Dear Year Nine Student, (and also parents)

The time has come for you to make some choices regarding the subjects that you will study for your GCSE’s. You have already started your GCSE’s in Maths, The Sciences and RS. In September 2020 you will be embarking on the rest of your GCSE courses as you move into Key Stage 4 of your education. Important decisions about which subjects you wish to study have to be made. This document will help you make your choices; but on its own it can only answer some of your questions. You should talk to your subject teachers, your form tutor, Mr Duck (Careers Co-ordinator), your parents, older students already studying for GCSE and Mr Kafai (Deputy Headteacher).

On Thursday 6th February 2020 the school will be hosting the Year 9 Options Evening (4:30pm to 6:30pm). This is an ideal opportunity for you and your parents to find out more about the options process and what lies ahead for the next phase of your education. The main presentation regarding the GCSE options process will be by Mr Kafai in the main hall at 5:00pm. You and your parents will have the opportunity to look at the subjects available and talk to the teachers of those subjects in order to help you decide upon your suitability for the subject. We believe that process of choosing the GCSE options is very important and so we strongly encourage you to attend.

Compulsory Core
These are several examined subjects which everyone must take:
   1. English, including English Literature as a separate GCSE
   2. Mathematics
   3. Science – Biology, Chemistry and Physics or Combined Science
   4. Computer Science
   5. Religious Studies

In addition to these, all students will have a double games period every week.

Optional Subjects
You may choose your remaining three GCSE courses by picking one subject from each of these blocks:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option Block A</th>
<th>Option Block B</th>
<th>Option Block C</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Art</td>
<td>Business</td>
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<td>Business</td>
<td>Design and Technology</td>
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<td>Design and Technology</td>
<td>German</td>
<td>French</td>
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<tr>
<td>French</td>
<td>Geography</td>
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<td>Geography</td>
<td>History</td>
<td>History</td>
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<tr>
<td>History</td>
<td>Music</td>
<td>PE</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

After you have thought about, consulted and decided upon your options you are required to choose your options online using your school Microsoft account login details following this link:

[GCSE options choices for September 2020](#)

The options form will open for your responses at 6:30pm on Thursday 6th February and will close at 11:00pm on Sunday 1st March.

After the 1st March, the options choices will be considered by the school to ensure that Students have made suitable choices. There may be circumstances where a student will be advised not to take a subject if, based on baseline data, predictive models and teacher professional judgement, it is considered that there is a low chance of them being able to pass the GCSE in a subject.
Head of Department: **Mr G. Dubay**

Specification: **AQA**

We like to think that English is an enjoyable and challenging subject at all levels in this school. Our English course in Years 10 and 11 is designed to prepare you for entry to the two separate GCSE examinations of English Language and English Literature. We shall follow the AQA specifications as these promote the effective integration of language and literature study in the classroom, which we have successfully established at KS3.

The assessment of GCSE English Language is based on two examinations that are sat in year 11. Students will be assessed on the areas of reading and writing. A result for spoken language is endorsed, however, this will not form part of the final English Language mark. We hope that reading will also form a central part of your response to this subject where a range of literary and non-literary texts will be studied.

In English Literature you will look at Prose, Poetry and Drama texts from 20th century and Pre-20th century writers. As with English Language, two examinations will be sat in year 11. Our students will be entered for both subjects.

**How are the qualifications assessed?**

In order to use English effectively in everyday life, learners must demonstrate that they can confidently apply, combine and adapt their English skills to new situations in their life and work. Learners must also demonstrate that they understand the role that English plays in the world and use English in ways which enable them to function as effective citizens.

In English Language, students will sit the following two examinations:
- Paper 1: Explorations in creative reading and writing
- Paper 2: Writers’ viewpoints and perspectives

In English Literature, students will sit the following two examinations at the end of year 11:
- Paper 1: Shakespeare and the 19th –century novel
- Paper 2: Modern texts and poetry
Head of Department: Mr G. Dhillow

Specification: EDEXCEL Linear

All students embarked upon the study of their GCSEs in Mathematics at the start of Year 9.

GCSE Mathematics covers a wide range of basic mathematical knowledge and skills, grouped into four areas:
- Number and algebra
- Shape, space and measure
- Ratio and Proportion
- Data handling
- Using and applying the mathematics contained in these areas to a range of problems.

While studying mathematics you will be expected to:
- Use mathematical skills and knowledge to solve problems
- Use logic and reason to solve problems
- Break down problems into small steps in order to solve them
- Use the mathematics that you learn to solve problems that might happen in real life
- Learn how to use a calculator to solve problems quickly and effectively.

Why do I have to take GCSE Mathematics?

GCSE Mathematics covers many basic skills that you will need to use throughout your life. It is a compulsory subject for all students in Years 9, 10 and 11.

You will use a lot of what you learn in GCSE Mathematics in the other GCSEs that you study, for example in Science you may be asked to use formulae and solve equations, in Geography you will need to read charts and diagrams and use statistics and in D&T you will need to use measures and make scale drawings.

What about exams?

You will have to take three exam papers at the end of your course, one non-calculator paper and two calculator papers. The questions on the exam papers will be arranged so that the easiest ones come first and then gradually get harder. There will be a mixture of short and longer questions.

What could I do next with GCSE Mathematics?

Almost all jobs and careers require you to have mathematics GCSE, but the following careers are some that would enable you to make a lot of use of your mathematics:

- Economics
- Medicine
- Architecture
- Engineering
- Accountancy
- Marketing
- Environmental studies
- Computing
- Insurance
- Information and communication technology (ICT)
- Business management
- Banking
- Pharmacy
- Teaching
GCSE SCIENCES

Head of Science: Mr P. Jones
Head of Physics: Mr P. Jones
Head of Biology: Mr F. Ahmed
Head of Chemistry: Mr I. Bedi

 Specification: AQA

All students embarked upon the study of their GCSEs in Science subjects at the start of Year 9. They have 2 periods in each of Biology, Chemistry and Physics per week. Final assessments will be by means of a series of question papers (which contain a variety of question styles – multiple choice, structured, closed, short answer and open response). Topics studied are:

Biology

Chemistry
- Atomic structure and the periodic table, Bonding, structure and the properties of matter, Quantitative chemistry, Chemical changes, Energy changes, The rate and extent of chemical change, Organic chemistry, Chemical analysis, Chemistry of the atmosphere, Using resources

Physics
- Forces, Energy, Waves, Electricity, Magnetism and electromagnetism, Particle model of matter, Atomic structure, Space Physics (not for Combined Science)

In Year 9, students are placed in one of five sets based upon the average of their Year 8 Science Assessment test and examination performances, with sets 1-3 being parallel sets made up of the top 60% of the year group, and sets 4 and 5 are parallel sets made up from the remaining students. All students cover the same material in Year 9.

Assessment schedule

Towards the end of their Year 9, students will sit internal ‘mock’ papers in each of Biology, Chemistry and Physics. This is in addition to the shorter Assessment Tests which take place during the year. The Science programme followed by students in Years 10 and 11 will depend upon their overall performances in all of these assessments.

Separate Science route
Those students who perform well in the Year 9 assessments will follow a programme leading to the award of GCSE Biology, Chemistry and Physics. They will sit all of their external GCSE examinations (two 1 hour 45 minute papers in each Science subject) at the end of Year 11.

Combined Science (Trilogy) route
Some students’ performances in Year 9 may indicate that it will be in their interests for them to be prepared for entry into GCSE Combined Science: Trilogy instead of the separate Sciences. This is a double award qualification, worth two GCSEs. At the end of Year 11, they will sit six examinations, two 1 hour 15 minute papers in each Science subject.
NB We will also have the flexibility to shift students who have embarked upon the separate Sciences to examination entry in GCSE Combined Science at the end of Year 10 (or after ‘mock’ examinations held during Year 11) if it becomes apparent that they would benefit from this.

**Practical work**
There is no coursework component in GCSE Sciences. As part of the course, students will perform a number of ‘required practicals’ (in addition to usual practical work); some examination questions will be related to these.

**Support materials**
Students will have access to bespoke electronic textbooks for their Science courses on [www.kerboodle.com](http://www.kerboodle.com), together with other resources. Many choose to purchase ‘hard’ copies of the texts themselves - look for Oxford separate GCSE Biology, Chemistry and Physics books, or the GCSE Combined Science: Trilogy books. Students can view and download the specification(s) and information about the courses from the website [www.aqa.org.uk](http://www.aqa.org.uk) Specimen examination and controlled assessment papers are also available on the AQA website.
Computer Science opens doors to your future and this exciting qualification gives you an excellent opportunity to learn how computer hardware works, communications and the Internet and how software is written through practical programming lessons using Python. You will also develop an understanding of computer science methods in the real world as well as excellent computational problem solving skills. The course is designed to give you an in-depth understanding of how the latest computer technology work and also develops transferable skills for progression to higher education.

The course consists of two externally-examined components:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit title</th>
<th>Unit detail</th>
<th>Assessment method</th>
<th>Unit weighting</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Component 1: Principles of Computer Science (*Paper code: 1CP2/01)</td>
<td>This component will assess your understanding of Topics 1 to 5:</td>
<td>Written paper 1 1 hour 30 minutes 75 marks</td>
<td>50%</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• What algorithms are, what they are used for and how they work; ability to follow, amend and write algorithms; ability to construct truth tables.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Binary, data representation, data storage and compression.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Hardware and software components of computer systems and characteristics of programming languages.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Computer networks and network security.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Emerging trends in computing technologies, and the impact of computing on individuals, society and the environment, including ethical, legal and ownership issues.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Component 2: Application of Computational Thinking (*Paper code: 1CP2/02)</td>
<td>This component will assess your understanding of Topic 6:</td>
<td>Practical onscreen examination 2 hours 75 marks</td>
<td>50%</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• What algorithms are, what they are used for and how they work in relation to creating programs</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• How to decompose and analyse problems</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• How to read, write, refine and evaluate programs.</td>
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Head of Department: Mrs V. Donoghue

Specification: AQA Syllabus A

Your son started following the GCSE course in year 9 from September 2018.

The course comprises of 2 units that will be assessed by written examinations at the end of Year 11

**Unit 1: The study of religions: beliefs, teachings and practices**

Students study: beliefs, teachings and practices from Christianity and one from the following religion of their choice (Hinduism, Islam, Judaism or Sikhism).

Assessed by a written exam of 1 hour 45 minutes

**Unit 2: Thematic studies**

Students will study 4 themes in religion from religious and non-religious points of view.

1. **Theme 1: Religion and life.**
   Students study: the origins of the universe, the use and abuse of the environment, the use and abuse of animals, the origins of human life, attitudes about abortion, attitudes about euthanasia and attitudes about death and an afterlife.

2. **Theme 2: Religion, peace and conflict.**
   Students study: the meaning and significance of: peace, justice, forgiveness and reconciliation. Attitudes about violence, including violent protest, terrorism. Beliefs and attitudes about reasons for war. Religion and belief as a cause of war and violence in the contemporary world. Religious attitudes to nuclear weapons and the use of weapons of mass destruction. Religion and peace-making in the contemporary world including the work of individuals influenced by religious teaching.

3. **Theme 3: Religion, crime and punishment.**
   Students study: good and evil actions and good and evil people, the reasons for crime including poverty, the treatment of criminals, punishments, attitudes about forgiveness and the death penalty.

4. **Unit 4: Religion, human rights and social justice.**
   Students study: social justice, human rights and the responsibilities that come with rights, issues of equality, prejudice and discrimination, wealth, exploitation of the poor and charity.

Assessed by a written exam of 1 hour 45 minutes
Although proud of its academic achievements, Handsworth Grammar School is also mindful of its responsibilities to facilitate the full development of the student and to prepare him for adult life. The Enrichment programme seeks to ensure the promotion of these wider educational issues. Students throughout the school participate in Enrichment/Citizenship via the form tutor period and once on standalone days each half term, to foster an understanding of physical, mental, social well-being and their respective role as a citizen in the wider community.

Citizenship spans traditional subject boundaries and offers increased awareness both of their own potential and of the contribution they can make to life outside of school.

Head of Department: Mr D. Griffiths

All students in Years 10 and 11 follow a programme of Physical Education through Games. Skills are continually taught although the emphasis is very much on participation.

During Years 10 and 11, students are expected to tackle complex and demanding activities, applying their knowledge of skills. They have to decide whether to become involved in physical activity that is mainly focused on competing or performing, promoting health and wellbeing or developing personal fitness. They also decide on roles that suit them best including performer, coach, leader and official. This subject gives them the confidence to become involved in exercise and activity out of School and in later life.

Students have the opportunity to partake in a variety of activities including Football, Basketball, Table Tennis, Badminton, Athletics and Cricket and represent the School in many of these sports.
Head of Department: **Ms H. Fisher**

Specification: **OCR GCSE in Art and Design: Fine Art J171**

‘The creative industries are the fastest growing part of the UK’s economy, one of the few sectors in which we are celebrated world leaders and in which there is huge employment growth. We are the world’s third largest cultural exporters, after China and the US. Last year the creative industries were worth £92bn to the UK economy.’ Being creative in today’s fast-moving, tech-driven world requires a particular set of skills that goes beyond fact-based learning. Problem-solving, creative thinking and the ability to experiment, fail and try again are the skills needed by the UK’s creative industries.’ – The Guardian 2018

If you’re thinking that Art is just about making pretty pictures and has no relevance to life skills and the qualities that universities are looking for, then think again. Developing ideas, experimenting (this is one of the very few subjects that actually encourages you to genuinely take risks!) and recording what you see, think and feel are what this course is all about. It allows students to experience a wide range of art and artists and gives them the opportunity to explore their own personal expression and individual style. Students will develop the confidence to be self-critical, under take creative decision-making, and experiment with new ideas and materials.

**SCHEME OF ASSESSMENT:**
The scheme of assessment consists of two components - coursework and the terminal examination.

**Component 1: Portfolio / Coursework**
*This contributes 60% of the marks for the GCSE.*
The purpose of coursework is to provide learners with an opportunity to demonstrate through the assessment objectives their ability to investigate, explore, modify, develop and realise ideas in one or more, two or three-dimensional areas of study. Learners are guided through the course to produce a portfolio of work developed from their own personal choices and starting points. They develop their ideas through their own choice of materials, techniques and artists.

**Component 2: Terminal Examination**
*This contributes 40% of the marks for the GCSE.*
The terminal examination in Art is a 'set-task' and requires learners to produce a unit of work from an early released paper, and through development, the student has 10 hours in which to complete the final response. Students are again in charge of selecting their own choice of artists, techniques and materials.
Head of Department: Mr R. Coulthard

Specification: AQA

The new Business Studies GCSE is designed to give students their first taste of the themes traditionally focussed on in the world of business. It would be an ideal options choice for boys who have started to take a general interest in the world of business or economics when they come across these areas in the news. Students who take and enjoy GCSE Business Studies can continue to study the subject at A’ level but this GCSE is not an essential pre requisite for higher level courses.

Content
We focus on studying how businesses operate themselves and how they can be influenced by the world that they operate in. The former will focus on decisions about producing, marketing, finance and human resources. The latter will examine the economic and legal backgrounds that businesses are affected by and have to comply with.

Examinations
This is a linear course where all the examinations will occur at the end of the course.

• There will be TWO equal length exams
• Both will carry 50% of the overall mark
• Both will be a mixture of multiple choice questions, short answers and extended writing in response to data provided about businesses.
• In common with many other courses there will be no coursework/controlled assessment element to the course.

If you feel that you have an interest in studying about businesses then this may be the course for you. If you wish to ask any further questions then please see either Mr Coulthard (Rm 14) or Mr Karra (Rm 28).
GCSE DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

Head of Design & Technology: Miss M. Hill

Specification: AQA

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

GCSE Design and Technology will prepare students to participate confidently and successfully in an increasingly technological world. Students will gain awareness and learn from wider influences on Design and Technology including historical, social, cultural, environmental and economic factors.

Throughout the course students will study core technical and designing and making principles, including a broad range of design processes, materials techniques and equipment. They will also have the opportunity to study specialist technical principles in greater depth. Students will be introduced to timbers, metals, plastics, electronic and mechanical systems. With the opportunity to specialise in a chosen material.

Students will become competent in using a range of Computer Aided Design packages and use Computer Aided Manufacture in the development of their products.

Students must also demonstrate mathematical and scientific knowledge and understanding, in relation to design and technology.

Assessment

Examination:
- 2 hours
- 100 marks
- 50% of GCSE

NEA (controlled assessment):
- 100 marks
- 50% of GCSE
- Internally assessed and externally moderated

Students will undertake a substantial design and make task and produce a prototype and a portfolio of evidence. Assessment in the NEA will look at identifying and investigating design possibilities, producing a design brief and specification, generating, developing and realising design ideas, analysing & evaluating.

CAREERS AND HIGHER EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES

A career in architecture, engineering (civil, mechanical, electrical, aerospace, production, medical, environmental, hydro, systems, transport, computer and software to name just a few!) graphic design, product design, concept artist, media studies, built environment, town planning, games technology, clinical research, bioengineering or robotics are just some of the 160 + courses and careers.
Head of Department: Mr S. Thaper

Specification: AQA GCSE

The Course
The course aims to encourage knowledge and understanding of the geographical processes that shape our world, and the development of geographical skills, including ICT, GIS (maps and computers) and map reading. The specification enables a variety of teaching and learning approaches. This exciting and relevant course studies geography in a balanced framework of physical and human themes and investigates the link between them.

The Content
Students will travel the world from the classroom, exploring case studies in the United Kingdom (UK), newly emerging economies (NEEs) and lower income countries (LICs). Topics of study include climate change, poverty, deprivation, global shifts in economic power and the challenge of sustainable resource use. Students are also encouraged to understand their role in society, by considering different viewpoints, values and attitudes.

The Examination (100%)

Paper 1– Living with the Physical Environment – Including the Challenge of Natural Hazards, Physical Landscapes in the UK and the Living World.
Paper 3 – Geographical Applications – Including an issue evaluation, fieldwork and geographical skills
The exam papers consist of structured questions,

Fieldwork
This first-hand enquiry provides a valuable (and usually enjoyable) opportunity to take what you have learnt in the classroom, and apply it to a real life situation. Since fieldwork is an essential aspect of geography which ensures that students are given the opportunity to consolidate and extend their achievement by relating learning to real experiences of the world, all students will be expected to take part in fieldwork. Students undertake two geographical enquiries, include the use of primary data, collected as part of a fieldwork exercise. The two enquiries are be carried out in contrasting environments and show an understanding of both physical and human geography.

Resources
Each student will have their own set textbook and the Geography Department has a wide range of recently published books and resources, all specifically written for GCSE. We have many DVDs and videos on all the major topics studied. The Department also has a notice board through which students can keep up to date with the latest developments and events in the subject of Geography. Students are also encouraged to purchase a revision guide and ‘The Wider World’ Magazine which will help to broaden their geographical knowledge.

Assessment
Students will be assessed through a range of homework and assessment tasks. This will include peer-assessment and evaluation. Students will sit three written exams. Paper 1 and 2 are 1 hour 30 minutes each and make up 35% each. Paper 3 is an hour and makes up 30%.
Head of Department: Mr I. Mohammed

Specification: GCSE History, AQA (8145)

Why Study History?

History will provide you with an understanding of the past and the personalities and events that have shaped it. It will give you many useful skills and abilities that are highly valued by employers. History at GCSE will improve your abilities in thinking about and communicating ideas. It will give you confidence in handling your own and other people’s opinions. It will help you to increase your skills in analysing evidence and organising information. History is accepted as a qualification for a wide range of careers where the skills of analysis and assessment are valued e.g. law, journalism, banking and education. Although it is about the past, History will help you to make your future!

Content:

There are two examinations. Each worth 50% of the GCSE qualification.

Paper 1 is called Understanding the Modern World, with a study of:
Section A: Period Studies – Germany, 1890-1945: Democracy and Dictatorship. This study focuses on the development of Germany during a turbulent half century of change. It was a period of democracy and dictatorship – the development and collapse of democracy and the rise and fall of Nazism. The social, political and economic policies of Hitler will be considered.

Section B: Wider World Depth Studies – Conflict and Tension, 1918-1939. This wider world depth study enables students to understand the complex and diverse interests of different individuals and states during the inter-war years. From the peace settlement after the First World War to the causes of the Second World War, this module investigates why peace failed in the years between both World Wars.

Paper 2 is called Shaping the Nation, with a study of:
Section A: Thematic Studies – Britain: Migration, Empires and the People: c790 to the present day. This thematic study will enable students to gain an understanding of how the identity of the people of Britain has been shaped by their interaction with the wider world. It will consider both invasions and conquests. It will study Britain’s relationship with Europe and the wider world. Looking at the people coming in and out of Britain, the study will also focus on the causes, impact and legacy of the British Empire. From the Viking invasion to Indian independence, this module will cover over a 1000 years of British and imperial history.

Section B: British Depth Studies – Elizabethan England, c1568-1603
This option allows students to study in depth the last 35 years of Queen Elizabeth I’s reign. This study will focus on the major events of Elizabeth’s reign considered from an economic, religious, political, social and cultural standpoint. It will also investigate foreign policy with a look at the Spanish Armada of 1588. In this module students will also be given the opportunity to examine a historical site in depth. This investigation will be examined in this section and will form 10% of the overall course. Students will be expected to think about the site’s relevance and its link to Elizabethan England as well as apply the concepts of change, continuity, causation and/or consequence in the context of the specified site.

Learning Styles
History is challenging, thought provoking and fun. We aim to use a variety of different teaching techniques, which will involve individual work, group work, role-play, PowerPoint presentations, team building scenarios and ICT. Throughout the course, students use a wide range of sources to develop skills in the use of historical evidence. Students will be expected to engage with different activities enabling them to be part of the teaching and learning experience.

Resources

Each student will have their own set textbook and the History Department has a wide range of recently published books and resources, all specifically written for GCSE. We have many DVDs and videos containing archive film and newsreels on all the major topics studied. The Department also has a notice board through which students can keep up to date with the latest developments and events in the subject of History. Students are also encouraged to use local libraries and the Internet to follow up their own interests.

Assessment

Students will be assessed through a range of homework and test-based tasks. This will include peer and self-assessment and evaluation. Students will sit two written exams each lasting two hours. These will each make up 50% of the total GCSE mark. Both exams will be taken at the end of Year 11.
Head of Department: Mrs A. Harvey

Specification: Edexcel

WHY STUDY A FOREIGN LANGUAGE?

The ability to speak a foreign language is a skill that is valued by universities and employers alike. Learning a language helps you to develop transferable intellectual skills that will be very useful in other subjects; Linguists notice patterns, can work accurately, use problem-solving skills and make predictions in order to communicate. Furthermore, learning a language helps to build confidence and teaches learners how to communicate effectively in difficult situations - vital for any job!

Learning a language also makes you more culturally aware and open to new ideas and ways of seeing things. This is a very important ability our increasingly multicultural society.

Britain currently has a shortage of foreign language skills, so students with a language qualification will be at an advantage when they apply for university or a job. And speaking another language does not necessarily mean living or working abroad. Recent census data shows that there are over 300 languages currently spoken in London alone, so there are lots of opportunities.

WHAT WILL I LEARN?

The work in years 7, 8 and 9 has enabled you to communicate in French or German using different time frames in a range of contexts and to develop specific skills and understanding. At GCSE this work is extended and developed through a wider range of topic areas as well as new and more complex grammar:

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

Each topic area will allow you to learn more about the countries where French and German are spoken and to compare this with your own experience. You will also have the chance to explore French and German texts and authentic resources. There will also be opportunities to take part in French and German cultural activities.

Throughout the course Listening, Reading, Speaking and Writing will be developed using a variety of resources, including ICT, and you will be encouraged to work independently. You will be expected to use the foreign language for communication in the classroom as much as possible, developing your ideas and expressing points of views.
HOW WILL I BE ASSESSED?

You will assessed via examination at the end of year 11 in Listening, Reading and Writing. There will also be a speaking test with your class teacher which will be marked by Edexcel and count as your oral. Each paper is worth 25%. The French and German assessments you have done in Year 9 will have prepared you for the style of assessment at GCSE.

HOW CAN I TAKE IT FURTHER?

A GCSE in French or German provides a perfect base for further study at A-level, which opens the way to many degree and career opportunities. Having a foreign language GCSE also tells universities and employers that you are open to the idea of language learning and would therefore benefit from further training in a language more specific to that company’s needs.

For further information about taking a French or German GCSE, please speak to your class teacher or Mrs Harvey or Mrs Fiess.
Head of Department: Mr M. Ward

Specification: Eduqas

This two-year course provides opportunities for students to develop performing, composing and listening/appraising skills and to increase their musical knowledge and understanding by exploring four Areas of Study:

- Musical Forms and Devices
- Music for Ensemble
- Film Music
- Popular Music

Assessment
Students have access to the full range of GCSE grades through a combination of performing and composing coursework (assessed by your HGS Music teacher) and listening/appraising examination.

Component 1: Performing 30% of qualification

- Total duration of performances: 4-6 minutes
- Non-exam assessment: internally assessed, externally moderated

A minimum of two pieces, one of which must be an ensemble performance of at least one minute duration. The other piece(s) may be either solo and/or ensemble. One of the pieces performed must link to an area of study of the learner’s choice. Music GCSE students are expected to develop their performing skills through the free tuition available to them at HGS (20-minute lessons on their main instrument). Opportunities to perform occur within the Music timetable and also in School events including concerts, recitals and HGS Young Musician of the Year. Level of difficulty is equivalent of Grade 3 to 4.

Component 2: Composing 30% of qualification

- Total duration of compositions: 3-6 minutes
- Non-exam assessment: internally assessed, externally moderated

Throughout the course students develop their understanding and skills in response to a variety of tasks based on each Area of Study. ICT may be used for the composing process and/or preparing the recording and score. Our students have access to our IMac ICT suite with GarageBand and Sibelius. Two compositions, one of which must be in response to a brief set by WJEC. Learners will choose one brief from a choice of four, each one linked to a different area of study. The briefs will be released during the first week of September in the academic year in which the assessment is to be taken. The second composition is a free composition for which learners set their own brief.

Component 3: Appraising 40% of qualification

- Written examination: 1 hour 15 minutes

Students will experience a variety of styles and genres connected with the four Areas of Study listed above. Each area will focus on three representative set works that will be studied aurally, identifying musical elements and features, applying subject-specific vocabulary and placing the music in its context. In addition, students will
use musical notation to apply aural skills including dictation. At the end of the course students will sit a 1 hr 15 min written examination. There are eight questions in total, two on each of the four areas of study.

Area of study 1: Musical Forms and Devices Area of study 2: Music for Ensembles Area of study 3: Film Music Area of study 4: Popular Music

Two of the eight questions are based on extracts set by WJEC.
Head of Department: Mr D. Griffiths

Specification: OCR GCSE PE

Outcome: GCSE

This is a demanding two years and students need to be focussed and determined throughout Year 10 and Year 11. A full commitment is needed to fulfil all the requirements.

GCSE PE

The GCSE course is designed to encourage students to investigate PE more carefully, by looking at the areas of human performance, developments in sport today and undertaking practical activities. **Students who wish to choose this subject should bear in mind that theoretical work makes up a substantial proportion of the course.**

60% of the course is theory based with students studying two components and then assessed by taking two 2 x 1 hour written exams. The two units are ‘Physical factors affecting performance’ and ‘Socio-cultural issues and sports psychology’. These units look at developing skills and techniques, decision making, physical and mental capacity, evaluating and improving, making informed choices about active and healthy lifestyles, reasons for people participating in sport, school influences, pathways to sport and physical body and movement.

40% of the course is practical based in which students are required to demonstrate effective performance, the use of tactics or techniques and being able to analyse and evaluate performance. Students who undertake the course must be proficient in three sports. An indication of the level that would be expected is that the student represents the school or is attached to a club where they play frequently. The acceptance of the students on the course will be decided by the PE department who have first-hand knowledge of the level of performances shown by students.

**Where can GCSE PE take me?**

For those fascinated by the human mind why not carry on to Psychology? Interested in the human family why not Sociology? This is also an excellent additional qualification for those undertaking the sciences with the intention to move through into medicine or physiotherapy routes.

GCSE PE can lead on to an interest in university degrees in sports science, sports management, healthcare or exercise and health. Physical Education can also complement further study in biology, human biology, physics, psychology, nutrition, sociology, teacher training and many more. The transferable skills you learn through your study of physical education, such as decision making and independent thinking are also useful in any career path you choose to take.
OTHER INFORMATION

You may find it useful to look at the following websites before you decide on your options, especially if you have a particular career/higher education course in mind. What GCSEs you choose can affect what A levels you do and therefore which university courses you can access. There is a link on our website that takes you to valuable information about the expectations of the top universities in the country (they are called the Russell Group) – it is under Curriculum then Careers & Options – this is a direct link:

http://www.russellgroup.ac.uk/informed-choices.aspx
http://www.ucas.ac.uk/
http://www.prospects.ac.uk/careers.htm
www.s-cool.co.uk
www.smaartmags.com

ENGLISH BACCALAUREATE (EBACC)

The English Baccalaureate is not a qualification; it is a performance measure. The measure recognises where students have secured a grade 5 or better across a core of academic subjects – English, Mathematics, History or Geography, the Sciences (including Computer Science) and a language.

A student will only qualify as being having achieved the English Baccalaureate if they choose a language GCSE (French or German) and a humanity GCSE (Geography or History) alongside the compulsory Maths, English and Sciences GCSE and achieve a grade 5 or higher in all of these subjects.

These are the subjects that the top universities also value. To find out more you can go to this web site: