



GCSE OPTIONS 2017



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HOWELL'S SCHOOL
Llandaff

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Where girls can



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INTRODUCTION

"This is an exciting time; these decisions are important ones so take your time, talk to your teachers, the careers advisors and your parents before you make them."

The aim of this booklet is to provide you and your parents with some basic information about the subjects and courses that are offered in Years 10 and 11. The curriculum in these two years is designed to ensure that you study a broad range of subjects which will provide you with the maximum amount of choice in your studies in the Sixth Form College and beyond.

Before you consider your choices in more detail, remember that you will study the following compulsory subjects:

- English Language and English Literature
- Mathematics
- Science (Biology, Chemistry, Physics)

In order to ensure that all options remain open in university and career choices later on, it is advisable to choose a humanities subject (Geography, History or Religious Studies) and a modern language (French, German, Spanish or Welsh). We will endeavour to create a timetable to accommodate everyone's choices; **however, unfortunately, we cannot guarantee this.** If we are unable to do so, we will let you know as soon as possible in the Summer Term.

It is school policy that all students should have a recognised qualification in ICT at the end of Key Stage 3. Everyone at Howell's will have completed the ICT short course by the end of Year 9 (this is sufficient preparation to take AS or A2 ICT). The option to study the Full Course GCSE in ICT will be offered as an additional subject after school if there is sufficient demand.

In addition to the GCSE subjects you will also have PE and Enrichment sessions. Wellbeing will be on discrete days and half-days when key issues such as finances, sex education and careers will be addressed, often by outside speakers.

If you have specific career aspirations and need some advice over subject choices you should make an appointment to see Mrs House or Mrs Wilks, our Careers Advisers, to discuss your probable career path. Your parents may come to the interview if they wish.

At the end of the booklet you will find a subject choice sheet. This must be filled in, signed by your parents and returned to your form tutor by Friday 3rd February 2017.

This is an exciting time; these decisions are important ones so take your time, talk to your teachers, the careers advisors and your parents before you make them.

Natalie Chyba, Deputy Principal

THE ROLE OF THE CAREERS DEPARTMENT

The Careers Department aims to support Year 9 Form Tutors as they guide students through this important transition period of GCSE option choices, enabling them to move smoothly into Year 10 with the minimum of anxiety and with a feeling of anticipation for the exciting challenges to follow.

The principal aims of the department are to help you begin to develop an understanding and self-awareness in relation to future roles in the worlds of work, training and continued education. The department undertakes:

- A planned and co-ordinated programme of careers education from Year 7 through to Year 13
- Access to impartial careers information and guidance
- Equality of opportunity
- Access to reliable and up-to-date resources and information
- Help and guidance at the transition times of 14+, 16+ and 18+
- Direct experience of the world of work

As you progress towards your GCSE choices, care is taken to ensure that you understand the process when making important choices and decisions. Help is given in encouraging you to focus on your strengths, abilities and interests in relation to specific subjects, and you are encouraged to recognise the importance of selecting a group of subjects which is as broad based as possible to maximise future career choices and University courses.

It is useful to bear in mind that some career choices require specific GCSE subjects and/or A Levels to be taken. This is to ensure that you have the required knowledge to pursue your university course choice; examples include medicine and engineering. You should ask the Careers department about this if you want to make sure you are taking the necessary subjects.

The Careers Department programme

- You will participate fully in the *Year 9 Option Choices* sessions. Time is spent explaining the importance of self-awareness at times of transition and decision-making and extra support may be given to help you understand the process involved. Arrangements are made for you to have access to senior students during a session to ask questions about subjects you may be considering for GCSE – *Option Choices Surgeries*.
- You will have attended the biennial careers convention where experts in many different career areas were on hand to offer advice. It is important that you are as well informed as possible. You will be informed of special events and courses as they arise and you will be able to make excellent use of the networking opportunities the GDST and the Drapers' Company offers.
- Courses specific to your year group and dates of careers events throughout the year are published on the website, in the school calendar and in the weekly newsletter.
- The external School Careers Adviser attends parents' evening and is available for one-to-one guidance on GCSE choices if required.

"As students progress towards their GCSE choices, care is taken to ensure that students understand the process when making important choices and decisions."

- You will take the Inspiring Futures *Futurewise Career Profile* at the end of Year 10, which produces a personalised record of abilities and career paths. This is discussed in a one-to-one interview in school. You and your parents can then access individual support from the *Futurewise Programme* until you are 23 years of age.
- In Year 11, you will take part in two weeks of work experience at the start of July.
- On going support in Years 10 & 11 from the CareerStart programme

Start your career planning now by visiting these websites where there is age-related information:

- <http://www.careerconnect.org.uk/YoungPeople-i2.html>
- <http://nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk/Pages/Home.aspx>



"Art GCSE shows up a new perspective on everyday things, giving you a chance to express yourself as well as enjoy yourself."

ART CRAFT AND DESIGN (EDUQAS)

"Creativity requires the courage to let go of certainties."

Eric Fromm

Should I choose this subject?

Certain qualities have been identified as vital for progress in the world of work in the future: flexibility, capability and creativity. Art, Craft and Design links all three with practical purpose, as well as providing a tool for personal expression and growth.

Creativity is a form of intelligence and distinguishes those who will form the future we hope to live in. If you are interested in the visual world and visual culture, Art, Craft and Design offers you the opportunity to find your own solutions and produce a personal response.

If you are considering a career in Art, Craft and Design, be it fashion and textiles, graphics or three-dimensional design, this subject is required for entry to higher education courses.

What is it about?

Art, Craft and Design is a huge area, and its applications range from fashion to transport design, from graphics to installation art, from architecture to film. The course we offer is intended as an introduction to the *dynamics* of visual creativity.

We seek and encourage:

- The love of drawing
- Curiosity in the visual world around you
- Enthusiasm for art, craft and design of past and present cultures
- Flexibility with ideas and materials
- The desire to create links and connections
- Perseverance and motivation to give form to ideas.



Art, Craft and Design can be personal expression, problem solving, exploration and experimentation, but it is also about meeting deadlines, so it requires commitment! Creativity is about "thinking outside the box", connecting ideas and being willing to think around a theme or problem in a number of ways, rather than following a set template.

How will it be studied?

- Component 1 Portfolio 60%
- Component 2 Externally Set Assignment 40%

The Course

Students are encouraged to develop a themed project for the portfolio showing initiative, imagination and motivation towards realising their ideas. Some of their work (at home and school) takes place in the Artbook, which is a combination of sketchbook and time-based record.

The students select one of the Externally set assignments as a starting point for their examination which consists of a preparatory study period of approximately 6 weeks culminating in a 10 hour examination over two days to make the final piece.

Classroom Activities

Coursework begins with students being introduced to different ideas and ways of working through workshop type activities. A wide range of processes is taught including painting, drawing, mixed media, ceramics, graphics, textiles, stop frame animation, photography and image manipulation through Photoshop. As personal starting points are developed from this, students are then supported on a one-to-one basis with teaching fashioned to their individual needs.

Homework

Homework is a continuation of the tasks covered in coursework: drawing, collecting visual materials/resources, researching the work of artist – whatever the student's response to the project theme demands.

Assessment

There will be on-going, formative assessment with gradual introduction of student self-assessment and target setting to encourage independent learning and personal responsibility. There is controlled assessment of the student coursework portfolio, and externally set assignment, which are then marked and externally moderated.

What can I do with it?

The skills and understanding you will acquire in GCSE Art, Craft and Design are required for further study in the subject at AS/Advanced level and beyond. Careers in Art, Craft and Design are competitive, but do provide one of the UK's main export strengths – creative talent.

The global market and digital technology have elevated the economic importance of creative design in many areas; British fashion, graphics, 3D design, architecture, fine art, animation and film production are regarded as amongst the best in the world.

The visual understanding gained from this subject can also benefit you when making personal choices in your future life, and will enrich your understanding of other times and cultures. The value of the personal enjoyment and sense of well-being gained from creative and productive effort cannot be underestimated.

DRAMA (EDUQAS)

Should I choose this subject?

Drama is not just about performing. The subject offers you many opportunities for working together when devising pieces of drama, considering the more technical side of the subject, such as lighting, set design and costume. If you are full of ideas and enjoy creative thinking then Drama may be for you. The subject allows you to gain confidence when speaking in public as well as learning much about cultural life and issues which dominate our everyday lives.

What is it about?

Drama provides you with a balance of practical performing, reading, analysing various plays and acting from recognised texts, as well as devising performances from creative group improvisation.

During the course of the year you will have two practical performance assessments. One will be devised by you and this is accompanied by a controlled assessment which evaluates the process and development of your devised piece. The other practical performance will be taken from an excerpt from a play.



Student Comments:

“Playwrights, lighting, costume, staging – it’s not just reciting Shakespeare.”

“It’s not all about performing. You do gain confidence and speaking in front of people is no longer a problem.”

Student Comment:

“All those topics you’ve thought of but never got to talk about – Drama gives you the opportunity to discuss them to your heart’s content.”

How will it be studied?

The activities you will be involved in will vary greatly. As there are two practical performances, there are many opportunities for acting, role-play, group discussion and improvisation. One drama text is studied and analytical and essay writing skills are practised frequently. Throughout the two years, there will be visits to various theatres which will allow you to gain a closer insight into the professional workings of Drama and inform your own performances.

Homework

There is a lot of work to cover and so two homeworks each week are to be expected. You will also be asked to do additional reading, and of course the learning of scripts is essential.

Assessment

There is one written paper lasting one and a half hours which is worth 20% of the final mark. You will be assessed on your ability to analyse one set text as an actor, designer and director. You will also be required to evaluate the performance taken from an excerpt from a play.

- **Component 1:** Devising Theatre – Students create, develop and perform a piece of devised theatre in response to a stimulus set by Eduqas. This is accompanied by a portfolio of supporting evidence and evaluation of the final performance (40%)
- **Component 2:** Performing from a text - Students will study two extracts from the same performance text chosen by the centre (20%)
- **Component 3:** Interpreting Theatre – Written examination (1 hour 30 minutes). A series of questions on one set text and a theatre review of a live theatre production (40%)

What can I do with it?

Drama allows you to develop many skills, such as communication, performing and making informed and considered judgements.

As a discipline, Drama complements both science and arts subjects and the skills developed during the two years are increasingly important in all career paths. The subject is also studied at AS/A2 level and is a highly regarded qualification for University entrance.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND ENGLISH LITERATURE

As a core subject, English is compulsory. You will study two completely separate GCSEs, one in **English Language** and one in **English Literature**.

The hard work you have done in Years 7 - 9 will support you throughout the course. Whilst you will be far more conscious of the demands of examinations, you will effectively be building on the skills you have already acquired as well as developing new ones that address specific areas of the GCSE. Your confidence and critical abilities will grow as you tackle a range of demanding reading matter and writing styles.

You will find the reading and writing skills you develop in English will help you in several other subjects as well as helping you to understand and appreciate subject specific non-fiction, media and literary texts.

What is it about?

Fundamentally the course encourages you to become confident and capable with comprehension and communication. You are assessed on:

- Reading – understanding, analysing and responding to different literary, non-fiction and media texts
- Writing – learning to recognise and use the features of different writing styles
- Speaking and Listening – including individual presentations (This aspect will no longer contribute to the GCSE English Language grade but will be separately endorsed)
- Literature – the literary study and appreciation of several texts – novels, plays and poetry.

How will it be studied?

English Language and English Literature will be separate but taught alongside one another. The first focus will be on English Language, which is made up of two examinations. In English Literature, there are also two examinations.

In Years 10 and 11 students will continue to study a range of tasks and text types including:

- Non-fiction and media texts
- Writing to present a viewpoint
- Descriptive and narrative writing techniques
- A Shakespeare play
- A 19th century novel
- Modern texts
- A range of poetry

Student Comments:

“A challenging course which encourages us to think for ourselves.”

“English makes you more independent and confident.”



What can I do with it?

Naturally, the process of studying English Language and English Literature will equip you for many of the skills you need for life as well as most jobs and careers. Employers expect a high standard of English for most occupations and achieving a top grade will enable you to show how skilful a communicator you are.

You can, of course, pursue Literature as an A Level course in the College, as well as English Language and Literature. These are very popular options and offer you the opportunity to explore key texts and writers in a more detailed way. If you are considering reading English at University you would need to study A Level Literature as preparation.

Many careers can lead on naturally from studying English Language and English Literature such as law, journalism, television, media and teaching. You will learn to analyse, articulate and communicate; essential skills for success in whatever area of professional life you choose.

And finally, remember:

“Great books help you understand and they help you to feel understood.”

John Green

GEOGRAPHY (EDUQAS SPECIFICATION B)

Should I choose this subject?

Geography is *the* subject to help make sense of the complicated and interconnected world in which we all live. Your generation will bear an increasing responsibility for the health and welfare of our planet and a well-informed appreciation of the issues will help you become more socially and environmentally aware.

Geography is a subject highly respected by both employers and higher education institutions. If you choose to study Geography, you will find that it combines well with sciences, languages and other humanities. You will also have opportunities to develop and apply your ICT skills in a meaningful context (including use of spreadsheets, Flash animation, web design and video conferencing).

Geography:

- Develops an awareness and understanding of the world and the importance of safeguarding the environment
- Helps students develop a range of transferable skills such as decision-making, research, use of primary and secondary data, analysis, evaluation and report writing
- Helps develop skills in information technology in a range of challenging contexts
- Involves practical fieldwork investigations in varied environmental contexts
- Bridges the arts and the sciences, giving flexibility for Higher Education courses
- Has links across the curriculum, for example, with economic understanding, environmental education and citizenship
- Has status as an A Level subject welcomed by universities
- Offers a very wide range of career opportunities. A recent Higher Education Careers Service Unit (HECSU) survey showed geographers have one of the lowest rates of unemployment after graduation of all subjects (third only behind Law and Psychology).



Investigating ecosystems in Kenfig Nature Reserve

Student Comments:

"Geography has opened my mind to a whole new world."

"There is always something different to do in Geography."

What is it about?

During the course we study three themes.

- Changing Places - Changing Economies – investigating the challenges in our ever expanding urban areas and the challenges facing global development.
- Changing Environments – this theme looks at weather and climate, rivers, coasts and the challenges of climate change and flood prevention.
- Environmental Challenges – this theme examines the challenges facing global ecosystems and how we can manage our global resources to maintain a sustainable future.

How will it be studied?

You will know from your studies in Geography in Years 7 - 9 that the subject includes a wide variety of topics and ways of studying them. Lessons are therefore very varied and include role-play exercises, videos, group work, discussions, debates, ICT enquiries etc. There are at least two days of fieldwork when photographs and sketches are taken and data is collected using a variety of techniques.

Homework

Homework is given weekly and usually involves extension work on case studies, decision-making exercises or independent follow-up work from classroom discussions.

Examinations

- **Component 1** (40%) lasts one hour and 45 minutes and assesses your understanding of themes one, two and three.
- **Component 2** (30%) lasts one and a half hours and is a problem-solving exercise based on a controversial issue.
- **Component 3** (30%) lasts one and a half hours and assesses your understanding of the fieldwork investigations we complete during the course.

What can I do with it?

A qualification in Geography is helpful to a wide range of careers, including:

Accountancy	Courier Services	Medicine
Agriculture	Conservation	Meteorology
Archaeology	Economics	Navigator
Architecture	Ecology	Politics
Broadcasting	Estate Management	Surveying
Cartography	Journalism	Teaching
Civil Engineering	Law	Tourism and Travel
Civil Service	Management/Business	Town Planning

HISTORY (EDUQAS)

Should I choose this subject?

If you are interested in people and events that shaped the world we live in today, you should definitely choose History. The EDUQAS GCSE specification builds upon and extends your knowledge, understanding and skills developed up to the end of Year 9. You will have the opportunity to study History in depth and breadth.

What is it about?

- The Development of the USA, 1930-2000** – A period study, Breadth. This is a study of the major Political, Social, Economic and Cultural perspectives that have affected the lives of the American people. This includes the Civil Rights Movement, Social change 1950 -2000 and the Cold War.
- Changes in Crime and Punishment in Britain c500 to the present day** – A Thematic study in breadth. This is a study of the causes of crime, nature of crime, methods of punishment and enforcing Law and order. This Unit includes a study of the historic environment. For 2018 this will be the east End of London in the late 19th century.
- Empire, reform and War. Britain 1890 -1918** – A British Study in Depth. This is the study of Britain before the First World War, Women's Suffrage, Culture and Fashion, the Western Front and Social Reform.
- The Voyages of Discovery and the conquest of the Americas 1492-1522** – Non British Study in Depth. Focus areas include the Voyages of Discovery, the Explorers, the Aztec Civilization, and the effect of the Spanish Conquest on the Aztecs.



Student Comment:

"History is really interesting; the trips are good, and the controlled assessment is so much easier than you think."

How will it be studied?

As you will already know, History lessons involve a variety of study activities. You will make notes, spider diagrams and timelines, watch DVDs and take part in discussion, group work, role-play and presentations. You are encouraged to make full use of ICT facilities.

These studies will lead to **two** examination sessions:

Component 1 – Studies in Depth

Written examination. Two papers, one hour each, 50% of qualification

Voyages of Discovery, 25% and Britain 1890 -1918, 25%

All questions are structures. Both papers will require you to use sources and own knowledge. The emphasis in these papers is on sources and interpretations.

Component 2. Studies in Breadth

Written examination. 2 hours, 2 papers. 45 minutes for the Period study and one hour fifteen minutes for the Thematic study. 50% qualification

USA 1930 -2000, Breadth study, 20%

Crime and Punishment, Thematic study, 30%

These papers focus on own knowledge and key concepts such as cause, continuity, change, consequence, significance, similarity and difference.

What can I do with it?

For careers in the following fields, a qualification in History is desirable, if not essential:

Antiques	Conservation	Law
Archaeology	Diplomatic Service	Librarianship
Architecture	Drama	Management
Archive/Museum Work	Economic Research	Medicine
Book Trade	Environmental Health	Broadcasting
Historical Cartography	Political Research	Building Renovation
Teaching	Publishing	Civil Service
Journalism	Town Planning	Travel and Tourism

Even if you are not interested in these particular careers, the study of History is highly recommended because it teaches you important skills, such as, recognising different viewpoints and propaganda. These are valuable in your future studies and in everyday life as well as in the workplace.

Student Comments:

"It all comes together in Year 11 – once you know the style of the questions, you can get really good marks."

"I think it's good that you do four different topics; it makes the course more interesting."

LATIN (OCR)

Should I choose this subject?

Yes, if you have enjoyed Latin so far and wish to take the opportunity to explore the rich treasure house of linguistic, historical and cultural understanding provided by this versatile language. You will find that it helps enormously with understanding other languages, including English. Whether you prefer the arts or the sciences, the subject matter and techniques of learning Latin will complement and enhance your learning across the subject range. If you are interested in words, extending your vocabulary, finding out about the civilisation which underpins modern European culture, literature, drama, philosophy and art, this is the subject for you!

What is it about?

The Cambridge Latin Course unfolds to introduce new characters and situations as well as some familiar figures from the early stages. While increasing in complexity, the language is always part of an intriguing story-line. Quintus, a survivor of the volcanic eruption at Pompeii, has journeyed to Egypt and Roman Britain in his quest to reunite a family broken by tragedy, and he survives the political wiles of Roman officials and priests there to get to Rome. Here, the intrigues of the Emperor's court offer a vivid, engaging world in which to study and expand your knowledge of the Latin language.

How will it be studied?

This is a reading course and you will continue to translate from Latin to English in class and for homework. The system of reading, comprehension passages and language exercises will be familiar to you. As well as improving your understanding of the language, you will gain a closer insight into the lives of the Romans and the people they conquered. Class discussion, slides, videos and visits to sites such as Caerleon, Caerwent and Bath increase your awareness of the ancient world, so remote but, strangely, so near.

When your understanding of the language has progressed sufficiently, usually in the third term of Year 10, you begin reading the set works, a selection of prose and poetry from the best Roman authors. There is a particular thrill in reading *original* Latin and the subject matter is fascinating. As with English Literature, you will be involved with characters and their motives as well as the style and content of the works. The material never fails to spark off a range of unexpected topics for discussion!

The course is assessed by three external examinations at the end of Year 11:

Unit 1 – 1 hour 30 mins (50%)

This is a language paper comprising of comprehension and translation questions.

Units 2 and 3 – each lasting 1 hour (25% each)

These papers are based on the texts we have prepared together and comprise of comprehension, translation and analytical questions.

There are no internally assessed components in Latin GCSE

Student Comments:

“Latin is great. We cover a wide range of topics including background work about Roman gods, soldiers, customs, etc. The lessons are really informative and usually fun-packed. If you have enjoyed Latin in Year 9, you will enjoy it even more in Year 10.”

“Latin really helps with other languages and widens your vocabulary, which is especially useful in English. It is interesting to find out about the Romans and their lives.”

Student Comment:

“The lessons are varied and good fun. It’s not just the language and grammar work, but also the background work, looking at the lives of the Romans.”

What can I do with it?

A stimulating subject in its own right, Latin also provides a unique foundation for a wide range of subjects and future careers. It is well known that Latin is the ideal basis for understanding European ‘Romance’ languages, (e.g. French, Italian and Spanish) and for gaining greater fluency and effectiveness in English. The background material gives you an awareness of the roots of western civilisation and helps you to understand contemporary issues through the discovery of the past.



As a discipline, Latin complements both science and arts subjects. You may later wish to study Latin at A level or choose the non-linguistic Classical Civilisation A level course. Latin is a highly regarded qualification at GCSE and A Level and Howell's students are uniquely privileged in Cardiff to be able to do both if they wish. Classics students have consistently won outstanding success in public examinations, helping them gain entrance to excellent universities. A vast array of classical degrees, with many possible combinations, is available in the majority of British universities.

The employment prospects of those with a classical training are particularly high and the range of options open to them is extremely wide. Law, Medicine, Librarianship, Journalism, Business and Management, Publishing, Creative and Media posts, and the Civil Service are among the many career possibilities for students of Latin. Latin remains a vitally important gold standard for academic achievement.

MATHEMATICS (AQA)

As a core subject, Mathematics is compulsory.

What is it about?

All of you will follow the AQA Higher Tier course (grades 4-9), which is examined at the end of Year 11.

The Assessment Objectives are:

- A01 Use and apply standard techniques (40%)
- A02 Reason, interpret and communicate mathematically (30%)
- A03 Solve problems within mathematics and in other contexts (30%)



How will it be studied?

The types of questions you will tackle are now *more* applicable to events that occur in everyday life. Also there will be investigational work, where the basics involved test your ability to organise work, discover patterns and interpret results whilst communicating and discussing your ideas. Mathematics at GCSE aims to enable you to use the subject as a means of communication, to develop the ability to reason logically, and to appreciate the interdependence of different branches of Mathematics (and also its applications to other subjects, particularly science and technology).

Homework

This is set twice a week, each taking approximately 45 minutes.

Student Comment:

"Year 10 Maths is exciting and challenging, interactive and fun. It is one of my favourite subjects."

Assessment

There will be three written papers, each 1 hour 30 minutes.

Paper 1: Non-Calculator paper

Paper 2: Calculator paper

Paper 3: Calculator paper

All papers will comprise of a mix of question styles, from short, single-mark questions to multi-step problems. Mark schemes will include specific criteria for the assessment of mathematical written communication such as legibility, mathematical style and use of specialist vocabulary in some questions.

What can I do with it?

Mathematics at GCSE is usually specified as an entry requirement into any form of Higher Education. GCSE Mathematics is obviously a stepping stone to taking Mathematics at A Level. Mathematics arises in many other subjects as well, such as science, business studies and psychology to name a few, and so it is necessary to be able to apply your knowledge. You also use Mathematics in everyday life and will be well equipped to cope even if you stop studying it after GCSE. If you are interested in Mathematics then you may well be able to take it to A Level. You can mix Mathematics with arts subjects or science subjects or both. Students who take Mathematics at A Level go on to study Mathematics, Medicine, Engineering, Pharmacy, Optics, Chiropody, Business Studies, Economics, Management, Psychology, Accountancy, Physics, Computer Studies, Languages and many other courses. Those with exceptional talent can also choose to take Further Mathematics at A Level.

Student Comments:

"The thought of GCSE Maths might be daunting but honestly there is no need to panic. Maths is just a continuation from Year 9. Obviously there are some more difficult topics but this harder work is made fun with the use of MyMaths and the interactive whiteboard."

"Maths does become more challenging in Year 10 but the topics we learn are very interesting. We still have fun tasks like investigations and computer work."

"It's a good idea to learn as you go along, as there is a large amount of work covered each year."

"Mathematics helps with other subjects, sciences in particular."

"Make sure you understand one topic before moving on to the next. If you need help, ask the teacher or you will come across things later that you don't understand."

MODERN LANGUAGES: FRENCH, GERMAN AND SPANISH (EDUQAS)

Should I choose this subject?

When you learn French, German or Spanish (or more than one in combination) for GCSE, you will be learning how to communicate! You will be developing the skills you have already been using in your language lessons: listening and speaking, reading and writing. As you study the various topics, you will also learn a great deal about the culture and society of French, German and Spanish-speaking countries, as well as extending your knowledge of the spoken language. We hope that you will find this both interesting and useful.

What is it about?

You will study three broad areas – Identity and culture; Local, national, international and global areas of interest; Current and future study and employment. You have already learned quite a lot of the vocabulary for these topics and as you expand your vocabulary and develop your language skills we hope you will understand how the languages work – grammar is not the most important thing you will learn but it does matter! The course encourages you to express your opinions in the foreign language when writing and talking about topics of interest to you.

How will it be studied?

You will have five hours of lessons a fortnight and your homework will take approximately one and a half hours per week. Homework could include preparing an oral presentation, reading, writing or learning.

Assessment

In all courses, you will be assessed in all four skills in the examination; Listening (25% of the qualification), Reading (25%), Speaking (25%) and Writing (25%).

What can I do with it?

Whatever you decide to do in the future, it is possible and likely that you will be dealing with colleagues in Europe in your work. It will be helpful if you can do this confidently and competently. There are some careers for which a very specialised knowledge of language is required, like interpreting and translating, but many careers now require an ability to use languages, for example, Law, Engineering, International Banking, Marketing, Advertising etc. – just read the job advertisements in the serious newspapers each week. British companies need people with language skills and there is a serious shortage of competent linguists at present. Your knowledge of other widely spoken European languages could well enhance your career prospects.

Student Comments:

“If you are thinking about taking more than one language, don’t worry, one helps the other and you don’t get confused at all between the two subjects. The only thing we can say is to enjoy the languages that you choose so that you get the best out of them. Good luck!”

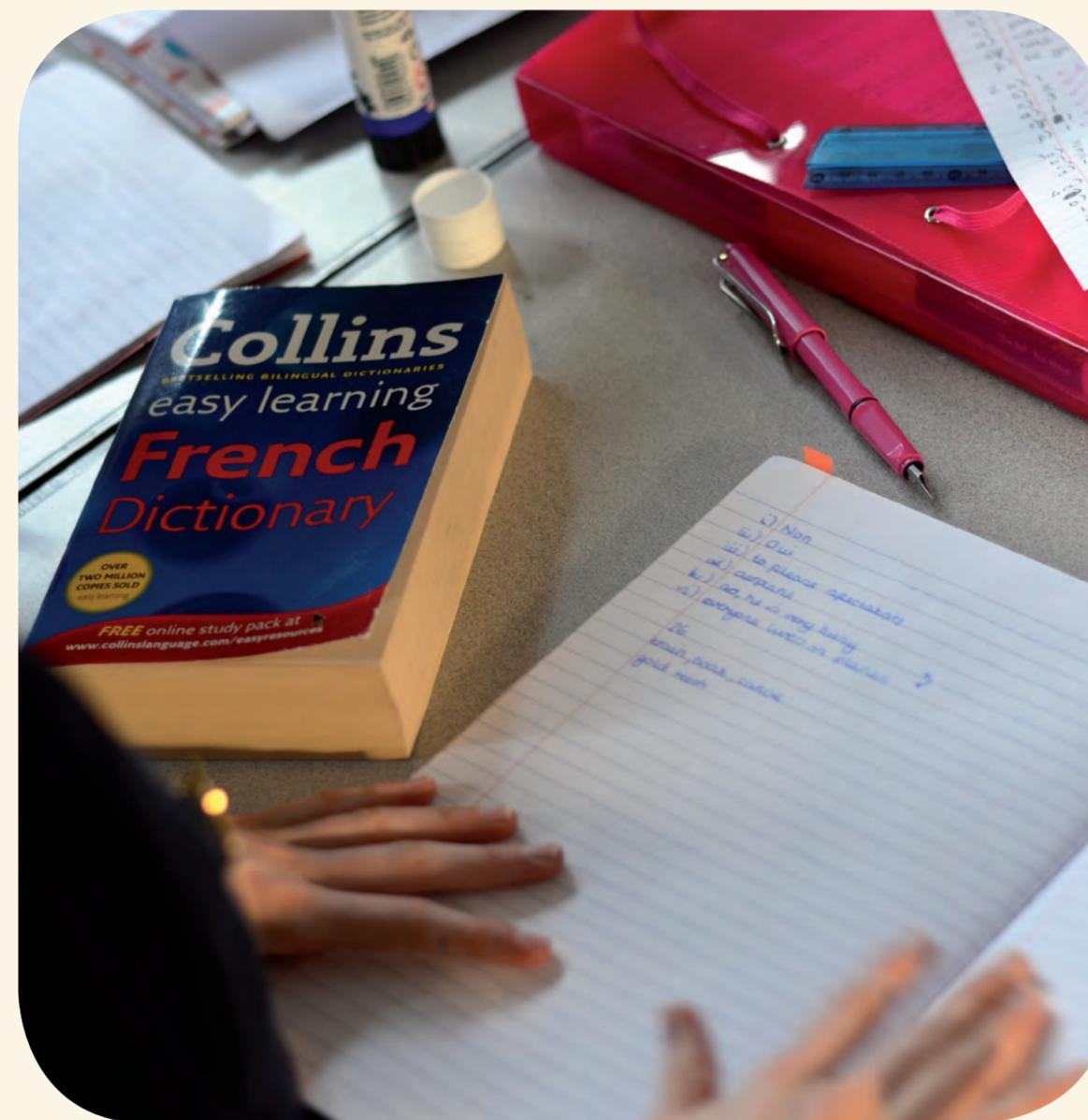
“GCSE French, German or Spanish is an extension of what you already know. Although there is a lot more grammar and vocabulary to learn, this is integrated into the course. The teachers help you 100% and the lessons are fun, lively and something to look forward to.”

Student Comment:

“What can we say? Vocabulary grammar work, reading, writing and listening – it all sounds familiar, doesn’t it? The work is more detailed but the topics are the same.”

We hope that what you learn in your GCSE language classes will help you to enjoy visits to French, German or Spanish-speaking countries and will also encourage you to study one or both of these languages in the College and/or to learn a new language later.

In Years 10 and 11, students have the opportunity to write to penfriends in our partner schools in Germany, France and Spain. Students are also offered residential trips to a range of venues in Germany, France and Spain.



MUSIC (EDUQAS)

Should I choose this subject?

The course is both interesting and challenging. Music has never been so exciting with the advances in music technology. This, combined with the excellent reputation Howell's School has for music, makes it a good choice if you enjoy playing an instrument or singing.

What is it about?

Three components are covered: performing, composing and appraising. The appraising aspect involves studying a variety of music from classical to pop.

How will it be studied?

Students are encouraged to write music in their own style and to perform a wide range of music, both classical and pop, on a range of instruments. Practical work, at whatever level, is an important part of the course.

Assessment

Performing Music (Component 1) 30%: The practical examination, held in February/March, entails being examined (i) as a member of an ensemble (ii) as a soloist or as a member of an ensemble – on any instrument or as a singer. Total performance time must not exceed six minutes. One piece should be linked to an Area of Study. As a guide, the maximum standard required is the equivalent of Grade III of the current Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music practical examinations.

Composing Music (Component 2) 30%: You have to submit two compositions with a total playing time not exceeding six minutes, one of which must be in response to a brief set by WJEC. Students will choose one brief from a choice of four, each one linked to a different area of study. The second composition is a free composition for which you can set your own brief. They may be submitted in written or recorded format on CD. All compositions are marked by your teacher at the end of February and a sample will be sent to the Examination Board for moderation. The Department uses Sibelius and Cubase software.

Appraising Music (Component 3) 40%: This is a listening/written examination, held in May/June, of 1 hour 15 minutes. There are eight questions in total, two on each of the four areas of study.

- Musical Forms and Devices
- Music for Ensemble
- Film Music
- Popular Music

Classroom Activities

- Class performances, group or solo performances;
- Four areas of study with a variety of styles of music through listening and performing;
- Group composition leading to individual compositions using classroom and orchestral instruments. In addition, the availability of the most up to date recording, electronic and computer facilities enables the widest possible styles of creativity to be pursued.

Student Comments:

"The new software and electronic equipment is fantastic."

"I find it really rewarding to compose and perform my own music."

Student Comments:

"I enjoy the variety of the course and, in particular, the practical performance element."

Homework

You will be expected to complete projects for the composing element and should listen to examples of music from a wide variety of styles. You are expected to maintain regular instrumental practice.

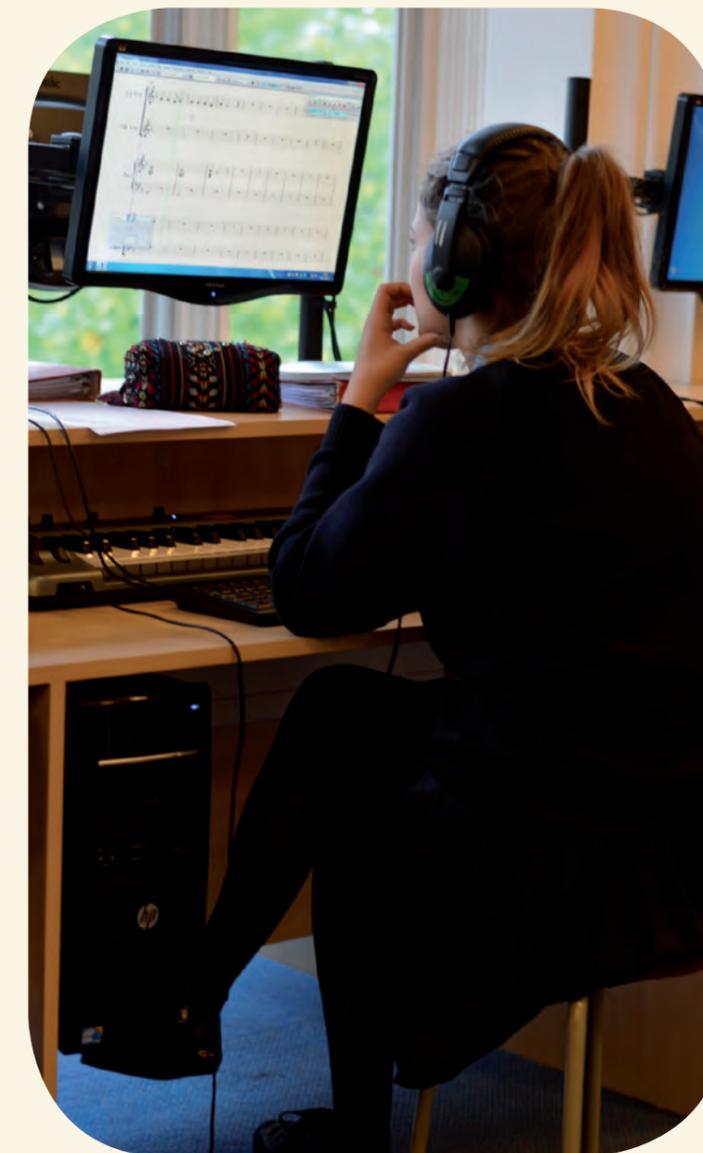
What can I do with it?

The ability to sing or play an instrument can have as big an impression on potential employers as academic qualifications. More companies and organisations now accept that music demands qualities such as self-discipline, team work, organisation and flair that managers look for when considering appointments or promotions.

Music develops:

- Self-discipline (self-motivation, self-evaluation, self-confidence)
- The ability to follow instructions
- Analysis and problem solving skills
- Communication skills and group loyalty
- Decision making and leadership qualities
- Co-operation
- Organisation, time keeping and accuracy
- Commitment and perseverance
- Physical and mental co-ordination
- Pride in achievement
- Imagination and inventiveness
- Reliability
- Aesthetic appreciation.

Music produces a mixture of skills unique in the school curriculum. It is not a subject in which facts are merely reproduced. Career options include performing, composing, administration, publishing, recording companies, instrument manufacturing and teaching. Despite the sophisticated technology which is used in producing music, it is still a labour-intensive industry. It is, in fact, one of the largest employers of people in the UK.



PRODUCT DESIGN (DESIGN & TECHNOLOGY AQA)

Should I choose this subject?

Do you enjoy Product Design lessons?

Do you like to learn new presentation techniques and produce design folder work of a high standard?

Are you keen to realise your own designs and create products either resistant materials in the workshop or textiles in the sewing room?

Are you interested in design and designers, fashion, style, products and marketing?

Product Design students tend to think laterally and are able to solve problems independently and as part of a team. They:

- Have acquired good communication skills by using a variety of media including ICT;
- Are confident in their own ability and take pride in the work that they have produced;
- Have an understanding of the world around them including how consumer needs relate to social, moral, ethical and environmental issues.

What is the course about?

The course aims to encourage students to be able to design and make products with creativity and originality, using a range of materials including wood, metal, plastics and/or textiles. Students will be enthused and challenged by the range of practical activities possible as the course seeks to use a multimedia approach.

The GCSE syllabus aims to apply the knowledge and understanding of materials and manufacturing processes when designing and making 3D products. It will also develop creative, practical, presentation and investigation skills. Students will be encouraged to establish an enquiring way of thinking and learning. This will provide an excellent foundation for study at University.



How will it be studied?

In Year 10 the course consists of a number of practical tasks to help develop an understanding of materials, fabrics, fastenings, fixings, finishes and embellishments. These tasks will include designing and making products using computer aided design, manufacture and modelling to ensure high quality outcomes. After completing market research students will learn how to design products that will appeal to the intended user.

Student Comment:

"D & T has helped me to learn about products and materials. I have also improved my presentation."

They will gain an awareness of the difference between good and bad design and an understanding of the social, moral and environmental impact that design and manufacture can have.

Students will learn new graphic presentation and drawing techniques that will help them to communicate their design work effectively using a variety of media.

Coursework

Internally assessed Coursework Project 50%.

In Year 11 each student completes a Controlled Assessment Task (in simple terms a design, make and evaluation task in 40 hours). This consists of a 20 page A3 portfolio and a 3D product.

Examination

Externally assessed Written Examination 50%.

The specification has been presented under the following headings:

- New and emerging technologies
- Energy storage and generation
- Modern and smart materials
- Mechanical devices
- Materials and their working properties
- Forces and stresses
- Ecological and social footprint
- Scales of production
- Sources and origins
- Using and working with materials
- Stock forms, types and sizes
- Specialist techniques
- Surface treatments and finishes.

What can I do with it?

Product Design develops candidates' interdisciplinary skills, all Key Skills and their capacity for imaginative, innovative thinking, creativity and independence. It is a relevant foundation for many careers and courses that can be pursued in higher education.

The course focuses on Product Design and manufacture and can lead to careers in Engineering; Web Design and Computer Graphics; Product Design; Architecture; Graphic Design; Fashion Design, Interior Design; Buying, Advertising and Marketing.

Student Comments:

"Product Design is fun, exciting and you learn along the way."

"Product Design is fun but harder than you think. I am really glad I did it though."

"Product Design has helped me to learn about products and materials. I have also improved on my presentation."

"Choose Product Design if you want to have fun, do folder work and make things."

RELIGIOUS STUDIES (EDUQAS)

Should I choose this subject?

Are you interested in investigating and analysing people, their beliefs, attitudes and behaviours?

Do you enjoy discussing and debating?

Do you wish to take a subject that will allow and demand you to formulate self opinions with reasoned justifications?

If you answered 'yes' to some or all of these questions, then Religious Studies is the correct choice for you.

What is it about?

The course is split into three units:

- Religious, Philosophical and Ethical studies in the Modern World,
- Christianity and
- Judaism.

In Religious, Philosophical and Ethical studies in the Modern World, you will gain an insight into how Christians and Jews answer some of life's most interesting and challenging questions:



Student Comments:

"I recommend RS because it is academic and beneficial to modern life."

"RS develops many useful skills such as debating, formal writing and ICT. It encourages me to appreciate and consider other cultures, lifestyles and practices."

Student Comment:

"Religious Studies is a highly informative GCSE and it is compatible with numerous subjects. It is an academic subject with modern, cultural and social issues."

These include

- Issues of Relationships; attitudes towards marriage and sexual relationships, attitudes towards women.
- Issues of Life after Death; attitudes towards the afterlife, attitudes to sanctity of Life; abortion and euthanasia,
- Issues of Good and Evil; attitudes towards crime and punishment, forgiveness, good and evil
- Issues of Human Rights; attitudes towards human rights and social justice, attitudes towards wealth and poverty.

In Christianity and Judaism you will explore fundamental beliefs, teachings and practices; including aspects of worship; rites of passage, festivals; the role of the community and faith leadership; pilgrimage and identity and belonging.

How will it be studied?

The study of religion encompasses a variety of teaching and learning styles. You will be encouraged to develop independent learning skills, acquire effective research and essay writing skills. You will be required to read around the subject area to develop a deeper level of knowledge and understanding. You will develop your range of Key Skills especially communication and ICT. You will regularly participate in class discussions, debates and presentations. You will develop the ability to consider and evaluate alternative viewpoints. Perhaps, most important of all, you will be expected to present your own point of view with the expectation of reasoned justifications to back it up.

The department uses a variety of up to date textbooks, DVDs, artefacts and ICT resources. Students are encouraged to visit communities, places of worship and interview people from the faith traditions.

Recent trips have included visits to productions of 'Jesus Christ Super Star', and 'Joseph and the Technicolour Dreamcoat' further afield, there are visits to Golders Green Jewish community in London.

The course is assessed by three external examinations at the end of the course.

Religious, Philosophical and Ethical studies in the Modern World – two hour paper

Judaism and Christianity – one hour paper in each unit.

There are no internally assessed components in Religious Studies GCSE.

What can I do with it?

Religious Studies enables you to develop valuable skills such as an enquiring mind, understanding and appreciation of other people's point of view, an ability to communicate and come to clear and informed decisions.

Religious Studies GCSE allows you to continue your education and eventually pursue a variety of careers including Medicine, Law, Journalism, Dentistry, Criminology, Teaching, Philosophy, Archaeology, Marketing, Business, Personnel, Nursing, Social Work, Theology, indeed almost anything. Whatever A Level choices or career path you intend to follow, Religious Studies could be the correct choice for you!

COMBINED SCIENCE (AQA Trilogy)

Science is a compulsory component of the National Curriculum and, therefore, you must follow a science course which covers Biology, Chemistry and Physics. Combined Science results in two GCSEs.

What is it about?

In all three of the subjects, you build on the work you have studied during your science lessons in previous years. In Biology you will study various topics such as cells, life processes (respiration, photosynthesis, digestion, excretion, circulatory systems), the variety of life, genetics and evolution.

The Chemistry course covers a range of topics which include the study of reactivity and metals, rates of reaction, electron arrangement and the Periodic table, structure of substances and chemical bonding.

Physics involves the study of everything around us. The specification covers energy, forces and motion and electricity. You will also look at other units which include radioactivity, electromagnetic waves and ultrasound.

You will carry out practical work throughout the course in all three sciences. This will enable you to design investigations, make measurements, present and analyse data and also to evaluate scientific evidence.

How will it be studied?

Each science will be taught by a qualified subject specialist from the Biology, Chemistry and Physics departments.

The lessons will be varied and will include practical investigations, discussions, presentations, DVDs, activity sheets and ICT work. The content of the specifications is taught within a particular context and this, therefore, addresses the Working Scientifically aspect of the course.

Homework

This will involve answering questions, reading, researching and practical skills assessments.

What can I do with it?

The Science courses are designed to give extensive background knowledge of Science for the life that you will lead, the part you will play in the community and the environment in which you live. It will give you a sound basis on which to build the next stage towards any career whatsoever.

Any student completing this course and attaining high grade awards is certainly well qualified to study the separate science subjects at AS and A2 level.

Separate Science (AQA)

This qualification will lead to three GCSEs (Biology, Chemistry and Physics). It is aimed at the Science enthusiast and adds breadth to the Combined Science course. It is not a requirement to go on to study any of the three sciences at A Level.

Student Comment:

"All three science subjects are interesting. They require a lot of work but are extremely rewarding."



Student Comments:

"Biology is brilliant, it opens your eyes to the wider world. We enjoy practical and non-practical exercises which help us to have a great understanding of this useful subject."

"I really enjoy Chemistry: it is a fascinating subject and makes you look at the world from a different perspective."

"Physics tells you how things work; it is challenging and it makes you think. I really recommend it."

WELSH SECOND LANGUAGE (WJEC)

Should I choose this subject?

The purpose of the course is to create an awareness of the increasing use of Welsh in our society today and to foster a positive attitude towards the language and Welsh culture. By showing interest and enthusiasm when learning Welsh we hope to develop confident and fluent speakers who will be able to understand and communicate effectively through the medium of Welsh.

Student Comments:

"We are well prepared for the GCSE course in the first three years at school."

"I was really surprised at how quickly I began to speak fluently."

What is it about?

During lessons, time will be spent discussing the various topic areas and relevant grammatical points. A variety of materials will be used in order to promote discussion such as newspaper advertisements and articles, television and radio programmes and reports, poems and short stories. Students will be encouraged to contribute to discussions to express views and opinions in order to increase confidence, fluency and accuracy. Students will also be given the opportunity to use various styles of writing in Welsh.

Homework

You will be expected to complete one written task per week, e.g. a letter or newspaper report and to learn vocabulary and complete reading tasks at your own pace. Any extra involvement with the Welsh language will be beneficial to you, e.g. listening to Radio Cymru, watching S4C programmes, reading Welsh publications and visiting Welsh theatre productions.

Assessment

● Unit 1 Oral response to visual (Group)	(25%)
● Unit 2 Communicating with others (Group)	(25%)
● Unit 3 Written Paper 1½ hours	(25%)
● Unit 4 Written Paper 1½ hours	(25%)

What can I do with it?

At the end of the GCSE course, you should feel confident enough to converse quite naturally with other Welsh speakers and take advantage of all opportunities available to you in modern Wales today. If you stay in Wales or return here to work at a later date, you will find that many careers ask for knowledge of the language.

Students are encouraged to participate in Urdd Eisteddfod competitions and to attend Welsh Language courses available at Glan Llyn Urdd Centre in North Wales.

'It is now very common for the Welsh language to be seen and heard in public life. Due to this, more and more public bodies and companies are using the Welsh language.'

Western Mail – Education Review

Student Comment:

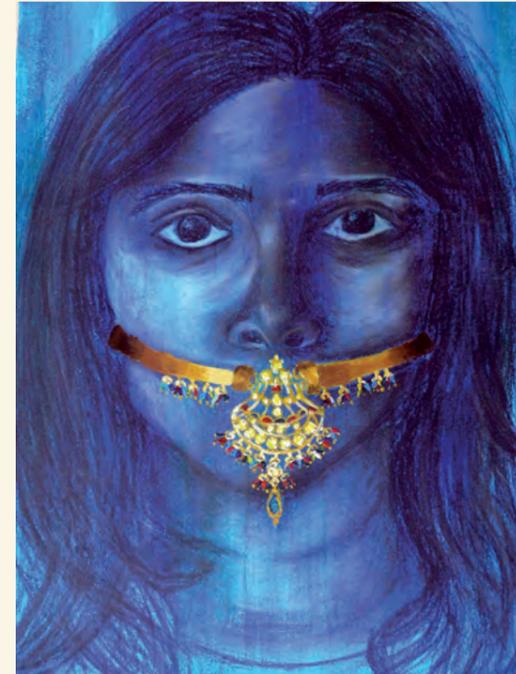
"I found that the lessons were fun and enjoyable and I was learning at the same time. I'd recommend it – the language is not dead and because there are generations who are passionate about it, it never will be."



HOW TO CHOOSE A SUBJECT

The right reasons for choosing a subject:

- ✓ You like it and find it interesting
- ✓ You are good at it
- ✓ It would be useful in your future career
- ✓ You can develop new skills
- ✓ You think you will do well in it
- ✓ It will give you satisfaction
- ✓ Your teachers think that it is a good choice for you
- ✓ It goes well with your other subjects
- ✓ You like the learning and assessment styles



The wrong reasons for choosing a subject:

- ✗ You want to do it because your friends are doing it
- ✗ You think you ought to even though you don't really want to
- ✗ You can't think of anything else to do
- ✗ You think it sounds easy
- ✗ It sounds good although you don't know much about it
- ✗ You like the teacher you have now
- ✗ You think it would make a good impression on people



GCSE SUBJECT CHOICES

Student's Name: _____ Form: _____

Your aim in choosing your GCSEs should be to pursue a broad curriculum and choose subjects that you enjoy and do well.

Remember everyone is doing Combined Science. If you want to do Separate Sciences you need to choose Science as one of your four choices below. You should also take a humanity subject and a modern foreign language.

If you have a particular career path or university in mind, you may want to look carefully at current information, or you can make an appointment to discuss your career path with Mrs House or Mrs Wilks.

REMEMBER!

You must discuss your choices with your parents and your form tutor before handing this sheet in.

Whilst we do everything in our power to ensure that you may take your chosen subjects, **this is not always possible**. Please note that a subject may not run if there are insufficient students wishing to study it.

I wish to study:

1	
2	
3	
4	

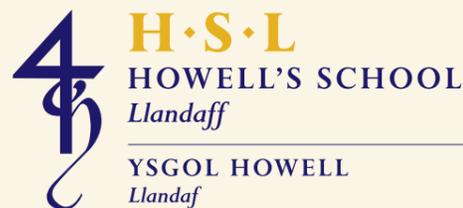
Some students may decide to alter their subjects once they return in September 2017. This will only be possible if the subject is available within the timetable and the class is not already full. **Any changes must be made by the end of September at the latest.** Any necessary catching up is the responsibility of the student.

Student's Signature: _____

Parent's Signature: _____

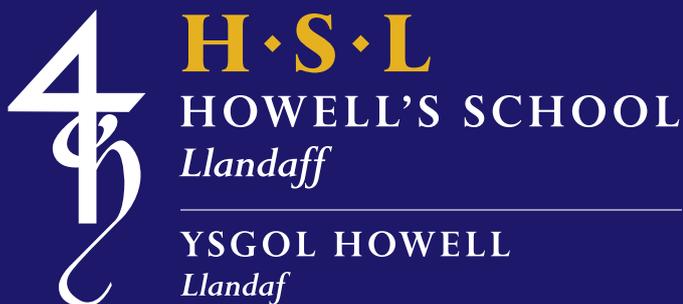
Form Tutor's Signature: _____

PLEASE RETURN BY: Friday 3rd February 2017



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Where girls can

N U R T U R I N G E X C E L L E N C E