

# Upper Four

# GCSE Options

for study  
from September 2016



# Contents

	<b>Page</b>
<b>How to use this booklet</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Careers</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Contact Information</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Core subjects</b>	
English & English Literature	<b>5</b>
Mathematics	<b>5</b>
Science	<b>6</b>
French	<b>7</b>
<b>Optional Subjects</b>	
Art and Design	<b>8,9</b>
Design and Technology	<b>10</b>
Drama	<b>11</b>
Music	<b>12</b>
Geography	<b>13,14</b>
History	<b>15</b>
German	<b>16</b>
Spanish	<b>16,17</b>
Latin	<b>18</b>
Religious Studies	<b>19</b>
<b>Timeline for choosing (I)GCSE Options</b>	<b>20</b>

# How to use this booklet

Your course of study at (I)GCSE level comprises two elements:

- Core Subjects
- Optional Subjects.

The details of the core subjects, which are a compulsory component of your study, are presented on pages 5, 6 and 7.

You will be required to choose a further 3 subjects. Details of the subject options are presented on pages 8 – 19.

When choosing your subject options, you need to consider

- your favourite subjects
- your future career plans
- the method of study and examination technique most suited to you.

References to GCSE mean that the syllabi and examinations follow the courses set by the main UK examination boards AQA, Edexcel, OCR and Welsh. References to IGCSE mean that the syllabi and examinations follow the international examination boards CIE and Edexcel. The two qualifications rank equally in respect of higher education although, in some areas, their emphasis differs.

Note that there are currently changes to some subjects following a review by the UK government and we are still awaiting final specifications in some cases, however, the key information is available and the information contained in this booklet is correct at the time of publication. A further update will be provided during the Options Evening.

## GCSE Options Evening

During the evening we will explain how the options process works and provide additional information relevant to the next two years. There will be opportunities for you to have any questions answered on the options process, subject choice and pastoral support. There will also be subject specialists present to answer any subject specific queries. Additional information can be found on [www.ladiescollege.com](http://www.ladiescollege.com), bearing in mind that some subjects will be updated as information becomes available from exam boards. **Our advice is to prioritise the subject staff in those subjects you are unsure about.**

## Careers guidance in Upper Four

Students in Upper Four have dedicated lessons covering option subjects available, different subject combinations, identifying students' skills and abilities and basic career pathways.

Students will also visit the Guernsey Careers Fair at the end of the Lent term and parents are welcome to attend the evening session.

Useful websites:

[www.careers.gg](http://www.careers.gg)

[www.guernsey.careersevents.co.uk](http://www.guernsey.careersevents.co.uk)

*Reference books:*

*'Choosing your GCSE'S & other post 14 Options'*

*ISBN 978-1-84455-125-5 (Trotman)*

*Several copies are available in school.*

Further careers advice or resources can be provided by contacting Mrs R Dovey

## Contact Information

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# Core Subjects



## English & English Literature

English Language and English Literature are taught together, the course leading to two separate IGCSEs. Work is based on the study of literary and non-literary texts.

In English Language (Specification A), the aim is to develop proficiency in speaking and listening and reading and writing. There is one examination. This consists of reading and responding to non-fiction/media texts, as well as two writing tasks. In addition, students are required to complete coursework tasks.

English Literature involves the study of a range of 20<sup>th</sup> century and pre-20<sup>th</sup> century texts in prose, poetry and drama, including exploration of historical and social influences and cultural contexts. There is one written examination assessing students' knowledge of both prose and poetry texts. There is also a coursework element.

Exam board: Edexcel Website link:

<http://qualifications.pearson.com/en/subjects/english.html>



## Mathematics

Following on from our practice in the first three years of school, Mathematics is taught in sets by ability. All sets will study for the Higher Level papers of the IGCSE syllabus. The grades attainable, at the Higher Level, range from A\* to D. Whilst girls in the upper sets will go directly to the Higher Level paper taken in May of their Upper Five year, girls in the lower sets may take a Foundation Level paper earlier in their Upper Five year with those gaining a grade C allowed to progress to the Higher Level paper. There will be an opportunity to re-sit the Foundation Level paper for those who do not gain a grade C at their first attempt. Girls in the highest set will also be taught an additional GCSE in Statistics which they will take at the end of their Lower Five year.

Girls wanting to study Mathematics beyond IGCSE really need to obtain a grade B or better. It is rare that any girl fails to attain a grade C in the examination.

Exam board: Edexcel (A) Website link:

<http://qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/edexcel-international-gcses-and-edexcel-certificates/international-gcse-mathematics-a-2009.html>



## Science

### Science

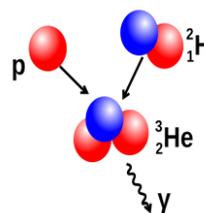
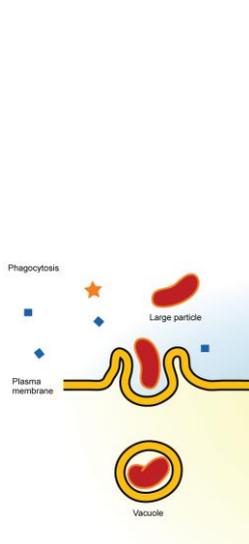
Most girls study the three separate Science subjects (Biology, Chemistry and Physics) and gain one IGCSE in each after two years. During the course of the Lower Five year we usually find it more appropriate for some girls to be given more support in a smaller set and study a reduced amount of content across the three Sciences that will enable them to take the IGCSE Double Award in Science (two IGCSEs representing their combined performance across all three Sciences) and hence achieve at a higher level than would otherwise be the case.

Students receive regular feedback through teacher assessed pieces of work, tests and the opportunity for students to reflect on their own progress. It is important that these opportunities are utilised effectively and action taken as appropriate

All the Science IGCSE courses are designed to contain the depth of knowledge required for future Advanced Level studies. There is no coursework or internal assessment of practical activities although there will be plenty of opportunities for hands-on practical work throughout the course. The final examinations, in the summer term of the Upper Five year, are preceded by revision to ensure that girls are well equipped to do justice to themselves in the examinations.

Exam board: Edexcel Website link:

<http://qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/edexcel-international-gcses-and-edexcel-certificates.html>



# Modern Foreign Languages

Studying any language shows that you have good communication and interpersonal skills which are highly valued by employers and universities. Language learners are considered to be well-organised and disciplined and are always admired by people who have not had the chance to study other languages. You should choose the language or languages which you enjoy and that you feel confident about.



## French

French is spoken on all five continents and is one of the official languages of the United Nations, the European Union, the International Red Cross and the International Olympic Committee. There are approximately 200 million speakers of this beautiful language around the globe. It makes sense to study French because of our proximity to France and our shared history with our nearest neighbour. Anybody wishing to follow a legal career would be well advised to study French, but it is a useful asset for many other jobs. A deeper knowledge of French will also offer you insights into the culture of France and the other Francophone countries.

The IGCSE French syllabus builds on the foundations laid in Remove, Lower and Upper Four and you will have the opportunity to revise what you already know, as well as exploring the topics in more detail. You will be encouraged to make the most of any opportunities that you have to spend time in France in order to become confident about using your skills.

The IGCSE course deals with topics such as lifestyle, leisure, the media, holidays, the environment, education and childhood and the world of work. You will be assessed at the end of the two years in all four skills of reading, listening, speaking and writing.

Examination Board: Edexcel Website link:

<http://qualifications.pearson.com/en/subjects/languages.html>

# Optional Subjects: The Arts



## Art & Design – Fine Art

### Description of Course

The GCSE in Art and Design is designed to be a general course, encompassing Art, Craft and Design, to enable students to explore a range of 2 or 3 dimensional approaches and to encourage students to develop an adventurous and enquiring approach to Art and Design. The focus is to nurture an enthusiasm for Art, Craft and Design through a broad programme, to develop critical, practical and theoretical skills that enable students to gain a holistic understanding of a range of practices and contexts in the visual arts, crafts and design fields.

Work produced for this qualification will demonstrate the use of formal elements and creative skills, and give form to thinking, feeling, observation, design and ideas. Students will show evidence of trying to extend their own and others' ways of seeing the world.

Fine art may be defined as work which is produced as an outcome of students' personal experiences, rather than that which is created exclusively for a practical function or that which is the outcome of a tightly prescribed brief. Disciplines will include painting and drawing, printmaking, sculpture and alternative media.

### Careers

There are many relevant career opportunities and pathways within the Art and Design field. At The Ladies' College, we offer access to an Advanced Level GCE in Art and Design. Art and Design is relevant to all careers where it is useful to have excellent visual skills. Careers may be in design or art related careers such as architecture, fine art, interior or special design, fashion and advertising to name a few.

### Assessment

*Portfolio - 60% (120 marks)*

Students complete two units within the portfolio in the two years. A unit is defined as a body of artwork, which includes a sketchbook and larger supporting studies and which shows the development of ideas leading to a final outcome. Four assessment objectives must be covered equally and in full. Students develop their knowledge of materials and processes. They will develop skills to investigate, analyse and experiment. Their imaginative powers and their ability to express their ideas will be encouraged.

*Externally set assignment – 40% (80 marks)*

An externally set assignment issued by the examination board, is completed in Year 11 of the GCSE course. Prior to a 'sustained focus' period of 10 hours, students have a preparatory period in which to complete a sketchbook of the development of ideas for the set theme. The 'sustained focus' period is produced, unaided and under exam conditions. It can be in any appropriate medium. The final realisation, a work journal, and preparatory study must show evidence of the four assessment objectives, already familiar to students through their work on the coursework stages.

**Entry Information**

This is an open entry subject with no higher/lower tiers. All students will be required to take the timed test. Different grades levels are awarded by assessment of outcome. In choosing this course, students must be prepared to commit to the considerable sustained dedication required to complete coursework successfully.

Exam board: WJEC      Website link: <http://wjec.co.uk/>





# Drama

The GCSE in Drama is an exciting, inspiring and practical course. The specification promotes involvement in and enjoyment of drama, as performers and/or designers. Additionally it provides opportunities to attend live theatre performances, travelling either to London or Stratford upon Avon to develop skills as informed and thoughtful audience members.

It is a highly creative course where students are given opportunities to participate in and interpret their own and others' drama.

Learners will investigate a practitioner or genre of drama, work collaboratively to develop ideas to communicate meaning and experiment with dramatic conventions, forms and techniques to produce and realise a piece of original theatre.

They are able to work as actors or designers participating as a resourceful group in the performance of an extract from a play text. Students will demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of drama, including their ability to interpret texts for performance, in a written examination. However, in preparation for this assessment, learners are encouraged to study their chosen text practically as a performer, designer and director.

There are no previous learning requirements for this course that provides a suitable foundation for the study of drama at A-level.

Studying drama is ideal for students wishing to take up careers in Law, Teaching, Theatre Studies, Design and Social Work.

**Unit 1: Devising Theatre Non-exam assessment:** internally assessed, 40% of qualification. Students will be assessed on either acting or design and participate in the creation, development and performance of a piece of devised theatre.

**Unit 2: Performing from a Text Non-exam assessment:** externally assessed by a visiting examiner 20% of qualification

Students participate in one performance using sections of a chosen text.

### **Component 3: Interpreting Theatre**

Written examination on a set text: 1 hour 30 minutes. 40% of qualification

#### **Section B: Live Theatre Review**

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

Exam board: WJEC Website link: <http://wjec.co.uk/>



## Music

All the exam boards have issued new specifications for GCSE Music for first teaching in September 2016. A new Director of Music will be appointed at Ladies' College this term and we feel it is appropriate that he or she decides which specification will be followed. Regardless of which specification is selected, the core components of GCSE Music remain the same:

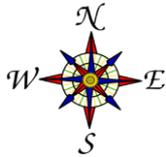
- **Performing:** students perform individually and as part of a group. The performances are marked internally and moderated by the exam board. There are regular opportunities to practise performing throughout the course.
- **Composing:** students are given a variety of stimuli from which to create pieces of their own. These are marked internally and moderated by the exam board.
- **Appraising:** During the course students learn about many musical genres and styles, and study how composers have created finished pieces from their initial ideas. At the end of the course the students take a written paper in which answer questions on pieces of music which are played to them on a CD.

GCSE Music is suited to students who are already learning a musical instrument (including singing) and who wish to build on their existing skills. It is not necessary to have passed Grade Five on an instrument/voice in order to start GCSE Music but it is an advantage if the student is able to perform pieces of an equivalent standard by the end of their Upper Fifth year. Classical and popular styles are equally valid.

Entry to A-level Music is not dependent on having taken GCSE Music but it is certainly an advantage as it introduces many of the key skills which form the core of the A-level syllabus.

In summary, GCSE Music is a wide-ranging qualification which offers students the opportunity to respond to many different musical styles. And, equally importantly, it is a lot of fun too!

# Optional Subjects: Humanities



## Geography

This course has been updated for September 2016

AQA Geography is a relevant, dynamic and up to date Geography GCSE course. Students will be exploring case studies from the UK, newly emerging economies and lower income countries. Topics of study include climate change, poverty, deprivation, global shifts in economic power and the challenge of sustainable resource use. Students are also encouraged to understand their role in society, by considering different viewpoints, values and attitudes. The course aims to make us more aware of our responsibilities to other people, the environment and the sustainability of the planet.

This is a two year linear course. The three external examinations, one on Physical Geography, one on Human Geography and an examination on Geographical Applications will be sat at the end of Year 11.

### **Unit 1 Physical Geography (35%)**

The first unit of the course covers natural hazards (including earthquakes, volcanoes, tropical storms, extreme weather in UK and climate change), coasts, rivers, tropical rainforests and cold environments. There will be a fieldtrip involving data collection in a local bay.

### **Unit 2 Human Geography (35%)**

The second unit covers world population growth, the growth of cities, sustainable urban living, and economic development, the importance of tourism to a low income country, globalisation and the management of water, food and energy resources. There will also be a local field trip to collect data in St Peter Port.

### **Unit 3 Geographical applications (30%)**

The third unit consists of two parts.

The skills developed from our two local field trips will be used to answer questions in the examination.

There is also an Issue Evaluation which involves critical thinking and problem solving based on a pre-release booklet available in March of year 11. This will provide students with an opportunity to demonstrate geographical skills and apply their knowledge and understanding of a particular issue from the syllabus.

## **Why study Geography?**

‘Geography is the subject which holds the key to our future’ - Michael Palin

‘Geography prepares for the world of work; geographers, with their skills of analysis are highly employable’

## **What qualities do I need to study GCSE Geography?**

\* You should have a keen interest in the world around you.

\* You should be prepared to work hard and research topics by yourself.

Exam board: AQA

Website link: <http://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/geography>



## History

History is a valuable and well respected subject. IGCSE History enables students to develop skills such as critical analysis and effective written communication which are highly prized in many academic and professional disciplines.

The course itself covers some fascinating aspects of modern world history from the question of how a man like Hitler could come to power in a democracy and then unleash such savage policies on both his own nation and Europe, to how developments in antiseptics, anaesthetics and antibiotics have revolutionised our expectations of health care.

The IGCSE course also acquaints students with important concepts such as the left-right political spectrum, the ways in which information can be manipulated as propaganda by governments and others with vested interests, and the impact of changing times on people's everyday lives.

### Course of Study for Edexcel IGCSE History

In the Lower Five we study "Russia in Revolution 1914-24" and "Development of Dictatorship: Germany 1918-1945".

In the Upper Five we study "Medicine through Time c.1845-c.1945" and "The World Divided: Superpower Relations War 1945-1962"

There are two examinations at the end of the course, each of which is 90 minutes and covers two topics. In other words, there is 45 minutes of equally-weighted examining on each of the four topics above.

Exam board: Edexcel Website link:

<http://qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/edexcel-international-gcses-and-edexcel-certificates/international-gcse-history-2011.html>

# Optional Subjects: Modern Foreign Languages



## German

As a major European language, German gives you a stimulating and important skill for life. It is spoken by approximately 180 million people in Europe alone and is a great asset for anybody wishing to work in a business or finance capacity. Anybody with an interest in science would also find that German is a useful subject.

We have a partnership with an exchange school in Papenburg, in North Germany and you will have the opportunity to visit the school and stay with a family during your time in Lower Five. This will increase your confidence for the speaking test and give you an insight into the culture of this very varied country. The Edexcel IGCSE German course is similar to the other modern language syllabuses. You will be assessed at the end of the two year course in all four skills of listening, reading, writing and speaking. The topic areas dealt with include lifestyle, leisure, the media, home and abroad, the environment, childhood and work and education.

Examination Board: Edexcel Website link:

<http://qualifications.pearson.com/en/subjects/languages.html>



## Spanish

Spanish is truly a world language with approximately 500 million speakers across the globe! It is one of the most important languages in international communication and therefore we are keen to give you the opportunity to study Spanish at IGCSE level.

We have a partnership with an exchange school near Zaragoza in Northern Spain and you will have the opportunity to visit the school and stay with a family during your time in Lower and Upper Five. This will increase your confidence for the speaking test and give you an insight into the culture of this beautiful country.

This is an intensive course since we cover the whole syllabus within a short time, but it is fun and worthwhile for committed linguists to be able to add such a useful language to their repertoire. We build on the language learnt in Upper Four and you will make huge progress very rapidly.

The Edexcel IGCSE Spanish course is similar to the other modern language syllabuses. You will be assessed at the end of the two year course in all four skills of listening, reading, writing and speaking. The topic areas dealt with include lifestyle, leisure, the media, home and abroad, the environment, childhood and work and education.

Examination Board: Edexcel Website link:

<http://qualifications.pearson.com/en/subjects/languages.html>



## Latin

Are you willing to stick out from the crowd? Do you want your C.V. to look a little unusual? Do you want people to assume that you are intelligent (whether or not that is true!)? Do you want to impress employers, now and in the future? Do you want to study language, medicine, law, literature or history? Do you want to be a writer yourself? If your answer to any of these questions is 'yes' then you have an extrinsic motive for doing Latin at IGCSE. The exam board is CIE.

The course follows on from the work you have been doing over the past three years; you will complete your knowledge of morphology, and learn more about the structure of sentences. With an increased understanding of the language you will be able to read some of the key documents of European literature. While these are all available in translation, no translator can successfully reproduce the effects of word order, rhythm and sound which Latin achieves especially in poetry, but also in prose. The structure and vocabulary of Latin prose means adopting a different way of thinking which has nevertheless profoundly influenced European thought. By studying Latin, you will acquire the same 'furniture' in your mind as any European writer/thinker up to 1900; this will make the history, philosophy, novels, plays and art of Europe more accessible to you. You will also increase your command of English vocabulary, and make the study of Romance languages easier.

The study of Latin opens many different avenues. There are, of course, A-levels and university courses about the classical world; moreover, the study of Latin is a good preparation for the tests for lawyers and doctors which the first class universities now demand. In addition, the exactness, precision and logical thought in which you will be trained by Latin will serve you well in courses as varied as engineering and computer science.

At the end of the two year course, you will face two examination papers. The first, on language, includes a translation and a comprehension section; you will learn a vocabulary list for this paper. The second, on literature, consists of questions on the two texts you will be studying, one prose (extracts from Cicero's letters) and one verse (a long extract from Virgil Aeneid XII.)

Exam board: CIE Website: <http://www.cie.org.uk/programmes-and-qualifications/cambridge-igcse-latin-0480/>



## Timeline for choosing (I)GCSE options:

### *December*

Discussions about choices and careers takes place during PSHEE lessons.

(I)GCSE options handbook is updated.

### *January*

Meeting for parents and students takes place on 13th January and individual letters are distributed containing login details for accessing the choices website.

Staff speak to students, in lessons, about studying their subject at (I)GCSE.

Students make provisional choices to establish the demand for each subject by 21st January.

### *February*

The proposed structure of the option blocks is issued to students and parents along with an invitation to the Upper Four parents' evening on 17th February.

Students make their choices from the option blocks by 11th March.