



Maidstone Grammar School
for Girls

Non sibi sed omnibus

Key Stage 4 (Yr 10)

**Curriculum Information
2021 - 2022**

**A Reference Booklet
*for Parents and Carers***

Contact: Mrs Z Harris, Deputy Headteacher

A forward-thinking community with a tradition of excellence

Introduction

GCSE studies began in Term 6, 2021 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 **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 enrichment 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 (sometimes referred to as 'target' 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 Mr Walker for further information about this.



MGGS is MEGA



Mindset

Our MGGS Mindset programme is well established across the school, promoting that students need vision, significant effort, effective systems, varied practice and a good attitude in order to achieve their full potential. We firmly believe that these skills, traits and habits can be learned and developed, and have lots of activities designed to assist with this.

We look at different aspects in each Key Stage, focusing on attitude in Key Stage 3, adding vision and systems in Key Stage 4, before looking at the whole programme in the Sixth Form.

Students receive explicit teaching about MGGS Mindset during special year group sessions led by senior staff. This is supported by subject specific activities, as well as mentoring, form activities and assemblies.



Enquiry, Extension, Enrichment

We seek to develop curious learners and promote scholarship, including activities to extend students' understanding in all lessons. We want our students to be well rounded, and, as a result, we have designed a diverse and comprehensive Curriculum and Sixth Form Extra programme for all Key Stages.

In Key Stage 3, students attend timetabled Big Questions lessons, extending learning beyond the National Curriculum and applying their skills to new contexts. In Key Stage 4, students explore thinking and reasoning and practise being reflective learners, alongside a programme of Core PE that is designed to promote lifelong fitness and activity. In the Sixth Form, students are able to choose options to learn for leisure, as well as having the opportunity to undertake additional qualifications, including the LIBF Personal Finance course and the highly-regarded Extended Project Qualification.



Google

At MGGS we believe that technology should be embedded within teaching and learning throughout the school and that we should use both existing and emerging technologies as a means of preparing our students for the digital age. Learning to use digital resources appropriately and effectively is an essential part of education.

We teach, collaborate and communicate via Google throughout the school. New students often comment on how Google has transformed their learning. All our current Year 7s have their own chromebook and this is being further extended across the school. There are Google Classrooms and Drives for subjects, houses and many other groups, including Student Voice, Careers and the Aspire UCAS Early Entry group. Additionally, MGGS has been selected by the DfE to be a Computing Hub school, one of only 30 in the country.



Advanced Thinking

MGGS has been an Advanced Thinking School since May 2015. Our students are equipped with tools designed to reorganise, frame and extend their thinking, promoting deeper learning.

Students will be introduced to the Thinking Tools as part of their induction to the school and will then practise these in lessons across all subjects. Students also have an opportunity to attend training sessions to develop their use of these invaluable tools during the revision season.

Advanced thinking is embedded in all we do, and there are opportunities to celebrate this through outreach days, competitions and the Festival of Thinking in the Autumn term.

Year 10 at a glance

Term 6, 2021	Start of all GCSE courses (NB some core subjects may have started earlier)
September 2020	Continuation of all GCSE courses
November 2021	Year 10 Tracking Review 1- helps monitor student progress
Feb 2022	Year 10 school examinations
March 2022	Year 10 Tracking Review 2- helps monitor student progress
March 2022	Parents' evening
June 2022	Year 10 reports (Tracking Review 3)
Summer 2022	Public examinations in Astronomy (as appropriate)

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

Please see independent learning (homework) timetables at:
[Homework KS4](#)

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**

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**, GCSE **Physical Education** and GCSE **Dance**.

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, photography and digital software. 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, with exception of the externally set assignment.

How will studying Art, Craft and Design 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, 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 understand the idea behind technological advancements. It allows you to understand how people work together with computers to develop world changing programs like Facebook, Spotify and Search Engines. The course will provide you with an understanding of how computers work, how you write programs enhancing your problem solving and logical thinking skills and how data is represented and handled by applications. This will serve as a competitive advantage to you in your career, 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 complements lots of other subjects, especially the Sciences, Textiles, Music, Maths and Art and Design.

Assessment / Examination Information

At MGGS we follow the curriculum specified by the AQA exam board.

The course is made up of two units:

Paper 1 : Computational Thinking and Programming Skills (50% of the course grade)

Students' ability to break down a problem and produce a solution based on their understanding of programming concepts is the basis of this assessment. You will sit a 2 hour exam worth 90 marks and will be expected to trace code, think computationally, problem-solve and use programming concepts for the design of effective algorithms. You will be expected to design, write, test and refine code using the Python programming language. This would be a written assessment and all code will be written on paper for the examination. There would be no computer-based assessment.

Paper 2 : Computing Concepts (50% of the course grade)

This section will assess the students' understanding of the theoretical concepts in Computer Science : data representation, computer systems including the architecture and components, computer networks, cyber security, relational databases (SQL Language) and legal, ethical and environmental impacts of digital technology. You will sit a 105 minutes written exam worth 90 marks. You will be assessed on your ability to identify core-components of the computer system and your planning and writing skills for the longer questions.

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, 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 Dance

Course Information

Dance is a powerful and expressive subject that encourages students to develop their creative, physical, emotional and intellectual capacity. With 60% of the course being assessed practically it is well-suited to those students passionate about the subject and regularly training and performing.

Students will study a range of dance styles and style fusions as part of the AQA syllabus. Apart from the solo performance, students can choose any style in which to perform and choreograph, in line with the assessment criteria. The study of the anthology of professional works will develop their ability to critically appraise and appreciate professional dance works.

Students will focus on the aesthetic and artistic qualities of dance and the symbolic use of movement to express and communicate ideas and concepts

Assessment / Examination Information

Component 1: Performance and choreography

Performance (30% of GCSE):

- Set phrases through a solo performance (approximately one minute in duration)
- Duet/trio performance (three minutes in a dance which is a maximum of five minutes in duration)

Choreography (30% of GCSE):

Solo or group choreography – a solo (two to two and a half minutes) or a group dance for two to five dancers (three to three and a half minutes)

How it's assessed: Internally marked and externally moderated

Component 2: Dance appreciation (40% of GCSE)

- Knowledge and understanding of choreographic processes and performing skills
- Critical appreciation of own work
- Critical appreciation of professional works

How it's assessed: Written exam: 1 hour 30 minutes. Questions are based on students' own practice in performance and choreography and the GCSE Dance anthology.

How will studying Dance help me in the future?

This GCSE will open students' eyes to the world of professional performance and choreography. It well prepares students for further study in dance or dance-related careers and builds transferable life skills. University courses include Dance, Dance and Choreography, Dance and Theatre Arts, Dance Science. Careers include Dance Performer, Dance Instructor, Dance Development Officer, Dance Marketing, Dance Teacher, Choreographer, Dance Movement Therapist, Dance Journalist.

GCSE Design Technology - Product Design

Course Information

Product Design is concerned with the fast paced, ever-changing, technological advances which affect society and the way in which we live our everyday lives. Studying Product Design provides students with the skills necessary to thrive in a future world of immersive technologies, sustainable design, augmented reality and smart materials.

This course will focus on producing creative design work and innovative practical work utilising an increasing use of Computer Aided Design and Computer Aided Manufacture. It will allow students the opportunity to explore and perfect new skills and techniques whilst developing confidence and experience with specialist equipment and materials. Students will find the course both challenging and rewarding, ultimately culminating in an immense sense of pride in the products they create from scratch. GCSE Product Design provides the knowledge, understanding, technical experience, problem solving ability and creativity required by many high profile careers. This unique blend of skills highlights the honed abilities of a well-rounded individual capable of achieving varied career aspirations. Product Design students are 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 timbers, metals, polymers and compliant materials.

The course will allow students to discover how Product Design can be linked to many other subjects across the school including but not limited to Mathematics, Science, Geography and History as well as more creative subjects such as Art and Physical Education. Students will be able to combine both a practical application and a theoretical underpinning in all of their work and will seek to understand the processes and techniques used by those in industry.

Assessment/Examination Information

The Non Exam Assessment (NEA) is worth 50% of the GCSE, taking approximately 30–35 hours to complete and is worth 100 marks. The NEA is a contextualised design and make task that covers the skills of investigating, designing, making, analysing and evaluating. This starts in Term 6 of Year 10 and continues until Term 4 in Year 11. The remaining 50% is comprised of a 2 hour examination. Section A of the examination covers core technical principles with a mixture of multiple choice and short answer questions, assessing a breadth of technical knowledge and understanding. Section B covers specialist technical principles where there are several short answer questions and one extended response to assess a more in-depth knowledge of specialist principles. Section C covers a range of designing and making principles allowing students the opportunity to evidence their knowledge, understanding and creativity.

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. The breadth of transferable skills developed through studying Product Design allows students to stand out from other candidates. By possessing an enhanced repertoire of skills in manual dexterity, problem solving, resilience, perseverance, collaborative working and business acumen, students are uniquely positioned to offer valuable qualities, highly sought after in further education and future employment. 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 progress to a wide variety of rigorous and demanding academic and creative degrees such as: product design; industrial design; computer animation; architecture; user centred design; interior design; accessory design; furniture design; sports design; aerospace engineering; chemical engineering; mechanical engineering; civil engineering; transport co-ordinators; project management; customer relations, among many, many more.

GCSE Design Technology – Art Textiles

Course Information

GCSE Design Technology Art 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 examination 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 examination 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 responses. Both components will be internally marked and externally standardised.

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

GCSE Design Technology Art 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 or other textile products whilst adhering 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 significant benefit to those who study it and such experience and skills are highly regarded by universities and employers.

A Design Technology Art Textiles qualification can lead to degree courses, apprenticeships and careers in the following fields: fashion design; print, knit and weave technology; embroidery; garment technology; fashion business and 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; museum conservation; fashion illustration; costume and theatre design; fashion photography; and fashion public relations. In addition to this, degrees and careers that require manual dexterity like medicine and dentistry also value students who have an understanding of how the manufactured world works; unique skills that this course provides ample experience of.

GCSE Drama

“The word theatre comes from the Greeks. It means the seeing place. It is the place people come to see the truth about life and the social situation.” Stella Adler

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 (live and digital) 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 will study 'Romeo and Juliet' (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 will study 'The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde' (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 the first poem (24 marks) and one comparative question on both poems (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

Students are given the opportunity to make a wide variety of dishes over the course of the two years in a well-structured environment. This course will give students valuable key life skills enabling them to cook and make informed choices about what and how well they are eating.

Students will study topics that include: Food Preparation Skills; Food Nutrition and Health; Food Safety; Food Science; Food Provenance; and Food Choice.

During the course students 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 students will complete a series of modules involving written work and food experiments.

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

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

Students must recognise that there is an increased proportion of theory work to cover and therefore not all lessons are practical. However, many elements of the course are taught in a “hands on” practical way and 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 and undertaken the necessary preparations prior to attending class.

Assessment/Examination Information

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

- NEA Task 1, 15% of GCSE – Food Science Investigation (10 hours)
- NEA Task 2, 35% of GCSE – Food Preparation Assessment (20 hours including a single 3 hour practical assessment)
- Examination, 50% of GCSE - 1 hour 45 minute examination

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

This subject 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 and safety inspector; food service management; restaurateur; food wholesaler; production and manufacturing; quality assurance; standardisation; purchaser (buys and sells food from around the world); store manager; supermarket or department store food sections; and packaging technologist.

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.

In Year 10 students will study topics from Paper 2 and some field work from paper 3.

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 subjects 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 (studied Year 9 Term 6 - Year 10 Term 5)

Section A: Germany, 1890-1945: Democracy and Dictatorship

We will study the development and collapse of democracy and the rise and fall of Nazism. This is broken down into:

- The reign and fall of the Germany monarchy under Kaiser Wilhelm II, including the impact of WW1 on Germany.
- The success and problems of democracy in the 1920s, including hyperinflation, art and culture and the Great Depression
- The rise of Hitler and the NSDAP, including the Reichstag Fire and Night of the Long Knives
- Life for Germans under the Nazis, including persecution of Jews and minorities, education and the role of women

Section B: Conflict and Tension in Asia: 1950 - 1975

Here, we will study the impact of the Cold War on Asia. This involves exploring:

- The causes, events and consequences of the Korean War, including the battle of Pusan Perimeter.
- The causes and development of the Vietnam war, including reasons for US involvement.
- Key events and tactics of the Vietnam War, including the use of napalm, guerrilla warfare and My Lai massacre.
- The reasons for the end of the Vietnam war, including protest and military failures.

Paper 2: Shaping the Nation Britain (studied Year 10 Term 6 - Year 11 Term 4)

Section A: Health and the People

Students will gain an understanding of the development of medicine over the time frame of 1000 years.

This considers the development in the following areas:

- The understanding of how disease was caused and diagnostics for example, the 4 humours and urine tasting in Medieval Britain
- The development in attitudes toward public health
- The development in surgery, e.g. operations before anaesthetics and antiseptics
- The development in prevention and treatment e.g. the first vaccination for smallpox

This is taught chronologically, starting with the Medieval era, followed by the Early Modern Era, 19th century and 20th and 21st centuries. Within this study students will consider how a range of factors including individuals, government, religion and technology helped and hindered the journey of medicine to what it is today.

Section B: Elizabethan England, c1568–1603

Students study the last 35 years of Elizabeth I's reign, focussing on major events from economic, religious, political, social and cultural standpoints. This is broken down into three themes:

- Elizabeth's court and Parliament (e.g. Marriage, court rivalry and scandal),
- Life in Elizabethan times (e.g. theatre, fashion and poverty)
- Troubles at home and abroad, (e.g. the circumstances around the execution of Mary Queen of Scots and the Spanish Armada.)
- A depth study of a specific site specified by the examination board which changes annually.

Assessment / Examination Information

We study the AQA course.

Assessment is through two examinations at the end of Year 11, each lasting 2 hours 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 the reliability of accounts on such controversial subjects as US involvement in the Vietnam War. Students will develop discursive writing skills, aiming to confidently reach judgements based on a balanced appraisal of evidence. 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 media.

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. Each topic 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 needed 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.

The course is divided into three themes: Identity and Culture; Local, national, international and global areas of interest; Current and future study and employment. These themes cover the following topics:

Identity and Culture - me, my family and friends; technology; free time; customs and festivals.

Local, national, international and global areas of interest - home, town, neighbourhood and region; social issues; global issues; travel and tourism.

Current and future study and employment - my studies; life at school; education post-16; jobs, career choices and ambitions.

Listening skills are developed by the use of authentic material which includes news items, 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 and structures.

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 - listening, reading, speaking and writing - which are given equal weighting of **25% each** of the 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 and meet new people 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 and Sports Law.

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 • Space

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 a STEM initiative. It runs for one year, is an optional after school course and students take their GCSE examinations at the end of year 10 after one year of study. The course is suitable for students whose have demonstrated good attainment and effort in Science and maths

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 careers' classrooms on Google, assemblies, school trips, lunchtime talks and form time activities. The aim is to develop a variety of 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, which includes university and college prospectuses, careers event notices, books and job profile information sheets.

In Years 7 to 10 students will take part in Focus Days which involve careers related activities such as interview skills workshops, career quizzes and enterprise tasks.

In Year 11 the programme is formulated to assist with decisions and choices for post-16 plans, including information about apprenticeships, career options, the Sixth Form at MGGS and how to apply for any of these.

There will be a Sixth Form Open Evening (possibly virtual in 2020) for students and parents to find out more details about the A Level courses on offer at MGGS, which our Careers Co-ordinator attends and is available to talk to all night. All Year 11 students will also have a one to one interview with our Careers Coordinator to assist with Post-16 plans and a guidance meeting with a member of the school's Leadership Team.

Students in Year 9 also have a one to one interview with our Careers Co-ordinator to help assist with GCSE option selections. Additionally, there will be access to advice and guidance from our independent careers link, which is available via request for Years 11, 12 and 13.

When students enter our sixth form there is a further CEAIG programme to assist and support in choice of employment, higher level apprenticeships or higher education course. This includes being able to book appointments to discuss future plans, help and support with UCAS, apprenticeship and job applications, and Google classrooms specifically for vocational careers such as Law, Education and Healthcare.

Personal, Social & Health Education & Citizenship

The aim of our PSHE programme is to support the development of the skills, attitudes and values to enable students to develop good relationships and value and respect themselves and others, to develop a healthy and safe lifestyle, become better informed citizens and make and act on informed decisions and have a sense of purpose. The PSHE programme has three areas of focus:

- Relationships and Sex Education (RSE)
- Health and Wellbeing Education
- Living in the Wider World (citizenship and careers education)

The course is delivered through the four Focus Days as well as assemblies and form times. 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 enrichment programme. It provides for physical, creative, social and intellectual development and gives students an opportunity to gain the MGGS Leadership Award in Dance or Sport. Through 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 and cooperate with others is another important factor in the assessment procedure.