

The
Mount School
York

GCSE HANDBOOK

2026

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“I could not have asked for better results! I couldn’t have done this without The Mount and all the opportunities and support I have been given. My teachers were always so supportive. In every way, The Mount always makes you feel as though you can achieve anything if you put your mind to it.” Hannah

The Mount School

KEY STAGE 4 CURRICULUM

Girls at The Mount are exuberantly confident because they know they can be. We are leaders in educating girls and understanding their needs, inspiring and empowering confident young women, enabling them to believe nothing is beyond their reach.



ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

At The Mount, girls take centre stage to pursue their academic excellence. Academically, girls excel and examination results are consistently excellent. Through our bespoke education and tailored teaching, we inspire each girl to strive for personal excellence, supported by teachers who are not only experts in their subjects but in teaching girls. Girls attain high 'value-added' scores and often exceed their predicted grades.

PASTORAL CARE

All girls at The Mount Senior School are assigned a Personal Tutor (PT) who will have pastoral and academic responsibility for you. The settling in period into a new academic stage, whether for girls who have been with us for a while, or new girls, is very important, and your PT is the first point of contact for any concerns that may arise.

We pride ourselves on our strong pastoral care system; in addition to your PT, the Heads of Years 10 and 11, will have an overview of your progress and will answer any questions you may have. The Head of Learning Support and English as an Additional Language (EAL) Teachers are also on hand to give advice.

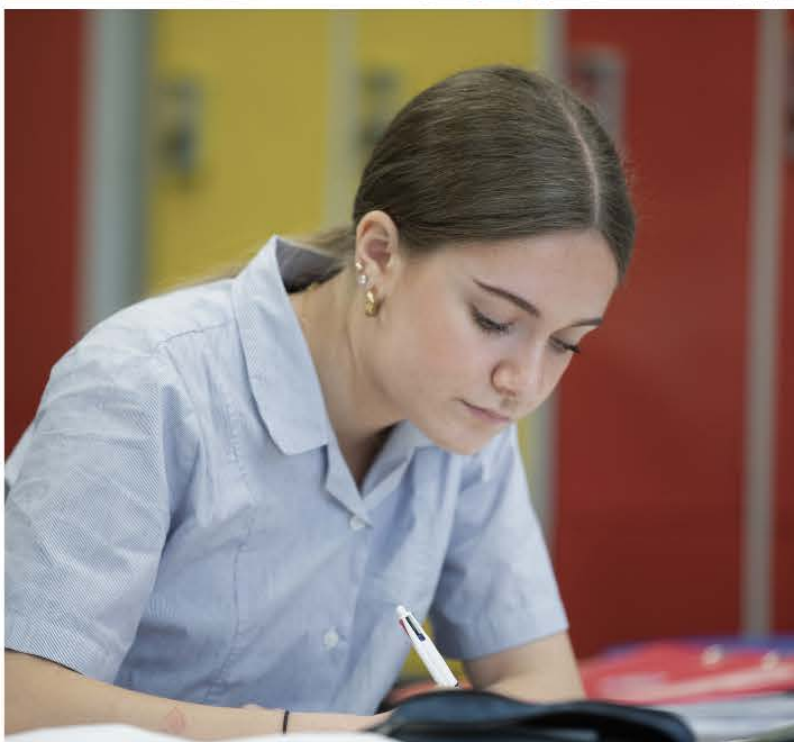
OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM

As well as lessons in class, there continues to be many extra-curricular activities. Whatever your interests, you will find activities that you can participate in, to expand your horizons and stretch and challenge you.

All girls have the chance to compete at a high level in all sports, develop creativity through LAMDA, Music and Arts, enter competitions in subjects, such as Design Technology, English and Mathematics, complete the prestigious Crest Award in Science, become involved in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme, and take part in a plethora of other activities on offer. The world really is your oyster at The Mount, an environment where girls come first and all can thrive and excel.

We hope that you will make the most of everything we have to offer. The staff will do everything we can to help make your time here a success. Wishing you a productive and happy time studying in Year 10 and Year 11.

James Waddington, Deputy Head



CHOOSING YOUR GCSES

CHOOSING YOUR OPTIONS

Choosing subjects to study at GCSE level should not worry you, but it does have to be done with care. This booklet contains details of the courses on offer at The Mount School York. We hope it will help you and your parents make the right choices for your GCSE courses. There is much more advice available from the School beside this booklet. Careers lessons and option choice guidance will also help you to make the right decisions. If you need more information than this booklet provides, there is no substitute for talking to subject staff and Mr Waddington.

Every pupil studies the Core Subjects; English Language and English Literature, Mathematics, a Modern Language (French or German) and Science.

Optional subjects are then added to the core subjects. Pupils study for 9 GCSEs, although, some may take more or less, dependent upon individual circumstances and after consultation with school staff.

It is very important to make time for other extra-curricular activities and to maintain a balanced workload. Of course we will do everything we can to help you to achieve your academic potential, but we also want your time during your GCSE years to be equally as valuable outside the classroom. It is therefore crucial to plan for your GCSEs carefully and to focus not only on what academic subjects you will do but also the wider enrichment activities that will stretch and challenge you in a different way to give you the broadest possible skill set.

CORE SUBJECTS
English Language English Literature
Mathematics
A Modern Language (French or German)
Dual award Science

OPTIONAL SUBJECTS	
Art and Design	Business
Classical Civilisations	Computer Science
Design & Technology	Drama
Geography	History
Latin	Music
Physical Education	Separate Science
	Religious Studies

WHAT NEXT?

Read this booklet carefully and talk to your parents and teachers. The staff at The Mount will help you to achieve the best you can in all areas of your academic and personal development. We take great pride in seeing our pupils develop into confident and mature young women. If you would like to talk to any of your teachers about your GCSE options, they will be happy to help.

The GCSE options process is an exciting time in your life. Choose your subjects wisely then step forward and strive for personal excellence in all you do!

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

The majority of girls at The Mount take two separate qualifications: English Language and English Literature. All girls are entered for English Language.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

You will read a range of high quality, challenging literature and non-fiction texts from a range of genres and types from the 20th and 21st Centuries. The assessment of reading and writing is equally weighted and you will be expected to write clearly and accurately, using Standard English. Spelling, punctuation, vocabulary usage and grammar will be assessed.

HOW WILL I BE ASSESSED?

All students sit the same examination and therefore the papers are designed to assess the full ability range. Students will sit one paper, which is worth 50% of the total GCSE and be two hours' duration. The paper is worth 80 marks. The examination involves reading two or three unseen non-fiction passages and answering a series of questions relating to:

- Vocabulary
- Comprehension
- Inference
- Retrieval of information
- Summarising large quantities of text
- Writing emphatically as a character from one of the passages.

The remaining 50% of the GCSE in English Language is made up of a portfolio of three coursework assignments which will be produced across both years of study. All three coursework pieces can be completed at home, as well as in lessons, can be drafted before final submission, and are supported by teacher intervention before final moderation takes place. The foci of the three assignments (all between 500-800 words in length) are:

- Writing to describe (with a maximum of 25 marks available for writing)
- Writing to narrate (with a maximum of 25 marks available for writing)
- Writing to discuss/argue and/or persuade (with a maximum of 15 marks available for writing and 15 marks available for reading)

Most girls are entered for this English Language iGCSE at the end of Year 10, allowing Literature to be studied throughout Year 11.

BOARD - Cambridge International Examination

ENGLISH LITERATURE

ENGLISH LITERATURE

All pupils sit the same examination and therefore the papers are designed to assess the full ability range.

You will read a wide range of classic fiction, including:

- A 19th century novel, for instance 'War of the Worlds'
- A Shakespeare play, for instance 'Macbeth'
- A selection of poetry since 1789
- Modern British fiction, for instance 'Animal Farm' or 'An Inspector Calls'.

You will also be expected to respond to a range of unseen texts.

HOW WILL I BE ASSESSED?

You will sit two papers; each paper will count for 50% of the total GCSE and be two hour's long. Each paper is worth 80 marks.

- Paper 1 is called 'Exploring Modern and Literary Heritage Texts' and includes the study of one studied modern prose text, making connections with a thematically linked unseen modern, same-genre text and the study of a 19th century prose text.
- Paper 2 is called 'Exploring Poetry and Shakespeare' and will include reading and responding to one thematic poetry cluster from the OCR Poetry Anthology, including making connections with a thematically linked unseen poem. You will also study and respond to a Shakespeare play.

You will be taken to see performances of your set texts wherever possible and we also encourage you to attend any other theatre trips offered by the department.

BOARD - OCR

Adam Dawson, Head of English

MATHEMATICS

WHAT WILL I STUDY?

The GCSE Mathematics course will build on the work you have already done at Key Stage 3. You will develop your non-calculator skills in more complex situations, learn about a wide variety of algebraic and graphical techniques and make increasing use of subject specific technology. Your GCSE exam will also test your ability to apply your skills in a range of situations.

For our most able mathematicians in Year 11, the opportunity to also study for the Level 2 Certificate in Further Maths will be offered. This adds depth and rigour to the GCSE work and introduces a small number of new ideas. It is an excellent taste of A Level Mathematics and will give those who study it a head start into that course. The Further Maths course is something that will be discussed with students when they are in Year 11.

HOW WILL I BE ASSESSED?

You will take a total of two GCSE exams at the end of Year 11. All papers are 2 hours long and cover all aspects of the syllabus. There is no coursework or controlled assessment. There are two tiers of entry, Higher and Foundation. Tiers of entry will be discussed with students and parents over the course of Years 10 and 11 and the tier of entry will be determined to best suit each student individually.

OPPORTUNITIES

In addition to regular lessons and prep, the department offers the following opportunities in Years 10 and 11:

- Entry into the UKMT Intermediate Challenge and the Year 10 Team Challenge.
- Involvement in our 'Mathematics Mentoring' scheme either as a mentor supporting younger girls or a Mentee of an older student.

BOARD - EDEXCEL IGCSE

Emily Mitchell, Head of Mathematics

MODERN LANGUAGES

‘A different language is a different vision of life’

Federico Fellini

WHY STUDY THIS COURSE?

Thanks to new technology and improved travel and communications, the world has become a much smaller place. In learning other languages, we become more open to understanding the people who speak them, and discovering their associated cultures. Even if you do not plan to specialise in languages, you will find studying one or more languages alongside other subjects can open up unexpected opportunities.

All Mount girls normally study at least one Modern Foreign Language to GCSE level, and we encourage all those interested in travelling or working abroad in the future to study both **French and German**, to offer the broadest possible basis of transferable language skills.

Languages are first and foremost a means of communication. This makes them invaluable when considering future employment opportunities, whatever your career choice. The modern world of work is a global marketplace, and the ability to speak a foreign language is highly prized by employers.

WHAT WILL I GAIN FROM STUDYING A MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGE?

The GCSE course in Modern Languages is a practical course which rewards four key skills of speaking, listening, reading and writing in the foreign language. You will learn to express yourself, your likes and dislikes, ideas and opinions, and understand those of other people.

The course is split into three themes:

1. Identity and relationships with others (including discussing family and friends, relationships, healthy living and lifestyle, education and work.)
2. Popular culture (including work on free-time activities, customs, festivals and celebrations and celebrity culture.)
3. Communication and the world around us (travel and tourism, media and technology, the environment and where people live.)

Your lessons cover all four skills, allowing you to develop your confidence in communicating in the foreign language.

The course follows on from work in KS3, building on vocabulary and structures already learned. You will extend your knowledge and apply it to new contexts and situations.

You will have regular opportunities to speak in small groups with our native-speaker French and German language assistants.

We always seek to encourage girls to use their language both in and out of the classroom. We recommend the use of a variety of apps or online activities, listening to music and watching films or TV programmes in French or German.

HOW WILL I BE ASSESSED?

The GCSE assessment is split into four equally-weighted exams, each testing a separate skill. Candidates are entered for either Foundation Tier or Higher Tier papers.

Listening (45 minutes, 25% of GCSE): You will answer questions in English to show your understanding of a range of spoken extracts. There will be a short dictation into French or German.

Speaking (10-12 minutes, 25% of GCSE): You will do a role-play, respond to a photo stimulus, and have a general conversation in the foreign language.

Reading (1 hour, 25% of GCSE): You will read a range of short texts, and answer questions in English to show your understanding. You will also translate a short passage from the foreign language into English.

Writing (1 hour 10 minutes, 25% of GCSE): You will write two short pieces of text in the foreign language, one structured and one more open-ended. You will also translate a short passage from English into the foreign language.

BOARD - AQA

Lisa Gibbs, Head of Modern Languages

SCIENCE

WHY STUDY THIS COURSE?

'The Science of today is the technology of tomorrow.'

Edward Teller

Science is playing an increasingly vital part in today's world. It is important therefore to be informed about Science, scientific issues and how Science impinges on our lives. For this reason, the school places Science (along with English, Mathematics and Foreign Languages) as one of the core subjects that all Mount girls study until the end of Year 11.

DOUBLE-AWARD SCIENCE

The Science course follows the AQA trilogy specification leading to two GCSE awards. The course is studied for nine lessons per fortnight in Year 10 and 11 which are equally divided between Biology, Chemistry and Physics.

This approach has the advantage that you will study individual Science subjects with specialist subject staff in such a way that what is learnt in one lesson may be built upon and applied in another. What you learn about energy in Physics for example, may be used in a different way in Biology or Chemistry.

HOW WILL I BE ASSESSED?

There are six examinations, two in each of the Sciences, at the end of the course. These exams are tiered and discussions will take place with girls concerning their level of entry. These courses will enable you to study all three Science subjects at A Level, should you choose to do so.

SEPARATE SCIENCE

Separate Science is available as an option choice should girls wish to study each of the three Sciences in more depth.

WHAT WILL I STUDY?

With GCSE, all girls cover the same topics, whether you take Dual Award or Separate Science, you cover each topic in slightly more depth with extension material.

BIOLOGY

- SECTION 1 – Cell biology
- SECTION 2 – Organisation
- SECTION 3 – Infection and response
- SECTION 4 – Bioenergetics
- SECTION 5 – Homeostasis and response
- SECTION 6 – Inheritance, variation and evolution
- SECTION 7 – Ecology

BOARD – AQA GCSE

Clare Hunt, Head of Biology

CHEMISTRY

- SECTION 1 – Atomic structure and the periodic table
- SECTION 2 – Bonding, structure and the properties of matter
- SECTION 3 – Quantitative chemistry
- SECTION 4 – Chemical changes
- SECTION 5 – Energy changes
- SECTION 6 – The rate and extent of chemical change
- SECTION 7 – Organic chemistry
- SECTION 8 – Chemical analysis
- SECTION 9 – Chemistry of the atmosphere
- SECTION 10 – Using resources

BOARD – AQA GCSE

Abigail Gingele, Head of Chemistry

PHYSICS

- SECTION 1 – Energy
- SECTION 2 – Electricity
- SECTION 3 – Particle model of matter
- SECTION 4 – Atomic structure
- SECTION 5 – Forces
- SECTION 6 – Waves
- SECTION 7 – Magnetism and electromagnetism

BOARD – AQA GCSE

Ruth Levings, Head of Physics

ART & DESIGN

WHY STUDY THIS COURSE?

GCSE Art and Design is an exciting and creative choice. The course gives you the opportunity to express yourself, explore areas of study to a high standard and incorporate your own strengths and interests as well as studying artists and designers that influence and inspire you.

WHAT WILL I STUDY?

Drawing and painting is explored through a range of media and techniques, including observational and imaginative themes as well as in sketchbooks as development work.

Other areas of study include printmaking, sculpture, ceramics, 3D design and installation work as well as photography. You are encouraged to experiment with media and can combine several areas of study in one project.

You will develop visual skills and a working knowledge of the materials and practices of art and design. You will learn to sustain an investigation, to think creatively and independently and make decisions about the progress and refinement of your work. You will learn to take risks, analyse artwork and experiment. Sketchbooks are used to record and develop your ideas, including written annotations and research.

You will develop your imaginative powers and an understanding of the place of art, craft and design in history and society. GCSE Art and Design will suit you if you have lots of ideas and enthusiasm for the subject, are motivated and enjoy making art work.

ADDITIONAL NOTES

Life drawing classes take place and GCSE artists are encouraged to attend. This is an excellent way of improving drawing skills and preparing for A Level Art and beyond. Work produced in creative studies including jewellery, photography and ceramics can be included as well.

Visits to the Yorkshire Sculpture Park and The Hepworth Gallery, Wakefield, are organised annually, and visits to York City Art Gallery and Leeds Art Gallery have also been included as part of the course.

HOW WILL I BE ASSESSED?

During the course you will build up a body of coursework as a portfolio. Projects contain preliminary work which can include sketchbooks. Tasks or themes are set as part of the coursework and are initiated by the teacher but allow room for personal development and progression. The aim is to encourage individuality and self-exploration. At the end of the course the exam project and the coursework is displayed in a final exhibition which is internally and externally assessed.

The examination is in two parts:

Component 1: Personal Portfolio (60%)

Coursework is made up from a personal portfolio of art and design which consists of work produced in Year 10 and Year 11. You will work towards producing a substantial final project which includes preliminary work as well as final pieces. This is 60% of the final mark.

Component 2: Externally Set Assignment (40%)

The externally-set assignment is the practical examination. This is produced in the Spring and Summer terms of Year 11. It is given a weighting of 40% of the final mark. It is made up of the exam piece and preliminary work. You have eight weeks to prepare for your examination which is ten hours long and is taken over a period of days and lessons.

BOARD - EDEXCEL

Rachel Milton, Head of Art and Design

BUSINESS

WHY STUDY THIS COURSE?

Business Studies is a subject that gives pupils the opportunity to develop a wide range of transferable skills. Pupils will become skilled in making decisions, being creative, solving problems, understanding finance, analysing data and working as part of a team. They will not only gain business knowledge and understanding, but will gain the opportunity to put it into practise through a range of business activities and projects. Business Studies gives pupils the opportunity to understand the world that we live in and to become more aware of global issues and events.

WHAT WILL I STUDY?

There are two themes within the GCSE. The first theme concentrates on the key business concepts, issues and skills involved in starting and running a small business. It provides a framework for students to explore core concepts through the lens of an entrepreneur setting up a business.

Theme 2 examines how a business develops beyond the start-up phase. It focuses on the key business concepts, issues and decisions used to grow a business, with emphasis on aspects of marketing, operations, finance and human resources. Theme 2 also considers the impact of the wider world on the decisions a business makes as it grows.

Subject content in Theme 1:

- Enterprise and Entrepreneurship
- Spotting a business opportunity
- Putting business ideas into practice
- Making the business effective
- Understanding external influences on business

Subject content in Theme 2:

- Growing the business
- Making marketing decisions
- Making operational decisions
- Making financial decisions
- Making human resource decisions

HOW WILL I BE ASSESSED?

There are two exams. Each exam is 1 hour 45 minutes long and is worth 50% of the GCSE. Each exam focuses on one theme. The paper will consist of calculations, multiple-choice, short-answer and extended-writing questions.

BOARD - EDEXCEL

Beverley Barnes, Teacher of Business

CLASSICAL CIVILISATION

WHY STUDY THIS COURSE?

If you enjoy the myths and history of ancient Greece and Rome, this is the course for you. All original texts are studied in translation and there is no entry requirement for this subject, although it helps if you enjoy English, Latin or History.

You get the chance to study the lives of Greek and Roman women and understand what it was like to live in ancient Rome. You will gain a valuable insight into how attitudes from long ago still influence our lives today.

WHAT WILL I STUDY?

The course consists of two topics:

1. Women in the Ancient World
2. Roman City Life

The 'Women' syllabus looks at all aspects of women's lives in ancient Greece and Rome. You will have a chance to study famous women from myth and history such as Cleopatra and Helen of Troy.

The 'City Life' course looks at Roman entertainments such as gladiator fights and the theatre. This part of the course also includes extracts of literature in translation, including work by famous writers such as Horace and Juvenal.

HOW WILL I BE ASSESSED?

There will be two examinations, one for each topic, each lasting 1 hour and 30 minutes. The examinations consist of shorter factual questions and 8-mark and 15-mark questions that require in-depth discussion of values and attitudes as set out in the sources you will have studied.

BOARD - OCR

Matthew Adams, Head of Classics

COMPUTER SCIENCE

WHY STUDY THIS COURSE?

Computer Science is playing an increasingly vital part in today's world. In a nutshell, GCSE Computer Science explores the principles of digital technology and a way of working that's called 'computational thinking', with coding at the core. You've got to be able to think logically, solve puzzles and be tenacious. But it is also creative, and you'll get a thrill out of getting something to work yourself, especially when programming.

WHAT WILL I STUDY?

1. Fundamentals of algorithms
2. Programming
3. Fundamentals of data representation
4. Computer systems
5. Fundamentals of computer networks
6. Cyber security
7. Relational databases and structured query language (SQL)
8. Ethical, legal and environmental impacts of digital technology on wider society, including issues of privacy

HOW WILL I BE ASSESSED?

The new AQA GCSE Computer Science Specification (8525) has been updated to reflect changes following Ofqual consultations last year. Below are the updated assessment details which are by terminal exam assessment only.

Course: AQA GCSE Computer Science (8525)

Paper 1: Computational thinking and programming skills

What's assessed?

Computational thinking, problem solving, code tracing, programming concepts including the design of effective algorithms and the designing, writing, testing and refining of code.

The content for this assessment will be drawn from subject content from 'Fundamentals of Algorithms and Programming'

How it's assessed:

Written exam: 2 hours

90 marks

50% of GCSE

Questions

A mix of multiple-choice, short-answer and longer-answer questions assessing programming, practical problem-solving and computational thinking skills.

Paper 2: Computing concepts

What's assessed?

The content for this assessment will be drawn from Fundamentals of data representation, Computer systems, Fundamentals of computer networks, Cyber security, Relational databases and structured query language (SQL) and Ethical, legal and environmental impacts of digital technology on wider society, including issues of privacy.

How it's assessed:

Written exam: 1 hour 45 minutes

90 marks

50% of GCSE

Questions:

A mix of multiple-choice, short answer, longer-answer and extended-response questions assessing SQL programming skills and theoretical knowledge.

BOARD - OCR

Beth Lane, Teacher of Computer Science

DESIGN & TECHNOLOGY

WHY STUDY THIS COURSE?

Design and Technology GCSE offers a unique opportunity in the curriculum for students to identify and solve problems by designing and making products in a wide range of contexts relating to their personal interests.

Design and Technology develops students' key skills and their capacity for imaginative and innovative thinking, creativity and independence. The course is based on the view that Design Technology is essentially a practically based activity combining skills, knowledge and understanding to design and make quality projects. Each student's capability is developed through a flexible and broad-based approach meeting the needs and interests of the individual.

Design and Technology provides students with a range of transferable skills whatever their career aspirations. The coursework element is designed to encourage creativity, innovation, critical thinking, and awareness of environmental, moral and social issues. Planning, organisational, analytical and evaluative skills are all developed too.

Students become discerning designers, producers and consumers, able to make informed decisions and choices. Students will explore sustainability and environmental issues in relation to commercial and global manufacturing, and will explore the work of professional designers in their chosen subject area.

Information Technology is an important and integral part of Design Technology GCSE. Students use IT within their coursework design folders and use Pro-desktop (a Computer Aided Design package) to design their chosen products.

WHAT WILL I STUDY?

In S10 students commence the course exploring Core knowledge based on the themes of:

- Design and technology and our world
- Smart materials
- Electronic systems and programmable components
- Mechanical components and devices
- Materials.

Students will explore in-depth knowledge and understanding of either Resistant Materials or Textiles. Through mini projects, in their selected specialist area, students will learn the following skills:

- Selecting and working with materials and components
- Marking out

- using tools and equipment
- using specialist techniques
- using surface treatments and finishes.

In Year 11, students undertake a NEA- Non-Examined Assessment (20-30 sides of A3 paper) Students can select from the focus areas;

- Identifying and investigating design possibilities
- Developing a design brief and specification
- Generating and developing design ideas
- Manufacturing a prototype
- Analysing and evaluating design decisions and prototypes.

HOW WILL I BE ASSESSED?

Written examination: 2 hours, 50% of qualification 100 marks

Design and make task NEA: approximately 35 hours, 50% of qualification 100 marks

BOARD - EDEXCEL

Rachel Milton, Head of Art and Design

DRAMA

WHY STUDY THIS COURSE?

Drama GCSE is an exciting, creative and challenging subject. It will appeal to anyone who enjoys performance and live theatre. It complements English GCSE with its study of classic and contemporary plays and will introduce you to a range of different theatrical styles and practitioners. Drama enhances initiative, creativity and essential teamwork skills as well as self-confidence.

WHAT WILL I STUDY?

You will work with other girls in small groups to produce two polished performances: a scripted performance and a devised piece, developed through improvisation and practitioner-based workshops.

You will need to attend a range of theatre performances during your GCSE course; some of these will be arranged by the school but you are also encouraged to attend the theatre regularly. You will learn how to analyse live theatre productions and comment on aspects such as performance skills, set design, costume, lighting and sound, thus building up a file of reviews.

In preparation for the written exam, you will also study a play from the perspective of an actor, director and designer, working practically in lessons but also developing written responses to exam questions.

HOW WILL I BE ASSESSED?

The examination consists of three components:

Component 1 – Devising Drama from a stimulus, in the style of a chosen practitioner (40% of qualification)

Component 2 – Performing from a text (20% of qualification)

Component 3 – Theatre Makers in Practice - Written examination: 1 hour 45 minutes (40% of qualification)

Written Coursework

You will be required to produce one piece of coursework for Component 1:

I. A portfolio covering the creating and developing of devised material, and analysis and evaluation of this process.

Written examination:

You will answer a series of questions on the set text (DNA, by

Dennis Kelly) and evaluate a live theatre performance.

Studying GCSE Drama develops a wide range of essential life skills, from confidence and creativity to teamwork and communication. These qualities are invaluable in any workplace and provide an excellent foundation for further study at A Level Drama and Theatre or for pursuing a career in the Performing Arts.

BOARD - EDEXCEL

Hannah Priestley, Teacher of Drama

GEOGRAPHY

WHY STUDY THIS COURSE?

Geography helps to develop the following in young people:

- **A fascinating insight into the way human and physical processes interact.** We hear every day that the world is short of space, that human beings are placing greater and greater demands on the Earth and its systems, but what causes droughts, floods and hurricanes? Are they natural phenomena or the result of human activity? Geography gives pupils the language and techniques to approach these questions with confidence.
- **An understanding of places and people.** All human societies have to arrange living space, economic production, distribution and consumption. People have many common needs and hopes. Yet no two places are alike. We can all see the differences and investigate the reasons.
- **Inspiration to become global citizens by exploring their own place in the world.** Values and responsibilities to other people, to the environment and the sustainability of the planet are all important issues which need to be discussed and understood.
- **Practical skills.** Whether it is learning about map use, data analysis, problem solving and ICT, working alone or in a team or directly in the real world – on ‘fieldwork’, pupils acquire valuable skills.

WHAT WILL I STUDY?

The course consists of three units:

Unit 1 – Living with the physical environment

This unit is concerned with the dynamic nature of physical processes and systems, and human interaction with them in a variety of places and at a range of scales. We will study natural hazards, the physical landscape of the UK and the living world.

Unit 2 – Challenges in the human environment

This unit is concerned with human processes, systems and outcomes and how these change both spatially and temporally. They are studied in a variety of places and at a range of scales. We will study urban issues, the changing economic world and the challenge of resource management.

Unit 3 – Geographical applications

This unit is designed to be synoptic in that students will be required to draw together knowledge, understanding and

skills from the full course of study. This unit is divided into two sections:

- 1) Issue evaluation This contributes a critical thinking and problem-solving element. The assessment will provide students with the opportunity to demonstrate geographical skills and applied knowledge and understanding by looking at a particular issue(s) derived from the specification using secondary sources.
- 2) Fieldwork Students will undertake two geographical enquiries, each of which must include the use of primary data, collected as part of a fieldwork exercise. The fieldwork will take place in the Lake District as a residential visit.

HOW WILL I BE ASSESSED?

Topics	Assessment Methods	% of GCSE
Living with the physical environment	Written paper - 1 hour 30 minute exam	35%
Challenges in the human environment	Written paper - 1 hour 30 minute exam	35%
Geographical applications	Written paper - 1 hour	30%

BOARD - AQA

Carol Cook, Head of Humanities

HISTORY

WHY STUDY THIS COURSE?

People are fascinating and how we come to be where we are is the stuff of History! How else can you make sense of the present unless you have a good understanding of the past? How are you going to change the world if you haven't looked at how it got into the state it's in already?

Look around you – many leading figures in our society have studied History. That's because History enables you to:

- Understand how people tick, what motivates them, what they think and feel.
- Gather and read different types of information and to check information carefully for bias and propaganda by looking at motive and content.
- Communicate clearly, both verbally and on paper, making your own judgements.

Why not take a look at university and careers-based websites? You'll find History is a highly valued qualification because it gives proof of skills essential for success in further study and work.

WHAT WILL I STUDY AND HOW WILL I BE ASSESSED?

The course consists of two exam papers:

Paper 1 – Understanding the modern world

(50% of total mark)

- Section A: Germany 1890 – 1945 democracy and dictatorship. Germany at a time of turbulent change over half a century is the focus for this period, it includes the collapse of the Weimar Republic and the rise and fall of Nazi Germany..
- Section B: wider world depth study: Conflict and tension, 1894-1918. We will study a part of international relations in the 19th and 20th century to understand the complex and diverse interests of the different individuals and states involved.

Paper 2 – Shaping the Nation

(50% of total mark)

- Section A: thematic study: Britain: Health and the People. This thematic study covers 1000 years of History, focusing on public health and medicine in Britain. Key questions consider why change happened

and whether the change brought about progress. We also evaluate the factors such as war, chance, religion, science and technology and their role in these changes.

- Section B: British depth study with the historic environment: Elizabethan England, c1568-1603, including a specific Elizabethan historic site. Often called the 'Golden Age' of England, and a key period for the development of modern Britain, we will study the England that formed Shakespeare. As part of this we will study a specific site and learn how to 'read' the heritage environment using its historical context.

BOARD - AQA

Carol Cook, Head of Humanities

LATIN

WHY STUDY THIS COURSE?

The study of Latin provides students with certain skills and areas of knowledge which may not be immediately obvious. It is a discipline which sharpens the powers of reasoning, memory and observation and gives a deeper understanding of our own language and literature and of related Romance languages such as French, Italian and Spanish. In studying the culture of the Roman world we are looking at the roots of Western culture and in considering the people and events of the past we are dealing with perennial social, political and moral issues.

WHAT WILL I STUDY?

The GCSE course in Latin is well-suited to students who have used the Cambridge Latin Course as their introduction to the language. The aims of this course are two-fold: to teach comprehension of the Latin language to enable students to read and appreciate Latin literature: secondly, to develop an understanding of the content, style and values of Roman civilization. In practical terms this means that preparation for the GCSE examination can be divided into three related areas: language, literature and cultural background. Preparation for these three areas will take the following form:

Language – You will continue to develop your knowledge of Latin grammar and syntax initially by working through Book 3 of the Cambridge Latin Course. At the same time, a detailed revision of the language points already covered in the first two years of Latin will be undertaken. This will ensure that you will have covered all the language work necessary for GCSE at least twice by the time of the examination. Practice will also be given in translating and answering comprehension questions on unseen passages of Latin. Finally, you will continue to learn vocabulary on a regular basis.

Literature – During the first year of the GCSE course you will gradually be introduced to original Latin literature and will begin to learn to appreciate and make a personal response to such literature. This will lead on to the detailed study of set extracts (prose and/or verse) from Latin authors. A substantial amount of assistance will be given with vocabulary and with grammatical constructions so that your enjoyment of the content is not diminished by endeavours to come to grips with the meaning.

Cultural background – You will consolidate your knowledge of various aspects of the classical world by close examination of the set texts and preparations for the Roman literature and Culture examination. You will study original sources on two

aspects of Roman life for questions based on topics such as entertainment, Roman Britain and Roman myths and beliefs.

HOW WILL I BE ASSESSED?

The assessment of skills acquired is by examination only i.e. there is no assessed coursework. The examination will consist of three short papers and you will be required to complete the following tasks:

- To translate and answer comprehension questions in English on passages of unseen Latin.
- To translate and answer comprehension questions in English on sections of the set extracts of literature which have been studied in detail previously.
- To answer questions in English on sources that you have studied previously.

NB. You will not be required to translate from English into Latin.

BOARD - OCR

Matthew Adams, Head of Classics

MUSIC

WHY STUDY THIS COURSE?

GCSE Music is available to any pupils who wish to take their understanding and enjoyment of the subject to a higher level.

WHAT WILL I STUDY?

The Eduqas music GCSE course encourages an integrated approach to the three distinct disciplines of performing, composing and appraising through four interrelated areas of study. The four areas of study are designed to develop knowledge and understanding of music through the study of a variety of genres and styles in a wider context.

HOW WILL I BE ASSESSED?

There is an emphasis on performing and composing, reflected in the 60% weighting for these two components in the specification. Candidates must perform a minimum of two pieces, one of which must be an ensemble performance, the other(s) may be either solo and/or ensemble.

They may record performances at any stage in the course and submit their preferred pieces for assessment at the end. The standard of the pieces should be broadly equivalent to Grade 3 of the graded music examination boards, such as ABRSM, Trinity, LCME.

Candidates submit two compositions, one of which must be in response to a brief set by the exam board. The second is a free composition for which learners set their own brief.

The final element of GCSE Music is the Appraising exam. This consists of eight questions, divided equally across the four areas of study:

1. Musical Forms and Devices
2. Music For Ensemble
3. Film Music
4. Popular Music

Two of the questions are on the two appealing set works covered during the course – a short piece of music for flute and strings ('Badinerie' by J.S. Bach) and a pop song ('Africa' by Toto).

Summary of topics and scheme of assessment

Component 1	Performing	30% of the total marks
Component 2	Composing	30% of the total marks
Component 3	Appraising	40% of the total marks

Further information can be found at: <https://www.eduqas.co.uk/qualifications/music-gcse/>

BOARD - Eduqas

Andrew Passmore, Director of Music

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

WHY STUDY THIS COURSE?

Academic PE is recognised as a Science both at GCSE and A Level. It is a varied, challenging course requiring academic ability, sporting success and a keen interest in the world of sport and exercise. The course compliments Biology, Psychology and History.

The GCSE PE course offers a broad range of topics including anatomy and physiology, sports psychology, physical training and health, fitness and wellbeing. The course develops a wide range of study skills, requiring the ability to describe anatomical structures to analysing sport psychology theorems. The course is varied and exciting and demands any student to be commitment and resilience.

The course provides pathways into a number of possible careers from Medicine; Dentistry Physiotherapy; Sports Marketing; PR and Journalism; Sport Psychology; Teaching; Coaching and Childcare.

WHAT ELSE IS EXPECTED IN GCSE PE?

In order to gain the best results, it is expected that you will participate in all Games activities within school and at least one competitive sport outside of school. In addition we would expect you to take on an active role as a sports ambassador in school. This may involve leading training sessions, umpiring matches, being a member of the school sports council and being sports team captains. Students will be assessed on their practical performance in three sporting activities and in order to gain the highest marks possible, they must be effective, proficient and regular competitions in these sports.

HOW WILL I BE ASSESSED?

- 2 written exams of 1hr 15mins each
- Both sat at the end of Year 11
- Each worth 30% of the overall GCSE
- Practical performance in three different physical activity areas worth 30%
- Analysis and evaluation coursework worth 10%

WHAT DO I NEED TO DO TO JOIN?

To join the course, it is desirable to be studying double or triple GCSE Science and it is vital that you are regularly competing outside of school in at least one sporting activity. You must have a keen interest in sport and be prepared to study a diverse course covering in-depth physiological concepts, psychological theories and socio-cultural issues in sport and exercise.

WHERE COULD IT LEAD?

PE is a recognised science and supports other subjects on the road to Medicine, Dentistry, Physiotherapy and Exercise Science degrees, to name a few. It also adds breadth to any application form as GCSE PE students must show commitment and dedication to competitive sport as well as their academic studies. Sport itself will strengthen any application form and the GCSE PE course adds academic rigour to these talents.

BOARD - AQA

Fiona Newman, Director of Sport

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

WHY STUDY THIS COURSE?

Religious Studies is one of the fastest growing GCSE courses. It will provide a good awareness and understanding of contemporary moral issues as well as religious beliefs and practices.

Christianity and Islam are the chosen religions for this course and it is essential, given the current world climate, that people living in the modern world are well informed. Other major world religions are studied in selected topics. The philosophy element of the course enhances skills and complements work in many other subjects and nurtures your ability to think creatively and flexibly.

Religious Studies also helps to prepare you for life in the wider world. Moreover, it creates an ideal springboard if you intend to study Ethics, Law, Philosophy, Politics, Economics, Medicine, as well as Religious Studies and Theology at A Level and beyond.

- Component 2 – Written examination: 1 hour 45 minutes – 50% of the GCSE

BOARD - AQA

Carol Cook, Head of Humanities

WHAT WILL I STUDY?

Component 1:

The Study of religions: beliefs, teaching and practices

Christianity

- Beliefs and teachings: the nature of God, creation, the afterlife and Jesus Christ and salvation.
- Practices: worship and festivals, the role of the Church in the local and worldwide community.

Islam

- Beliefs and teachings: key beliefs, the oneness of God, predestination, authority.
- Practices: worship, duties and festivals.

Component 2:

Thematic Studies

- Theme A: Relationships and families
- Theme B: Religion and life
- Theme C: The existence of God and revelation
- Theme D: Religion, peace and conflict
- Theme E: Religion, crime and punishment
- Theme F: Religion, human rights and social justice

HOW WILL I BE ASSESSED?

There will be two examinations in the Summer Term of S11:

- Component 1 – Written examination: 1 hour 45 minutes – 50% of the GCSE

PERSONAL, SOCIAL, HEALTH AND ECONOMIC EDUCATION

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

Social justice and well-being underpin the PSHE curriculum at The Mount School, which takes place in lessons and Form Time. As PSHE is statutory under the National Curriculum we have as an independent school, the opportunity to do something radical with our delivery of this far-reaching subject. Placing social justice and well-being at its heart shifts the focus away from information-gathering and the 'cautionary tale' approach to place the emphasis on an awareness of the mind and how it works, and the acquisition of skills to make life choices, big or small. It is not just about having all the information around an issue, but primarily about the ability to make an informed decision. It is the consciousness of how our decision-making processes work which will ultimately help us to be experts in looking after ourselves.

The programme begins with study and revision skills for all year groups, so that pupils are supported in their learning from the start of the academic year. The PeaceJam Anti-bullying Curriculum is embedded in year groups 7 -11, as are specific and tailored social, moral, spiritual and cultural elements from 'sewing the seeds' in Year 7 to full fruition in College 2. Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) is explored in all year groups to an age appropriate level (see RSE 7-11 Overview), and also includes online safety in conjunction with the separate specialist teaching of ICT. Careers advice increases in significance and emphasis in each year group. Financial topics are also explored with increasing complexity throughout the age groups. CPR is undertaken with all year groups.

YEAR 10

PSHE in Year 10 develops many of the themes found in Years 7 to 9, such as healthy lifestyles and stress management, SMARTER goals, and active listening skills, and moves into areas of conflict resolution, compassion focussed therapy (CFT), and de-stigmatising counselling.

The PeaceJam Curriculum is integrated with a case study on Desmond Tutu and focuses on identity and difference. Careers occupies much more time at this point, and forms of discrimination are examined; Finance also increases in complexity. Study skills are fostered, and self-defence is brought to the pupils from an expert external practitioner.

YEAR 11

In Year 11 Careers takes a dominant place in PSHE, with Work Experience being a key component, as well as an emphasis on developing research skills. Presentation skills with regard to written, oral, aural and image are discussed and evaluated. Revision skills and exam techniques are explored. Stress management, mindfulness and CFT play a role, as again does Finance.

CAREERS & WORK EXPERIENCE

CAREERS EDUCATION AND GUIDANCE

Developments in learning and the world of work make it essential for you to take an active role in your preparation for a fulfilling career and laying down good foundations for the future. In Years 10 and 11, our Careers programme emphasises individual participation and is based on three aims:

- That you understand yourself and recognise your strengths and talents, and then by using self-assessments and individual research you set goals and targets and develop your skillset.
- That you investigate the vast opportunities available in learning and the changing world of work
- That you are well equipped to make successful choices and to make and adjust plans to manage change and transition.

We have access to a wide range of up-to-date resources and materials which you are encouraged to use regularly. In addition, students in all year groups are able to make an appointment to discuss any aspect of Careers Guidance.

WORK EXPERIENCE

Work experience is a valuable part of the broad education we provide and is invariably found to be a most rewarding and maturing experience. At the end of your time in Year 11, after your GCSE examinations, you will have the opportunity to complete a two-week period of work experience.

This is designed not only to develop your knowledge and understanding of the world of work, but also to help you to think about the qualities and skills which you might need to develop for a particular area of work or study. Increasingly nowadays, a portfolio of work experience is a vital requirement as evidence of employability skills.

The majority of Mount girls obtain their work placement through the North Yorkshire Business and Education Partnership scheme. Some recent examples of work experience undertaken by Year 11 include: banking and insurance, sport and leisure, local radio and television, architecture and interior design, theatre and the arts, as well as in local university science and psychology departments. Work experience preparation and CV creation are incorporated in the Year 11 Careers programme.

James Waddington, Head of Careers

CONTACT

If you have any further questions regarding the information within this booklet or require further help please contact James Waddington, Deputy Head (Senior)

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