

مدرسة جيمس فيرست بوينت

GEMS FirstPoint School

THE VILLA



GCSE

Options Course Guide





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MAKING CHOICES FOR THE FUTURE

KEY STAGE 4 AND 5

The UK education system in the secondary phase is organised into Key Stages based on the students' age range:

SECONDARY PHASE

- Key Stage 3 (KS3)
Years 7, 8 and 9
Students in the age range 11 to 14 years
- Key Stage 4 (KS4)
Years 10 and 11
Students in the age range 14 to 16 years
- Key Stage 5 (KS5, also referred to as the Sixth Form/Post 16/Years 12 and 13)
Students in the age range 16 to 18 years

BROAD AND BALANCED CURRICULUM

At FirstPoint School, we believe that a broad, balanced education is essential and this ethos is reflected in our GCSE option format. Our aim is to prepare students thoroughly for future studies in whichever system of education they enter. It will also give them the diversity of subject matter essential for future employment.

To ensure breadth and balance in each student's curriculum, we do insist that all students take English Language, English Literature, Mathematics, Science Double Award and five further subjects to GCSE level from the option boxes. Students also take Physical Education as a non-GCSE subject. Those students who wish to develop their physical education skills to a higher level may do so within the option choices. For the majority of students this can mean a total of ten GCSE subjects. For our Arabic A students this will be nine GCSE subjects, as if a student holds an Arab passport they MUST select Arabic A in one of the option blocks in order to follow the compulsory course prescribed by the Ministry of Education in the UAE. Students will also follow a course in either Cultural Studies (for non-Muslims) or Islamic Studies (for our Muslim students).

THINKING AHEAD

During Year 9, students are given the opportunity to decide upon their options for the critical two years of KS4. The choice of subjects is particularly important because it will have a significant bearing on what they will be able to do when they complete their GCSE studies at the end of Year 11.

Students need to think ahead, as, although it may be tempting to discontinue studying particular subjects at the end of Year 9, they need to take into account the range of subjects that will allow them to access the opportunities for taking up certain careers, vocational training or entry to AS and A-level courses, whether at FirstPoint School or another educational establishment in the UAE, the UK or beyond.

Access can be limited if a student does not continue a particular subject to GCSE level. It is important for students to keep their options open when they make their decisions. This generally means that students should choose a wide range of subjects.

Many 13 or 14 year olds will have no fixed idea about what they want to do for a career. Even if they do, it is still advisable to be flexible. Minds are often changed!

KS4 CURRICULUM

The following tables set out:

- the subjects which are **core** for all students or **compulsory** for certain students
- the subjects which are available as options within option blocks

CORE/COMPULSORY SUBJECTS

- English Language
- English Literature
- Mathematics
- Science
- Physical Education (*Core – Non Examination*)
- Arabic Ministry of Education Programme (*compulsory for students holding Arab passports*)
- Islamic Studies Ministry of Education Programme (*compulsory for Muslim students*)

GCSE OPTION SUBJECTS

- Arabic (*Suitable for second language Arabic students*)
- Art and Design
- Business Studies
- Computer Science
- Drama
- Economics
- French
- Food Preparation and Nutrition
- Geography
- History
- Music
- Physical Education
- Spanish
- Technology



GENERAL CERTIFICATE IN SECONDARY EDUCATION (GCSE)

WHAT ARE GCSES?

GCSE courses are designed as a two year course of study for students in Years 10 and 11. GCSEs were developed over twenty years ago as part of the reform of 14 -19 education. More recently the regulators in England, Wales and Northern Ireland have made some important changes to the way in which GCSE courses are structured and the way students are assessed. The changes are designed to ensure that GCSE courses are relevant, stimulating, engaging and accessible to all students.

GCSE EXAMINATIONS AND CONTROLLED ASSESSMENTS

Students who enter Year 10 from September 2016 will be assessed through a range of Controlled Assessments throughout Years 10 and 11, as well as examinations in the summer of Year 11 (May/June). Controlled Assessments have more recently replaced coursework. This, however, varies from one subject to another and full details of what is required for each subject are included in this booklet.

GCSE GRADE STRUCTURE

The grade range at GCSE is 9 to 1. It is important to note that a student gaining a grade from 9 to 4 has gained (or 'passed') a GCSE. There is an ungraded category U, (U meaning unclassified), which would be an extremely rare occurrence as it would represent no progress in a GCSE course. This would not appear on the final certificate issued by the examination board. For more information on the new grading system follow the link <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/setting-standards-for-new-gcses-in-2017>.

GCSE GRADES 9 TO 4

There is a major focus on gaining at least five GCSEs in the grade range 9 to 4 in the UK and we strive to maximise attainment for all our students to gain GCSEs in these grades. Gaining at least five GCSEs in this grade range will enable students to access a range of opportunities, particularly in more advanced academic study. It is important to be aware that the highest attainment at GCSE (grade 9 to 5) in specific subjects is needed for entry into Post 16 at FirstPoint School and other educational establishments.

GCSE RESULTS

The examination results are published by the examination boards towards the end of August. Every Year 11 student at FirstPoint School will be given details of how to access their results online, for which a password is issued by the Examinations Officer. It is very important that the password is written down in several places so that the student can locate it when they need it in August of Year 11 to access results.

ENTRY TIERS

In some subjects, students are entered for a 'tier' (the Foundation tier which targets grades 5 to 1; or the Higher tier which targets grades 9 to 4. The decision about the appropriate tier will be fully discussed with the students, parents, teacher and Head of Department. It is very important for the student and parents to be aware of the reasons for selecting a tier as entry at Foundation or Higher has implications for the range of grades accessible to the student. Where a student is borderline Foundation or Higher, the guidance of the Head of Department and, if required, The Head of Secondary, must be fully taken into account.

ABSENCE FROM LESSONS AND LEARNING

It is important that parents do not take their children out of School on holidays (other than scheduled school holidays) during Year 10 and Year 11 as essential teaching, learning and preparation for examinations may be missed. It is rarely successful for students to study during family holidays and it is always hard for them to 'catch up' with work missed. Not being in the classroom and not being taught by a teacher can put students at a real disadvantage.

EXAMINATION BOARDS

The GCSE examination courses offered at FirstPoint School are examined through the following UK Examination Boards:

AQA and EDEXCEL

These boards are overseen by Ofqual, the regulatory body established by the British government to standardise the English Examination Boards.

| GCSE OPTION SUBJECTS | GCSE OPTION SUBJECTS |
|--------------------------------|----------------------|
| English Language | Edexcel |
| English Literature | Edexcel |
| Mathematics | Edexcel |
| Science | Oxford AQA |
| Arabic B | Edexcel |
| Art and Design | Edexcel |
| Business Studies | Edexcel |
| Computer Science | Edexcel |
| Design Technology | Edexcel |
| Drama | Edexcel |
| Economics | Edexcel |
| Food Preparation and Nutrition | Edexcel |
| French | Edexcel |
| Geography | AQA |
| History | AQA |
| Music | Edexcel |
| Physical Education | AQA |
| Spanish | Edexcel |

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION COURSES

- Arabic A (Arab passport holders only)
- Islamic Studies (Muslim students only)

EXAMINATION FEES

Examination fees are payable upon confirmation of the examinations being undertaken by a student. Parents will be invoiced before the examinations are taken by the students. Currently, the fees range from Dhs 400 to Dhs 900 per subject per full GCSE, depending upon the particular subject concerned. Variations in the fee structure are due to the nature of the course; whether it is a single or double award, or if an external moderator has to be employed by the Examination Board and brought out from the UK (the latter usually applies to practical areas of the curriculum).



ARABIC (*Arab Passport Holders*)

EXAMINATION BOARD: The Ministry of Education

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF COURSE

The Dubai Ministry of Education syllabus covers the topics identified below and is intended for all Arabic native speakers to further their knowledge and understanding of the Arabic language. In Year 12, students will also have the opportunity to study further topics which are essential to pass the Ministry of Education examination. These topics will be presented to students entering Year 12 at FirstPoint School.

The Arabic course consists of four elements: Reading, Writing, Listening and Speaking.

Reading

- Analysing the words, fluency, and developing vocabulary
- Understanding and assimilation
- The response to literature and analysing the literary texts

Writing

- Writing essays that contain systematic introduction, supported evidences, and logical conclusions,
- The learners use and employ their ability and their knowledge of the language, style, and eloquence to write narrative, informational, persuasive, and descriptive texts

Listening

The learners listen to the audible texts and show understanding, distinguish and analyse the ideas, extract values and principles, evaluate the texts according to objective standards, and adhere to the etiquette of listening.

Speaking

The learners show their ability in conversation such as fluency, confidence, organizing the ideas, clarity, and using the paralleled elements of the language including: tuning, accent, gesture, and allusion ..., as well as participate effectively in official presentations such as speeches, public discussions, and debates, moreover to use conversation skill for various purposes as asking questions, exchanging information, re-formatting the audible texts, or narration of a story and providing different presentations.

METHODS OF ASSESSMENT

Arabic is internally assessed in each of the Years 10, 11 and 12 with the final Ministry examination taking place at the end of Year 12. The internal assessment involves:

| | |
|---|-----|
| Class work and assessment throughout the year | 50% |
| End of the year examination | 50% |

The final examination in Year 12 will be attested by the Ministry of Education and this certification can then be used to verify that the student has followed the statutory course as required for employment and attendance at universities throughout the Middle East.

ENTRY INFORMATION

The Ministry of Education requirement is that students who are native speakers of Arabic follow the Ministry syllabus until they sit a formal examination at the end of Year 12. This is essential for all native Arabic speakers who wish to work and attend university in the Middle East as they will be provided with an attestation that they have followed the course and achieved the appropriate standards.



ENGLISH LANGUAGE

EXAMINATION BOARD: Edexcel

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF COURSE

The Edexcel International GCSE in English Language (Specification A) is designed as a two year course. The specification includes a wide range of reading and writing. The reading requirements of the course are covered in the Edexcel Anthology for International GCSE and Certificate Qualifications in English Language and Literature, for use throughout the course and in the examination.

KEY SUBJECT AIMS

The Edexcel International GCSE in English Language (Specification A) enables students to:

- develop their understanding of the spoken word and the capacity to participate effectively in a variety of speaking and listening activities
- develop the ability to read, understand and respond to material from a variety of sources, and to recognise and appreciate themes and attitudes and the ways in which writers achieve their effects
- develop the ability to construct and convey meaning in written language, matching style to audience and purpose

METHODS OF ASSESSMENT

External Examination: 2 papers (100%)

Paper 1: Reading & Writing tasks based on Section A of the Edexcel Anthology for International GCSE and Certificate Qualifications in English Language and Literature.

- The assessment of this paper is through a two-hour and 15-minute examination, set and marked by Edexcel and is a single tier of entry
- The total number of marks available is 60

Paper 2: Reading & Writing tasks based on Section B of the Edexcel Anthology for International GCSE and Certificate Qualifications in English Language and Literature.

- The assessment of this paper is through a one-hour and 30-minute examination, set and marked by Edexcel and is a single tier of entry
- The total number of marks available is 30

CAREERS

The skills you gain through studying an English are marketable in most career areas. English graduates find opportunities in a wide range of careers including: administration; research; finance; general management; publishing companies; advertising marketing and public relations agencies, and media organisations. The retail, leisure and tourism sectors also typically recruit English graduates.

GCSE at Grade 4 or above is required for entry into many UK university courses.

ENGLISH LITERATURE

EXAMINATION BOARD: Edexcel

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF COURSE

The Edexcel International GCSE in English Literature is designed as a two-year course. A selection of prose, drama and poetry from around the world allows for a wide choice of set texts. The examination questions allow all students to make a personal, informed response to the texts studied. The qualification offers an enjoyable and stimulating introduction to the study of English Literature. The Edexcel Anthology for International GCSE and Certificate Qualifications in English Language and Literature is provided for use throughout the course and examination.

KEY SUBJECT AIMS

The Edexcel International GCSE in English Literature enables students to:

- engage with and develop the ability to read, understand and respond to a wide range of literary texts from around the world
- develop an appreciation of the ways in which authors achieve their literary effects and to develop the skills needed for literary study
- explore, through literature, the cultures of their own and other societies
- find enjoyment in reading literature and understand its influence on individuals and societies.

METHODS OF ASSESSMENT

External Examination: 2 papers (100%)

Paper 1: Drama and Prose

- The assessment of this paper is through a one-hour and 45-minute examination, set and marked by Edexcel and is a single tier of entry.
- The total number of marks available is 60.

Paper 2: Unseen Texts and Poetry Anthology

- The assessment of this paper is through a one-hour and 30-minute examination, set and marked by Edexcel and is a single tier of entry.
- The total number of marks available is 40.

CAREERS

The skills you gain through studying an English are marketable in most career areas. English graduates find opportunities in a wide range of careers including: administration; research; finance; general management; publishing companies; advertising marketing and public relations agencies, and media organisations. The retail, leisure and tourism sectors also typically recruit English graduates.

GCSE at Grade 4 or above is required for entry into many UK university courses.

ISLAMIC STUDIES *(Muslim Students only)*

EXAMINATION BOARD: The Ministry of Education

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF COURSE

- Memorisation of selected passages from the Holy Quran
- Memorisation and understanding of selected Hadeeth of the Prophet Muhammed (pbuh)
- Acquire knowledge and develop understanding of the beliefs and values of Islam
- Consider the influence of the beliefs, values and traditions associated with Islam
- Consider religious and other responses to moral issues
- Rules of recitation
- Studying the stories of all the prophets of Islam

METHODS OF ASSESSMENT

Islamic Studies is internally assessed in each of the Years 10, 11 and 12 with the final Ministry examination taking place at the end of Year 12. The internal assessment involves:

| | |
|---|-----|
| Class work and assessment throughout the year | 50% |
| End of the year examination | 50% |

The final examination in Year 12 will be attested by the Ministry of Education and this certification can then be used to verify that the student has followed the statutory course as required for employment and attendance at universities throughout the Middle East.

It is also important to note that Arab passport holders must study and sit examinations in Islamic Studies in Arabic.

ENTRY INFORMATION

The course is compulsory for all Muslim students who are directed by the Ministry of Education to follow a course in Islamic Studies. FirstPoint School will enter students through the Ministry of Education procedures which will be explained to students and parents prior to entry. The final examination will be set by FirstPoint but must be approved by the Ministry of Education and will be taken by all Muslim students at the end of Year 12.

MATHEMATICS

EXAMINATION BOARD: Edexcel

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF COURSE

This course aims to develop mathematical knowledge and oral, written and practical skills in a manner which encourages confidence. There is emphasis at all levels on the relationship of Mathematics to the real world.

METHODS OF ASSESSMENT

Formal examination: 3 equally weighted papers at the end of Year 11

| | | |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------|
| Paper 1 – Non-Calculator. | Duration – 1 hour and 30 minutes. | Maximum Marks – 80. |
| Paper 2 – Calculator. | Duration – 1 hour and 30 minutes. | Maximum Marks – 80. |
| Paper 3 – Calculator. | Duration – 1 hour and 30 minutes. | Maximum Marks – 80. |

ENTRY INFORMATION

Examination entry is based on two tiers, with candidates taking three written examinations. The first is a non-calculator paper, whilst a calculator is necessary for the second and third paper. Students will be entered for the appropriate tier, based on their performance throughout the course. The table below indicates the tier level and matching examination grades:

| Level | Examination Papers | Grades Possible |
|------------|--------------------|--------------------------|
| Foundation | 1, 2 and 3 F | 5 to 1 |
| Higher | 1, 2 and 3 H | 9 to 4 (Grade 3 Allowed) |

CAREERS

Mathematics is an essential requirement for many occupations and Higher Education courses. It develops a wide range of useful skills for those who wish to pursue a career as an Accountant, Computer Programmer, Actuary, Engineer, Doctor, Psychologist, Radiographer, Teacher and many other fields.

GCSE at Grade 4 or above is required for entry into many UK university courses.



SCIENCE (DOUBLE AWARD)

EXAMINATION BOARD: Oxford International AQA Examinations

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF COURSE

The International GCSE Combined Science Double Award provides students with a good grounding in the principles of all three science disciplines. It gives students the opportunity to be scientifically literate and able to use science in their everyday lives and further studies. Students develop a range of practical skills along with data analysis and critical thinking skills.

Topics include:

Biology

Organisation, bioenergetics, ecology, inheritance, organisms' interaction with the environment, variation and evolution.

Chemistry

Atomic structure and the periodic table, periodicity, organic chemistry, structure, bonding and the properties of matter, metals, chemical analysis, acids, bases and salts, energy changes.

Physics

Forces and their effects, energy, waves, particle model of matter, electricity and magnetism, generating and distributing electricity and household use, nuclear physics, space physics.

METHODS OF ASSESSMENT

For each International GCSE, exam questions will be asked on the practical activities undertaken in lessons, but there is no coursework or practical exam. There will be three linear 1 hour and 45 minute exam papers, comprising structured and open questions. The quality of written communication is also assessed. In line with UK GCSEs, the qualification will be graded 9 to 1, where 9 is the best grade. Entries for the examination will be at either Core or Extension.

CAREERS

Science is an important subject for students wishing to pursue careers in: Biological Sciences, Chemistry, Physics, Engineering, Nursing, Teaching, Agriculture, Horticulture and a very wide range of other career areas.



SCIENCE (TRIPLE AWARD)

EXAMINATION BOARD: Oxford International AQA Examinations

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF COURSE

The GCSE qualifications in Biology, Chemistry and Physics encourage students to be inspired, motivated and challenged by following a broad, coherent, practical, satisfying and worthwhile course of study. They provide insight into, and experience of how Science works, stimulating students' curiosity and encouraging them to engage with Science in their everyday lives and to make informed choices about further study and career choices.

International GCSE in Biology

This qualification prepares students for further study in biological sciences and provides a thorough grounding in the practical skills needed to be a working scientist.

Topics include:

Organisation, bioenergetics, ecology, organisms' interaction with the environment, inheritance, variation and evolution.

International GCSE in Chemistry

This qualification contains a broad range of topics designed to engage students in chemistry while providing the knowledge and understanding required for progression to A-level.

Topics include:

Atomic structure and periodic table structure, bonding and the properties of matter, chemical changes, chemical analysis, acids, bases and salts, quantitative chemistry, periodicity, the rate and extent of chemical change, organic chemistry and energy changes.

International GCSE in Physics

This qualification is designed to engage students in physics. It encourages a questioning approach to scientific ideas and prepares students for working scientifically.

Topics include:

Forces and their effects, energy, waves, particle model of electricity, magnetism, generating and distributing electricity, nuclear physics and space physics.

METHODS OF ASSESSMENT

For the International GCSE exam, exam questions will be asked on the practical activities undertaken in lessons, but there is no coursework or practical examination. There will be two 90 minute papers for each of Biology, Chemistry and Physics comprising of structured and open questions. The quality of written work will be assessed. In line with UK GCSEs the qualification will be graded 9 to 1, where 9 is the best grade. The examination is single tier of entry.

CAREERS

Science is an important subject for students wishing to pursue careers in: Biological Sciences, Chemistry, Physics, Engineering, Medicine, Nursing, Teaching, Pharmaceuticals, Agriculture, Horticulture, Chemical Engineering and a very wide range of other career areas.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION-CORE

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF COURSE

This core PE course offers students a wide and varied programme of activities and is regarded as a continuation in the development of basic skills learned in earlier years.

Core PE is a non-examination subject and aims to implement the following objectives:

- to develop a knowledge of health and exercise in the pursuit of a healthy and active lifestyle
- to acquire a positive body image
- to obtain a range of personal and social skills through Physical Education
- to become skilful, knowledgeable and discerning consumers of sport

CAREERS

For those interested in sport, there is a wide choice of careers ranging from the professional athlete to work-related sport such as: Teaching and Coaching, Recreational Management, The Media, Sports Medicine and many others.





ARABIC (*Second language*)

EXAMINATION BOARD: Edexcel

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF COURSE

The course will encourage students to become proficient in the mechanics of oral and written Arabic. The ability to use Arabic to think, learn, communicate and develop critical skills will be promoted. Students will be challenged to develop a positive attitude towards language development and to encourage contacts with contemporary society as well as the cultural background and heritage of other Arabic speaking countries.

The key aims of the course are to develop:

- The ability to communicate in Arabic
- An understanding of Arabic in a variety of contexts
- A knowledge of the Arabic vocabulary and structures
- Awareness and understanding of countries and communities where Arabic is spoken
- Transferable learning skills

SUMMARY OF SCHEME OF ASSESSMENT

One tier of examination will be offered with papers targeted at grades A* to G.

The grid below shows the relationship between assessment objectives and examination components.

| Paper | | Duration of Examination |
|-------|---------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1 | Listening and understanding in Arabic | 50 minutes |
| 2 | Speaking in Arabic | 10 minutes |
| 3 | Reading and understanding in Arabic | 55 minutes |
| 4 | Writing in Arabic | 1 hour |

ENTRY INFORMATION

This is an open entry subject with no higher/lower tiers and is available to second language Arabic speakers.

CAREERS

Arabic develops a wide range of useful skills for those who wish to work or live in an Arab country. Careers in Trading, Investment, Diplomacy and Tourism, to name just a few, are all helped by a sound knowledge of Arabic.

ART AND DESIGN

EXAMINATION BOARD: Edexcel

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF COURSE

The Art and Design course will encourage students to explore different media and approaches to work in this area.

Drawing skills will be developed and will form a strong thread running through the two-year programme of study, thereby increasing the individual's confidence to externalise his/her ideas and feelings. Opportunities to work in painting, print-making, graphic design, textiles, ceramics and sculpture will arise and be developed depending on the individual student's interest and strengths. Students will be required to relate their own work to that of other artists, designers and cultures in both contemporary and historical contexts. Work outside of the classroom is of great importance and students extend their interest through a work journal, taking the initiative in its development.

COURSEWORK

Students are required to complete a portfolio of coursework. The portfolio will fully cover all assessment objectives. This will include a body of research, supporting searches and developmental work leading to one or more outcomes. Students must produce work from disciplines such as painting, sculpture, print-making or textiles.

METHODS OF ASSESSMENT

The course will lead to a ten hour controlled test which will be assessed at the same time as the presentation of coursework.

| | |
|---------------------------|-----|
| Personal Portfolio | 60% |
| Externally set assignment | 40% |

ENTRY INFORMATION

This is an open entry subject with no higher/lower tiers. All students will be required to take the controlled test with its 'open' style of questions and differentiation will be achieved by outcome.

CAREERS

This course would form an excellent foundation to further study at GNVQ, GCE A-level and beyond. It would be of benefit to students who may wish to pursue careers in areas such as Fashion, Set Production, Graphic Design, Photography, Video/Film Production, Architecture, Teaching and Design in all of its forms.

BUSINESS STUDIES

EXAMINATION BOARD: Edexcel

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF COURSE

Students are encouraged to think and act as business men and women as they develop the ability to understand business activity and the environment in which it takes place. Students are expected to apply their knowledge and understanding of business concepts to business situations and to develop problem-solving skills.

The course introduces the concept of enterprise and the characteristics needed to run a successful business. This involves finding out how to develop an idea and spot an opportunity and turn that into a profitable business. Managing each function of a business and understanding the economic influences are also key factors to be explored.

| UNITS | METHOD OF ASSESSMENT |
|---|--|
| Unit 1 – Introduction of Small Businesses | This unit is externally assessed by a 45 minute examination of multiple choice and objective test questions. It represents 25% of the total marks. |
| Unit 2 – Investigating Small Businesses | This unit is internally assessed through coursework under controlled conditions. The examination board provides a set task which is marked internally and then externally moderated. It represents 25% of the total marks. |
| Unit 3 – Building a Business | This unit is externally assessed by a 1 hour 30 minute examination using a wide range of questions. It represents 50% of the total marks. |

ENTRY INFORMATION

There is one tier of entry available that allows students to achieve grades A* to G.

CAREERS

Business Studies helps students to develop an understanding of the world of work and, as such, is of value in any career choice. Some of the more obvious careers benefiting from Business Studies include: Marketing, Hotel Management, Catering, Retail Management, Personnel Management as well as Banking and Finance.



COMPUTER SCIENCE

EXAMINATION BOARD: Edexcel

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF COURSE

Computer Science aims to ensure that all students are equipped to understand and change the world through computational thinking. It develops and requires logical thinking and precision. It combines creativity with rigour. Students apply underlying principles to understand real world systems and to create purposeful and usable artefacts. It provides opportunities for students to explore the wider societal and ethical issues associated with Computer Science and to develop as responsible practitioners.

A computing education also ensures that students become digitally literate – able to use, and express themselves through, information and communication technology – at a level suitable for the future workplace and as active participants in a digital world.

OVERVIEW OF CONTENT

Programming Constructs, Computer Structures, Algorithms, Data Representation, Software Development Life Cycle, Application Testing, Networking, External Code Sources, Database Concepts, Computer Technology in Society.

METHODS OF ASSESSMENT

| Type | Duration | Weighting | Assessment |
|---------------------|----------------|------------------|---|
| Written examination | 1 hour 40 mins | 40% of the marks | Externally assessed with multiple-choice, short open response, open response and extended open response answer questions. |
| Written examination | 2 hours | 40% of the marks | This paper is based on a scenario. It consists of short open response, open response and extended open-response answer questions. |
| Project | 20 hours | 20% of the marks | Project set by exam board. Non-examined assessment. |

ENTRY INFORMATION

It is suitable for students who have followed the KS3 ICT programme of study and wish to continue on an academic pathway to study Engineering, Computer Science, Digital Media, Information Technology or Design Technology at university.

CAREERS

Computer Science provides an excellent progression to A-level Computer Science, vocational courses and on to degree level courses in the areas of Computing, Engineering, Science, Digital Media or Design Technology. In addition the course provides the knowledge, skills and understanding that a growing number of employers are demanding.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

EXAMINATION BOARD: Edexcel

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF COURSE

The Design and Technology Course will prepare students to participate confidently and successfully in an increasingly technological world. Students will have the opportunity to be aware of and learn from wider influences on Design and Technology, including historical, social, cultural, environmental and economic factors. Design and Technology enables the students to work creatively when designing, making and applying technical and practical expertise, in order to:

- Use imagination, experimentation and synthesis when designing.
- Develop a broad Knowledge of materials, components, technologies and practical skills to develop high quality, imaginative and functional prototypes and products.
- Be ambitious and take design risks in order to stretch the development of design proposals.
- Consider the cost, commercial viability and marketing of products.
- Develop realistic design proposals as a result of exploration of design opportunities and users' needs, wants and values.
- Communicate their design ideas and decisions using different media and techniques, as appropriate for different audiences.
- Develop the skills to critique and refine their own ideas whilst designing and making.

COURSEWORK

Students are required to complete a portfolio of coursework. The portfolio will fully cover all assessment objectives. This will include a body of research, supporting searches and developmental work leading to one or more outcomes. Students must produce work from disciplines such as Electronics, Resistant Materials and Textiles.

METHODS OF ASSESSMENT

The course will lead to a ten hour controlled practical assessment which will form part of the coursework portfolio and a written exam.

| | |
|---------------------------|-----|
| Coursework Portfolio | 50% |
| Externally set assignment | 50% |

ENTRY INFORMATION

This is an open entry subject with no higher/lower tiers. All students will be required to take the controlled test with its 'open' style of questions.

CAREERS

This course would form an excellent foundation to further study at GCE A-level and beyond. It would be of benefit to students who may wish to pursue careers in areas such as Fashion, Interior Design, Graphic Design, Architecture, Teaching and Design in all of its forms.

DRAMA

EXAMINATION BOARD: Edexcel

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF COURSE

GCSE Drama will engage students through encouraging creativity, focusing on practical work which reflects twenty-first century theatre practise and developing skills that will support progression to further study of drama and a wide range of other subjects. The course consists of three components: One that focuses on devising, one that focuses on performing in or designing for a performance from a text and one that focuses on practical understanding of a performance text resulting in a written examination.

Component 1 - Devising

Students will create and develop a devised piece of Drama in response to a stimulus. This will be performed to an audience and evaluated. Students may either act or choose a design route to specialise in.

Component 2 - Performance from Text

Students will either perform in and/or design for two key extracts from a performance text. These performances will be assessed by a visiting examiner.

Component 3 - Theatre Makers in Practice

Practical exploration and study of one complete performance text. Students will also observe and evaluate a live theatre performance.

METHODS OF ASSESSMENT

Component 1 - Devising

Internally Assessed

40% Written Portfolio and Practical Performance

Component 2 - Performance from Text

Externally Assessed

20% Practical

Component 3 - Theatre Makers in Practice

Externally Assessed

40% Written Examination

ENTRY INFORMATION

This is an open entry subject with no higher/lower tiers. Students should enjoy acting and performing and be willing to work collaboratively with other students.

CAREERS

This course will be advantageous to students wishing to pursue a career in Drama or Theatre, the Media, Law, as well as any other career that requires creativity, strong interpersonal skills and leadership qualities.

ECONOMICS

EXAMINATION BOARD: Edexcel

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF COURSE

The course aims to equip students with the basic tools of the economist to help them understand their place and contribution to the national and global economy as consumers, workers and citizens.

They will be encouraged to investigate a range of contemporary issues, analysing the evidence from different perspectives.

There are four areas of subject content. Students are required to study all four areas:

- The Market System: consisting of demand and supply, the role of the market in solving the economic problem and the labour market
- Business Economics: consisting of production, competition and public and private sectors
- Government and the Economy: consisting of macroeconomic objectives, policies, relationship between objectives and policies.
- Global Economy: consisting of globalisation, international trade and exchange rates

METHODS OF ASSESSMENT

This qualification is assessed through an examination paper lasting two hours and 30 minutes, set and marked by Edexcel and is a single tier of entry.

CAREERS

Economics is used as a qualification and preparation for careers in: Management, Business, Politics, Insurance, Retailing and Investment and International Finance. GCSE Economics can also be used as an entry qualification for A-level Economics, Business Studies, Law and Marketing.



FOOD PREPARATION AND NUTRITION

EXAMINATION BOARD: Edexcel

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF COURSE

The Food Preparation and Nutrition Course will equip students with the knowledge, understanding and skills required to cook and apply the principles of food science, nutrition and healthy eating. Students will be encouraged to cook and make informed decisions about a wide range of further learning opportunities and career pathways as well as develop vital life skills that enable them to feed themselves and others affordably and nutritiously, now and later in life. In studying cooking and nutrition students will:

- 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 functional properties and chemical processes as well as the nutritional content of food and drinks.
- 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 sociocultural influences on food availability.
- Understand and explore a range of ingredients and processes from different culinary traditions to inspire new ideas or modify existing recipes.

COURSEWORK

Students are required to complete a portfolio of coursework. The portfolio will fully cover all assessment objectives. This will include a body of research, supporting searches and developmental work leading to one or more outcomes.

METHODS OF ASSESSMENT

The subject content includes a significant practical focus on students' ability to prepare and cook food. GCSE qualifications in cooking and nutrition use both exam and non-exam assessments. Non exam assessments will allow students to apply their theoretical knowledge and understanding in a practical context to plan, prepare and cook meals.

| | |
|---------------------------|-----|
| Coursework Portfolio | 50% |
| Externally set assignment | 50% |

ENTRY INFORMATION

This is an open entry subject with no higher/lower tiers. All students will be required to take the controlled test with its 'open' style of questions and differentiation will be achieved by outcome.

CAREERS

This course would form an excellent foundation to further study at GCE A-level and beyond. It would be of benefit to students who may wish to pursue careers in areas such as a caterer, cake designer, food writer, culinary school teacher, chef, food and restaurant critique, recipe developer and food and nutrition in all of its forms.

FRENCH

EXAMINATION BOARD: Edexcel

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF COURSE

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

- develop their ability to communicate confidently and coherently with native speakers in speech and writing, conveying what they want to say with increasing accuracy
- express and develop thoughts and ideas spontaneously and fluently
- listen to and understand clearly articulated, standard speech at near normal speed
- deepen their knowledge about how language works and enrich their vocabulary in order for them to increase their independent use and understanding of extended language in a wide range of contexts
- acquire new knowledge, skills and ways of thinking through the ability to understand and respond to a rich range of authentic spoken and written material, adapted and abridged, as appropriate, including literary texts
- develop awareness and understanding of the culture and identity of the countries and communities where the language is spoken
- be encouraged to make appropriate links to other areas of the curriculum to enable bilingual and deeper learning, where the language may become a medium for constructing and applying knowledge
- develop language-learning skills both for immediate use and to prepare them for further language study and use in school, higher education or employment
- develop language strategies, including repair strategies

Questions across all four language skills are set in common contexts, addressing a range of relevant contemporary and cultural themes. They are organised into five themes, each broken down into topics and sub-topics. The five themes are:

- Identity and culture
- Local area, holiday, travel
- School
- Future aspirations, study and work
- International and global dimension

METHODS OF ASSESSMENT

The Pearson Edexcel Level 1/Level 2 GCSE (9-1) in French consists of four externally examined papers based on the following skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing. Students must complete their speaking assessment in April/May and all other assessments in May/June in any single year. Each paper is available at Foundation tier or Higher tier. Students must be entered for a single tier across all papers.

ENTRY INFORMATION

Assuming maximum individual attainment in all four skills, students can obtain:

5 to 1 at entry for Listening and Reading at Foundation Tier

9 to 4 at entry for Listening and Reading with both skills at Higher Tier

CAREERS

We live in a world where careers are increasingly international and companies have global activities for which the ability to speak another language is a necessary and important skill. French is a major world language and is useful in many careers such as: diplomacy, banking, ICT, journalism, medicine, science, travel and tourism, marketing, music, art, theatre, film, engineering, transport, aviation, hotel management, catering, teaching, sales, sports and leisure. French is widely recognised as a language which is challenging to learn and involves considerable academic effort; a qualification in French is therefore often valuable to enhance opportunities for entrance to the best universities.

GEOGRAPHY

EXAMINATION BOARD: AQA

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF COURSE

"Geography puts the knowing into seeing and makes sense of the world."

Geography students will study a broad range of topics allowing them to explore the interactions between the human and physical elements of our world. The GCSE Geography course encourages students to ask questions about the world they live in, process ideas and evaluate key global issues.

Students can expect to experience a variety of teaching techniques from debate, group work, the enquiry process, thinking skills and role-play. They will also see Geography brought to life through ICT and researching relevant case studies. Students will have numerous opportunities to take part in extra-curricular activities within the subject, focusing on fieldwork and geographical skills. The course will involve a mandatory piece of fieldwork to be completed that permits students to carry out primary data collection.

METHODS OF ASSESSMENT

The course is divided into three examination papers which will be sat in summer 2018. These are outlined below:

Paper 1: Living with the physical environment

Section A: The challenge of natural hazards

Section B: The living world

Section C: Physical landscapes in the UK

Paper 2: Challenges in the human environment

Section A: Urban issues and challenges

Section B: The changing economic world

Section C: The challenge of resource management

Paper 3: Geographical applications

Section A: Issue evaluation

Section B: Fieldwork

Section C: Geographical skills

ENTRY INFORMATION

This is an open entry subject with no higher/lower tiers. All students will attempt common examination papers, which will contain questions of graded difficulty requiring answers of varying lengths.

CAREERS

A GCSE in Geography is a stepping stone to a whole range of future opportunities. The knowledge gained from studying the subject will allow students to enter a career directly related to its content such as that found in tourism, development or environmental consultancy. Alternatively, like many Geography graduates, it will be possible to transfer into a career which uses a geographers' wide range of transferable skills, for example, finance, marketing, research and industry.

HISTORY

EXAMINATION BOARD: AQA

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF COURSE

"Those who ignore History are condemned to repeat it."

History allows students to gain knowledge and understanding of the world in which they live today. Topics are chosen for their relevance to modern society and links to events taking place around the world. History encourages students to think independently and to ask questions and make judgments. History students train their minds to assemble, organise and present facts and opinions.

Students will encounter a variety of teaching techniques from role-play, discussion and debate to group work and personal reflection. They will also see the subject brought to life through ICT and authentic footage. Students will have numerous opportunities to take part in extra-curricular activities. The department wishes to organise out of school learning opportunities for all GCSE and A-Level students both in the UAE and abroad.

METHODS OF ASSESSMENT

The two externally assessed examined units will be sat in summer 2018. These examinations all require students to develop their writing skills, and in this respect History can be as challenging as English. As well as being assessed on specific historical skills, students will be expected to use all they have learned in English to produce a high standard of written communication. Source analysis skills are essential and students will be taught to rigorously evaluate evidence to form an opinion and answer questions. The two distinct parts to the course are outlined below;

Paper 1 Understanding the modern world (50%)

America, 1920–1973: Opportunity and inequality

Conflict and tension, 1918–1939

Paper 2 Shaping the nation (50%)

Britain: Health and the people: c1000 to the present day

Elizabethan England, c1568–1603

ENTRY INFORMATION

This is an open entry subject with no higher/lower tiers. All students will attempt common examination papers, which will contain questions of graded difficulty requiring answers of varying lengths.

CAREERS

History is accepted as an academic subject by all universities and educational institutions. It provides an excellent training for anyone interested in following a career that involves working with people and an understanding of what motivates them. These might include law, journalism, personnel management, the police force and positions in local and central government.

MUSIC

EXAMINATION BOARD: Edexcel

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF COURSE

The course aims to develop a high degree of skill, knowledge and understanding in the three principal areas of Performing, appraising and Composing. It is expected that by the second term of Year 11 candidates will be capable of performing satisfactorily on their chosen musical instrument or voice at approximately Grade 3 standard. This element of the course is teacher assessed and does not require the student to take an external practical examination.

There are four areas of study:

- Instrumental Music 1700 – 1820
- Vocal Music
- Music for Stage and Screen
- Fusions

METHODS OF ASSESSMENT

| Part or component | Requirements | Mode of assessment | Weighting |
|--|---|--|-----------|
| Paper 1: Performing Solo performing Ensemble performing | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Candidates will perform one solo piece• Candidates will perform/direct one ensemble piece | 15% internally assessed/ externally moderated 15% internally assessed/ externally moderated | 30% |
| Paper 2: Composing Composition 1 Composition 2 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• One composition to a brief set by Pearson, of at least one minute in duration.• One free composition set by the student, of at least one minute in duration. | 15% internally assessed/ externally moderated 15% internally assessed/ externally moderated | 30% |
| Paper 3: Appraising | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Written examination• 1 hour 45 minutes• Section A – Areas of study, dictation, and unfamiliar pieces• Section B – Extended response comparison between a set work and one unfamiliar piece | 40% externally assessed | 40% |

All students are required to submit two compositions which they have composed or arranged themselves throughout the course. The work will be teacher assessed and externally moderated.

ENTRY INFORMATION

This is an open entry subject with no higher/lower tiers. All students will attempt common examination papers, which will contain questions of graded difficulty requiring answers of varying lengths.

CAREERS

A knowledge and understanding of music can enhance the quality of life, regardless of one's career. Music engenders the qualities of maturity, analytical thinking and self-discipline, all sought after in many aspects of life. Possible careers after studying GCSE Music include: Teaching, Journalism, Performing, Composing, Music Marketing, Entertainment Law, Music Production and Advertising.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

EXAMINATION BOARD: AQA

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF COURSE

GCSE PE provides students with the opportunity to be assessed within both practical and theoretical based study. Non-examination assessment will constitute 40% of the overall GCSE grade. This will entail students being assessed in practical performances within a wide range of selected physical activities, in the role of player/participant, official or leader. The performances must come from at least 1 individual sport and at least 1 team sport with at least two of the performances being as a player/participant. The activities chosen for final assessment will very much depend on their own personal strengths. Within the non-examination assessment, students will also be required to analyse and evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of a sporting performance.

There will be two written examination papers which account for 60% of the overall mark. These will test the candidate's knowledge of applied anatomy and physiology, movement analysis, physical training and sports psychology, amongst others.

METHODS OF ASSESSMENT

Examination based assessment (60%):

Paper 1 – The human body and movement in physical activity and sport consisting of: Applied anatomy and physiology, Movement analysis, Physical training and Use of data

Paper 2 – Socio-cultural influence and well-being in physical activity and sport consisting of: Sports psychology, Socio-cultural influences, Health, fitness and well-being and Use of data

Non-examination based assessment (40%):

This consists of 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) and the analysis and evaluation of performance to bring about improvement in one activity.

ENTRY INFORMATION

This is an open entry subject with no higher/lower tiers. All students will attempt common examination papers, which will contain questions of graded difficulty requiring answers of varying lengths. Students will need to have demonstrated good ability and a positive attitude to Physical Education during KS3. An active involvement in sport either in or out of school is also a key requirement.

CAREERS

Physical Education offers a wide choice of careers ranging from the professional athlete to work related with sport. The GCSE course provides an insight into: Teaching and Coaching, Recreational Management, The Media, Sports Medicine and many other related areas. Leisure is a growing industry and offers an abundance of opportunities for the sports enthusiast.

SPANISH

EXAMINATION BOARD: Edexcel

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF COURSE

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

- develop their ability to communicate confidently and coherently with native speakers in speech and writing, conveying what they want to say with increasing accuracy
- express and develop thoughts and ideas spontaneously and fluently
- listen to and understand clearly articulated, standard speech at near normal speed
- deepen their knowledge about how language works and enrich their vocabulary in order for them to increase their independent use and understanding of extended language in a wide range of contexts
- acquire new knowledge, skills and ways of thinking through the ability to understand and respond to a rich range of authentic spoken and written material, adapted and abridged, as appropriate, including literary texts
- develop awareness and understanding of the culture and identity of the countries and communities where the language is spoken
- be encouraged to make appropriate links to other areas of the curriculum to enable bilingual and deeper learning, where the language may become a medium for constructing and applying knowledge
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- develop language strategies, including repair strategies

Questions across all four language skills are set in common contexts, addressing a range of relevant contemporary and cultural themes. They are organised into five themes, each broken down into topics and sub-topics. The five themes are:

- Identity and culture
- Local area, holiday, travel
- School
- Future aspirations, study and work
- International and global dimension

METHODS OF ASSESSMENT

The Pearson Edexcel Level 1/Level 2 GCSE (9-1) in Spanish consists of four externally examined papers based on the following skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing. Students must complete their speaking assessment in April/May and all other assessments in May/June in any single year. Each paper is available at Foundation tier or Higher tier. Students must be entered for a single tier across all papers.

ENTRY INFORMATION

Assuming maximum individual attainment in all four skills, students can obtain:

5 to 1 at entry for Listening and Reading at Foundation Tier

9 to 5 at entry for Listening and Reading with both skills at Higher Tier

CAREERS

We live in a world where careers are international and companies have global activities for which the ability to speak another language is a necessary and important skill. Spanish is a major world language and it is useful in many careers such as: diplomacy, banking, ICT, journalism, medicine, science, travel and tourism, marketing, music, art, theatre, film, engineering, transport, aviation, hotel management, catering, teaching, sales, sport and leisure. A qualification in a modern foreign language such as Spanish is often valuable to enhance opportunities for entrance to the best universities.

