



Stone

In January your son or daughter will embark on the new linear GCSE courses. Modular exams have been abolished and pupils will take their GCSE exams at the end of the Fifth Form. We teach a foundation course for the first six months of the Third Form to provide a broad range of subjects and an introduction to general academic themes. This is a conscious decision to avoid premature specialisation, before pupils make their GCSE choices. Stoics would be overloaded if they continued with the same number of subjects up to GCSE level and it is important that their effort is not spread too thinly and, therefore, some choices must now be made.

The aim of this Guide is to set out clearly the curriculum options at Stowe and provide some background to our tutorial support and monitoring system. It also contains information about the careers education and guidance that is available to support Stoics throughout this important phase of their education.

Each subject offered at Stowe is described in detail in the following pages in order to assist parents and Stoics to make the right choices. If you have any questions, your Housemaster, Housemistress, Senior Tutor or the relevant Head of Department would be delighted to help. This booklet should be kept for reference throughout the GCSE period.

Academic Progress Grades will be sent to you every four weeks with a short Tutor report on your son or daughter's progress. We also have a Fourth Form Parents' meeting in the Summer term and a Fifth Form Parents' meeting in the Lent term. In addition, members of the Common Room are happy to talk to parents at any time if you have specific concerns - these are always best tackled immediately rather than waiting for the next report or meeting.

I hope that the first months at Stowe have been fulfilling, with your son or daughter making the most of the many opportunities that Stowe has to offer - academically, culturally and in games.

GCSEs are an important foundation for subjects studied at a higher level and inculcate a strong work ethic, the beginnings of independent learning and the experience of revising for and taking more challenging external examinations. Many universities, especially the Russell Group of 24 leading UK universities, now look closely at GCSE grades and the breadth of an applicant's interests and achievements.



Headmaster, **Dr Anthony Wallersteiner**

Choices	3
GCSE Curriculum.....	4
Careers Education and Guidance.....	5
Lower School Tutorial System	6
Subject Profiles	
Art.....	7
Classics.....	8
Computer Science.....	9
Design	10
Drama	11
English	12
English as a Second Language (ESL).....	13
French.....	14
Geography	15
German.....	16
History	17
Mathematics.....	18
Music	19
Projects/Vanguard Programme	20
Religious Studies.....	21
Science.....	22
Biology	23
Chemistry.....	24
Physics.....	25
Spanish	26
Sports Science.....	27
Last Year's Examination Results	28
Sixth Form Curriculum.....	29

Choices

Stowe's GCSE curriculum provides a broad combination of subjects to cater for all abilities and aptitudes. GCSE Choices are made during the Third Form year, at the end of the Michaelmas term, with Stoics embarking on their GCSE programmes of study in January.

Pupils must choose one subject from each option block, in addition to English (Language and Literature), Maths and Science. Those wishing to study for three separate Science GCSEs in Biology, Chemistry and Physics should choose Science in Option 1. Those preferring the dual award course will have one additional lesson in Maths each week and will follow Stowe's Vanguard Programme, leading to the Higher Project Qualification (HPQ), which is equivalent to a full GCSE. Triple scientists will complete their HPQ with one timetabled period a week with their supervisor, in addition to private study time.

The HPQ provides an opportunity for pupils to undertake an independent project on a topic of their own choosing. The project can take a variety of formats - a dissertation, artefact, investigation or performance. Each pupil will work closely with a supervisor who will provide guidance on how to formulate a workable question or design brief, how to go about research, how to assess sources of information, and how to provide professional academic referencing. The final GCSE grade reflects not just the quality of the outcome but also the pupil's ability to manage their project independently.

All Stoics are expected to take a Modern Language, chosen from Options 2, 4 or 5, and a Humanities subject (Geography, History and Religious Studies). The remaining option columns offer a degree of flexibility and breadth to GCSE Choices, with many Stoics benefiting from a more practical or creative subject chosen from Option 4 or Option 5.

It is important to note that there is no change in the curriculum at the end of the Third or Fourth Form. The choice of subjects made now leads to GCSE examinations at the end of the Fifth Form and also has important implications for Sixth Form subject choices.

Whilst in general it is best for a Stoic to continue with the subjects in which they feel most confident, please note that it is not usually possible to take a subject at A Level which has not been taken for GCSE. Also, certain subjects at GCSE are prerequisites for entry into some higher education courses and career fields. Stoics are generally advised to keep open as many fields as possible at this stage.

Parents are advised that the minimum requirement for automatic progression to the Sixth Form at Stowe is currently six B grades at GCSE level (or points equivalent).

In the second half of the Michaelmas term Third Form Tutors will meet with each member of their Tutor group to discuss their provisional GCSE Choices and to ensure that the number and balance of GCSE subjects is appropriate for each Tutee. This allows time for any queries about careers and/or university entrance qualifications to be addressed. Parents are invited to a formal briefing, 'Making Informed GCSE Choices', immediately before the Third Form Parents' Meeting in November, and Stoics are asked to confirm GCSE Choices shortly after this event.

GCSE Curriculum - Provisional for 2016-2018

All Stoics follow the Common Core (English, Maths, Science and Vanguard). In addition, Stoics must choose one subject from each of Options 2 to 5 below, including a Modern Language and a subject from the Humanities:

(Number of lessons per week in brackets.)

PLEASE NOTE THIS IS PROVISIONAL

Common Core
English Language and English Literature (5)
Mathematics (4/5)
Dual or Triple Science (9/12)
Vanguard (1/2)

Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4	Option 5
Choose one from	Choose one from	Choose one from	Choose one from	Choose one from
3 separate Sciences and Vanguard outside the timetable in the Fourth and Fifth Form	French	Geography	Art	Art
or	German	History	Computing	Design (Graphics)
Dual Sciences and Vanguard within the timetable, with an extra lesson in Maths	Spanish	Latin	Design (Graphics)	Design (Resistant Materials)
	ESL (English as a Second Language)	Religious Studies	Design (Resistant Materials)	Drama
	Art		Drama	French
	Design (Resistant Materials)		History	Geography
	Sports Science		Spanish	Music
			Sports Science	Sports Science
(12/13)	(4)	(4)	(4)	(4)

Please note:

- Co-ordinated Science (dual award) is a double GCSE made up of equal parts of Biology, Chemistry and Physics (3 lessons per week each). It is also possible to study all 3 Sciences as separate GCSE subjects (4 lessons per week each) by choosing Triple Sciences in Option 1. For further details please read the Science pages in this guide. Those taking Triple Sciences will have one Vanguard lesson outside the normal timetable for their project work in the Fourth Form and the first term of the Fifth Form.
- English as a Second Language (ESL) is available in each of the option columns by arrangement with the International Department.
- Classical Greek is available within the curriculum by arrangement. Please contact the Senior Tutor.
- All pupils have one period a week of Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE). Pupils also meet weekly with their Tutor to discuss and monitor academic progress and achievement.
- A few subjects offer tiered entry by papers of graded difficulty, targeting a restricted range of grades. In these subjects, decisions about the tier level at which a candidate will be entered will be delayed for as long as possible to allow for academic improvement. We will ensure that Stoics are entered for the most appropriate tier for them.
- In the pages that follow, each Academic Department describes the GCSE subject(s) that it offers. Specifications for GCSE may change. The subject descriptions in some cases reflect the flavour of the GCSE rather than the precise content of the course to be followed.

Careers Education and Guidance

Careers Education forms a continuous thread throughout a pupil's time at Stowe. It aims to provide a framework within which each pupil can develop the self-awareness and experience necessary to make balanced decisions at each stage during their time at School and, we hope, after they leave.

Throughout the Third Form work is done to raise self-awareness and help decision-making in the build-up towards making GCSE option choices. *Launchpad*, an online careers resource, is used to help inform GCSE choices.

During the Fourth Form all Stoics are introduced to *Fast Tomato*, a complete Careers Guidance programme, comprising a psychometric assessment test of interests resulting in job and higher education course suggestions, which will assist the eventual choice of A Levels.

In the Fifth Form all Stoics take a series of tests of aptitude and interest. The Cambridge Occupational Analysts (COA) Profile and Preview results are then explained and discussed at a one-to-one interview with COA staff in December. A report based on these results is given to each Stoic, together with other information designed to help preliminary decisions about A Level courses. Advice on subject combinations for particular courses is available from the Head of Careers.

Work Experience is an important part of career exploration. Stoics spend some time on this at the end of the Fifth Form, the object being to relate experience to potential career options.

The Careers Centre is particularly well-resourced with full Internet access, in addition to a comprehensive range of prospectuses and guides. It is open during the daytime every weekday and on Saturday mornings for Stoics to research and explore their interests. Every encouragement is given for regular visits to be made to the Careers Centre during a pupil's time at Stowe and parents are more than welcome to use the resources, or make an appointment with the Head of Careers.

Lower School Tutorial System

The Tutor's Role

It is a Tutor's responsibility and role to oversee their Tutees' academic and pastoral development as a whole. As part of this process, a Tutor provides a vital communication link between Housemaster/ Housemistress, teaching staff, parents and pupils.

The Tutor/Tutee relationship is an important one. Tutors meet with each of their Tutees, planning the week ahead using the VLE/ StoweNet and reflecting on achievements or concerns from the previous week or, indeed, as they arise. Tutees are asked to note/ highlight important dates including impending academic deadlines, department based clinics or society meetings, as well as sporting commitments, music lessons or drama rehearsals. Tutors help their Tutees in achieving a healthy balance of academic and extra-curricular activities and in managing their time effectively and efficiently.

In the weekly Tutor period, Tutors also guide their Tutees through a Tutorial Programme which has been designed to specifically support the Stowe Vanguard Programme. A variety of activities and resources will be used to assist pupils in 'learning how to learn' and to develop growth mindsets. Pupils will develop skills of self awareness and reflective practice so that they gain confidence and competence, resulting in progress in all their examined subjects .

The Tutorial Programme also provides a foundation in careers education. Pupils are introduced to an online careers research programme, Fast Tomato, and Higher Education Profiling Schemes. In the Fifth Form, Stoics are encouraged to participate in the COA Profile Aptitude tests and Preview Careers Selection Programme.

Tutors are key members of the pastoral support teams in the Boarding Houses, providing many opportunities for more informal contact with Tutees in the evenings, the supervision of prep and by offering support through their attendance at music concerts, sports matches, drama performances etc.

Where possible the Tutor keeps their Tutor group as they move through the School from the Third Form to the Fifth Form, providing continuity and fostering strong professional relationships with both their Tutees and Tutees' parents.

Monitoring Academic Performance

Twice a term pupils receive Academic Progress Grades (APGs) from each of their subject teachers, which are sent by email to parents together with a Tutor's APG report. Regular assessment grades allow potential problems to be noted as they arise and pave the way for discussions between Tutor/ Teachers and Tutor/Tutee. Individual action plans are agreed which support and closely monitor further academic progress. Plans may include the need to attend academic clinics; assistance with coursework planning and management; Tutor support cards, report cards or simply providing additional or temporary help to Stoics to balance their academic and extra curricular commitments. More detailed feedback of a Stoic's progress is provided in end of term reports.

As at all levels of the School, we would like parents to feel involved in their child's education. Please feel welcome to discuss any matter related to your son's or daughter's progress directly with the Tutor.

Art

Art GCSE requires open-mindedness, hard work and dedication. A real passion for the visual world and curiosity about art and artists is also very important. It helps if drawing skills are good, and pupils should have a creative mind and be prepared to experiment with imagery, materials and ideas to produce ambitious and exciting works of art. In addition to formal lesson time, to achieve a top grade, some activity time should be spent in the Art School, and there will be some holiday assignments to complete.

Content

This is an exciting course which guides and supports pupils through a broad range of approaches and techniques including the use of:

- photography (including digital and darkroom techniques) and the creative use of IT
- monoprinting and other print techniques, including photographic methods, which can be combined with intaglio and relief printmaking
- collage, mixed media and mark making with a range of materials, both conventional and alternative
- three dimensional construction and relief work in a range of materials
- acrylic paint; oil paint; watercolour and gouache

The emphasis will be on recording from direct observation and experience in order to analyse or interpret source material. Encouragement is given to develop ideas, personal responses and aesthetic understanding to a high level. The use of sketchbooks is essential to prepare ideas and document the various processes.

A vital and integral part of the course aims to develop knowledge of Fine Art. Contact with artists and visits to galleries will play an important role in helping to make significant connections with the pupil's own practical work.

The GCSE course at Stowe is currently delivered over three years with broad, skills based projects set in the first year. All pupils in the third form will have one double lesson of art during the Michaelmas term, and then those who wish to continue with GCSE Art will opt to do this after Christmas.

The Art GCSE specification is due to change in 2016 with the first assessment in 2018. At the time of writing the new specification has not yet been accredited by the JCQ, but we expect to continue with AQA as our examination board for GCSE. The draft specification has been published and suggests that under the new structure pupils will be required to create a portfolio of work containing just one sustained project and a selection of further work, rather than the two complete projects currently required. This will allow pupils more time for experimentation in the early part of the course, building skills and confidence before producing a unit of work for formal assessment in the later stages of the course.

During the fourth form year teachers will set thematic projects which will create a model for the assessed work produced in the fifth form. These projects will guide pupils towards the production of exciting, personal sketchbooks which also fulfil the assessment objectives.

As before, the board will set an 'Externally Set Task' just after Christmas in the Fifth Form, with the Controlled Assessment held just after the Easter holidays. The coursework unit will be worth 60% of the course and the externally set task will be worth 40%.

Latin

Content

Latin studied up to GCSE at Stowe concentrates on mastering the language, along with reading an excellent blend of stories from Roman life and its superb literature. The course leads to a language component designed to be user-friendly, covering mythological stories or Roman domestic life and historical accounts. There are also two literature components, with exciting stories of love and intrigue, parts of letters or scenes from dinner parties etc.

Assessment

WJEC Eduqas GCSE Latin (C999QSL) has three components, one Language paper and two shorter Literature papers.

In the Language paper you are tested by translation and comprehension, with some multiple choice questions. Straightforward questions and vocabulary lists make the language study enjoyable and much more manageable than in the past. Gone are the days of obscure, dry grammar and awkward translations designed to trick the unwary.

The Literature options allow you to read some fascinating stories from the Roman world, both prose and verse. These are based on themes like leisure, love and marriage, stories of Roman emperors and their wives, and myths of Aeneas' adventures escaping from Troy. You are tested in a straightforward way, allowing you to show how well you know and understand what you have read.

Benefits of Latin

Latin still provides one of the very best opportunities to develop skills in literature and language. It gives a marvellous insight into how other European languages work and the foundations of our European culture. So it is ideal for those interested in Law, Languages, History, Literature or Philosophy. It is also brilliant for improving powers of analysis; many of the greatest scientists and mathematicians have valued their Latin as the best possible intellectual training. As such, it will enhance a Stoic's way of thinking and use of words for the rest of their life.

Latin GCSE is an excellent preparation for the A Level courses in Latin. There are many exciting degree courses at universities too.

Classical Greek

Content

If we inherit most of our culture and language from the Romans, they in turn derived theirs mainly from the Greeks. Within a few centuries the Greeks invented the origins of almost all our western culture. The key to understanding this is their language and literature.

The elegance, flexibility and precision of the Greek language make it highly enjoyable and rewarding to learn, while the stories read for GCSE can include some of the powerful myths, the exciting adventures of Odysseus' epic voyage, or some part of their turbulent history. Like Latin, the GCSE now provides vocabulary lists in advance, so the examination is fully manageable for those prepared to learn.

Assessment

OCR GCSE Classical Greek (J292) has three components. One is entirely Language work, with translations and comprehensions based on stories from history or mythology, using defined vocabulary lists. There are two further Literature components covering a range of interesting prose and verse authors.

Benefits of Greek

Greek combines excellently with Latin, as well as all other subjects. Greek at GCSE and A Level gives great standing academically. It will look very impressive on your UCAS form when applying to university. It also opens up some of the best Classics courses at university. Greek is a highly enjoyable subject which will appeal to those who like intellectual challenges and rewards.

Computer Science

GCSE Computer Science is a brand new GCSE Course for 2016, following on from the successful GCSE Computing Course that was launched by a OCR a few years ago.

Take a look at the world around you. How close to a computer are you? When was the last time you used one? When was the last time you were creative with one? Life without computers is almost unimaginable. There's nothing that doesn't involve computing in some way.

Computing is not just about writing code for a computer. There is far more to it than that. Just look at the amazing artwork or the surround sound and special effects that goes into all the multi million pound video games if you want evidence of this. The UK, by the way, is at the global forefront of this industry. Watch any modern film and the special effects will show countless examples of computing in action. The music you listen to has been engineered, compressed and transmitted all thanks to computers. Read any eMagazine and it is obvious that even traditional professions such as journalism have embraced the technological revolution and are using computers to create a new kind of content.

The devices we use to consume a wide range of media, whether it is an Android phone or an iPad, are at the heart of almost everything we do. From Facebook to the latest apps, creativity is central. Stop being a simple consumer of software and start designing your own. If you can spot a gap in the market, if you sometimes think, "I wish I could find an app to..." then maybe you could be the next Mark Zuckerberg.

A GCSE in Computer Science will give you a fantastic set of skills to do just that. But even more than this, it will give you the skills you need for any career. You want to become a designer, architect, engineer, publisher, medical researcher, sports coach, music or film producer (the list is endless)? Then Computing is one of the best points to start from. Don't know what you want to do with your life just yet? Perfect! Most of the jobs that will be available when you leave university have not even been thought of yet! Computing is the very best start you will get here too.

Why Choose Computer Science?

Engaging and Contemporary: We have spoken to companies like Microsoft, Google and Cisco, organisations like Computing At School (CAS), plus teachers and academics.

Focus on Cyber Security: It looks at phishing, malware, firewalls and people as the 'weak point' in secure systems, which pupils will study for the first time at this level.

A Greater Emphasis on 'Computational Thinking': We have partnered with a specialist education technology company, Codio, to provide a cloud based programming and course content platform where pupils can learn the theory and apply it in real life situations, in any computing language.

Encourages Mental Versatility: Pupils use their new-found programming skills on an independent coding project by solving a real problem of their choice.

Support and Guidance: Pupils have access to outstanding resources, including Codio's platform to help enhance their own computer science knowledge and skills.

Draft Specification - OCR GCSE (9-1)

Computer Systems (01)

Written Paper - 40%

- Systems Architecture
- Memory
- Storage
- Networks
- System Security
- Ethical Legal Cultural Environmental Issues

Computational Thinking, Algorithms and Programming (02)

Written Paper - 40%

- Algorithms
- Programming Techniques
- Producing robust programs
- Computational Logic
- Translators and language facilities
- Data representation

Programming Project (03)

Coursework Project - 20%

- Programming Techniques
- Analysis
- Design
- Development
- Testing and Evaluation

Design

Aims

Design and Technology (D&T) is an established, challenging and creative area of the curriculum, where Stoics can forge and maintain close comparisons with the practices and processes found in the world of product and industrial design, graphics, architecture and engineering. The design process is explored from a simple concept sketch on paper through Computer Aided Design (CAD) and on to a developed prototype ready for commercial viability. Design is a subject of application and requires Stoics to apply related knowledge from many disciplines including Art, Maths, History (timelines of design and technological development), Languages and Science, as well as to generate an awareness of cultural diversity with regard to the designing of products in a world market.

The subject aims to foster this application of knowledge, skills and understanding in order to facilitate the design and manufacture of innovative products that address real needs. In this respect, Design is a unique subject that requires and promotes the combined use of academic, technological and practical skills through a wide range of differing media. It asks the question, "How does one actually engineer desire?"

The Department wants Stoics to approach their design work with a divergent and creative state of mind; to realise products that not only function very well, but that also stimulate the emotions in terms of aesthetic appeal.

The courses we offer enable Stoics to:

- apply a range of intellectual, technical and creative skills to solving problems
- design and manufacture their own innovative products
- develop a wide range of skills (in both design and manufacture) that can be applied across other subjects and ultimately be applied in the real world of employment
- analyse, synthesise and improve upon existing designs and products

Options

The Design Department currently offers two courses in Design and Technology: Graphic Products and Resistant Materials. Both follow the Edexcel Exam Board's 2012 specification.

Resistant Materials provides Stoics with the opportunity to work within a range of more traditional materials (woods, metals and plastics) that allows them to design and manufacture innovative high quality outcomes in response to a brief that is set by the Exam Board.

Graphic Design focuses on the design and development of ideas and concepts and allows experimentation within a range of more compliant materials. Stoics are encouraged to explore advertising, promotion, display of information, packaging, architecture, product design and CAD in order to design and manufacture products that solve specific problems.

The structure and weighting of the courses are identical and share two distinct components.

Unit 1: Creative Design and Manufacture

Coursework: 60% of Final Grade

Stoics working in both the Graphic and Material disciplines submit a design portfolio (A3) that explores a range of problems. Then, working through the design process, they manufacture products, prototypes, models and solutions that address the situation highlighted at the project outset. Ideas are communicated using a variety of drawing techniques that include sketching, rendering, technical drawing, image manipulation, digital film and video, desktop publishing and CAD. Stoics manufacture their products from quality materials in an environment well equipped to meet exacting standards of accuracy and innovation.

Unit 2: Knowledge and Understanding

Written Exam: 40% of Final Grade

Regular theoretical lessons are integrated into the course to ensure that experiences learned in the workshops, graphics and design studios are supported and extended through formal teaching. They are assessed regularly in order to impart vital examination experiences, as well as gauging the level of knowledge and understanding.

Creativity, diversity and a willingness to challenge existing solutions are all encouraged and Stoics may follow any area that interests them in either Resistant Materials or Graphic Design. Stoics following a course in Design will benefit from having the use of a laptop to help support their design work.

Drama

Throughout this course Students will play many parts in different imaginary situations and have the opportunity to create their own work as well as look at plays written and performed by other people. It will help foster creativity, personal growth, self-confidence, communication and good analytical skills. It will help our pupils' involvement in and enjoyment of drama as performers, devisers, designers and directors. It will provide opportunities for pupils to attend an eclectic range of professional dramatic performances and to develop their skills as informed, thoughtful and appreciative audience members.

Component 1: Devising Theatre

40% of qualification

You will be assessed on either your acting or design skills.

You will participate in the creation, development and performance of a piece of devised theatre using either the techniques of an influential theatre practitioner or a genre, in response to a given stimulus set by WJEC.

In this assessment you will produce:

- a final performance realisation of your piece of devised theatre
- written supporting evidence of your rehearsal and development process
- a written evaluation of your final performance or design skill

Component 2: Performing from a Text

20% of qualification

You will be assessed on either your acting or design skills.

As part of the rehearsal and development process you will study two extracts from the same performance text as chosen by the centre.

You will then participate in one performance using sections of text from both extracts.

Component 3: Interpreting Theatre

Written examination: 1 hour 30 minutes

40% of qualification

Section A: Set Text Study

You will be assessed on your ability to analyse an extract from one set text, chosen by the centre. You will study the play from the viewpoint of an actor, designer, and director and evaluate practical work completed in Component 2.

Section B: Live Theatre Review

You will analyse and evaluate a given aspect of a live theatre production seen during the course.

Expectation

This is the right course to follow if there is a desire to study a subject that is both practical and creative. You may have done some acting before or helped out backstage on a production. You may have always wanted to have a go at directing, acting or creating a lighting plan but never had the chance. Now this can be done - and you can obtain a GCSE at the end of it!

The course will be enjoyed by those who like working as part of a team, as Drama involves a significant amount of group work.

The Value of GCSE Drama

If you are unsure about what to do next, do discuss options with your Drama teacher. There are many opportunities for those holding a GCSE in Drama. The exam can be taken for its own sake or as part of a range of subjects. Alternatively, there may be a desire to go into a job which requires the skills developed during this course. Career areas might include retail, travel and tourism, sales and marketing or any other that involves meeting people face-to-face. The study of Drama helps develop transferable skills which can be taken into any career or job.

English

Content

At IGCSE Level, all Stoics are now entered for the Cambridge International Examinations First Language English IGCSE (0500) and Literature (English) IGCSE (0486) courses.

English Language Assessment

The English Language IGCSE consists of two separate units:

Paper 2 (Reading Passages)

This is a 2 hour external examination worth 50% of the overall mark and pupils answer three questions on two passages. Pupils are assessed on their ability to:

- demonstrate a precise understanding of extended texts
- synthesise, develop, analyse and evaluate facts, ideas and opinions
- effectively summarise, paraphrase and re-express
- demonstrate understanding of how writers achieve their effects
- recognise and respond to sophisticated linguistic devices
- extract appropriate information for specific purposes

Pupils sit this paper at the end of the Fifth Form.

Component 4 (Coursework Portfolio)

In this unit pupils complete three tasks which are assessed 80% on writing skills and 20% on reading skills. This unit is worth 50% of the overall IGCSE mark.

The three tasks are the following:

1. An argumentative piece
2. A descriptive piece of creative writing
3. A response to a stimulus text

Pupils are assessed on their ability to:

- order and convey facts, ideas and opinions effectively
- demonstrate a sophisticated use of imaginative and varied vocabulary
- demonstrate a clear sense of audience and context
- demonstrate accuracy in spelling, punctuation and grammar
- use effectively a variety of sentence structures

All three tasks are internally examined through coursework.

Literature (English) Assessment

The English Literature IGCSE consists of three separate units.

Component 1 (Poetry and Prose)

This is a 1 hour 30 minute external examination, in which pupils are examined on an anthology of short stories and another anthology of poetry. This is worth 50% of the overall IGCSE mark.

Component 3 (Drama)

This is a 45 minute external examination in which pupils answer one question on a play they have studied. This is worth 25% of the overall mark.

Component 5 (Coursework)

In this unit pupils write two coursework essays, one on a Shakespeare play and the other on the play being examined in Component 3. This is examined internally through coursework and is worth 25% of the overall mark.

Tiers of Entry

The Extended Tier allows the award of grades A* to E. All candidates at Stowe will take the Extended Tier First Language IGCSE qualification and the separate qualification in Literature (English) for which the grades A* to F can be awarded. For a very small number of pupils, for whom English is not their first Language and who are finding the requirements of the course particularly challenging, it may be more appropriate to focus upon the attainment of a satisfactory grade in IGCSE First Language English or Literature (English) only.

English as a Second Language (ESL)

Overview

The IGCSE in ESL (English as a Second Language) is a language-focused qualification specifically designed for international pupils. The course provides pupils with an excellent opportunity to refine their written, analytical and comprehension skills, which in turn helps to improve their performance in other GCSE subjects.

Content

The Edexcel IGCSE tests Reading, Writing and Listening skills through two examination papers. It is a single tier examination and assessment takes place in the June examination series. An optional speaking test is endorsed separately.

Paper 1: Reading and Writing

Two thirds of the marks
(2 hours)

Reading (50 marks)

Passages will be taken from a variety of sources, including fiction, and may include factual information, explanation, opinions and biographical writing.

- **Part 1:** Skimming and scanning skills
- **Part 2:** Read for both gist and detail
- **Part 3:** Read for both gist and detail, follow a line of argument or discussion, identify attitudes and opinions in the text

Writing (50 marks)

- **Part 4:** Short piece of writing in response to a given situation - the writing can take the form of a letter, fax or email
- **Part 5:** Factual piece of writing based on own knowledge and interests - the writing can take the form of a report or article
- **Part 6:** Respond to one or two short texts, approximately 500 words in total, and produce a summary for a given purpose and reader

Paper 2: Listening

One third of the marks
(45 minutes)

- **Part 1:** Listening for detailed information
- **Part 2:** Following a discussion or argument; identifying attitude and opinions of speakers; following instructions
- **Part 3:** Listening to a complex argument or discussion; understanding the overall message; identifying attitudes and opinion

Aims

The aim of the Edexcel International GCSE in English as a Second Language (ESL) is to refine English language competence through realistic and contextualised tasks based on authentic texts.

On completion of the Edexcel IGCSE course, pupils should be able to:

- produce clear, detailed texts on a wide range of subjects and explain a viewpoint on a topical issue, giving the advantages and disadvantages of various options
- understand a wide variety of complex reading texts on both concrete and abstract topics, recognising implicit meaning and adapting own style and speed of reading to different texts and purposes
- write well-structured texts using an appropriate style, highlighting relevant salient issues, expanding and supporting points of view with supporting arguments and showing controlled use of organisational patterns, connectors and cohesive devices
- develop the skills necessary for further study in English

Pupils have the option of completing this IGCSE subject as one of their main options or as an extra qualification to enhance their overall grade profile.

French

French GCSE aims to prepare pupils to take their place in a multilingual global society, by providing a thorough yet engaging course where pupils build on their grammar and lexis as well as develop an awareness of the French speaking world and French culture.

All pupils are required to study at least one language at GCSE as a GCSE language may be a minimum entry requirement to certain Universities.

Content

The GCSE course assesses both passive understanding of the language (Listening and Reading) as well as linguistic ability (Speaking and Writing). The main emphasis is placed on communication and linguistic understanding, with the aim to develop pupils' lexical and grammatical knowledge as well as facilitating all further learning.

Assessment

The GCSE is a linear course and all assessment therefore takes place at the end of the course. Four skills are assessed in four separate examinations:

- **Paper 1:** Listening and Understanding French
- **Paper 2:** Speaking in French
- **Paper 3:** Reading and Understanding French
- **Paper 4:** Writing in French

The four skills are equally weighted with each examination accounting for 25% of the final GCSE. All skills are assessed externally but the speaking examination is conducted by class teachers.

The GCSE will be graded 9-1, with 9 the highest, and is available at Foundation and Higher Level. Foundation Level is graded 1-5 and Higher Level 4-9. Candidates are required to take all four skills at the same level.

We expect pupils to enter at Higher Level, although there may be occasions when it is deemed in the candidate's best interest to enter for Foundation Level. Individual cases are discussed with the Head of Department after trial examinations.

All pupils should be able to understand the spoken and written foreign language from contemporary and literary sources. They should also be able to communicate in the spoken and written form as well developing a cultural and social understanding of France.

Since communication and authenticity are such a major part of the course, we would recommend that all Stoics try to spend some time in the appropriate country during their course. This is essential for any pupil considering taking the language beyond GCSE.

As well as being one of the official languages of the EU, French is spoken by around 200 million people and is the official language in 32 countries. With the multitude of possibilities now available through Europe, career opportunities for those with good linguistic ability are rapidly expanding, whatever the profession they may ultimately choose to follow.

*Proposed Exam Board: Edexcel
Specifications are not yet accredited so this may change.*

Geography

The word geography literally means writing about the world. Geography is about trying to make sense of the world we see around us. Why are settlements where they are? How does global trade work? What causes a volcanic eruption? These are all questions in which geographers are interested. Geography is a broad-based subject, that will give you a range of important skills and it is highly valued by universities and employers alike.

Content

The GCSE course will be following a new specification from September 2016, but as these are still in draft form, they will not be selected until late 2015. There are common themes between exam boards which will form core topics within the syllabus and these are listed below. There is also a draft specification for the AQA A GCSE Geography Course shown as an illustration of what our specification choice might be.

Draft AQA A Specification Content

Paper 1 (Physical)

Written Exam: 1 hour 30 minutes
35% of GCSE (88 marks)

- The Challenge of Natural Hazards (compulsory)
- UK Physical Landscape - to include two topics from: Rivers, Coasts and Glacial Landscapes
- The Living World - to include Ecosystems and Tropical Rainforest, then a choice from Hot Deserts, or Cold Environments
- Geographical Skills

Paper 2 (Human)

Written Exam: 1 hour 30 minutes
35% of GCSE (88 marks)

- Urban Issues and Challenges
- The Changing Economic World
- The Challenges of Resource Management
- Geographical Skills

Pupils will be tested via examination and there will be no coursework elements to the future syllabus.

Aims

- To stimulate interest in Geography, to develop a sense of place and an appreciation of the environment and to help to act in an informed and responsible way
- To acquire knowledge and understanding of a range of places, environments and geographical patterns at a range of scales from local to global, as well as an understanding of the physical and human processes, including decision-making, which affect their development
- To develop awareness of the ways in which people and environments interact, the importance of sustainable development in these interactions and to appreciate the opportunities, challenges and constraints that face people in different places
- To appreciate that the study of Geography is dynamic, not only because geographical features, patterns and issues change, but also because new ideas and methods lead to new interpretations

German

German GCSE aims to prepare pupils to take their place in a multilingual global society, by providing a thorough yet engaging course where pupils build on their grammar and lexis and develop an awareness of the German speaking world and its culture.

All pupils at Stowe are required to study at least one language at GCSE as this may be a minimum entry requirement to certain universities.

Content

The GCSE course assesses both passive understanding of the language (Listening and Reading) as well as linguistic agility (Speaking and Writing). The main emphasis is placed on communication and linguistic understanding, with the aim to develop pupils' lexical and grammatical knowledge as well as facilitating all further learning.

Assessment

GCSE German is a linear course and all assessments therefore take place at the end of the course. Four skills are assessed in four separate examinations.

Paper 1: Listening and Understanding German

Paper 2: Speaking in German

Paper 3: Reading and Understanding German

Paper 4: Writing in German

The four skills are equally weighted with each examination accounting for 25% of the final GCSE. All skills are assessed externally but the speaking examination is conducted by class teachers.

The GCSE will be graded 9-1, with 9 the highest, and is available at Foundation and Higher Level. Foundation Level is graded 1-5 and Higher Level 4-9. Candidates are required to take all four skills at the same level.

We expect pupils to enter at Higher Level, although there may be occasions when it is deemed in the candidate's best interest to be enter for Foundation Level. Individual cases are discussed with the Head of Department after trial examinations.

All pupils should be able to understand the spoken and written foreign language from contemporary and literary sources. They should also be able to communicate in the spoken and written form as well develop a cultural and social understanding of Germany.

Since communication and authenticity are such a major part of the course, we would recommend that all pupils try to spend at least one week in Germany/Austria during their course. This is essential for any pupil considering taking the language beyond GCSE.

Germany, as well as being a key financial player in the EU, has a population of over 82 million people, and German is spoken natively by 95 million people, making it the most widely natively spoken language of the EU. With the multitude of career possibilities now available throughout Europe, those with a good linguistic ability are far more employable and will get the more highly paid jobs, especially if their additional language is German.

*Proposed Exam Board: Edexcel
Specifications are not yet accredited so this may change.*

History

Benefits of History

The study of history has a wide variety of benefits for pupils. We aim to develop enjoyment of the subject by following a course that is engaging and relevant. The rich content also provides an excellent platform for A Level studies.

GCSE History is also well-respected for the skills that it develops. Pupils will need to write in depth, explain key events and form an argument assessed over two exams. The longer answers require an explanation of events across extended periods of time, and invaluable skills in essay writing and analytical thinking are developed by pupils throughout the course.

Therefore, studying GCSE History provides pupils with an excellent academic qualification but also forms a foundation of skills that are crucial for both future study and for wider development.

Course Outline

The History Department follows the Edexcel International GCSE History course.

There are two written examinations which are taken at the end of the 5th form.

The content introduces pupils to a range of 20th century cultures, societies and approaches to history. Social, political, cultural, economic and military histories are all explored and build a good foundation for further study.

Paper 1

50% (90 minutes)

A World Divided: Superpower Relations, 1945-1962

Development of Dictatorship: Germany, 1918-1945

Paper 2

50% (90 minutes)

The USA: 1917-1929

Conflict Crisis and Change: The Middle East 1919-1973

Paper 1 Content

- The problems experienced by Germany after the First World War and the rise of Hitler
- Life in Nazi Germany, the Holocaust and the German experience of the Second World War
- The origins of the Cold War and the development of rivalry throughout the 1950s
- The arms race and escalation to the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962

Paper 2 Content

- The economic position of the USA following the First World War, isolationism and American attitudes to immigration and the black community in this period
- Growing liberalisation of culture in the 'Jazz Age' and conservative measures, such as prohibition
- The tension between the Jews and Arabs in Palestine and the creation of Israel by 1948
- The Arab-Israeli Wars of 1948, 1956, 1967 and 1973 and subsequent attempts to make peace

Please note that for the International GCSE course pupils do not complete a controlled assessment or coursework.

Mathematics

Content

All Students are prepared for the IGCSE syllabus from Edexcel (4MA0).

Assessment

The IGCSE aims to develop a knowledge and understanding of mathematical concepts and techniques, while providing pupils with a foundation in mathematical skills for further study in the subject or related areas.

Pupils will enjoy using and applying mathematical techniques and concepts, and become confident in using mathematics to solve problems. It will offer pupils an appreciation of the importance of mathematics in society, employment and study.

The Mathematics IGCSE is assessed as one final exam split into two papers - calculators are allowed on both papers. All sets will be entered for Higher Tier (grade range A* to D). In some circumstances individual pupils may be entered for Foundation Tier (grade range C to F). Depending on the strength of candidates there may be the opportunity for early entry in January.

Paper 1 and Paper 2

Statistics and Probability/Number and Algebra/Geometry/Measures

Each paper is 2 hours long and has equal weighting.

Extension Content

Pupils in the top set will be expected to cover some extension material and follow the Additional Maths paper from OCR (FSMQ) and will sit the exam in the Summer after completing their IGCSE.

Assessment

This qualification allows the very able pupils the opportunity to follow an extension of topics from IGCSE, as well as introducing topics from A Level Mathematics, acting as a valuable bridge between the two. It is examined with a single 2 hour calculator paper in June and passes are graded from A* to E (as per A Levels). This module allows those wishing to do Further Mathematics for A Level to start from a more prepared base, while also allowing those following the single A Level course an introduction onto an accelerated course.

Philosophy

Pupils are also encouraged to develop an appreciation of Mathematics beyond the IGCSE syllabus. They are introduced to a wide range of topics, including some history of Mathematics, through class discussions, problem solving, investigative work and personal research, as well as opportunities to listen to speakers throughout the year to help broaden their view on the applications of Mathematics. The more motivated pupils are also entered in the UKMT Maths Challenges with other opportunities for further competitions.

Music

Aims

The aim of the course is to stimulate and develop an appreciation and enjoyment of music through an active involvement in three musical activities: Listening and Appraising; Performance; and Composition. The course allows for all styles of music to be explored including Classical, Popular and Jazz. It is advisable for Stoics wishing to take this GCSE to be at least Grade 4 on one instrument before embarking upon the course. Pupils are encouraged to take Grade 5 Theory.

Unit 1: Performing (30%)

60 marks

Assessment

- One Solo Piece (of at least one minute)
- One Ensemble Piece (of at least one minute)
- Internally Assessed
- Externally Moderated
- Four minutes combined duration

Knowledge and Skill

Pupils develop their skills as a soloist and part of an ensemble.

Unit 2: Composing (30%)

60 marks

Assessment

- Two Compositions: one to a brief set by Edexcel, and another free composition
- Internally Assessed
- Externally Moderated
- At least three minutes combined duration

Knowledge and Skill

Pupils develop their skills in composing and/or arranging.

Unit 3: Listening and Appraising (40%)

80 marks

Assessment

Written Paper: 1 hour and 45 minutes
Externally set and assessed

Knowledge and Skill

Section A

Pupils will be expected to:

- answer six questions related to six of the eight set works studied across four areas of study
- complete one short melody or rhythm dictation exercise
- answer a question on an unfamiliar piece, using a skeleton score provided
- complete an extended response comparing and evaluating the musical elements, contexts and language of a set work against one unfamiliar piece of music

Areas of Study:

1. Instrumental Music 1700-1820
2. Vocal Music
3. Music for Stage and Screen
4. Fusions

Projects/Vanguard Programme

The new Vanguard Programme at Stowe, which runs from the Third to the Fifth Form, is a core programme encouraging the pupils to 'learn how to learn'. In a busy Third Form and GCSE curriculum of different subjects and exam pressures, it can be too easy for pupils to slip into only focusing on 'what do I need to know for the exam?' rather than, 'what can I be doing to deepen my understanding and skills?'

Here at Stowe we see the most promising pupils as being the ones who display a willingness to take on new challenges, whether this is on the sports field, in the theatre, or in the classroom. Challenge is the key to growth and improvement and this applies to academic progress as much as it does in the gym. As teachers, therefore, our aim is not to make learning 'easy' for our pupils, but to help them find the right level of challenge for them, in the areas that interest them, and to give them the encouragement and support to try difficult things, make mistakes and learn. This is the key to unlocking potential.

The Vanguard Programme is designed as a vehicle for allowing us to help pupils develop an understanding of how learning happens and how challenge (and also failure) is essential to achieving progress. It provides the opportunity to encourage Stoics to look beyond the confines of the examined curriculum, to see how their studies are interconnected and how they relate to the 'real' world. It is designed to foster inquisitiveness and genuine independence as learners.

When Stoics arrive in the Third Form, they will have a designated space in their timetable devoted to Vanguard. Lessons will be devoted to developing an understanding of how best to approach learning and to building an awareness of and interest in issues and topics that fall outside or between the subjects in the examined curriculum. This will be done both through whole year group lectures or seminars, and through follow-up work in small sets of 12 to 15 pupils. Throughout the year they will work both as individuals and in teams and will be encouraged to read, think, innovate, take risks, and reflect on their progress. In the first term they will have lessons on understanding how learning happens and what makes learners more effective, and in the second and third terms they will be exploring thought-provoking topics where they will be encouraged to research, challenge and debate. By the end of the year they will have also designed a proposal for the individual project which they will pursue across the next year and a half.

The course in the Fourth and Fifth Form offers them the opportunity to make their ideas manifest, giving them the space and time to challenge themselves in an area of their choice through the development of the individual project. The project can take on a variety of formats - a dissertation, artefact, investigation or performance, for example. This leads to a 'Higher Project Qualification' or HPQ, which is managed through the exam boards and is equivalent in weighting to a GCSE. Pupils will be working in small sets with a supervisor. The supervisor will not necessarily be an expert in the areas their pupils have decided to research, but will provide guidance on how to formulate a workable question or design brief, how to go about research, how to assess sources of information and how (and why) to provide professional academic referencing.

The project will come to a close in at the end of the Michaelmas term in the Fifth Form, when the pupils will give a presentation on their work and submit their final version, with a reflective analysis of their learning journey. Marks are awarded not just on the quality of the outcome, but also on the pupil's ability to manage their project independently, to find and use resources analytically, and to genuinely reflect on the process; what they learned about themselves from their successes and mistakes along the way.

The programme is designed to be transformational and empowering. Through self-awareness, reflective practice and determination they will discover how to develop and transfer skills, resulting in a growth in both confidence and competence. Furthermore the programme will lead to the development of habits, attitudes and competencies that will reflect richness and integrity and which will ripple out into all their examined subjects and indeed all areas of their lives.

There will be another opportunity to carry our project research in the Sixth Form, where pupils can choose to embark on an 'Extended Project Qualification', or EPQ. This is very similar in design to the HPQ, but with more independence, more depth and more rigour. It is worth 50% of a full A Level and is very highly regarded by universities, as it encourages pupils to develop the intellectual curiosity and skills needed for success in the

Religious Studies

Religion and Philosophy has always been, and continues to be for us today, a powerful driving force in society for good and ill. It affects us all, whether or not we are believers. A knowledge of religion is needed to inform our own political and social understanding, to enlighten the subtleties of literature, and to aid our understanding of history. Beyond this, the study of Religious Studies and Philosophy is a fascinating one, interesting for its own sake and useful in that it sharpens the mind and provides an insight into the study of ideas and their accompanying debates. It forces you to examine your own ideas and raises questions where before you thought there were none. The focus on developing analytical skills means that Religious Studies qualifications are held in high regard by universities and employers.

This course provides an opportunity for pupils to engage with a variety of topical questions around belief, values, meaning, purpose and truth.

Pupils will be able to reflect on and develop their own values, beliefs and attitudes in light of what they have learnt. There will be a range of relevant and contemporary themes to study that will promote awareness of modern-world issues and engagement within the classroom.

Pupils will be challenged and inspired, whilst developing valuable skills sought after by higher education and employers.

The exam consists of two papers that are 1 hour 45 minutes in length. There is no coursework or controlled assessment.

Paper 1: The Study of Religion: Beliefs, Teachings and Practices

An in-depth study of Christianity and Islam.

Paper 2: Thematic Studies

Ethical issues raised by crime and punishment; war and peace; human rights and social justice; relationships and families.

Issues in the Philosophy of Religion - the existence of God and religious experience.

Science

Introduction

Science is taught at Stowe by subject specialists in well-equipped, modern laboratories. Our laboratories are currently being extended and refurbished. This project should be complete in the Autumn of 2016.

There is a full back-up team of technicians and laboratory assistants and a great deal of emphasis is placed on practical work. Extensive use of ICT is made by both teachers and pupils to enhance the delivery of Science. With a full class suite of laptops with data logging equipment, any of the teaching labs can be converted into an ICT lab. All teaching labs have projectors, interactive whiteboards and document cameras. The Science Departments also make full use of online video material and other educational resources.

All Stouics will continue to study all three sciences, i.e. a balanced science course, through to GCSE. It is envisaged that all pupils who are more Science focused will study three separate sciences (Biology, Chemistry and Physics) in four, 40 minute periods per week, per subject, gaining three separate GCSE qualifications. This is certainly the best route for all who may eventually study one or more science subjects in the Sixth Form.

Dual Award Science

A dual award combined Science course is also offered for those whose interests or strengths lie away from the sciences. Based on three, 40 minute periods per week, per subject, this will lead to a Science qualification that is equivalent to two full GCSEs. The syllabus is separated into discrete areas of Biology, Chemistry and Physics, all of which are taught by subject specialists from these departments.

The exams for dual award are shorter in length than those doing the separate sciences and cover a smaller syllabus. The syllabus material in dual award Science is the core material from each of the separate science subjects.

Assessment

There is no longer a coursework element. Instead, the new dual award GCSE has sixteen required practicals integrated into the course. These are tested in the examinations.

Summary of dual award Science content:

Biology

- Cell Biology
- Organisation
- Bioenergetics
- Infection and Response
- Homeostasis and Response
- Inheritance, Variation and Evolution
- Ecology

Chemistry

- Atomic Structure and the Periodic Table
- Bonding, Structure, and the Properties of Matter
- Quantitative Chemistry
- Chemical Changes
- Energy Changes
- The Rate and Extent of Chemical Change
- Organic Chemistry
- Chemical Analysis
- Chemistry of the Atmosphere
- Using Resources

Physics

- Forces
- Waves
- Magnetism and Electromagnetism
- Energy
- Electricity
- Particle Model of Matter
- Atomic Structure

Examinations

There are six examinations:

Two Biology

Two Chemistry

Two Physics

Each exam is 1 hour and 15 minutes long and worth 70 marks.

We follow the AQA GCSE Science syllabuses and all exams take place in the summer of the Fifth Form.

A Level Sciences are possible for those who do very well at dual award, however, this is not a sensible option unless the grade gained for dual award is 'AA' or better. In any case, we expect the majority of potential A Level scientists to take three separate science GCSEs.

Biology

Aims

Biology is a subject of immense interest to most pupils. Wide ranging in its scope, the subject encourages pupils to ask questions about themselves and the world in which they live. Amongst the main aims of the course is the hope that each pupil will develop a concerned and informed awareness of relationships between living organisms, of relationships between organisms and their environment, and the effect of human activities on these relationships. Above all, the aim is to promote a respect for all forms of life. The course provides a worthwhile educational experience for all and is a suitable preparation for careers which require knowledge of Biology. The course is taught in four, 40 minute weekly lessons. It must be studied with GCSE Physics and Chemistry, leading to three full Science GCSEs.

Content

GCSE Combined Science: Trilogy Co-ordinated Course is divided into seven biological components. This is a linear course composed of two 75 minute papers written at the end of the Fifth Form. Units 1-4 are assessed in Paper 1 whilst units 5-7 are assessed in Paper 2.

GCSE Combined Science: Trilogy Paper 1

1. **Cell Biology**
 - Cell Structure
 - Cell Division
 - Transport in Cells
2. **Organisation**
 - Principles of Organisation
 - Animal Tissues, Organs and Organ Systems
 - Non-Communicable Disease
 - Plant Tissues, Organs and Systems
3. **Infection and Response**
 - Communicable Disease
 - Monoclonal Antibodies (Biology only)
 - Plant Disease (Biology only)
4. **Bioenergetics**
 - Photosynthesis
 - Respiration

GCSE Combined Science: Trilogy Paper 2

5. **Homeostasis and Response**
 - Homeostasis
 - The Nervous System
 - The Brain (Biology only)*
 - The Eye (Biology only)*
 - Thermoregulation (Biology only)*
 - Plant Hormones (Biology only)
6. **Inheritance, Variation and Evolution**
 - Reproduction
 - DNA Structure (Biology only)

- Genetic Inheritance
 - Variation and Evolution
 - Cloning (Biology only)*
 - The Development of Understanding of Genetics and Evolution
 - The Theory of Evolution (Biology only)
 - Speciation (Biology only)*
 - Mendel (Biology only)*
 - Classification of Living Organisms
- 7. Ecology**
- Adaptation, Interdependence and Competition
 - Organisation of and Ecosystem
 - Decomposition (Biology only)*
 - Impact of Environmental Change*
 - Biodiversity and the Effect of Human Interaction on Ecosystems
 - Trophic Levels in an Ecosystem (Biology only)
 - Food Production (Biology only)

Trilogy Practical Component

There will be sixteen required practicals (five from Biology) conducted throughout the course to develop pupils' practical skills. Questions in the written exams will draw on the knowledge and understanding pupils have gained by carrying out the practical activities. These questions will count for at least 15% of the overall marks for the qualification. Pupils are expected to take Higher Tier papers (grade 4-9).

GCSE Biology: Separate Science

The GCSE Biology course follows the Trilogy Co-ordinated syllabus content but also involves extending biological understanding of some key components. This will provide important foundation material supporting further study of Biology at A Level.

GCSE Biology Assessment

This is also a linear course. Units 1-4 are assessed in Paper 1 whilst units 5-7 are assessed in Paper 2, each 105 minutes and written at the end of the Fifth Form.

Practical Component

There will be eight required practicals conducted throughout the course to develop pupils' practical skills. Questions in the written exams will draw on the knowledge and understanding pupils have gained by carrying out the practical activities. These questions will count for at least 15% of the overall marks for the qualification. Pupils are expected to take Higher Tier Papers (grade 4-9).

Careers

Many higher education courses require a qualification at Key Stage 4 in Science, and Biology satisfies this requirement if grade 4 or better is obtained.

Chemistry

Aims

Increasingly, modern Chemistry is focusing on a detailed understanding of the processes at a molecular level, in living systems on the one hand and the structure and properties of exciting new materials on the other.

Knowledge of a wide range of everyday chemicals and materials used in the home, in agriculture and in industry is still required and plenty of practical experience is provided during the course. Calculations based on chemical formulae and equations form an important part of the Higher Tier syllabus, for which most Stoics will be entered.

The new GCSE course provides a stimulating educational journey that pulls together many skills and draws from a wide range of topics. It is suitable preparation for anyone considering any A Level or degree course that involves Chemistry.

Summary of Content

1. Atomic Structure and the Periodic Table
2. Bonding, Structure, and the Properties of Matter
3. Quantitative Chemistry
4. Chemical Changes
5. Energy Changes
6. The Rate and Extent of Chemical Change
7. Organic Chemistry
8. Chemical Analysis
9. Chemistry of the Atmosphere
10. Using Resources

Assessment

There is no longer a coursework element. Instead, the new GCSE has eight required practicals integrated into the course. These are tested in the examinations.

Examinations

There are two examinations:

Paper 1

Questions on topics 1-5

1 hour 45 minutes - 100 marks

Questions: multiple choice, structured, closed short answer and open response

Paper 2

Questions on topics 6-10

1 hour 45 minutes - 100 marks

Questions: multiple choice, structured, closed short answer and open response

Teaching

This single subject is taught in four 40 minute periods a week. It must be studied with single subject Biology and Physics leading to three full Science GCSEs.

Future Studies and Careers

Those with aspirations to go on to A Level Chemistry are strongly advised to take the full Chemistry GCSE, as much relevant material is missed by studying dual award instead.

Chemistry occupies a central position between the physical and biological sciences, and is an essential requirement at A Level for many courses such as Medicine, Veterinary Science, Chemical Engineering and some life sciences. It is strongly recommended for anyone contemplating taking biological sciences at university.

Physics

“In the beginning there was nothing, which exploded.”

Terry Pratchett

The new Physics GCSE is a coherent and logical journey through the fascinating world of physics. Some of the less interesting topics have been removed and new topics like gears, vectors and atmospheric pressure have been included.

It is easy to be left behind in a technological world that is changing fast. A grasp of basic Physics provides the necessary understanding that will enable active participation in this dynamic world. The AQA Physics course at Stowe makes full use of the latest applications to make Physics a highly up-to-date and more relevant subject. It is an exciting time as Physics plays an increasingly important role in our everyday lives. ICT skills, an essential part of all careers, are developed in practical work and projects. Applications of Physics are studied in each topic, to ensure relevance in the subject matter. Whether there is a wish to study Physics to a further level or not, pupils acquire a better understanding of the changes that are occurring around them and can participate in an informed way.

Content of the Course

1. Forces
2. Energy
3. Waves
4. Electricity
5. Magnetism and Electromagnetism
6. Particle Model of Matter
7. Atomic Structure
8. Space Physics

Practicals

Physics is a practical subject and should be taught that way, the new GCSE has eight required practicals integrated into the course.

Examinations

Paper 1

Questions on topics 2, 4, 6, 7

1 hour 45 minutes - 100 marks

Questions: multiple choice, structured, short answers and open response

Paper 2

Questions on topics 1, 3, 5, 8

1 hour 45 minutes - 100 marks

Questions: multiple choice, structured, short answers and open response

“Physics is really nothing more than a search for ultimate simplicity, but so far all we have is a kind of elegant messiness.”

Bill Bryson

Spanish

Studying Spanish at GCSE gives learners the opportunity to develop their understanding of not only the Spanish language, but also the Hispanic World.

With around 400 million native speakers, Spanish ranks as the world's second most widely-spoken first language, the first being Mandarin Chinese.

All Stoics are required to study at least one language at GCSE. This is because a language GCSE is a minimum entry requirement for some universities.

Content

The demanding GCSE Spanish course assesses both the learners' passive understanding of Spanish (their listening and reading comprehension) and their linguistic ability (their speaking and writing skills). Emphasis is placed on communication and linguistic understanding. The course aims to help learners develop their lexical and grammatical knowledge whilst building a strong foundation for further language study.

Assessment

The GCSE is a linear course and all assessment therefore takes place at the end of the course. Four skills are assessed in four separate examinations:

Paper 1: Listening and Understanding Spanish

Paper 2: Speaking in Spanish

Paper 3: Reading and Understanding Spanish

Paper 4: Writing in Spanish

The four skills are equally weighted with each examination accounting for 25% of the final GCSE. All skills are assessed externally but the speaking examination is conducted by class teachers.

The GCSE will be graded 9-1, with 9 the highest, and is available at Foundation and Higher Level. Foundation Level is graded 1-5 and Higher Level 4-9. Candidates are required to take all four skills at the same level. We expect Stoics to enter at Higher Level, although there may be occasions when it is deemed in the candidate's best interest to enter for Foundation Level. Individual cases are discussed with the Head of Department after trial examinations.

Studying Abroad

Learners should be able to understand spoken and written Spanish from a variety of sources and should also be able to communicate in spoken and written forms. In addition, learners should take an interest in Hispanic cultures. Given that the GCSE course focuses on communication and authenticity, a study trip to Spain is usually organised for pupils in the Fifth Form. It is strongly recommended that all GCSE Hispanists spend time in Spain or another Spanish-speaking country. This is *essential* for any pupil considering taking the language beyond GCSE level.

Proposed Exam Board: Edexcel

Specifications are not yet accredited so this may change.

Sports Science

Aims

The course is designed to enable pupils with a particular interest in physical education and sport to gain a deeper understanding of the subject, both at a practical and theoretical level. It is hoped that through the enjoyment of taking part in physical activities, they will be able to apply this interest to the work in the classroom and potentially future careers.

Edexcel Assessment Objectives

The examination will assess ability to demonstrate:

- physical performance, including an ability to interrelate planning, performing and evaluating whilst undertaking activity
- analysis and improvement of their own and others' performance
- knowledge and understanding of the factors affecting performance
- knowledge and understanding of the health and safety aspects of physical activity, including the advantages and risks associated with a range of training strategies and techniques
- knowledge and understanding of the reasons for participating in physical activity

Assessment

Unit 1 - Theory (60%)

One Written Paper at the end of the course

Unit 2 - Controlled Assessment (40%)

Practical Performance and Analysis

Unit 1: Theory (60%)

Assessments are made on the knowledge of factors affecting performance and participation in physical activity, through structured questions.

Section 1.1: Healthy, Active Lifestyles

Including the benefits of exercise and fitness and the key influences on participation.

Section 1.2: Healthy, Active Body

Including the effects of an active lifestyle on the cardiovascular, muscular, respiratory and skeletal systems.

Unit 2: Non-Exam Assessment

Practical Performance (30%)

Assessment is on performance of three different activities in the role of player/performer, one of these must be a team sport/activity and one must be an individual sport/activity. The third activity may come from either list.

Team Activity

Football, Badminton, Basketball, Cricket, Dance, Handball, Hockey, Lacrosse, Netball, Rowing, Rugby, Squash, Table Tennis, Tennis, Volleyball

Individual Activity

Boxing, Athletics, Badminton, Cycling, Golf, Gymnastics, Equestrian, Rowing, Sculling, Skiing, Snowboarding, Swimming, Table Tennis, Tennis, Trampolining

Analysis of Performance (10%)

Pupils will analyse performance in one activity which includes knowledge of the rules, observation, evaluation, strategies and tactics for improvement, as well as planning a Personal Exercise Programme.

Please note that the Exam Board and specifications are not yet confirmed and therefore may change.

GCSE Examination Results 2015*										
Subject	Number Entered	Grade							% A*/A	% Pass
		A*	A	B	C	D	E	F		
Art (Fine Art)	39	11	18	10	0	0	0	0	74.4	100.0
Biology	115	27	39	35	12	1	1	0	57.4	98.3
Chemistry	115	32	40	26	14	3	0	0	62.6	97.4
Chinese	4	3	1	0	0	0	0	0	100.0	100.0
Computing	8	2	5	1	0	0	0	0	87.5	100.0
D&T Graphics	16	10	3	2	1	0	0	0	81.3	100.0
D&T RMT	32	1	7	10	14	0	0	0	25.0	100.0
Drama	39	8	15	10	6	0	0	0	59.0	100.0
English Language	160	14	46	60	34	6	0	0	37.5	96.3
English (Second Language)	17	7	8	2	0	0	0	0	88.2	100.0
English Literature	160	20	52	62	26	0	0	0	45.0	100.0
French	89	26	19	16	20	8	0	0	50.6	91.0
Geography	112	24	44	30	14	0	0	0	60.7	100.0
German	15	6	4	4	0	0	1	0	66.7	93.3
Greek	2	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	50.0	100.0
History	105	34	33	27	6	4	1	0	63.8	95.2
Italian	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	100.0	100.0
Latin	20	13	2	4	1	0	0	0	75.0	100.0
Mathematics	160	30	33	62	33	2	0	0	39.4	98.8
Music	11	4	4	3	0	0	0	0	72.7	100.0
Physical Education (Sports Science)	46	8	14	13	11	0	0	0	47.8	100.0
Physics	115	31	37	33	14	0	0	0	59.1	100.0
Religious Studies	30	16	8	4	2	0	0	0	80.0	100.0
Religious Studies Short Course	17	0	8	8	1	0	0	0	47.1	100.0
Russian	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	100.0	100.0
Science	47	0	0	13	34	0	0	0	0.0	100.0
Science - Additional	45	0	6	19	17	3	0	0	13.3	93.3
Spanish	78	22	18	17	13	4	2	2	51.3	89.7
Spanish IGCSE	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	100.0	100.0
Textiles	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	100.0	100.0
TOTAL	1602	354	465	472	273	31	5	2	51.1	97.6

GCSE	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
% pass rate at GCSE grade A*/A	41.7	48.4	47.0	46.1	42.8	51.1
% pass rate at GCSE grade A* - C	95.7	94.6	95.6	94.6	95.8	97.6
% pass rate at GCSE grade 5A* - C	96.9	97.9	98.6	99.3	100.0	99.4

*Results correct as of 18 November 2015

Sixth Form Curriculum - Provisional for 2016-2018

The subjects available to those qualifying for the Sixth Form are set out in the four columns below. We expect members of the Sixth Form to take **one** subject from each of the four columns. It is anticipated that most Stoics will continue with three of these four subjects in the Upper Sixth to full GCE A Level, although those wishing to pursue A Levels in all four subjects are encouraged to do so.

A Level Columns			
1	2	3	4
Biology	Art	Art	Art
Design (Resistant Materials)	Business	Biology	Business
Design (Graphics)	Chemistry	Chemistry	Design (Graphics)
Economics	Drama	Computer Science	Drama
English Literature	Economics	Design (Resistant Materials)	Further Mathematics
History	English Literature	Economics	Geography
History of Art	German	French	History
Latin	Music Technology	Geography	Mathematics
Mathematics	Philosophy and Ethics	History of Art	Music
Media Studies	Physics	Politics	Philosophy and Ethics
Physics	Politics	Sports Science	Politics
Sports Science	Spanish		

Please note:

- Further Mathematics may not be taken without Mathematics.
- Business, Economics, History of Art, Media Studies and Politics courses are rarely studied before the Sixth Form. Some other subjects can also accept candidates who lack the GCSE experience. Prospective candidates should negotiate with the Head of Department in question. Business and Economics should not be studied together as two out of a pupil's three A levels.
- Classical Greek may be offered by arrangement.
- The Extended Project Qualification will run from January of the Lower Sixth until December of the Upper Sixth and be delivered in four lessons per week within each column or if necessary outside the timetable.
- The School reserves the right to withdraw a subject from the curriculum if there is insufficient demand.



Stowe School
Stowe
Buckingham
MK18 5EH

t | +44 (0)1280 818000
f | +44 (0)1280 818181
e | enquiries@stowe.co.uk
w | www.stowe.co.uk