

GCSE Curriculum Information 2010-2012

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GCSE

In Years 7, 8 and 9 all pupils study a wide range of subjects. In Years 10 and 11 most pupils follow a curriculum which leads to up to ten GCSE awards.

The **core curriculum** is compulsory for all:

- English and English Literature (2 GCSEs)
- Mathematics
- Science (2 or 3 GCSEs)

The remaining four subjects are chosen from a broad range of options.

Pupils are strongly advised to opt into those subjects that they enjoy and are good at. Higher Education and career aspirations should also be considered.

Wherever possible it is sensible to aim for a balanced programme of study. However, the School does **not** require that pupils choose courses to include all the main curriculum areas (languages, humanities, creative subjects and technology). It is possible, therefore, to select a combination of subjects tailored to individual needs.

The process of choosing subjects may take some time. The School provides advice and consultation for pupils and parents during Year 9 to help them make appropriate choices.

This booklet provides basic information about the GCSE courses provided at St Christopher and will be a good starting point for discussion.

Subject

English Language

Examining Group

AQA

Syllabus Title

English Language A

Examinations

Unit 1 (2 hours) 40% - Understanding and Producing Non-fiction Texts

Section A: Reading (1 hour – 20%) Answer questions based on reading resources.

Section B: Writing (1 hour – 20%) Two compulsory writing tasks.

Coursework
(Controlled
Assessment)

Unit 2 20% - Speaking and Listening
Assessed on three equally weighted activities

- Presenting
- Discussing and listening
- Role playing

Unit 3 40% - Understanding Spoken and Written Texts and Writing Creatively

Part a: Extended Reading (15%)

Choose one task from the Controlled Assessment Bank of published titles. Consider one extended text which may be a text that is also used for GCSE English Literature

Part b: Creative Writing (15%)

Choose two tasks from the Controlled Assessment Bank of published titles.

Part c: Spoken Language Study (10%)

Choose one task from the Controlled Assessment Bank of published titles.

Subject

English Literature

Examining Group

AQA

Syllabus Title

English Literature

Examinations

Unit 1 (1½ hours) – Exploring Modern Texts

Section A: Modern Prose or Drama (45 mins – 20%)
Answer one question from a choice of two on each set text.

Section B: Exploring Cultures (45 mins – 20%)
Answer one question on the set text they have studied.

The question will be in two parts

- Part (a) will ask candidates to respond to a passage from the text.
- Part (b) will ask candidates to link this passage to the whole text.

Unit 2 (1¼ hours 35%) – Poetry Across Time

Section A: Poetry cluster from the anthology (45 mins – 23%)
Answer one question, from a choice of two, on the poetry cluster studied.

- Candidates compare one named poem with another, chosen by the candidate, from the cluster.

Section B: Responding to an unseen poem (30 mins – 12%)
One compulsory unseen poem.

Unit 4 (1¼ hours) – Approaching Shakespeare and the English Literary Heritage

Section A: Shakespeare (45 mins – 20%)
Answer one question from a choice of two on the Shakespeare set texts that have been studied.

- Part (a): to consider a short extract and
- Part (b): to relate the extract to another part of the play, chosen by the candidate.

Section B: Prose from the English Literary Heritage (30 mins – 15%)
Answer one essay question from a choice of two on the set text studied.

Coursework

Unit 3 (25%) – The Significance of Shakespeare and the English Literary Heritage

Unit 5 (25%) – Exploring Poetry

Subject **Mathematics**

Examining Group	EDEXCEL
Syllabus title	GCSE Mathematics (2381)
Assessment	Two levels of entry: Foundation (C - G) Higher (A*- D)

GCSE	Stage 1 March 2011	30%
	Stage 2 June 2011	20%
	Stage 3 June 2012	50%

All sets

Pupils will be following the GCSE modular course. The course is assessed by examination only; 50% of the course is examined in Year 10 (IV Group) and 50% in Year 11 (V Group).

Pupils in the lowest set will follow either the Foundation or Higher level of study. The other two groups will follow the Higher level of study. The GCSE course comprises topics from four main areas: Number, Algebra, Shape and Space and Data Handling.

Pupils in the top set will take the Stage 1 and Stage 2 modules in November 2010 and March 2011 respectively. This will leave sufficient time to enable them to prepare for both the Stage 3 modules in June 2012 and an Additional Mathematics qualification.

Subject Science

Science, Additional Science and Separate Sciences

Progress in lessons and module results in Year 10 and Year 11 allow us to decide the best combination for each individual which can be used to achieve either 2 GCSEs or 3 GCSEs in Science. The highest achievers will follow a course aiming to achieve 3 GCSEs. Other students will work towards a second GCSE called Additional Science.

Examining Group AQA

Syllabus Title Science A (4461), Additional Science (4463)
GCSE Biology, Chemistry, Physics (4411, 4421, 4451)

Assessment

The following table gives a summary of the assessment:

Core Science 4 Group	Nov Mar/June	B1a B1b		C1a C1b		P1a P1b	ISA
Additional Science 5 Group	Jan/May	B2		C2		P2	ISA
	May	B3		C3		P3	
		ISA		ISA		ISA	
		Biology		Chemistry		Physics	

Year 10

Module Tests (75%)

These are multiple choice, 30-minute papers. There are two (1a and 1b) in each of Chemistry, Biology and Physics. Exams may be taken in November, March or June.

Coursework (25%)

Coursework consists of 45-minute *ISA* tests, based on practical exercises set by the Board, taken in lessons, when appropriate during the course and marked internally. The best set of marks is submitted. There is no coursework to do at home.

Year 11

Examinations (75%)

Exams may be taken in January or June.

Coursework (25%) follows the same pattern as in Year 10 for all classes.

GCSE Options

Art and Design

Design and Technology

Drama

French

Spanish

Geography

History

Media Studies

Music

Physical Education

Subject

Art and Design

Examining Group

AQA

Syllabus Title

Art and Design GCSE

Assessment

Students are provided with a wide range of creative, exciting and stimulating opportunities to explore their interest in Art and Design in ways that are personally relevant and truly developmental in nature. Students can work within any of the following areas of study: Fine Art, Textiles, Three-Dimensional Design, Graphic Communication and Lens-based and Light-based Media.

60%:
Portfolio of Work

The content of the portfolio will be determined by the particular requirements of the course of study undertaken. There is no restriction on the scale of work produced. Students may submit in their portfolio a selection of thoughtfully-presented work that demonstrates the breadth and depth of the course of study. There should be more than one extended collection of work or project which demonstrate an ability to sustain work from initial starting-points or project briefs to the realisation of intentions and include evidence of research, the development of ideas and meaningful links with critical/contextual sources.

40%:
Externally-Set Task

Students are required to elicit a personal response from one starting-point or project brief within the paper for which they have been entered.

AQA will set a paper containing a selection of starting points. Papers should be issued to students from 1 January in the year of the examination. There is unlimited preparation time followed by a ten-hour period of sustained focused study, in which students are expected to develop their own unaided work, informed by their preparatory studies. During the preparatory period, teachers may discuss starting-points with students and give them general guidance on the choice of materials, how to carry out preparatory studies or how to begin research on their chosen starting-point.

Subject Design and Technology

Syllabus title AQA 4560 GCSE Design and Technology "Resistant Materials"

Assessment 60% Single Coursework Project ("Controlled Assessment Task").
This involves choosing a theme from the Syllabus (there are lots to choose from), then the creation of an A3 design folio and design development through drawings, scale models, mock-ups, CAD etc. A single final product is then manufactured.

40% Theory Exam (in Year 11).

This incorporates numerous fact-based questions as well as design / drawing challenges. The questions are a mixture of CDT 'Theory', such as types of material, and 'Designing' questions which give the candidate the chance to sketch design solutions set within the paper (rather like the design work in their projects and Year 9 theory tests). Theory is addressed during the course and especially in the first half of the Summer Term of Year 11. Pupils should ideally have an interest in this aspect of the subject, and be willing to study this in their own time from the given text book and theory summary sheets. These provide an additional focus for homework and should establish wider subject knowledge in readiness for the final exam.

Pupils should consider CDT as an option if they already enjoy:

- coming up with creative ideas
- finding out about how things are made and used
- freehand sketching and accurate measured drawings
- designing 3D shapes on the computer (ProDesktop)
- making projects in the workshop
- using + knowing about all sorts of materials, tools and machines
- learning about DT theory (doing well in the Year 9 CDT tests)
- being motivated and organised with project work

The differences between Year 9 work and GCSE are chiefly:

- the opportunity to design and make a more complex project
- smaller classes so more individual help - especially in the workshop
- the chance to use a wide variety of tools and machines
- greater emphasis on planning ahead through the design folder
- greater emphasis on model making to explore initial design ideas

Subject

Drama

Examining Group

AQA

Syllabus title

Drama (4240)

The course aims to develop:

1. Theatre skills
2. Imagination and creativity
3. Social skills

Course Content:

Practical (60%)

Year 10: Each student will act in two mini-productions. One will be a scripted performance and one devised. These will be internally assessed and externally moderated.

Year 11: Students can continue in acting with a further two mini-productions, one scripted and one devised. However, there will also be opportunities to be assessed in technical areas such as lighting, set design and sound. Again, both assignments are internally assessed and externally moderated.

Scripts range from old (Shakespeare) to new (Godber).

Devised work is based on narrative.

Written (40%)

There is one written paper in the final term of Year 11. Students have to answer questions on a live production they have seen and a piece of practical work undertaken on the course.

Theatre Trips:

Students can expect to see at least one production a year with the School.

Subject

French

Examining Group

OCR

Syllabus Title

French (J730)

Examinations

Papers in Listening (20%), Reading (20%) and Writing (30%) at Foundation or Higher level. Writing carried out as controlled assessment in school time.

A Speaking test is conducted and recorded by the teacher (30%), internally assessed and externally moderated.

It is expected that most pupils will continue with the study of French in Year 10. The emphasis of GCSE on communication and an exchange programme with a French school gives added relevance to this course. The stay with a French family early in Year 10 will greatly enhance pupils' knowledge of the language and of French culture.

Subject

Spanish

Examining Group

OCR

Syllabus title

Spanish (J732)

Examinations

Papers in Listening (20%), Reading (20%) and Writing (30%) at Foundation or Higher level. Writing carried out as controlled assessment in school time.

A Speaking test is conducted and recorded by the teacher (30%), internally assessed and externally moderated.

During the GCSE course pupils will continue to develop all of the skills which they will have already practised in their first 3 years of Spanish. At the beginning of Year 10 they will have the opportunity to visit Spain and stay with a Spanish family, which will greatly enhance their knowledge of the language and of Spanish culture.

Other Options: Other Languages can be followed at an extra charge.

Subject

Geography

Examining Group

Edexcel

Syllabus Title

Geography Syllabus B (5GB)

Paper 5GB1 (1 hour, tiered) Weighting: 25%

A question is set on each of the topics listed below. Each question contains a mixture of question styles and will involve using material covered throughout the course.

Unit 1 – Dynamic Planet

- Introduction to Dynamic Planet – (compulsory)
climate and change, restless earth, battle for the biosphere and water world.
- Small scale Dynamic Planet – (option)
coastal change and conflict or river processes and pressures.
- Large-scale Dynamic Planet – (option)
oceans on the edge or extreme climates.

Paper 5GB2 (1 hour, tiered) Weighting: 25%

A question is set on each of the topics listed below. Each question contains a mixture of question styles and will involve using material covered throughout the course.

Unit 2 – People and the Planet

- Introduction to People and the Planet – (compulsory)
population dynamics, consuming resources, living spaces and making a living.
- Small scale People and the Planet – (option)
changing cities or changing countryside.
- Large-scale People and the Planet – (option)
development dilemmas or world at work.

Paper 5GB3 (1 hour, tiered) Weighting: 25%

Unit 3 - Making Geographical Decisions

This paper takes the form of a decision-making exercise. It includes a booklet with resources such as maps, photographs and newspaper articles, all based on issues that relate to sustainable development and the environment. Candidates are asked structured questions using the resources to consider the issue being examined.

Paper 5GB4

Unit 4 - Researching Geography Coursework: a fieldwork investigation worth 25% - internally assessed

Candidates are required to complete ONE fieldwork investigation at a local scale to investigate an argument, problem or assertion. They will collect the data during a visit to Cambridge in the Summer Term of Year 10 and complete the write-up within a **specific time frame** during the Autumn Term of Year 11.

Subject

History

Examining Group

OCR

Syllabus Title

Syllabus B
The Modern World

The GCSE syllabus provides candidates with the opportunity to study crucially important aspects of Twentieth Century World History in outline and in depth. Assessment is by three examinations worth 75% and one piece of coursework worth 25%.

Examinations

The Cold War 1945-1975. Looks at the Origins of the Cold War, the Cuban Missiles Crisis, and the Vietnam War.

The USA, 1945-1975: Land of Freedom?
Examines McCarthyism, the Civil Rights Struggle of African-Americans, native peoples and Hispanics.

How far did British society change 1939 to 1975. A History of Britain on topics such as immigration and multi-culturalism, the growth of the welfare state, and the youth movement of the 1960s and 1970s

Coursework

The Russian Revolution and the Soviet Union under Stalin, 1917-1941. An examination of the impact of the Great War on Tsarist Russia, the revolution of 1917 and the emergence of the Stalin Dictatorship and the industrialisation of the Soviet Union.

Subject

Media Studies

Examining Group:

AQA

Syllabus Title:

GCSE Media Studies

What is it?

Consumption of the media is unavoidable and it could be argued that it affects young people more than most. GCSE Media Studies encourages students to analyse and interpret different media texts using a similar skill set to that expected of an English student. However, students are then able to put what they have learnt into practice, designing and producing their own media products such as news broadcasts, web pages or magazine articles and critically evaluating their success.

How is it assessed?

The AQA syllabus is followed. Students are assessed by means of coursework and a final case study style examination where students will produce work to a brief provided by the exam board beforehand.

Coursework is 60% of the overall mark in Media Studies. It is made up of three assignments each of which allows students to focus on the key concepts of representation, audience, institutions and media language. The assignments are:

Assignment 1: Introduction to the Media – Analysing magazines and comics

Assignment 2: Cross Media Study – Analysing advertising and marketing across different media platforms

Assignment 3: Practical Production – Producing a music video

The examination is worth 40% and takes the form of a case study on a topic set by the board and is assessed during a 1 ½ hour examination. In 2011 the topic for the exam will be Action Adventure Films. This is an open examination and therefore students can conduct their research and produce preliminary design work before the exam itself.

Who should take it?

Pupils should consider Media Studies as an option if they already enjoy:

- Applying skills of analysis to a range of different texts
- Coming up with creative ideas
- Investigating the world around them
- Working as part of a team
- Using ICT to design publications
- Creating organised, professional looking work
- Working with moving images

Subject

Music

Examining Group

OCR

GCSE Music is based on four areas of study, giving pupils the opportunity to learn more about music they are already familiar with, and introducing them to a number of exciting new styles from different times and cultures:

Area of Study 1: "My Music" (spotlight on my instrument)

Pupils perform on their own instrument (or voice) and compose a piece in any style they wish.

Area of Study 2: "Shared Music" (musical relationships and roles)

Looking at different genres in which musicians work together to make music:

- How a soloist works with an accompanist
- How musicians work together as equals
- How singers work together in large groups

Area of Study 3: "Dance Music"

Pupils learn about dance styles from a number of different times and cultures, including waltz, tango, salsa, American line dance, Irish jig and reel, bhangra, disco and club dance.

Area of Study 4: "Descriptive Music"

Studying pieces of music that depict a mood or scene, and learning how composers convey emotions, events and places in their music. Pupils find out how film composers devise their music to support the action and story of a film.

How Music GCSE is assessed:

Unit 1: Integrated tasks (30%)

Pupils record **one performance** and **one composition** for their own instrument. They also write a **commentary** which links both of these together. The performance can be as a **soloist** or as part of an **ensemble**.

Unit 2: Practical portfolio (30%)

Pupils record **one performance** that shows an understanding of how parts work together and also produce **one composition** based on a selected task e.g. a piece of dance music or a piece of descriptive music. The performance in this unit will need to be as part of an **ensemble**.

Unit 3: Creative task (15%)

Pupils create a **short composition** based on an idea, called a stimulus, which will be set by OCR. In an exam situation pupils are given the idea at the beginning and will then have 45 minutes to compose and present their piece.

Unit 4: Listening test (25%)

The listening test is a written exam, in which pupils listen to extracts of music and answer questions about them. The exam will last for about an hour.

Subject

Physical Education

Examining Group

EDEXCEL 5PE01

Syllabus

Physical Education

Theory

This section of the course accounts for 40% of the final assessment and falls under these broad headings:

- Healthy, active lifestyles
 - Factors affecting physical activity.
 - Safety aspects of physical activity.
- Your healthy, active body
 - Anatomy and Physiology.

Practical Skills

This section of the course accounts for 60% of the final assessment and falls under two broad headings:

- Practical Performance
- Analysis of Performance

Each student must participate in four activities from at least two of the following areas:

Games	Athletic Activities
Gymnastic Activities	Dance
Outdoor and Adventurous Activities	Health and Fitness

This may be achieved as a performer, leader or official.

It is anticipated that each student will study more than just four activities to enable them to choose the four most appropriate for examination. It may also be possible to negotiate the inclusion of certain activities pursued outside of school (such as martial arts). This section not only includes physical performance itself, but also the ability to plan and evaluate performance, and also to analyse performance with a view to improving it. 35% of the marks are awarded during the course and 25% for a final practical assessment.