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# GCSE Options Booklet 2016-2017

# INTRODUCTION

This guide has been produced to give you, the prospective senior student at Bedstone College, information about the GCSE options subjects on offer. In each case, it gives a summary of the syllabus and details of written examinations and controlled assessment needed to complete the assessment.

In the Spring Term, Third Form students are offered certain options from which they can choose some subjects for GCSE. Each student is expected to take one Modern Foreign Language, either French or Spanish, although the possibility exists for them to request to study both. Initially students are asked for five choices from a general list. The subjects are then arranged into option groups which are designed, as far as possible, to avoid clashes. The grouping of the options, therefore, changes from year to year always but consists of a choice of three from the following:-

**Art, Business Studies, Design and Technology (DT), French or Spanish, Geography, History, Music and Sports Studies.**

These 3 options occupy 12 periods. In addition there is Mathematics (5), English (5), French or Spanish (4) as a compulsory Modern Foreign Language, R.E. (2), PE (2), PSE (1) and the Sciences (9). In the Fifth Year, the 'A' set has 12 lessons of Science, 1 lesson of RE and none of PE. The 'B' set has 9 lessons of Science, 2 of PE and 2 of R.E.

It may be the case that after the initial choices, subjects that have generated little interest do not appear in the final option groups to be found in the letter you will receive.

You should choose subjects that you enjoy doing, which you are (or feel you will be) good at and with an eye on possible AS and A2 courses in the Sixth Form. Do not choose a subject you do not like *'because all my friends are doing it'*.

## The English Baccalaureate

In 2010 the government announced the 'English Baccalaureate' would be introduced. To gain the English Baccalaureate, a GCSE candidate must gain A\* - C grades in English, Maths, two sciences, a modern foreign language, and either History or Geography.

At Bedstone we believe that students should be given as much freedom of choice as possible over their GCSEs. Therefore it is **not** compulsory for students to take either History or Geography. Students and parents to whom the English Baccalaureate appeals, however, should know that if they wish to achieve the award they would need to opt for at least one of History or Geography at GCSE level.

## GCSE Reforms:

No doubt you will be aware of reforms to GCSEs introduced by the Government commencing from September 2015. The reforms will impact all students. Although initially introduced in September 2015, new courses will be phased in over the period September 2015 to September 2017. There are changes to both the course content and changes to the way in which examinations are graded. During this time, students will possibly be taking a mixture of new and old courses and, in the case of GCSEs between 2017 and 2019, they will be receiving results some of which are graded in letters (A\*- G) and some in numbers (9 – 1).

The main features of the new GCSEs are:-

1. A new grading scale of 9 to 1 will be used, with 9 being a new top grade (higher than A\*) awarded only to a very small percentage of candidates. This will allow greater differentiation between students and will help distinguish the new GCSEs from previous versions. Grades 1 – 3 are the equivalent of the current grades G – D, grades 4 – 6 equivalent to C and B and grades 7 – 9 equivalent to A and above.
2. Assessment will be mainly by exam, with other types of assessment use only where they are needed to test essential skills.
3. There will be new, more demanding content, which has been developed by the Government and the exam boards.
4. Courses will be designed for two years of study – they will no longer be divided into different modules and students will take all their exams in one period at the end of their course.
5. Exams can only be split into “foundation tier” and “higher tier” if one exam paper does not give all students the opportunity to show their knowledge and abilities.
6. Re-sit opportunities will only be available each November in English Language and Mathematics.

These changes will affect your child as follows:-

- Students will take the new GCSE courses in English Language, English Literature and Mathematics.
- Depending on their GCSE Option choices, they may also take new courses in subjects such as Art, Geography, History, Modern Foreign Languages, Music, Physical Education, the Sciences and Religious studies (although at Bedstone Religious studies remains a compulsory subject). These will be taught from September 2016 and first examined in June 2018. Grades will be shown as 9 – 1.
- Again, depending on their GCSE option choices, they may take unreformed GCSE courses in subjects such as Business and Design Technology. Grades will be shown as A\* - G.

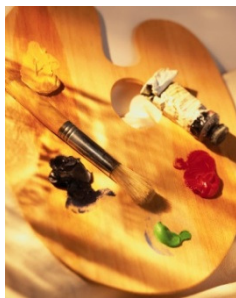
More information can be found on the following web pages:-

**For a timetable of the main changes:**

- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/timeline-of-changes-to-gcses-as-and-a-levels>

**For information on the new grading structure:**

- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/grade-descriptors-for-gcses-graded-9-to-1>



## GCSE ART & DESIGN:

**AIMS:** The aims of the specification are:-

- To develop visual perception and understanding including the creative, imaginative and practical skills for working in Art, Craft and Design.
- To develop visual literacy and an appreciation of the richness of our cultural heritage through practical and critical responses to achievement in Art, Craft and Design.
- To develop the individual's special aptitudes and interests and foster and encourage confidence, enthusiasm and a sense of achievement.

Studying for the OCR specification, the students are assessed on both their coursework, for which they will produce **one sustained unit** produced to a centre- or learner-set starting point with NO restriction on scale of work or timeframe. During the first year of the GCSE course, the students complete a 'practice' project which familiarises themselves with the processes and procedures that they will be expected to follow during the second, assessed, coursework project. The work will be presented in an appropriate format and will include sketchbooks which support the outcome which may be in a choice of media. The course is completed with the submission of a practical terminal examination in which candidates have a sustained period of time to plan and prepare, followed by **TEN** hours to complete their response as a finished piece of work. The paper will give candidates a choice of five themes, each with a choice of written and/or visual starting points or stimuli. From this paper, candidates are expected to choose **one** option, as a starting point, for which they will generate an appropriate personal response.

**THE OBJECTIVES:** The students will be required to demonstrate their ability;-

- To record responses, including observations of the natural and man-made environment;
- To gather resources and materials, using them to stimulate and develop ideas;
- To explore and use two and three-dimensional media, working on a variety of scales;
- To review and modify their work as it progresses;
- To develop understanding of the work of Artists, Craftspeople and Designers, applying knowledge to their own work;
- To respond to and evaluate Art, Craft and Design, including their own and other's work;
- To design and make images and artefacts;
- To develop visual literacy through ideas, feelings and meanings;
- To use knowledge of visual and tactile elements;
- To use materials, tools and techniques imaginatively and safely.

At Bedstone, students will be introduced to a variety of media during the course; paint of various sorts, clay and simple printmaking techniques will be explored. Drawing, however, is at the heart of everything they do. It is a rigorous course; challenging yet intended to be fun. Each student will be issued with a Bedstone College sketchbook and will be expected to accumulate interesting visual material of a personal nature, much as a diarist might do with a diary, on a daily or at least a regular basis. This will help put a personal stamp on their work. Holiday work is given to supplement each project. This will be used to feed in to the class work and, while it is carried out *outside* the classroom, it *will* be included for assessment when it is clear that it is the student's own work.



## GCSE BUSINESS STUDIES:

The study of Business is very much based on the world in which we live and work. This course concerns the world of small businesses - which is the most important type of business in the UK.

You consider what might make you want to go into business for yourself and how you might decide what your business will make. You will also think about the things a small business needs to consider, such as ways of coming up with new ideas, how you keep your customers happy, how you keep track of your business's money, and how you keep your staff keen.

Business Studies is a dynamic subject and you are encouraged to do independent research, to think imaginatively and to show initiative.

### Syllabus Content

The candidates study the following units of work:

- Unit 1 - Introduction to small business
- Unit 2 - Investigating small business
- Unit 3 - Building a business

The scheme of assessment takes the form of a 45 minute multiple choice exam for Unit 1 (25% of total GCSE)

A controlled writing assessment for Unit 2 in the Autumn term of the Fifth year (25% of total GCSE).

A 1 ½ hour written exam for Unit 3 (50% of the total GCSE).

The controlled piece of writing is in the form of a report. This is where you get to show how well you can independently research into a small business that you choose, and use the business ideas you have learned to answer the question about it.



## GCSE DESIGN & TECHNOLOGY:

### Course Outline

- written paper (40%) based upon knowledge and understanding of RMT
- coursework (60%) based upon design and make activities.

### Controlled Assessment (*The Coursework*)

The internally assessed unit will be undertaken using controlled assessment. The Design and Make task should allow students to be able to complete their work in 40 hours. The 40 hours can be broken down for each criteria to reflect the amount of time the student should be spending on a particular part of their work.

The exam board will provide five tasks and the student has to choose one of them. The tasks are broad themes, which you can adapt.

The five themes the exam board has chosen for RMT are storage, lighting, furniture, toys and games and the garden.

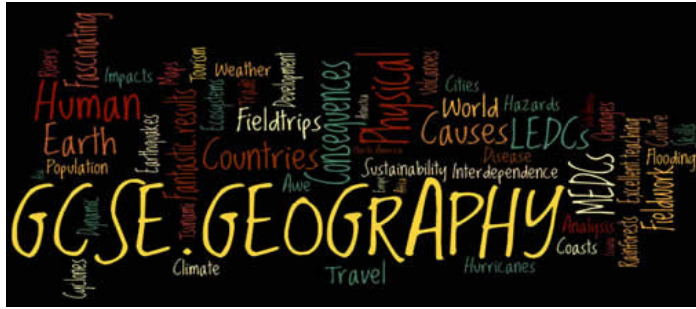
The exam board has made sure that the designing and making parts of the coursework have equal marks – both are equally important. This also supports students whose strengths may not be in both designing and making.

### Examination:

- 1 ½ hours
- Demonstrate knowledge of Materials, Processes, Joining techniques, Health and safety, and engineering principles.
- The examination paper is now un-tiered.
- The paper now accommodates the full grade range, A\* to G.

Design Technology prepares students to think independently, develop analytical skills, make decisions and justify them in terms of design and manufacture techniques. They will use a wide range of communication and presentation techniques including CAD, and also develop practical skills with a range of materials including CAM (Laser cutter, Vinyl Cutter and 3D router).

Design Technology will enable progression for further academic study at A level or enter into employment in careers in Engineering, Design and Manufacturing. Students who follow these career paths are highly sought after and have high levels of employment prospects.



## GCSE GEOGRAPHY:

At Bedstone College students follow the 'OCR A' Geography specification. This is a lively and exciting Geography course that captures student's imagination through studying contemporary themes and issues that affect the real world.

**Course content:** The course has three components:-

### 1) Living in the UK Today

- River landscapes
- Development and population of the UK
- Living in a UK city
- A climate and flood event
- Energy in the UK

### 2) The World Around Us

- Tropical rainforests and Coral reefs
- Development – living in a city in the developing world and in an emerging economy
- Climate change and the impact of extreme weather

### 3) Geographical Skills

- Geographical skills
- Fieldwork and fieldwork skills

### **Assessment:**

*"Living in the UK"* is assessed via a 1 hour 15 minute exam. It's worth 30% of the qualification.

*"The World Around Us"* is assessed via a 1 hour 15 minute exam. It's worth 30% of the qualification.

*"Geographical Skills"* is assessed via a 1 hour 30 minute exam. It's worth 40% of the qualification.

### **Fieldwork:**

Fieldwork is an important part of Geography. It is exciting and allows students to apply the theory taught in class to the real world. Fieldwork visits will include a visit to Snowdonia, Birmingham City Centre and the Severn valley.



## GCSE HISTORY:

GCSE history at Bedstone College remains a very popular option for GCSE students. The history department aims to ensure that it is an interesting, relevant and accessible subject that helps develop a number of key skills.

At Bedstone, we will be following the new [Edexcel 1-9 GCSE Course](#).

There are four components to the course which gives you a very wide variety of different topics to study.

1. Crime and Punishment in Britain c1000- Present day. Whitechapel, c1870- c1900: crime, policing and the inner city as a case study of history in its environment.
2. Anglo Saxon and Norman England c1060-88
3. Superpower relations and the Cold War, 1941–91
4. Russia and the Soviet Union, 1917–41

Under the new History GCSE changes there is no longer coursework or controlled assessment, instead students are assessed in three exams sat at the end of fifth form.

You do not need to have any prior knowledge of the topics above before commencing the GCSE course, but the course will require you to work hard, to conduct your own research and to produce quality work to set deadlines. GCSE history is not all about writing long essays. You will write some essays, but this will help you develop your skills in analysis, use of source material, persuasion and communication of ideas.

Please feel free to talk to any members of the History Department, or any of the History students in the current fourth or fifth Form, about the requirements and content of this course – see you next year!





## GCSE SPANISH:

Spanish is one of the two Modern Foreign languages offered at GCSE level at Bedstone. Spanish is the 2<sup>nd</sup> most widely spoken language in the world, and is an important business and communicative language globally, due to it being spoken extensively throughout South America and the USA. Spain is also a popular holiday destination for European families, and students have often used their holidays as an opportunity to practice their Spanish!!

The course covers three distinct themes: *Identity and Culture*; *Local, National, International and Global areas of interest*, and *Current and Future Study and Employment*, which apply to all four question papers. Students are expected to understand and provide information and opinions about these themes relating to their own experiences and those of other people, including people in countries/communities where Spanish is spoken.

**ASSESSMENT:** Assessment for Modern Foreign Languages will change for the course beginning in September 2016. The qualification has a Foundation Tier (grades 1–5) and a Higher Tier (grades 4–9). The four language skills of Listening, Reading, Writing and Speaking are assessed separately, and students must take all four question papers at the same tier. The overall grade is made up of the following proportions which are added together to give the overall grade:

### **Non-examination Assessment – 25%**

**25% - Speaking** This is conducted within school, although marked externally. Depending on the tier, students must speak for a total of 7–9 minutes (Foundation Tier) or 10–12 minutes (Higher Tier) in three different formats: a Role-play, speaking about a Photo stimulus card, and holding General conversation.

### **Examination – 75%**

**25% - Listening:** The examinations tests students' understanding and responding to different types of spoken language. Listening material may include instructions, messages, announcements, monologues, dialogues and discussions of varying length. The extracts relate to the Topic Areas studied. The listening exam lasts 35 minutes (Foundation Tier) or 45 minutes (Higher Tier), and consists of Section A, where questions are given in English and are to be answered in English, and Section B – questions are given in Spanish, and must be answered in Spanish.

**25% - Reading:** The examinations tests students' understanding and responding to different types of written language. Reading material may include instructions, messages, announcements, monologues, dialogues and discussions of varying length. The extracts relate to the Topic Areas studied. The listening exam lasts 45 minutes (Foundation Tier) or 1 hour (Higher Tier), and consists of Section A, where questions are given in English and are to be answered in English, Section B – questions are given in Spanish, and must be answered in Spanish, and Section C, where students are required to translate from Spanish into English (a minimum of 35 words at Foundation Tier and 50 words at Higher Tier)

**25% - Writing:** The written exam lasts 1 hour for the Foundation Tier, or 1 hour 15 minutes for Higher Tier candidates. It consists of 3 main parts: Question 1 is a structured writing task, where the student responds to four compulsory detailed bullet points, producing approximately 90 words in total) – there is a choice from two questions. Question 2 is an open-ended writing task, where the student responds to two compulsory detailed bullet points, producing approximately 150 words in total. Finally, Question 3 is a translation from English into Spanish of at least 50 words.



## GCSE FRENCH:

French is one of the two Modern Foreign languages offered at GCSE level at Bedstone. French has always traditionally been taught in secondary schools, and is the only continental foreign language taught in the Junior School at Bedstone.

The course covers three distinct themes: *Identity and Culture*; *Local, National, International and Global areas of interest*, and *Current and Future Study and Employment*, which apply to all four question papers. Students are expected to understand and provide information and opinions about these themes relating to their own experiences and those of other people, including people in countries/communities where French is spoken.

**ASSESSMENT:** Assessment for Modern Foreign Languages will change for the course beginning in September 2016. The qualification has a Foundation Tier (grades 1–5) and a Higher Tier (grades 4–9). The four language skills of Listening, Reading, Writing and Speaking are assessed separately, and students must take all four question papers at the same tier. The overall grade is made up of the following proportions which are added together to give the overall grade:

### Non-examination Assessment – 25%

**25% - Speaking:** This is conducted within school, although marked externally. Depending on the tier, students must speak for a total of 7–9 minutes (Foundation Tier) or 10–12 minutes (Higher Tier) in three different formats: participating in a role-play, speaking about a picture stimulus card, giving a mini-presentation, and holding two different conversations.

### Examination – 75%

**25% - Listening:** The examinations tests students' understanding and responding to different types of spoken language. Listening material may include instructions, messages, announcements, monologues, dialogues and discussions of varying length. The extracts relate to the Topic Areas studied. The listening exam lasts 35 minutes (Foundation Tier) or 45 minutes (Higher Tier), and consists of Section A, where questions are given in English and are to be answered in English, and Section B – questions are given in French, and must be answered in French.

**25% - Reading:** The examinations tests students' understanding and responding to different types of written language. Reading material may include instructions, messages, announcements, monologues, dialogues and discussions of varying length. The extracts relate to the Topic Areas studied. The listening exam lasts 1 hour (Foundation Tier) or 1 hour 15 minutes (Higher Tier), and consists of Section A, where questions are given in English and are to be answered in English, Section B – questions are given in French, and must be answered in French, and Section C, where students are required to translate from French into English (between 35 – 50 words depending on the Tier)

**25% - Writing:** The written exam lasts 1 hour for the Foundation Tier, or 1 hour 15 minutes for Higher Tier candidates. It consists of 3 main parts: Question 1 is a structured writing task, where the student writes in the style of an email, producing approximately 115 words in total. Question 2 requires the student to write approximately 150 words in total, in the style of an article or a report, using opinions and justifications and persuasive language. Finally, Question 3 is a translation from English into French of at least 50 words.



## GCSE MUSIC:

### Exam Board: Edexcel

The GCSE Music course by Edexcel is weighted in the following way:-

Performing	-	30%
Composing	-	30%
Exam	-	40%

### Performing:

Students are required to submit a recording of a solo performance and an ensemble performance. The total time of both performances must be at least 4 minutes in duration and each performance is marked out of 30. Pupils may perform on any instrument, including voice and should be approximately grade 3-4 standard by the time of recording in 5<sup>th</sup> form.

### Composing:

Students are required to submit two compositions, one to a set brief given by Edexcel and one free choice. Pupils may use software to write and record their compositions and the combined length of both compositions must be over 3 minutes. Pupils do not need to have any prior experience of composing or using notation software.

### Exam:

At the end of the course pupils will sit a 1hr 45min written exam answering questions on pieces they have studied throughout the course and drawing similarities between them and previously unheard pieces of music (similar to the prep homework pupils undertake at KS3).

Students will look at set pieces and undertake related listening from 4 areas of study which are as follows

1. Instrumental Music 1700-1820
2. Vocal Music
3. Music for Stage and Screen
4. Fusions



## **GCSE PHYSICAL EDUCATION:**

**Exam Board: AQA**

**Overall Assessment:**

60% Theory:

Two Written papers, both carrying 30% of the final marks available! One is a Physiology paper and the other psychology and sociology.

40% Practical

Each student is assessed in three activities, one team, one individual and then one either team or individual. Students can choose to be assessed in the role of performer or coach. They will also be assessed on their ability to evaluate and improve performance in one of their chosen activities!

**Coursework Time Commitment:**

Assessment takes place throughout the duration of the course but the moderation of marks will take place in the Summer of Year 11.

**Coursework Deadlines in Year 11:**

Practical moderation in the Summer of year 11, written .  
Element from the practical is due in April/May of Year 11.

**Other Key Points:**

All the practical marks are internally examined and then externally moderated