



Maidstone Grammar School
for Girls

Non sibi sed omnibus

Key Stage 4
Curriculum Information
2018-2019

A Reference Booklet
For Parents and Carers

Contact: Mrs Z Harris, Deputy Headteacher

Introduction

GCSE studies began in Term 6, 2018 and for some core subjects earlier than this. In order to ensure a balanced programme of study some restrictions are placed on the choice of subjects. All students take English (leading to two GCSEs in English Language and English Literature), GCSE Religious Studies, GCSE Mathematics and a Science course (leading to either a Combined Science award which is worth two GCSE grades or to three GCSEs in Biology, Chemistry and Physics). Students also study four more courses (options) to complete their GCSE programme, which must include at least one Modern Foreign Language course and at least one Humanities course.

All students follow non-examined courses in core Physical Education and through the school's Focus Days in Personal, Social & Health Education, Citizenship and Careers Education, Information, Advice & Guidance.

Throughout Years 10 and 11 students will be encouraged to become involved in their own self-assessment and, through discussion with their teachers, encouraged to identify their strengths and areas for further development in order to plan future learning needs. At MGGS, we call this process Assessment as Learning. Thinking skills will become increasingly important to students and their GCSE studies, particularly the higher order thinking skills which are linked to grade 9, 8, & 7 style examination questions. Students will be encouraged to use a wide range of thinking tools such as *Thinking Maps* to help enhance their learning.



Early on in their courses students will be given GCSE estimated grades. These realistic yet challenging estimates will be an indication of what the school believes each student could achieve provided she continues to work hard. Please note that estimated grades are not predicted grades. We appreciate that a set of high estimated grades can sometimes be seen as quite daunting but the purpose of these estimates is *not* to make students feel under excessive pressure but rather for the grades to be used in an informed way by students, parents and teachers to monitor progress and identify where additional help and support may be needed.

There will be an opportunity for students and their parents to attend a Year 10 consultation evening to discuss on-going progress, with further information about progress being given via tracking reviews. Following Year 10 internal school examinations a full report will be compiled and sent home.

When in Year 11, students will be given predicted grades for their GCSE subjects following the mock GCSE examinations. These predicted grades will help students when considering post-16 choices as will discussions in guidance meetings and at the Year 11 parents' consultation evening. An interim tracking review and a full report about progress is also compiled and sent home before the end of Year 11 studies.

Parents of Pupil Premium students should note that financial assistance will be made available to support students with their GCSE studies and GCSE option choices. For example, financial assistance can be provided for the purchasing of specialist materials and equipment needed in some GCSE courses, revision resources and support for attending particular events and trips. **No pupil premium student should be put off from choosing an option course because of any financial constraints!** Parents can contact Mrs Binks for further information about this.

Year 10 At a Glance

Term 6 2018	Start of all GCSE courses (NB some core subjects may have started earlier)
September 2018	Continuation of all GCSE courses
November 2018	Year 10 Tracking Review 1- helps monitor student progress
January 2019	Year 10 Tracking Review 2- helps monitor student progress
March 2019	Year 10 school examinations
May 2019	Year 10 reports (Tracking Review 3)
Summer 2019	Public examinations in Astronomy (as appropriate)

NB Some of the above dates may be subject to change.

The Key Stage 4 Curriculum at MGGS

At Key Stage 4 some subjects are studied by all students whereas others are optional in order to ensure a broad and balanced programme of study.

GCSE Examination courses that ALL students are required to take are: **English:** leading to two GCSEs in **English Language** and **English Literature**, **Mathematics**, **Religious Studies**, **Science:** leading to either a Combined Science award worth two GCSE grades or three individual GCSEs in **Biology**, **Chemistry** and **Physics**

For **OPTION COURSES** all students have to choose four courses of which at least one must be an MFL course and at least one must be a Humanity course.

Modern Foreign Languages courses GCSE **French**, GCSE **German**, GCSE **Spanish**.

Humanities courses GCSE **Geography** and GCSE **History**.

Additional Options courses: GCSE **Art**, GCSE **Computer Science**, GCSE **Food Preparation and Nutrition** or GCSE **Design Technology: Product Design** or GCSE **Art Textiles**, GCSE **Drama**, GCSE **Music** and GCSE **Physical Education**.

GCSE Art and Design (Art, Craft and Design) Course Information

The GCSE Art, Craft and Design course allows you to work in a wide and exciting range of media including: drawing; painting; printmaking; collage; ceramics, textiles and 3D multimedia construction. The course is structured so that you gradually determine your own theme for your portfolio and develop individual ways of working.

For each unit of work you will:

- Develop ideas through investigations, demonstrating critical understanding of sources.
- Refine work by exploring ideas, selecting and experimenting with appropriate media, materials, techniques and processes.
- Record ideas, observations and insights relevant to intentions as work progresses.
- Present a personal and meaningful response that realises intentions and demonstrates understanding of visual language. Home study time allows for further exploration of current themes, extension of skills and development of ideas.

You are expected to visit galleries and museums to enrich your studies and trips to major galleries and exhibitions are undertaken in both Years 10 and 11.

Assessment/Examination Information

Portfolio (60% of the total marks) The portfolio consists of two sustained projects which will evidence a journey from initial engagement with an idea to the realisation of intentions. It will also include a selection of further work resulting from activities such as experiments with ideas and processes, gallery visits and the extension of techniques.

Externally Set Assignment (40% of the total marks) You will produce another project, choosing a theme set by the examination board, which will be completed by you creating, in examination conditions, a ten hour unaided piece of work.

Your work as a whole is assessed after the completion of your Externally Set assignment to determine your GCSE grade. It is internally marked and moderated externally by AQA.

Your work is continually assessed against the GCSE assessment objectives by your teacher. Interim grades and tutor comments aid your understanding of the levels attained in specific components of a unit of work. Each section of work is assessed at conclusion with detailed written feedback to advise of areas that would benefit from further consideration and refinement. You can then address the issues raised to maximise your marks.

How will studying Fine Art help me in the future?

Alongside a range of practical arts skills, Art students will also have good observational, analytical and research skills, including the ability to solve problems creatively and work well independently. Art enhances fine motor skills, hand-eye coordination, lateral thinking, time management and complex analysis and critical thinking skills.

While Art continues to be a desirable option for students wishing to pursue 'traditional' creative careers, such as Architecture, Interior Design or Painting / Fine Art related professions, the internet has seen an explosion of exciting, new roles emerge as the creative industries continue to grow and evolve.

GCSE Computer Science

Course Information

GCSE Computer Science helps you think about how technology is created. It allows you to understand how people work together with computers to develop world changing programs like Facebook, Spotify and eBay. The course will provide you with a foundation of knowledge, problem solving and logical thinking skills that will serve as a competitive advantage to you in your career, in whatever field you choose. You will also develop the skills that colleges, universities and employers are looking for – and they will prove valuable for the rest of your life. GCSE Computer Science goes really well with lots of other subjects, especially the Sciences, Textiles, Music, Maths and Art and Design.

Assessment/Examination Information

The course is made up of two units, two examined written assessment and a non-examined practical assessment. The first examination will cover computational thinking, problem solving, code tracing, applied computing and theoretical knowledge of computer science. The second examination covers the following topics: fundamentals of data representation, computer systems, fundamentals of computer networks, fundamentals of cyber security, and ethical, legal and environmental impacts of digital technology on wider society, including issues of privacy. The non-examined unit does not contribute to the final grade but allows students to undertake a larger programming project. Students will be tasked with the development of a computer program which has been designed, written and tested to solve a problem. Students will produce an original report outlining this development.

How will studying Computer Science help me in the future?

“When human beings acquired language, we didn’t just learn how to listen, we learnt how to speak. When human beings acquired text, we didn’t just learn how to read, we learnt how to write. Now that we have acquired computers, we should learn not just how to use them, but how to program them.” - Douglas Rushkoff

Technology is part of just about everything that touches our lives, from the cars we drive, to the movies we watch, to the ways businesses and governments deal with us. Understanding different dimensions of computing is part of the necessary skill set for an educated person in the 21st century. GCSE Computer Science gives a real, in-depth understanding of how computer technology works giving an insight into what goes on ‘behind the scenes’. Computer Science drives innovation in the sciences (human genome project, AIDS vaccine research, environmental monitoring and protection just to mention a few), and also in engineering, business, entertainment and education. If you want to make a positive difference in the world, study Computer Science. Creating high-quality computing solutions is a highly creative and imaginative activity, and computing supports creative work in many other fields. The best solutions in Computer Science exhibit high levels of elegance and beauty. However, the most exciting aspect of Computer Science is that it is almost impossible to predict what will happen next!

GCSE Design Technology - Product Design

Course Information

Product Design is concerned with the ever-changing technological advances which affect society and the way we live our everyday lives. This course will focus on producing creative design work and innovative practical work. This course will be one that students will find both challenging and rewarding. GCSE Design and Technology: Product Design will provide the knowledge, understanding and problem solving skills required to undertake the iterative design process of exploring, creating and evaluating. The majority of the course will be delivered through practical projects with a focus on working with woods, metals, plastics and compliant materials.

The course will allow them to discover how Design and Technology can be linked to many of the subjects across the school including Maths and Science as well as more creative subjects such as Art. Students will be able to combine both practical application and theoretical underpinning in all of their work and will look to understand the processes and techniques used by those in the product design industry.

Assessment / Examination Information

Non-examination assessment (NEA) worth 50% of the GCSE 30–35 hours approx - 100 marks

The NEA is a contextualised design and make task that covers the skills of investigating, designing, making, analysing and evaluating. This takes place in Year 11.

2 Hour Examination worth 50% of the GCSE Section A – Core technical principles. A mixture of multiple choice and short answer questions assessing a breadth of technical knowledge and understanding. Section B – Specialist technical principles. Several short answer questions and one extended response to assess a more in-depth knowledge of technical principles. Section C – Designing and making principles.

How will studying Design Technology Product Design help me in the future?

GCSE Design and Technology Product Design equips students with the tools needed to thrive in an increasingly technological world. It will provide them with the creativity to design, make and problem solve following the design principles that underpin the work of those in industry.

Students will learn about a broad range of design processes, material techniques and specialist equipment, as well as exploring the historical, social, cultural, environmental and economic factors relating to the design world of today. Many students choose to continue with this subject into the sixth form taking the hugely successful and popular A Level 3D Product Design course. From this, many progress to a wide variety of creative degrees such as product design, engineering, industrial design, computer animation, architecture, user centred design, interior design, accessory design, furniture design or sports design. A select few opt to take foundation courses.

GCSE Design Technology – Art Textiles

GCSE Art and Design Textiles provides students with the opportunity to showcase their imagination, innovation and creativity through an exciting and diverse range of disciplines including fashion, printed and constructed textiles.

“Fashion is not something that exists in dresses only. Fashion is in the sky, in the street, fashion has to do with ideas, the way we live, what is happening”. Coco Chanel

Through the exploration of imagery and artefacts related to a chosen theme, students will experiment with a wide variety of ideas, materials, techniques and processes, whilst also enhancing their knowledge, skills and understanding in relation to the iterative design process. The course develops a number of personal attributes, including self-confidence, perseverance, self-discipline and commitment as students will take risks, learn from their mistakes and build upon their successes. All students will be encouraged to enter prestigious national competitions, such as Young Fashion Designer of the Year, which can provide a strong foundation for creative portfolios. Numerous textile techniques and processes used by industry professionals are also explored throughout the course.

Assessment/Examination Information

Component 1 worth 60% GCSE: Portfolio

The personal portfolio covers two themes where learners engage in workshop sessions and develop their theme through the understanding of textile materials, techniques and processes. Learners will explore and analyse the work of other artists and designers, making critical and contextual links between the artist’s work and their theme, enabling students to develop their own work further with a greater level of understanding. They refine their work and complete a personally informed and meaningful practical outcome.

Component 2 worth 40% GCSE: Externally set assignment

In the exam unit learners initiate and extend their own ideas and work more independently. This has an externally set theme. The final outcome to this will be produced under Controlled Assessment exam conditions over a period of 10 hours (likely to be two consecutive days).

Formative assessment and target setting will take place each term; students will receive written and verbal feedback and time will be allowed for individual response. Both components will be internally marked and externally standardised.

How will studying Art and Design Textiles help me in the future?

GCSE Art and Design Textiles aims to equip all students with the tools needed to thrive in an increasingly fast paced and competitive world. The course promotes the creativity required to design and make garments (and other textile products) and also adheres to the design principles that underpin the work of those in industry. Students will use specialist equipment and machinery to further enhance their creative processes, this is a real strength of the department and is of real benefit to those who take it, as well as being highly prized by Universities and Employers.

An Art and Design Textiles qualification can lead to degree courses, apprenticeships and careers in the following fields: Fashion Design, Print & Knit & Weave Technology, Embroidery, Garment Technology, Fashion Business & Marketing, Branding; Textile Design; Fashion Buying; Merchandising; Visual Merchandising; Garment/Fabric Technology; Fashion blogger; Fashion Journalism; Marketing; Sales; Product Design; Textile Engineering; Interior Design;

Architecture; Primary and Secondary Teaching; Museum Conservation; Fashion Illustration; Costume/Theatre Design; Fashion Photography; Fashion PR. In addition to this, degrees and careers that require manual dexterity like Medicine & Dentistry also value students who have an understanding of how the made world works that this qualification can provide..

GCSE Drama

Course Information

The course will provide an inspiring introduction to theatre in all its forms. By the end of the two years you will have completed a full, balanced and enjoyable course in which all of the different aspects of a production will be looked at. The syllabus will have given you ideal preparation to progress to Drama and Theatre at Advanced Level if desired. Drama is a fascinating subject where you get to look at the social, cultural, historical and political backgrounds of different practitioners, texts, playwrights and characters. You also have the opportunity to debate and discuss with others. The GCSE course is made up of three components:

Assessment/Examination Information

Component 1: Understanding drama

- Knowledge and understanding of drama and theatre
- Study of one set play from a choice of six (studied through practical workshops)
- Analysis and evaluation of the work of live theatre makers

Assessed through:

- Written examination: 1 hour and 45 minutes
 - 40% of GCSE and marked externally

Attending arranged theatre trips will be integral to this component of the course.

Component 2: Devising drama (practical)

- Process of creating devised drama
- Performance of devised drama (students contribution is as a performer)
- Analysis and evaluation of own work

Assessed through:

- Devising log (analysis and evaluation of the creation and final performance of the piece)
- Devised performance
 - 40% of GCSE. This component is marked by teachers and moderated by AQA.

Component 3: Texts in practice (practical)

Assessed through:

- Performance of two extracts from one play (student's contribution is as a performer). Free choice of play but it must contrast with the set play chosen for Component 1
 - 20% of GCSE. This component is externally marked by AQA.

The practical work is performance based. Please be aware that opting for this course will mean you will have to perform to an audience.

How will studying Drama help me in the future?

The course will enable you to develop a number of transferable skills such as presentation/public speaking, communication, leadership, problem solving, the ability to analyse and many more. These qualities are highly valued by universities and employers. In addition you will be taught a wide range of practical and technical skills, and you will attend live theatre performances, where you will learn how to become a critical and appreciative member of an audience, applying independent thinking skills to the knowledge and understanding gained.

GCSE English Language

Course Information

The programme of study at Key Stage 4 will lead to separate GCSE qualifications in English Language and English Literature. You will be expected to understand and convey information, ideas and opinions; explore the meanings behind literary texts; examine points of view in non-fiction texts; analyse the impact of language and craft your own writing for effect. For these purposes, you should be able to use speech and written expression correctly and appropriately. In oral communication you will be expected to demonstrate speaking and listening skills and required to give a formal presentation, understanding when it is appropriate to use formal and informal language.

Assessment/Examination Information

AQA GCSE English Language (8700)

Below are brief details of the course you will be following in years 10 and 11. Your teacher will explain the requirements for each unit in greater detail as the course progresses. Please ask for further information if necessary.

(1) Paper One: Explorations in Creative Reading and Writing

(Total of 80 marks, 50% weighting of GCSE, 1 hour 45 minutes)

Section A: Reading one literature fiction text. The examination will ask you to answer one short question (4 marks), two longer questions (2x8 marks) and one extended essay question (20 marks).

Section B: Writing descriptive or narrative writing. The examination will ask you to write one extended piece (24 marks for content, 16 marks for technical accuracy).

(2) Paper Two: Writers' Viewpoints and Perspectives

(Total of 80 marks, 50% weighting, 1 hour 45 minutes)

Section A: Reading one non-fiction text and one literary non-fiction text. The examination will ask you to answer one short question (4 marks), two longer questions (1 x 8, 1 x 12 marks) and one extended question (1 x 16 marks).

Section B: Writing to present a viewpoint. The examination will ask you to write one extended piece (24 marks for content, 16 marks for technical accuracy).

(3) Non-Examination Assessment: - Spoken Language

(0% weighting)

Your teacher will assess your presentation skills, how you respond to questions and feedback, and how you use Standard English.

How will studying English Language help me in the future?

The study of English Language at GCSE develops skills in the key areas of reading, writing and spoken language. These are fundamental skills for success in all areas of employment, higher education and access to the wider world of media, culture and politics. English Language is a compulsory subject for all students at key stage 4 and many students choose to continue their studies into A-level and beyond.

GCSE English Literature

Course Information

In the study of GCSE English Literature you will read and discuss drama, prose and poetry. The course covers a complete Shakespeare play as well as classic Victorian fiction. Texts are studied for their themes and meanings, as well as locating them within their specific cultural contexts. Approaches to analysing characterisation, plot, style and symbolism will be studied in detail.

Assessment/Examination Information

AQA GCSE English Literature (8702) The GCSE English Literature course you will follow consists of two examination papers, covering drama, prose and poetry: (1) Paper One: - Shakespeare and the 19th-century Novel (Total of 64 marks, 40% weighting, 1 hour 45 minutes)

Section A: Shakespeare The examination will ask you to answer one question made up of two parts: you will be required to write in detail about an extract from the play and then to write about the play as a whole. You might study one of these plays: 'Macbeth', 'Romeo and Juliet' or 'Much Ado About Nothing' (30 marks for content, 4 marks for technical accuracy).

Section B: The 19th-Century Novel The examination will ask you to answer one question made up of two parts: you will be required to write in detail about an extract from the novel and then to write about the novel as a whole. You might study one of these novels: 'The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde', 'Great Expectations', 'Jane Eyre' or 'Pride and Prejudice' (30 marks).

(2) Paper Two: - Modern Texts and Poetry

(Total of 96 marks, 60% weighting, 2 hours 15 minutes)

Section A: Modern texts The examination will ask you to answer one essay question from a choice of two on your studied modern prose or drama text, which is likely to be 'An Inspector Calls' (30 marks for content, 4 marks for technical accuracy).

Section B: Poetry The examination will ask you to answer one comparative question on poems you have studied from your anthology, which will either be on 'Love and Relationships' or 'Conflict and Power' (30 marks).

Section C: Unseen Poetry The examination will provide you with two poems you have not studied in class and ask you to answer one question on each poem (2x12 marks) and one comparative question (8 marks).

How will studying English Literature help me in the future?

The study of English Literature enriches the cultural, moral, spiritual and intellectual capacity of our students, and as such is seen as vital to a complete education. Britain has produced many of the world's greatest writers, poets, playwrights and thinkers, and the study of English Literature creates a connection between the modern world and the experiences of the many generations of people who have lived before our time. English Literature also develops subtlety and sophistication in the key skills of reading and writing, with students being encouraged to develop inference and critical thinking in their analysis of literature.

GCSE Food Preparation and Nutrition

Course Information

Pupils are given the opportunity to make a huge variety of products over the course of the two years in a well-structured environment. This course will give you valuable key life skills enabling you to cook and make informed choices about what and how well you are eating.

You will study topics that include Food Preparation Skills, Food Nutrition and Health, Food Safety, Food Science, Food Provenance and Food Choice.

During the course you will be given the opportunity to practise a wide range of skills along with gaining a greater understanding of nutrition, the science behind food as a material and wider environmental aspects associated with food. Throughout the course you will complete a series of modules involving written work and food experiments.

In Year 11 pupils will concentrate on completing two Non Examination Assessments (NEA) using a variety of research and investigation methods. Students will respond to one of three specified tasks set by the examination board. Pupils will not cook as much in Year 11 due to NEA and preparing for their examination in the summer term.

Pupils will enjoy Food Preparation and Nutrition if they are organised and enjoy experimenting with food. It is more important for pupils choosing the course to enjoy a large variety of foods than have a natural flair for cooking; we will teach you how to cook!

The course is taught in a “hands on” practical way; consequently the weekly purchase of ingredients is essential. Time will also need to be allocated to visiting the supermarket. Students are expected to do their own ingredient shopping (not parents!) and be prepared for lessons, having familiarised themselves with their recipes prior to attending class.

Assessment/Examination Information

We follow the AQA syllabus. All assessments take place in Year 11.

- September – November. NEA Task 1 – Food Science Investigation (10 hours) = 15% of GCSE
- December – February. NEA Task 2 – Food Preparation Assessment (20 hours including a 3 hour practical assessment) = 35% of GCSE
- May – June. 1 hour 45 minute examination = 50% of GCSE

How will studying Food Preparation and Nutrition help me in the future?

Food Technology is one of the world’s fastest growing industries. In fact, over 20% of the top 100 British companies are in food manufacturing.

Some examples of careers in food are: Dietician / Nutritionist, Food Sales and Promotion, Product Development, Consumer Technologist (Sensory Analysis and Product Tasting), Chef / Baker / Caterer, Food Journalist / Food Critic, Environmental Health Officer, Health & Safety Inspector, Food Service Management, Delicatessen / Restaurateur, Food Wholesaler, Production & Manufacturing, Quality Assurance / Standardisation, Purchaser (buys and sells food from around the world), Store Manager – Supermarket or Fast Food Chains, Packaging Technologist, Teacher.

GCSE Geography

Course Information

If you have ever wondered what is happening to the world around us and what you can do to help shape the future then Geography is for you. We are living in an ever-changing world facing many challenges and the Geography department at Maidstone Grammar School for Girls aims to develop students' understanding of what these challenges are and how we can overcome them. Our aim is to prepare students to lead and manage change successfully for the future. Travel the world from the classroom, exploring case studies in the United Kingdom, newly emerging economies and lower income countries. We follow the AQA specification which covers a variety of topics including climate change, poverty, deprivation, urbanisation, tectonic disasters, global shifts in economic power and the challenge of sustainable resource use. Students are also encouraged to understand their role in society, by considering different viewpoints, values and attitudes.

Geography is an excellent option to choose if you enjoy both a practical and academic subject. It will provide you with knowledge and a skill set which is transferable to a wide-range of areas. An important part of studying Geography is fieldwork which enables students to apply their knowledge in practical situations. They will be required to take part in 2 separate days of fieldwork during the course.

Assessment/Examination Information

There will be 3 examinations sat at the end of year 11 which include:

Paper 1: Living with the physical environment Written examination: 1 hour 30 minutes; 35% of GCSE

Paper 2: Challenges in the Human Environment Written examination: 1 hour 30 minutes; 35% of GCSE

Paper 3: Geographical applications Issue evaluation, Fieldwork, and Geographical skills Written examination: 1 hour 15 minutes; 30% of GCSE

How will studying Geography help me in the future?

Geography is a subject that develops a variety of different skills that can be used to study the subject at A Level or a range of other social sciences successfully. The skills and relevance of the study of Geography are highly regarded amongst employers and universities and Geography is one of the very few classed as both a Science and an Arts subject. It can lead into a broad selection of future careers including work within the Government, environmental sciences, marketing, human resources, surveying, town planning, environmental sciences, management and research.

GCSE History

Course Information

Paper 1: Understanding the Modern World

Germany, 1890-1945: Democracy and Dictatorship

We will study the development and collapse of democracy, the rise and fall of Nazism, experiences under Nazi rule including the Final Solution and the impact of the actions of individuals and groups in assisting and opposing Nazi rule.

Conflict and Tension, 1990-2009

Here, we will study motives for global terrorism, focussing on conflict in Iraq, Iran and Afghanistan. Western and Russian interests will be analysed, as will the contribution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Students will gain an understanding of how and why conflict occurred and why it has proven difficult to resolve tensions. Events covered will include Gulf War, 1990, the UN campaign against Saddam Hussein, the war on Al-Qaeda, Afghanistan & the Taliban regime and the Iraq War of 2003.

Paper 2: Shaping the Nation Britain: Power and the People: c.1170 to the present day

Students will gain an understanding of the development of the relationship between the citizen and the state in Britain over a long period of time. We consider the causes, scale, nature and consequences of protest to that relationship by charting the journey from feudalism and serfdom to democracy and equality.

Elizabethan England, c1568–1603

Students study the last 35 years of Elizabeth I's reign, focussing on major events considered from economic, religious, political, social and cultural standpoints. Topics include Elizabeth's court and Parliament, life in Elizabethan times, troubles at home and abroad and the historic environment of Elizabethan England. This entails an in-depth study of a specific site specified by the examination board which changes annually. We would intend to visit the specified site.

Assessment/Examination Information

We study the AQA course.

Assessment is through two terminal examinations, each lasting 1 hour 45 minutes and each comprising 50% of the GCSE.

How will studying History help me in the future?

This course will develop students' understanding of the world in which they live through a study of the past. Students will study British and international history, covering medieval, early modern and modern topics. They will develop their critical faculties, analysing sources and assessing reliability of accounts on such controversial subjects as western interference in the Middle East and the origins of terror. Students will develop discursive writing skills, aiming to confidently reach judgements based on a balanced appraisal of evidence. Topics will contribute contextual knowledge that will ease the transition to A level at MGGS. For all students, the study of History provides them with the power of persuasion and the ability to seek out truth. These skills are essential in numerous careers, from journalism, politics and law to art, literature and music.

GCSE Mathematics

Course Information

Students are set by ability throughout Years 10 and 11. All students are prepared for the Higher tier Edexcel Mathematics papers although a few may be entered for the Foundation level in order to secure a grade 4/5. In GCSE Mathematics, students develop and extend their understanding of topics covered throughout Key Stage 3. As before, each term's work is linked to a Big Question showing real-life applications of the topics taught.

Number: Topics covered will include: fractions, decimals and percentages; standard form; calculations.

Algebra: Students study: graphs, algebraic manipulation (expanding brackets, factorising and rearranging formulae); proportion; and equation solving.

Ratio, Proportion & Rates of change: This includes: ratio; proportion; speed and density.

Geometry & Measures: Topics include area and volume; transformations; vectors; trigonometry; similar shapes; and angles work.

Statistics: Areas to be covered include sampling; statistical calculations and graphs.

Probability: This topic includes set theory.

Assessment/Examination Information

There is no coursework in GCSE Mathematics. Assessment is by three equally weighted examinations, one of which is non-calculator.

How will studying Mathematics help me in the future?

Mathematics is a subject that uses its own language, made up of numbers, symbols and formulae, to explore the rules we need to measure or identify essential problems like distance, speed, time, space, change, force and quantities. Studying Mathematics helps us find patterns and structure in our lives. Practically, it helps us put a price on things, create graphics, build websites, build skyscrapers and generally understand how things work or predict how they might change over time and under different conditions. Mathematics is one of the best subjects to develop your analytical, research and problem-solving skills. Not only will studying mathematics help give you the knowledge to tackle scientific, mechanical, coding and abstract problems, it will also help you develop logic to tackle everyday issues like planning projects, managing budgets and even debating effectively. Maths A-level is a must have for degrees in: Physics, Engineering, Actuarial Science, Economics and, of course, Mathematics; it is recommended or sometimes required for: Computer Science, Accounting, Chemistry, Biology and Life Sciences, Medicine / Nursing, Dentistry, Business Studies, Management Studies, Finance, Architecture, Geology, Psychology, Surveying and even Philosophy.

GCSE Modern Foreign Languages

Course Information

All students must follow at least one GCSE MFL course. The details that follow apply to all of these courses. The aim of each course is to enable you to use the language effectively for purposes of practical communication, to offer insights into the culture and civilisation of the countries concerned, to foster a positive attitude to foreign language learning and to provide you with the knowledge and skills to continue the study of the foreign language beyond GCSE.

Listening skills are developed by the use of authentic material which includes news items, weather forecasts, interviews, dialogues and short films. You will have the opportunity to use the Language Laboratory regularly to improve your listening & speaking skills.

GCSE places great emphasis upon the ability to communicate orally in the foreign language. You will learn how to talk about yourself, to express your ideas and opinions and how to cope in a variety of everyday situations. You will also have the opportunity to record yourself speaking in order to improve your pronunciation.

Reading comprehension is an important part of the syllabus. You will learn how to read with understanding, to translate and to extract particular information from texts. The material used includes magazines, letters, articles, advertisements and literary extracts.

Writing accurately in the foreign language is another important element of the course. You are expected to be able to write letters, articles and e-mails and simple narrative accounts as well as produce translations, displaying a sound grasp of grammatical concepts and a wide-ranging vocabulary.

Assessment/Examination Information

We follow the AQA specification in French, German and Spanish. It is a linear course and there will be four examinations during the summer of Year 11. The examinations are as follows: Listening and responding. 25% of total marks. Speaking. 25% of total marks. Reading and responding. 25% of total marks. Writing. 25% of total marks.

How will studying French, German or Spanish help me in the future?

English is not enough! Not everyone speaks or wants to speak English. A language will always be useful, no matter what you do, as it will offer greater opportunities to travel or work abroad. Businesses need people who speak more than one language so being able to speak a language will make you stand out. Using a language at work could raise your salary by up to 20%. In addition, studying a language is good for you, as speaking more than one language increases your brain capacity and improves your memory.

GCSE Music

Course Information

The Music GCSE course aims to inspire its students to form personal and meaningful relationships with music through the development of musical knowledge, understanding and skills. You will be encouraged to engage critically and creatively with a wide range of music, develop an understanding of the place of music in different cultures and contexts, and reflect on how music is used in the expression of personal and collective identities. At MGGS students will be studying the Edexcel Music specification.

Course Content There are three components: 1. Performing (30%) 2. Composing (30%) 3. Appraising (40%)

Assessment/Examination Information

Component 1: Performing Performing is developed and recorded internally during the course itself. This consists of one solo performance and one ensemble performance. Each individual performance must last for a minimum of one minute with a combined length of at least four minutes across the solo and ensemble pieces. There should be a minimum of two pieces although more may be selected to make up the time. Each performance is worth 30 marks giving a total of 60 marks for the component. (30% of the course)

Component 2: Composing Composing is developed and recorded internally during the course itself. This consists of two compositions, one of which is to a set brief and the other a free composition. Each composition must last for a minimum of one minute with a total of at least three minutes for both compositions. Each composition is worth 30 marks giving a total of 60 marks for the component. (30% of the course)

Component 3: Appraising Component 3 includes four Areas of Study, each containing two Set Works: Instrumental Music 1700-1820, Vocal Music, Music for Stage and Screen, Fusions. This component is examined externally at the end of the course with an examination paper of 1hr 45 minutes which is worth 80 marks (40% of the course)

How will studying Music help me in the future?

Apart from specialist music careers a knowledge of music can be very useful in other arts-related courses/careers. Beyond this, your personal knowledge and experience of music will be enriched and you will develop listening and analytical skills which can be used in other subjects.

GCSE Physical Education

Course Information

Physical Education GCSE is like no other subject as it enables pupils to develop both their mind and body. The course covers a whole range of topics including sports psychology, socio-cultural issues, anatomy and physiology, use of data in sport, health fitness and well-being. The course looks into information such as why men get paid more than women in sport, why companies pay so much money to sponsor sport, and how the body responds to physical activity. There is a real focus on the impact that sport has on both the performer and society.

At Maidstone Grammar School for Girls we cover the AQA course which focuses on the six areas listed above. Over the two-year course students are assessed in their theoretical understanding and practical ability. Pupils will be assessed in three sports (one in a team activity, one in an individual activity and a third in either a team or in an individual activity). Students are assessed on their ability to perform a variety of skills in isolation as well as their ability to perform in a competitive situation.

GCSE PE not only promotes and encourages a healthy lifestyle, it also encourages pupils to discuss, debate, analyse and critically evaluate numerous factors that impact upon sport and sports participation.

Assessment/Examination Information

There will be three examinations: Paper 1: The human body and movement in physical activity and sport I hour 15 minutes 30% of the GCSE Paper 2: Socio-cultural influences and well-being in physical activity and sport I hour 15 minutes 30% of the GCSE Non-examination assessment: Practical performance in 3 activities and a written piece of coursework (externally moderated) 40% of the GCSE

How will studying Physical Education help me in the future?

Physical Education is a subject that develops a variety of skills. Pupils who take GCSE can of course go on to take A Level PE. It also gives them skills to be able to work with others, improves confidence and helps to develop the 'whole student'. GCSE PE can also lead to the opportunity to go to university and complete a sports degree, leading to a career in any of the following: Sports Training Sports Medicine Sports Dietitian Sports Coach Sport Psychologist Sport Journalist Sports Marketing Sports Lawyer.

GCSE Religious Studies: Full Course

Course Information

Religious Studies aims to provide students with the opportunity to develop a more in-depth understanding of Christianity and Islam. Students will be required to focus on key areas for discussion and debate such as Marriage and the Family, Peace and Conflict and Beliefs and Practices. Students will be required to develop their skills of articulation, reasoning and argumentation. They will also be required to use advocacy to represent the view of others and to analyse the importance of religious beliefs, values and commitments. Students are judged on their knowledge and accuracy with explanations, as well as their ability to express their own views and create a coherent line of reasoning.

Assessment/Examination Information

Area of Study 1- Christianity (50%)

- Christian Beliefs - Marriage and Family - Living the Christian Life - Matters of Life and Death
Assessed in an external examination lasting 1 hour 45 minutes

Area of Study 2- Islam (50%)

- Islamic Beliefs - Crime and Punishment - Living the Muslim Life - Peace and Conflict
Assessed in an external examination lasting 1 hour 45 minutes

How will studying Religious Studies help me in the future?

This course provides exceptional preparation for anyone intending to study Philosophy, Religion or Ethics to a higher level. Many students choose, for example, to continue the course into Sixth Form studies or take units relating to the course at Degree level. More generally, the course is essential in developing wider knowledge of religious views and the ways in which they can influence communities around the world. A basic understanding of religion is essential to anyone with an interest in politics, community cohesion or public sector work (e.g. healthcare, education or policing). Achievement in Religious Studies or Philosophy is looked upon favourably by employers because these subjects require the development of skills that can be underexplored elsewhere in the curriculum. For example, the ability to engage with sacred/contemporary beliefs, to examine divergent views and opinions and to deconstruct the evidence and reasoning behind a position of faith.

GCSE Sciences: Biology, Chemistry and Physics

Course Information

The Science Department aims to make your learning experience of Science enjoyable, interesting and relevant to everyday life.

At MGGs there are two possible Science GCSE routes for students:

Route 1 is to complete three separate Science GCSEs in Biology, Chemistry and Physics

Route 2 is to complete GCSE Combined Science: Trilogy which will be worth two GCSE grades.

Please note that whether a student follows route 1 or route 2 all three Science subjects (Biology, Chemistry and Physics) are studied. In addition, both courses are suitable preparation in order to study the Sciences at A level, provided the school entry requirements for A level are met.

Course content:

Biology • Cell biology • Organisation • Infection and response • Bioenergetics • 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 • Energy • Waves • Electricity • Magnetism and electromagnetism • Particle model of matter • Atomic structure

Assessment/Examination Information

Each subject will be examined by two externally-marked examination papers. Each paper will assess knowledge and understanding from different topics. Combined Science papers are 1 hour 15 minutes in duration and Separate Science papers are 1 hour 45 minutes.

Students are also required to take part in a number of required practical activities during the course, which are not formally assessed. However, there may be questions on these practical activities in the examination papers. Throughout the course progress will be monitored by a variety of means. These include the quality and standard of written work in class and homework, test results, contributions to class discussions and how practical work is implemented and analysed.

GCSE Astronomy

GCSE Astronomy is an after school course run by Mr Reid, Head of Physics, as part of our Specialist Science School initiative. It runs for one year, is an optional after school course and students take their GCSE examinations in summer 2019.

Assessment/Examination Information

Assessment takes the form of two written examinations each of 1 hour and 45 minutes duration. The first paper covers Naked Eye Astronomy and the second Telescopic Astronomy.

How will studying Sciences help me in the future?

Science has something to offer every student and a multitude of careers benefit from a good scientific understanding. From a trainee chef to a nuclear physicist, a construction apprentice to a cancer researcher, everyone needs some level of relevant Science understanding.

Non-Examined Courses

Careers Education, Information, Advice & Guidance

CEIAG is delivered throughout the school across all year groups often as all or part of a Focus Day. Other information is disseminated in a variety of ways, including a careers classroom on Google, assemblies, school trips or in lunchtime and lesson time activities. The aim is to develop enterprise skills and assist with career decisions and future plans. Students are strongly recommended to investigate a wide variety of careers using the materials available in the careers library on the top floor of Buckland House.

In Year 10 students will take part in a focus day involving careers related activities. In Year 11 the programme is formulated to assist with decisions and choices for post-16 plans. Students will be provided with lots of information about career options, the sixth form at MGS and how to apply. There will be a Sixth Form Open Evening for students and parents to find out more details about the A Level courses on offer. All Year 11 students will also have a one to one interview with our Careers Coordinator to assist with career decisions and a guidance meeting with a member of the school's Leadership Team. Additionally, there will be access to advice and guidance from CXK during focus days and in the form of one to one interviews where required.

When students enter our sixth form there is a further CEIAG programme to assist and support in choice of employment, higher level apprenticeships or higher education course.

Personal, Social & Health Education & Citizenship

The Personal, Social & Health Education (PSHE) programme provides the opportunity to deal with subjects such as healthy lifestyles, personal identities, relationships, managing risk and appreciating diversity. In addition, the programme provides opportunities to understand the concepts of economic wellbeing and financial capability. There will also be planned opportunities to prepare for future academic study and the world of work. Students will have the chance to participate in a business enterprise activity in Year 10 and work experience in Year 11. The course is delivered through the five Focus Days and these will also provide valuable enrichment activities. By using a variety of resources and approaches students will be able to identify their own strengths, draw up plans to support those areas that need more development and become increasingly prepared for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life.

Physical Education (Core PE)

The Physical Education Department offers a wide and varied programme. It provides for physical, creative, social and intellectual development and gives students an opportunity to gain the MGS Leadership Award in Dance or Sport. Through experiencing a balanced and relevant range of activities and learning experiences, students are encouraged to lead an active lifestyle and develop those attitudes necessary for the effective and productive use of leisure time.

Students at Key Stage 4 will be required to study a variety of activities in depth which will be assessed against Personal Learning and Thinking Skills. In addition to this the Physical Education Department also assesses attitude to learning and involvement in every aspect of this subject. Students' knowledge of the rules, tactics and techniques required in each activity together with an understanding of the fitness aspects involved are also assessed. Planning and evaluating is also an integral part of each course. The ability to work in co-operation with others is another important factor in the assessment procedure of the activities covered. Student progress will be defined in personal terms - there is little comparison between one student and the next. Views and evaluations of this progress are sought at the end of each unit of work.