



GCSE Options Guide

2023/2024



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Welcome

From the Headteacher

Dr Gareth J A Hughes

This booklet provides information for you and your parents about the curriculum offered in Years 10 and 11, leading to GCSE examinations. It will help you make decisions about subject choices for these years.



All students follow a core curriculum and this ensures that everyone has a balanced programme of education. Outside the compulsory core subjects, you can make choices about what you study. This allows you to follow subjects that you are particularly strong at, that you enjoy most and that best prepare you for your future career.

Students should aim for a range of subjects so that they have enough flexibility to enable them to follow a range of future paths. If you are uncertain, our Head of Careers, Mrs Job, can help you with your options so we recommend that boys speak to her before submitting an option form. If you already have a clear idea of your direction, especially in higher education or employment, then we recommend that you consider the entrance requirements and qualifications that might be needed.

The same applies for Sixth Form. Students who are hoping to stay at Victoria College for A levels will need to meet our entrance criteria, which includes a Grade Point Average of 4.8 from a minimum of 8 GCSEs. We also require at least a Grade 4 in English and Mathematics GCSEs and students may be asked to resit in November of Y12 to achieve a Grade 5 if necessary. We have included a list of the A level subjects currently on offer although these can alter from year to year. Acceptance on to some subjects is based on particular GCSE requirements so that we can be confident they will be comfortable and successful in studying at a higher level. Further advice and guidance on selecting A level subjects will take place throughout Years 10 and 11.

Entry into Years 12 and 13 is always discussed with the Head of Sixth Form and Headteacher so that individual boy's circumstances can be taken into consideration.

We hope you enjoy the challenge of studying at GCSE level. You will be able to develop the skills you have already learnt at Victoria College and will have opportunities to explore your Option Choices in more depth, with the great satisfaction and academic stimulation that can bring. We will work closely with you to maximise your potential in the classroom but please also remember that we are here to help and support you in every way through this phase of education. Please ask as many questions as you can before you make your decisions.

We wish you well in your GCSE years.

Dr Gareth Hughes
Headteacher

Programme of Study

In Years 10 and 11 students take Core subjects of English Language, English Literature and Maths, which are studied by all students, and a further six Option subjects, at least two of which must be Sciences (Biology, Chemistry, Physics).

Core subjects:

Leading to GCSE examinations in Year 11:

- English Language
- English Literature
- Mathematics
- Sciences (at least two): Biology, Chemistry, Physics

Not examined:

- Games
- Careers
- Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) delivered by Form Tutors and external experts

Option subjects

All leading to GCSE examinations in Year 11 are:

- Art
- Biology
- Chemistry
- Computer Science
- Design and Technology
- Drama
- Food and Nutrition
- French
- Geography
- History
- Music
- Physics
- Religious Studies
- Spanish
- Sports Studies
- Triple Science (express set scientists only)

Principles of Choice

In order to ensure that students have a balanced curriculum and the chance to develop a breadth of skills, Victoria College has established the following principles:

- Students can choose to study all three sciences or opt to study two sciences from the separate disciplines of Biology, Chemistry and Physics. (There is also a Coordinated Core Science Option – see below.) Students considering medicine or veterinary careers are advised to opt for all three sciences
- We recommend that all students choose at least one Modern Foreign Language (French, Spanish) and at least one Humanities subject (History, Geography, Religious Studies)

Making Your Choices – A Guide for Students

Use a logical, thoughtful approach to making your choices. You should begin by thinking about:

- The interests and strengths that you have
- The A level and career path that you may wish to pursue
- The opportunities that your selections will leave open to you in the future

Then consider which combination of subjects matches your aspiration. Before finalising your choices, please ensure that you have:

- Talked to your subject teachers about the course, what it entails and how it is assessed
- Attended the Year 9 GCSE Options Evening on 29 November 2023 with your parents
- Taken an active part in the Year 9 Careers sessions
- Given consideration to the assemblies when you will hear about the different subjects available to study from Heads of Department
- Made an appointment to see Mr Crill (Head of Year 9) or Mrs Job for careers or University guidance

If you have any concerns about your option choices or your ability to succeed in a subject, please speak to a teacher or your tutor at the earliest opportunity.

Please note that the subject choices offered at Victoria College are dependent on class sizes and timetabling. The Headteacher makes the final decision.

The deadline for submitting options online is 1 March 2024. Please use the link shared with you by the School Office. If you submit your options and then decide upon a change, please contact Mrs Palfreyman and Mr Crill to confirm your changes and resubmit online.

Help and Advice

The right choice of subjects for Years 10 and 11 depends on the student being receptive to the advice and guidance on offer. During this term, all students in Year 9 are following a Careers module which offers support in making these important decisions. They will have had the opportunity to hear from all Heads of Department about the courses on offer. In addition, students should consult their own teachers in a subject, especially if there might be concern over progression to a chosen career. Mrs Job, Head of Careers, is always happy to see students and parents. She can be contacted on 638266.

Core Subjects

English

Examination board: Edexcel

All students study one GCSE in English Language and one in English Literature. This course involves reading a variety of literary texts from the literary heritage and a range of more recent works. It also involves developing writing skills for a wide range of tasks. Essay writing skills are seen as important but so too is the ability to write for a wide variety of purposes, including formal letters, speeches and creative writing.

Speaking and Listening coursework will consist of one formal presentation (please note that the speaking and listening component no longer contributes towards a student's final GCSE but will be published as a standalone grade on their results certificates). Controlled Assessment is no longer part of GCSE Language or Literature.

Students will sit their Language examination at the beginning of Year 11 and their Literature examination at the end of Year 11. We will prepare set texts with them for their Literature examination and develop comprehension skills for their Language paper through the study of a variety of texts from different eras. Students will be asked to write for different audiences and purposes throughout Year 10 and 11 in preparation for the written element of the Language paper.

Mathematics

Examination board: Edexcel

Mathematics remains an important subject, both in its own right and as a support to many other subjects both at GCSE and especially A level.

This two-year course builds on the topics covered in the lower school and leads to the Edexcel Linear GCSE assessment at the end of Year 11. The assessment is based on three 1.5 hour examination papers; Paper 1 is a non-calculator, papers 2 and 3 are both calculator papers.

There is an opportunity for able mathematicians to be challenged with deeper questions based on the GCSE syllabus and to cover some additional topics in order to attempt the AQA Level 2 Further Mathematics qualification. This qualification serves as a base for Mathematics at A Level.

The Sciences

Examination board: Cambridge IGCSE

Students can choose to study all three sciences, or opt to study two sciences from the separate disciplines of Biology, Chemistry and Physics. Students who find Sciences more challenging may be advised to take Co-ordinated Sciences.

Separate Sciences

The content of the Cambridge Assessment IGCSE Separate Science courses reflects the exciting developments taking place across all the sciences at present. These rigorous courses give students an ideal stepping-stone to a science at A Level, containing both theory and practical

elements which are both formally assessed at the end of the two years. The courses are taught by well qualified subject specialists.

Boys thinking of studying medicine, dentistry or veterinary science at university are advised to take all three sciences as should those thinking of taking a science subject at Oxbridge.

The Express Science option: This option is suitable for those students who have demonstrated a particular aptitude for Science (those from Y9 Express Set, plus students in Set 1 who perform especially well in Y9) who wish to have the option of selecting an additional GCSE option. The pace of the course means that these students study three GCSEs in the time normally allocated to two and the content is covered more quickly.

Co-ordinated Sciences (Double Award)

This is aimed at students in Set 4 for whom studying separate sciences would not produce the best outcomes for them. Students will follow the Cambridge IGCSE (9-1) Co-ordinated Sciences (Double Award), which gives them the opportunity to study the foundations of Biology, Chemistry and Physics. It is a double award qualification, earning two IGCSE grades. Students cover the core content of the syllabus, allowing them to earn up to Grades 5-5. Whilst not a preparation for A level study in the three science subjects, the course will allow students to gain a sound understanding in the fundamental aspects of the three subjects at IGCSE level.

Biology

Cambridge IGCSE (9-1) Biology helps learners to understand the biological world in which they live and take an informed interest in science and scientific developments. The syllabus includes the basic principles and concepts that are fundamental to the subject, some current applications of biology, and a strong emphasis on practical skills. Learners also develop an understanding of the scientific skills essential for progression to Cambridge International AS & A level, further education or a career related to science.

The course is assessed by two examinations, one written and one multiple choice, in May/June of Year 11, as well as by an 'Alternative to Practical' paper.

The course covers five broad areas:

1. Characteristics and classification of living organisms
2. Organisation and maintenance of organisms
3. Development of organisms and the continuity of life
4. Organisms and their environment
5. Practical biology

NOTE: If a student is likely to continue this subject to A level, it is advisable to also study Chemistry at GCSE.

Chemistry

Chemistry at IGCSE will take students further into this interesting, relevant and rewarding subject. They will take part in more experiments, learn new skills and have more opportunities to look at the way the substances and materials used and abused in our modern-day society are created and destroyed.

Students will be taking the knowledge and skills they learn and applying them to new situations involved in 'living in the material world'. Like Biology and Physics, we follow the Cambridge Assessment IGCSE course (0971). The IGCSE in Chemistry is essential to anyone thinking of studying the subject at A Level and to those that have future plans to work in the medical or veterinary sectors. It is equally useful to anyone looking at studying either Biology or Physics at IGCSE level or beyond. All the examinations in this course are taken at the end of Year 11. Practical skills are developed continually throughout the two years of the course and are externally assessed by examination.

Topics include:

- Exploitation of raw materials, including limestone, metals and crude oil
- Atomic structure, structure and bonding and how these influence the properties of substances
- Rates of chemical reactions
- Chemical energetics and chemical equilibria
- Quantitative chemistry
- Electrolysis
- Organic chemistry
- Chemical analysis

Physics

GCSE Physics is an important qualification to have because it demonstrates numeracy and the ability to problem solve in diverse situations.

It is often required by universities for anyone thinking of taking any aspect of science or engineering beyond school level. The subject is advised for anyone with an enquiring mind and an interest in scientific matters in order to develop your confidence in a technological world.

We offer the Cambridge IGCSE in Physics, which is a traditional course. It is assessed by two examinations, one written and one multiple choice, in Year 11, as well as by a practical exam.

Topics include:

- Motion
- Forces
- Energy
- States of Matter
- Thermal Properties of Matter
- Waves, Sound and Light
- Electricity
- Atomic Physics

Careers

All boys at Key Stage 3 follow a Careers programme aimed at specific sessions which encourage the students to look at different routes after GCSEs, to consider their own strengths and talents and to reflect on what is important to them as individuals in their future professional life. All boys in Year 9 will have an individual guidance interview with the Senior Leadership Team and the Head of Careers, which will discuss any future career plans to ensure the correct GCSE options are considered.

PE and Games

All students currently have two lessons of sport per week. In Year 10 one of these is a games afternoon and one is a traditional PE lesson. In Games the 'major' school sports are coached and inter-house matches are played. In PE, groups rotate around athletics, badminton, basketball, softball and swimming. In Year 11 pupils choose options in both of their sports lessons as they start to take responsibility for their own sporting involvement.

Option Subjects

Art

Examination board: OCR

This exciting and interesting course will enable students to develop their artistic skills and knowledge. The majority of individuals in Year 9 could consider taking Art as a GCSE subject choice as it is designed to allow a wide ability range to develop their artistic talents. It is especially desirable for students who are considering Art and Design based A levels and higher education courses after Sixth Form. Each year, a number of students doing Art are accepted onto courses such as architecture, product design, graphic design and art foundation courses.

Students will work on themed projects such as natural forms, still life, landscape, portraiture, animals, buildings and architecture. They will also study the work of relevant artists as a way of enhancing their own ideas, imagination and technical skills.

Year 10 will concentrate on building up their portfolios, learning new techniques and gaining confidence in handling a wide variety of art materials. Drawing in pencil, ink, charcoal and pastel and painting in watercolour, gouache, acrylic and oil will all feature, as well as mixed media and collage. As each student gains in confidence, he will be encouraged to work on a more ambitious scale and with a greater degree of independence. Students will be given guidance in developing preparatory study sheets for project work, general presentation and the use of sketch books.

In Year 11 students will have greater opportunity to develop their own ideas and will often be given a number of project titles in order that they can select one which is of particular interest to them. Greater emphasis will be placed on the individual student researching his personal ideas, but guidance and advice will always be available.

The Art Department is open during lunch and after school if students wish to use the facilities outside lesson time.

Assessment

Coursework (60%): A selection of work made in Year 10 and 11 and presented in your portfolio.

Controlled test (40%): At the end of Year 11. Students are given a choice of project questions. They make preparatory studies over six weeks and then produce a final piece in a 10-hour test (spread over two days).

The course must have a degree of flexible learning and is particularly reliant on the development of individual research and time management skills.

Although the majority of materials will be provided, students are required to purchase an A1 sized art folder. These are available from the Art Department at cost price and an order list will be issued at the beginning of the academic year.



Computer Science

Examination board: OCR

Computer Science can be a very practical subject. Students will be able to use the knowledge and skills they learn in the classroom on real-world problems. It is also a highly creative subject that calls on students to be inventive. This engaging, modern qualification has been developed in consultation with companies like Microsoft, Google and Cisco as well as with organisations like Computing at School (CAS) together with teachers and academics.

There are three broad areas of study:

Computer systems: Introduces students to the central processing unit (CPU), computer memory and storage, data representation, wired and wireless networks, network topologies, system security and system software. It also looks at ethical, legal, cultural and environmental concerns associated with computer science.

Computational thinking, algorithms and programming: Students apply knowledge and understanding gained in component 01. They develop skills and understanding in computational thinking: algorithms, programming techniques, producing robust programs, computational logic and translators.

Practical programming: Students are to be given the opportunity to undertake a programming task(s) during their course of study which allows them to develop their skills to design, write, test and refine programs using a high-level programming language. Students will be assessed on these skills during the written examinations, in particular component 02 (section B).

Assessment

The content is assessed by two exam papers at the end of the syllabus, one focusing on computer systems and one with a focus on computational thinking, algorithms and programming. Each paper lasts 1.5 hours and is worth 50% of the total GCSE.

Students will also complete several practical programming challenges that are aimed at supporting them with component 2 and designed to teach them the skills they will need if they choose to progress to A level.



Design & Technology

Examination board: AQA

Design and Technology is a subject where knowledge and understanding gained in all areas of the curriculum are brought together and applied to real-world problem-solving activities.

This course is designed to develop critical creative thinking skills and to manage and organise opportunities that are identified. This style of learning will equip students with lifelong skills of problem spotting and problem solving and enable them to apply their learning in a range of contexts that may occur in any profession or future life stage.

This GCSE will require students to be curious and take risks. They will need to be prepared to challenge their thinking and they will need to work independently, making informed decisions based on their own journey of 'iterative design' - a process of exploration, creating and evaluating.

Throughout the course students will be building on the knowledge acquired in previous years and will develop a more in-depth knowledge about materials, processes

and techniques. This is done by completing a range of short projects that may involve designing and making using traditional workshop skills, CAD/CAM, electronics or even textiles – depending upon the requirements of their self-directed solution. Much of this work is completed in Year 10 as Year 11 is occupied by the Non-Examined Assessment (previously known as coursework) Iterative Design Challenge component where students get to demonstrate their capabilities by designing and making a viable product.



<p>Iterative Design Challenge NEA</p>	<p>100 marks Approximately 40 hours Non-exam assessment (previously known as coursework)</p>	<p>50% of total GCSE</p>
<p>Examination</p> <p>The examination brings together the learner's core and in-depth knowledge and understanding.</p> <p>Core knowledge of Design and Technology demonstrates learners' broad understanding of principles across the subject.</p> <p>In-depth knowledge allows learners to focus more directly on at least one main material category.</p>	<p>Principles of Design and Technology</p> <p>100 marks</p> <p>2 hours</p> <p>Written paper</p> <p>A minimum of 15% of the paper will assess learners' mathematical skills as applied within a design and technology context.</p>	<p>50% of total GCSE</p>

Drama

Examination board: Cambridge IGCSE

GCSE Drama offers the kind of interpersonal skill development valued by businesses worldwide. In Drama students will not only study the craft of acting and theatre. They will also develop extremely valuable transferrable skills such as communication/presentation, collaboration, leadership and empathy. Students will begin the complex processes of deconstructing a given subject/problem and the construction of performance pieces. Drama builds confidence and develops advanced oracy skills in young people, more than most other subjects. Students can perform but also work on directorial and production skills such as lighting, costume, sound, set and props.

Through practical and theoretical study, learners develop an understanding and enjoyment of drama, developing group and individual skills and studying ways to communicate ideas and feelings to an audience. They learn how to discover the performance possibilities of a text and other stimuli and devise dramatic material of their own. Learners also develop their performance skills, the demonstration of which will form part of the final assessment.

At GCSE students will explore a range of themes and issues; some are funny, some are moving, some are very thought provoking. They need to be prepared to think deeply about difficult situations and support others in doing so. They will explore a vast quantity of practitioner styles in order to immerse themselves in a range of subject matter that is designed to make them think differently about the world and other people.

Most practical work is carried out in groups of varying sizes and can be demanding. Students must feel comfortable working with their peers and have a willingness to develop their leadership skills. They will be filmed at points in the course and need to be comfortable with



that. They will be expected to give up a lot of free time outside of lessons for rehearsal - including lunch times, after school and some evenings – so they must make sure they are 100% committed to the course. We will also arrange local theatre trips in the evening and hopefully a return to our annual London Theatre trip.

Course structure

Component 1: Written Exam (40%)

In three parts and based on practical work completed from the perspective of the actor, director and designer. The exam is taken in the summer of Year 11, is 2.5 hours, contains six to eight short questions and two long answers. It is externally assessed.

Component 2: Coursework (60%)

There are three pieces:

- 1 solo performance from a scripted play
- 1 group piece from a scripted play
- 1 original devised piece

The coursework is internally assessed and externally moderated by the exam board.

Food and Nutrition

Examination board: OCR

Studying GCSE Food Preparation and Nutrition will equip students with the knowledge, understanding and skills required to cook and apply the principles of food science, nutrition and healthy eating. They will be engaging in plenty of cooking and making carefully informed decisions about health conscious and safe cooking along with developing an awareness of the economics of food both in a domestic and global setting.

This is a very busy and practical course. Students will need to be organised and be prepared to plan effectively as there is a significant commitment and cost when buying and bringing in food ingredients on a regular basis.



<p>Food Investigation Task</p> <p>This component assesses the scientific principles underlying the preparation and cooking of food.</p>	<p>45 marks</p> <p>Non-exam assessment (previously known as coursework)</p>	<p>15% of total GCSE</p>
<p>Examination</p> <p>This component assesses all areas of knowledge and understanding.</p>	<p>100 marks</p> <p>Written paper</p>	<p>50% of total GCSE</p>
<p>Food Preparation Task</p> <p>This component assesses the planning, preparation and cooking and presentation of food.</p>	<p>105 marks</p> <p>3-hour practical examination</p> <p>Non-exam assessment (previously known as coursework)</p>	<p>35% of total GCSE</p>

French

Examination board: AQA

The ability to communicate in another language improves employability. Learning another language also develops key skills such as empathy, adaptability, communication, analysis, creativity, memory and mental agility.

It is a multilingual world and not everybody speaks English. A GCSE in French gives students an understanding of the language and culture of French speaking countries.

Lessons are interactive and students are encouraged to speak in the target language as much as possible. They also have the opportunity to develop their oral skills by working in small groups with a native speaker.

The main aims of the GCSE course are to encourage candidates to develop:

- an understanding of the language in a variety of contexts
- knowledge of the language and language learning skills
- the ability to communicate effectively in the language
- awareness and understanding of countries and communities where the language is spoken

The French GCSE specification is based on the following themes:

Theme 1 - Identity and culture

Theme 2 - Local, national, international and global areas of interest

Theme 3 - Current and future study and employment



Assessment

Unit 1 - Understand the spoken language (25% - **listening** comprehension)

Unit 2 - Understand the written language (25% - **reading** comprehension)

Unit 3 - Communicate in speech (25% - **speaking** test)

Unit 4 - Communicate in writing (25 % - **written** test)

Listening, Reading, Writing and Speaking

will be assessed externally by final examination and students can take Foundation Tier or Higher Tier.

Geography

Examination board: AQA

Geography GCSE is a contemporary, relevant subject that is well regarded by universities; it is one of the Russell Group's listed facilitating subjects. It is an ideal bridging subject between the Arts and Sciences, and geographers gain a number of valuable transferable skills during the course, such as data handling, report writing, interpretation and evaluation of text.

Students conduct both Physical and Human fieldwork off-site. This is not submitted as coursework, rather students answer questions about the collection and analysis of fieldwork data in their final examination.

In addition, pupils will be examined on a variety of visual, cartographic and statistical skills in all three papers.

The topics examined by these three papers cover a variety of physical processes that enable pupils to understand how the earth has been shaped by geographical processes and how people interact with the landscapes at a local, national and global level. The human topics explore contemporary themes and issues, including migration, inequalities in world development and sustainable development. There is the opportunity to develop communication and discussion skills as well as independent research and analysis.

Geographical skills involving maps, satellite images and Geographical Information Systems are integrated into the teaching of the topics and examined by application in the written papers.

There are three examined units (no controlled assessment):

Paper 1. Living with the Physical Environment: Natural Hazards (tectonics, tropical storms, UK weather, climate change), Rivers and Coasts. The Natural Hazards topic is covered in Year 9. There is also a question on Ecosystems and Tropical Rainforests, and then candidates answer one question from our chosen topic of Desert Environments.

Paper 2. Challenges in Human Environment: Compulsory questions on Urban Issues, the Changing Economic World and Resource Management, then one from optional topics of Food, Water or Energy.

Paper 3. Geographical Applications: This paper involves a decision-making exercise based on pre-released material and questions about at least two pieces of practical fieldwork conducted during the year.



History

Examination board: AQA

This subject allows students to understand their world more fully. It inspires them to develop communication skills, an ability to empathise with others and greater understanding of current problems around the globe. As well as being a fascinating GCSE that is valued by employers, History develops a range of cross-curricular skills and links to numeracy, ICT and English in particular. History helps students to become more articulate, thoughtful and analytical. It also fosters:

- An awareness of the nature and analysis of evidence
- An appreciation of change and continuity
- Familiarity with ideas about causation, understanding why events take place
- An ability to enter into some informed appreciation of the predicaments and points of view of other people in the past



Paper 1 - Understanding the Modern World

- Section A: Period Study: Russia, 1894 - 1945, Tsardom and Communism
- Section B: Wider world depth study: Conflict and Tension between East and West, 1945–1972

Paper 2 - Shaping the Nation

- Section A: Thematic Study: Britain: Migration, empires and the people, c790 - present day
- Section B: Elizabethan England 1558-1603

Music

Examination board: Edexcel

Students opting for Music at GCSE level should have a keen interest in all aspects of music. There is a strong emphasis on practical ability and therefore if you already play an instrument, you will be well placed to do well. GCSE students are expected to take an active role in College music making by contributing to appropriate extra-curricular activities, including the College Choir. The syllabus has three components.

Component 1: Performing 30%

Students perform two pieces, one solo and one ensemble, with a combined duration of at least four minutes. Students are encouraged to develop creative thinking, aesthetic sensitivity, critical awareness, self-confidence, self-motivation and their own musical interests and skills. This includes the ability to make music individually and in groups, and perform with control, using phrasing and dynamics appropriate to their chosen styles and moods of music.



Component 2: Composing 30%

Students compose two pieces, one to a set brief and one as a free composition, with a combined duration of at least three minutes. They will be encouraged to explore a range of compositional starting points and investigate a range of elements, techniques and resources for developing and manipulating ideas – and turning them into completed pieces of music.

Component 3: Appraising 40%

Students' listening and appraising skills are assessed through the study of music across a variety of styles and genres. The content is grouped into four areas, each of which contains two set works:

Instrumental Music 1700 – 1820

- J S Bach: 3rd movement from Brandenburg Concerto No.5
- Beethoven: 1st movement from Piano Sonata No 8. (Pathétique)

Vocal Music

- Purcell: Music for a While
- Queen: Killer Queen

Music for Stage and Screen

- Schwartz: Defying Gravity
- Williams: main title/rebel blockade runner (Star Wars Episode IV)

Fusions

- Afro Celt Sound System: Release
- Esperanza Spalding: Samba Em Preludio

There is a written examination of 1 hour and 45 minutes.

Religious Studies

Examination board: AQA

Religious Studies (RS) GCSE (AQA Syllabus A) is essentially an in-depth study of TWO religions and FOUR Philosophical and Ethical themes. It is intended to challenge students with questions about belief, values, meaning, purpose and truth, and to help them to develop further their own attitude towards religious issues. It should also help them to gain an appreciation of how religion, philosophy and ethics form the basis of our culture.

In addition, students will develop their analytical and critical thinking skills, the ability to work with abstract ideas, and their research skills, all things that will help prepare them for further study. As well as being a well-regarded academic qualification and a mechanism by which they can explore their own and others' attitudes, beliefs and values there are many other areas of the school curriculum (and life) in which knowledge of RS is highly relevant: it is a good foundation for understanding and further study of topics in Law, History, Art, Science, Ethics, Philosophy, Psychology, English, the Media, Politics, Sociology, and many more.

During the course students will study Christianity and Buddhism and four Religious, Philosophical and Ethical Studies themes selected from a choice of six. This will enable them to understand the nature and diversity of religious traditions - as well as non-religious beliefs such as atheism and humanism - and then apply these to a range of religious and non-religious issues in contemporary British society. Hopefully students will find it interesting to explore how many religious ideas and principles have either directly influenced the behaviour of religious people and others or been absorbed into other practices from how people make informed ethical decisions - on issues like going to war or the death penalty - to more recent adoptions of meditation techniques to help with mental health issues.

Assessment

Component 1: The Study of Religions (Christianity and Buddhism): Beliefs, Teachings, and Practices

Written exam: 1 hour 45 minutes (50% of GCSE) made up of 4 sets of 1, 2, 4, 5 and 12 mark questions.

Buddhism: The Dhamma (teachings); the Buddha and the Four Noble Truths; Worship and Festivals; Buddhist Ethics

Christianity: Key Beliefs; Jesus Christ and Salvation; Worship and Festivals; the Role of the Church in the Local and Worldwide Community

Component 2: Thematic Studies

Written exam: 1 hour 45 minutes (50% of GCSE) made up of 4 sets of 1, 2, 4, 5 and 12 mark questions.

Four, out of the following six, topics:

1. Relationships and Families
e.g. human sexuality; gender equality
2. Religion and Life
e.g. animal experimentation; euthanasia
3. The Existence of God and Revelation
e.g. design argument; Science and God
4. Religion, Peace and Conflict
e.g. Just War; terrorism; nuclear weapons
5. Religion, Crime and Punishment
e.g. causes of crime; treatment of prisoners
6. Religion, Human Rights and Social Justice
e.g. racial prejudice; people-trafficking

For more detail on each of these options go to www.aqa.org.uk and search for Religious Studies GCSE Syllabus A.

Spanish

Examination board: AQA

It is a multilingual world and not everybody speaks English. GCSE Spanish gives students an understanding of the language and culture of Spanish speaking countries.

Lessons are interactive and students are encouraged to speak in the target language as much as possible. They also have the opportunity to develop their oral skills by working in small groups with a native speaker.

The ability to communicate in another language improves employability. Learning another language also develops key skills such as empathy, adaptability, communication, analysis, creativity, memory and mental agility.

The main aims of this GCSE course are to encourage candidates to develop:

- an understanding of the language in a variety of contexts
- knowledge of the language and language learning skills
- the ability to communicate effectively in the language
- awareness and understanding of countries and communities where the language is spoken

The Spanish course's specification is based on the following themes:

Theme 1 - Identity and culture

Theme 2 - Local, national, international and global areas of interest

Theme 3 - Current and future study and employment

Assessment

Unit 1 - Understand the spoken language (25% - **listening** comprehension)

Unit 2 - Understand the written language (25% - **reading** comprehension)

Unit 3 - Communicate in speech (25% - **speaking** test)

Unit 4 - Communicate in writing (25% - **written** test)

Listening, Reading, Writing and Speaking

Will be assessed externally by final examination and students can take Foundation Tier or Higher Tier.



Sport Studies

Examination board: AQA

GCSE Sport Studies gives pupils the chance to develop their understanding of sport and sport related matters. The course is assessed practically (30%) and theoretically (70%).

A large percentage of the final grade is based on a student's understanding of the factors that underpin sport and sports performance so they should have a passion for this kind of knowledge. The majority of the lessons will be in the classroom looking at physiology, sports psychology, socio-cultural factors and health & fitness. The ability to understand the theory and be able to apply it to sporting performance will be essential for boys on this course and in the final examinations. The GCSE lessons are additional to the timetabled PE and games lessons that all students have.

Boys will sit two exams at the end of Year 11 accounting for 60% of their final grade. They

will also submit three practical assessments in sports of their choice, which will account for 30% of their final grade. The final 10% is awarded for a written or verbal coursework that analyses either their own or someone else's sporting performance.

Boys must choose one team sport, one individual sport and then one other from the table below.

In order to achieve a top grade in the practical assessments, students need to show a high level of sporting ability and that they can make successful and effective tactical and strategic decisions. The student's performance must be highly effective, significant and sustained for almost all the performance. Students must be participating in at least one of the sports below on a weekly basis:

Team activities			Individual activities		
Association Football	Badminton	Basketball	Amateur Boxing	Athletics	Badminton
Camogie	Cricket	Dance	Canoeing	Cycling	Dance
Gaelic Football	Handball	Hockey	Diving	Golf	Gymnastics
Hurling	Lacrosse	Netball	Equestrian	Kayaking	Rock climbing
Rowing	Rugby League	Rugby Union	Rowing	Sculling	Skiing
Squash	Table Tennis	Tennis	Snowboarding	Squash	Swimming
Volleyball	Acrobatic Gymnastics	Figure Skating	Table Tennis	Tennis	Trampolining
Futsal	Ice Hockey	Inline Roller Hockey	Figure Skating	Sailing	Windsurfing
Sailing	Sculling	Water polo			

Combined Cadet Force (CCF)

The aim of the CCF is to provide an organisation within which students can develop leadership skills and qualities of responsibility, self-reliance, resourcefulness and endurance. The CCF is open to pupils of Victoria College and Jersey College for Girls and there are three uniformed sections - the Royal Navy, Army and Royal Air Force. The initial recruit training in Year 9 is common to all three services and involves basic drill, how to wear the uniform, leadership, weapon training and an understanding of the armed forces in general. Recruits will become Cadets upon satisfactory completion of this training and will then join the section of their choice.

All essential items of uniform, except boots, will be provided free of charge.



There will be opportunities during the year to undertake various activities that will include overnight camps, rifle shooting, flying and gliding, afloat training and exercises. Adventure Training, shooting at the National Shooting Centre, Bisley and Summer Camps are off-Island during Activities/Challenge week and Cadets in Year 9, 10 and 12 are expected to attend.

We have a College Shooting Club that meets on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday from 3.25 to 5.30pm, and open to pupils in Year 9 and above.

The CCF parades at the following times:

Year 9, 10 & 11: 3.30pm to 5pm on Friday
Sixth Form: 2pm to 3.25pm on Friday; there is an expectation that Senior Cadets will parade until 5pm with the younger Cadets.

The Sixth Form

Sixth Form subjects in September 2023

- Art
- Biology
- Business
- Business CTech*
- Chemistry
- Classical Civilisation*
- Computer Science
- Criminology*
- Drama and Theatre Studies
- Economics
- English Language and Literature
- English Literature
- French
- Further Mathematics
- Geography
- Health and Social Care Diplomas*
- History
- ICT BTech*
- Mathematics
- Media Studies*
- Music
- Music Technology*
- Philosophy
- Physical Education
- Physics
- Politics
- Product Design
- Psychology
- Religious Studies – Philosophy & Ethics*
- Sociology*
- Spanish

*At Consortium schools

Other opportunities

- IOD Future Leaders Programme
- Extended Project Qualification (EPQ)
- College Prefect
- Student Council
- Combined Cadet Force (CCF)
- Community Involvement
- Full Careers Programme
- Higher Education Fair
- Introduction to Medicine
- Jersey Skills Show
- Lunch and Learn Talks
- Music / Drama
- Sport
- Work Experience

Enrichment programme

- Teaching primary school Physical Education lessons
- Assisting the Senior Leadership team at Victoria College
- Victoria College Class Assistant
- Boxing
- Cooking
- Culture Club Discussion Group
- French / Spanish
- Fundamentals of Financial Services
- Gym Training
- History of Victoria College
- Jèrriais
- LAMDA award in public speaking
- Level 2 Personal Training Programme
- AS Level Photography
- PWC Hive Academy – Python Training
- STEM
- TEFL (Teaching English as a foreign language)
- Year 12 Weekly Lecture
- Fundamentals of Financial Services
- Body conditioning
- British Sign Language
- Climbing Wall

Help and Advice

Please contact any of the members of staff below to discuss the GCSE Options Process.

Head of Year 9

Jo Crill on 638200

j.crill@vcj.sch.ie

**Assistant Head – Curriculum,
Teaching & Learning**

Mrs Karen Palfreyman on 638258

k.palfreyman@vcj.sch.ie

Head of Sixth Form

Mr Falle on 638257

a.falle@vcj.sch.ie

Head of Careers

Mrs Job on 638266

s.job@vcj.sch.ie

If you submit your options and then decide upon a change, please contact Mrs Palfreyman or Mr Crill to confirm your changes and resubmit online.



Victoria College, Mont Millais, St Helier, Jersey JE1 4HT
01534 638200 | admin@vcj.sch.je | www.victoriacollege.je

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