama GCSE offers teenagers an increasingly rare space in which to develop complex skills of collaboration and critical thinking. These skills are recognised as essential for the modern workplace and for students social and emotional development in a screen dominated landscape. The subject is unique in inviting family and friends for performance events where we share the exploration of nuanced ideas as well as achieving outstanding performance standards. Our students enjoy the subject immensely, gaining great pride from their creative work.

How is the course structured and assessed?

Component	Form	% of GCSE	OPTIONS: Acting / Set Design / Lighting Design / Costume Design / Sound Design / Puppetry
C1 Understanding Drama	Written paper	40	Section A: Multiple choice Section B: Set text <i>The Empress</i> by Tanika Gupta. Short essay answers Section C: Professional Theatre review Single essay on Performance or Design AQA MARKED
C2 Creating Original Drama	Practical project Coursework and performance	40	Devised theatre process and performance. Devising log choice of format eg film / audio, design portfolio or essay. Max 2500 words or 15 minutes CENTRE MARKED & AQA MODERATED
C3 Text in Practice	Practical project Performance	20	One play – two extracts performed. Performance or Design choice AQA VISITING EXAMINER

How is the course delivered?

Most lessons take place in our spacious Drama Studio which is equipped with theatre lighting including LED lanterns and industry standard QLab software for sound design. Students will study drama through performance projects including **Performance for Film, The Monologue and Duologue Project, The Christmas Pantomime, Page to Stage - *The Empress*, C2 Devising exam, C3 Scripted performance exam.**

Professional theatre visits include The National Theatre, The Globe Theatre, The Marlowe and Gulbenkian Theatres with the benefit of reduced priced tickets for schools. Students will enjoy the opportunity to join a **backstage tour** at The National Theatre and take part in professional stage combat and technical theatre workshops.

Possible career paths

GCSE is a fantastic social and cultural educational experience for 14–16-year-olds. This course develops invaluable and transferable skills in communication, presentation and independent thinking making a DRAMA GCSE standout on a CV. Our students have gone on to pursue practical and people facing careers including Arts Industry professionals (technicians, designers, performers, management), Law, Commercial Flying, Gaming Design, Medical Careers, Teaching, Media and Journalism.

NB: A school booking to see The Marlowe Theatre Pantomime 2026 is in place as an optional GCSE drama visit. We do have to ask families to contribute to the costs of theatre tickets & transport. Financial support is available where applicable. Theatre visits sometimes take place after school hours.

ECONOMICS

Understand the world around you!

Why Choose GCSE Economics?

Do you want to understand how money, markets, and governments work? OCR GCSE Economics helps you explore real-world issues such as inflation, unemployment, economic growth, and global trade. This course will equip you with skills to analyse economic problems and make informed decisions.

IMPORTANT: you cannot choose both Economics and Business – only one of them.

What Will You Learn?

- The Economic Problem: Understanding scarcity and decision-making.
- How Markets Work: Supply, demand, and price determination.
- Government & Economy: Taxes, spending, and policies that shape society.
- Global Economy: International trade, exchange rates, and economic development.
- Personal Finance: Understanding wages, credit, saving, and budgeting.
- Current Economic Issues: Real-life applications of economic theory to global and national events.

Why This Course is Valuable?

- Develop analytical thinking and problem-solving skills.
- Gain insights into business, government policies, and financial markets.
- Improve decision-making and logical reasoning abilities.
- Understand real-world economic issues and their impact on people.
- Prepare for careers in finance, business, law, and government.

How is the Course Assessed?

- Paper 1: Introduction to Economics (50%)
- Paper 2: National and International Economics (50%)

Both papers are written exams, each lasting 1 hour 30 minutes.

Who is This Course For?

- Students interested in global issues and financial markets.
- Those who enjoy problem-solving and critical thinking.
- Anyone considering careers in economics, business, finance, or government.
- Students who want to understand how the economy affects their daily lives!

Future Opportunities:

GCSE Economics provides a strong foundation for A-Levels in Economics, Business, and Politics. It leads to career paths in banking, finance, law, international relations, and policymaking. Students can progress to university degrees in Economics, Finance, International Business, and Public Policy. Many employers in industries such as consulting, investment banking, government agencies, and global corporations value economics graduates. GCSE Economics also lays the groundwork for roles in data analysis, economic journalism, market research, and even entrepreneurship, giving students a competitive edge in a wide range of careers.

GEOGRAPHY

Geography is an exciting, rewarding, and extremely relevant subject that plays a critical role in building our understanding of the world and its different physical and human environments. It will challenge you to think about your role as a global citizen, and about how key processes and issues impact the Earth's natural systems and society. It is likely that the challenges facing our world today, such as climate change and resource depletion, will increasingly be tackled by geographers.

Why will I enjoy this course?

Geography focuses on local, national and global issues/challenges that will affect you, both now and in the future. For example, you will learn about issues concerning sustainable urban growth, alternative energy and resource management, and the mitigation of natural hazards.

Geography involves **practical** fieldwork in both coastal and urban environments. We examine differences in quality of life in Stratford, London and the impact of coastal management on beach characteristics in Reculver. Fieldwork will allow you to apply classroom knowledge to real-world settings, helping you to develop critical thinking and data collection skills.

You will learn transferable skills that will help to prepare you for your future career (e.g. teamwork, decision making and evaluation)

What will I study?

We follow the Edexcel B geography specification. This course is divided into three areas of study and is designed to build on the knowledge you have acquired at Key Stage 3.

Component 1: Global Geographical Issues

This component focuses on some of the key geographical issues in today's world, and the interaction of the physical and human processes that cause them.

Hazardous Earth focuses on the study of the world's climate system and climate change. You will then investigate hazards caused by tropical cyclones and earthquakes in contrasting places.

Development dynamics investigates global inequality and development, before focusing on a case study of an emerging country, India.

Challenges of an urbanising world investigates the causes and challenges of rapid urban change, before focusing on a case study of life in a growing megacity, Mumbai.

Component 2: UK Geographical Issues

This component focuses on the key geographical issues in the UK today, and the physical and human processes that cause change.

The UK's evolving physical landscape starts with an overview of why the UK's natural landscapes are so varied, before you investigate change in a coastal environment through fieldwork (Reculver).

The UK's evolving human landscape investigates why the UK's human landscapes (i.e. cities and rural areas) are changing, before you focus on a case-study of a dynamic UK city, London.

Component 3: People and Environment Issues- Making Geographical Decisions

In this component you will develop your understanding of the processes and interactions between people and environments by investigating three important global issues:

People and the Biosphere provides an overview of the world's large-scale ecosystems or biomes, and why the biosphere is important to humans for their wellbeing and for resources.

Forests under threat is a detailed study of how two biomes function – tropical rainforests and the taiga – and how they can be managed sustainably.

Consuming energy resources investigates energy supply, demand and security, and how energy resources can be managed sustainably.

How is the course assessed?

Assessment is comprised of three written examinations, each 1 hour & 30 minutes in length. These use a variety of question styles and involve calculations and longer extended answers. The Unit 3 examination is a decision-making exercise based around the analysis of a resource booklet, which covers some of the concepts taught across all three units. The final question on this paper requires you to choose one of three proposals outlined in the booklet and give a reasoned justification for your choice.

What could I do with geography?

We encourage students to continue with their studies at A Level and then study geography or a related discipline at university. However, even if you decide not to continue with your geography studies, the transferable skills you will learn will prove extremely useful.

Students who have studied geography are highly valued in the workplace and geography graduates are very employable. This is because the skills learnt are transferable to a wide range of professional occupations. Below is just a sample of the employment opportunities available:

Law	Sustainable development project management
Business management	Environment Agency planning
Banking and commerce	Local/ central government planning
Event management	Transport planning and management
Accountancy	Civil service
Estate agency	Surveying
Climatology	GIS specialisms

HISTORY

Study the past if you would define the future (Confucius)

At the Langton, History is one of the most popular subjects at GCSE, A Level and as a choice for university. Students are impassioned and excited by the history they are taught in the upper school, which is testament to the quality of the staff, in particular their ability to prepare students for university life through the delivery of academic, challenging lessons and a rich extra-curricular programme.

Of course History is much more than an effective stepping stone to a successful career (a recent *Telegraph* survey placed only the options MFL and History in the top ten of graduate subjects leading to employment); it is an enthralling, engaging and edifying subject. History is dynamic too - our understanding of the past can determine both our present and future, for example, if we revise our understanding of Britain's imperial past as something glorious then there is every chance that contemporary policy makers will attempt to emulate those former glories. Therefore, a deeper understanding of History helps us improve the world we live in, and hopefully, preventing us from replicating the mistakes of the past.

It is an article of faith that knowledge of the past is a key to understanding the present. (K. Stamp)

BERLIN TRIP

As part of the first two units (listed directly below), the History Department offers a residential trip. Spread across five days, students visit sites such as, the Reichstag, Sachsenhausen concentration camp, Checkpoint Charlie, the Berlin Wall, and a Cold War nuclear bunker. The trip explores Berlin in depth; many locations are off the tourist path and accessed with a guide who knows the city intimately. We have found that such trips have a deep and lasting impact on the students, not only on their ability at History but in terms of their maturity. This trip provides a rare opportunity at GCSE for travel and adventure.

GCSE – AQA

This GCSE is examined in two 2 hour papers to be sat in Year 11.

Paper 1

Understanding the Modern World: Germany 1890-1945: democracy and dictatorship

This period study focuses on the development of Germany during a turbulent half century of change. It was a period of democracy and dictatorship – the development and collapse of democracy and the rise and fall of Nazism.

Students will study the political, economic, social and cultural aspects of these two developments and the role ideas played in influencing change. They will also look at the role of key individuals and groups in shaping change and the impact the developments had on them.

Understanding the Modern World: Conflict and Tension between East and West 1945-72

The Cold War shaped the latter half of the last century and this course will introduce students to the innumerable fault lines that opened up between the East and West. This wider world depth study enables students to understand the complex and diverse interests of different states and individuals and the ideologies they represented, which is vital for the large number of historians who go on to read Politics at A Level and beyond. The course considers revolutionary movements during this time. It focuses on the causes and events of the Cold War and seeks to show how and why conflict occurred and why it proved difficult to resolve the tensions which

arose during the Cold War. This study also considers the role of key individuals and groups in shaping change and how they were affected by and influenced international relations.

Paper 2

Shaping the Nation: Britain: Power and the People (c.1215 to present)

This thematic study will enable students to gain an understanding of the development of the relationship between the citizen and the state in Britain over a long period of time. It considers the causes, scale, nature and consequences of protest to that relationship. By charting the journey from feudalism and serfdom to democracy and equality, it reveals how, in different periods, the state responds to challenges to its authority and their impact. It allows students to construct an understanding of the rights and responsibilities of the citizen.

Students will have the opportunity to see how ideas, events or developments in the wider world affected the course of Britain's political development and will promote the idea that ideas of authority, challenge and rights did not develop in isolation, but these developments should be seen in terms of how they affected Britain and British people.

This study is relevant to any students who wishes to take their study of History further and also for students considering Politics at A Level too.

Shaping the Nation: Elizabethan England c1568-1603

The new History GCSE allows us to offer the opportunity to study the early modern period. The specific depth study chosen, is a focus on the last 35 years of Elizabeth I's reign. The study focusses on the major events of her reign considered from economic, religious, political, social and cultural standpoints, and arising from contemporary and historical controversies. This is a dynamic component that builds a solid foundation for the A Level module on Stuart England and the English Revolution.

Thinking beyond GCSE

History GCSE is a stepping stone to further study in both History and Politics at A Level and beyond. Our students, and staff, are passionate about their subject and develop this outside, as well as inside, the classroom. GCSE students are encouraged to attend History Society talks that are organised by the Year 13 members which will enhance their classroom studies and broaden their historical perspectives. Many of our GCSE students go on to study History at A Level and even write their EPQ dissertation on a wide variety of historical topics. There are also additional research projects that are available to A Level students, run by various members of the department.

LATIN

Latin is a logical, structured and disciplined language which underpins a multitude of modern foreign languages. Seen as a highly academic subject, it encourages both critical thinking and problem solving, whilst boosting literacy and enabling students to gain a deeper understanding of their own grammar and vocabulary.

Although Latin is not offered in many schools, we are very proud to offer the GCSE course at the Langton as it provides a challenging and rigorous experience which will enable our students to stand out from the crowd. Only students who have studied Latin in Year 9 will be able to enrol on this course, and as a result GCSE class sizes tend to be smaller than average which is clearly beneficial to the students.

What will I learn?

Our aim is to bring Latin to life and to prove its relevance to modern society through both the language and its cultural and historical context. We will continue with the Cambridge Latin Course in Year 10, exploring the sites of Aquae Sulis (Bath) and Rome through the context of the stories. Alongside the rigour of the language, we will also start the Roman Civilisation component which is taught entirely in English and examines various topics on daily life such as Roman Sport and Leisure, Family life and the City of Rome. These topics provide an interesting and exciting insight into what life was like in Rome and create wonderful opportunities for debate and a comparison with modern culture.

Students will be given a vocabulary course booklet and will have regular vocabulary tests throughout Year 10 and 11 to ensure they know these words before their final examinations. Many of the words studied in Key Stage 3 are on this list so students will already have a head start on their GCSE vocabulary.

In Year 11, we will introduce the set texts of component 2 which are extracts from real Roman authors such as Catullus, Ovid and Cicero, based on a common theme. Here the students will not only piece together the translations but will also develop an appreciation of the authors' style of writing through an in-depth analysis of the texts.

How will I be assessed?

There are three examinations for Latin at GCSE level:

- **Latin Language** is worth 50% of the qualification and lasts 1 hour 30 minutes. The exam consists of short comprehension questions based on an unseen text and a passage of translation from Latin to English. There is also a choice of either translating a number of short sentences from English to Latin or answering some grammar questions about a short Latin passage.
- **Latin Literature and Sources** is worth 30% of the qualification and lasts 1 hour 15 minutes. This exam consists of a range of comprehension questions based on texts previously studied in class. It is an open-book assessment and students are expected to analyse the style of the writer as well as translate the passages. There is a final essay (written in English) which is usually based on an overarching theme of these set texts.
- **Roman Civilisation** is worth 20% of the qualification and lasts 1 hour. This component consists of a range of comprehension questions based on sources, and a variety of longer written tasks including one essay. All answers are written in English.

What skills will I develop?

Latin is a great subject to develop a number of transferrable skills for further education, work and life. The logical nature of this subject encourages critical thinking and problem solving, whilst written responses will require students to be both analytical and persuasive. Latin complements many other subjects including English, modern foreign languages and history.

Careers with Latin?

Studying Latin can open the door to an array of career paths that require use of language. It is an ideal complement to a range of subjects where formal terminology is used such as law and medicine, and can support other careers in politics, history, journalism and teaching.

Mrs E Taylor

WJEC Eduqas C990PB

MODERN LANGUAGES

French, Spanish (AQA), Mandarin (EDEXCEL)

What are modern foreign language GCSEs all about?

Thanks to new technology and improved travel and communications, the world has become a much smaller place. It is crucial, therefore, that we learn to speak and understand each other. This can only be done effectively by learning other languages and appreciating the associated cultures.

A GCSE in another language rewards practical communication skills and adds a European and/or international dimension to your studies as well as developing a skill for life. .

Learning another language can enhance your employment and mobility prospects whether you want a career in science, business, accountancy, engineering, journalism, law, the world of sports among others and even those wishing to become entrepreneurs. Language graduates appeal to employers who are looking for excellent written and spoken communication skills.

This is a multi-skill GCSE (speaking 25%, listening 25%, reading 25% and writing 25%) which will enable students of all abilities to develop their language skills to their full potential, equipping them with the knowledge to communicate in a variety of contexts with confidence.

Will I enjoy this course?

You will enjoy this course if you want to study a subject that offers:

A range of skills and a variety of activities with themes that include media, entertainment and youth culture, education, training & employment and social activities, fitness and health, social and global issues as well as identity and culture in countries/communities where the language is spoken.

The possibility to be able to travel abroad – there are trips to France and Spain available for KS4 students.

The potential for linking work to ICT –using multi-media facilities to access resources and news channels and other practical ICT applications will be actively encouraged.

It will appeal to all types of students including those interested in travel, culture and people from different countries, as well as those who will become a new generation of researchers and their role within the international context.

How does it follow on from what I have learned before?

You have developed important language skills and knowledge at Key Stage 3 (Years 7-9). The GCSE course will build on this and introduce you to a wider range of language structures and vocabulary. You will learn to recognise these and to apply your new knowledge to different contexts.

What about exams?

You will be assessed in four different skills. You will take an exam in listening, reading, writing and speaking where you will be expected to demonstrate general and specific understanding of different types of language, writing for a variety of purposes and communicating and interacting across a range of specified contexts.



What about my results?

We enter students for the most appropriate level to enable them to achieve the highest grade possible. The majority are entered for Higher Tier.

Results in Modern Languages have consistently been amongst the highest achieved in the school with several students each year achieving full marks across the four skills.

What other skills might I develop?

Learning a language will help you to develop skills that will be extremely useful to you. It can help you to develop key skills in communication, information and communication technology, working with others and improving your own learning and performance. It will also develop your confidence and ability to communicate with people from other countries and cultures. In addition, learning languages boosts brain power as memory is improved. Decision making skills become easier and your performance in other academic areas is enhanced as you develop a variety of cognitive skills.

What could I do next with a GCSE in a modern foreign language?

You can study a foreign language A level, always in demand by university admissions tutors. An MFL is an essential component of the Ebacc. Employers too are forever asking for candidates with language skills and a GCSE in a modern foreign language will place you in a strong position for interesting employment with plenty of career opportunities. Examples of employment where language skills are particularly valued include journalism and media, law, engineering, business and marketing, ICT, sport and leisure, travel and tourism, customer service, civil service (Immigration, Customs and Excise, Diplomatic Service) and teaching (UK and abroad).

What about exchanges/visits?

In Year 10 Spanish students may take part in a trip to Barcelona. Year 10 French students may take part in a trip to France and Y10 Chinese students may take part in a trip to China.

NOTES

All students are expected to study a modern foreign language through to GCSE at the end of Year 11. This has to be a language that you studied up to Year 9. If you studied two languages in Year 9, it is possible to continue both to GCSE. Students should discuss their choice with their languages teacher(s) before completing their options form.

Ms L Santana (Director of MFL)

Mr J Waters (French)

Mr P Golmayo (Spanish)

Mrs C Jarrett (Mandarin)

AQA

AQA

Edexcel

MUSIC

What is GCSE Music all about?

GCSE Music is an academic, challenging and engaging subject, which encourages development of a wide range of skills. It covers performing, composing, listening to, analysing and appraising a wide variety of music – classical music, popular music, music for stage and screen and world music. Lessons are split, equally, between practical and theory lessons. You will develop and improve your instrumental and vocal skills, along with your music theory knowledge, widen your musical vocabulary and ability to analyse music. You will also take part in various music workshops with visiting professional musicians, and have the opportunity to visit primary schools as a music mentor. You will be offered the chance to attend several trips throughout your GCSE course, including a visit to London to see a West End show. Music is a great subject to take as a complete contrast to your other subjects. It encourages and nurtures essential skills that will serve you well for the remainder of your education and beyond.

Will I enjoy this course?

You will enjoy this course if you want to study a subject that:

- involves performing solo – 15%
- gives you the opportunity to play music with others in various group situations – 15%
- builds on your existing strengths and interests in music, e.g. playing an instrument, composing
- involves composing or arranging music on your own, following certain conventions – 30%
- involves listening to, studying and analysing a wide range and varying styles of music – 40%
- you appreciate working in a smaller class and building a strong rapport with your classmates.

How does it follow on from what I have learned before?

You will improve your own skills in performing, through regular solo and group performances to the class. You will compose different types of music, using conventions found in a variety of music, along with improving your music theory knowledge and aural awareness. You will listen to, perform and closely analyse 8 set works, following the music and learning more about how and why they were written and/or performed. You will also experience wider listening around these set works, whilst learning to draw comparisons between the different repertoire. Music is an academic subject and writing is a significant part of the course; you will consolidate existing knowledge and learn new vocabulary to enable you to describe music in an appropriate manner, whilst providing musical examples to reinforce each point.

Requirements for the course:

It involves an even greater element of *independent study* than in KS3. You will prepare solo and group performances of notated music and improve both solo improvising and extemporising in groups, whilst appreciating different performing situations. Your instrumental/vocal skills need to be at approximately grade 2 standard, at the **start** of the course. You will compose and notate your own music, on your own, using Sibelius or Logic. It requires a complete understanding of the notation of music on paper or using ICT. You must be learning an instrument or be able to sing for your performances. You may also be entered for a theory examination.

What about exams?

There is one exam lasting 1 hour and 45 minutes, during the final summer term. You will listen to a CD and answer short questions on the set works which cover popular music, classical music (past and present) and music from around the world. There will also be a longer essay style question which will require you to compare one of the set works with an unfamiliar piece of music.

Is there any coursework?

Yes. You will submit two performances. One of the pieces will be a solo in any style and on any instrument/voice. The other performance may be one of your own compositions, but must be an ensemble piece (including other musicians). These performances may take place in the classroom, in a school concert, in school music groups, or outside school. You will also submit two compositions, one

according to a brief written by the exam board, relating to one of the areas of study; the other may be a free composition.

Mrs E Renshaw-Kidd

Edexcel 1426

ANCIENT HISTORY

What is on offer? How will it work?

The option to study GCSE Ancient History is only available as an additional option, on top of the compulsory GCSEs and three option subjects, and outside the framework of the normal timetable.

Lessons will take place during (and instead of) the History of Ideas sessions, supplemented with some lunchtime lessons. Currently there are thirteen students taking this option in Year 10 and eleven in Year 11. You can start the course on a trial basis in Term 6 of Year 9, but you will need to make a firm decision as to whether or not to commit to the course at the start of Year 10. Looking ahead, Ancient History also now runs as an AS option in our Sixth Form (ten students at present).

You can take Ancient History regardless of whether or not you also choose (Modern) History as one of your three option choices.

Why might you want to take it?

Obviously this is only an appropriate choice for highly-motivated students who are keen to explore the ancient worlds of Persia, Greece and Rome, and are ready to take on significant additional study demands in order to do so. You will also need to be proficient and confident in literary-based subjects. This is particularly important as the course involves the careful reading and use of literary texts from the ancient world, including authors such as Herodotus, Plutarch, Livy, and Polybius.

While this course will give you an additional, fully-certified GCSE qualification, and also involves a real focus on developing intellectual skills of careful source reading and piecing together complex and fragmentary evidence from the distant past, the main motivation to take this course should simply be interest and a desire to learn about the ancient world. If you enjoyed the Year 9 History of Ideas course on ancient history, it is well worth considering this option.

What will you study?

The GCSE course is offered by the OCR exam board and involves the following units of study:

- The Persian Empire 559-465 BC
- Alexander the Great 356-323 BC
- The Foundations of Rome 753-440 BC
- Hannibal and the Second Punic War 218-201 BC

It is examined through two exam papers of 1h45m each, both taken at the end of Year 11. You can find further details about the course at www.ocr.org.uk/qualifications/gcse-ancient-history-j198-from-2017/

ASTRONOMY

What is on offer? How will it work?

The option to study GCSE Astronomy is only available as an additional option, on top of the compulsory GCSEs and three option subjects, and outside the framework of the normal timetable.

Lessons will take place during (and instead of) the History of Ideas sessions, supplemented with some evening or before school lessons. Observation nights will be included however most observation work will be completed at home (when its dark!) and this is a significant component of the practical work.

You can start the course on a trial basis in Term 6 of Year 9, but you will need to make a firm decision as to whether or not to commit to the course at the start of Year 10.

Why might you want to take it?

This is only an appropriate choice for highly-motivated and committed students with a deep interest in physical science. Studying astronomy helps to approach the biggest questions and fuels a desire to understand great phenomena. It follows an incredible story of how scientists, from ancient civilisations to the modern day, have used their imagination and carefully recorded visual measurements to explore the Universe in which we live. It's a diverse subject and offers transferable skills, such as problem solving and research skills.

What will you study?

The GCSE Astronomy course is offered by the Edexcel exam board and involves the following units of study:

- Topic 1 – Planet Earth
- Topic 2 – The lunar disc
- Topic 3 – The Earth-Moon-Sun system
- Topic 4 – Time and the Earth-Moon-Sun cycles
- Topic 5 – Solar System observation
- Topic 6 – Celestial observation
- Topic 7 – Early models of the Solar System
- Topic 8 – Planetary motion and gravity
- Topic 9 – Exploring the Moon
- Topic 10 – Solar astronomy
- Topic 11 – Exploring the Solar System
- Topic 12 – Formation of planetary systems
- Topic 13 – Exploring starlight
- Topic 14 – Stellar evolution
- Topic 15 – Our place in the Galaxy
- Topic 16 – Cosmology

It is examined through two exam papers of 1h45m each, both taken at the end of Year 11. Students also need to complete several observational tasks and records. A basic telescope will be provided for this if required.

GCSE OPTIONS 2026

Name

Form

- We expect students to study a Foreign Language
- You are strongly advised to take Geography or History.
- You should consider taking a Creative subject (Art, Design, Drama, Music)
- List your choices in priority order (1=your highest priority)

You also need a reserve choice in case we cannot timetable your 3rd option.

1	
2	
3	
Reserve	
	Ancient History – tick here if you wish to take this additional extra-curricular subject
	Astronomy – tick here if you wish to take this additional extra-curricular subject

You cannot choose both Business and Economics
You cannot choose both Ancient History and Astronomy

Parent's/carer's signature.....

Date:.....2026

*Please return this form to your Form Tutor by **Monday 30th March 2026***

Choice A is a sound default set of subjects if you do not have a clear specialism to follow.

		OPTION 1	OPTION 2	OPTION 3
	(A)	CREATIVE SUBJECT	HISTORY or GEOGRAPHY	LANGUAGE
	(B)	HISTORY or GEOGRAPHY	LANGUAGE	COMP SCI or BUSINESS or ECONOMICS
LANGUAGES	(C)	LANGUAGE	LANGUAGE	HISTORY/GEOGRAPHY
HUMANITIES	(D)	HISTORY	GEOGRAPHY	LANGUAGE
TECHNOLOGY	(E)	DESIGN	COMP SCI	ANOTHER SUBJECT
CREATIVE	(F)	CREATIVE	CREATIVE	ANOTHER SUBJECT