



ST JAMES
Senior Boys' School



Stepping into Adulthood

2025/26

GCSE Options

Contents

Welcome from Deputy Head of Academics	3
Guidance on making your GCSE Options	4
Art & Design	6
Biology	8
Business Studies	9
Chemistry	10
Classical Civilisation	12
Computing	14
Design & Technology	16
Drama	18
English Literature & English Language	20
Geography	22
History	24
Latin	25
Mathematics	26
Media Studies	27
MFL: French & Spanish	28
Music	30
Physical Education	32
Physics	34
Sanskrit	35





Welcome from our Deputy Head of Academics

At St James, our Stepping into Adulthood GCSE options programme has been carefully developed over several years to provide a curriculum and co-curricular experience that reflects the diverse interests of our pupils.

By starting the GCSE programme in Year 9, students gain the advantage of exploring each subject in greater depth. This not only strengthens academic performance but also fosters a genuine curiosity for learning. We guide your son in recognising his full potential, encouraging him to build on his strengths and develop a passion for his chosen subjects. Furthermore, extensive consultation with university admissions tutors have reinforced that the quality of GCSEs achieved and the results obtained are far more significant than the number of subjects taken.

Beyond academics, our three-year programme plays a vital role in supporting students on an emotional, spiritual and physical level. These formative years are essential in preparing them for life beyond school, whether in higher education or the working world. Our programme is designed to help students identify opportunities, make the most of them, and build lasting friendships. Above all, we instil in them a deep understanding of our shared responsibility to support and care for one another - an invaluable mindset in today's challenging world.

To ensure a well-rounded education, our Guided GCSE Options Programme allows most students to take nine GCSE subjects while continuing with philosophical education, singing, drama and participation in Cadets or the Duke of Edinburgh Award, alongside Citizenship training. This balanced approach is not only beneficial for your son's personal development but is also highly regarded by universities, art colleges, drama schools and future employers.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Quartier". The signature is stylized with a large, circular flourish at the beginning.

Madame Virginie Quartier
Deputy Head of Academic

Guidance on making your GCSE choices

Choosing the right subjects for GCSE is an important and exciting step in your academic journey. It's a decision that should be made thoughtfully, balancing your interests and strengths with a well-rounded selection of disciplines. As you explore your options, it's helpful to consider not only which subjects you enjoy and excel in but also how they will support your future ambitions.

At St James, we believe that a strong academic foundation is built on developing reasoning skills across a variety of subjects. Each discipline provides a distinct way of thinking and problem-solving:

- **Mathematics and Sciences** teach you to approach problems from different angles, apply logical thinking and understand real-world applications.
- **History** helps you analyse the past, evaluate sources and form well-reasoned arguments.
- **Classical Languages** strengthen your understanding of language structure, communication and abstract thinking.
- **Modern Languages** build communication skills and broaden your cultural awareness.
- **Creative subjects such as Art, Photography, Drama, and Design Technology** encourage self-expression, innovation, and problem-solving in different ways.

Strike a balance

The right combination of subjects should challenge and inspire you while playing to your strengths. Striking a balance between these disciplines will help you develop a versatile skill set, preparing you for future academic and career opportunities.

Supporting your decision making

To support you in making informed decisions, discussions take place between the Deputy Head Academic, subject teachers, and Form Tutors to help identify your strengths and potential pathways. We encourage you and your son to reflect on the guidance provided and to consider which subjects resonate most with him. While we offer recommendations, the final choice is yours - this is a chance to take ownership of your learning and shape your future.

Key Stages of the Process

1. FROM SPRING TERM ONWARDS

Informative Assemblies

Pupils begin their decision-making process with a series of assemblies led by Heads of Departments, where they learn about each GCSE syllabus and how different subjects align with future career opportunities.

Examinations Week

During this week, students sit formal assessments in most academic subjects during their regular timetabled lessons. These exams help teachers evaluate each student's suitability for GCSE subjects. To support their preparation, students attend 'Revision Guidance' assemblies and receive ongoing assistance throughout the year.

2. MEET THE TEACHERS

Parent Information Event

As part of our Stepping into Adulthood programme, Madame Quartier and Mr Atkinson-Young will lead a session outlining the GCSE options process. This event provides an opportunity for parents to engage with teachers and students to gain deeper insights into each subject.

1-2-1 Guidance

Each pupil will have an individual meeting with a senior member of staff to discuss their subject choices and receive personalised advice, ensuring they make confident and informed decisions.

3. FINAL SUBMISSION DEADLINE

May

Once pupils and parents have gathered all necessary information, GCSE choices must be finalised and submitted by 9.00am

This carefully structured process ensures that every pupil is well-supported in choosing the subjects that best align with their strengths, interests, and aspirations.

Compulsory Subjects

All students will study Mathematics, English Language and English Literature as part of their GCSE programme. We also recommend that they study two sciences, one language, one humanity and a creative subject.

Art & Design

SUBJECT OVERVIEW

Our Art course offers students the creative freedom to express their opinions, thoughts, and feelings through the physical process of making art. By visiting exciting art galleries and exhibitions, students gain firsthand inspiration and insights into the work of other artists.

The course encourages experimentation with a wide range of 2D and digital 3D media, while fostering critical analysis of art to understand how the work of others relates to students' own creations. The skills developed throughout the course provide a strong foundation for creative expression, problem-solving, and artistic development.

Why Choose Art and Design?

This subject is perfect for students who have a passion for creativity and want the opportunity to express themselves through various art forms. If you are thinking about an artistic career that requires individual, creative, and flexible thinking, this course will be an excellent start. Throughout the course, students will not only develop technical skills but also cultivate personal attributes such as self-confidence, resilience, perseverance, discipline, and commitment. These qualities are essential for success in any creative or professional field.

What future opportunities will I have?

Particular careers could include Professional Artist, Games Designer, Graphics Designer, Jewellery and Fashion Designer, Interior Designer, Architect, Art Historian, Curator, Art Dealer, Product Designer, Conservator, Animator, Furniture designer, Web Designer, Creative Director, Props-maker, Stylist, Film Director and many more.

For more information, please see subject specification code: 1AD0

SUBJECT INFORMATION

Content

Throughout the course, students will experiment with various art forms and media, including:

- Drawing
- Painting
- Printmaking
- Sculpture/3D
- Ceramics
- Lens-based media, including Photography/ Filmmaking
- Typography
- Modelling/Carving
- Illustrations
- Text-based Art and Art historical writing

Students will develop a large portfolio of work linked to the themes set in the course. Additionally, they will create sketchbooks to document their ideas, track the evolution of their work, experiment with different materials, and make connections to the work of other artists. Critical analysis and reflection will play an integral role in the development of their artistic practice.

Assessments

There are two distinct units to complete as follows:

Unit 1:**Personal Portfolio in Art and Design**

60% of the marks

including a controlled assessment (45 hours).

Higher Weighting:**Externally Set Assignment in Art and Design**

40% of the marks

20 hours of preparation time culminating in a 10-hour (controlled conditions) sustained focus. It consists of one broad-based thematic starting point.



SUBJECT OVERVIEW

Pupils will study the structure and function of cells, organ systems in animals and plants, inheritance patterns, and how organisms interact with their environments. The course also emphasizes practical skills and investigations, allowing students to apply theory to observable phenomena.

What future opportunities will I have?

GCSE Biology opens the door to a wide range of careers in fields such as healthcare, research, and the environment. With a strong understanding of living organisms, it leads to opportunities as a doctor, nurse, veterinarian, research, environmental scientist, or laboratory technician.

It's also valuable for careers in biotechnology, nutrition, sport science, forensics, agriculture, and conservation.

SUBJECT INFORMATION

Content

- 1 Cell Biology
- 2 Organization
- 3 Infection and Response
- 4 Bioenergetics
- 5 Homeostasis and Response
- 6 Inheritance, Variation and Evolution
- 7 Ecology

Practical work is essential in Biology and central to the GCSE syllabus. There are three main reasons for its inclusion:

- To reinforce scientific concepts by applying and deepening understanding of abstract ideas and models.

- To develop investigative skills, including formulating testable questions, controlling variables, and analysing results.
- To build practical skills in using equipment, taking measurements, and handling risks safely.

Assessments

This qualification is linear, with students taking 2 separate papers at the end of the course.

Paper 1: Topics 1-4

Paper 2: Topic 5-7

100 marks in each paper

For more information, please see subject specification code: 8461

Business Studies

AQA

SUBJECT OVERVIEW

A GCSE in Business offers the opportunity to explore businesses and how they work. It is an introduction to business terminology and concepts, including a consideration of their practical application in the real world.

Why Choose Business Studies?

It will be of interest to those who have an entrepreneurial flair as it will help with the basic principles that are necessary for bringing a business idea to fruition

What future opportunities will I have?

Business Studies can either provide straight access to an A-level or a degree in Business or associated degrees such as in Marketing, Management or Finance. It can also provide a basic level of knowledge that can help any person in any career to run their own business or even just their personal finances.

SUBJECT INFORMATION

Content

The modules include:

- Business in the real world
- Influences on Business
- Business Operations
- Human Resources
- Marketing
- Finance

Assessments

This subject will be assessed via two examinations which are each 1 hour 45 minutes in length. They will consist of 22% multiple choice and short answers, and 88% case study and data response questions. The mathematics that is required for success in Business, particularly in the Finance section, relies on the basic skills of addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. Calculators are allowed and recommended.

For more information, please see subject specification code: 8132

SUBJECT OVERVIEW

Pupils will explore the chemical principles that govern both the visible and invisible worlds, investigating the molecular forces behind real-world phenomena. This helps them understand how chemical reactions impact the environment and influence biological processes in humans.

What future opportunities will I have?

This qualification opens doors to exciting academic and career opportunities. Pupils will gain a solid foundation for future studies in fields like medicine, veterinary science, dentistry, engineering, education, and environmental science. It also develops valuable skills relevant to many careers.

Chemists are addressing global challenges such as climate change, health, resources, and sustainable energy which are issues that affect everyone.

SUBJECT INFORMATION

Content

Pupils will follow a curriculum that builds a strong understanding of key concepts over the three years. Practical work is vital, giving students hands-on experience and encouraging problem-solving. Safety rules are emphasized, and students are taught to present findings using correct scientific language. Strong math skills are necessary for tasks such as calculations, interpreting data, and working with graphs. To support exam preparation, students receive advice on effective revision methods to help them remember, recall, and apply their knowledge.

Assessments

This qualification is linear, with pupils taking 2 separate papers at the end of the course.

For more information, please see subject specification code: 8462



Classical Civilisation

SUBJECT OVERVIEW

Studying Classical Civilisation will strengthen your knowledge and credentials. It is such an interesting subject that will exercise your brain and give you an edge! You will be able to discuss a wide variety of subject areas such as philosophy, art, literature and theology and have a good set of skills including critical analysis and reflection, assessing the meaning and significance of information and intellectual initiative. You will need to have a passion for ancient history and a love of reading and writing!

Why Choose Classical Civilisation?

Classical Civilisation at GCSE offers a unique opportunity to explore the cultures of Ancient Greece and Rome, providing insights into their mythology, beliefs and values, art, literature, philosophy, politics, and society. Pupils will refine their critical thinking, research, and writing skills while gaining a deeper understanding of Western thought, particularly in shaping modern law, democracy, and culture. By exploring renowned texts, myths, and historical events, pupils will immerse themselves in captivating stories and gain a deep appreciation for the lasting influence of the classical world.

This subject not only broadens knowledge but also equips students with valuable skills for future academic and career paths in history, archaeology, law, literature, and beyond.

What future opportunities will I have?

Typical careers it can lead to:

- Civil Service
- Journalism
- Politics
- Museum and Heritage Sites
- Teaching
- Solicitor/Barrister
- Theatre and acting

For more information, please see subject specification code: J199

SUBJECT INFORMATION

Content

Year 9: Myth & Religion paper

Year 10: Roman City Life paper

Year 11: Review Myth and Religion paper
and build in exam technique

Assessments**Myth & Religion**

50%

- The gods and goddesses of Greece and Rome
- The universal hero – Heracles/Hercules
- Religion and the city – Temples of Greece and Rome
- Myth and the city: foundation stories of Greece and Rome
- Festivals of Greece and Rome
- Myth and the symbols of power in Greece and Rome
- Death and burial in Greece and Rome
- Journeying to the Underworld: the myths of Greece and Rome

Roman City Life

50%

25% Culture

- Roman Housing
- The Roman Home and Family
- Roman Society
- Leisure and Entertainment

25% Literature

- Satire and Fiction
- Pliny and his Letters
- Experiencing Roman City Life
- Relationships and Roman Society

Computing

SUBJECT OVERVIEW

Computing focuses on the design, development, and analysis of software and hardware used to solve problems across business, scientific, and social contexts. As technology is designed to serve people, the subject also explores the human aspects of computer science, emphasizing problem-solving, innovation, and real-world applications.

Why Choose Computing?

Computer science is a dynamic and rapidly growing area that has become an integral part of the world that we live in today. Expertise in computing enables you to solve complex, challenging problems. Computing enables you to make a positive difference in the world and offers many types of lucrative careers.

What future opportunities will I have?

- Software Engineer
- Data Engineer
- Computer Vision Engineer
- Python Engineer
- Data Scientist
- IT Director
- Analytics Manager
- Business Intelligence Developer
- Computer and Information Systems Scientist
- Information Systems Developer
- Database Administrator
- DevOps Engineer
- Systems Analyst
- Games Programmer
- Cloud Consultant
- Data Warehouse Architect
- Technology Officer
- IT Project Manager

For more information, please see subject specification code: J277

SUBJECT INFORMATION

Content

Topics covered include problem solving, data, communication, programming, computers and the Internet and the bigger picture. Around 40% of the entire course is spent learning and developing coding skills using the high-level language Python that gives students good preparation for the second paper and also, an excellent foundation for the next steps towards a career in one of the many IT and computing related areas of work.

OCR minimum requirements

20 hours of coding practice. In reality, this amounts to half of the time in Years 9 & 10. This relates directly to Paper 2 questions and prepares students for A level standard.

Assessments**Paper 1**

Computer Systems - 50%

1 hour 30 minutes

- Written examination of theoretical knowledge
- Questions range from multiple choice to more extended answers

Paper 2

Computational thinking, algorithms

& programming - 50%

1 hour 30 minutes

- Written examination of practical aspects of programming.
- More technical questions than paper 1, demanding coding skills.



Design & Technology

SUBJECT OVERVIEW

Our Design Technology course gives pupils the chance to develop their designing and making skills through practical projects. Students explore a range of materials and design techniques, including graphical design, CAD/CAM, woodworking, metalworking, plastics, SMART materials, and sustainability. They will work in both workshop and design studio settings, building hands-on skills and critical thinking. The course fosters creativity, problem-solving, and innovation, preparing students for future studies and careers in design and engineering.

Why Choose Design & Technology?

D&T offers many of the key skills that employers are looking for including:

- Creativity, innovation and adaptability
- Communication skills in a wide range of visual and practical outcomes
- Practical transferable skills and problem solving
- Aptitude and a willingness to learn and take on new skills
- Critical thinking skills
- Team working and negotiation skills

What future opportunities will I have?

DT focuses on applying technological solutions to manmade problems, such as addressing the environmental impact of past industrial processes. It plays a key role in sectors like:

- Communications
- Engineering
- Product design
- Architectural design
- Interior design
- Textiles
- Medical industries
- Transportation
- Robotics and AI

For more information, please see subject specification code: C600QS

SUBJECT INFORMATION

Content

Pupils will participate in various practical and design-based activities, including:

- Working with resistant materials such as wood, metal, and plastics
- Learning and applying graphical design principles
- Using CAD/CAM to create digital designs and prototypes
- Understanding SMART materials and sustainable design practices

They will draw in both 2D and 3D, research famous designers, and sketch their own designs. They will model design iterations and create a working prototype for final assessment. The course covers how materials are sourced, processed, and manipulated, helping students understand material properties and their impact on design. Pupils will also keep sketchbooks to document their ideas, material experiments, and connections to other designers. This course equips students with the skills to turn creative ideas into functional designs and working models.

Assessments

Component 1 - 50%

2 hours

Design & Technology in the 21st Century
Written examination

A mix of short answer, structured and extended writing questions assessing candidates' knowledge and understanding of technical principles, designing and making principles along with their ability to analyse and evaluate design decisions and wider issues in design and technology.

Component 2 - 50%

35 hours

Design & make task
Non-exam assessment

A sustained design and make task, based on a contextual challenge set by WJEC, assessing candidates' ability to identify, investigate and outline design possibilities. Design and make prototypes, analyse and evaluate design decisions and wider issues in design and technology.

Drama

SUBJECT OVERVIEW

GCSE Drama helps students develop their creative skills and enables a deep understanding of collaboration and the process of developing original work.

Why Choose Drama?

By studying Drama, students will develop their skills in collaboration, creative thinking, organisation, presentation, performance, evaluation and more.

What future opportunities will I have?

Study of Drama can lead to many careers:

- Actor
- Director
- Producer
- Arts
- Administrator
- Choreographer
- Community arts worker
- Teacher
- Media researcher
- Music producer
- Special effects technician



SUBJECT INFORMATION

Content

Our GCSE course offers opportunities to study many different elements of Theatre, including:

- Devised thematic work
- Improvisation
- Physical theatre
- Set design
- Costume
- Make-up and masks
- Puppets
- Lighting and sound
- Stage management

Assessments**Component 1**

Understanding Drama - 40%

80 Marks overall

1 hour 45 minutes

Open book

Written Exam

What's assessed?

- Knowledge & understanding of drama and theatre
- Study of one set play from a choice of six.
- Analysis & evaluation of the work of live theatre makers.

Component 2

Devising Drama (Practical) - 40%

80 Marks overall

Devising log (60 marks)

Devised performance (20 marks)

What's assessed?

- Process of creating devised drama
- Performance of devised drama (students may contribute as performer or designer)
- Analysis & evaluation of own work

Component 3

Tests in Practice (Practical) - 20%

40 marks overall

Performance of Extract 1 (20 marks)

Performance of Extract 2 (20 marks)

What's assessed?

Performance of two extracts from one play (students may contribute as performer or designer) Free choice of play but it must contrast with the set play chosen for Component 1.



English Literature & English Language

SUBJECT OVERVIEW

Studying English builds essential skills for school and beyond. Reading fosters empathy by introducing new perspectives and deepening our understanding of others, while literature offers insight into the past and inspiration for the future. A rich vocabulary enhances our ability to express ourselves clearly and creatively, helping us connect with others. Strong English skills directly impact our ability to engage with and comprehend other subjects and are invaluable for career success.

What future opportunities will I have?

English can be a useful A-Level if you're interested in studying Law, Media Studies, Cultural Studies, Drama, or English.

SUBJECT INFORMATION

Content

English Language

- Unseen Fiction
- Unseen Non-Fiction

English Literature

- AQA Poetry Power and Conflict Anthology
- Drama: One Shakespeare play
- Prose: One 19th-century novel
- Modern Texts: A choice of modern prose or drama

Assessments

Our pupils study both English Literature and English Language from Year 9, each leading to a separate GCSE. Both subjects are assessed through final exams at the end of Year 11, with no coursework.

English Language

- Speaking and listening component (not contributing to the final grade)
- Two exams: one Fiction and one Non-Fiction

English Literature

- Two exams, covering the topics studied throughout the course in English Literature

These assessments are designed to develop analytical thinking, critical reading, and written communication skills essential for academic and professional success.

For more information, please see subject specification code: 8702 (English literature) & 8700 (English Language)



Geography

SUBJECT OVERVIEW

Geography is a dynamic and relevant subject that connects the world we live in to our future. It encourages discussion on current affairs, with a particular focus on environmental issues. This course combines practical fieldwork with investigative learning, providing a comprehensive understanding of how people interact with different environments. By studying Geography, pupils will develop a diverse skill set that not only enhances other academic subjects but also prepares them for future career opportunities.

Why Choose Geography?

“There has never been a better or more important time to study Geography. With growing interest in issues such as climate change, migration, environmental degradation, and social cohesion, geography is one of the most relevant courses you could choose to study. Geographers are also highly employable. Whatever your passion for the world fascination with landscapes or concerns about inequality – Geography will provide you with knowledge and transferable skills that will reward you personally and advance you professionally”

DR RITA GARDNER

CBE, Director of Royal Geographical Society (1996-2018)

What future opportunities will I have?

The skills developed throughout the course provide strong support for further studies and employment. Achieving a good grade at GCSE opens doors to A level or vocational courses, with subjects like Biology, Geology, Environmental Science, Government and Politics, Economics, and Travel and Tourism having close links to the material studied in Geography.

Geographical skills are highly valued in various employment sectors, including journalism and media, law, engineering, accountancy, finance, business management, ICT, planning, teaching, marketing, and leisure and tourism.

For more information, please see subject specification code: 8035

SUBJECT INFORMATION

Content

Pupils will explore a range of topics that examine both local and global environments. Key areas of study include:

- Sustainability and the Earth's ability to continue providing essential resources.
- The development of landscapes and the natural forces that shape them.
- The causes and consequences of global migration, and the impact on both sending and receiving locations.

Practical fieldwork will provide firsthand experience of geographical concepts, complementing classroom learning.

Assessments**Paper 1**

Living with the physical environment

- The challenge of natural hazards
- The living world
- Physical landscapes in the UK

Written exam

1 hour 30 minutes

88 marks (including 3 marks for spelling, punctuation, grammar and specialist terminology (SPaG))

35% of GCSE

Paper 2

Challenges in the human environment

- Urban issues and challenges
- The changing economic world
- The challenge of resource management

Written exam

1 hour 30 minutes

88 marks (including 3 marks for spelling, punctuation, grammar and specialist terminology (SPaG))

35% of GCSE

Paper 3

Geographical applications

- Issue evaluation
- Geography fieldwork

Written exam

1 hour 30 minutes

30% of GCSE

76 marks (including 6 marks for SPaG)

Pre-release resources booklet made available 12 weeks before Paper 3 exam

SUBJECT OVERVIEW

Our history curriculum provides a comprehensive exploration of significant events, stories, and individuals from both British and world history. It fosters a deep and nuanced understanding of the past and its ongoing impact on the present.

Studying History enhances critical thinking, analysis, and literacy skills, as well as the ability to evaluate sources and construct well-supported arguments. Intellectual curiosity is central to the subject, with pupils encouraged to question, debate, and examine the complexities of historical developments. The aim is to cultivate knowledgeable, articulate, and thoughtful individuals who can interpret the world and its history with clarity and insight.

Why Choose History?

History teaches skills that are highly valued by many different employers. Skills such as:

- Critical Reasoning and analytical skills
- The ability to construct an argument by selecting and deploying relevant evidence
- The ability to communicate in a clear, structured and persuasive manner
- The capacity to think objectively

What future opportunities will I have?

Many History students go on to study and to work in Law, Business and Finance, Marketing and the Media as it is a subject that teaches a wide range of analytical and communication skills.

SUBJECT INFORMATION

Content

In Year 9, students follow a preparatory syllabus before beginning the Pearson Edexcel GCSE course in the summer. This course covers a broad range of 20th-century world history, providing students with a rich and varied understanding of global events and their lasting impact. Key areas of study include:

- The outbreak of World War I
- The Russian Revolution
- The rise of Nazism and the Holocaust
- The war in Asia and the use of atomic weapons
- British decolonisation in India, Africa, and Northern Ireland
- The Vietnam War
- The Civil Rights Movement in the United States

Assessments

Paper 1

30% - 1 hour 15 minutes

- Migrants in Britain c.800-present & Notting Hill c.1948-70 (20%)
- Historic Environment, London and the Second World War (10%)

Paper 2

40% - 1 hour 45 minutes

- British Depth Study, Anglo-Saxon and Norman England 1060-88 (20%)
- Period Study, Superpower relations and the Cold War, 1941-91 (20%)

Paper 3

30% - 1 hour 20 minutes

- Modern Depth Study, Weimar and Nazi Germany 1918-1939

For more information, please see subject specification code: **1HI0 KN**

SUBJECT OVERVIEW

Latin provides an opportunity to study the language, literature, and culture of the Roman world. Through this, students not only enhance their writing and speaking abilities but also deepen their understanding of English and other Romance languages. This subject offers a rich exploration of the classical world while developing essential skills in communication and language comprehension. You will need to have a passion for learning languages and an interest in Roman history!

Why Choose Latin?

Latin is a fascinating subject that challenges your mind and gives you a competitive edge by strengthening your analytical and problem-solving skills. Studying Latin provides valuable insight into language structures and improves both English proficiency and the learning of modern languages. Universities highly regard a strong background in Latin, particularly for careers in law, medicine, science, archaeology, and academia. Latin is also a valuable asset for professions that demand analytical or detail-oriented thinking.

What future opportunities will I have?

Typical careers it can lead to are:

- Law
- Medicine
- Civil Service
- Journalism and Politics
- Government and Diplomacy

SUBJECT INFORMATION

Content

- Year 9: Begin the language part of the course using John Taylor Book 1.
- Year 10: Continue building on language skills using John Taylor Book 2; study the prose set text.
- Year 11: Study the verse set text and revision

Assessments

Language

50%

449 word defined vocabulary list

- Passages will be based on myth and Roman history
- Unseen translation, comprehension and grammar questions

Literature

50%

25% -prose set text – approx. 110 lines.

25% -verse set text -approx. 110 lines.

- Authors we study are usually from the following range; Virgil, Julius Caesar, Ovid, Catullus, Tacitus

For more information, please see subject specification code: J282F

SUBJECT OVERVIEW

GCSE Mathematics fosters strong knowledge, skills, and understanding of key mathematical concepts. It teaches pupils to apply techniques to solve problems, think logically, and draw conclusions. Pupils will also learn to interpret and communicate mathematical information effectively in different contexts.

What future opportunities will I have?

A GCSE Mathematics pass is essential for various aspects of life, from managing finances to solving spatial problems. High achievers can pursue Mathematics at A-level, leading to university courses and careers in fields like Engineering, Medicine, Science, Finance, Accounting, Business, Economics, and more. Even subjects such as Psychology and Geography benefit from a solid mathematical foundation.

SUBJECT INFORMATION

Content

Pupils are grouped into four ability sets, with most taking the Higher Tier exam in Year 11 and covering the full higher-level syllabus.

Key areas of study include:

- Number
- Algebra
- Ratio, Proportion & Rates of Change
- Geometry & Measures
- Probability
- Statistics

Set 1 students explore Level 2 Further Mathematics (AQA) in Years 10 and 11, gaining exposure to advanced topics.

Students also take part in the UKMT Intermediate Mathematical Challenge, where many qualify for higher rounds.

Assessments

The GCSE Mathematics course offers two tiers, Foundation and Higher, each with specific content, and pupils can choose to take assessments in either tier. The qualification includes three equally weighted written exams, all taken at the same tier and within the same assessment series. Each paper lasts 1 hour and 30 minutes and is worth 80 marks.

- Paper 1: Non-calculator assessment
- Paper 2 & Paper 3: Calculator allowed

The content for each tier is assessed across all three papers.

Topic Area	Foundation Weighting	Higher Weighting
Number	22-28%	12-18%
Algebra	13-23%	27-33%
Ratio, Proportion & Rates of change	22-28%	17-23%
Geometry & Measures	12-18%	17-23%
Statistics & Probability	12-18%	12-18%

For more information, please see subject specification code: 1MA0 & 8035 (Further Maths)

SUBJECT OVERVIEW

In today's digital world, media influences almost every aspect of our lives. GCSE Media Studies equips students with critical thinking skills to analyse the media they consume daily- whether it's social media, advertising, film, or news. By studying this subject, students learn how media shapes opinions, creates narratives, and even influences consumer choices.

Why Choose Media Studies?

The world is changing rapidly in terms of our consumption of media, and how it fits into our lives. Media Studies will help you in developing your research skills, alongside your analytical skills. You will develop your critical faculties by engaging with a range of media and exploring the intentions and effect of different examples. This can also potentially aid students in their personal lives, particularly in how they engage with social media, how they understand media bias and the effects of social media.

You also have the potential to develop your technological skills when creating creative content of your own, which includes photography and visual merchandising skills. This subject is the perfect blend of analysis, application and creativity.

What future opportunities will I have?

Media Studies helps to prepare students for careers in marketing, advertising, journalism, social media, and the creative industries, such as film, television and content creation.

SUBJECT INFORMATION

Content

Students will explore and analyse all the relevant four areas of the theoretical framework:

- Media language
- Media representation
- Media industries
- Media audiences

Students will critically engage with content from a range of industries, such as film, television, newspapers, radio, magazines, advertising and marketing. They will also create content of their own when completing coursework (an NEA assessment). This course might suit students who enjoy the creative side of English Literature GCSE but struggle with the extensive reading required.

Assessments

Two exams, each lasting 1 hour and 15 minutes.

30% of your final grade will be completed in lesson and at home (students begin completing the non-exam assessment (NEA) in the Spring term of Year 10.

For more information, please see subject specification code: J200

Modern Foreign Languages: French & Spanish

SUBJECT OVERVIEW

Learning a second language is priceless. Impressing future employers, creating richer travel experiences and developing your mind in a way no other subject can are only some of the ways in which continuing with modern foreign language is the right choice. With the world becoming ever more international, those who can speak more than one language have an enormous advantage in business. Not only that, knowing a second language helps you understand your own language better and better develops your communication skills.

Why Choose MFL?

- Builds relationships: Speaking to anyone in their own language breaks down barriers and allows them to feel more comfortable and confident.
- Highly valued skill for employers: Being fluent in two or more languages gives you an edge over monolingual candidates in job interviews. Being able to speak a foreign language allows you to go abroad to do business; you can use the language of the country you are heading to without having to rely on a translator.
- Command higher salaries: Employees who learn a foreign language command a higher salary. A recruitment agency recently stated that knowing a foreign language can add between 10-15% to your salary.
- Wider range of carer opportunities: Language skills can be used in almost any career, and particularly in businesses that trade internationally

What future opportunities will I have?

- Academic researcher
- Translator
- Political risk analyst
- Secondary school teacher
- Broadcast Journalist
- Detective
- Diplomatic services
- Marketing executive
- Sales executive

For more information, please see subject specification code: 8652 (French) & 8692 (Spanish)

SUBJECT INFORMATION**Content****Theme 1:** People & Lifestyle

- Topic 1: Identity & Relationships with others
- Topic 2: Healthy Living & Lifestyle
- Topic 3: Education & Work

Theme 2: Popular Culture

- Topic 1: Free Time Activities
- Topic 2: Customs, Festivals & Celebrations
- Topic 3: Celebrity Culture

Theme 3: Communication & the world around

- Topic 1: Travel & Tourism, including places of interest
- Topic 2: Media of Technology
- Topic 3: The environment & where people live

Assessments**Paper 1:** Listening

Written exam:
35 minutes (F)
45 minutes (H)

Paper 2: Speaking

Non-exam assessment

Paper 3: Reading

Written exam:
45 minutes (F)
1 hour (H)

Paper 4: Writing

Written exam:
1 hour 10 minutes (F)
1 hour 15 minutes (H)

All four sections are weighted equally at 25% each.

SUBJECT OVERVIEW

GCSE Music is a fantastic choice for anyone who loves music, and who already has instrumental or singing lessons. You will learn about a wide range of musical genres, across the three main strands of Performing, Composing and Listening.

Why Choose Media Studies?

Studying GCSE Music offers a range of benefits. It helps to develop creativity, discipline, and teamwork, while also enhancing skills in performance, composition, and analysis. It deepens the understanding of music theory and different musical styles and strengthens the ability to express yourself through sound. GCSE Music also improves listening skills, attention to detail, and problem-solving, all of which are valuable in many careers. Whether you pursue a career in music or another field, the skills gained from studying GCSE Music are transferable and highly regarded.

What future opportunities will I have?

- GCSE Music is unique in demonstrating a huge range of talents, mixing creativity with academic rigour which is impressive on CV.
- It leads seamlessly into A Level, followed by university.
- Career opportunities in Music include performing, composing for film and the media, sound engineering, journalism and concert/festival/artist management.

SUBJECT INFORMATION

Content

The course will cover a range of topics, including:

- Composing music, allowing you to explore creativity and develop attention to detail.
- Performing music, improving skills in self-discipline and commitment.
- Studying a variety of musical genres, broadening your knowledge and encouraging a deeper appreciation for different styles of music

Assessments

Performing - 30%

- At the end of Year 11 your teacher will submit two recordings of you performing – one solo, and one as part of a group. You need to perform for at least four minutes. You can achieve full marks if you play at Grade 5 standard.

Composition - 30%

- Two compositions submitted as coursework at the end of Year 11.
- Any style/genre. Most pupils use technology to help them – at St James we run Cubase and Sibelius on our computers.

Listening & Appraising - 40% - 1 hr 45 mins

This is the only 'exam'

It is a listening exam, mainly focusing on 8 'set works' which will be studied in Year 10 and 11:

- Instrumental Music (Bach and Beethoven)
- Vocal Music (Purcell and Queen)
- Music for Stage and Screen (Star Wars and Wicked)
- Fusions (Esperanza Spalding and Afro Celt Sound System)

For more information, please see subject specification code: 1MU0



Physical Education

SUBJECT OVERVIEW

This course has both elements of practical and theoretical study encouraging the students to analyse their own performances in a great deal of detail, highlighting strengths and weaknesses in their performances and developing strategies to ensure that improvement can be achieved over the course of the period of study. The theoretical content allows the student to understand the science behind their performances whilst also highlighting relevant social issues in modern day sport such as professionalism, performance enhancing drugs and the role of the media.

Why Choose Physical Education?

At St James Senior Boys' School, we are gaining a formidable reputation for sporting prowess in the local, regional and national arenas. This has prompted the introduction of GCSE and A Level studies in Physical Education to deepen our pupils' knowledge and love of the subject.



SUBJECT INFORMATION

Content**Team Sports**

Acrobatic Gymnastics
 Association Football
 Badminton
 Basketball
 Hurling and Camogie
 Cricket
 Dance
 Field Hockey
 Figure Skating
 Futsal
 Gaelic Football
 Handball
 Ice Hockey
 Inline Roller Hockey
 Lacrosse
 Netball
 Rowing
 Rugby League
 Rugby Union
 Sailing
 Sculling
 Squash
 Table Tennis
 Tennis
 Volleyball
 Water Polo
 Blind Cricket
 Goal all
 Power chair Football
 Table Cricket
 Wheelchair Basketball
 Wheelchair Rugby

Individual Sports

Amateur Boxing
 Athletics – Field Events
 Athletics – Track Events
 BMX Cycling
 Canoeing
 Track Cycling
 Road Cycling
 Diving
 Figure Skating
 Golf
 Gymnastics
 Equestrian
 Kayaking
 Rock Climbing
 Sailing
 Sculling
 Skiing
 Snowboarding
 Swimming
 Trampolining
 Windsurfing
 Boccia
 Polybat

Assessments**Component 1** - Fitness & Body systems

36%

80 marks

1 hour 30 minutes

Content Overview:

- Topic 1: Applied anatomy and physiology
- Topic 2: Movement analysis
- Topic 3: Physical training
- Topic 4: Use of data

Component 2 - Health & Performance

24%

60 marks

1 hour 15 minutes

Content overview:

- Topic 1: Health, fitness and wellbeing
- Topic 2: Sport psychology
- Topic 3: Socio- Cultural influences
- Topic 4: Use of data

Component 3 - Practical Performance

NEA: Internally marked & externally moderated

30%

105 marks (35 marks per activity)

Content overview:

- Skills during individual and team activities
- General performance skills
- Pupils will be assessed in three physical activities from a set list.
- One must be a team activity

Component 4 - Personal Exercise Programme (PEP)

NAE: Internally marked & externally moderated

10%

20 marks

Content overview:

- Aim and planning analysis
- Carrying out and monitoring the PEP
- Evaluation of the PEP

For more information, please see subject specification code: 0995

SUBJECT OVERVIEW

Physics will help you to build up your problem solving, research, and analytical skills. With these skills you'll be able to test out new ideas plus question and investigate other people's theories, which is useful for any kind of job that involves research or debate.

What future opportunities will I have?

Physics is a highly valuable subject for a wide range of STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) careers. Physicists work in many fields, including industry, transport, government, universities, the armed forces, secret services, game companies, research labs, and more. It provides a strong foundation for virtually any career, demonstrating the ability to grasp abstract concepts - an essential high-level skill. Physics is particularly beneficial for careers in technology development, such as:

- Engineering (aerospace, construction, space exploration, etc.)
- Astronomy
- Robotics
- Renewable energy
- Computer science
- Communications
- Space exploration
- Science writing
- Sports and gaming technology
- Research and nanotechnology (engineering at the molecular scale)

SUBJECT INFORMATION

Content

- Energy
- Electricity
- Particle model of matter
- Atomic structure
- Forces
- Waves
- Magnetism and electromagnetism
- Space physics

Assessments

1. Written Exams (100% of your grade)

You will be assessed through two written exams:

- Paper 1: Covers Topic 1 (Energy, Electricity, Atomic Structure, Matter).
- Paper 2: Covers Topic 2 (Waves, Forces, Magnetism and Electromagnetism, Space Physics).

Each exam lasts 1 hour 45 minutes and is worth 50% of your final grade.

2. Question Types

The exams will include various question formats such as:

- Multiple choice questions
- Short-answer questions
- Longer, structured questions
- Calculations (you will need to apply physics equations)

3. Practical Skills

Practical skills are assessed within the written exams, not through a separate practical exam.

You will be expected to know and understand key practical experiments and their methods.

Required practical's (experiments you complete during the course) will help develop skills that are tested through application in the written exams.

For more information, please see subject specification code: 8463

SUBJECT OVERVIEW

Sanskrit is an ancient language from India and is the eldest sister to Greek and Latin. What is unique about St James is not only that the school teaches this language but that it does so for examination purposes. As with any other classical language trains the mind to be focused on detail and to do that, patience is cultivated. Linguistically, Sanskrit is extremely rigorous and trains the student to think logically while understanding and appreciating the structures of language. Essentially, it develops those invaluable higher order skills. The study of Sanskrit provides young people with many transferable skills to use in many areas of their future lives, especially in the workplace.

Why Choose Media Studies?

Students at St James Senior Boys School have been studying Sanskrit since the age of five years onwards or from the age of 11 years on joining the senior school. The O Level in Sanskrit (replacing the IGCSE qualification) which is held by Cambridge Assessment International Education (CAIE) is offered to those students who feel they have been able to comfortably grasp what they have covered in the subject in the years preceding Year 9. As with any Key Stage 4 exam, commitment is needed but those students who have taken it for GCSE thus far have enjoyed the intellectual challenge while at the same time appreciating the beauty of the Sanskrit language.

What future opportunities will I have?

Sanskrit provides a strong foundation for further academic and professional opportunities. As the language with the most complete and systematised grammar among classical languages, it is the root of all Indo-European languages. St James is recognised globally as a centre of excellence in teaching Sanskrit, with some students progressing to study the language at prestigious institutions like Oxford. This offers pathways to careers in linguistics, academia, translation, and cultural research.

SUBJECT INFORMATION

Content

Apart from greater study of the language itself, the course includes the study of, in Sanskrit of course, select verses from the Bhagavad Gita as well as basic Paninian grammar.

Assessments

Two papers
Both are 1 hour and 30 minutes
90 marks each

For more information, please see subject specification code: 0499



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