



The GCSE Years at  
Gresham's

Year 10 and 11 Prospectus  
2018-2020

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## **THE GCSE YEARS – YEARS 10 and 11**

GCSEs continue to be the national educational benchmark for England, Wales and Northern Ireland. Most students at Gresham's take up to ten subjects at GCSE (with English counting as two GCSEs, Language and Literature). Occasionally, this may be reduced with the agreement of parents and the Deputy Head (Academic). Departments choose whether GCSEs or IGCES offer the best preparation for their students, but in this document both qualifications are described as GCSEs.

The core GCSE subjects at Gresham's are:

- English Language
- English Literature
- Mathematics
- All three Sciences (Biology, Chemistry & Physics)
- A Modern Foreign Language (French, Spanish, German, Mandarin or Japanese)

Beyond that, students have a free choice of options subjects. It is recommended that pupils play to their strengths while looking to keep a broad range of subjects.

Dependent on the number of sets, the core subjects are usually setted by ability. The options subjects are not setted but are mixed ability, depending entirely on student option choices.

Depending on whether students take 3 single sciences or the Combined Science GCSE, they will have 6 or 7 subjects in the core.

## **OPTION SUBJECTS**

- Art and Design
- 3-D Design
- Drama
- English as a Second Language (for non-native English speakers only)
- French (if not chosen as the core language)
- Geography
- History
- Computer Science
- Latin (Ancient Greek as an enrichment extra by agreement)
- Music
- Religious Studies
- Physical Education
- Spanish (if not chosen as the core language)

All pupils will make the choice of 4 subjects in preference order. Depending on the Sciences route, these will be 3 choices and a reserve, or 4 choices.

We aim to give pupils a complete choice of option subjects. However, low demand and timetable constraints may mean that subjects are not available or certain combinations of options are not possible. Due to their similarity, we do not allow pupils to choose Art, 3D Design and Graphic Design. One 2 of these are permissible.

### **The Number of Options Subjects Taken – the impact of Science**

All pupils will study all three sciences; however, there is a choice as to how this is achieved. The school offers GCSE Combined Science which amounts to two GCSEs, or separate science GCSE which amounts to three individual science GCSEs.

We would envisage that those wanting to go onto a Sixth Form programme involving two or more sciences would normally study GCSE separate science and those who want to study one or none would follow the Combined Science route.


The taking of Combined Science does not preclude any student from continuing in any science through to A Level or the IB Diploma Programme or degree level, assuming a sufficiently high grade is achieved.

The judgement as to which route is most appropriate is guided by the Science Department who recommend the appropriate route at the end of the Lent Term.

## GRADING AT GCSE

Until Summer 2016, GCSE grades were awarded at grades A\* (top) to U. Grade C or above was deemed a pass grade. The norm for entry into the Sixth Form at Gresham's was 6 B grades.

This system of letter grades is now being replaced by number grades, with 9 the highest, as indicated here:



New GCSE grading structure

New grading structure	Current grading structure
9	
8	A*
7	A
6	B
5	
4	C
3	
3	D
2	E
1	F
	G
U	U

GOOD PASS (DfE)  
5 and above = top of C and above

AWARDING  
4 and above = bottom of C and above

The chief differences will be that the new top grade 9 will go to only the very highest achievers, and a new pass – grade 4 – which will be aligned with the bottom of grade C.

Most GCSE subjects will be assessed by the new numerical grading by 2018, though not necessarily all IGCSEs.



## **THE STEPS TO MAKING THE RIGHT CHOICES**

It is important that discussion about pupil choices are thorough. Please do not hesitate to contact us to make arrangements for a Skype call with our Academic team if required.



## **THE CORE**

### **ENGLISH**

Head of English: Mrs C Van Hasselt [cvanhasselt@greshams.com](mailto:cvanhasselt@greshams.com)

We follow Cambridge International Examinations IGCSE for First Language English and for English Literature. We follow this course as it is academically challenging and teaches useful skills. Pupils are set by ability established by their performance in Year 9 and end of year exams.

The Language course is assessed by two terminal exams. The first exam lasts 2 hours, the paper comprising two texts. There are three tasks: the first involves directed writing in response to text one, the second analysis of how the writer has achieved certain effects in text one, the last is a summary of one facet of text two. The second exam lasts 2 hours and comprises two questions: the first is another directed writing task in which the student responds to the ideas and arguments in the text. The second is a creative writing task either descriptive or narrative.

The Literature course is assessed through three terminal examinations. The first is 1 ½ hours and involves writing one essay on a novel and one on a group of poems. These take different forms: either traditional essay (perhaps on a character or theme) or passage-based response (the exam is closed book although named poems are printed); the second paper is 1hr 15 min and is a commentary on an unseen poem or prose passage; the final paper is 45 minutes on a drama text. Again, the response is either a traditional essay or a passage-based response.

**Board: Cambridge CIE IGCSE**



## **MATHEMATICS**

Head of Mathematics: Mr James Thomson [jthomson@greshams.com](mailto:jthomson@greshams.com)

All pupils follow the higher level IGCSE course although occasionally a pupil might be entered for the foundation level paper. Higher level papers are designed for grades 9 to 4 and the foundation level paper only allows for a 5 grade to be the highest awarded grade.

The IGCSE specification is an academically challenging course and is assessed by two written exam papers.

Pupils who show particular ability in mathematics during their Year 9 course will be placed in set 1. This set will take the IGCSE exam at the end of Year 10 and will take the Additional Maths examination at the end of Year 11.

Pupils in set 2 *may* be given the opportunity to take their IGCSE exam in January of Year 11; this will be at the discretion of the Head of Maths and the Deputy Head (Academic). Set 2 will then follow an algebra-based pure mathematics course in preparation for Sixth Form mathematics, which will not be examined at the end of Year 11.

Most pupils will not be allowed to give up Mathematics, even if they have achieved the highest grade at IGCSE, prior to the end of Year 11.

Coursework: Nil

**Board: EDEXCEL for IGCSE  
OCR for Additional Mathematics**





## **SCIENCE**

Head of Science: Mr M Matthams. [mmatthams@greshams.com](mailto:mmatthams@greshams.com)

Head of Biology: Mr T Philpott. [tphilpott@greshams.com](mailto:tphilpott@greshams.com)

Head of Chemistry: Mr M Kemp. [mkemp@greshams.com](mailto:mkemp@greshams.com)

Head of Physics: Mr D Saker. [dsaker@greshams.com](mailto:dsaker@greshams.com)

It is compulsory to study all 3 sciences (Biology, Chemistry and Physics) at GCSE. There are two routes you can take:

- Opt to study all 3 as **separate** GCSE subjects (giving an Edexcel GCSE in each of Biology, Chemistry and Physics).

Or

- As part of the **Combined Science** GCSE programme (giving 2 Combined Science Edexcel GCSEs)

The separate award course will suit those who enjoy and are reasonably able in the sciences. There is no coursework element to the separate award course and there are two examinations papers in each science taken at the end of Year 11.

The Combined Science programme has no coursework components. There are two science papers in Biology, Physics and Chemistry making 6 papers for the Combined Science award. All papers will be taken at the end of Year 11.

Both courses develop the necessary academic and thinking skills for further scientific education. The study of science requires good basic mathematics and the ability to comprehend and express ideas with effective use of technical language; obviously these skills are in greater need for the separate award course. Both courses will be taught with a variety of activities, including plenty of experimental work. Some aspects of the GCSE course have already been taught in Year 9, and Year 10 will build upon this material. Both separate science and Combined Science allow access to science courses in the Sixth Form but we recommend anyone taking higher level sciences to take the separate science option.

There is much more flexibility in changing from separate science to Combined Science during the course as the separate science course covers the entire Combined Science course.

It is not recommended to change from Combined Science to the separate science award



## **BIOLOGY**

Head of Biology: Mr T Philpott. [tphilpott@greshams.com](mailto:tphilpott@greshams.com)

Biology is the study of life, and both courses develop a thorough understanding of food production, health matters, environmental issues, biology in industry and all the fundamental principles that underlie these areas. In addition it provides the basis for understanding of the human body, including overview of key organ systems and how they work.

Nine topic areas are covered in the Edexcel Combined Science and Edexcel GCSE (9–1) Biology courses, studied at varying levels of detail:

1. Key concepts in biology
2. Cells and control
3. Genetics
4. Natural selection and genetic modification
5. Health, disease and the development of medicines
6. Plant structures and their functions
7. Animal coordination, control and homeostasis
8. Exchange and transport in animals
9. Ecosystems and material cycles

**Board: Edexcel GCSE (9–1) Biology / Edexcel Combined Science**



## **CHEMISTRY**

Head of Chemistry: Mr M Kemp. [mkemp@greshams.com](mailto:mkemp@greshams.com)

Chemistry is an experimental science that combines academic study with the acquisition of practical and investigative skills. It is called the central science, as chemical principles underpin both the physical environment in which we live and all biological systems. The breadth of the subject includes looking at the chemistry of selected elements and their compounds, the study of a number of families of related carbon compounds and more quantitative aspects concerning the theory and underlying principles in Chemistry.

Those studying either the separate Chemistry or Combined Science course will be ready for advanced study at the end of the two years, and will have a knowledge base and enhanced problem-solving skills as a result of studying the subject.

Apart from being a subject worthy of study in its own right, chemistry is a prerequisite for many other courses in higher education, such as medicine, biological science and environmental science.

The GCSE course is split into five topic areas:

1. Principles of chemistry
2. Chemistry of the elements
3. Organic chemistry
4. Physical chemistry
5. Chemistry in society

These give students a flavour of the breadth of the subject and its importance to our everyday lives.

Apart from being a subject worth of study in its own right, chemistry is a pre-requisite for many other courses in higher education, such as medicine, biological science and environmental science.

**Board: Edexcel GCSE (9-1) Chemistry / Edexcel Combined Science**

## **PHYSICS**

Head of Physics: Mr D Saker. [dsaker@greshams.com](mailto:dsaker@greshams.com)

Physics studies the way the world works and the process of scientifically describing the universe in which we live. If you are to make informed choices later in life you will need some knowledge of Physics. Physics covers the principles behind the workings of the nucleus of an atom to the motion of galaxies in the universe, along with everything in between.

The hardest part of Physics for many students is applying these principles clearly and logically to solve problems in unfamiliar situations. Consequently, Physics is a highly desirable subject to study due to its practical content and training it provides in problem solving.

The GCSE course follow the Edexcel boards qualifications and there are two routes. Combined science or Separate Science.

The topics you will encounter for each course are below.

<b>Combined Science (2 Periods of Physics each week)</b>	<b>Separate Science (3 Periods of Physics each week)</b>
1. Key concepts in Physics	1. Key concepts in Physics
2. Motion and Forces	2. Motion and Forces
3. Conservation of Energy	3. Conservation of Energy
4. Waves	4. Waves
5. Light and the EMS	5. Light and the EMS
6. Radioactivity	6. Radioactivity
7. Energy and Work	7. Astronomy
8. Forces and their Effect	8. Energy and Work
9. Electrical circuits	9. Forces and their Effect
10. Magnetism	10. Electrical circuits
11. Electromagnetic induction	11. Static electricity
12. Particle Models	12. Magnetism
13. Forces and Matter	13. Electromagnetic induction
	14. Particle Models
	15. Forces and Matter

**Exam Board. Edexcel GCSE (9-1) Physics / Edexcel Combined Science**

## **FRENCH**

Head of French: Mrs A Watt [awatt@greshams.com](mailto:awatt@greshams.com)

If you study French, you will enhance your ability to understand and communicate in the only language spoken on all five continents and gain some excellent transferable skills. In many cases, you will already have seen the main structures covered at Prep School and in Year 9 so it is simply a case of furthering understanding and enjoyment.

At the end of the course, not only will it be possible for you to go to France or a Frenchspeaking country and converse confidently, you will also gain an insight and appreciation of French culture whilst expanding your own individual interests.

The ability to speak and understand French is an advantage in the international job market and it is the international language of cooking, fashion, theatre, the visual arts, dance and architecture, as well as being the official language of diplomacy and the International Olympic Committee. It is the third most widely used language after English and German internationally, but it is also an analytical language which develops critical thinking.

The department ensures that pupils have the opportunity to excel in their French learning and some Russell Group universities now require a language GCSE for all their courses, regardless of what subject you plan to study there.

Languages are a “facilitating” subject, meaning that they will help you whatever career path you take.

Exam= 25% speaking; 25% listening skills; 25% reading skills and 25% writing skills

**Board: Edexcel IGCSE**

## **GERMAN**

Head of German: Mr F Retter. [fretter@greshams.com](mailto:fretter@greshams.com)

The GCSE German course builds on the structures learned in the introductory Year 9 course. The emphasis is on developing the practical skills required to communicate in the language; although a certain amount of grammar is covered, this is by no means onerous.

The course is based on the broad themes specified by the exam board: *Identity and culture, Local, national, international and global areas of interest and Current & future study and employment.*

Full use is made of the language laboratory and of the native-speaker language assistant.

Students need not worry that they may well have studied German for a shorter time compared with other languages – the material is easily covered over the two years of the course.

They are actively encouraged to take part in the trips to Germany and Austria organized by the department and to attend German Society film evenings.

Exam = 25% Listening, 25% Reading, 25% Writing Skills – all three skills tested by means of a final exam; 25% Speaking – tested by means of a single oral exam.

**Board: Eduqas**

## **JAPANESE**

Head of Japanese: Mr R West. [rwest@greshams.com](mailto:rwest@greshams.com)

By studying Japanese pupils have a unique opportunity to acquire not only a very interesting and useful non-European language, but also an understanding of a fascinating culture with a global economy.

Pupils have 3 lessons per week in Years 10 and 11, which includes normal key language elements as well as learning a new written script form. In addition, included in the syllabus are opportunities for acquiring knowledge of Japanese culture both ancient and modern – from Shogun to Nintendo Wii.

The School has two partner schools in Japan. Every two years we visit one of our partner schools briefly before embarking on a tour of Japan, visiting Tokyo, Osaka, Kyoto and Hiroshima.

Learning Japanese gives the pupils an edge, showing flexibility to learn a completely different language system and is a talking point for university and job applications.

Coursework: Nil.

Exam times are

- Listening: 25%, 50 minutes
- Speaking: 25%, 10-12 minutes
- Reading: 25%, 1 hour 5 minutes
- Writing: 25%, 1 hour 25 minutes

**Board: EDEXCEL**



## **SPANISH**

Head of Spanish Mrs V Seldon [vseldon@greshams.com](mailto:vseldon@greshams.com)

GCSE Spanish is an ideal option for those pupils who have enjoyed studying the language in Year 9 and who feel confident enough to perform well at GCSE standard.

It is suitable for both those who began studying Spanish in Year 9, and those who began before this point.

The course aims to develop practical communication skills in the four components of speaking, listening, reading and writing, with the overall goal of improving fluency and understanding in the language and promoting an awareness of Spanish and Latin American culture and customs.

Exam= 25% speaking; 25% listening skills; 25% reading skills and 25% writing skills

**Board: Edexcel IGCSE**





## **CHINESE**

Head of Chinese: Dr Kuan-Chun Tsai. [ktsai@greshams.com](mailto:ktsai@greshams.com)

Mandarin Chinese has the greatest number of native speakers in the world. Being able to speak Mandarin would enable you to communicate with one-fifth of the population on the planet!

Chinese script is possibly the oldest written language still in existence. Learning Chinese in written form is also an exciting journey to gain insight into the rich heritages of Chinese history and culture.

With the increasing economic and political importance of China in the world, studying Mandarin Chinese equips you with the powerful tools to become a global citizenship, in addition to opening up opportunities for your future career.

The Chinese Department organises an optional trip to China and details of this trip will be available at a later date.

Exam: Listening (25%); Reading (25%)

Controlled assessment: Speaking (25%); Writing (25%)

**Board: Edexcel**

## **THE OPTIONS**

### **ART AND DESIGN**

Head of Art and Design: Mr A Gray. [agray@greshams.com](mailto:agray@greshams.com)

Pupils may choose two of the three courses offered here for options. ThreeDimensional design replaces DT as a GCSE in the School's curriculum.

### **ART**

Year 10 and 11 artists follow a course aimed at giving them the skills and knowledge to produce informed, personal and accomplished work. Students work across a range of disciplines and media, with drawing from direct observation being central to the course. Reference to masters both old and modern is expected and a willingness to experiment with ideas and materials is welcome. Students are expected to take advantage of the art department's long opening hours to develop their work in their own time.

### **GRAPHIC COMMUNICATION**

The course introduces students to a visual way of conveying information, ideas and emotions, using a range of graphic media, processes, techniques and elements such as colour, icons, images, typography and photographs. Students should conduct primary and secondary investigations during their design development, and explore traditional and/or new technologies. The course will be built upon an ethos of risk taking and experimentation which is driven by an understanding of contemporary practice.

### **THREE-DIMENSIONAL DESIGN.**

This course is concerned with the designing, prototyping, modelling or making of functional and aesthetic consumer products, interiors and architecture. Students should engage with appropriate processes, materials and construction techniques, using maquettes, models and working drawings to help take their initial ideas through to realisation. The course will be built upon an ethos of risk taking and experimentation which is driven by an understanding of contemporary practice

Controlled assessment portfolio: 60%

Externally set assignment: 40%

**Board: OCR**



## **COMPUTER SCIENCE**

Head of Computer Science: Mr W Robinson [brobinson@greshams.com](mailto:brobinson@greshams.com)

Computing is an intellectually challenging yet very practical and rewarding discipline, and one which permeates and shapes the contemporary world in profound ways. The Computer Science GCSE course reflects this, emphasising the creative application of logical reasoning to produce computational solutions to real-world problems.

Computational and algorithmic thinking are developed throughout the course, which explores the fundamentals of programming, data representation and compression, the protocols underpinning the Internet, cyber-security and hacking, and the ethical issues and risks of technology for society.

Pupils will also spend a significant part of their time programming in Python, a language widely used in industry and in universities, leading to their final programming project where they are required to create an application such as a mobile or web app, or a computer game.

The problem-solving skills developed through study of Computer Science have wide applicability across the disciplines, and pupils who go on to study Computer Science beyond GCSE will find opportunities in a wide range of fields.

Assessment is by means of two 90 minute exams (80% of total marks) and one 20 hour programming project (20% of total marks).

**Board: AQA**

## **DRAMA**

Head of Drama: Ms B O'Brien. [bobrien@greshams.com](mailto:bobrien@greshams.com)

GCSE Drama is a lively and creative course designed to balance the practical and academic study of Drama. Students work together to understand and experience for themselves the roles and responsibilities of a theatre company. Working as part of a creative team of actors, directors, designers and technicians, students build confidence and develop skills in communication, cooperation and performance. The course enables students to work imaginatively and develop their understanding of how to create thought-provoking and well-made theatre. In addition to acting and directing, students will be encouraged to consider a range of design and technical skills including stage lighting, sound design, set design, stage management, make up, costume and puppet design.

The course is an excellent preparation for A Level or IB Theatre, which we offer in the 6<sup>th</sup> Form, and provides an excellent foundation in creative, practical performance and production skills. With the focus on working imaginatively, collaborating creatively and communication effectively, GCSE Drama provides a solid foundation for further studies in Drama and Theatre with a skills set that opens up many vocational opportunities.

The course is divided into three components, which includes the study of a set text, audience experience of live theatre, devising original work and scripted performance.

Component 1: Understanding Drama	Written Exam, 1 hour 45 minutes, 40%
Component 2: Devising Drama	Devising Log & Devised Performance, 40%
Component 3: Texts in Practice	Performance (2 extracts) to examiner, 20%

**Board: AQA**



## **ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE (ESL)**

Head of ESL: Mrs S Ellis-Retter. [sretter@greshams.com](mailto:sretter@greshams.com)

IGCSE English as a Second Language is sat by the majority of overseas ESL pupils in conjunction with English as a First Language. The idea behind this is so that pupils are exposed to as much English as possible in order to help them achieve well in all their subjects.

Examinations are taken in the summer of Year 11 and comprise reading, writing, speaking and listening elements. Texts are culturally neutral, and are suited to pupils who are relatively new to living in the UK.

This qualification is accepted by some British Universities as satisfying their English language requirements.

**Board: Edexcel IGCSE.**

**Two grades awarded; the first for Reading, Writing and Listening and the second for Speaking.**

## GEOGRAPHY

Head of Geography: Mr S Brown. [sbrown@greshams.com](mailto:sbrown@greshams.com)

The GCSE final grade is based on three exams and there is no coursework. Students have to attend two fieldwork days, which are close to the school.

**Paper 1 exam: (1 hour 30 minutes, 35% of GCSE)** This is concerned with the dynamic nature of physical processes and systems, and human interaction with them in a variety of places and at a range of scales. An understanding of the tectonic, geomorphological, biological and meteorological processes and features in different environments, and the need for management strategies governed by sustainability and consideration of the direct and indirect effects of human interaction with the Earth and the atmosphere. **Topics** – Tectonic and weather hazards, and climate change. Ecosystems, rainforests and hot deserts. UK physical landscapes, coastal and glacial landscapes in the UK.

**Paper 2 exam: (1 hour 30 minutes, 35% of GCSE)** This is concerned with human processes, systems and outcomes and how these change both spatially and temporally. They are studied in a variety of places and at a range of scales and must include places in various states of development, such as higher income countries (HICs), lower income countries (LICs) and newly emerging economies (NEEs). They develop an understanding of the factors that produce a diverse variety of human environments; the dynamic nature of these environments that change over time and place; the need for sustainable management; and the areas of current and future challenge and opportunity for these environments. **Topics** – Urban issues and challenges, the changing economic world, resource management, either food/water/energy resources.

**Paper 3 exam: (1 hour 15 minutes, 30% of GCSE)** Section A is a critical thinking and problem-solving assessment. Students have the opportunity to demonstrate geographical skills and applied knowledge and understanding by looking at a particular issue(s) derived from the specification using secondary sources. A resource booklet will be available twelve weeks before the date of the exam so that students have the opportunity to work through the resources, enabling them to become familiar with the material. Sources could include maps at different scales, diagrams, graphs, statistics, photographs, satellite images, sketches, extracts from published materials, and quotes from different interest groups. Assessment will consist of a series of questions related to a contemporary geographical issue(s), leading to a more extended piece of writing, which will involve an evaluative judgement. Section B consists of two geographical enquiries, each of which must include the use of primary data, collected as part of a fieldwork exercise. The two enquiries must be carried out in contrasting environments and show an understanding of both physical and human geography. In at least one of the enquiries, students are expected to show an understanding about the interaction between physical and human geography.

**Board: AQA**

## **HISTORY**

Head of History: Mr S Kinder. [skinder@greshams.com](mailto:skinder@greshams.com)

The GCSE History course we offer is the Edexcel specification. The course focuses on the development of Medicine in Britain from c1250 to Present Day and Anglo Saxon and Norman England. It also looks at the development of Communism in Russia and the impact this had upon American-Soviet Relations during the Cold War. In this respect it marries the best of the previous SHP curriculum with the exciting and dramatic events of the Twentieth Century. This is a truly exciting specification which allows a focus on breadth and depth!

All classes study the following topics:

### **Superpower Relations and the Cold War: 1941-1991**

The period studies focus on a substantial and coherent medium time span of at least 50 years and require students to understand the unfolding narrative of substantial developments and issues associated with the Cold War period. This will involve focus on the origins of East-West rivalry, Berlin in 1961, Cuba in 1962, Czechoslovakia in 1968 etc.

### **Anglo-Saxon and Norman England, c1060-'88**

This depth study focuses upon the Norman invasion of England and the immediate repercussions in terms of social, economic, political, religious and military impact. It requires students to study the origins of the Conquest and then the consolidation of Norman rule. Resistance to Norman rule, such as that of Hereward the Wake, is also covered.

### **Medicine in Britain, c1250-Present Day**

The Medicine thematic study requires students to understand change and continuity across a broad sweep of history, including the most significant characteristics of different ages from the medieval to modern periods. Students will examine when and why ideas concerning the origins of disease and the methods of treatment changed over time.

### **Russia and the Soviet Union, 1917-1941**

This unit focuses on the collapse of the Russian Monarchy and the reasons for the Bolshevik seizure of power in the second of two revolutions in 1917. The nature of Bolshevik rule under Lenin and the subsequent Civil War is then covered in depth. In addition, students will examine the reasons for Stalin's rise to power and the nature of his rule up to the Nazi invasion of the Soviet Union.



Students will face three examinations at the end of the course. Paper One (Medicine in Britain) carries a weighting of 30% of the final GCSE Grade and involves the analysis of contemporary sources. Paper Two comprises of two units (Anglo Saxon and Norman England and Superpower Relations and the Cold War) and carries a weighting of 40% of the final Grade. Paper Three (Russia and the Soviet Union) is worth the remaining 30% of the GCSE Grade and involves analysis of contemporary sources and historical interpretations. The Units are delivered in such a way as to allow the gradual development of skills which the exam papers will address.

These four topics are fascinating in themselves but in the process of studying them students will acquire important skills of analysis. These include the ability to explain cause and consequence, assess change, structure arguments, and to present and justify judgements. Students will also acquire the ability to synthesise, cross-reference and critically evaluate historical sources and representations.

**BOARD: EDEXCEL**



## **LATIN & GREEK**

Head of Latin: Mr M Peacock. [mpeacock@greshams.com](mailto:mpeacock@greshams.com)

Students at Gresham's have traditionally studied Latin GCSE; Greek GCSE is also now available. These courses are designed for students with prior experience in these languages. The school is currently considering offering Classical Civilisations as well, as a two year course, starting in Year 10. No prior experience of the Ancient World is necessary for students wishing to take the Classical Civilisation course.

At the time of writing, GCSE Latin, is studied by about 12,000 students nationwide per year. Classical subjects are not widely taught, making them special and eye-catching in a CV. They are also still looked upon as a gold standard in education. When prospective universities and employers see a Classical subject listed among your GCSEs, they know they have a special application before them.

Studying the Classical World is a lot of fun – the great stories of people winning against impossible odds and achieving so much despite their limited technology. Classical Languages are like Mediterranean food – only a few ingredients, but so many different dishes. The vocabulary you need to know for GCSE Latin or Greek is less than a quarter of what you need to know for a modern language, and yet out of this, come some of the greatest stories every told.

Studying Classical languages requires, but, more importantly, develops logicity, tenacity and perceptiveness. These are abilities which are valuable in their own right and which complement many other fields of study. The special challenge of ancient languages is often a clear sign to universities and employers that a student is talented, ambitious, prepared to and capable of dealing with the unfamiliar.

In 2017, all the Gresham's Latin GCSE students gained an A or an A\*. Nevertheless, you do not have to be a genius to study a Classical subject: working hard, thinking through a problem and not giving up are the keys to success. You will be able to read the thoughts of the ancients in their own words, in prose and verse literature which has survived for two millennia because of its superb quality and its timeless appeal.

The set texts for students starting Year 10 in 2016 include Virgil's account of the escape of Aeneas from the burning city of Troy, and Tacitus' account of the conspiracies said to have caused the death of the Emperor Tiberius's adopted son. For Greek, they include Homer, the Western world's first writer of literature of any kind, and his account of the duel between Paris and Menelaus, Helen of Troy's lover and husband respectively (rather different from the Brad Pitt film version). The other main text is Herodotus, the entire world's first historian, and his account of ancient Egypt and North Africa.

When a former chief executive of BP was asked why he recruited so many Classics graduates, he answered simply: "We find they sell more oil." The skills you learn in Classics will serve you well in the future, in whatever field, and make you very



marketable. Through studying ancient masterpieces, you learn attention to detail, precision of thought and how to harness your imagination. You will also have a lot of fun, and something that is both very escapist and very relevant.

**Board: OCR**



## **MUSIC**

Head of Academic Music: Mr E Coleman. [ecoleman@greshams.com](mailto:ecoleman@greshams.com)

GCSE Music is split into three parts – Performing, Composing and Listening.

The course is particularly suited to those who enjoy performing and composing. The expectation to get the highest marks by the end of Year 11 is performing at Grade 5 of the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music, Trinity or Rock School.

It is therefore essential to take music lessons on an instrument and GCSE musicians are usually well-involved in choirs and instrumental groups outside the timetable.

Grade 5 theory is advantageous, and students embarking on this course should attend Grade 5 theory classes if they haven't already passed the exam.

For those who do take the course, the two years are highly rewarding with performance opportunities and the enjoyment of writing one's own music. Performance and Composition is coursework, which makes up 60% of the course.

The Listening paper (90 minutes) is examined in the summer term of Year 9. There are eight set works which are studied and in the exam; most of the music examined is from these eight set works.

Parents are welcome to contact me in advance to discuss their son's or daughter's suitability for the course, whatever level they are currently at.

**Board: Edexcel**

## **PE (Physical Education)**

Head of PE: Mr S Adams. [sadams@greshams.com](mailto:sadams@greshams.com)

Studying GCSE (9-1) Physical Education will open your eyes to the amazing world of sports performance. Not only will you have the chance to perform in three different sports through the non-exam assessment component, you will also develop wide ranging knowledge into the how and why of physical activity and sport.

The combination of physical performance and academic challenge provides an exciting opportunity for students. You can perform, and then through the academic study learn how to improve your performance through the application of theory.

You will learn the ways in which we learn skills, why some people outperform others, mentally and physically. You will also delve into the ethical considerations behind the use of drugs and also gain an understanding of the consequences of inactivity and poor diet.

### **Key features**

- Simple, straight forward assessment structure.
- Opportunity to perform in three different sports from a list of team and individual activities. This can be achieved through your participation in the School's Games' programme.
- Study topics such as anatomy, sport's physiology, psychology and sociology and principles of training.
- Provides an excellent introduction to future study in this and many other areas.

### **Assessment**

- 40% Non-Exam Assessment (NEA). Three practical performances and one performance analysis task.
- 60% Exam. Two examination papers (2 x 1 hour) taken at the end of the two year course.
- A wide range of question types including: multiple choice, single mark, short answer and extended response.
- The opportunity to demonstrate your knowledge of the theory and performance skills in both NEA and through the examinations.

**Board: TBC**



## **RELIGIOUS STUDIES [Philosophy & Ethics]**

Head of RS: Mr S Gates. [sgates@greshams.com](mailto:sgates@greshams.com)

The GCSE Religious Studies course is one of the most fascinating and relevant subjects that can be studied. Pupils are given the chance to examine and respond to a wide range of philosophical and ethical ideas and controversies and thereby develop their own understanding of life in its fullness.

The course considers the philosophical ideas that form the foundation of human society, a selection of major ethical issues and the significance of religious beliefs in everyday life. Pupils explore different understandings of God, miracles, worship, good & evil and the afterlife. They also analyse various responses to moral problems in the areas of medicine, equality, human relationships & conflict.

Pupils are encouraged to evaluate a range of religious and non-religious perspectives, with a specific focus on Christianity & Buddhism, as well as reflect on their own ideas about life. They also have the opportunity to debate some of the most fascinating questions raised by humanity in the 21<sup>st</sup> century and develop their understanding through a range of educational activities including visits and encounters with visiting speakers.

The subject naturally complements a wide range of subjects and develops the skills of analysis, reasoned argument and thoughtful reflection that are highly valued by Universities and modern employers.

Assessment is by means of three exams [2 x 1hr & 1 x 2hr].

There is no coursework

**Board: OCR**