



MIDDLE SCHOOL YEARS 2025-2027

**An introduction to
GCSE Courses**

MIDDLE SCHOOL YEARS

As you go through RGS, you follow three stages of educational studies. In Years 7, 8 and 9 you follow Key Stage 3 courses. Many subjects also begin preparation for GCSE in Year 9. Years 10 and 11 are Key Stage 4 courses and lead to the GCSE examination. Finally, there is the two-year A level course, Key Stage 5, completed in the Sixth Form.

Students at RGS study ten GCSEs. These are Mathematics, English Language, English Literature, Physics, Chemistry, Biology, a Modern Foreign Language, a Humanity, and two other optional subjects. Students will take the full course GCSE exam in these ten subjects in May and June 2027.

GCSE optional subjects are listed below:

Art (Fine or Graphics)	French	Latin	Spanish
Classical Civilisation	Geography	Music	
Computer Science	German	Physical Education	
Design Technology	History	Religious Studies	

Please be aware of the following:

- All students must choose **at least one** of French, German or Spanish (Modern Foreign Language)
- All students must choose **at least one** of History or Geography (Humanity)
- No student may begin French, German, Spanish or Latin at this stage
- Classical Civilisation may be chosen even if it has not been studied previously
- Only one Art option (either Fine Art or Art Graphics) option may be studied

You will need to consider three factors before you make your choices:

1. Which are the subjects in which you think you will achieve your best results?
2. Which are the subjects you are most interested in?
3. Do you have a career in mind?

In this booklet we provide more detailed information on all Key Stage 4 subjects. Your classes are based on mixed ability groupings in all subjects apart from Mathematics. In Mathematics pupils are put into sets based upon internal School exam results and teacher recommendations.

All GCSEs are linear (no interim exams) and will be graded from 9 (highest) to U (lowest).

Co-Curriculum

We also regard all other aspects of School life as important. We expect you to develop your talents to the full and provide opportunities in many different fields, to an extent, we believe, unparalleled in most State Schools. It is your responsibility to make the best use of the activities that are offered to you and thus continue to develop the transferable skills which future universities and employers value highly.

Games

During Terms 1 and 2 of Year 10 and Year 11, you can take part in Rugby, Hockey or a rotation of activities which includes athletic development, Badminton, Basketball, Dodgeball, and Invasion Games. In Term 3, Cricket, Tennis, Athletics, Softball, Athletic development, pre-season Rugby and Hockey are all on offer.

Physical Education

Year 10 students have two periods of Physical Education per week. Students taking GCSE Physical Education or who represent the School in Rugby, Hockey, or Cricket (Core Sports) will rotate around Sport Specific multi -skills, Handball, and Badminton to benefit their sporting performance. The Non-GCSE and Core Sports group will have a health and fitness focus, through a broader range of physical activities and sports, such as Dodgeball, Gym, Badminton, and Tennis.

Thursday Afternoon Activities

On Thursday afternoons, in what is known as TAA, you may join the CCF, do Social Service or take part in one of the many activities designed to enrich the curriculum and develop your additional skills or interests. We currently offer:

Art	Badminton	Basketball
Board Games	CCF – Army	CCF - RAF
Cookery	Creative Writing	Croquet
Drama	Film Club	Fitness
Fives	Football	Italian
Japanese	Library	Media Studies
Music	Outdoor Skills	Politics
Psychology	Social Services	Squash
Stage, Lighting and Sound Team (SLST)		
Table Tennis	Tennis	Volleyball

You will make your TAA choices later in the Spring term.

We encourage you to join Clubs and Societies, go on expeditions and trips, and participate fully in the various activities of the School community.

THE MIDDLE SCHOOL (KEY STAGE 4) CURRICULUM AND CAREERS

As a Year 9 pupil at the end of your third year in the School, future careers seem a long way away. However, it is never too early to acquire ideas and information. Here is a summary of our system. We encourage you to use it.

The School subscribes to Unifrog, a careers information and logging programme that provides up-to-date advice and guidance. You may also request an individual careers interview. In Years 10 and 11, as part of the PSHE programme, there are two modules of Careers Education and there is a monthly Careers bulletin. You are encouraged to organise Work Experience, which will enable you to gain a real insight into the world of work.

The RGS Curriculum ensures a broad and balanced choice of subjects so no career options are closed to you at this stage. You should choose the subjects you enjoy and will perform best in. If you wish to discuss options and possible careers, please contact Mrs Thakrar, Careers Lead.

Looking ahead to the Sixth Form these are the A levels we currently offer:

Ancient History	German*
Art and Design*	History*
Biology*	Latin*
Business Studies	Mathematics*
Chemistry*	Music*
Computer Science	Music Technology
Design and Technology*	Philosophy
Economics	Physics*
English Literature*	Politics
French*	Psychology
Geography	Spanish
	Sports BTEC

*You must have studied the corresponding GCSE for entry to these subjects

ENGLISH LANGUAGE and ENGLISH LITERATURE

You will continue with English until you sit two GCSEs in Year 11: English Language and English Literature. Both GCSEs require the full range of reading, writing and speaking skills you developed in the lower School.

English Language requires writing in various styles, reading a range of different text types and understanding their stylistic features, debating, discussion and presentation of ideas in front of a whole class. Perhaps, most importantly, it requires you to demonstrate an awareness of the 'mechanics' of the language and this skill is a key component of your Literature GCSE too.

In both English Language and Literature, at the end of each unit studied in Year 10 and Year 11, there will be a common assessment completed. This assessment will be completed under timed conditions during an English lesson. Although the result of each assessment will not directly affect the overall GCSE result, it will reflect your progress within each unit. Likewise, both the Year 10 and 11 mock exams will contain exam-based tasks. There is a 'Speaking and Listening' component to the Language GCSE but it is separately awarded and does not contribute to the overall Language GCSE grade.

Literature:

Paper 1: Shakespeare and the 19th Century Novel (40%)

Paper 2: Modern texts and Poetry (60%)

The set texts for Literature are *Macbeth* by William Shakespeare, *An Inspector Calls* by J. B. Priestley and *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* by Robert Louis Stevenson. Students also study the 'Power and Conflict Poetry' anthology.

Language:

Paper 1: Explorations in creative reading and writing (50%)

Paper 2: Writers' viewpoints and perspectives (50%)

Component 3: Speaking and Listening Test
(separately endorsed 0% weighting of GCSE)

Method of Assessment:

English Language: 100% exam – externally assessed

English Literature: 100% exam – externally assessed

Speaking and Listening Test – teacher assessed, then internally moderated

Exam Board: AQA

Specification: 8702 (Literature) 8700 (Language)

MATHEMATICS

As this subject is integral to so many other areas of study, as well as every aspect of life itself, you will continue to study Mathematics to the end of Year 11. A large cohort then decide to pursue the subject to a higher-level post 16 and this is enthusiastically encouraged.

In Year 10 you will be split into two parallel halves of the year and each of these is then further divided into four sets. These sets allow the Mathematics Department to cater for your needs throughout these two very important years. If you are in Sets 1 and 2 you will complete your higher tier GCSE course in Year 10 and will move on to study the AQA Level 2 Certificate in Further Mathematics in Year 11. If you are in Sets 3 and 4 you can work at a steadier pace on the higher-level GCSE course, enabling you to have every opportunity of attaining a top grade in the GCSE exam taken in the Summer of Year 11.

The Mathematics GCSE course encompasses many areas, giving a thorough grounding in numerical skills, Algebra, Mensuration, Trigonometry, Statistics and Probability. There are opportunities for you to explore around the set topics, with problem solving skills and logical thinking encouraged using open ended tasks. There are also occasions when you will make use of ICT in understanding and exploring mathematical theory.

The AQA Level 2 Certificate in Further Mathematics course is designed as an enrichment programme for those students who have a thorough knowledge of the content of the Higher Tier Mathematics GCSE course, and is designed to stretch and challenge high achieving Mathematicians. It places an emphasis on higher order technical proficiency, algebraic reasoning and problem-solving skills. As a high achieving student, it gives you an introduction to topics that will help you develop skills in Algebra, Geometry, Calculus, Matrices, Trigonometry, Functions and Graphs. The redeveloped specification has been designed to provide you with a coherent course of study to develop mathematical understanding and provides you with an excellent opportunity to experience the Mathematics studied at post-16 level, including some topics from GCE Mathematics and Further Mathematics. However, if you do not study Level 2 Certificate in Further Mathematics, you will not be prevented from studying Mathematics or Further Mathematics at A Level.

Method of Assessment:

GCSE Mathematics: Grades available: 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9

Paper 1 1½ hours non-calculator (out of 80) 33⅓%

Paper 2 1½ hours with calculator (out of 80) 33⅓%

Paper 3 1½ hours with calculator (out of 80) 33⅓%

Exam Board: EdExcel

Specification: 1MA1

Level 2 Further Mathematics: Grades available: 5, 6, 7, 8, 9

Paper 1 1¾ hours non-calculator (out of 80) 50%

Paper 2 1¾ hours with calculator (out of 80) 50%

Exam Board: AQA

Specification: 8365

SCIENCES

BIOLOGY

This course builds upon the biological principles established in Years 7, 8 and 9 by considering genetics, natural selection, diseases and medicine development in Year 10. You will then learn about animal coordination, ecosystems and plant structures in Year 11.

Method of Assessment:

Examinations of the different modules will be taken at the end of Year 11. These take the form of 1 hour 45-minute exams, consisting of a mixture of short and extended writing questions. You will complete several core practical tasks during Biology GCSE and skills acquired from these tasks will be tested in the written examinations.

Exam Board: PEARSON EDEXCEL

Specification: 1BIO

PHYSICS

Physics is taught by a combination of practical work, demonstration, discussion and numerical analysis. Physics demands and develops your ability to grasp abstract concepts and apply them to practical situations – often using Mathematics to assess their usefulness. As such the skills you learn in Physics will be readily applicable to a whole range of subjects and careers from engineering, commerce, health, and research to disciplines which involve making sense of data and communicating it.

Topics include: Waves, Electricity, Forces and Motion, Nuclear Physics, Astronomy, Matter and Energy.

Method of Assessment:

Assessment will be by examinations at the end of Year 11. These papers will include questions on the practical tasks that are a compulsory part of the course.

Exam Board: PEARSON EDEXCEL

Specification: 1PH0

CHEMISTRY

The GCSE Chemistry course enables you to:

- Develop scientific knowledge and conceptual understanding of Chemistry
- Develop an understanding of the nature, processes and methods of Chemistry through different types of scientific enquiries which will help you answer questions about the world around you
- Develop and learn to apply observational, practical, modelling, enquiry and problem-solving skills in the laboratory and in other learning environments
- Develop your ability to evaluate claims based on Chemistry through critical analysis of the methodology, evidence and conclusions, both qualitatively and quantitatively

Method of Assessment:

Paper 1 1 hour 45 minutes 50 % of mark

Paper 2 1 hour 45 minutes 50 % of mark

Both papers are a mixture of different question styles, including multiple-choice questions, short answer questions, calculations and extended open response questions. Questions also cover practical procedures.

Exam Board: PEARSON EDEXCEL

Specification: 1CHO

MODERN LANGUAGES

Why learn one or more foreign languages?

At RGS all students are required to take at least one modern foreign language. You can choose either or both of the languages you are currently studying in Year 9. If you study Latin and French, you must take French but you can also take Latin in addition. The advantages of learning a foreign language are well-documented from the point of view of future career prospects, understanding of a culture, and the ability to communicate in that language. However, did you know there are other benefits to learning a foreign language beyond the language itself? Here are just some of the advantages:

- **You build multi-tasking skills**
- **You become more perceptive**
- **Your decision-making skills improve**
- **Your memory improves**
- **You improve your English**

If you enjoy studying languages, you should certainly consider taking up more than one foreign language at GCSE level. Take a closer look at the individual languages and you will find that there are clear advantages to studying the same topics and sitting an identical exam (albeit in a different language). You get the amazing skill of being able to communicate in two foreign languages and get twice the practice in the key linguistic skills of reading, listening, speaking and writing, alongside twice the exam practice.

If you are a native speaker of these languages or another language where a GCSE qualification is available, you also have the option of taking a GCSE in that language early in Year 10. This is then in addition to the language or languages you pick as your GCSE options. If you are interested in this, please contact Miss Sheppard, Head of MFL, at the start of Year 10.

FRENCH

Students who have studied French since Year 7 can continue into Years 10 and 11, at the end of which they take the GCSE.

There are many good reasons to choose French: it is an important global language, which is spoken on every continent. A GCSE in French will enable you to connect with people near and far, and will enable you to communicate across cultures, as well as giving you an edge in the UK employment market. Many of the most wonderful pieces of world literature have been written in French, and it remains the language of gastronomy. Many of Europe's biggest businesses are based in France, and Quebec in Canada is a centre for the global eSports industry. With over 300 million speakers worldwide, projected to grow to 500 million by 2030, French is a language of growing importance.

We aim to offer a KS4 French trip to allow the students to practise their language skills and experience French culture.

GERMAN

Students who have studied German in Year 8 and Year 9 can continue the subject in Years 10 and 11 and take the GCSE at the end of Year 11.

Here are good reasons for studying German: it is an important language in the scientific and engineering field. A GCSE qualification in German will give communication skills that can increase your chances in the job market. It will also mean you can communicate in the language when you travel to German speaking countries to discover more about this diverse and exciting linguistic culture. There are many specific career opportunities in Germany and in the UK for English speakers who also know German. Germany has the world's third strongest economy and is the world's second-largest exporter. Multinational businesses such as BMW, Daimler, Siemens, Lufthansa, SAP, Bosch, Infineon, BASF, and many others need international partners. German is also the 11th most-spoken language in the world, with over 132 million speakers and has the largest number of native speakers in the European Union.

In the two years of GCSE study, you will cover a range of topics about German, Austrian and Swiss identity and culture. Our aim is for you to get to a level of German to enable you to be able to communicate with German speaking people on a range of topics such as family and friends, hobbies, lifestyle and culture, your local area and travel, school life, studies and the world of work.

In Year 10, we offer a week-long exchange to Osnabrück, Germany, where you will be living with a German family, experiencing family life and visiting the local area. The exchange programme has been running for over fifty years and is a fantastic opportunity to improve your German and experience the culture first hand. If you are doing the exchange this year, you are more than welcome to go again in Year 10.

SPANISH

If you studied Spanish in Year 8 and Year 9 you can carry on with the subject in Years 10 and 11.

Spanish is the third most spoken language in the world with approximately 437 million native Spanish speakers in 24 different countries. It has also become increasingly important in certain areas of the United States.

If you study Spanish at GCSE you will cover a range of topics about Spanish identity and culture, national and international areas of interest and future study and employment. Our aim is for you to attain a level of Spanish which enables you to competently communicate with Spanish speaking people in a natural way.

We offer you a week-long Spanish exchange trip to Barcelona in Year 10 where you will have the opportunity to stay with a family and experience the language and the culture first hand.

FRENCH, GERMAN AND SPANISH TOPICS

Please note you will be studying the new GCSE qualification which is different from the one current Year 11 students are studying. The new exam is designed to be more accessible, so you have the great advantage of being the first year group to sit this new exam in Summer 2027.

Thematic Context	Topics
My personal world	Family and friends Relationships
Lifestyle and wellbeing	Equality Physical well-being Mental well-being Food and drink Sports
My neighbourhood	Places in town Shopping Transport The natural world Environmental issues
Media and technology	Social media Gaming Music TV and film
Studying and my future	Future opportunities (e.g. work, travel) School
Travel and tourism	Accommodation Tourist attractions

Method of Assessment in all Modern Languages:

Pupils take all four papers at either Foundation or Higher tier: Speaking, Listening, Writing and Reading. Each skill is worth 25%.

Exam Board: PEARSON EDEXCEL

Specification: 1FR1 (French)
1GN1 (German)
1SP1 (Spanish)

ART and DESIGN

There are two AQA courses which run simultaneously alongside each other: FINE ART and GRAPHIC COMMUNICATION. As such it is not possible to study both subjects at the same time.

ART AND DESIGN (Fine Art)

Art and Design is an incredibly broad and exciting GCSE which emulates the richness and variety of the Creative Industry through its openness and research focused approach. The course encapsulates a range of subjects that share the common ground of creativity, expression, function and composition. In simple terms this includes: the fine arts (painting, printmaking, sculpture, installation); computer-aided design or visual communication through print, animation; three-dimensional design. There are also many specialist fields including photography, public art, film and TV. The course encourages students to explore and resolve findings of their own devising.

ASSESSMENT

The course itself is divided into two areas for assessment:

- **Unit 1: Portfolio of Work.** This is marked out of 96 and carries 60% of the total marks available and will include work done in Year 10 and 11.
- **Unit 2: Externally Set Task.** This is a project carried out over 9 weeks. It is marked out of 96 and carries 40% of the total marks available.

What is meant by a 'portfolio'? A 'portfolio' is another word for a collection of coursework. It can include work of any scale, so it does not have to fit into a designated size of folder. It can include work such as drawing and painting; large scale 3D installations; digital or lens-based work; responses to visits and workshops; experimental and developmental work as well as finished pieces; research into sources such as the work of artists, craftspeople and designers; sketch books as well as mounted work – in fact anything that reflects the breadth of the course that you have taken and any work that you have done on a personal level.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

1. Coursework Portfolio – 2 units of work (media studies and final pieces)
2. Final Examination – preparatory work and final test piece

We believe this reflects the current growth in the creative industry and enables the students a wider scope to be experimental and expressive. An expected amount of 45 minutes to an hour of additional study at home per week, will enable the students to successfully cover the course requirements.

Fine Art Timetable

YEAR 10

AUTUMN TERM Coursework	UNIT 1: Theme – Natural Forms <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct observational drawing • Exploration through mixed media techniques • Design work for sculpture • How to use and develop a sketchbook
SPRING TERM Coursework	UNIT 1: Theme – Natural Forms Personal Investigation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visit to Kew Gardens • Personal explorative work in response to Kew Gardens and previous studies • Development of individual ideas
SUMMER TERM Coursework	UNIT 2: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In depth exploration in a wide range of media • Creation of final response • Mock Examination (2 days) Create final outcome

YEAR 11

AUTUMN TERM Coursework	UNIT 2: MOCK EXAMINATION PROJECT <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Choice of questions • Visit to a London gallery • Research/Development studies • Final piece (10 hours) in November
SPRING TERM Coursework	UNITS 1 and 2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation of coursework portfolio (plus any other personal work)
Final Exam	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FINAL EXAM PAPER (February) • Choice of questions • Research/Development studies • Final exam (10 hours) just before Easter holidays
SUMMER TERM Coursework	UNITS 1 and 2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completion and presentation of coursework

% of
Overall
Mark



60%

40%
Exam



Exam Board:
Specification:

AQA
8202 (Fine Art and Graphic Communication)

ART AND DESIGN (Graphic Communication)

Students will explore the way Graphic Design reflects and influences contemporary tastes and styles and has connections to the wider historical context of Art and Design. Students will produce work that has visual clarity, impact, originality and a high standard of technical finish as well as fulfilling its specific function (usually predetermined by a design brief). The portfolio and exam work will be created using a range of techniques and processes including computer assisted graphics. The areas of study will cover a selection from below.

- **communication graphics**
- **design for print**
- **advertising and branding**
- **illustration**
- **package design**
- **typography**
- **interactive design (including web, app and game)**
- **multi-media**
- **motion graphics**
- **signage**
- **exhibition graphics**

ASSESSMENT

The course itself is divided into two areas for assessment:



- **Unit 1: Portfolio of Work.** This is marked out of 96 and carries 60% of the total marks available and will include work done in Year 10 and 11.
- **Unit 2: Externally Set Task.** This is a project carried out over 9 weeks. It is marked out of 96 and carries 40% of the total marks available.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

1. Coursework Portfolio – 2 units of work (media and digital studies and final pieces)
2. Final Examination – preparatory work and final outcome created during exam conditions.

We believe this reflects the current growth in the creative industry and enables the students a wider scope to be experimental and expressive. An expected amount of 45 minutes to an hour of additional study at home per week, will enable the students to successfully cover the course requirements.

Graphic Communication Timetable

YEAR 10		% of Overall Mark
AUTUMN TERM Coursework	UNIT 1: Theme – Typography – an exploration of type through a series of workshops <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Exploration through mixed media such as collage and photo montage ● Digital work for a specific brief using photoshop ● How to use and develop a sketchbook 	
SPRING TERM Coursework	UNIT 1: Theme – Kew Gardens Brief – a personal investigation. Letter stencils and show and light through photography <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Visit to Kew Gardens ● Personal explorative work in response to Kew Gardens. Digital and non-digital studies ● Development of individual ideas in response to the graphic brief 	
SUMMER TERM Coursework	UNIT 2: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● In depth exploration in a wide range of media – digital and non-digital responses ● Creation of final response in a series of graphical outcomes ● Mock Examination (2 days) Create final outcome 	
		60%
YEAR 11		40% Exam
AUTUMN TERM Coursework	UNIT 2: MOCK EXAMINATION PROJECT <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Choice of questions ● Visit to a London gallery ● Research/Development studies – digital and non-digital ● Final piece (10 hours) in November ● 	
SPRING TERM Coursework	UNITS 1 and 2 - Presentation of coursework portfolio (plus any other personal work)	
Final Exam	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● FINAL EXAM PAPER (February) ● Choice of questions ● Research/Development studies ● Final exam (10 hours) just before Easter holidays 	
SUMMER TERM Coursework	UNITS 1 and 2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Completion and presentation of coursework 	

CLASSICS

LATIN

Latin is a useful foundation for English, History and Modern Languages. However, many pupils take it for its intrinsic worth, its academic value and because of their enjoyment of the subject.

We are using the new Suburani course which teaches Latin through an exploration of life and culture across the Roman empire, focusing particularly on typical Romans and their life. During GCSE, you will be gradually introduced to all the grammar required to enable you to read original Latin literature, meeting texts that were designed for a Roman reader and engaging with Roman thought and belief through this literature. Year 10 will focus mainly on the language required, while Year 11 will be literature-focused with a range and variety of writers such as Virgil, Cicero, Catullus and Ovid, for example.

The final assessment comprises both unseen translation and comprehension, and questions on the verse and prose set texts. There is no requirement for you to translate from English into Latin, although there is an option to do this if you want to. It should be noted, however, that while Roman life topics may be taught alongside the Latin, these do not currently form part of the exam; if you are interested in this element you should consider GCSE Classical Civilisation as well as, or instead of, Latin.

Method of Assessment:

100% end of course exam

Exam Board: OCR

Specification: J282

CLASSICAL CIVILISATION

This course is open to you regardless of whether you have studied Classical Civilisation in Year 9; no previous knowledge of Latin or of the Classical world is required. All source materials are in English.

The course is made up of a series of topics on the social life, culture and literature of the ancient Greeks and Romans; this year, the focus has been on religion, myth and life in the city. Emphasis is laid upon the study and interpretation of the ancient evidence; this evidence includes both visual and written materials. You do not need to have a knowledge of Greek or Latin since all written sources are studied in English. You will be encouraged to make reasoned comparisons between the ancient and modern worlds, and, where you find differences, to show an understanding of and sympathy with ancient behaviour, attitudes and ways of thinking.

Among the topics currently available are: Myth and Religion, Roman City Life, The Homeric World, and War and Warfare, two of which will be studied for GCSE. During study of these topics, you will be expected to consider physical evidence (such as archaeology and art) and written evidence (such as letters, plays, literature, and historical accounts). Thus, this course has a wide scope and caters to a range of different interests as well as developing a wide variety of skills.

Method of Assessment:

Component 1 Thematic Study 1½ hours, 90 marks, 50%

Component 2 Literature and Culture 1½ hours, 90 marks, 50%

Exam Board: OCR

Specification: J199

CLASSICS AND CAREERS

Pupils and their parents often ask why one should study Classical subjects or how these can assist in a future career. The high educational value of Classical subjects is acknowledged by universities and employers, both for their intellectual rigour and for their breadth of view. Surveys show that Classics graduates can be found working in a very wide range of jobs in business and commerce, advertising and marketing, computing and IT, politics and the Civil Service, the law, education, and public services such as the Police. The subjects are also valued for the way in which they encourage accuracy, analytical thinking and persuasive communication of ideas and, thus, open the door to many and varied future career pathways.

COMPUTER SCIENCE

GCSE Computer Science encapsulates a range of topics related to the study and application of computational thinking and algorithm design. You will be taught a high-level programming language which is used as an industry standard. The course offers you an introduction and gateway to the study of Computer Science at A level, degree level and beyond. The course gives you an opening into a career in a dynamic industry which is still growing. There are opportunities related to hardware, software, system development, programming and networking.

Component 1 – Computer Systems

This component is focused on computer systems. You will cover the physical elements of computer science and the associated theory.

Component 2 – Computational Thinking, Algorithms and Programming

This component is focused on the core theory of computer science and the application of computer science principles.

What will I study?

Component Title	Component Overview	Assessment
Computer Systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Systems architecture● Memory● Storage● Wired and wireless networks● Network topologies, protocols and layers● Network security● System software● Moral, social, legal, cultural and environmental concerns● Data representation	80 marks 1½ hour exam 50% of the final exam
Computational Thinking, Algorithms and Programming	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Translators and facilities of languages● Algorithms● High- and low-level programming● Computational logic● Robust Programming and procedures	80 marks 1½ hour exam 50% of the final exam

Exam Board: OCR

Specification: J277

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

Design and Technology is an inspiring, rigorous and practical subject. Using creativity and imagination, you will design and make products that solve real and relevant problems within a variety of contexts, considering your own and others' needs, wants and values. You acquire a broad range of subject knowledge and draw on disciplines such as Mathematics, Science, Engineering, Computing and Art, and you will learn how to take risks, becoming resourceful, innovative, enterprising and a capable citizen. Through the evaluation of past and present design and technology, you develop a critical understanding of its impact on daily life and the wider world. High-quality design and technology education makes an essential contribution to the creativity, culture, wealth and well-being of the nation.

DT is an ideal subject if you are considering a career in Engineering, or if you are someone who simply enjoys DT while having a strong aptitude for the subject.

You begin Year 10 with a small, focused practical project aimed at developing a variety of manufacturing and design skills, while also studying the theory elements of the subject. From early June, you will start the non-examination assessment (NEA) element of the course following the release of a range of context challenge areas from which to choose, provided by AQA. There is an element of applied Mathematics included within the written exam worth 15% and covering elements of the KS3 and KS4 (Foundation Level) Mathematics syllabus.

If DT is oversubscribed, places will be offered to those who have previously demonstrated a good standard of ability and effort, meeting all homework deadlines and acquiring the necessary design, practical and Computer Aided Design (CAD) skills taught over KS3.

Method of Assessment:

Written examination (2 hours): 50% of GCSE

Coursework: 50% of GCSE

(approximately 35 hours / 20-page design folder and practical manufactured product)

Exam Board: AQA

Specification: 8552

GEOGRAPHY

Geography is the study of change across time and space in both physical and human environments. At GCSE we build on the knowledge and skills you have gained in Years 7-9. We aim to give you a sense of awe and wonder at the dynamic beauty of our world. The course will equip you to be a better-informed global citizen, with an understanding of the world around you. You will gain insight into critically-relevant debates about the future of our planet. Throughout, you will develop wide-ranging skills to support whatever education and career pathways you follow in the future.

Through three papers (each examined with a 1 ½ hour end of course exam), you will study issues of contemporary relevance.

For Paper 1, Global Geographical Issues, you will study:

- Hazardous Earth, including climate change, tropical cyclones, volcanoes and earthquakes.
- Development Dynamics, including theories of development and an in-depth case-study of India.
- Challenges of an Urbanising World, including trends in urbanisation with a case study of Mumbai.

For Paper 2, UK Geographical Issues, you will study:

- The UK's evolving physical landscape, including geology, coasts and rivers.
- The UK's evolving human landscape, including economic activity, migration, and urban (Birmingham) and rural change.
- Fieldwork on a local river (River Chess) and urban area (High Wycombe).

For Paper 3, Making Geographical Decisions, you will study:

- People and the biosphere, including the global distribution and character of different biomes.
- Forests under threat, with case studies of tropical rainforests and taiga.
- Consuming energy resources, studying renewable and non-renewable resources

In the GCSE, the exams are structured in the same way as the Year 9 end of topic tests. Each section begins with short, factual recall, multiple choice and data response questions. A number of medium-tariff 'explain' questions follow. Each section ends with short 8 or 12 mark essays, which require you to evaluate or assess the relative significance of factors, supported by evidence from in-depth case study knowledge or resources given.

There will be two compulsory fieldwork days in the local area studying rivers, flood risk and urban environmental quality. These will take place in the summer term within the school day.

Additionally, there is the optional opportunity to join the popular Y10 Skern Lodge trip to North Devon, where we study river processes and landforms from a kayak and coasts from a surfboard!

Method of Assessment

Paper 1 - Global Geographical Issues 1 ½ hour end of course exam

Paper 2 - UK Geographical Issues 1 ½ hour end of course exam

Paper 3 - Making Geographical Decisions 1 ½ hour end of course exam

Exam Board: PEARSON EDEXCEL B

Specification: IGBO

HISTORY

History is an extremely popular subject at the RGS, both at GCSE and at A Level. It offers you the chance to acquire the crucial skills of communication, detecting bias and making sound judgements. These are particularly valued in a wide range of professions, such as politics, the law, business and personnel management, the Civil Service, accountancy, marketing, journalism and education. In addition, History provides an important foundation for all citizens living in a democracy.

Every year the History Department offers you the opportunity to take part in one of our exciting adventures! We have visited Berlin, Krakow, Istanbul, New York, Washington and the D-Day beaches of World War Two. We also organise enriching visits closer to home, including RAF Hendon.

The GCSE History course is very exciting and includes a selection of modules covering medieval, early modern and modern periods. This will ensure you develop into a well-rounded historian. Topics include migrants in Britain c800 to present day; Henry VIII and his ministers; Weimar and Nazi Germany; Superpower relations and the Cold War.

Method of Assessment

End of course examinations

Paper 1:	Thematic Study and Historic Environment	1hr 20 mins
Paper 2:	Period Study and British Depth Study	1hr 50 mins
Paper 3:	Modern Depth Study	1hr 30 mins

Exam Board: PEARSON EDEXCEL

Specification: 1H10

MUSIC

The EDEXCEL GCSE Music syllabus aims to inspire all students with a true passion for Music by advancing the three main areas of Performing (30%), Composing (30%) and Listening (40%). As well as catering for those who are already advanced musicians, you can also be accommodated if you have enjoyed KS3 classroom music. However, if you want to take this subject you must be able to play an instrument or sing to Grade II/ III standard by the beginning of Year 10. In addition, you will be expected to have attained a standard (playing an instrument of your choice or singing) approximating to Grade IV/V by Easter of Year 11, although it is not necessary for you to take the exam.

For the composing side of the course, any style is acceptable, and recent candidates have made increasing use of modern technology to improve and present their work. A knowledge of traditional music theory is a great help to all aspects of the course and, if this is a weakness, we can arrange extra theory support throughout Year 9 and above to help you feel comfortable with Year 10 content.

The Listening paper is the only written paper taken in the Summer of Year 11 and tests your knowledge and understanding of different styles and techniques from across the centuries and across the world whilst studying set works including *Star Wars*, *Defying Gravity* and *Killer Queen*. Performing, Composing and any musical activity will contribute to this paper, which is why GCSE students need to be furthering their participation in ensembles/groups, whether inside or outside RGS. You should also listen to as much music as you can throughout the course. Indeed, the vast majority of GCSE students simply have a passion for Music and enjoy the specialised support on offer at GCSE level that enables them to really further their musicianship.

One-year Accelerated GCSE Course

If you would like to do a GCSE course in Music but not as part of the options scheme, the alternative is to do it after-school on Wednesdays (3.45 – 5.00pm), in an accelerated one-year course. As the time frame is so limited, this should only be considered if you are a good enough performer (Grade V standard is normally expected at the beginning of Year 10) and an able candidate that is prepared to compose much more independently than in the standard 2-year course. There is a modest charge for this course (currently £12.00 per hour, usually about 30 sessions overall). Please contact Mrs Jashari for further details (naj@rgshw.com)

Method of Assessment:

Composing (30%) and Performance (30%) are treated as NEA coursework. It is marked internally and moderated externally. The Listening paper is worth 40% and marked externally.

Exam Board: EDEXCEL

Specification Code: 1MU0

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

GCSE Physical Education is for those students who have a passion for Physical Education, Physical Activity and Sport. Students studying this subject will be assessed in three sports. You must be representing RGS in at least one of your chosen sports to at least B team level and/or representing a club on a weekly basis. Ideally you would be regularly playing two sports across the academic year. We use the AQA exam board at GCSE as it offers a breadth of stimulating topics that build on well from our KS3 Physical Education curriculum. The theoretical aspects of the course will develop your knowledge and understanding of the factors that underpin performance and involvement in Physical Education, Physical Activity and Sport. The practical element of the GCSE course affords the opportunity for you to perform in some of your favourite sports as well as produce a written analysis and evaluation on how you could improve in one of your chosen performances. The GCSE course will develop your passion beyond the specification and inspire the possibilities of future careers in the Sport industry.

Externally Examined Assessment (Theory)

How it is assessed

1. 2 written exams: 1 hour 15 minutes for each paper
2. 78 marks for each paper
3. 30% of GCSE for each paper

Paper 1: The human body and movement in physical activity and sport

- Applied anatomy and physiology
- Movement analysis
- Physical training
- Use of data
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Paper 2: Socio-cultural influences and well-being in physical activity and sport

- Sports psychology
- Socio-cultural influences
- Health, fitness and well-being
- Use of data

Non-Examined Assessment (Practical)

How it is assessed

- Assessed by teachers and moderated by AQA
- Total 40% of GCSE (30% Practical Performance and 10% Written Analysis and Evaluation)
- Practical performance in three different physical activities in the role of player/performer - one in a team activity, one in an individual activity, and a third in either a team or in an individual activity
- Practical Performance - for each of your three activities, you will be assessed in skills in progressive drills (10 marks per activity) and in the full context (15 marks per activity)
- Written Analysis and Evaluation - you will be assessed on your analysis (15 marks) and evaluation (10 marks) of performance to bring about improvement in one activity

Exam Board: AQA

Specification: 8582

RELIGIOUS STUDIES

Religious Studies has become an increasingly important area of study. The subject develops a deep understanding of two religions as well as key skills in critical thinking and analysis. There is also an opportunity for you to explore current affairs in components, studying four themes.

Year 10: Component 1 - the study of two religions (50% of GCSE)

- Christianity - beliefs, teachings and key practices
- Islam – beliefs, teachings and key practices

Year 11: Component 2 - the study of four themes (50% of GCSE)

- Religion in relationships and families
- Religion - human rights and social justice
- Religion - peace and conflict
- Religion - crime and punishment

Method of Assessment:

Component 1 exam: 1 hour 45 minutes

Component 2 exam: 1 hour 45 minutes

Exam Board: AQA (Religious Studies A)

Specification: 8062