



ABINGDON



# MIDDLE SCHOOL CURRICULUM

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# WELCOME

The Middle School here at Abingdon is an important part of our students' educational journey. It is a time of significant development: academically, socially and emotionally. As students pass through Middle School, they gain greater awareness of their strengths and interests.

Academically, our curriculum gives them the opportunity to learn a wide range of subjects allowing them to gain a broad knowledge base from which they will ultimately make decisions to specialise as they move into Sixth Form. Regular assessments, alongside end of year examinations, help our students develop revision skills in preparation for their GCSE examinations which take place at the end of their time in the Middle School.

Equally, the many Other Half opportunities allow our students to hone existing skills, as well as enjoying new experiences and finding new interests. Regular sports fixtures, musical performances or Middle School drama productions all offer a chance to excel.

Socially, in the Middle School, students learn to work and collaborate with a large number of their peers from the many activities that they are involved in during the school day. Some of the friendships forged at this time will last a lifetime.

As our Middle School students navigate their teenage years, we offer them a wide range of support pastorally. In our PSHCE lessons, we aim to equip them to respond positively to the many issues that face young people today. Tutors and Heads of House are key members of the pastoral team offering help and guidance. In addition, the Middle School students are mentored by Peer Support Leads from our Sixth Form.

Thanks to the breadth of opportunities on offer in the Middle School, our students are able to move on successfully to the next stage of their personal journey. There is no stereotypical Abingdon student but we do ask everyone to work hard, set themselves high standards and be enthusiastic.

**Andrew Crisp**

**Head of Middle School**

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# CURRICULUM



## **Distinctive features of the Abingdon Middle School curriculum**

At Abingdon, there are several distinctive features of our curriculum which require some emphasis. PSHCE lessons and tutor time provide personal and social education. Some pupils will also receive additional support from the Academic Support team. At each stage there are optional choices to be made. The relationship between the optional and compulsory subjects is shown for each of the year groups in the tables on subsequent pages.

At GCSE, students may choose to study three separate sciences or to take “double award science”. Students doing the double award science will spend fewer periods per week studying science, allowing them to timetable an additional optional subject for GCSE.

For further information about the curriculum please contact me directly.

**Oliver Lomax**

**Curriculum Director**

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# CHOICE OF OPTION SUBJECTS

## Third Year (Year 9)

Third Year students are taught in the same groups for Science, English, History, Geography and Philosophy and Theology. Most subjects are compulsory, but students are given the opportunity to choose which modern foreign language they will study.

In addition, they choose two 'option' subjects from the following: German\*, Spanish, Mandarin Chinese, Latin\*, Ancient Greek, Music or Drama.

\* Previous study of the subject is required.

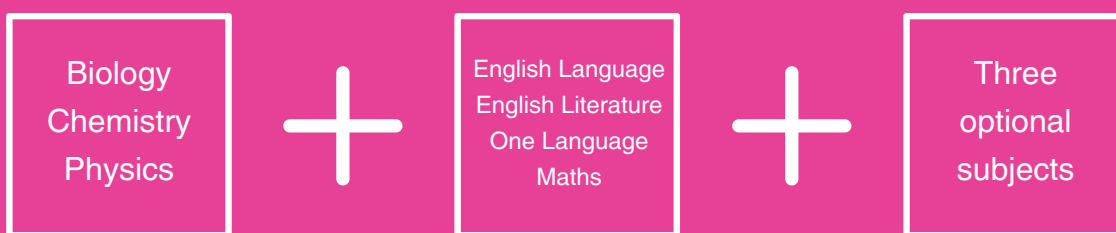


# CHOICE OF OPTION SUBJECTS

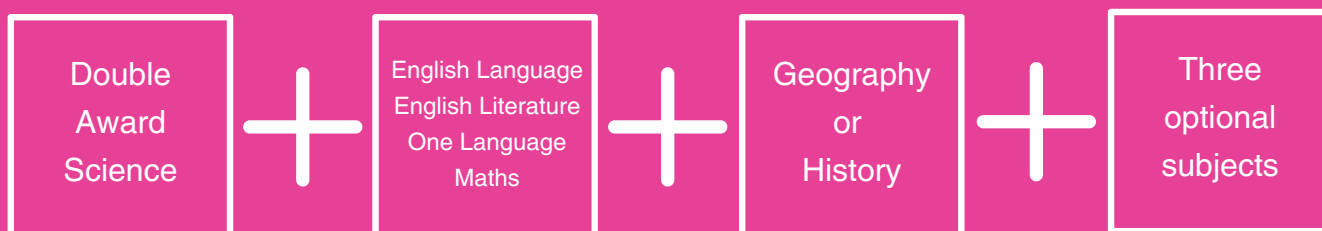
## Fourth Year (Year 10)

In the Fourth Year (Year 10), fewer subjects are compulsory and more options are available. Subjects other than languages can usually be taken in the Fourth Year without having been studied previously, though Music students should have a minimum standard of about ABRSM grade 3 to 4 on one instrument (or singing) at the start of the course.

Those doing all three separate sciences to GCSE make **three** subject choices from the option blocks.



Those taking double award (DA) science are taught by three separate, specialist teachers, but have fewer science lessons each week and gain only **two** science GCSEs. Double award science students make four subject choices from the option blocks. Within these four choices they must study at least one of History and Geography (they may also choose to study both).



In Maths and Latin, students are allocated sets based on ability - these usually remain unchanged throughout the year.





# GCSE & IGCSE GRADING

GCSEs and IGCSEs are graded from 9 to 1, instead of from A\* to G. The table shows how the numerical structure compares.

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

# THE OTHER HALF



Integrated into the timetable, our enviable Other Half co-curricular programme provides an extensive variety of activities and subjects.

Middle School students have the opportunity to become more proficient in an existing interest, learn a new skill, mentor younger peers and lend their support within the wider community. In turn, this will help our young people to develop important life skills including societal awareness, leadership, independence, perseverance, resilience, empathy, patience and kindness.



# ACADEMIC SUPPORT

The specialist Academic Support teachers see a considerable number of students during their time in the Middle School, whether or not the student has a formally identified neurodivergence.

Lessons, either 1:1 or small groups, are provided on a rotational basis in the Third Year and in the Fourth and Fifth Years, students come to us in one of their Other Half sessions. This minimises impact on academic studies.



In the sessions, we target areas specifically related to a student's learning difference, such as literacy and organisational skills. With all students, we also look at techniques that can be applied across curriculum subjects including workload management, revision strategies and study skills. Lessons can also provide an opportunity to reinforce particular topics or concepts.

Requests for support come through a student's Head of House, tutor or academic subject teachers and sometimes the student may self-refer. We work closely with the student's academic teachers and the pastoral team to ensure a student can thrive academically.

As external exams approach, we are involved in screening for and approving exam access arrangements. The procedure for granting these is tightly controlled by regulations set out by the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) and these are strictly adhered to. We carry out preliminary screening and ask for feedback on academic work. If it seems appropriate, a student is referred for an external assessment. If exam access arrangements are granted as a result of this, it is important a student uses the arrangement in internal tests and exams to demonstrate it is their normal way of working; such arrangements are also monitored by the Academic Support team and their effectiveness reviewed.

# EAL



Approximately 150 of our students have English as a second or third language. Most do not need extra support, but help from our English as an Additional Language (EAL) department is available for those who need it.

In Middle School, the focus is on preparation for GCSE English Language and Literature exams. Some students may not have studied poetry, Shakespeare or language analysis techniques before and our department is well placed to help them learn the analytical skills they will need to decode literature and write about it. We work closely with the student's main English teacher to make sure our lessons are relevant to what is being taught in class. We may use the lesson time to improve upon classwork, or prepare ahead of the next English lesson.

Our initial entrance tests are a good indicator of those students who may benefit from support but teachers (and students) can make referrals.

EAL lessons are charged to the student's bill, unless the student is on a reduced timetable.

# ANCIENT HISTORY

**Exam board:** OCR Ancient History J198



## What will I study?

Two period studies, one on the rise of Persia, focused on the influence and achievements of the first four Achaemenid kings, the other on the foundation and early history of Rome, including the period under the kings beginning with Romulus and the early Republic - a time of memorable characters and huge social unrest. Two depth studies with greater focus on the source material: the period in Greece where tyranny was prevalent and the surprising development of Democracy in Athens, and Hannibal's role almost bringing Rome to its knees in the second Punic War. As part of these topics you will look at how the viewpoint of the author might affect the accuracy of the source.

## What skills will I acquire?

- Constructing a written argument
- Analysing the accuracy of a variety of sources
- Reading and understanding difficult texts (in translation)
- Summarising and selecting the most important details
- Cultural appreciation of very different cultures
- Understanding key historical processes, such as cause, consequence, change and continuity

## What extension activities/trips have previously been offered to students?

- British Museum trip
- Lectures on parts of the course
- Overseas Classics trip

## How will I be examined?

Component	Assessment	Content
01 (Greece and Persia)	2 hour 30 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Period study questions (60 marks): essay and two questions focused on a short passage of ancient text (in translation)</li> <li>• Depth study questions (45 marks): essay and two questions focused on a short passage of ancient text (in translation)</li> </ul>
02 (Rome and her neighbours)	2 hour 30 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Period study questions (60 marks): essay and two questions focused on a short passage of ancient text (in translation)</li> <li>• Depth study questions (45 marks): essay and two questions focused on a short passage of ancient text (in translation)</li> </ul>



# ART

**Exam board:** Edexcel GCSE Fine Art 1FA0



## What will I study?

The Fine Arts course is exciting and fun. You will learn to appreciate the visual world and express your own ideas thoughts and feelings.

We have students who learn Fine Art and specialise in disciplines such as Textiles/Illustration/Architecture/Concept Art/Game Design, Painting etc. You will work with skilled teachers and artists to build up a professional portfolio of work. This will enable you to study this subject at a higher level or gain employment in the creative industries.

## What skills will I acquire?

- Painting and Drawing / Photography
- Printmaking / Textiles
- Mixed Media
- Using CAD/Procreate
- Critically responding to artists' work
- Building up a portfolio

## What extension activities/trips have previously been offered to students?

- Gallery trips to London and Florence
- Access to workshops and clubs to build up specialist skills
- Lectures and speakers from industry professionals
- Working with artists and visiting practitioners
- One-to-one feedback and group critiques
- You will secure excellent skills and knowledge working in a high-performing department

## How will I be examined?

Component	Assessment	Content
Coursework (60%)		Students create a personal portfolio of work that demonstrates their knowledge, understanding and skills. It will be on a theme developed between you and the teacher.
Exam (40%)	10 hour exam at the end of the course	The exam project aims to test the skills and knowledge built up over the first year. You will respond to an exam board topic or theme.

# BIOLOGY

Exam board: Edexcel IGCSE 4BI1



## What will I study?

Students will gain an understanding of how the natural world works and how our interactions can affect it. It covers fundamental principles that give a good understanding for A Level study if needed. Topics include Stem Cells, Genetics, Human Biology and Ecology.

## What skills will I acquire?

- Problem solving techniques
- Data analysis
- Practical and experimental skills
- Research skills

## What extension activities/trips have previously been offered to students?

- The International Biology Challenge
- Talks at Science Live!
- Internal extension prizes on topics such as Antimicrobial Resistance
- Writing for local scientific journals

## How will I be examined?

Component	Assessment	Content
Paper 1	2 hour written exam	This paper assesses the topics below, including areas of overlap between them: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The nature and variety of living organisms</li><li>• Structures and functions in living organisms</li><li>• Reproduction and inheritance</li><li>• Ecology and the environment</li><li>• Use of biological resources</li></ul>
Paper 2	1 hour 15 minute written exam	Assesses all the content from both years of study. Questions may come from any topic area across the specification with some sub-topics in greater depth.

# CHEMISTRY

**Exam board:** Edexcel International GCSE 4CH1



## What will I study?

Principles of Chemistry, Inorganic Chemistry, Physical Chemistry and Organic Chemistry.

## What skills will I acquire?

- Developing an understanding of fundamental chemical concepts
- Learning to apply these concepts to real-world scenarios, enhancing analytical and problem-solving abilities
- Practical laboratory skills, enabling students to make precise observations, and analyse data effectively
- Developing critical thinking and the ability to work methodically and safely
- Students improve their ability to communicate scientific ideas clearly, through both written explanations and verbal discussions
- Interpreting and presenting data in various ways alongside a strong foundation in scientific literacy and inquiry

## What extension activities/trips have previously been offered to students?

- Projects Club and Chemistry Practical Masterclasses in the Other Half
- OX14 competition; RSC Chemistry Challenge; RSC Top of the Bench
- Chemistry Live (Science Live) lecture series

## How will I be examined?

Component	Assessment	Content
Paper 1 (61.1%)	2 hour exam	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Core material only</li></ul>
Paper 2 (38.9%)	1 hour 15 minute exam	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Core and extended material</li><li>• The extended material that is only assessed in Paper 2C includes metallic bonding, some salt preparations, titrations, equilibria and the chemistry of alcohols, carboxylic acids and esters</li></ul>



# COMPUTER SCIENCE

Exam board: AQA GCSE 8525



## What will I study?

Computers and computerised devices are everywhere today. An understanding of how computers work, and how to solve problems using them, transforms you from being simply a consumer of modern technology to having the potential to shape our modern world. A computer scientist undertakes a creative role which connects the very fast but very rigid calculating power of a machine with a myriad of interesting human problems, from science and engineering to art. If you have an interest in logic puzzles, and also have a persistent approach to problem-solving, you should take to programming. The programming itself will be in Python, a high-level language which has many applications beyond the classroom.

## What skills will I acquire?

- Python programming
- Problem solving skills
- Mathematical skills (Boolean logic, Binary and hexadecimal numbers, algorithmic thinking etc)

## What extension activities/trips have previously been offered to students?

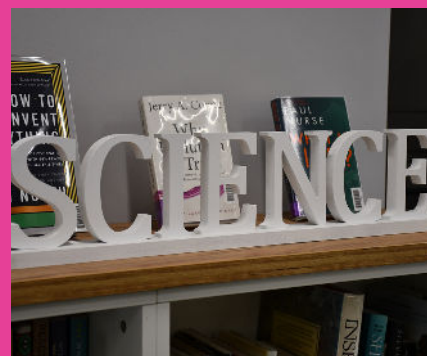
- Programming projects
- Hardware development
- AI development
- Programming in other languages

## How will I be examined?

Component	Assessment	Content
Paper 1 (50%)	2 hour exam	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fundamentals of algorithms</li> <li>• Programming</li> </ul>
Paper 2 (50%)	1 hour 45 minute exam	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fundamentals of data representation</li> <li>• Computer systems</li> <li>• Fundamentals of computer networks</li> <li>• Cyber security</li> <li>• Relational databases and structured query language (SQL)</li> <li>• Ethical, legal and environmental impacts of digital technology on wider society, including issues of privacy</li> </ul>

*NB: In order to ensure a breadth of subject types at GCSE we only allow students to take one of Computer Science and Electronics at GCSE level.*

# DOUBLE AWARD SCIENCE



**Exam board:** Edexcel Science (Double Award)  
(9-1) 4SD0

## What will I study?

A selection of topics taken from the Biology, Chemistry and Physics GCSE courses.

## What skills will I acquire?

- Learn how to evaluate scientific information and make informed judgements
- Experimental and investigative skills - used to analyse, interpret and evaluate data and experimental methods and draw conclusions
- Select, organise and present information clearly and logically including graphing
- Develop a logical approach to problem solving
- Apply appropriate areas of mathematics relevant to science

## What extension activities/trips have previously been offered to students?

- Competitions: International Biology Challenge, RSC Chemistry Challenge, RSC Top of the Bench Competition, OX14 Chemistry competition, BPhO Physics challenges
- Science Live! lecture series
- Internal extension prizes on topics such as Antimicrobial Resistance
- Writing for local scientific journals
- Projects Club and Chemistry Practical Masterclasses in the Other Half
- Trips to local scientific institutions and a residential trip to Munich

## How will I be examined?

Component	Assessment	Content
Paper 1 (33.3%) Biology	2 hour written exam	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The nature and variety of living organisms</li> <li>• Structures and functions in living organisms</li> <li>• Reproduction and inheritance</li> <li>• Ecology and the environment</li> <li>• Use of biological resources</li> </ul>
Paper 2 (33.3%) Chemistry	2 hour written exam	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Principles of chemistry</li> <li>• Inorganic chemistry</li> <li>• Physical chemistry</li> <li>• Organic chemistry</li> </ul>
Paper 3 (33.3%) Physics	2 hour written exam	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Forces and motion</li> <li>• Electricity</li> <li>• Waves</li> <li>• Energy resources and energy transfers</li> <li>• Solids, liquids and gases</li> <li>• Magnetism and electromagnetism</li> <li>• Radioactivity and particles</li> <li>• Astrophysics</li> </ul>

# DRAMA

**Exam board:** Edexcel GCSE Drama 9DR01



## What will I study?

You will study in depth how to create, perform and respond to a range of theatrical styles and contexts. You will cover a range of play texts and practitioners, and learn how to create, direct and design theatre from the perspective of different performers.

## What skills will I acquire?

- Creative skills in making theatre
- Writing about drama and theatre from the perspective of different theatre makers
- Analytical and evaluative skills about performance
- Performance skills across a range of theatrical styles and genres
- Transferable skills in teamwork, creative thinking, problem solving and ensemble

## What extension activities/trips have previously been offered to students?

- Theatre trips
- Masterclass workshops with theatre practitioners
- Live Theatre streamings

## How will I be examined?

Component	Assessment	Content
Component 1 - Devising (40%)	Devised practical piece, portfolio. Internally assessed, externally moderated.	Devising – In groups of 3 to 6, Centre choice of a piece of stimulus. A 1,500 word portfolio on the creation and performance of the devised piece.
Component 2 - Scripted performance (20%)	Practical exam, externally examined.	A group performance of two key extracts from a text (2 to 4 people, 10-20 minutes).
Component 3 - Written exam (40%)	1 hour 45 minutes written exam, externally examined.	Section A - Interpreting a performance text - study and interpretation of a text (45 marks). Section B – Live Theatre Evaluation (15 marks).



# ELECTRONICS



**Exam board:** WJEC Eduqas GCSE in Electronics C490P1

## What will I study?

Learning theory and building various subsystems which can then be connected together to design and build input-process-output systems. Inputs subsystems include: switching units, light sensing units and temperature sensing units. Processing subsystems include: logic gates, timers, counters, amplifiers. Output subsystems include: 7 segment LED displays, filament bulbs, speakers.

## What skills will I acquire?

- Students develop problem-solving and analytical abilities directly applicable to modern technology and engineering fields
- Students will develop the resilience and skills to be completely independent and able to design and build a project of their choosing (that has a minimum of 7 subsystems)

## How will I be examined?

Component	Assessment	Content
Component 1 - Discovering Electronics (40%)	Written Test: A mix of short answer questions, structured questions and extended writing questions, with some set in a practical context.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Electronic systems and subsystems</li> <li>• Circuit concepts</li> <li>• Resistive components in circuits</li> <li>• Switching circuits</li> <li>• Applications of diodes</li> <li>• Combinational logic systems</li> </ul>
Component 2 - Application of Electronics (40%)	Written Test: As above	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Operational amplifiers</li> <li>• Timing circuits</li> <li>• Sequential systems</li> <li>• Interfacing digital to analogue circuits</li> <li>• Control circuits</li> </ul>
Component 3 - Extended System Design and Realisation Task (20%)	Non Exam Assessment: An extended system design and realisation task to assess electronics skills.	10 week project that ends before Lent half term holidays. Students design and build a system on their breadboard that meets their design brief. The system is fully tested and students record their progress from design to completion.

# ENGLISH LANGUAGE

**Exam board:** Edexcel IGCSE English Language 4EA1



## What will I study?

In this compulsory subject you will study poetry, prose fiction and non-fiction and learn to hone your written expression and essay-writing skills. We also cover how to compose various forms of fiction and non-fiction writing, from short stories to speeches.

## What skills will I acquire?

- Reading and understanding a variety of texts, selecting and interpreting information, ideas and perspectives
- Understanding and analysing how writers use linguistic and structural devices to achieve their effects
- Exploring links and connections between writers' ideas and perspectives, as well as how these are conveyed
- Communicating effectively and imaginatively, adapting form, tone and register of writing for specific purposes and audiences
- Writing clearly, using a range of vocabulary and sentence structures, with appropriate paragraphing and accurate spelling, grammar and punctuation

## What extension activities/trips have previously been offered to students?

- Fifth Year students benefit from the English Plus revision sessions
- *Words and That* creative writing publication
- *The Martlet* school newspaper - our Shine Media Award-winning publication

## How will I be examined?

Component	Assessment	Content
<b>Paper 1:</b> Non-fiction Texts and Transactional Writing	2 hour 15 minute written exam (90 marks)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Section A (90 minutes; 45 marks): five questions on a non-fiction text from Part 1 of the <i>Anthology</i> and an unseen passage; open book</li><li>• Section B (45 minutes; 45 marks): one writing task from a choice of two, involving a given audience, form or purpose</li></ul>
<b>Paper 2:</b> Poetry and Prose Texts and Imaginative Writing	1 hour 30 minute written exam (60 marks)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Section A (45 minutes; 30 marks): one essay question on a poetry or prose text from Part 2 of the <i>Anthology</i>; the <i>Anthology</i> text will be provided in the exam</li><li>• Section B (45 minutes; 30 marks): one imaginative writing task from a choice of three</li></ul>

# ENGLISH LITERATURE

**Exam board:** Edexcel IGCSE English Literature 4ET1



## What will I study?

A compulsory subject, English Literature is the study of poetry, prose and drama texts. You will learn to appreciate and interpret literary works, including a range of poetry, a modern play, a Shakespeare play and a novel.

## What skills will I acquire?

- Demonstrate a close knowledge and understanding of texts, maintaining a critical style and presenting an informed personal engagement
- Analyse how the language, form and structure create meanings and effects
- Explore links and connections between texts
- Interrogate relationships between texts and the contexts in which they were written
- Evaluate, sympathise, empathise, think critically and exercise attention to detail

## What extension activities/trips have previously been offered to students?

- Fifth Year students benefit from the English Plus revision sessions
- Screenings and theatre trips for set texts, e.g. *Macbeth*
- Reading extension in Abingdon Litsoc (literary society) and attend guest lectures

## How will I be examined?

Component	Assessment	Content
<b>Paper 1:</b> Poetry and Modern Prose	2 hour written exam (90 marks)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Section A (35 minutes; 20 marks):</b> One essay question on an unseen poem</li> <li>• <b>Section B (40 minutes; 30 marks):</b> One essay question from a choice of two, comparing two poems from Part 3 of the <i>Anthology</i>; open book</li> <li>• <b>Section C (45 minutes; 40 marks):</b> One essay question on the Modern Prose text, <i>Things Fall Apart</i>; closed book question</li> </ul>
<b>Paper 2:</b> Modern Drama and Literary Heritage	1 hour 30 minute written exam (60 marks)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Section A (45 minutes; 30 marks):</b> One essay question on the Modern Drama text, <i>An Inspector Calls</i>, from a choice of two; open book question</li> <li>• <b>Section B (45 minutes; 30 marks):</b> One essay question on the Literary Heritage text, <i>Macbeth</i>, from a choice of two; open book question</li> </ul>

# FRENCH

**Exam board:** Cambridge IGCSE French (9-1)  
7156



## What will I study?

The focus of the IGCSE course is on authentic communication and grammatical accuracy. Over two years, students will learn how to speak with confidence about their own experiences and to navigate the modern world of public transport, travel and tourism, and discuss social issues. All four skills are given equal emphasis in our teaching and there are opportunities to go beyond the course content for IGCSE. The content of each paper is drawn from five topic areas: Everyday activities; Personal and social life; The world around us; The world of work; The international world.

## What skills will I acquire?

- Listening (decoding spoken French on a variety of the topics covered)
- Reading (decoding written French on a variety of the topics covered)
- Speaking (role play followed by two conversations on the topics covered)
- Writing (a short form followed by a 90 word and 140 word writing task)

## What extension activities/trips have previously been offered to students?

- IGCSE study trip to Lyon (Fourth Year)
- Microstories competition
- Stephen Spender translation prize
- Anthea Bell translation prize

## How will I be examined?

Component	Assessment	Content
Paper 1 (25%) Approximately 50 minutes	Listening 40 marks	Candidates listen to a number of recordings and answer multiple-choice and matching questions.
Paper 2 (25%) 1 hour	Reading 45 marks	Candidates read a number of texts and answer multiple-choice and matching questions as well as questions requiring short answers.
Paper 3 (25%) Approximately 10 minutes	Speaking 40 marks	Candidates complete one role play and conversations on two topics.
Paper 4 (25%) 1 hour	Writing 45 marks	Candidates complete one form-filling task, one directed writing task and one task in the format of an email/letter or article/blog.



# GEOGRAPHY



**Exam board:** Edexcel IGCSE Geography 4GE1

## What will I study?

Geography aims to cultivate students' interest in the wider world and encourage them to think like a global citizen. The IGCSE includes contemporary topics and geography is uniquely placed to give pupils an insight into the issues that will affect them in the future. The course helps students to draw links between and evaluate the significance of different topics and concepts. The Department integrates GIS (Geographical Information Systems) into lessons to enable students to see the real world impact of current global issues with their own eyes. Fieldwork is an integral part of the IGCSE and time is dedicated to learning essential fieldwork skills. Students complete two pieces of fieldwork during the course: one physical geography and one human geography. Fieldwork is undertaken in Abingdon and Oxford but there is no need to complete any formal project for submission and assessment. Our IGCSE results are excellent. In 2024, 58% of students scored a grade 9 and 96% achieved grade 9-7.

## What skills will I acquire?

- Geo-spatial mapping skills
- Evaluative writing skills
- Geographical fieldwork skills

## What extension activities/trips have previously been offered to students?

- Geographical Association lecture series
- Royal Geographical Society lecture series
- Royal Geographical Society essay competition
- Iceland residential trip
- Writing for the Geog Blog

## How will I be examined?

Component	Assessment	Content
Paper 1 - Physical Geography (40%)	1 hour 10 minutes written exam (70 marks)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• River environments</li><li>• Hazardous environments</li><li>• River environments fieldwork</li></ul>
Paper 2 - Human Geography (60%)	1 hour 45 minutes written exam (105 marks)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Economic activity and energy</li><li>• Urban environments</li><li>• Urban environments fieldwork</li><li>• Global Issues (Development and human welfare)</li></ul>

# GERMAN

**Exam board:** Cambridge IGCSE German  
(9-1) 7159



## What will I study?

This course enables students to communicate effectively in both written and spoken German in a range of situations. Students will learn both practical language, such as buying tickets and asking for directions, as well as vocabulary relating to modern social issues such as environmental problems. There are regular opportunities for students to expand their knowledge of the German-speaking world. The content of each paper is drawn from: Everyday activities; Personal and social life; The world around us; The world of work; The international world.

## What skills will I acquire?

- Listening: understanding spoken German in a variety of contexts
- Reading: comprehension of texts in German on a wide range of topics
- Speaking: conversational and transaction language; expressing opinions in spoken German on both personal and more global topics
- Writing: producing accurate written German

## What extension activities/trips have previously been offered to students?

- Exchange to our partner school Ratsgymnasium in Bielefeld (Fourth Year)
- Annual Filmabend in partnership with local schools
- Microstories and Oxford German Network competitions
- Stephen Spender translation prize and Anthea Bell translation prize

## How will I be examined?

Component	Assessment	Content
Paper 1 (25%) Approximately 50 minutes	Listening 40 marks	Candidates listen to a number of recordings and answer multiple-choice and matching questions.
Paper 2 (25%) (1 hour)	Reading 45 marks	Candidates read a number of texts and answer multiple-choice and matching questions as well as questions requiring short answers.
Paper 3 (25%) (Approximately 10 minutes)	Speaking 40 marks	Candidates complete one role play and conversations on two topics.
Paper 4 (25%) (1 hour)	Writing 45 marks	Candidates complete one form-filling task, one directed writing task and one task in the format of an email/letter or article/blog.

# GREEK



**Exam board:** OCR Classical Greek J292

## What will I study?

Greek language for unseen translation and comprehension. One Verse set text (usually from a play by Euripides) of about 110 lines. Short excerpts from Prose authors or roughly equivalent length, including the background and context of the text.

## What skills will I acquire?

- Reading and appreciating a text in a different language
- Grammatical and linguistic understanding of both Greek and English
- Precision of thought in a multi-step process
- An understanding of how to discuss literary merit and style
- Cultural appreciation of a very different culture

## What extension activities/trips have previously been offered to students?

- Lectures on the set-texts
- Trip to the Ashmolean to see the remains there
- Classical Association reading competition
- Overseas Classics trip

## How will I be examined?

Component	Assessment	Content
01 (Language)	1 hour 30 minute written exam	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Comprehension</li><li>• Unseen</li><li>• Choice between grammatical questions and simple English-to-Greek sentences</li></ul>
03 (Prose set-text)	1 hour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Questions on short parts of the set-text</li><li>• An 8-marker passage analysis</li><li>• A 10-marker short essay-style question on an aspect of the text</li></ul>
05 (Verse set-text)	1 hour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Questions on short parts of the set-text</li><li>• An 8-marker passage analysis</li><li>• A 10-marker short essay-style question on an aspect of the text</li></ul>

# HISTORY



**Exam board:** Edexcel IGCSE History 4HI1

## What will I study?

- Germany: development of dictatorship, 1918–45
- A world divided: superpower relations, 1943–72
- Russia and the Soviet Union, 1905-24
- The Middle East: conflict, crisis and change, 1917–2012

## What skills will I acquire?

- The ability to place current affairs into their (international) context, so as to become a more informed, global, citizen
- Writing coherent arguments that are well evidenced and logically structured
- The ability to work through historical sources
- Improved spelling, punctuation and grammar
- The ability to debate and form coherent arguments through class discussions

## What extension activities/trips have previously been offered to students?

- History trip to Berlin linked to the Germany 1918-45 and Cold War 1943-72 units
- Trip to the Imperial War Museum, London
- Talk in the Amey Theatre by a Holocaust Survivor, Henry Schachter
- History and Politics Society - Middle School Club

## How will I be examined?

Component	Assessment	Content
Paper 1: Superpower relations 1943-1972	Exam, 45 minutes of the 90 minute paper.	This unit covers the Cold War between the USA and USSR from 1943-72.
Paper 1: Germany: development of dictatorship, 1918–45	Exam, 45 minutes of the 90 minute paper.	This unit covers the development of Germany from Weimar democracy in 1918 through to the rise of the Nazis, Nazi regime and World War Two including the Holocaust.
Paper 2: Russia and the Soviet Union, 1905-24	Exam, 45 minutes of the 90 minute paper.	This unit covers the decline of Tsar Nicholas II's regime, the Russian revolutions, study of the Russian Civil War and the death of Lenin.
Paper 2: The Middle East: conflict, crisis and change, 1917–2012	Exam, 45 minutes of the 90 minute paper.	This unit covers the conflicting promises Britain made to Jews and Arabs regarding Palestine and the Middle East in 1918 and the subsequent decline in relations up to 2012.



# LATIN



Exam board: OCR Latin J282

## What will I study?

Latin language for unseen translation and comprehension.

One Verse set text (usually from Vergil's Aeneid) of about 110 lines. Short excerpts from Prose authors or roughly equivalent length, including the background and context of the text.

## What skills will I acquire?

- Reading and appreciating a text in a different language
- Grammatical and linguistic understanding of both Latin and English
- Precision of thought in a multi-step process
- An understanding of how to discuss literary merit and style
- Cultural appreciation of a very different culture

## What extension activities/trips have previously been offered to students?

- Lectures on the set-texts
- Classical Association reading competition
- Overseas Classics trip

## How will I be examined?

Component	Assessment	Content
01 (Language)	1 hour 30 mins written exam	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Comprehension</li><li>• Unseen</li><li>• Choice between grammatical questions and simple English-to-Latin sentences</li></ul>
03 (Prose set-text)	1 hour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Questions on short parts of the set-text</li><li>• An 8-marker passage analysis</li><li>• A 10-marker short essay-style question on an aspect of the text</li></ul>
05 (Verse set-text)	1 hour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Questions on short parts of the set-text</li><li>• An 8-marker passage analysis</li><li>• A 10-marker short essay-style question on an aspect of the text</li></ul>

# MANDARIN

**Exam board:** AQA GCSE Chinese (Mandarin)  
8673



## What will I study?

This is an exciting course that brings language learning to life. You'll discover the vibrant world of Chinese language and culture by exploring themes that resonate with your life and broaden your global perspective. From Identity and Culture to Local, National, International, and Global Areas of Interest, as well as Current and Future Study and Employment, you'll not only share your own experiences but also connect with the rich stories of people and communities where Chinese is spoken.

## What skills will I acquire?

- Communicating and interacting effectively in speech and writing for a variety of purposes
- Understanding and responding to different types of written and spoken language

## What extension activities/trips have previously been offered to students?

- Workshops: Mid-Autumn Festival mooncake making, New Year dumplings, dragon dances, lion dances, calligraphy and Peking opera workshops
- Trips to China, the British Museum and Chinatown
- Mandarin cultural experiences with visual arts
- Online public talks and annual essay competitions on Chinese economy, literature and culture

## How will I be examined?

Component	Assessment	Content
Listening (25%)	Written exam 45 minutes (Higher tier)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Listen to Mandarin texts, with questions and answers in English</li></ul>
Speaking (25%)	Non-exam assessment 10-12 minutes (Higher tier); 12 minutes preparation time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Includes 3 parts: role-play, photo card, and general conversation</li></ul>
Reading (25%)	Written exam 1 hour (Higher tier)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Read Chinese texts, with questions and answers in English</li><li>• Translation from Chinese into English</li></ul>
Writing (25%)	Written exam Up to 1 hour 15 mins (Higher tier)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Two writing tasks, with a choice of two options for each task</li><li>• Translation from English into Chinese</li></ul>

# MATHS

**Exam board:** Edexcel IGCSE Mathematics A  
4MA1



## What will I study?

As well as enabling each student to achieve their potential in examinations, the course is designed to give everyone the opportunity to develop their ability to think through problems, and develop the mathematical skills and understanding which will support work in other scientific subjects, in the social sciences, and for later employment and adult life. You will build on the number, algebra, shape and data work from earlier years, honing your skills and learning new ones too. The ability to apply your knowledge to multi-step questions and problems will be key to success.

## What skills will I acquire?

- Logical and systematic working
- An ability to think through problems
- Develop mathematical understanding that will help in other subjects
- Become more numerate so you can deal confidently with numbers in life

## What extension activities/trips have previously been offered to students?

- Set 1 students are entered for the UKMT Maths Challenges with some progressing to follow on rounds
- Participation in the Maths Feast team competition
- The Cartwright Group meets weekly to tackle problems and puzzles and to gain an interest in different areas of mathematics

## How will I be examined?

Component	Assessment	Content
Paper 1	2 hours, 100 marks	Any content may be examined on either paper. Calculators are allowed throughout: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Number, Algebra, Shape and Space,</li><li>• Graphs, Sequences, Sets, Handling Data</li></ul>
Paper 2	2 hours, 100 marks	

# ADDITIONAL MATHS

**Exam board:** OCR Additional Mathematics (FSMQ, Free standing maths qualification) 6993



## What will I study?

The Additional Maths course is studied by students in set 1. Some go on to take the exam at the end of the Fifth Year, alongside their IGCSE. It is not an optional course but an integral part of the scheme of study for set 1 students. You will be challenged to build upon your IGCSE knowledge, strengthening these skills and extending your knowledge to new areas of maths. The course provides an excellent foundation for studying Further Maths at A Level.

## What skills will I acquire?

- Increased rigour in approach to mathematical study

## What extension activities/trips have previously been offered to students?

- All Additional Maths students are entered for the UKMT Maths Challenges with some progressing to follow on rounds
- The Cartwright Group meets weekly to tackle problems and puzzles and to gain an interest in different areas of mathematics

## How will I be examined?

Component	Assessment	Content
Additional Maths	2 hour paper, 100 marks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Algebra</li><li>• Coordinate Geometry</li><li>• Trigonometry</li><li>• Selections (Permutations and Combinations)</li><li>• Exponentials and Logarithms</li><li>• Numerical Methods</li><li>• Calculus</li></ul>



# MUSIC



**Exam board:** Edexcel 1MUO

## What will I study?

**Performance:** Solo performance and Ensemble performance.

**Composition:** Free composition and composition in response to a brief.

**Appraising and Listening:** Study of musical elements, contexts and language. Four areas of study including Instrumental Music 1700-1820, Vocal Music, Music for Stage and Screen and Fusions.

## What skills will I acquire?

- Performance skills
- Develop technical control, expression and interpretation of performance
- Composing and developing musical ideas across two compositions
- Listening, appraising and written skills will be developed

## What extension activities/trips have previously been offered to students?

- Concert trip once a year
- Composition masterclasses each term
- Performance opportunities alongside masterclass provision for specific instruments
- Wide ensemble opportunities ensure every student joins at least one ensemble
- Advanced theory grades on offer to relevant students

## How will I be examined?

Component	Assessment	Content
Performance (30%)	Internally recorded and assessed; externally moderated	Two recordings (at least 4 minutes in total) to be completed in the Fifth Year.
Composition (30%)	Internally assessed before externally moderated	Two compositions (3 minutes combined) - one composed to a brief; one of choice.
Listening and Appraising (40%)	Paper is comprised of a series of listening questions, both seen and unseen, short dictation exercise and comparative essay	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Instrumental - Bach Brandenburg <i>Concerto No. 5</i> and Beethoven <i>Pathetique Sonata</i></li> <li>• Vocal Music - Purcell's <i>Aria Music for a While</i> and Queen's <i>Killer Queen</i></li> <li>• Music for Stage and Screen - Wicked's <i>Defying Gravity</i> and Star Wars' <i>Rebel Blockade Theme</i></li> <li>• Fusions - <i>Samba em prelude</i>, Esperanza Spalding and <i>Release by Afro Celt</i></li> </ul>

# PHYSICS

**Exam board:** Edexcel IGCSE Physics (4PH1)



## What will I study?

Students will explore the fascinating world of physics, from the forces that shape our universe to the energy that powers our daily lives. Students will gain a deeper understanding of key concepts like motion, electricity, waves, and energy transfer. The course is designed to develop both practical skills and theoretical knowledge, providing a solid foundation for further studies in science and engineering.

## What skills will I acquire?

- Problem solving
- Applying mathematical reasoning in context
- Graphing skills
- Practical techniques and investigative techniques
- Analysis, interpretation and evaluation of data

## What extension activities/trips have previously been offered to students?

- Residential trip to Munich
- BPhO Physics challenges
- Trips to Diamond Light Source and Culham Fusion Centre
- Science Live! lectures

## How will I be examined?

Component	Assessment	Content
Paper 1 (61.1%)	2 hour written exam	Questions may come from any of these topic areas: forces and motion; electricity; waves; energy resources and energy transfers; solids, liquids and gases; magnetism and electromagnetism; radioactivity and particles; Astrophysics.
Paper 2 (38.9%)	1 hr 15 min written exam	Questions may come from any of these topic areas: moments; momentum; static charge; sound; energy resources; changes of state; electromagnets and transformers; cosmology.

# PRODUCT DESIGN & ENGINEERING



**Exam board:** AQA - Design & Technology (9-1) 8552

## What will I study?

The course encourages students to develop and sustain their own innovation, creativity and product design capability. It will suit those who are problem solvers, enjoy challenges and working with materials and machinery, as well as students who have the motivation to work consistently throughout the design and manufacture of their coursework piece. Students will need excellent time management skills to excel in the coursework and there is also a maths content that is assessed in the written paper.

## What skills will I acquire?

- Project management
- Creative problem solving skills
- An awareness of material properties
- The ability to realise ideas in 3D dimensions
- Confidence and competency in a practical environment
- Digital design skills : CAD and Rapid Prototyping

## What extension activities/trips have previously been offered to students?

- Appropriate students are supported through the application process for the Arkwright Scholarship
- The department is always accessible for students to pursue their own practical development and work through their NEA task

## How will I be examined?

Component	Assessment	Content
Non-examined assessment unit	50% of the GCSE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students design, model and manufacture a physical 3D prototype from a range of AQA set contexts</li> <li>• Students create a supporting design folio containing research, generation of ideas, design development, and manufacturing specification with ongoing analysis and evaluation of their work</li> </ul>
Exam	50% of the GCSE comprising of a written examination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Technical principles</li> <li>• Specialist technical principles</li> <li>• Designing and making principles</li> </ul>

# PHILOSOPHY & THEOLOGY (RS)



**Exam board:** Edexcel Religious Studies B  
'Beliefs in action' 1RB0

## What will I study?

The course gives students the opportunity to apply a wide range of concepts, allowing them to confidently analyse, contextualise and interpret religious thought and other world views they study. Our areas of focus are key questions surrounding ethics, philosophy and theology, looked at through the lense of both religious traditions and secularism. The topics we study include, but are not limited to, medical ethics, crime and punishment, divergent views on life after death and the way in which religious people live their lives. Students will develop knowledge and understanding of Christianity in the 21st century alongside either Judaism or Islam, enabling them to understand and articulate their own and others' beliefs, values and commitments.

## What skills will I acquire?

- Critical thinking
- Appreciation of divergent perspectives
- Literacy skills
- Skills of analysis and integration
- The ability to work with abstract ideas
- Research skills
- Appreciation of the impact of religion and secularism on the world today

## What extension activities/trips have previously been offered to students?

- Trips to Istanbul and India
- Lectures from experts in their field (The Edmund Society)

## How will I be examined?

Component	Assessment	Content
1RB0/1	Exam	Religion and ethics
1RB0/2	Exam	Religion, peace and conflict



# SPANISH

**Exam board:** Cambridge IGCSE Spanish (9-1)  
7160



## What will I study?

The focus of the IGCSE course is on authentic communication and grammatical accuracy. Students learn how to speak with confidence about their own lives and experiences as well as about more general social issues such as travel and environment. There are also opportunities to go beyond the course content. The content of each paper is drawn from five topic areas: Everyday activities; Personal and social life; The world around us; The world of work; The international world.

## What skills will I acquire?

- Listening (decoding spoken Spanish on a variety of the topics covered)
- Reading (decoding written Spanish on a variety of the topics covered)
- Speaking (role play followed by two conversations on the topics covered)
- Writing (a short form followed by a 90 word and 140 word writing task)

## What extension activities/trips have previously been offered to students?

- IGCSE study trip to Malaga or Seville
- Film and tapas evenings
- Microstories competition
- Stephen Spender translation prize
- Anthea Bell translation prize

## How will I be examined?

Component	Assessment	Content
Paper 1 (Approximately 50 minutes)	Listening (25%) 40 marks	Candidates listen to a number of recordings and answer multiple-choice and matching questions.
Paper 2 (1 hour)	Reading (25%) 45 marks	Candidates read a number of texts and answer multiple-choice and matching questions as well as questions requiring short answers.
Paper 3 (Approx 10 minutes)	Speaking (25%) 40 marks	Candidates complete one role play and conversations on two topics.
Paper 4 (1 hour)	Writing (25%) 45 marks	Candidates complete one form-filling task, one short directed writing task and one longer task in the format of an email/letter or article/blog.



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ABINGDON

**Co-ed from 2026**

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Last updated: February 2025