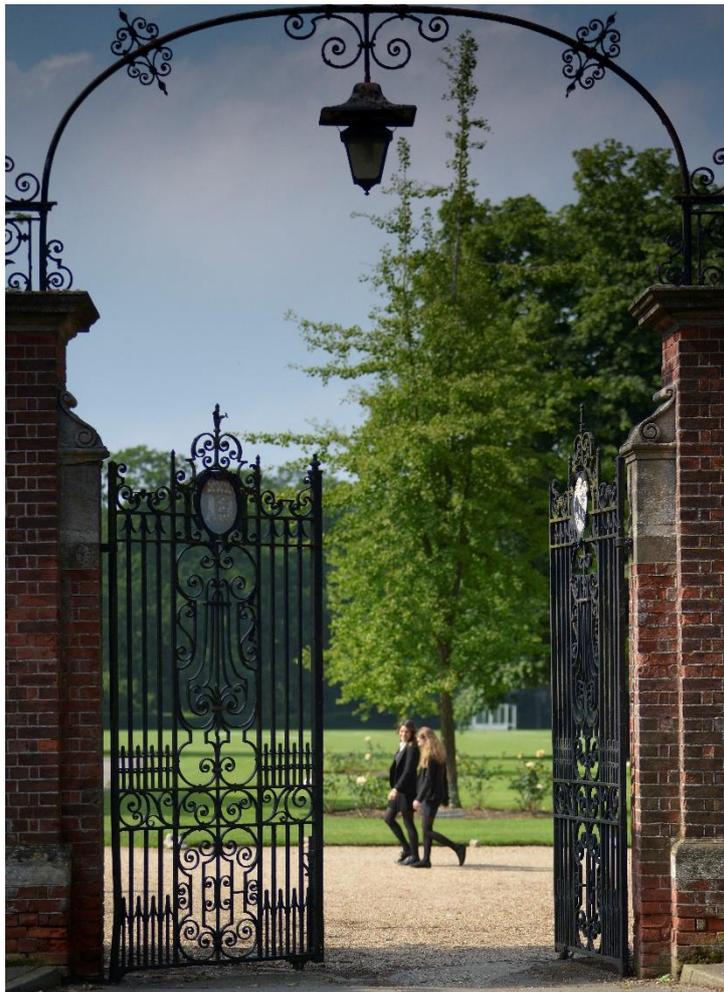


## The GCSE Years at Gresham's: Years 10 & 11



*“At every level, we offer a curriculum which we believe is versatile and enriching and provides an excellent skills set to equip young learners in a future of unpredictable and dynamic change. In Years 10 and 11, pupils study up to ten IGCSE and GCSE subjects which enables them to keep open a wide diversity of career opportunities.”*

**Tim Hipperson**  
Deputy Head Academic

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

The GCSE years mark an important stage for pupils to consider their subject choices, alongside the core curriculum offered at Gresham's. The combination of core subjects and choice enables pupils to consider subjects they enjoy whilst having a strong breadth within their education to support their future study and career plans.

GCSEs continue to be the national educational benchmark for England, Wales and Northern Ireland. Most pupils 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) and in light of advice from the Learning Support Department.

At Gresham's most courses we offer are GCSE and some are international GCSEs (IGCSEs). The reason for this is to provide the pupils with the courses we believe are most appropriate, accessible and will best prepare pupils for later study. Departments choose whether GCSEs or IGCSEs offer the best preparation for their pupils, but in this document both qualifications are described as GCSEs.

Years 10 and 11 continue to develop pupils' academic maturity and study methods. The curriculum we offer ensures that academic rigour is treasured, and that pupils will start to identify as linguists, artists, historians, and other such specialists. Although the final outcome is a public exam grade, they will be taught to interact with, and to love their subjects. This will, inevitably, bring about examination success, and therefore one of the key points to consider is what pupils believe they will enjoy. The rigour in the content of the courses will be balanced with opportunities for pupils to develop their curiosity, to question and probe the veracity of the subjects that they are studying, and to recognise connections across these subjects. Independence of thought and of study will be developed: this is, of course, the end goal of education, rather than the means through which it is delivered.

The core GCSE subjects at Gresham's are:

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

Beyond that, pupils 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 pupil option choices.

Depending on whether pupils 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
- Computer Science
- Drama
- English as a Second Language (for non-native English speakers only)
- French (if not chosen as the core language)
- Geography
- History
- Japanese (not available beyond GCSE)
- Latin (Ancient Greek as an enrichment may be offered 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. Two of these 3 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 (a double award GCSE in Combined Science), or separate Science GCSE which amounts to three individual Science GCSEs (in Biology, Chemistry and Physics).

We would envisage that those wanting to go onto a Sixth Form programme involving a Science subject would take separate Science if they are planning to study any one Science subject at A level or IB, and those who want to study none, or who may still be unsure, would follow the Combined Science route.

The taking of Combined Science does not preclude any pupil from continuing in any Science through to A level or the IB Diploma Programme or degree level, assuming a sufficiently high grade is achieved. There will, however, be some information that they will need to review and catch up with prior to starting the course.

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	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 are 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.

GCSE subjects are now assessed by the new numerical grading, though not necessarily all IGCSEs.

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

We hope this booklet helps pupils to consider carefully what choices to make. Tutors and pupils will also discuss options and so pupils and parents should not feel these choices are being made in isolation. Therefore, please do not hesitate to contact your son's or daughter's tutor or teachers to discuss options. The parents' reception on 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> March will provide an opportunity to speak to teachers briefly about the suitability of choices but conversations can start at any time.

The pupils will be asked to fill out a form at the start of the Summer Term containing their 4 option choices. The choices indicated will not be set in stone, but it would be beneficial if these are as thoughtful as possible as it is at this stage we will begin to construct the timetable. Later changes to options may increase the likelihood of the timetable or set sizes restricting certain combinations.

The cut-off date for any possible changes is week 3 of the Michaelmas Term.

I am also available to help with the process.



Tim Hipperson  
Deputy Head (Academic)  
[thipperson@greshams.com](mailto:thipperson@greshams.com)

## **THE CORE**

### **ENGLISH**

Head of English: Mrs C Stevens ([cstevens@greshams.com](mailto:cstevens@greshams.com)) (Maternity cover for Mrs C Sharrock ([csharrock@greshams.com](mailto:csharrock@greshams.com)))

Board: Edexcel

We follow the Edexcel IGCSE specifications for English Language and English Literature. Pupils are set by ability established by their performance throughout Year 9. The texts studied cover a broad spectrum of literary periods and genres and the prescribed anthology that accompanies both qualifications is engaging and includes a diverse range of international authors. There are both coursework and examination options providing assessment routes to suit all pupils.

#### **English Language A (4EA1)**

The English Language qualification is assessed through one examination (60%) and two pieces of coursework (40%).

Examination: Non-fiction texts and transactional writing

This examination includes short and long answer questions on one non-fiction text from Part 1 of the Edexcel anthology and one unseen text. It also features a transactional writing question.

Coursework: Poetry and prose texts and imaginative writing.

- Assignment A – one essay based on any two poetry or prose texts from Part 2 of the Anthology including a commentary on why these were selected.
- Assignment B – one imaginative writing task.

#### **English Literature (4ET1)**

The Literature course is assessed through one examination (60%) and two pieces of coursework (40%).

Examination: Poetry and Modern Prose.

There are three sections in this exam covering unseen poetry, poetry from Part 3 of the anthology and the chosen Modern Prose text.

Coursework: Modern Drama and Literary Heritage Texts.

- Assignment A – one essay response to a teacher-devised assignment on the studied Modern Drama text.
- Assignment B – one essay response to a teacher-devised assignment on the studied Literary Heritage text.

## **MATHEMATICS**

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

Board: Edexcel for IGCSE, OCR for Additional Mathematics

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.

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

## **SCIENCE**

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

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

Head of Chemistry: Dr P Taylor ([ptaylor@greshams.com](mailto:ptaylor@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 a double GCSE award in Edexcel Combined Science).

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.

Staff meet as a faculty to discuss potential advice for each pupil regarding the choice of Separate or Combined Science GCSE. This factors in their enthusiasm for the subject, attainment in each science, whether they are considering pursuing a Science subject beyond GCSE and whether they would benefit more by having an extra option choice for GCSE subjects (which combined science would provide). Teachers will talk to pupils about their recommendations and share these with parents at consultation meetings, however, these are only a suggested guide and the final decision rests with the pupil and parent. 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.

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.

## **BIOLOGY**

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

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

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) Separate Biology courses, studied at varying levels of detail:

1. Key concepts in biology (including cells, enzymes and transport of molecules)
2. Cells and control (including cell division, stem cells and the nervous system)
3. Genetics (including DNA and inheritance of genes)
4. Natural selection and genetic modification (including modern techniques such as cloning and genetic engineering)
5. Health, disease and the development of medicines
6. Plant structures and their functions (including photosynthesis and plant growth)
7. Animal Coordination, control and homeostasis
8. Exchange and transport in animals (including the respiratory and circulatory systems)
9. Ecosystems and material cycles

## **CHEMISTRY**

Head of Chemistry: Dr P Taylor ([ptaylor@greshams.com](mailto:ptaylor@greshams.com))

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

Chemistry is an experimental science that combines academic study with the acquisition of practical and investigative skills. It is a remarkably broad subject and is vital to the understanding of everything from the composition of asteroids to the physical principles governing the materials we take for granted, the environment we live in and biological systems including ourselves. Studying the subject involves a journey from the basic building blocks of the atom to the industrial chemistry which has built the world we live in and underpins billions of pounds worth of trade every year.

The chemistry course starts in year 9 leaving plenty of time for exploration of the core material and other areas of interest. The full, separate science, syllabus is split into 9 broad topic areas:

1. Key concepts in chemistry
2. States of matter and mixtures
3. Chemical changes
4. Extracting metals
5. Separate chemistry 1 (not studied by the combined scientists)
6. Groups in the periodic table
7. Rates of reaction
8. Fuels and Earth science
9. Separate chemistry 2 (not studied by the combined scientists)

Those studying either separate Chemistry or Combined Science will be ready for advanced study at the end of the course. The analytical and problem-solving skills taught and honed in chemistry are applicable across the GCSE curriculum and beyond.

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, materials science and environmental science.

## **PHYSICS**

Head of Physics: Mr D Saker ([dsaker@greshams.com](mailto:dsaker@greshams.com))  
Exam Board. Edexcel GCSE (9-1) Physics / Edexcel Combined Science

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 pupils 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 follows the Edexcel exam board qualification and there are two routes. Combined Science or Separate Science.

The topics you will encounter for each course are below.

Combined Science (2 Periods of Physics each week)

1. Key concepts in Physics
2. Motion and Forces
3. Conservation of Energy
4. Waves
5. Light and the EMS
6. Radioactivity
7. Energy and Work
8. Forces and their Effect
9. Electrical circuits
10. Magnetism
11. Electromagnetic Induction
12. Particle Models
13. Forces and Matters

Separate Science (3 Periods of Physics each week)

1. Key concepts in Physics
2. Motion and Forces
3. Conservation of Energy
4. Waves
5. Light and the EMS
6. Radioactivity
7. Astronomy
8. Energy and Work
9. Forces and their Effect
10. Electrical Circuits
11. Static Electricity
12. Magnetism
13. Electromagnetic Induction
14. Particle Models
15. Forces and Matter

## **FRENCH**

Head of French: Mrs A Brighton-Watt ([awatt@greshams.com](mailto:awatt@greshams.com))  
Board: AQA GCSE (Higher or Foundation)

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 as we continue the GCSE course.

At the end of the course, not only will it be possible for you to go to France or a French-speaking country and converse confidently, you will also gain an insight and appreciation of French culture whilst expanding your own individual interests. You learn key soft skills through study of a language, and you are taught to think on your feet, communicate/respond to feedback, and to react positively to critique, all of which enable pupils to develop an entrepreneurial mindset.

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 in international business 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. We also offer a foundation course for pupils who are less confident with the language. This course is very accessible, and it also enables pupils to further understand their own language, improving their ability to write with more awareness across all their academic subjects.

Languages are a “facilitating” subject, meaning that they will help you whatever career path you take, and in the job market it is now widely accepted that they give you an added advantage in all fields of work.

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

## **GERMAN**

Head of German: Miss C Hayes ([chayes@greshams.com](mailto:chayes@greshams.com))

Board: AQA GCSE GERMAN Higher Tier and Foundation Tier

The pedagogical aim of the AQA GCSE in German is to encourage pupils to develop their ability and ambition to communicate with native speakers in speech and writing. The study of German should also broaden their horizons and encourage them to step beyond familiar cultural boundaries and develop new ways of seeing the world.

The German Department has a large number of German pupils with whom this practice and improvement of both the spoken and written form of German, can not only be facilitated, but also enjoyed and developed in an informal, fun way. Out of these linguistic exchanges come friendships and an intercultural understanding that doesn't just augment academic achievement, but acts as a fortifier of European relationships within the school itself.

The AQA 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 and future study and employment.

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

Pupils 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.

Germany is the biggest economy within the European Union and the fourth largest worldwide. It is home to numerous international corporations and on the front line of new technologies. Germany is home to a large number of economic global players. Siemens, Volkswagen, Adidas and Lufthansa are globally recognised brands and corporations. The country also hosts some of the biggest international trade fairs including CeBIT, the world's largest exhibition for information technology, as well as the IFA trade fair for consumer electronics.

English, French and German are the three official working languages of the European Union. In absolute numbers, German is the second most-spoken language on the continent of Europe. However, when it comes to native speakers, German is number one.

It is the language of the [famous written works](#) of Goethe, Kafka, Brecht and Mann. It was the native language of composers Mozart, Bach, Schubert, Beethoven and Wagner. Revolutionary philosophy poured onto the pages in German when pens were first lifted by Kant, Hegel, Nietzsche, and Heidegger.

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.

## **JAPANESE**

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

Board: Edexcel

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's partner school in Japan is the highly regarded Keio Shonan-Fujisawa Junior & Senior High School. They visit and stay with us for a week every March, enjoying cultural and language exchange. We reciprocate the visit to their school in Japan every three or four years before embarking on a wider 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

## **SPANISH**

Head of Spanish Miss J Challis ([jchallis@greshams.com](mailto:jchallis@greshams.com))  
Board: AQA GCSE (Higher or Foundation)

The Spanish Department at Gresham's is composed of a team of experienced teachers who are genuinely enthusiastic about the formation and complex nuances of the Spanish language.

We study the details of how the language is formed and spoken, in addition to putting this information into a relevant context through learning about both Spain and the Spanish Speaking World.

We strive to provide a challenging and stimulating atmosphere in the classroom where each individual can achieve their potential, and as well as aiming for academic success, we endeavour to ensure that pupils enjoy their study of Spanish and that they are highly motivated.

GCSE Spanish is an ideal option for those pupils who have studied 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 who have undergone a fast track course and those who started prior to joining in Year 9.

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. There is also an emphasis on translation from Spanish to English and vice versa.

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

## **CHINESE**

Head of Chinese: Mrs C Greenfield ([cgreenfield@greshams.com](mailto:cgreenfield@greshams.com))  
Board: AQA GCSE

Mandarin Chinese has the greatest number of native speakers in the world. Being able to speak Mandarin enables you to communicate with one-fifth of the population on the planet and participate in perhaps the most intriguing and fascinating culture in the east.

Chinese script is possibly the oldest written language still in existence. Learning Chinese in written form is an exciting journey to gain insight into Chinese philosophy, cultural heritage and wisdom.

With the increasing global economic and political importance of China, studying Mandarin Chinese is the gateway to equip speakers with the power invested in participating in social, economic and cultural global citizenship and the associated benefits towards opening up opportunities for your future career.

Exam: Listening (25%); Reading (25%); Speaking (25%); Writing (25%).

## **THE OPTIONS**

### **ART AND DESIGN**

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

Board: OCR

Pupils may choose two of the three courses offered here for options. Three-Dimensional 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. Pupils 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. Pupils 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 pupils 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. Pupils 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. Pupils 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%

## **COMPUTER SCIENCE**

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

Board: AQA

Computing is an intellectually challenging yet very practical and rewarding discipline, and one which permeates and shapes our 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 very widely used in industry, business and in universities; within higher education and beyond, knowledge of Python is a valuable asset for data analysis and the application of machine learning techniques in many subjects.

The problem-solving skills developed through study of Computer Science have wide applicability across the disciplines, and pupils who study Computer Science at GCSE and beyond will find opportunities in a wide range of fields, including financial services, cyber security, engineering and the sciences.

Assessment is by means of two 90 minute exams (100% of total marks).

## **DRAMA**

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

Board: AQA

GCSE Drama is a lively and creative course designed to balance the practical and academic study of Drama. Pupils 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, pupils build confidence and develop skills in communication, cooperation and performance. The course enables pupils to work imaginatively and develop their understanding of how to create thought-provoking and well-made theatre. In addition to acting and directing, pupils 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 Sixth Form, and provides an excellent foundation in creative, practical performance and production skills. With the focus on working imaginatively, collaborating creatively and communicating 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%

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

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

IGCSE English as a Second Language is sat by many overseas ESL pupils in conjunction with English as a First Language. It should be chosen as an option subject. This course is topic based and aims to expose pupils to a significant amount of English to help them achieve well across the curriculum.

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

This IGCSE qualification is split into three papers:

Paper 1: **Reading and Writing** is worth 66 2 /3 % of the total. Externally assessed.

Typical tasks include:

### **Reading:**

- Skimming and scanning skills.
- Reading for both gist and detail.
- Following a line of argument or discussion.
- Reading for detail.

### **Writing:**

- Writing a short piece of writing in response to a given situation. The writing can take the form of a letter, email or postcard and pupils may have to both provide information and ask for required information.
- Constructing a factual piece of writing based on own knowledge and interests. The writing can take the form of a report or article.
- Responding to one or two short texts of 500 words in total to produce a summary for a given purpose and reader.

Paper 2: **Listening** is worth 33 1/3 % of the total. Externally assessed.

- Listening to short extracts; identifying the item, place or event being described. Listening for detailed information.
- Following a discussion or argument; identifying attitude and opinions of speakers; following instructions.
- Listening to a complex argument or discussion; understanding the overall message; identifying attitudes and opinion.

Paper 3: **Speaking** (optional). Endorsed separately. Performance is marked by Pearson.

- Part 1 – Introductory interview with pupil (2–3 minutes).
- Part 2 – Pupil talk (1 minute preparation, plus a talk of 1–2 minutes).
- Part 3 – Extended discussion (5–6 minutes).

The IGCSE ESL English as a Second Language qualification is accepted by some British Universities as satisfying their English language requirements.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

Head of Geography: Mrs E Wilson ([ewilson@greshams.com](mailto:ewilson@greshams.com))

Board: AQA

The GCSE final grade is based on three exams and there is no coursework. Pupils 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. Pupils 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 pupils 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, pupils are expected to show an understanding about the interaction between physical and human geography.

## **HISTORY**

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

The GCSE History course we offer is the Edexcel specification. The course focuses on the development of Medicine in Britain from c. 1250 to the Present Day and Anglo-Saxon and Norman England. It also looks at the development of Communism in Russia 1917-1941 and the impact this had upon American-Soviet Relations during the Cold War after 1945. 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 course focuses on a substantial and coherent medium timespan of at least 50 years and requires pupils to understand the unfolding narrative of substantial developments and issues associated with the Cold War period. This involves focusing on the origins of East-West rivalry, Berlin in 1961, Cuba in 1962, Czechoslovakia in 1968, détente, the 'New Cold War' and the dramatic events in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union in 1989-1991.

### **Anglo-Saxon and Norman England, c. 1060 - 1088**

This depth study focuses upon late Anglo-Saxon England, the subsequent Norman invasion and the immediate repercussions in terms of social, economic, political, religious and military impact. It requires pupils 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 pupils 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. Pupils 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, pupils 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 in 1941.

Pupils 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.

These four topics are fascinating in themselves but in the process of studying them pupils 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. Pupils will also acquire the ability to synthesise, cross-reference and critically evaluate historical sources and representations.

## **LATIN**

Head of Latin: Mr J Brettell ([jbrettell@greshams.com](mailto:jbrettell@greshams.com))

Board: OCR

Latin GCSE is open to all pupils who have studied the language up to the end of Year 9. Pupils tend to have at least two years' experience of Latin and are working at an appropriate level to make the transition to GCSE a fairly obvious one. It is a challenging subject, which is part of its appeal to pupils and future employers alike. Yet it is also readily accessed by pupils who have felt comfortable with the level of Latin taught in Year 9 at Gresham's. Please talk to the Head of Latin if you are unsure about whether it would be the right choice for you.

The course has three parts, each of which is examined at the end of Year 11.

1. Language (50%) – The course focuses on developing a strong grasp of grammar, vocabulary, and translation. The exam paper consists of unseen comprehension, grammatical and translation exercises.
2. Verse Literature (25%) – The course focuses on understanding, translating and analysing the prescribed Roman poem(s). Skills developed are similar to those needed in English literature. The exam paper consists of translation and commentary on passages from the prescribed poem(s). The prescription will be from Virgil's *Aeneid*.
3. Prose Literature (25%) – The course focuses on understanding, translating and analysing the prescribed Roman prose text(s). Skills developed are similar to those needed in English literature. The exam paper consists of translation and commentary on passages from the prescribed text(s). The selections are usually from various authors and explore a theme.

Or (in certain circumstances),

4. Literature and Culture (25%) – The course focuses on developing an understanding of the Roman world through contemporary sources in translation. It also develops the ability to be critical of those sources. There is no Latin in this section of the course.

N.B. The usual combination for the GCSE course at Gresham's is to sit the Language and two Literature papers. However, in certain circumstances, the Head of Latin may decide at the end of the Year 10 course that a group would achieve more highly by sitting the Literature and Culture paper instead of the Prose Literature paper. This will depend on the relative strengths of the set and therefore may differ from year to year.

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 critical skills you will

learn in Latin GCSE will serve you well in the future, in whatever field, and make you highly marketable to universities and employers. Through studying ancient literature and culture, you will also develop a deep appreciation of language and the influence of the Roman world on our own.

## **MUSIC**

Director of Music: Mrs M Wolfe ([mwolfe@greshams.com](mailto:mwolfe@greshams.com))  
Exam Board: Edexcel GCSE (9-1)

GCSE Music is a fantastic way for pupils to further develop their love of music, using their existing practical skills to appreciate and understand a wide variety of musical styles, create their own music, and perform regularly, as a soloist and in groups.

Pupils are required to have experience of playing an instrument or singing – ideally to grade 4 standard - so that they can demonstrate a love of music and musical understanding.

Grade 3 Music Theory knowledge is advantageous, and for those pupils aiming for top marks, Grade 5 Music Theory is strongly recommended. These courses are available to study throughout the duration of the course.

The GCSE qualification is split into three sections:

### **Performance - 'Coursework' 30%**

Pupils will perform and record and submit two pieces of music, one as a soloist and another as part of a group. These pieces should be at a minimum of Grade 4, ideally grade 5 standard.

### **Composition – 'Coursework' 30%**

Pupils will create two pieces of music. One to an examination brief and another completely free choice. These can be in any genre or style and the use of music notation software or music technology is permitted.

### **Listening & Appraising – Final written examination 40%**

Pupils study eight set works, in detail, demonstrating their understanding of context, musical elements and the impact of the music. This also broadens out to many different genres and styles.

Areas of study include:

- Western Classical Music – Bach & Beethoven
- Vocal Music – Purcell & Queen
- Music for Stage & Screen – Star Wars & Wicked: The Musical
- Fusion Music – Afro Celt Sound System & Esperanza Spalding

A final 1 hour 45 minute listening examination is held, with a variety of multiple choice and short answer questions linked to set works and unfamiliar music. Pupils also write an extended essay to compare and contrast a piece they have studied, with another which is new.

Music GCSE offers academic rigor with the creative and expressive aspects you would expect from an arts GCSE.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION (PE)**

Head of PE: Mrs S Knightbridge([sknightbridge@greshams.com](mailto:sknightbridge@greshams.com))  
Board: OCR (J587 Physical Education)

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 pupils. 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.

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

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

Board: AQA (*New for 2022*)

The GCSE Religious Studies course provides an opportunity to study one of the most fascinating and relevant subjects in the modern curriculum. It also prepares pupils to engage with, evaluate and respond effectively to the personal, national and global issues encountered every day in the media and their personal experience. Pupils are given the chance to examine and explore a wide range of philosophical ideas and ethical controversies, thereby developing 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 and evil and the afterlife. They also analyse various religious, humanist and secular responses to moral problems in the areas of crime & punishment, equality, wealth, human relationships and 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 two exams of 1hr 45mins each.

There is no coursework.