



In January your son or daughter will embark on their GCSE courses and pupils will take their GCSE exams at the end of the Fifth Form. We teach a foundation course in the first term 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 twice a term with a Tutor's 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 leading UK universities, now look closely at GCSE grades and the breadth of an applicant's interests and achievements.



Dr Anthony Wallersteiner, Headmaster

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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, 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, Maths and the Higher Project Qualification. Whilst English Language is mandatory and will be partly delivered through the study of literature, pupils who wish to study for the separate English Literature GCSE are encouraged to choose it as one of their options. Please note that pupils who show a high aptitude for English may be invited to study an accelerated Language and Literature course, leading to two GCSEs, within one option block (Combined English).

All Stoics study all three Sciences; those with a genuine aptitude in Science are encouraged to take Triple Science leading to three separate GCSEs in Biology, Chemistry and Physics, whilst those whose interests lie more in the humanities or arts would probably be best taking Dual Award Science leading to two GCSEs. Pupils who choose Dual Award Science have an additional choice of GCSE chosen from within the Science option column. In addition, there is an expectation that all pupils will choose at least one modern language and at least one subject from the humanities (Geography, History or Religious Studies). The option columns offer a degree of flexibility and breadth to GCSE choices, with many Stoics benefiting from a more practical or creative subject such as Physical Education, Design, Art, Drama or Music. 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 (other than those subjects which are provided only at A Level). Furthermore, certain GCSE subjects 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.

Pupils and Parents should be aware that there are mandatory entry grade requirements for A Levels e.g. a grade 7 or higher in the relevant subject(s) at GCSE is the required entry level for those wishing to take A Levels in Maths, Sciences and Modern Languages.

The Higher Project Qualification (HPQ) is part of our core curriculum and 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, for one period per week, 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.

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 2019-2021

All Stoics follow the Common Core (English, Maths, Science and Projects). In addition, Stoics must choose one subject from each of Options 1 to 5 below, including a Modern Language and a subject from the Humanities:

PLEASE NOTE THIS IS PROVISIONAL

Common Core
English Language (or Combined English)
Mathematics
Dual or Triple Science
Projects

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
Triple Science	Art	English Literature	Art	Art
or	Design	Geography	Computing	Design
Dual Science and one from:	ESL (English as a Second Language)	History	Design	Drama
Drama	French	Latin	Drama	French
English Literature	Greek	Religious Studies	History	German
Geography	Music		Spanish	Geography
History	Spanish		Sports Science	Religious Studies
Music	Sports Science			Sports Science
Religious Studies				

Please note:

- Dual Science is a double GCSE made up of equal parts of Biology, Chemistry and Physics. Those choosing this option will be able to pick another GCSE in Option 1. It is also possible to study all three Sciences as separate GCSE subjects by choosing Triple Science in Option 1. This brings additional teaching and course content in each of the Science subjects. For further details please read the Science pages in this guide.
- All pupils follow a non-examined course in Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE). Pupils 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.

During the Michaelmas Term work is done to raise self-awareness and help decision-making in the build-up towards making GCSE option choices. *Fast Tomato*, an online careers resource, is used with the help of the Head of Careers to inform GCSE choices.

During the Fourth Form all Stoics continue to use *Fast Tomato*, this time as a Careers Guidance programme, comprising a psychometric assessment test of interests resulting in career 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 and Head of Sixth Form.

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 personal 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 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 periods, Tutors guide their Tutees through a Tutorial Programme which has been designed specifically to 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 the key virtues implicit in character education. 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, as well as in their personal development, resilience and resourcefulness.

Tutors are also integral to the delivery of the Lower School's PSHE programme. Bespoke resources will be provided weekly by the Head of PSHE for use in the Friday tutorial period. In addition, pupils will be required to attend year group assemblies and smaller group sessions with visiting speakers, specialists and health professionals who will be responsible for delivering key aspects of the PSHE curriculum.

Throughout the Lower School, the Tutorial Programme aims to provide 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; subject report cards; Tutor and Head of Year reports; Pupil Monitoring Meetings 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.

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 Watson 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 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. 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 the three years of the Third, Fourth and Fifth Forms, starting in the Lent Term of the Third Form. 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 Department follows the AQA Art specification which requires pupils to create a portfolio of work containing one sustained project and a selection of further work. This allows 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 Third and Fourth Forms, 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 sheets and sketchbooks which also fulfil the assessment objectives.

As before, the board will issue 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 an opportunity to sample an excellent blend of stories, from Roman life and its superb literature. The course culminates in two language papers designed to be user-friendly, covering mythological stories or Roman domestic life and historical accounts.

Assessment

The course is assessed at the end of the Fifth Form by sitting the WJEC Level 2 Latin exams (9520). This comprises a Core Language paper and a shorter Additional Language paper, of which the two scores are aggregated to form a final graded mark.

Both the Core and the Additional Language papers involve assessment 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.

Although Latin literature is not formally tested through the WJEC Level 2 assessment, it offers a rich source from which pupils can gain a deeper understanding of Latin syntax and grammar as well as an enjoyment of the classical world presented in its original form. To this end carefully selected elements of literature can be used to augment the language aspects of the taught course.

Benefits of Latin

Latin still provides one of the very best opportunities to develop analytical skills in literature and language. It gives a marvellous insight into how other European languages work and the foundations of our European culture. Therefore as well as being an ideal subject for those interested in Law, Languages, History, Literature, or Philosophy, it also offers an excellent foil for scientific subjects: 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 language for the rest of their life.

In short, Latin GCSE is an excellent preparation for a broad range of A Levels and can also open the door to several exciting degree courses.

Head of Department: **Jonathan Murnane**

Classical Greek

Content

If we inherited 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 through their language and literature.

The elegance, flexibility and precision of the Greek language makes 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 voyages, or some part of their turbulent history. As with Latin, vocabulary lists are provided in advance, so the examination is fully manageable for those prepared to learn.

Assessment

OCR GCSE Classical Greek (J292) has three components. One consists entirely of language work, with translations and comprehensions based on stories from history or mythology, using defined vocabulary lists. In addition there are two literature components covering a range of interesting prose and verse authors.

Benefits of Greek

Greek combines excellently not only with Latin, but also with a huge range of other subjects spanning the humanities, science and social science. Greek at GCSE and A Level lends significant weight to a pupil's academic standing and is an impressive record both on UCAS forms when applying to university (where it opens up some of the best Classics courses) and on CVs in later life. Above all, Greek is a highly enjoyable and dynamic subject which will appeal to those who relish intellectual challenge and reward.

Computer Science

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 isn't anything 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 go into all the multi-million pound video games. The UK 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 consumer of software and start designing your own. If you can spot a gap in the market, and 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. But even more than this, it will give you the skills you need for any career. If 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!

Why Choose AQA Computer Science (8520)?

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

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

Focus on:

Computational Thinking: Looking at programming concepts and paradigms to develop algorithms of the future.

Computer Systems: Knowledge about various hardware, software, software classification, systems architecture and Boolean logic.

Networks and Cyber Security: Looking at types of networks, addressing, phishing, malware, firewalls and people as the 'weak point' in secure systems, which pupils will study for the first time at this level.

Computational Thinking and Problem Solving (Paper 01)

Written Paper - 50%

- Computation Thinking, Problem Solving
- Programming Techniques
- Code Tracing, Algorithms
- Computer Systems
- Data Representation

Written Assessment (Paper 02)

Written Paper - 50%

- System Architecture
- Computer Networks
- Cyber Security
- Ethical, Legal and Environmental Impact of Computing

Programming Project

The programming project is a 20 hour mandatory element to develop software skills to analyse, design, develop, test and evaluate a software problem.

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

Design

The Design Department at Stowe will be offering the Pearson Edexcel GCSE Specification (2017).

Design and Technology (Product Design) (1DT0)

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), 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.

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 course enables 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

Component 1:

Principles of Design and Technology

Written Exam: 50% of the total GCSE

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

The modern designer must have a good working knowledge of the use of ICT and systems and control technology in the design and manufacture of products. They must also be aware of the important contributions of designers from the past which may provide inspiration for future design. Creativity, diversity and a willingness to challenge existing solutions are all encouraged and pupils will follow a core content with specific extended areas.

Topic 1: All Aspects of Design in Society

Topic 2: Metals

Topic 3: Papers and Boards

Topic 4: Polymers

Topic 5: Systems

Topic 6: Textiles

Topic 7: Timbers

Component 2:

Independent Design and Make Project

Externally Assessed: 50% of the total GCSE

Pearson Edexcel will set a contextual challenge in June of the calendar year preceding the year in which the qualification is to be awarded.

Stoics will then work on 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.

The portfolio of work will be assessed under the following four areas:

Part 1: Investigate

Part 2: Designing a Prototype

Part 3: Making a Prototype

Part 4: Testing and Evaluating the Design

Drama

AQA GCSE Drama is a challenging and creative course that requires open-mindedness, dedication and the desire to work collaboratively with others.

This course balances theory and practice providing opportunities for pupils to participate in the creation of drama as performers and designers, experimenting with a wide range of theatrical conventions and styles. Through practical exploration pupils develop an awareness and understanding of contemporary professional theatre practice, as well as theatre history. As a further component of the course, pupils will enjoy opportunities to attend live theatre performances and to develop skills as informed and thoughtful audience members.

In addition to formal lessons, pupils are required to devote some activity time to attend rehearsals in preparation for performance. These are often some of the most rewarding and fulfilling aspects of the course as they enable pupils to appreciate the beauty of creating theatre as part of a company.

The subject aims not only to develop performance and design skills, but to foster a sense of enquiry and innovative thinking. A unique subject, Drama promotes the development of academic, practical and inter-personal skills simultaneously.

Component 1: Understanding Drama

40% of the total GCSE

What is Assessed:

- knowledge and understanding of drama and theatre
- study of one set play
- analysis and evaluation of live theatre

How it is Assessed:

- written exam: 1 hour and 45 minutes
- open book

Component 2: Devising Drama (practical)

40% of the total GCSE

What is Assessed:

- process of creating drama
- performance of devised drama (pupils may contribute as performer or designer)
- analysis and evaluation of own work

How it is Assessed:

- devising log
- devised performance

Component 3: Texts in Practice (practical)

20% of the total GCSE

What is Assessed:

- performance of two extracts from one play (pupils may contribute as performer or designer)

How it is Assessed:

- performance of extract 1 (20 marks) and extract 2 (20 marks)

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

100 marks (2 hours)

66⅔% of the total International GCSE

Reading (45 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 (55 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

40 marks (45 minutes)

33⅓% of the total International GCSE

- **Part 1:** Listening to short extracts; identifying the item, place or event being described
- **Part 2:** Listening for detailed information
- **Part 3:** Following a discussion or argument; identifying attitude and opinions of speakers; following instructions
- **Part 4:** 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 their 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 may complete this IGCSE subject as one of their main options or as an extra qualification to enhance their overall grade profile.

English Language

English Language (Core)

All pupils will receive compulsory instruction in English Language. The readings for this course will draw from a wide range of texts and genres in fiction and non-fiction. Because reading across generations of writers and styles is the cornerstone of the English Department's mission, pupils will have an in-depth engagement with literature; however, at the end of the course they will only sit GCSE examinations in English Language, and not in English Literature.

English Language Assessment

The English Language GCSE (AQA 8700) is assessed in two written papers, each worth 50% of the overall course. All of the texts in the examination are unseen extracts. The examinations are graded on a scale of 9-1, with 9 being the highest grade. All assessments are by examination only; there is no written coursework element. The new GCSEs are untiered, meaning that the full range of grades (9-1) is available to all candidates (there are not separate Foundation and Higher Tier examinations). There is also an oral component, which is graded and reported separately.

Paper 1:

Explorations in Creative Reading and Writing

In Paper 1, the focus is on fiction and creative writing. In the reading section, pupils answer a combination of short and long-form questions about one extract from a piece of literary fiction. The fiction extract will be from the 20th or 21st centuries. In the writing section, pupils compose an original piece of creative writing, either descriptive or narrative. Marks are awarded for content, organisation, and technical accuracy.

Paper 2:

Writers' Viewpoints and Perspectives

In Paper 2, the focus is on non-fiction and persuasive or discursive writing. In the reading section, pupils answer short and long-form questions on two non-fiction texts, one from the 19th century, and the other from either the 20th or 21st centuries. In the writing section, pupils compose an original piece of writing to present a particular viewpoint. Marks are awarded for content, organisation, and technical accuracy.

Spoken Language Endorsement (Non-Examination Assessment)

In the non-examination assessment, pupils create and deliver an oral presentation, and respond to questions from the teacher. These are teacher assessed and awarded a Pass, Merit or Distinction. The grades do not count toward the English Language GCSE, and are reported separately.

Please see the opposite page for details about how to study for English Language and English Literature GCSEs in a combined course.

English Literature

English Literature Options

Both of the options below lead to pupils sitting GCSE examinations in English Literature, as well as the compulsory English Language GCSE examinations.

A GCSE in English Language at grade 6 or above will allow pupils to take the A Level English Literature course in the Sixth Form.

English Literature as an Optional GCSE Subject

English Literature can be studied as a separate, and additional, GCSE subject to the English Language core specification. Selecting English Literature as an optional subject in effect doubles the number of English lessons per week but leads to two GCSEs. The course aims to develop a deep appreciation of a wealth of literature and a sustained focus on the selected texts and skills of analysis assessed in the GCSE English Literature examinations. The texts studied are chosen from a list set by the AQA examination board (details below).

OR

English Language/Literature Combined (Accelerated Course)

This course guides the Stoic through the two full GCSE specifications - English Language and English Literature - in one option column. To select this option, the Stoic needs to submit an application form signed by their current Third Form teacher. Each applicant will then be considered by the Head of English, who will also be looking at attitudes to learning and to prep demonstrated in the Michaelmas Term. This option will require pupils to undertake a significant amount of independent reading and to be ready to discuss texts in lessons. Some confidence with writing and literary analysis will already have been demonstrated in the Michaelmas Term.

English Literature Assessment

The English Literature GCSE (AQA 8702) is assessed in two written papers. Pupils are not allowed to have copies of their set texts in the examinations, with the exception of extracts and poems that are printed on the paper.

The following elements are divided across the two papers; all texts are chosen from a list set by the examination board:

- one 19th century prose text (a novel or novella)
- one 20th century drama or prose text
- one Shakespeare play
- a collection of 12-15 thematically related poems
- a response to an 'unseen' poem and/or prose extract (there is a comparative element in this task)

Pupils will begin studying one of the set texts in the Third Form, with other elements introduced throughout the course.

Support, Extension and Enrichment

The English Department works closely with the Skills Department, the Library and the ESL Department to deliver an integrated approach to the study of English. We offer an exciting range of enrichment activities, from writing workshops and a cross-curricular day, to the World Book Day quiz and poetry competitions. We also work closely with Arts at Stowe to bring performances and Young Adult writers to Stowe. There is something new every year.

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, and 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

Exam Board: Edexcel

French 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 interests 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 as 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 pupils 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. Career opportunities for those with good linguistic ability are rapidly expanding, whatever the profession they may ultimately choose to follow.

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 the AQA Exam Board. Outline details are below:

Paper 1:

Living with the Physical Environment

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

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

Paper 2:

Challenges in the Human Environment

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

- Urban Issues and Challenges - to include case studies of an LIC/NEE city and an HIC city
- The Changing Economic World - to include the Development Gap and Economic Futures
- The Challenges of Resource Management (the optional topic chosen is Food)
- Geographical Skills

Paper 3:

Geographical Applications

Written Exam: 1 hour 15 minutes
30% of the total GCSE (76 marks)

Pre-release resources booklet made available 12 weeks before Paper 3 exam.

- This synoptic paper will involve issue evaluation, with the need for critical thinking and problem solving skills
- The second part of the paper involves fieldwork skills and the use of knowledge gained through fieldwork projects

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

Exam Board: Edexcel

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 interests to be entered 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 as 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 spoken native language of the EU. Those with a good linguistic ability are far more employable, especially if their additional language is German.

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. They are assessed over two exams. The longer answers require an explanation of events across extended periods of time so 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.

The department also organises a regular optional trip to Berlin, which provides an excellent foundation for the course.

Course Outline

The History Department follows the Edexcel International GCSE History course.

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, 1943-1972

Development of Dictatorship: Germany, 1918-1945

Paper 2

50% (90 minutes)

Russia and the Soviet Union, 1905-1924

Conflict Crisis and Change: The Middle East, 1919-2012

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 Thaw, Berlin Crisis, Cuban Missile Crisis, Czechoslovakian Crisis and Détente

Paper 2 Content

- Tsarist rule in Russia and the February Revolution
- The October Revolution and the Bolsheviks
- 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 GCSE Higher exam from AQA (8300).

Assessment

The GCSE aims to develop a knowledge and understanding of mathematical concepts and techniques, whilst 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 GCSE is assessed as one final exam split into three papers. One paper where no calculators are allowed and two where calculators are allowed. The GCSE will be graded 1-9, with 9 being the highest grade. Pupils will be entered for the Higher Tier paper. However, when it is in the candidate's best interests, and with the Head of Department's permission, an individual pupil may be entered for the Foundation Tier (which is restricted to grades 1-5).

Papers

Paper 1 - Non-Calculator paper

Papers 2 and 3 - Calculator papers

Each paper is 1 hour and 30 minutes long, consists of 80 marks and has equal weighting.

Further Maths (Extension)

Pupils in the top set will be expected to cover some extension material and will be introduced to the Level 2 certificate in Further Maths from AQA. They will have the option of sitting the exam in the summer after completing their GCSE.

This qualification allows the very able mathematicians the opportunity to follow an extension of topics from GCSE, as well as introducing topics from A Level Mathematics, acting as a valuable bridge between the two. The course is assessed in two papers of equal weight. Each paper consists of 80 marks and is tested in 1 hour and 45 minutes. Paper 1 is a Non-Calculator paper and Paper 2 is a Calculator paper. Passes are graded from 4-9. 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 into an accelerated course.

Philosophy

Pupils are encouraged to develop an appreciation of mathematics beyond the GCSE 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. High attaining pupils are encouraged to take part in the afternoon enrichment courses, 'vertical stretch' and 'local maximum'. In addition to this, curious Mathematicians have the opportunity to join the Maths Society, the 'Gaussian Group', where speakers from other schools or other departments are invited to collaborative lectures. Pupils are given the chance to enter the UKMT Maths Challenges, with other opportunities for further competitions.

Music

Music is everywhere: it's used in restaurants to make a relaxed atmosphere and stimulate conversation; it's used to heighten dramatic moments in films and television programmes; and it often accompanies key moments in someone's life. Research has shown how the heartbeat changes and mimics the music you listen to, and that listening to music releases the hormone Dopamine (associated with feeling good). But why does music have such an effect?

Our popular and highly engaging Edexcel GCSE Music course opens up the world of music, to find out why certain songs and pieces are the way they are. Old Stoic musicians include Harry Gregson-Williams (the composer of *Chicken Run* and *Shrek*) and award-winning composer Howard Goodall. Pupils study everything from *Defying Gravity* from *Wicked*, to Queen and Bach, via African fusion music and *Star Wars*. They also get the opportunity to write their own music, and develop their skills in performing the music they enjoy.

The course allows for all styles of music to be explored including Classical, Popular and Jazz. It is advisable for pupils wishing to take this GCSE to be at least Grade 4 standard on one instrument before embarking upon the course. Pupils are encouraged to take Grade 5 Theory over the two years.

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

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 45 minutes

Externally set and assessed

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

The Projects 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 tasks, make mistakes and learn. This is the key to unlocking potential.

Vanguard

The Vanguard Programme in the Third Form 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.

Vanguard lessons will be aimed at 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, collaborate 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 undertake individual and group projects designed to build their skills for research, planning, ICT, visual training and presentation.

Higher Project Qualification (HPQ)

The HPQ course in the Fourth and Fifth Form offers pupils 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, for example a dissertation, artefact, investigation or performance. This leads to a 'Higher Project Qualification' (HPQ), which is managed through the exam boards and is equivalent in weighting to half 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 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 out project research in the Sixth Form, where pupils can choose to embark on an 'Extended Project Qualification' (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 tertiary sector.

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 universities and employers.

AQA Religious Studies (8062)

The exam consists of two papers that are 1 hour 45 minutes in length and are worth 50% each of the final grade. There is no coursework or controlled assessment.

Paper 1: Study of Religions: Beliefs, Teachings and Practices of Christianity and Islam

- Two compulsory five-part questions will be set on each religion
- Each five-part question is worth 24 marks, with 12 marks for AO1 and 12 marks for AO2
- The structure of the five-part questions will be identical across all religions; marks will be allocated as follows: 1, 2, 4, 5 and 12
- In each five-part question, AO1 is tested in the first four questions; AO2 is assessed through the 12 mark question

Paper 2: Thematic studies

Pupils must answer questions on four religious, philosophical and ethical themes: Religion, Peace & Conflict; Religion, Crime & Punishment; Religion & Life; The Existence of God & Revelation.

- One compulsory five-part question will be set per theme
- Each five-part question is worth 24 marks, with 12 marks for AO1 and 12 marks for AO2
- The structure of the five-part questions will be identical: marks will be allocated as follows; 1, 2, 4, 5 and 12
- In each five-part question, AO1 is tested in the first four questions; AO2 is assessed through the 12 mark question

Science

Introduction

Science is taught at Stowe by subject specialists in modern, well-equipped laboratories, all housed in a purpose built building which was extended and fully refurbished in 2016.

The academic staff are backed up by a full team of technicians and laboratory assistants as 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. Extra support is provided outside of lessons via daily science clinics and a wealth of extra material is available on StoweNet.

All Stoucs will continue to study all three sciences, i.e. a balanced science course, through to GCSE. This can be done by either doing Dual Award or by studying all three sciences separately to GCSE (Triple Science).

Triple Science is only recommended for those pupils who have shown a particular aptitude for Science and whose future A Level choices are most likely to include one or more science subjects.

All other pupils are recommended to take Dual Award which allows them to keep more options open, whilst still allowing them to study one or more of the sciences at A Level.

Dual Award Science

The Dual Award combined science course is offered for those whose interests or strengths lie away from the sciences. Based on two 55 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: (AQA Trilogy Syllabus)

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 '7-7' or better.

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 must be studied with GCSE Physics and Chemistry, leading to three full Science GCSEs.

Biology Content

The course is divided into seven biological components. This is a linear course composed of two 1 hour 45 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.

Summary of Content

1. Cell Biology
2. Organisation
3. Infection and Response
4. Bioenergetics
5. Homeostasis and Response
6. Inheritance, Variation and Evolution
7. Ecology

Practical Component

There will be ten 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).

Examinations

There are two examinations:

Paper 1

Questions on topics 1-4

1 hour 45 minutes - 100 marks

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

Paper 2

Questions on topics 5-7

1 hour 45 minutes - 100 marks

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

Teaching

Biology as a single subject must be studied with single subject Chemistry and Physics leading to three full Science GCSEs.

Careers

Many higher education courses require a qualification at Key Stage 4 in Science, and Biology usually satisfies this requirement if grade 5 or above is obtained. This course will provide important foundation material supporting further study of Biology at A Level.

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

Chemistry as a single subject 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 fascinating introduction to the fundamental study of the universe, matter and interactions. The new 9-1 course has removed some of the more outdated content, and replaced it with advanced, relevant and interesting topics that enable pupils to gain a better understanding of our world and the laws of physics, while also providing a better preparation for A Level for those pupils who are considering this option.

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 learn to analyse the beauty of the world and our place in the universe.

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 ten required practicals integrated into the course. The required practical elements necessitate the use of common laboratory equipment, dataloggers, and important skills including data analysis and graph drawing.

Examinations

Paper 1

Questions on topics: Energy, Electricity, Particle Model of Matter and Atomic Structure

1 hour 45 minutes - 100 marks

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

Paper 2

Questions on topics: Forces, Waves, Magnetism and Electromagnetism and Space Physics

1 hour 45 minutes - 100 marks

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

Teaching

Physics as a single subject must be studied with single subject Biology and Chemistry leading to three full Science GCSEs.

"There is no science in this world like physics. Nothing comes close to the precision with which physics enables you to understand the world around you." (Neil deGrasse Tyson)

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 Students 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

Exam Board: Edexcel

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 pupils to enter at Higher Level, although there may be occasions when it is deemed in the candidate's best interests 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.

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 work in the classroom and potentially future careers.

Requirements for GCSE Candidates:

- pupils should be at a good level of performance in three individual and team sports/activities
- pupils should have a keen interest in sport generally and want to understand what factors influence elite sporting performance

AQA 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%)

Two written papers at the end of the course

Unit 2 - Controlled Assessment (40%)

Practical Performance and Analysis

Unit 1: Theory (60%)

Assessments are made up of multiple choice, short answer and extended answer questions.

Paper 1: Human Body and Movement in Sport

Including applied anatomy and physiology, movement analysis, physical training and the use of data.

Paper 2: Socio-Cultural Influences and Well-Being in Sport

Including sports psychology, socio-cultural influences, health, fitness and well-being and the use of data.

Unit 2: Non-Exam Assessment (40%)

Practical Performance (30%)

Assessment is on performance of three different activities, 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%)

The candidates complete a piece of written coursework in which they need to analyse, understand and correct areas of weakness in their performance in one chosen sport. Pupils have to apply the physiological, psychological and cultural aspects learned in the theory side of the course.



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