



**Harris** Science Academy  
East London

Helping all children to become  
leaders in their chosen field.

# Year 9 GCSE Specialisms booklet 2024-2025

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## Introduction from Principal

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Dear Year 9 students and parents,


Key Stage 4 is a defining period of your education. Students are now some ways from primary school and the focus shifts to considering various 'end points'. What happens at the end of Key Stage 4 can have a material impact on the number of choices available in the next Key Stage and later in life. Put simply, **GCSE results matter**.

1. Students who aspire to attend the best post 16 providers and best universities will need to ensure their GCSE grades place them amongst the highest performing in the country. They will need an average grade of at least '7' across their best 8 subjects to secure places at the best post 16 providers.
2. Students typically need an average grade of at least '6' across their best 8 subjects to comfortably secure their place on A Level courses.
3. Students will need an average grade of at least '5' across their best 8 subjects to secure places on competitive BTEC and academic vocational courses.
4. Students who do not secure a grade '4' in English and Mathematics will be required to re-sit this examination until they are 18 or until they secure it. A grade 4 in English and Mathematics is now a typical requirement in most jobs and on all apprenticeship programmes.

The Key Stage 4 curriculum at HSAEL is distinctive and is based on what other very high performing schools do. As a result of changes to our Key Stage 4 curriculum over time, **HSAEL is the 24th fastest improving school in the UK and the most improved school in Newham and Tower Hamlets**. Our results now outperform all local schools, and the results for disadvantaged students at HSAEL are now in the top 12.5% nationally. *What we do here works*.

We guide students and parents through the Key Stage 4 transition process carefully, with lots of opportunities to ask questions along the way. I appreciate that these choices can feel stressful, but your child's teachers are here to support them. I hope this guide provides a helpful source of information which you can refer back to over the coming months.

Yours Faithfully,



D MacPherson

Principal

## Personal Development and Careers at Key Stage 4

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At HSAEL, for children to become leaders in their chosen field, they will need much more than good exam results. Their qualifications will get them to the door of great opportunities, but the skills and experiences they accrue throughout their adolescence will mean they can have a positive change on their life and their community.

**By the time students finish KS4 at HSAEL they will:**

- Visit art galleries and museum.
- Have encounters with apprenticeship providers and post 16 colleges.
- Visit universities.
- Take part in Jack Petchey Speak Out Programme.
- Raise money for charity and engage in community projects.
- Complete their Silver and Gold Duke of Edinburgh.
- Engage in debating and public speaking opportunities.
- Complete 1 week of work experience.

### Careers Programme

The aim of Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance at Harris Science Academy East London is to ensure that students who study here are exceptionally well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment, and go on to be successful leaders in their chosen field.

### KS4 Careers Timeline

<b>Autumn (Year 10)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Leadership development time</li> <li>aspiration goal setting</li> </ul>	<b>Summer (Year 10)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Work experience</li> <li>- Post 16 Taster Day</li> <li>- HSAEL Careers Fair</li> </ul>
<b>Autumn/Spring (Year 11)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Post 16 application support</li> <li>- HSAEL Sixth Form Open Evening</li> </ul>	<b>August (Year 11)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Post 16/Next steps support</li> <li>- HSAEL Sixth Form Enrolment</li> </ul>

Further information on the careers program can be found on the **community bulletin** and the **careers hub** on MS Teams.

You can contact the careers team for further support via email:

[careers@harrisscienceeastlondon.org.uk](mailto:careers@harrisscienceeastlondon.org.uk)

## Key Stage 4 Curriculum

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The Key Stage 4 curriculum is made up of 4 components. Each component contributes to provision that will help your child secure the qualifications and develop the character to become a leader in their chosen field.

**Core  
curriculum**

**Character  
Curriculum**

**Leadership  
Pathways**

**Specialisms**

### Core Curriculum

In Year 10 and Year 11, all students continue to study English, mathematics, and science. Students prepare for two qualifications in English, GCSE English Language and GCSE English Literature, one qualification in mathematics and two qualifications in science, GCSE Combined Science (Trilogy). Students continue to study all three sciences to the end of Year 11 and the GCSE Combined Science course includes two examinations in each of biology, physics, and chemistry. Students can choose to study Separate Sciences as their specialism. In line with the requirements of the national curriculum, all students will continue to study Religious Studies and will be entered for a GCSE qualification in this subject.



### Character curriculum

The Character Curriculum at Key Stage 4 has 3 parts:

- **Leadership Development time.** This focusses on ensuring students know and understand British values, how to build and maintain healthy relationships, develop financial literacy and have an aspirational career plan.
- **PE lessons.** The focus in compulsory PE lessons is to ensure students understand how to lead an active and healthy lifestyle and appreciate the physical and psychological benefits of regular exercise.
- **Club attendance.** Key Stage 4 students are expected to participate, as a minimum, in the club that is linked to their specialism so that they can explore its application outside the classroom and can explore their learning at greater depth.



## Leadership Pathways

In order for students to develop the knowledge and skills to be a leader of the future, we believe that all students should study subjects that will help them play an active role in society. Students make a preference for one of the below pathways:

Languages Pathway	Citizenship Pathway
Students will continue to study French to build an international perspective and develop their communication skills.	Students will study Citizenship, which will help them to develop their understanding of society and the world.
Students will choose between either history or geography to develop their understanding of society and the world.	Students will sit the examination for this subject at the end of Year 10 and receive additional support in the core curriculum in Year 11.

Your child's teachers will work with you to review their preferences and ensure that their pathway gives them the maximum number of opportunities in the future.



## Specialisms\*

Students will rank their preferences of the subjects they are passionate about and wish to 'specialise' in. Experience and results produced in very high performing schools shows that success in these subjects requires significant commitment and time outside of lessons. Studying too many of these subjects together can mean that students do not have sufficient time to excel in them. This is why students specialise in one subject at HSAEL.

### Specialisms for 2025-2026:

- Triple Science
- Computer Science
- Design and Technology
- Art, Craft and Design
- Latin
- Classical Civilization
- Music

- Drama
- History (for students who have chosen geography in the Languages Pathway or students in the Citizenship Pathway)
- Physical Education
- Citizenship (for students in the Languages pathway)

\*Every effort is made to give students their first preference specialism. However, given the size of the Year 10 cohort for 2025-2026, courses must reach a viable number of students to run and so students may be allocated their second or third preference.

### Key Stage 4 Timetable

Subject	Lessons per fortnight
English	9
Mathematics	8
Combined Science	8
French and History/ Geography Or Citizenship	10
Religious Studies	5
Specialist Subject	6
Leadership Development Time	2
PE	2



## GCSE Core Subjects

### ENGLISH

**Why this subject is important:** Studying English Literature and Language at GCSE is essential for developing strong communication, analytical, and critical thinking skills. These subjects provide students with a deeper understanding of language, literature, and how they shape the world around us. English Literature fosters an appreciation of classic and contemporary texts, encouraging empathy and cultural awareness. English Language, on the other hand, equips students with the skills to write clearly, effectively, and persuasively, which are valuable in every aspect of life. Both subjects enhance reading, writing, and speaking abilities, preparing students for a wide range of careers and further education opportunities. Beyond this, they support the development of creativity, self-expression, and the ability to interpret complex ideas, all of which are crucial in today's globalised society. A strong foundation in English is fundamental for success in virtually all disciplines and future endeavours.

#### Assessment Details:

Assessment details:	
Exam Board	AQA
QAN Code	Language: 601/4292/3 Literature: 601/4447/6
Assessment structure	<b>Language GCSE:</b> Language Paper 1 (1 hour 45 minutes) Language Paper 2 (1 hour 45 minutes) <b>Literature GCSE:</b> Literature Paper 1 (1 hour 45 minutes) Literature Paper 2 (2 hours 15 minutes) <b>Non-exam assessment:</b> Speaking and Listening

#### Entry Requirements:

Core subject – N/A

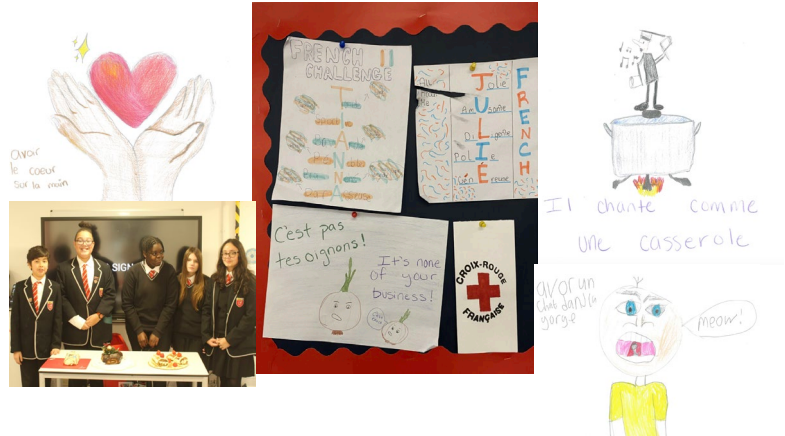


## FRENCH

**Why Study French:** "The limits of my language mean the limits of my world" - Ludwig Wittgenstein

Studying French, or any Modern Foreign Language (MFL), in secondary school offers a range of benefits that go beyond language acquisition. First, learning French improves cognitive abilities, enhancing problem-solving, memory, and multitasking skills. This means that studying French will improve your performance in your other GCSE subjects.

Additionally, French exposes students to a vibrant cultural heritage, including history, literature, and art, enriching their worldviews and helping them develop greater empathy.



Mastering French also enhances future career prospects, as bilingualism is highly sought after by employers in industries such as business, communications, marketing, diplomacy, tourism, government and international relations, education, and translation. Being bilingual also gives you a competitive edge in industries like finance, healthcare, journalism, and technology, where cross-cultural communication and international collaboration are increasingly important. Moreover, being fluent in French opens up opportunities for travel and cross-cultural communication, both personally and professionally. Ultimately, studying French equips students with valuable life skills, broadens their horizons, and strengthens their prospects in an increasingly globalized world.

### Assessment Details:

Exam Board	Edexcel	
QAN Code	610/2718/2	
Assessment Structure	Paper 1 – Speaking Paper 2 – Listening and understanding	Paper 3 – Reading and understanding Paper 4 Writing

### Entry Requirements:

All HSAEL students will continue in French

## MATHS

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**Why this subject is important:** Mathematics is the foundation of understanding the world around us. It sharpens your ability to think logically, solve problems creatively, and make informed decisions—skills that are essential not only for academic success but for navigating life with confidence.

Through GCSE Mathematics, you will explore a wide range of concepts, from mastering algebra and geometry to uncovering the patterns behind statistics and probability. It's not just about learning formulas—it's about developing the resilience to tackle challenges and the precision to approach problems systematically.

As a core subject, Mathematics is the backbone of countless career pathways, from science and engineering to finance and technology. Beyond academic and professional opportunities, it equips students with the practical skills needed for informed decision-making in everyday life.

GCSE Mathematics isn't just a subject—it's a foundation for success, both now and in the future.

### **Assessment Details:**

Exam Board	AQA
QAN Code	601/4608/4
Assessment Structure	3 x 80 mark/ 90 min exams (1 Non calculator, 2 calculator papers)

## RELIGIOUS STUDIES

GCSE Religious Studies offers students the opportunity to explore some of the most fundamental questions about belief, life, morality and worldviews. This course will challenge you to engage with different belief systems and ethical arguments, deconstruct them and critically assess them. You will have plenty of opportunities to discuss some of the most relevant and engaging questions – e.g. Is war ever justified? Why does society punish criminals? What is the purpose of marriage? By debating such issues, you will develop your sense of compassion, tolerance and responsibility and you will be equipped to engage in civil debate and shape the future in a professional, empathetic and respectful manner. Furthermore, this course will also provide you with an opportunity to reflect on your own beliefs and values and add meaning to your view of the world.

This course prepares you well for communicating and working effectively with people from different backgrounds, which is extremely important in our increasingly diverse society. It also helps you develop analysis, critical thinking and essay-writing skills which will open the doors for a range of different careers, including law, politics, journalism, education, and social work.

### Assessment Details:

Exam Board	AQA	
QAN Code	601/8400/0	
Assessment Structure	Paper 1 – Christianity Beliefs and Practices + Islam Beliefs and Practices Total marks: 102 Time: 1h 45 minutes	Paper 2 – Thematic Studies Theme A Theme D Theme E Theme F Total marks: 102 Time: 1h 45 minutes

### Entry Requirements:

n/a

## Subject Specialisms

### ART

**Why chose Fine Art:** Embark on a visual odyssey with AQA's GCSE in Fine Art! AQA's unique approach blends technical mastery with expressive freedom, encouraging students to explore various mediums and techniques, from painting and sculpture to digital art.

Immerse yourself in the vibrant world of AQA's Fine Art GCSE, where personal expression is celebrated and artistic skills are honed. The course not only develops your artistic prowess but also opens doors to diverse career paths. From gallery curation and art education to graphic design and illustration, the skills cultivated in this course lay the foundation for a myriad of creative professions. Choose AQA Fine Art GCSE and unleash your artistic potential while charting a course toward a future where your creativity becomes your greatest asset.

#### Assessment Details:

Exam Board	AQA
QAN Code	60180882
Assessment Structure	Coursework ONLY

#### Entry Requirements:

N/A

## CITIZENSHIP

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**Why chose Citizenship?** Learn about the society you are about to enter into when you leave HSAEL! GCSE Citizenship teaches our about the make up of modern Britain, how the Houses of Parliament and justice systems works alongside learning about how to influence our government and Britain's place in the world.

GCSE Citizenship offers a range of valuable skills that can help students understand and engage with the world around them. Here are some of the key skills developed through studying this subject:

**Critical Thinking:** Students learn to assess issues from different perspectives, analysing information critically, and making well-informed judgments on social, political, and ethical issues.

**Debate and Argumentation:** Citizenship encourages students to present their views clearly and confidently, while also considering the views of others. It helps in developing strong reasoning and argumentation skills, which are valuable in any field.

**Problem-Solving:** The course focuses on real-world issues, teaching students to identify problems in society and consider possible solutions. This develops practical problem-solving abilities.

**Empathy and Understanding:** Citizenship promotes an understanding of diverse perspectives and experiences, encouraging students to think about the impact of issues on different groups and individuals.

**Global Awareness:** The course also explores international issues, which helps students gain a broader understanding of global citizenship, human rights, and international relations.

These skills are useful not only in academic settings but also in future careers, as well as in becoming an informed and active participant in society.

The subject is particularly suited to those who wish to go on to further study in A-Level Law and Government and Politics.

### Assessment Details:

Exam Board	Edexcel
QAN Code	601/4791/5
Assessment Structure	Paper 1 – Theme A, B and C + Unseen Debates in Citizenship Paper 2- Citizenship Action Project + Theme D + Unseen Debates in Citizenship Total marks: 102 / Time: 1h 45 minutes



## CLASSICAL CIVILISATION

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**Why chose Classical Civilisation:** Embark on a captivating exploration of the ancient world with OCR's GCSE in Classical Civilisation! This course invites students to unravel the rich tapestry of Greco-Roman history, literature, and culture. Dive into fascinating myths, delve into the political intrigues of ancient civilizations, and unlock the secrets of enduring classical masterpieces.

Discover the unique content offered by OCR, where the study of Classical Civilisation provides a holistic understanding of the foundations of Western thought. From epic tales of gods and heroes to the examination of historical events, this course offers a comprehensive perspective on classical societies.

Choosing GCSE Classical Civilisation not only fosters critical thinking and analytical skills but also opens doors to careers in archaeology, academia, museum curation, and beyond. Immerse yourself in the ancient world and choose OCR's Classical Civilisation GCSE to embark on a scholarly journey with timeless relevance.

### Assessment Details:

Exam Board	OCR
QAN Code	60181230
Assessment Structure	2x 90 mark/ 90 min exam

### Entry Requirements:

Performing at a grade 5 in Classical Civilisation

## COMMUNITY LANGUAGES

**Do you speak another language at home?** Speaking to a man in his language is like giving him a piece of your heart." - Nelson Mandela. Do you want an easy GCSE grade?

If you speak another language at home, taking a Community Language GCSE can be a great way to formally recognize and develop your language skills. Whether it's Arabic, Bengali, Polish, Spanish, or any other language, this GCSE allows you to demonstrate your fluency and cultural knowledge. By studying for the Community Language GCSE, you'll improve your reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills in your home language, and gain confidence in using it in a wider context.

This qualification not only boosts your language skills but also enhances your understanding of grammar, vocabulary, and linguistic structures, which can improve your performance in other subjects. It provides a valuable opportunity to showcase your bilingual abilities to future employers, giving you an advantage in a global job market. Fluency in multiple languages is especially sought after in fields such as translation, customer service, international business, and diplomacy.

Taking a Community Language GCSE can also give you a deeper appreciation of your cultural heritage and strengthen your connection to your community. It's a rewarding and practical choice that opens doors to many opportunities, both academically and professional.

### Languages Offered:

AQA : Arabic, Bengali, Gujarati, Hindi, Mandarin, Polish, Punjabi, Turkish, and Urdu

Edexcel : Arabic, Chinese (Mandarin), French , German, Gujarati, Hindi, Italian, Polish, Punjabi. Spanish, and Urdu

### Assessment Details:

Exam Board	Edexcel or AQA depending on language
QAN Code	
Assessment Structure	Paper 1 - Speaking / Paper 3 : Reading and Understanding Paper 2 - Listening and Understanding / Paper 4 : Writing

### Entry Requirements:

**Entry Requirements:** Students must be proficient in language for all four areas of assessment (Speaking, Listening, Reading and Writing), there is no class to improve abilities in the language. All studying is conducted in the library after school or at home with resources provided by exampro and Head of MFL. **The best ways to prepare is practicing with a fluent speaker at home.**

## COMPUTER SCIENCE

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**Why chose Computer Science:** Embark on a transformative journey into the digital realm with OCR's GCSE in Computer Science! This options booklet unveils a world of opportunities for students seeking a dynamic and future-focused curriculum. Delve into coding, algorithms, and problem-solving with OCR's distinct syllabus, designed to cultivate practical skills and ignite creative thinking.

Discover the unique content that sets OCR's Computer Science GCSE apart, such as hands-on programming projects and a nuanced exploration of cutting-edge technologies. From artificial intelligence to cybersecurity, students gain a comprehensive understanding of the tech landscape.

Choosing OCR's Computer Science GCSE not only equips you with essential skills for the digital age but also opens doors to a myriad of careers. Prepare for roles in software development, data analysis, cybersecurity, and beyond. Elevate your academic journey, embrace innovation, and position yourself for a future where technology shapes the world. Choose OCR Computer Science and unlock the potential of tomorrow's digital landscape.

### Assessment Details:

Exam Board	OCR
QAN Code	6018355X
Assessment Structure	2x 80 mark/ 90 min exams.

### Entry Requirements:

Performing at a grade 6 in Maths

## DESIGN & TECHNOLOGY

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**Why chose Design & Technology:** Embark on a creative adventure with the GCSE in Design and Technology, where innovation meets craftsmanship! This options booklet invites students to explore a world of possibilities, cultivating skills that bridge imagination and practicality. Unleash your creativity as you engage in hands-on projects, from product design to prototyping, under the comprehensive curriculum tailored for aspiring designers and technologists.

By choosing Design and Technology, you not only refine your problem-solving abilities but also open doors to diverse career paths. Imagine a future where you shape the world through industrial design, engineering, architecture, or even sustainable product development. From fashion to robotics, the skills honed in this course set the stage for dynamic careers in an ever-evolving global landscape. Embrace the fusion of creativity and technology, and choose GCSE Design and Technology to sculpt a future where your innovative ideas leave an indelible mark.

### Assessment Details:

Exam Board	AQA
QAN Code	603/1133/2
Assessment Structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Written exam: 2 hours, 100 marks, 50% of GCSE</li> <li>• Non- exam assessment (NEA): 30-35 hours approx, 100 marks, 50% of GCSE</li> </ul>

### Entry Requirements:

N/A

## DRAMA

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**Why choose Drama:** Embark on a transformative journey with GCSE Drama, where creativity takes centre stage! This options subject invites students to explore the dynamic world of performance, unlocking the power of storytelling, communication, and self-expression. Delve into the craft of acting, scriptwriting, and theatrical production, honing skills that extend far beyond the stage.

GCSE Drama not only nurtures your artistic flair but also develops essential life skills. Enhance your communication, teamwork, and problem-solving abilities through collaborative projects and live performances. Immerse yourself in the world of characters and narratives, cultivating empathy and self-confidence.

This course opens the curtains to diverse career opportunities, including acting, directing, scriptwriting, event management, and even roles in public speaking or corporate training. Choose GCSE Drama to ignite your passion for the performing arts and build a foundation for a future where creativity and confidence are your greatest assets. Step into the spotlight and embrace the transformative power of drama!

### Assessment Details:

Exam Board	Eduqas
QAN Code	601/8420/6
Assessment Structure	Component 1: Devising (Teacher Assessed) Component 2: Performing from text (Externally assessed) Component 3: Interpreting theatre (Exam)

### Entry Requirements:

Commitment to drama extracurricular activities.



## GEOGRAPHY

**Why chose Geography:** Geography GCSE (OCR) offers a unique blend of physical and human geography, helping students understand the world around them. With topics like climate change, urbanisation, natural disasters, and sustainability, Geography is highly relevant to today's global challenges. It also provides hands-on learning through both a human and physical fieldwork, where students gain practical experience in data collection and analysis. The physical fieldwork will be a trip to Walton-on-the-Naze to look at coastal management and the human fieldtrip will be to Canary Wharf to look at urban deprivation. This engaging, real-world approach develops critical thinking, problem-solving, and communication skills that are valuable across all subjects and in future careers.



Studying Geography opens up a wide range of career opportunities in areas such as environmental consultancy, insurance, journalism, urban planning, and data analysis. It fosters a global perspective, encouraging students to think about different cultures, economies, and environmental issues. Whether you're interested in the environment, global politics, or development, Geography provides a solid foundation for future study and work in an increasingly interconnected world.

### Assessment Details:

Exam Board	OCR
QAN Code	
Assessment Structure: Three papers	Paper 1 – Our Natural World (35%) Paper 2 – People and Society (35%) Paper 3 – Geographical Exploration (30%)

Topics will include: urban futures, UK in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, dynamic development, resource reliance, sustaining ecosystems, climate change, global hazards and distinctive landforms.

### Entry Requirements:

N/A

## HISTORY

**Why chose History:** *"We are not makers of history. We are made by history."* – Martin Luther King Jr.

History is continuously changing; it is more than the study of the past; it is the roadmap to our future.

History has shaped the modern world we live in. In History GCSE, we study historical events which have changed our society for better and worse. From Vicious Vikings, who raided England's shores for glory and treasure, eccentric Elizabethans who invented new kinds of leisure and the Cold War which changed the modern world beyond measure... the study of GCSE history is far from boring.

We believe that at HSAEL that you can change the world. To become the future leaders of this country, the study of GCSE History is essential to equip you with the knowledge and skills to bring about effective change. Apart from studying over 1000 years of fascinating history, this GCSE will equip you with transferable skills for life. They include:

- excellent written communication and writing skills
- the ability to decipher sources (important in an age of misinformation and the spread of 'fake news')
- the ability to construct an argument
- investigation and problem solving
- analytical and interpretation skills
- resilience, as the study of History is an academically rigorous GCSE!

Studying History can lead to some exciting careers in Journalism, Law, Policy, Education, Archaeology, Marketing, Politics and Business.

### Assessment Details:

Exam Board	Edexcel
QAN Code	601/8092/4
Assessment Structure	3 Papers:  Paper 1(30%) – Migrants to Britain c800-present Paper 2 (40%) – Elizabethan England 1558-88 and Superpower Relations and the Cold War 1943-91 Paper 3 (30%) – Weimar and Nazi Germany 1918-39

### Entry Requirements:

N/A

## LATIN

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**Why chose Latin:** Latin GCSE is both stimulating and interesting as it allows you a chance to delve into the exciting world of Gladiators and fantastic storytellers. You will be introduced to vocabulary and grammar that will help you to understand how English has developed. It's also a fantastic choice to complement study of a Modern Foreign Language. You will have opportunities to study first-hand accounts of battles, chariot races and entertainment days in Ancient Rome and will enrich your understanding of language structures.

Throughout the course everyone will study Latin Language and Literature. For Language you will read Latin stories and be able to translate into and from English. You'll also learn to identify a wide range of linguistic features and be able to pick these out of Latin texts. For the Literature element, you will study a range of texts and pictures fitting into themes. You'll be able to discuss writing techniques and talk about the stories told about life in Ancient Rome. You will also learn about Roman Civilisation, the historical study of buildings, pictures, written texts to help you understand how the Romans lived, what they believed in and how their society worked.

### Assessment Details:

Exam Board	Eduqas
QAN Code	601/7811/5
Assessment Structure	1x 100 mark/ 90 min exam & 2x 50 mark/60 min exam

### Entry Requirements:

Performing at a grade 5 in Latin

## MUSIC

**Why choose Music:** "Music education opens doors that help children pass from school into the world around them – a world of work, culture, intellectual activity, and human involvement." - Gerald Ford

Discover the symphony of possibilities with a GCSE in Music! From classical to contemporary, jazz to pop, rock to musical theatre, GCSE Music allows you to explore a huge variety of musical styles and genres. We will learn about different characteristics of music from different time periods and geographical regions and how to describe them. Students will also create their own musical compositions using various kinds of music technology, and receive private lessons from a music specialist on an instrument of their choosing (the cost for these lessons will be covered by the school).

At HSAEL we prepare you to be leaders in your chosen field, and GCSE Music will provide you with a variety of life skills that will allow you to be successful in any career you choose. These include:

- Creative thinking and processing
- Written communication skills in analysis and description
- The importance of practice and dedication in learning a new skill
- Confidence in performing and expressing yourself

Elevate your academic experience, as GCSE Music not only fuels your passion for music but also equips you with versatile skills for a future where the language of music resonates across diverse career paths. Choose the harmony of knowledge and creativity; choose GCSE Music!

### Assessment Details:

Exam Board	Eduquas
QAN Code	601/8131/X
Assessment Structure	Individual Musical Performances - 30% Musical Composition Projects - 30% Exam Paper - 40%

### Entry Requirements:

Enthusiasm for music, willingness to learn an instrument, and excitement for creativity. Previous experience playing an instrument is helpful, but not required.

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION

**Why Choose GCSE Physical Education (AQA)?** GCSE PE is more than just showcasing your practical skills – it's an exciting journey of learning, discovery, and personal growth. Here's why it's the perfect choice for those passionate about sport and physical activity:

**Unlock the Secrets of the Human Body** - Discover Anatomy & Physiology: Explore how your body works, moves, and adapts to exercise.

**Master the Science of Performance** - Learn how to prevent injuries, enhance fitness, and understand the positive impact of exercise on mental and physical health.

**Fascinate Yourself with Real-World Application** - See how knowledge of the human body improves sports performance and overall well-being.

**Build Analytical Skills for Life** - Dive into Elite-Level Sports: Analyse top-level performances and uncover the tactical and strategic elements behind success.

**Evaluate and Improve** - Study the effectiveness of training methods and their influence on performance outcomes.

**Think Critically** - Develop skills to interpret data, draw insights, and form evidence-based arguments.

**Become a Leader in Society** - Understand Sport's Bigger Picture: Explore how sport influences society, from health and inclusion to social and cultural impact.

### Assessment Details:

Exam Board	AQA		
QAN Code			
Assessment Structure	Paper 1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Written Exam (1h 15m)</li> <li>78 marks</li> <li>30% of GCSE</li> </ul>	Paper 2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Written Exam (1h 15m)</li> <li>78 marks</li> <li>30% of GCSE</li> </ul>	Non-exam assessment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assessed by teachers.</li> <li>Moderated by AQA</li> <li>100 marks</li> <li>40% of GCSE</li> </ul>

### Entry Requirements:

- Performing at a grade 5 in science
- Plays sport for a competitive club outside of school.
- Participates fully in PE.



## SEPARATE SCIENCE

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**Why chose Separate Science:** AQA's Separate Science GCSE stands out with its rich and diverse content, ensuring students gain a nuanced understanding of each scientific realm. From the intricacies of cellular biology to the thrilling world of chemical reactions and the laws governing motion and energy, this course equips students with a profound foundation for advanced studies.

Embarking on this scientific voyage not only opens the door to awe-inspiring knowledge but also paves the way for exciting career opportunities. Future biologists, chemists, and physicists will find themselves well-prepared for university-level studies and careers in medicine, research, environmental science, engineering, and beyond. Elevate your academic journey and prepare for a future where your understanding of the sciences can shape the world. Choose AQA Separate Science GCSE and embrace the limitless possibilities of scientific exploration!

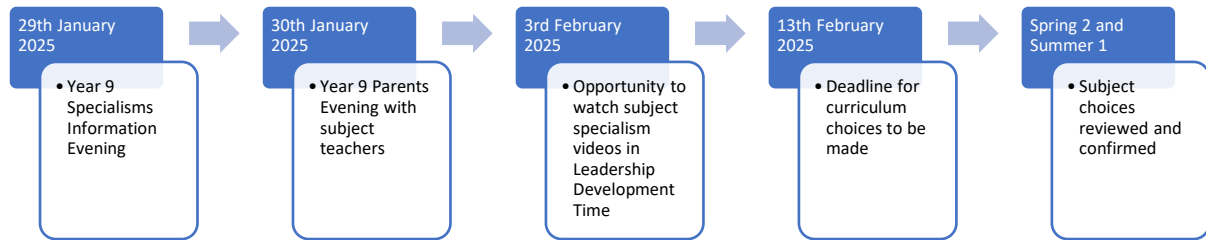
### Assessment Details:

Exam Board	AQA
QAN Code	60187529, 60187578, 60187517
Assessment Structure	6x 100 mark/ 2 hr exams. 2 per subject of Biology Chemistry and Physics.

### Entry Requirements:

Performing at a grade 5 in each Science and Maths

## TIMELINE



Please use the link below to submit your curriculum choices:

<https://tinyurl.com/HSAEL-KS4-Choices>

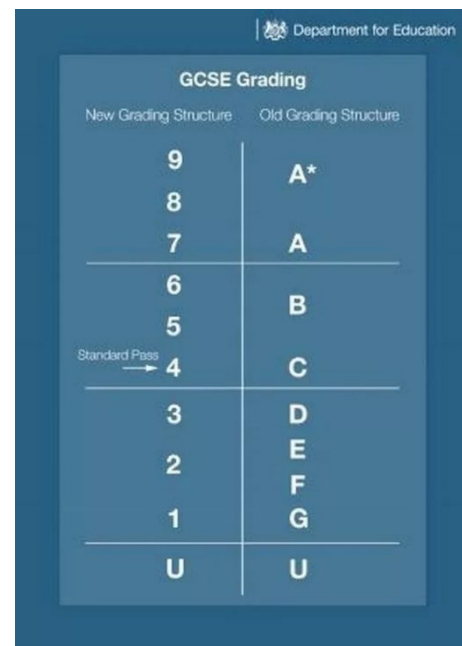
Please follow the link below to view short video introductions to each GCSE subject:

<https://tinyurl.com/3wc2f8aw>

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### 1. How are GCSEs graded?

GCSEs are graded on a 1-9 scale, with grade 9 being the highest and low being the lowest. If you are familiar with the old grading of GCSEs, a conversation table below is provided for your reference. A **standard pass** is a grade 4, with a **strong pass** a grade 5. All students must secure a **standard pass** in GCSE English and mathematics. Students who secure less than a grade 4 in these subjects will be required to re-sit these subjects in Year 12. Students who aspire to entry into the best post 16 courses in Newham should aim to secure grade 7 or above in all their subjects.



New Grading Structure	Old Grading Structure
9	A*
8	
7	A
6	
5	B
4	C
3	D
2	E
1	F
	G
U	U

### 2. What should my child choose if they can't decide on their specialism?

It is important for your child to specialise in something they enjoy. They will secure the best grades in a subject they are passionate about and want to spend time studying for. Students **do not** need to have studied Triple Science in order to continue with sciences for A Level and so should consider the subjects they feel they will secure the highest grades in. Creative subjects like music and art require a significant time commitment, staying after the end of the day for rehearsals and studio time. Students should consider this when making their specialism preferences.

### 3. Why does my child have to do RE?

It is a National Curriculum requirement for all students to study Religious Studies to the end of Key Stage 4. At HSAEL, we meet these requirements by entering all students for the GCSE course, because we believe this qualification gives them the knowledge and skills to understand their place in the world and to develop the compassion required to be a leader.

### 4. What tier of entry will my child do?

In the majority of subjects, there are no tiers of entry. This means that all students sit the same papers. There are foundation and higher tiered papers in **mathematics, science and languages**. Students sitting the foundation tier can secure grades 1-5. Students sitting the higher tier can secure grades 3-9. If students do not secure enough marks to achieve a grade 3 in the higher paper, their result will be **ungraded**. It is, therefore, important to enter students for the tier of entry that will maximise their results. Tiers of entry will be confirmed by the Heads of mathematics, science and MFL by the spring of Year 11.

### 5. What's the difference between PE in the character curriculum and PE as a specialism?

It is a National Curriculum requirement for all students to do physical education as part of their timetable until the Key Stage 4. At HSAEL, we meet these requirements through PE lessons. Students can choose to specialise in PE, which is a separate course for students who participate in sport outside of the Academy, represent a club or show a strong skill in a sport. 70% of this course is theory, and so students should expect to complement their practical PE lessons with the study of anatomy and sports science.

### 6. Can my child trial a subject and then change?

The content of the GCSE courses is taught from the beginning of Year 10, with the first assessments at the end of the autumn term. It is therefore rare for a student to change specialisms once they have started them due to the amount of content they would have missed. Students should use their Year 9 lessons to consider whether they would enjoy studying a subject. Subject teachers can also advise on subject suitability at the Year 9 parent consultation evening.