



Holy Cross

CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL

Options Booklet

I have come that they may have life and have it to the full John 10:10

Love God, Work Hard, Be Kind

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Options Process 2026

Questions and Answers

How many subjects must I choose?

- ALL pupils will study RE, Maths, English Language, English Literature and Combined Science to GCSE level (a total of six qualifications)
- ALL pupils will be able to select three option subjects. Choice is limited to one subject from each "block" listed on the options form
- ALL pupils will also have two hours of core PE each week. This is physical activity only and does not lead to any qualification. Studying PE to a qualification is available as an option

Am I likely to get the subjects I want?

- We cannot guarantee that every single choice can be met. There may be too few pupils to form a viable class, or too many for a practical subject. In this case pupils will be asked to select an alternative subject
- For the majority of pupils, we can normally guarantee at least two out of three first choices. Most schools no longer offer a free choice of three subjects
- It is our duty to ensure pupils do not choose a selection of subjects that would disadvantage them in the future

How should I choose?

- Here are some GOOD reasons for choosing a subject:
 - you have ability in a subject and have achieved good results
 - you are interested in a particular subject
 - you enjoy a subject
 - the subject could help you in your chosen career path or future studies
- Here are some BAD reasons for choosing a subject:
 - your friends have chosen the subject
 - you like the teacher (you may not stay with the same teacher)

Every year some pupils ignore the dos and don'ts and make the mistake of choosing subjects because they like a particular teacher or their friends are studying those subjects. This almost always results in serious mistakes being made with option choices and a lot of distress.

PLEASE make your selections based only on what YOU want to study and believe YOU are good at.

Options Process 2026

Who can give me advice?

- Your teachers – they know your ability and how committed you are to the subject
- Heads of Department – they can tell you about the courses offered in their subject and their relevance in college applications
- Mr Morris/Mr Bolton – they will be looking closely at what combinations you are choosing
- The Careers' Adviser – Mrs Love has lots of information about subjects required for various careers or Mrs Easterbrook can offer more specialist advice
- Your Tutor – he or she sees you every day and knows you well

When will I get my options form?

On Friday 27 February 2026

What if I have difficulties completing my form?

Most issues can be solved by Mr Morris or Mr Bolton, any serious difficulties will be referred to Mrs Huddy

When do I need to complete the Microsoft Form by?

You should return your option form via Microsoft Forms on or before: **Tuesday 24 March 2026**

What if I want to change my mind on my options?

No changes to choices will be allowed after this date

GCSE Grade Conversion Table

Old GCSE Grade (A*–G)	New GCSE Grade (9–1)	Notes	Vocational Grades (CNAT)
A*	8-9	Grade 9 represents performance above the old A*	Level 2 Distinction *
A	7	Equivalent to a strong A	Level 2 Distinction
B	5-6	Grade 6 ≈ high B, Grade 5 ≈ strong pass	Level 2 Merit
C	4-5	Grade 4 is the standard pass (equivalent to old C)	Level 2 Pass
D	3	Below pass level	Level 1 Distinction
E	2	Below pass level	Level 1 Merit
F	1-2	Lowest tiers of achievement	Level 1 Pass
G	1	Lowest formal grade	Level 1 Pass
U	U	Unclassified (unchanged)	Fail

Religious Education



Examination Board – Eduqas

I have come that they may have life and have it to the full John 10:10

Religious Education is central to the life of the school. The Religious Education Department aims to offer a holistic model of Religious Education whereby each pupil is allowed to express their unique God given gifts. We seek to educate each person academically, spiritually and morally.

All pupils are entered for GCSE Religious Education. The syllabus is based on the Religious Education Directory.

Pupils follow Eduqas, Specification B. There are three exam papers which will be assessed externally at the end of Year 11.

Component 1: Foundational Catholic Theology - 37.5% of the qualification

Exam Time: 1 hour 30 minutes

Pupils will study Foundational Catholic Theology in two modules:

- Origins and Meaning
- Good and Evil

Component 2: Applied Catholic Theology - 37.5% of the qualification

Exam Time: 1 hour 30 minutes

Pupils will study:

- Life and Death
- Sin and Forgiveness

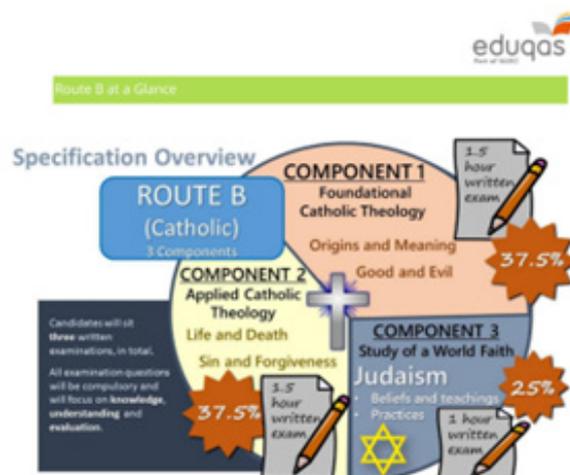
Component 3: Judaism - 25% of the qualification

Exam Time: 1 hour

Pupils will study Judaism (as directed by the Catholic Bishops of England and Wales) in two modules:

- Beliefs and Teachings
- Practices

Head of Department - Ms Devlin



English Language/ English Literature



Examination Board - AQA

Papers

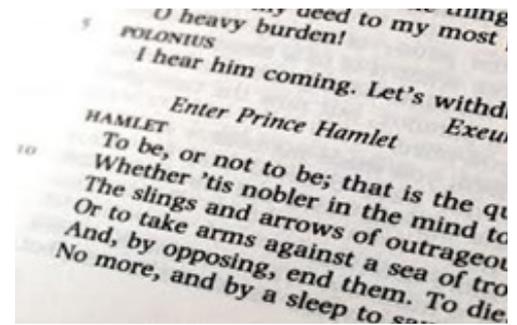
All pupils will sit the same examinations in both subjects.

There is no longer tiered entry.

GCSE English Language

Paper 1 (1 hour 45 minutes): Explorations in Creative Reading and Writing

Paper 2 (1 hour 45 minutes): Writers' Viewpoints and Perspectives



Non-examination Assessment: Spoken Language

GCSE English Literature

Paper 1 (1 hour 45 minutes): Shakespeare and the 19th Century Novel

Paper 2 (2 hours 15 minutes): Modern texts and poetry

Possible Careers:

Holy Cross pupils have gone on to enjoy successful careers in teaching, law, journalism and politics.

Head of Department - Miss Shiels

Mathematics

Examination Board – AQA



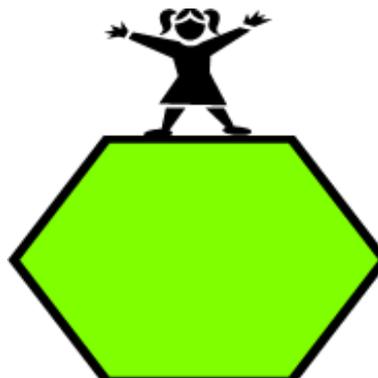
Holy Cross Maths Department is currently following the AQA GCSE Mathematics Syllabus. All the examinations are taken at the end of the course and any part of the specification can be tested on any paper. There are three written examination papers in the summer term each awarded 80 marks. No calculators are allowed for Paper 1 and a scientific calculator is required for Paper 2 and Paper 3. An hour and half is allocated to each exam paper. This specification is designed to enable pupils to engage, enjoy and succeed in mathematics as well as equip pupils with the appropriate skills, whatever their chosen pathway.

- The mathematics GCSE follows two tiers: Foundation tier, where grades 1 to 5 may be achieved and Higher tier, where grades 4 to 9 are possible.
- The mathematics GCSE is assessed by written examination, which means that no coursework will be expected from any pupil.
- The content of the mathematics GCSE specifications has been grouped into five topic areas:
 - Number
 - Algebra
 - Ratio, proportion and rates of change
 - Geometry and measures
 - Statistics and probability

$$\int \frac{x+5}{x^2-2x-3} dx$$
$$\frac{5}{3} dx - \int \frac{2}{x-3} dx - \int \frac{1}{x+1} dx$$
$$= 2 \ln(x-3) - \ln(x)$$
$$= \ln \frac{(x-3)^2}{x+1} + C$$

GCSE mathematics assesses the Key Stage 4 Programme of Study which schools and colleges are required to teach. The Secondary Mathematics Programmes of Study consist of problem solving, functionality, and mathematical thinking. There is an emphasis in examinations on applying mathematics and using mathematics to solve problems. Often questions are set in real-life contexts, for instance, decorating a room or designing a garden, paying bills, or sorting out rotas for shop staff. Questions also require pupils to be able to communicate the mathematics they have applied. This may involve, for example, giving a reason for an answer, correctly setting out a proof or accurately marking up a statistical diagram.

Head of Department - Mrs Coyle



Science

Examination Board – AQA



All pupils will study the AQA GCSE Combined Science Trilogy. This course includes content on each of the three disciplines of science: biology, chemistry and physics. The examinations take place at the end of Year 11 in Summer 2028 and pupils will achieve two GCSEs. Pupils in Year 9 have already started on this course and will continue with the modules throughout the next three years. Some pupils may be selected to follow the AQA GCSE Separate Science course.

Content:

The topics that are taught are as follows:

Year 9	Year 10	Year 11
Building Blocks of Life Atomic Structure and the Periodic Table Particle Model of Matter	Body and Lifestyle Bioenergetics Electricity	Quantitative Chemistry Forces and Motion Inheritance, Variation and Evolution
Digestion and Food Energy	Infection and Response Atomic Structure and Radiation Radiation Energy Changes	Homeostasis and Response Electromagnetism
Transport in Plants and Organisms Bonding Chemical Analysis	Ecology Waves Chemical Changes Organic Chemistry	Atmosphere and Resources Rates of Reaction Space (Separates Course)

Assessment:

The course will be assessed by means of six externally assessed examinations. Pupils will also need to describe how to carry out 21 specified required practical tasks which will be examined within these papers. The practical activities will be delivered across the three years of the course. Pupils will be entered for the foundation (grades 55 to 11) or higher (grades 99-55) tier exams. Decisions on tier entry is based upon pupils' internal assessment results. Pupils achieving outside of these ranges will be awarded a U grade.

Science

Examination Board – AQA



Combined Science Trilogy (2 GCSE grades are awarded)			
Biology Paper 1 1 hour 15 mins 16.7% of the GCSE	70 marks	Biology Paper 2 1 hour 15 mins 16.7% of the GCSE	70 marks
Chemistry Paper 1 1 hour 15 mins 16.7% of the GCSE	70 marks	Chemistry Paper 2 1 hour 15 mins 16.7% of the GCSE	70 marks
Physics Paper 1 1 hour 15 mins 16.7% of the GCSE	70 marks	Physics Paper 2 1 hour 15 mins 16.7% of the GCSE	70 marks

A qualification in science is recognised as one of the starting points for acceptance onto college courses and apprenticeships. For those who have studied the combined and separates course, A' Levels in science represent a logical career path opening up many different exciting career opportunities.

Head of Department - Mrs Prescott



Course Summary

In Art at Holy Cross, pupils are building on the foundations of KS3 Art, developing skills in a variety of mediums and to a standard applicable to GCSE. The GCSE specification is not overly prescriptive, therefore leaving space for innovative and creative project planning and pupil autonomy. Projects build in complexity across the problem-solving course; we aim for pupils to be able to function as (almost) independent artists by the end of Year 11. Pupils make excellent progress during their allocated lesson time (five hours per fortnight) and additionally are required to attend after school sessions and complete unfinished work at home.

Course structure

Component 1 (60% of GCSE): A portfolio that shows explicit coverage of the four assessment objectives. It must include a project evidencing the journey from initial engagement, to the realisation of intentions and a selection of further work undertaken during the pupil's course of study.

Component 2 (40% of GCSE): Pupils are given an externally set exam task and will respond to a chosen starting point. There will be a preparatory period of work followed by ten hours supervised exam time. When creating this project pupils provide evidence that meets all four assessment objectives.

How will your learning be assessed?

- AO1 Develop ideas through investigations, demonstrating critical understanding of sources.
- AO2 Refine work by exploring ideas, selecting and experimenting with appropriate media, materials, techniques and processes.
- AO3 Record ideas, observations and insights relevant to intentions as work progresses.
- AO4 Present a personal and meaningful response that realises intentions and demonstrates understanding of visual language.

What skills will you learn?

Painting techniques, drawing in a variety of media, printing techniques, photography, digital editing, problem-solving design, textiles, sculpture, installation, and mixed media.

Why Art?

The subject promotes not only jobs in the artistic industry but, also enables pupils to realise the employability skills that they develop as an art student. In an increasingly automated economy, art education develops creativity, empathy and problem-solving skills. Jobs requiring these skills are considered to be more future proof. Below are just a few examples to show the diversity and richness of the subject:

- 1 Advertising: printing, packaging and book publishing
- 2 Architecture
- 3 Engineering illustration
- 4 Fashion work in photography, illustration, design and millinery
- 5 Film and TV work: animation, documentary, design and production
- 6 Display work in exhibition design, window dressing and events
- 7 Interior design: domestic and industrial
- 8 Theatre sets, stage and costume
- 9 Art therapy
- 10 Graphic design

How will you be learning?

- 1 Through whole class learning demonstrations and group critique
- 2 Independent research and project-based learning
- 3 Visits from and to working artists
- 4 Using a variety of media, processes and equipment
- 5 Analysing and annotating work from different cultures, artists and designers

Head of Department - Mrs Nelson



Hospitality and Catering

Examination Board – EDUQAS



Level 1 or 2 Vocational Award in Hospitality and Catering

This course, from the food and nutrition department is a **vocational qualification** (practical and work-related) covering knowledge and skills used in the hospitality and catering industry — from understanding the sector and food safety to menu planning, food preparation, cooking and presentation. **Level 2** is broadly equivalent to a full **GCSE qualification** (eg a Level 2 Pass ≈ GCSE grade 4; Level 2 Merit ≈ GCSE grade 5-6; Level 2 Distinction ≈ GCSE grade 7; Level 2 Distinction* ≈ GCSE grade 8-9/strong pass



Careers

Chef
Caterer
Hotel/event catering roles
Restaurant Management
Cruise catering
Front of house
House keeping

The course is taught in these areas

- **Unit one: The Hospitality and Catering Industry:** industry basics, health & safety, jobs and operations.
- **Unit two: Hospitality & Catering in Action:** nutrition, menu planning and practical cookery.

**You will be directed towards either GCSE Food Preparation and Nutrition or Hospitality and Catering depending on your skill set. Mr Callander will make this decision.*

Any information on the course speak to Mr Callander

The course is broken down and assessed in two parts:

Written Assessment (Exam) - **40%**
Controlled Assessment (Coursework) - **60%**

There will be regular weekly home learning tasks consisting of researching and preparing ingredients for practical lessons, exam preparation and other written tasks.



Head of Department - Mr Callander

Computer Science

Examination Board – OCR



Technology is advancing. Stay ahead of the game.



This carefully planned course gives pupils a real, in-depth understanding of how computer technology works. It offers an insight into what goes on ‘behind the scenes’ including computer programming, which many pupils find absorbing.

Through this qualification, pupils will develop their understanding of current and emerging technologies and how they work. They will look at the use of algorithms in computer programs. They will acquire and apply creative and technical skills, knowledge and understanding of IT in a range of contexts. They will develop computer programs to solve problems and evaluate the effectiveness of these and look at the impact of computer technology in society.

There's a career for everyone

- Create your own future and ideas
- Create a future for other people
- Give yourself great problem solving skills
- Give yourself a brilliant career
- Challenge yourself to be the best
- Challenge yourself to change the world

Future Careers

Computing is a subject which is becoming more and more central to every type of business. A good foundation in Computing will enable you to follow any one of a wide variety of career paths. Specific careers could include:

Software Engineer, Video Game Programmer, IT Consultant, Network Administrator, Mobile App Developer, Software Developer, Computer Engineer

The Course	Overview
Unit 01: Computer Systems	Exam 50% 1 hour 30 minutes written paper exam, externally assessed
Overview of content	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Systems architecture and memory storage • Data representation of numbers, characters, images and sound • Wired and wireless networks, network topologies, protocols and layers • System security and system software • Ethical, legal, cultural and environmental concerns 	
Unit 02: Computational thinking, algorithms and programming	Exam 50% 1 hour 30 minutes written paper exam, externally assessed
Overview of content	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Algorithms • Programming techniques • Producing robust programs • Computational logic • Translators and facilities of languages 	

Head of Department - Mr Washington

Creative iMedia

Examination Board – Cambridge National OCR



The future is digital so get in the picture

iMEDIA will look good on your CV

Digital Media is a key part of many areas of our everyday lives and vital to the UK economy. Production of digital media products is a requirement of almost every business so there is huge demand for a skilled and digitally literate workforce.

iMEDIA is not just for computer experts

This qualification will help pupils develop specific and transferable skills such as research, planning and review, working with others and communicating creative concepts. The qualification's hands-on approach has strong relevance to the way young people use the technology required in creative media.

With iMEDIA you will learn about digital devices in:

- Pre-production
- Digital graphics
- Video production
- Multimedia products

Progression?

Cambridge Nationals provide a strong base for progression to Further Education, whether it is on to Level 3 Cambridge Technicals, A' Levels, apprenticeships or work.



What makes CREATIVE iMEDIA such a good choice for you?

- **It's future-proofed:** So when new technologies come on stream you'll learn about them and ditch anything that's past its sell-by.
- **You'll have a head start:** You'll be building on knowledge you already know – a bit like taking an exam in a long-held interest.
- **It's relevant:** Whatever you choose to do later, the skills you learn will help you; at university, at work, in managing your money and operating online.

CAREERS

Almost all businesses use information and communication technologies. Twenty one million people use IT every day at work in the UK. Telecommunications is one of the fastest changing sectors, with new technologies constantly being explored and developed.

Employers require varying skills, ranging from sales and customer-focused careers, to highly technical jobs. The opportunity for career advancement, self-development and financial reward within all these sectors is excellent.

In this sector various ICT careers exist, such as:

- Computer and IT development
- Film industry
- Animator
- Graphic design
- Space and exploration
- Installation and maintenance
- TV and radio



THE COURSE	OVERVIEW	
R093 – Creative iMedia in the media industry	Written paper 1 hour 30 minutes	40% of the final mark
R094 – Visual identity and digital graphics	Centre assessed task, OCR moderated.	25% of the final mark
R097 – Interactive Digital media	Centre assessed task, OCR moderated	35% of the final mark

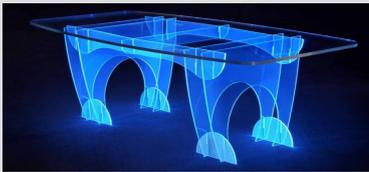
Head of Department - Mr Washington

Design Technology



Examination Board – AQA

This course from the Design Technology department encourages you to solve real problems by **designing** and **making** products in a wide range of contexts. You will develop industry standard design skills in many areas which will increase your capacity for imaginative, innovative thinking, creativity and independence.



Product Design is all around you!

Think about the objects that you love. Your mobile phone or smart watch was designed on a computer screen. The car you yearn for started life as a reduced size clay model and that building that you admire sprang from the drawing board of an architect.

What skills will you learn?

- You will learn how to **INVESTIGATE** your chosen area of study, deducing what kind of information you will find useful to begin generating ideas.
- You will use a range of techniques to **DEVELOP** your design ideas. These include professional sketching techniques and physical and computer generated modelling.
- You will decide on the most effective materials and manufacturing systems to **MAKE** working prototypes of your final design, using a range of CAD (Computer Aided Design) and CAM (Computer Aided Manufacture) techniques such as the Laser Cutter and 3D Printer, as well as more traditional hand tools in our fully equipped workshop.

The course is broken down and assessed in two parts:

Written Assessment (Exam) - **50%**

NEA (Design and make project) - **50%**

All GCSE Product Design classes will be taught by Miss Moore

There will be regular homework tasks consisting of practice exam questions, independent research and investigation work, sketching and CAD practice as well as other written tasks. **The work load is significant, there will be a notable increase from lower school.**



Careers

Product Design can lead to many exciting careers, including **Product, Automotive or Engineering Design, Graphic and Website Design, Interior and Fashion Design** and **Architecture** to name a few. We try to give you opportunities to see 'product design in action' with visits to BAE, MBDA Missile Systems and Leyland DAF.

What does the course entail?

How products have evolved
History of Design and Influential Designers
Materials and Manufacture
Sketching and Presentational Drawing
Model Making
Using CAD/CAM
The use of traditional hand tools
Making Prototypes

As well as the theory behind Design Technology, we also work on four projects:

- 1a. **Chair Challenge**
- 1b. **Chocolate bar and wrapper project**
2. **Mock NEA (Designing and making a board game)**
3. **An NEA project. (50% of your final grade) The context is dictated to all candidates, by the exam board (AQA), in June 2026.**

Head of Department - Miss Moore

Drama



Examination Board – EDUQAS

This course is suitable for creative and hard-working pupils who have an interest in theatre, performance and the dramatic arts.

The course is very practical but you must be aware that all of your performances and workshops will require extensive supporting notes that track and monitor your learning and progress, including a portfolio and evaluation.

This is a subject that rewards hard work, team work, creativity and energy.

Assessment

Unit One: 40%

You will create a play based around a simple theme/stimuli set by the Board. You will be asked to apply all of your theatrical knowledge and know-how to create the most engaging and thought provoking piece of theatre you can. You will also be asked to provide a portfolio of written evidence and an evaluation in exam conditions.

Unit Two: 20%

This is an externally assessed performance where you will perform two scenes from an established play for a visiting examiner.

The length of the performance will be dictated by the number of actors in your group.

Unit Three: Written Exam 40%

Section A: Set Text – I Love You Mum I Promise I Won't Die

You will study the above set text. From this text you will be asked to answer six questions. The questions centre on how you would perform certain roles and stage the production.

Section B: Live Theatre Review

One question, from a choice of two, requiring analysis and evaluation of a given aspect of a live theatre production seen during the course.

Life Skills

Pupils who choose this subject may not necessarily be considering the dramatic arts as a career. As well as acquiring the skills involved in creating and performing drama, you will also find that the subject helps to build teamwork skills, public speaking, self-confidence and problem solving.

Head of Department - Mrs Chapman-Dean

Food and Nutrition



Examination Board – Eduqas

This course, from the food technology department, looks at both food preparation, to cook and apply the principles of food science, nutrition and healthy eating. It encourages learners to cook, enables them to make informed decisions about food and allows them to acquire knowledge in order to be able to feed themselves and others.



Careers

Chef
Caterer
Dietitian
Restaurant Management
Food Scientist
Physiotherapist
Child Care
Nursing
Hotel Management

The course is taught in these areas

- **Nutrition and Health:**
You will learn the value of the food we eat and why some are of more value than others.
- **Food Commodities:**
Following on from your Year 9 experiences in food and nutrition, you will be taught which food to choose for specific occasions, special diets, religious beliefs, food service and many more.
- **Food Preparation:**
You will be learning to cook a wide variety of dishes that require a high amount of skill to prepare as well as learning a variety of new techniques for food handling and preparation.
- **Food Provenance (where food comes from):** Learn about food miles, seasonality, organic food and much more.
- **Food Science:** How science is used in food.

** You will be directed towards either GCSE Food Preparation and Nutrition or Hospitality and Catering depending on your skill set. Mr Callander will make this decision.*

The course is broken down and assessed in two parts:

Written Assessment (Exam) - 50%
Controlled Assessment (Coursework) - 50%

There will be regular weekly home learning tasks consisting of researching and preparing ingredients for practical lessons, exam preparation and other written tasks.



Head of Department - Mr Callander

Geography



Examination Board – AQA

Why pick GCSE geography?

- **Relevance:** The content we study is *relevant to today's world and will help you understand our planet* as it is currently, but also how it is changing. Some topical issues we will look at include recent earthquake activity, the UK's north-south divide, flooding, and the destruction of tropical rainforests.
- **Fieldwork opportunities:** As part of our GCSE course, you will **visit Salford Quays in Manchester**, where we will explore the regeneration of the area through conducting environmental surveys and questionnaires. Alongside this, we will **visit the river Wyre** - on this visit we physically measure the width, depth and speed of the river, as well as looking at how the river is managed to reduce flooding. There is also an **optional visit to Iceland - on the Iceland visit we will see a range of volcanic and glaciated landscapes, experience the Secret Lagoon, and even have the chance to see the Northern Lights**. The Iceland trip truly is a once in a lifetime opportunity!
- **Fun:** As well as getting excellent grades, we want you to enjoy your GCSE years. You can expect interesting lessons and engaging activities, some of which might include building earthquake proof structures, debating and conducting internet research.
- **Employability:** In GCSE geography you will practise a **wide range of transferable skills**; some geographers go on to work directly in their field, for example as volcanologists, flood risk managers, or town planners. However, many go on to careers in finance, the media and IT. What this highlights is **geography opens the door to a wide range of career opportunities**. Speak to your geography teacher about where geography can take you.



What does the GCSE course involve?

PAPER 1: This is the physical geography paper, where we learn about the **challenges of natural hazards** (earthquakes, tropical storms, climate change); **the living world** (tropical rainforests and deserts) and the **physical landscapes of the UK** (coasts and rivers).

PAPER 2: This is the human paper, which looks at **urban challenges** (through the cities of Rio de Janeiro and Manchester); **the changing economic world** (which includes the growth of countries like Nigeria and a study of the UK economy), and **the challenges of resource management** (with a focus on water insecurity).

PAPER 3: This encapsulates the **fieldwork element** of the course but also assesses your ability to interpret the **pre-release** material. The pre-release is a booklet on a topical issue (that we receive around Easter time), which you are questioned about in the exam.

All papers have questions ranging from 1–9-mark questions. Speak to your geography teacher to see some examples

Head of Department - Mrs Milligan

History

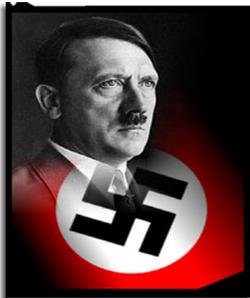


Examination Board – AQA

General course details

The History Department runs a History AQA course which combines some key events in the 20th Century with some fascinating topics from earlier periods.

There are only two exams (at the end of Year 11) and no coursework, with two topics per exam.



Niamh at Oxford University



Niamh—one of our Year 11s from 2023—is now studying History at Oxford.

Skills

- Master **extended writing** and essay skills
- Learn how to **argue and debate** with confidence and precision
- Class discussions centre on key questions such as “Why did so few people stand up against the Nazis in 1930s Germany?”
- **Investigate sources** to discover if common myths are really true, including representations of historical events in film and media



GCSE History teachers at Holy Cross:

- All mark for AQA: the exam board
- Will go the extra mile to help you achieve

What use will a qualification in History be to me?

A qualification in history is proof of the ability to assess and analyse complex information, problem solving and an ability to argue and present your opinions. All of these qualities are highly desired by employers, particularly in business, law, journalism and the Civil Service. Even accountancy firms employ history graduates for their communication and people skills. All the top universities have History as one of the highest-rated academic subjects.



The horrors of surgery in the 1800s!



Head Girl 2024/2025 at **Auschwitz-Birkenau**, during our 2024 tour of Krakow.

What topics are covered?

- Life in Nazi Germany
- World War 1
- Medicine Through Time
- Elizabethan England



GCSE History pupils at the **Brandenburg Gate** during a guided tour on their 2023 historical tour of **Berlin**

Trips

- Holocaust tour to Krakow and Auschwitz, Poland
- Nazi Germany and Cold War tour of Berlin



What help will I get to achieve my potential?

The History Department offers a range of after-school and lunch revision classes and an Easter Masterclass.

1-1 help is available for any pupil needing extra support. Revision guides and access to laptops help prepare for exams and achieve excellence.

..set the darkness echoing.
Seamus Heaney 1939-2013

Head of Department - Mr Murray

Modern Foreign Languages



Examination Board – Edexcel

“One language sets you in a corridor for life. Two languages open every door along the way”.

Frank Smith (Contemporary Psycholinguist)

Pupils are offered the opportunity to study for GCSE:

- French
- Spanish (if studied during Key Stage 3)
- French AND Spanish (if both languages studied during Key Stage 3)



All GCSE language courses are suitable for hardworking pupils who wish to continue their foreign language skills to GCSE level. They build on the skills, grammar, phonics and topic vocabulary learnt during Key Stage 3, ensuring progress and developing pupils into independent and creative learners who question and explore their own language whilst learning to cope in a variety of contexts in another. Pupils are given opportunities to express their ideas and thoughts as well as responding to others, which is underpinned by the development of solid communication, linguistic and grammatical skills. Language learning allows pupils to open their minds to other cultures, promoting tolerance and understanding, ready for them to take up their place in our multi-lingual, multi-cultural, global society.

Core Content

Language content builds on the topic areas covered in Key Stage 3 and fall into six thematic areas.

My personal world	Lifestyle and wellbeing	My neighbourhood
Media and technology	Studying and my future	Travel and tourism

Assessment

- 100% Final Examination – taken in the summer of Year 11
- The weighting of all four skills (Listening, Reading, Speaking and Writing) is equal at 25%
- Pupils will be entered at either Foundation (Grades 5-1) or Higher Level (Grades 9-3)

Listening examination: (Foundation - 45 minutes Higher - 60 minutes)

- Pupils will understand and respond to a range of different types of spoken language. Questions and answers are in English
- Pupils listen and transcribe short sentences into the target language.

Reading examination: (Foundation - 45 minutes Higher - 60 minutes)

- Pupils will understand and respond to a range of different types of written language, including literary texts. Questions and answers are in English
- Pupils translate a passage from the target language into English, with instructions in English.

Speaking examination: (15 minutes preparation time, 7 -12 minutes speaking time)

- To be conducted with the class teacher during speaking exam week, normally April in Year 11.
- Pupils will communicate and interact effectively in the target language through carrying out a read aloud task, a role play scenario, and a conversation about a photograph with general conversation.

Writing examination: (Foundation - 1 hour 15 minutes Higher - 1 hour 20 minutes)

- Pupils will communicate effectively through writing for a variety of purposes. Pupils will have structured writing tasks and an open-ended task, set in English and a translation text from English into the target language.

Possible careers

Even basic language skills can be beneficial to your career choice. Possible careers include: travel, armed forces, journalism, broadcasting, law, finance, sport, television, catering, banking, commerce, translating, interpreting, civil service, teaching, fashion and many more.

Head of Department - Mrs Gaughan

Physical Education



Examination Board – Edexcel

The Physical Education GCSE course is an excellent choice for pupils who have a keen interest in sport, healthy lifestyles and the effects of exercise on the human body. The course has a significant amount of human biology within the theoretical element and also requires strong practical ability in three areas (including a combination of individual and team activities) – it is strongly recommended that pupils who opt for GCSE PE are regularly taking part in sport and physical activity competitively, both within and outside of school.

Lesson Structure

GCSE PE lessons are very different from the core PE curriculum – pupils will learn about the theoretical concepts that underpin how the body works within various sporting situations. Typically, over a two-week period, five lessons will be classroom based with some practical lessons, where possible, to help underpin the knowledge learned within the classroom.

Assessment

Component 1 - 36% (1hr 30min written examination)

Fitness and body systems – pupils will be assessed in topics covering:

- Anatomy and physiology
- Movement analysis
- Physical training

Component 2 - 24% (1hr 15min written examination)

Health and performance – pupils will be assessed in topics covering:

- Health, fitness and well-being
- Sports Psychology
- Socio-cultural influences in sport

Component 3 - 30% (non-examined practical assessment)

Practical Performance

Pupils will be marked on their practical ability, out of 35 in three different practical activities. Each of the activities will account for 10% of the final grade. This means pupils will be assessed in a varying range of different sports/activities from the course specification. Practical skills will be assessed in a range of both team and individual activities, including activities that cannot be offered within school. These lessons will occur four times over a two-week period.

Component 4 – 10% (non-examined theoretical assessment)

Personal Exercise Programme (PEP)

Pupils will demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of how to lead an active, healthy lifestyle through:

- Planning a personal exercise programme
- Carrying out the proposed training plan
- Evaluating the effectiveness of their training

Head of Department - Miss Dent



Cambridge National Certificate in Sport Studies

Examination Board – OCR



The OCR Cambridge National Certificate in Sport Studies is an excellent course for pupils who have a keen interest in sport and are wishing to pursue a more vocational pathway. The course is theoretical but doesn't rely on strong scientific knowledge. It is recommended that pupils have a keen interest in a variety of different sports and a desire to work with others within a practical setting. This is a GCSE equivalent course.

Lesson Structure

Sport Studies lessons are very different from the core PE curriculum. This course has a larger practical element in comparison to GCSE PE, practical lessons will focus on developing leadership and officiating skills as well as working with younger/older pupils whilst the theory will be developing knowledge of contemporary issues in sport and the media's influence on sport. There will be a minimum of four theory lessons over a fortnight which will then be underpinned by appropriate practical lessons.

Assessment

Unit R184 - 40% (1hr 15 minute examination)

Contemporary issues in sport

Pupils will explore a range of topical and contemporary issues in sport, such as participation levels and barriers, promoting values and ethical behaviour, and how sport contributes to society. This will be explored through how technology is used in sport and the influence of major sporting events on a country's reputation and economy.

Unit R185 – 40% (centre-assessed tasks)

Performance and Leadership in Sports Activities

Pupils will experience a range of sports-related skills and techniques, including different practice methods for improving both their own performance and that of others. They will develop their knowledge of the use of tactics and strategies in both individual and team sporting activities as well as their understanding of the rules. They will learn about the knowledge and practical skills required to be an effective sport leader. They will put their knowledge into practice by planning and delivering safe and effective sporting activity sessions. Afterwards they will review their performance.

Unit R187 - 20% (centre-assessed tasks)

Increasing awareness of outdoor adventurous activities

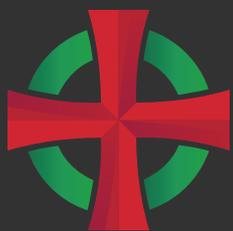
Pupils will learn how to find out information about what OAA opportunities there are in their local area, as well as nationally in the UK, for all different types of activities. They will learn how they can benefit from and enjoy activities safely by finding out what equipment, clothing, facilities and technology they need, as well as completing planning to help keep them safe. They will take part in their own OAA session locally.

Head of Department - Miss Dent



Option Blocks

Block X	Block Y	Block Z
Creative iMedia	Art	Computer Science
French	Drama	French
Geography	Food and Nutrition	Geography
History	Geography	History
Food and Nutrition	History	Physical Education/ Sports Studies
Product Design	Physical Education/ Sports Studies	Spanish
	Product Design	
	Spanish	



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