



# AYLESBURY GRAMMAR SCHOOL

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**GCSE OPTIONS**

**2022 - 2024**

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# SECTION

A

# GENERAL INFORMATION

## GCSE

This is a key period in your school career. In September this year, you will be starting a two-year course leading to GCSE examinations. This booklet will help you to decide your choice of subjects for GCSE.

In Years 10 & 11 (Key Stage 4), you will study a package of compulsory core subjects plus four options. One of these four options will be a Modern Foreign Language which you currently study (French, Spanish or German)

At Aylesbury Grammar School you are offered as much choice as possible, so that you can continue to study subjects you enjoy and may wish to consider taking in the Sixth Form.

## COMPULSORY SUBJECTS

All students will study the following **compulsory** subjects:

GCSE	SUBJECT	PERIODS PER FORTNIGHT
	English (Language and Literature)	7
	Mathematics (including Statistics)	6
	Biology	4
	Chemistry	4
	Physics	4
<b>NON - EXAM</b>	PE and Games	4
	Personal, Social and Health Education	1

### Notes:

1. All students are required to choose one modern language from those studied at Key Stage 3. Please read carefully the relevant sections of this booklet for further details. Keen linguists may select an additional language as an optional subject.
2. GCSE Physical Education may be chosen as an optional subject in addition to non-exam PE and Games.
3. PSHE is delivered in tutor groups.

## OPTIONAL SUBJECTS

These are the subjects where **you** choose what you want to study. Each is studied on 5 periods per fortnight:

Ancient History	Food Preparation and Nutrition	Latin
Art	French	Music
Business	Geography	Physical Education
Computing	Geology	Religious Studies
Drama	German	Spanish
Engineering	History	

## KEEPING OPTIONS OPEN

One of the things to consider in making choices for GCSE is whether you are keeping options open for the Sixth Form and university.

To study for 'A' level in the following subjects you **must** have taken GCSE:

Art	Computing	Design and Technology (Engineering)	French	Geography
German	History	Latin	Music	Spanish

Some 'A' level subjects do **not** require you to have studied them at GCSE:

Ancient History	Business	Economics
Physical Education	Religious Studies/ Philosophy	Theatre Studies (Drama)

## WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

Before making your choices we urge you to talk things through with your parents and read the options booklet very carefully. We have included a section on Frequently Asked Questions which you may find helpful!

These choices are important so do not hesitate to talk to your tutor and your subject teachers. If you need further advice, you may also wish to speak to:

Mrs L Wilson (Head of Year 9) [lwilson@ags.bucks.sch.uk](mailto:lwilson@ags.bucks.sch.uk)

Mr G Dallas (Assistant Headteacher, Head of Middle School) [gdallas@ags.bucks.sch.uk](mailto:gdallas@ags.bucks.sch.uk)

Dr K J Smith (Assistant Headteacher, Head of Upper School) [ksmith@ags.bucks.sch.uk](mailto:ksmith@ags.bucks.sch.uk)

You will need to make your choices and complete the **option choices form, details of which are on the last page of this booklet** by the end of **Friday 11<sup>th</sup> February**. If you do not do this then you will be less likely to get your first choice of subjects as the teaching sets may be over-subscribed. Early submission of options will provide no greater chance of getting preferred choices so it is worth taking time over the decision.

## TIMETABLE THEFOR GCSE OPTIONS PROCESS

January 2022	Options Booklet issued.
Wednesday 19 January 2022	Year 9 Parents Information Evening which will include details regarding GCSE option choices
Tuesday 25 January 2022	Year 9 Consultation Evening – opportunity for parents/students to discuss options with teaching staff.
Friday 11 February 2022	Deadline for return of options choices form.
March 2022	Individual discussions and option changes as necessary.
By the end of the Spring Term	Confirmation of option choices allocated.

# SECTION

**B**

# ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

## OVERVIEW

**English Language:** there are no controlled assessments – both exams will be in the summer of Year 11

**Unit 1:** fiction and imaginative writing (1 hour 45 minutes) 40%

**Unit 2:** non-fiction and transactional writing (2 hours and 5 minutes) 60%

Spoken Language ('speaking and listening') is still compulsory, but students are given a separate level. It does **NOT** form part of the GCSE.

**English Literature** there are no controlled assessments – both exams will be in the summer of Year 11

**Unit 1:** Shakespeare and post-1914 literature (1 hour 45 minutes) 50%

**Unit 2:** 19<sup>th</sup>-century novel and poetry since 1789 (2hours 15 minutes) 50%

## DETAILS

### Head of Department

Mr A Skinner

### Specification

1 EN0 (Language);  
1 ET0 (Literature)

### Examination Board

Edexcel

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# MATHEMATICS

## OVERVIEW

**Exam Board:** **EDEXCEL 1MA1 GCSE Mathematics (taken by all students in Year 11)**  
**EDEXCEL ST01 GCSE Statistics (taken by all students in Year 10)**  
**OCR 6993 Additional Mathematics FSMQ (Students in top sets only – Year 11)**

**Controlled Assessment:** None for any of the above courses.

All sets follow a Higher Tier GCSE Maths course, with three exams at the end of Year 11. The course provides a broad basis of 'everyday' mathematics, while also preparing the way for further study at A level. Students will cover topics in number, algebra, ratio, geometry, statistics and probability. The course has an emphasis on problem solving and links between topics, meaning that students require a rich understanding of topics covered.

Alongside their study of GCSE Maths in year 10, all students will also prepare for a GCSE in Statistics. While overlapping significantly with topics from the Maths GCSE, this additional course provides students with a much deeper knowledge of statistics, which can be useful in many careers. It is also a useful foundation in Applied Maths for the many who will opt to continue with Maths in the Sixth Form. This additional qualification is assessed through two exams at the end of year 10.

Additional Maths FSMQ is an extra qualification targeted at students in our top sets only. This Free-Standing Maths Qualification overlaps in part with grade 8 and 9 topics at GCSE, whilst also stretching the most able by giving them an early taste of 'A level' type work.

A variety of evidence is used to allocate students to appropriate sets for Year 10. The aim behind our setting strategy and the different routes taken in KS4, is to ensure that all students remain suitably challenged and maximise their progress and performance. This has proved a very effective approach for students of all abilities and parental support, whichever set students find themselves in, is appreciated.

The option of future study in Mathematics and Further Mathematics at the Sixth Form remains open to students in ALL sets.

## DETAILS

**Head of Department**  
Mr B R Disley

**Specification**  
See above

**Examination Board**  
Edexcel/OCR

# BIOLOGY

## OVERVIEW

For a copy of the specification please visit:

<http://www.ocr.org.uk/qualifications/gcse-gateway-science-suite-biology-a-j247-from-2016/>

Students sit two written examinations, all at the end of Year 11. These are:

Paper 3: Testing topics B1 – B3 (1 hour & 45 minutes)

Paper 6: Testing topics B4 – B6 & assumed knowledge of B1 – B3 (1 hour & 45 minutes)

Both examination papers consist of multiple choice questions, short answer styles (practical, mathematical, synoptic and structured questions) and one extended 6 mark level of response question.

There is neither formally assessed coursework nor any Controlled Assessment Tasks.

Practical work is carried out throughout Years 9, 10 and 11. There are eight practical assessment groups (PAGs.) Knowledge of PAGs (practical methods, techniques and skills in the analysis and evaluation of results) are tested in both papers.

## DETAILS

### Head of Department

Mr M T Pilkington

### Specification

Gateway Biology A (9-1) J247

### Examination Board

OCR

# CHEMISTRY

## OVERVIEW

For a copy of the specification please visit:

<http://www.ocr.org.uk/qualifications/gcse-gateway-science-suite-chemistry-a-j248-from-2016/>

Students sit two written examinations, both at the end of Year 11 and each 1 hour and 45 minutes.

There is no formally assessed coursework, nor any Controlled Assessment Tasks.

Practical work is carried out throughout Years 10 and 11. Knowledge of practical methods and techniques and skills in the analysis of results are tested in the written papers.

The course starts whilst students are in Year 9.

## DETAILS

### Head of Department

Dr C J Gardener

### Specification

Gateway Chemistry A (9-1) J248

### Examination Board

OCR

# PHYSICS

## OVERVIEW

For a copy of the specification please visit:

<http://www.ocr.org.uk/qualifications/gcse-gateway-science-suite-physics-a-j249-from-2016/>

Students sit two written examinations, both at the end of Year 11 and each 1 hour and 45 minutes.

There is no formally assessed coursework, nor any Controlled Assessment Tasks.

Practical work is carried out throughout Years 9, 10 and 11. Knowledge of practical methods and techniques and skills in the analysis of results are tested in the written papers.

The course starts at the beginning of Year 9.

## DETAILS

### Head of Department

Mr J P Kemp

### Specification

Gateway Physics A (9-1) J249

### Examination Board

OCR

# SECTION

C

# ANCIENT HISTORY

## OVERVIEW

This course will appeal to anyone interested in History and enjoyed the Classical Studies course in Year 7. NO KNOWLEDGE OF LATIN OR GREEK is required, however the course provides an excellent complement to both Latin and History GCSE. The course covers international politics, war and the strategy of wars, and how civilisations were created and destroyed, and an in-depth study of one particular ancient society. Students will be taught how to analyse and evaluate original source material.

There are two exams.

### **J198/01 - Greece and Persia**

The Persian Empire, 559–465 BC: This is a compulsory period study focusing on the Persian Empire under Cyrus the Great, Cambyses II, Darius I and Xerxes (27.5%) and a depth study on Alexander the Great, 356–323 BC (22.5%). The Persian Empire and its place as the first global superpower has fascinated the world for millennia, students will have the opportunity to learn about how the empire came into being and how it 'fell' both through the failed stand by the Spartans at Thermopylae, and finally through the conquests of a young Alexander the Great.

### **J198/02 - Rome and its neighbours**

The foundations of Rome: from kingship to republic, 753–440 BC: This is a compulsory longer period study focusing on the kings of Rome and the early Roman Republic, with an emphasis on the most exciting and interesting events and characters. (27.5%) and a depth study on Hannibal and the Second Punic War, 218– 201 BC (22.5%). Students will look at the mythical foundation of Rome, Romulus and Remus and the wolf, right up to killing of Tarquin the Proud and the end of the kings, following this they will study the North African general Hannibal and how he almost destroyed Rome itself.

## DETAILS

### **Head of Department**

Miss S E Holliday

### **Specification**

J198

### **Examination Board**

OCR

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# ART

## OVERVIEW

The OCR GCSE Art and Design – Fine Art (J171) has considerable scope for students to focus on their individual strengths and interests but they will be expected to open-minded enough to experiment and try new things. The course is made up of two components. Both components are essentially made up of practical responses and practical study.

**Component 01** has a 60 % weighting – this is the portfolio where you will develop, explore and record your ideas. The initial stages of the course consists of a series of tasks that are aimed at developing the skills and ways of thinking that will be needed during the ‘controlled coursework’ phase of component 1. Observations skills, imaginative techniques, composition and the ability to analyse and learn from the work of other artists are essential parts of the course.

Following these initial stages students will begin formal completion of ‘controlled coursework’ during the summer term of Year 10 which runs through until the end of January in Year 11 – up to 45 hours class time in total. During this time, homework tasks will support the coursework but only work carried out in class can be marked and contribute towards the final coursework grade. Ambition, independence and good time management will be essential skills because students have to fully research, develop and make their own piece of work within this period.

**Component 02** has a 40% weighting – this is an externally set task provided by the Board. Students will begin work on this component as soon as the ‘controlled coursework’ period is complete. The early release paper provides a choice of starting points either visual or written to develop a response using the skills, knowledge and understanding gained through the course. A preparation period of approximately 8 weeks is provided which is followed by a 10 hour period under exam conditions in which students complete their final piece.

Specification details can be found at:

<http://www.ocr.org.uk/qualifications/gcse-art-and-design-j170-j176-from-2016/>

## DETAILS

### Head of Department

Mrs L M Tangi

### Specification

J171

### Examination Board

OCR

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# BUSINESS

## OVERVIEW

OCR's specification states "This qualification equips pupils with the skills and confidence to explore how different business situations affect business decisions. It is a well-rounded introduction to the subject. The qualification will encourage students to make informed choices about a wide range of further learning opportunities and career pathways as well as develop life skills that enable them to become financially and commercially aware."

This is a GCSE which involves a wide range of activities; it is a "hands on" course that will mean students will find themselves participating in real world business decisions via use of case studies, personal research and practical presentations. As such it is for those students who have a genuine interest in the business world and is not recommended for those unprepared to commit to the workload involved.

The GCSE deals with all of the major functions of business: Marketing, Production, Accounting, Finance and Human Resources. The course looks at how and why business decisions are made in both small and large businesses. The course incorporates a number of key skills: problem solving, numeracy and communication. A lot of time is spent in discussion of how to manage a particular business problem so *students considering taking the GCSE must be prepared to 'speak up' and also not be afraid to use numbers*. Calculations are an important part of business decision making.

There are two examinations in the GCSE; unseen examination papers in the standard question and answer format. There is no coursework (controlled assessment).

Business is a very popular option which has seen many students achieve high grades but is not a GCSE to take if you are unwilling to show initiative and effort. If it is not selected at GCSE level it is still possible to take this subject at Advanced level. Whilst not essential it may also be a good option if you are considering taking Economics at A Level.

## DETAILS

### Head of Department

Mr G A Davey

### Specification

J204

### Examination Board

OCR

# COMPUTER SCIENCE

## OVERVIEW

As a subject Computer Science has aspects in common with Maths, Chemistry, Physics, Biology and Languages. You need to develop your capabilities to solve problems (like Maths), in the contexts of programming a project and answering examination questions. There is a range of theory to understand and apply in the context of written paper exam questions (like any science). As in learning a language you need to regularly apply yourself to programming tasks in order to develop the fluency you'll need for your programming project, competitive programming, and for the exams at the end of two years.

### Exams

We use the AQA specification. There are two end of qualification exams (worth 50% each). The main areas covered in the exams include:

Programming	Algorithms (program design)	Data representation
Computer systems	Computer networks	Computer security
Ethical, legal and environmental impacts of digital technology		

As with the theory so also with the practical. We develop the programming and computational thinking skills for GCSE and beyond. Frequent coding and exam question practice helps students to apply knowledge of computer science principles as you design, program, and evaluate problem solving computer systems.

### Programming and Competitive Programming

We learn to program with Python, a language that's used in millions of smart-phones, tablets and PCs. You'll learn about design, algorithms, testing and debugging, and use many of the tools you'll need to produce quality code. AGS students will already have experience programming from their Key Stage 3 courses. In addition, students aspiring to study Computer Science beyond GCSE are expected to develop fluency with a second text based programming language, C++, for which we provide the necessary resources and introduction to competitive programming.

Students who make exceptional progress with programming challenges may be invited to enter the British Informatics (aka Computer Science) Olympiad in year 11.

### Other benefits of Computer Science at AGS

- We are developing links with local high-tech companies and universities.
- We foster and develop interests in robotics and other aspects of Computer Science leading developments worldwide.

## DETAILS

**Head of Department**  
Mr S Goff

**Specification**  
8525

**Examination Board**  
AQA

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# DRAMA

## OVERVIEW

GCSE drama is a practical course that allows pupils to develop advance performance and technical theatre skills. Drama encourages critical thinking, team skills, problem solving and increases confidence.

The course is assessed by two practical coursework tasks (60%) and a written exam (40%). The GCSE drama course includes the study of a set text (The Tempest) and reviews of live theatre performances.

For further specific information and questions please contact the Director of Drama, Mr Warner, via e-mail [rwarner@ags.bucks.sch.uk](mailto:rwarner@ags.bucks.sch.uk)

## DETAILS

**Head of Department**

Mr R J Warner

**Specification**

601/8420/6

**Examination Board**

EDUQAS

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# ENGINEERING

## OVERVIEW

### Engineering (AQA 8852)

Engineering is an increasingly innovative and exciting area to work in. It affects every aspect of modern life – from skyscrapers to smart phones, cars and graphic products. This new GCSE introduces you to a host of new technologies, helping you to gain practical skills and understanding to inspire a lifelong interest in engineering. It will particularly appeal to those who enjoy being creative, with an affinity for drawing, design, mathematics and problem solving. The course includes a series of mini practical projects, the development of knowledge and understanding and a coursework-based project. The subject is assessed at the end of Year 11 as follows:

Exam Paper: 2 hours (120 marks), 60% of GCSE

Coursework: Brief set by AQA in June of year of study (80 marks), 40% of GCSE

Further information can be obtained from the department or the examination boards' website: [www.aqa.org.uk](http://www.aqa.org.uk)

On successful completion of your GCSE you may continue your studies of Design Technology through the A Level Product Design course offered by the Department. Studying Design and Technology at A Level can lead to career opportunities in advertising, architecture, industrial design, illustration, engineering, and designing and manufacturing.

## DETAILS

Head of Department	Specification	Examination Board
Mr C Dimelow	8852	AQA

# FOOD PREPARATION AND NUTRITION

## OVERVIEW

This GCSE course is for those who want to develop their Food knowledge and cooking skills. The course is composed of 7 units as follows:

<b>Food preparation skill</b>	A group of 12 skills will be taught throughout year 10 using practical activities to support students learning
<b>Food, Nutrition and Health</b>	Exploring the function and the role of nutrients and the relationship between diet and health
<b>Food science</b>	Explore the scientific side of ingredients and cooking, spending time understanding the functional and chemical properties of food
<b>Food safety</b>	Exploring the need for good hygiene practices to prevent food poisoning
<b>Food choice</b>	Consumers choose foods and diets for a variety of different reasons. Some of these will be investigated and applied to the practical aspect of this course
<b>Food provenance</b>	Environmental impact and sustainability of foods will be explored
<b>Food preparation and cooking techniques</b>	This will be assessed through the non-exam assessment (NEA) element of the specification

### How is the course assessed?

**Written Exam:** this is a 105 minute exam assessing the theory aspect of the course and is worth 50% of the final overall mark

**Non-Examination Assessment (NEA):** this consist of two parts:

**Task 1: Food Investigation** set annually by the exam board a written or electronic report (1,500–2,000 words) including photographic evidence of the practical investigation. That will assess your understanding of the working characteristics, functional and chemical properties of ingredients 30 marks – 15%

**Task 2: Food Preparation Assessment** Students' knowledge, skills and understanding in relation to the planning, preparation, cooking, presentation of food and application of nutrition related to the chosen task. Students will prepare, cook, and present a final menu of three dishes within a single period of three hours, planning in advance how this will be achieved. It will be assessed by Written or electronic portfolio including photographic evidence of the three final dishes must be included. 70 Marks – 35%

## DETAILS

**Head of Department**  
Mrs M Wilkinson

**Specification**  
8585

**Examination Board**  
AQA

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# FRENCH

## OVERVIEW

It is essential in today's world that you have a good grasp of **at least** one Modern Foreign Language at GCSE level. The GCSE course in French builds on the skills and grammatical understanding you will have developed in Key Stage 3.

This is a linear qualification with papers in Listening (25%), Reading (25%), Speaking (25%) and Writing (25%). Students must sit all four at either Higher or Foundation level, not a mixture of the two. Higher tier grades range from 4 to 9, whilst Foundation tier grades range from 1 to 5.

### THEMES

<b>IDENTITY AND CULTURE</b>	<b>LOCAL, NATIONAL, INTERNATIONAL, AND GLOBAL AREAS OF INTEREST</b>	<b>CURRENT AND FUTURE STUDY AND EMPLOYMENT</b>
Me, my family and friends	Home, town, neighbourhood and region	My studies
Technology in everyday life	Social issues	Life at school
Free time	Global issues	Post 16 education
Customs and festivals in French-speaking countries/communities	Travel and tourism	Jobs, career choices and ambitions

### How is this knowledge assessed?

**Listening** - In the Listening Exam students will hear short items such as announcements, short conversations, instructions, news bulletins and telephone messages from suitable adapted authentic sources and answer questions on them.

**Reading** - The Reading Exam will consist of a variety of longer and shorter written texts from items such as brochures, guides, newspapers, websites, magazines and literary texts. There will also be a short translation task from French into English

**Speaking** - The Speaking Exam will consist of a short two-minute rôle play based on a stimulus card, a discussion of one of the GCSE topics prompted by a photo card (two minutes at Foundation Level and three minutes at Higher Level) and then a general conversation on two further GCSE topics (about four minutes at Foundation Level and about 6 minutes at Higher Level)

**Writing** - At Foundation Level students will write a message, a short paragraph and a 90-word structured essay. They will translate short phrases from English into French. At Higher Level students will write two essays: a 90-word structured task and a more open-ended 150-word task. They will translate a short text from English into French.

## DETAILS

**Head of Department**  
Mr T J Crapper

**Specification**  
8658

**Examination Board**  
AQA

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# GEOGRAPHY

## OVERVIEW

**Controlled Assessment:** 0% (There is no coursework)

“Geography is the subject which holds the key to our future” Michael Palin.

Geography is a subject well regarded by employers for the skills developed, namely problem solving, using initiative, decision making and team work. Geography ranks third among the academic disciplines for the employability of graduates. With Geography sitting between economic, historical and scientific subjects, it is perfectly placed to offer the broad and practical approach to find the solutions to the world’s problems. It is this broadness that ensures geography fits in with both scientific and humanities based subjects.

### Unit 1: Physical Geography

Written Paper – 1 hour 30 mins – 35% of marks

This covers the following topics: river landscapes, glaciated landscapes, ecosystems, hot deserts and natural hazards. Assessment – This unit is assessed through a mixture of short and long answer responses.

### Unit 2: Human Geography

Written Paper – 1 hour 30 mins – 35% of marks

This covers the following topics: world economic development, resource management, urban issues and energy problems. This unit is assessed through a mixture of short and long answer responses.

### Unit 3. Geographical Skills

Written Paper – 1 hour paper – 30% of marks. (NO COURSEWORK)

Students will receive an information booklet before the exams about a geographic issue which they must answer questions about in the exam. Students will also work in teams completing fieldwork based on the topic of tourism. It is anticipated this will involve completing a residential fieldtrip to the Lake District. They will then be asked questions in the exam about their fieldwork. The exam will also test their Geographical skills such as map reading & graph interpretation.

## DETAILS

**Head of Department**  
Mr M Corby

**Specification**  
8035 (Geography A)

**Examination Board**  
AQA

# GEOLOGY

## OVERVIEW

### WJEC Eduqas GCSE (9-1) in GEOLOGY

Geology GCSE is an interesting course aimed at students who want to understand the environment which they see around them and who are prepared to study a new subject and engage in some additional independent work. It offers unique insights into the history of the planet using the principle 'the present is the key to the past' and provides understanding of management of resources now and in the future. It allies comfortably with other sciences and is very well received by all universities. Study in the field is an important element of the course and includes three essential fieldtrips over the two years, to local quarries, to Bradgate Park in Leicestershire and to the Jurassic Coast in Dorset.

**Component 1 (50% of the course):** Geological Principles On-screen examination: 1 hour 15 minutes 50% of qualification An on-screen assessment consisting of data and stimulus response questions.

**Component 2 (50% of the course):** Investigative Geology Written examination: 1 hour 30 minutes 50% of qualification A written assessment consisting of data and stimulus response questions. This assessment requires short, structured and extended writing answers to investigate the geology of an area shown on a simplified geological map.

You will study four different topic areas including:

**Key Idea 1** covers how rock exposures contain evidence of formation and deformation. This includes;

Mineral	Metamorphic rocks and processes
Igneous rocks and processes	Deformational structures
Sedimentary rocks and their fossil content	

**Key Idea 2** covers the major concepts and techniques that underpin our current understanding of the Earth and its history. This includes;

The rock cycle	Global climate and sea level change
Plate tectonics	The origin and development of life on Earth
Geographical principles	

**Key Idea 3** looks in depth at comparisons of the Earth with other planetary bodies within the Solar System provide evidence for the origin and evolution of both.

**Key Idea 4** covers how Humans interact with the Earth and geological hazards. This includes;

Earth hazards and their mitigation	Earth resources and engineering
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## DETAILS

### Head of Department

Mr M J Jones

### Specification

GCSE (9-1)

### Examination Board

WJEC

# GERMAN

## OVERVIEW

It is essential in today's world that you have a good grasp of **at least** one Modern Foreign Language at GCSE level. The GCSE course in German builds on the skills and grammatical understanding you will have developed in Key Stage 3.

This is a linear qualification with papers in Listening (25%), Reading (25%), Speaking (25%) and Writing (25%). Students must sit all four at either Higher or Foundation level, not a mixture of the two. Higher tier grades range from 4 to 9, whilst Foundation tier grades range from 1 to 5.

### THEMES

IDENTITY AND CULTURE	LOCAL, NATIONAL, INTERNATIONAL, AND GLOBAL AREAS OF INTEREST	CURRENT AND FUTURE STUDY AND EMPLOYMENT
Me, my family and friends	Home, town, neighbourhood and region	My studies
Technology in everyday life	Social issues	Life at school
Free time	Global issues	Post 16 education
Customs and festivals in French-speaking countries/communities	Travel and tourism	Jobs, career choices and ambitions

### How is this knowledge assessed?

**Listening** - In the Listening Exam students will hear short items such as announcements, short conversations, instructions, news bulletins and telephone messages from suitable adapted authentic sources and answer questions on them.

**Reading** - The Reading Exam will consist of a variety of longer and shorter written texts from items such as brochures, guides, newspapers, websites, magazines and literary texts. There will also be a short translation task from German into English

**Speaking** - The Speaking Exam will consist of a short two-minute role play based on a stimulus card, a discussion of one of the GCSE topics prompted by a photo card (two minutes at Foundation Level and three minutes at Higher Level) and then a general conversation on two further GCSE topics (about four minutes at Foundation Level and about 6 minutes at Higher Level)

**Writing** - At Foundation Level students will write a message, a short paragraph and a 90-word structured essay. They will translate short phrases from English into German. At Higher Level students will write two essays: a 90-word structured task and a more open-ended 150-word task. They will translate a short text from English into German.

## DETAILS

**Head of Department**  
Mr R E Sloan

**Specification**  
8668

**Examination Board**  
AQA

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# HISTORY

## OVERVIEW

The course is divided into 4 separate units, each of which is examined by a terminal exam. There are no Controlled Assessments in the new syllabus.

We intend to offer the following options at GCSE:

- The Elizabethan Age, 1558-1603
- The USA: A Nation of Contrasts, 1910-1929
- The Development of Germany, 1919-1991
- The Development of Warfare, c500 to the present day

'As part of Unit 4 students are required to study a site of historical interest. Examples of recent historical sites include London during the Blitz, Kenilworth Castle and Dover Castle.

Educational visits are an important part of learning about History beyond the classroom. In order to further develop our students' interest and understanding of the development of warfare, in recent years we have visited the RAF Museum at Hendon, the Imperial War Museum and HMS Belfast.

We believe that these exciting range of new courses will enable students to build on their interests in History, develop their historical skills and the courses will also provide a firm foundation for those students who wish to continue the subject to A Level.

If you require any further information about the GCSE History course, you should speak to Mr Barrie or your History teacher.

## DETAILS

### Head of Department

Mr J M Barrie

### Specification

C100QS

### Examination Board

EDUQAS

### Follow us on Twitter

@AHSHistory\_Dept

# LATIN

## OVERVIEW

This course will appeal to anyone who enjoys the study of Latin and exploring an ancient culture through its language and literature. It will develop language skills in every area and expand your analytical and problem solving skills. Latin continues to be one of the most valued GCSEs and A Levels by universities for all subjects. It provides an excellent complement to the study of Modern Foreign Languages and English Literature, as well as testing logic skills. You will read stories based on the myths, legends and history of Rome in Years 10 and 11 to develop your grammar and vocabulary further, and you will also read original Latin literature and investigate literary techniques. All exams are taken at the end of Year 11.

### *Unit J282/01: Latin Language (50%)*

You will develop your language skills further from those in Years 8 and 9, and translate passages into English. These are based around the topics of Myths and Roman history. You will continue to be expected to be able to make derivations and you will also develop your English into Latin skills.

### *Unit J282/03: Latin Prose Literature B (25%)*

You will study a selection from works by Apuleius and Cicero, on witchcraft and the morality of personal gain.

### *Unit J282/05 Latin Verse Literature B (25%)*

You will study a section of Virgil's Aeneid Book VI, examining the journey of the hero Aeneas into the underworld, a key part in the most famous Roman epic and the basis for many great works of European literature, such as Dante's Inferno and Milton's Paradise Lost.

## DETAILS

### **Head of Department**

Miss S E Holliday

### **Specification**

J282

### **Examination Board**

OCR

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# MUSIC

## OVERVIEW

**Coursework:** 60% (Performing and Composing)

The exam is divided into three parts – listening (40%), performing (30%) and composing (30%). The Listening Paper is a series of questions on a dozen or so short extracts of music. For the Performing Paper students must play one solo piece ideally of Grade 4 standard or above, and one duet, trio or ensemble piece (eg a piano duet, a guitar duet or a piece for an instrument with piano accompaniment). For the Composing Paper students must submit two original pieces; which needs to be scored out and recorded onto CD.

It is a requirement that students play an instrument for GCSE Music and that they take an active part in ensemble playing / singing – either inside school or outside of school. Students need to be aware of a wide variety of musical styles and be happy listening to and studying music from the Baroque period through to the Beatles as well as more modern pop music. Good candidates will have achieved Grade II or above in the Theory of Music and Grade III or above on their instrument before starting Year 10.

## DETAILS

**Head of Department**

Mr D C Nathan

**Specification**

J536

**Examination Board**

OCR

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# PHYSICAL EDUCATION

## OVERVIEW

**TWO** written exam papers.

**ONE** practical component (controlled assessment). In this component you will be assessed in **THREE** practical performances (i.e. **THREE** sports).

**ONE** written analysis tasks (AEP).

There will be two written papers, each with a 30% weighting, both taken in Year 11. The practical assessment will consist of practical performance and analysing and evaluating performance (AEP weighting 40%). A good level of practical performance is essential in at least 3 practical areas of physical education (team or individual games, swimming, athletics, gymnastics, etc). The course forms a good basis for continuing to study Physical Education at AS and A2 level.

## DETAILS

### Head of Department

Mr C W Duggan

### Specification

J587

### Examination Board

OCR

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@AGSSportandPE

# RELIGIOUS STUDIES

## OVERVIEW

Religious Studies is an increasingly popular option at AGS. Students are already familiar with the evaluative questions that form the basis of the examination and will have already studied the basics of Buddhist and Christian traditions in KS3 lessons. The aims of the GCSE Religious Studies course are to:

- 1) develop our knowledge and understanding of religious and non-religious beliefs, and to develop our ability to construct well-argued, well-informed, balanced and structured written arguments
- 2) reflect on, and develop, our own values, belief, meaning, purpose, attitudes and truth in the light of what we learn from our study of religion
- 3) prepare ourselves for adult life in a pluralistic society and global community

There are two examination papers, each worth 50% and each lasting 1 hour 45 minutes.

### Paper 1: The study of Buddhism and Christianity:

Buddhism: We study the Dharma and various Buddhist traditions in what is, unusually, a non-theistic religion. We find out about temples and monasteries, worship and festivals, and different forms of meditation and other activities of the sangha. We visit Amaravati Buddhist Monastery near Hemel Hempstead.

Christianity: We consider the nature of God, the after-life, salvation, and the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, the local church, different forms of worship and prayer, the significance of sacraments, pilgrimage, and celebrations such as Christmas and Easter. We spend a day visiting Aylesbury churches.

### Paper 2: Philosophical and Ethical Themes:

We study four topics from a choice of these six decided by student vote:

Family and Relationships	The Existence of God & Revelation	Crime and Punishment
Matters of Life	Peace and Conflict	Human Rights and Social Justice

The course has academic rigour and a practical outlook as we consider different religious beliefs and attitudes to issues in contemporary British society. We listen attentively and respectfully to a range of viewpoints reflecting the diversity of viewpoints that people hold. We question opinions intelligently and express our own views clearly, confidently and non-judgmentally. We learn to think clearly and compassionately about issues that are significant for us as individuals and for the world in which we live. These skills and attitudes are highly valued by employers and higher education institutions alike. Religious Studies is a relevant qualification for any career which involves working with other people such as law, politics, and medicine.

Assessment: At the end of the course students sit two (equally weighted) examinations, each lasting 1 hour 45 minutes, as described above. (Controlled Assessments: None)

## DETAILS

**Head of Department**  
Mrs K L Crussell

**Specification**  
8062 (Spec A)

**Examination Board**  
AQA

# SPANISH

## OVERVIEW

It is essential in today's world that you have a good grasp of **at least** one Modern Foreign Language at GCSE level. The GCSE course in Spanish builds on the skills and grammatical understanding you will have developed in Key Stage 3.

This is a linear qualification with papers in Listening (25%), Reading (25%), Speaking (25%) and Writing (25%). Students must sit all four at either Higher or Foundation level, not a mixture of the two. Higher tier grades range from 4 to 9, whilst Foundation tier grades range from 1 to 5.

### THEMES

<b>IDENTITY AND CULTURE</b>	<b>LOCAL, NATIONAL, INTERNATIONAL, AND GLOBAL AREAS OF INTEREST</b>	<b>CURRENT AND FUTURE STUDY AND EMPLOYMENT</b>
Me, my family and friends	Home, town, neighbourhood and region	My studies
Technology in everyday life	Social issues	Life at school
Free time	Global issues	Post 16 education
Customs and festivals in French-speaking countries/communities	Travel and tourism	Jobs, career choices and ambitions

### How is this knowledge assessed?

**Listening** - In the Listening Exam students will hear short items such as announcements, short conversations, instructions, news bulletins and telephone messages from suitable adapted authentic sources and answer questions on them.

**Reading** - The Reading Exam will consist of a variety of longer and shorter written texts from items such as brochures, guides, newspapers, websites, magazines and literary texts. There will also be a short translation task from Spanish into English

**Speaking** - The Speaking Exam will consist of a short two-minute role play based on a stimulus card, a discussion of one of the GCSE topics prompted by a photo card (two minutes at Foundation Level and three minutes at Higher Level) and then a general conversation on two further GCSE topics (about four minutes at Foundation Level and about 6 minutes at Higher Level)

**Writing** - At Foundation Level students will write a message, a short paragraph and a 90-word structured essay. They will translate short phrases from English into Spanish. At Higher Level students will write two essays: a 90-word structured task and a more open-ended 150-word task. They will translate a short text from English into Spanish.

## DETAILS

**Head of Department**  
Mrs R Corbould

**Specification**  
8698

**Examination Board**  
AQA

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# SECTION

D

# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

## 1. What are good reasons for opting for particular subjects?

You should ask yourself the following questions before choosing a subject:

- Do I have an aptitude for this subject?
- Do I enjoy studying this subject at the moment?
- Will this subject provide enough (or too much) academic and intellectual challenge?
- Do I need this subject for my higher education and career plans?
- Will my choices give me a broad and balanced range of subjects?

## 2. How likely is it that I will get my choice of options?

As long as you meet the deadline for handing in the option form, it is highly likely that you will get your option choices. Occasionally some subjects are under-subscribed. If too few students opt for a subject it will not run.

If we cannot accommodate your first set of option choices, we will speak to you to discuss any changes to be made.

We endeavour to create a timetable that allows each student to opt for a portfolio of subjects which best meets their individual needs. There are, however, certain constraints that mean, in a relatively few cases, you may not be able to put together your ideal combination of subjects. In the interests of breadth and balance, it will **not** be possible for you to study certain combinations of subjects, such as Business and Economics.

## 3. What is the maximum number of GCSEs I can take?

The majority of students will take 11 full GCSEs. .

Some students may take more subjects following discussion with the Head of Section. However, **it is not the number of GCSE passes** that matter but the **quality** of the passes. Allowing time to be involved in the many extra-curricular activities offered at school will probably be more helpful in developing your potential in the long term and is certainly of interest to universities and future employers.

## 4. How will GCSE results affect my long term prospects?

GCSEs are very important. Universities use the quality of GCSE passes as part of their selection process for applicants. The Higher Education Leader at the school has spoken to Year 9 about this process and the importance of top grades.

## 5. Which Maths sets take the additional Maths FSMQ?

Set 1 has the opportunity to study for the FSMQ Additional Maths, a Free Standing Mathematics Qualification **in addition** to Mathematics.

# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

## 6. I find languages difficult. Do I have to do a modern language?

Yes, our Key Stage 4 curriculum includes a modern language and this breadth is an asset to our students.

## 7. I find science challenging. Is it possible for me to drop one of the three GCSE science courses offered at AGS and opt for an additional subject instead?

No. Our agreed Key Stage 4 curriculum includes three GCSE science courses. In Year 10, students struggling to cope with the demands of the three sciences will be put into smaller classes and a more supportive learning environment.

## 8. I wish to take a subject because I enjoy the teaching style of my current subject teacher. Can you guarantee that I get this teacher in Year 10 and Year 11?

No. Timetabling constraints and possible staff changes mean there is no guarantee that you will get the same teacher. Choosing a subject on the basis of teacher preference is not the right reason for choosing that subject.

## 9. What are the minimum entry requirements for the Sixth Form at Aylesbury Grammar School?

Our current minimum requirements are 44 points from the best 8 full GCSE results. You must achieve a minimum of grade 5 in Maths and English. You should have **at least a GCSE grade 6** in the subjects you wish to take at A Level, some subjects require a grade 7. The vast majority of Year 11 students at AGS obtain at least the minimum requirements to continue their study here into the Sixth Form.

## YEAR 10 OPTION CHOICES FORM

Please complete this form by **Friday 11 February 2022** at the latest

To complete the form you will need to follow this link: <https://forms.gle/RB2YvjUYNhNfkSPKA>

**Please note that you must be signed in to an AGS school google account in order to complete this form**

Before submitting the form, please be sure of your options as you may only submit the form once. You should provide your chosen Modern Foreign Language choice and three other choices in order of priority. You should also provide two reserve options, again in order of priority.

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