

A photograph of two male students in school uniforms (blue and white striped shirts and dark ties) looking at a test tube held by a hand. The test tube contains a yellow liquid. The background is a blurred classroom setting with posters on the wall.

GCSE Courses

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Welcome to GCSEs at Sidcot

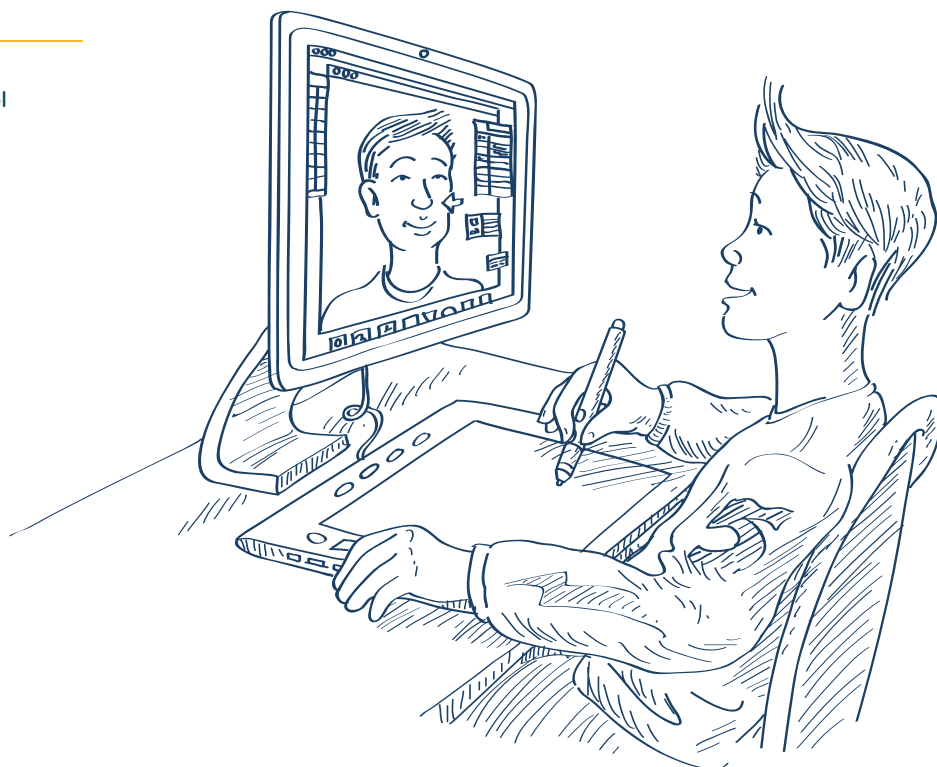
Welcome to the GCSE Course Guide which gives you an insight into what to expect when studying your GCSE's at Sidcot.

We try to ensure a smooth transition from Fourth Form to Fifth Form; entering Key Stage 4 is an exciting time. We make sure that students are supported by our teaching staff and given plenty of opportunity to talk through the GCSE process. We want our students to feel enthusiastic about starting their new studies.

GCSEs are the beginning of a journey that will ultimately take students beyond Sidcot to higher education and the world of work. We want to make sure that each of our students grasp this opportunity and develop a love for learning that will set them up for their future.



James Jones
Head of Sidcot School



Introduction

This is an exciting time in your academic career that will lay the foundation for your further education and future employment. It is also a challenging time that will require reflection and careful contemplation on what you wish to do in the future and which path you choose to reach your destination.

To help you on your journey at Sidcot, we have an excellent range of challenging and stimulating subjects perfectly complemented by a comprehensive extra-curricular programme to provide a broad, diverse and academic education. We have extensive experience in teaching at GCSE level and we achieve excellent results. We believe our GCSE programme provides an excellent preparation for the Sixth Form, leading to university entrance worldwide.

GCSE courses mean a deeper study of your chosen subjects. Success in these courses will depend not only on your ability to work hard in class, but also on your willingness to work independently. Some of the syllabuses demand students assemble a collection of project work and students who are prepared to work hard continuously over two years are rewarded.

One of the most crucial factors in making a success of your courses is the appropriate choice of subjects. You should choose subjects which you enjoy now, because a genuine interest and aptitude for a subject is a great advantage.

If you are currently at Sidcot, you must not base your choices merely upon the personalities of your present teachers, because you may have different teachers in the Fifth Form (Years 10 & 11).

You should carefully read the course outlines in this course guide and you should discuss your proposed choices with your current teachers and your tutor.

If you can, you should also talk to students in the Lower Fifth (Year 10) and Upper Fifth (Year 11), who are already following the courses which interest you.

Another major consideration is your proposed career. Some of you may have made a definite and specific choice of career already, but most students in Upper Fourth (Year 9) will have only a general idea of the type of career they wish to pursue at the end of their studies.

Students' aptitudes and preferences often change, as they become more deeply involved in subjects. So, in general, you should be careful not to close too many avenues at this early stage. You should try to leave room for a change of direction when you have completed your GCSEs.

You will find useful advice in the careers section of this booklet: read this carefully before making any final decisions.

Please note that individual subjects will only run if there is sufficient interest from students.

Some subjects are studied as IGCSEs, which are courses equivalent to GCSEs. They are already used by hundreds of independent schools in the UK.

We recently introduced the BTEC Tech Award in Sport at Sidcot. Tech awards are the same size and rigour as GCSE's, widening learners' option at Key Stage 4. You can find more information on this qualification at the back of this guide.

GCSE Grading System

The UK government introduced a new grading system for GCSEs in 2017. GCSEs are number graded 9 through to 1.

"Broadly the same proportion of students will achieve a grade 4 and above as previously achieved a grade C and above. Broadly the same proportion of students will achieve a grade 7 and above as previously achieved an A and above. For each examination, the top 20 per cent of those who get grade 7 or above will get a grade 9 – the very highest performers." – Ofqual

Making a choice



The GCSE Options Procedure

The Options Procedure starts in the Autumn Term, when Upper Fourth (Year 9) students and their parents are invited to attend our GCSE Options Evening. We then ask our students to participate in an online GCSE 'interests' survey/consultation, which enables us to design our 'option blocks'. We then group subjects together into blocks, from which students must select their GCSE options. In addition, students are given talks by various members of staff to inform them about new subjects. In the meantime, this course guide is issued to students.

All students will study GCSEs in English, Mathematics and Sciences, as well as taking classes in Religious Studies, ICT, careers and sports as a core. Students will then be able to choose up to four more GCSE subjects from the published option blocks. They will be required to submit an online School Options form. Parents should sit with their child to complete this form together. The tutor will then discuss their options with them to ensure they have thought through their choices. The tutor may wish to make some comments or may ask for some

further consultations with parents. Students and parents will also have the opportunity to discuss the students' choices with their teachers at the Year 9 Parents Consultations evening. If students then wish to change their choices, they should inform our Options Team by emailing options@sidcot.org.uk

Students will be encouraged to select a balanced choice of subjects. We recommend that the choice include a more text-based subject, such as History or Geography, as well as a creative/practical subject, and a modern language.

Courses will only be offered if there is sufficient demand from our students. If there are any problems regarding the viability of courses, students will be notified and further discussions will follow. Later changes can only be made in the context of the published option blocks and if a class has space in it.

If at any time in the options process, you or your parents would like more information on any aspect of courses or careers, we will be happy to assist you in any way we can.

Careers education



Careers education and guidance during the GCSE years

During the GCSE years, the Lower and Upper Fifth (Years 10 & 11) are offered a wide range of opportunities to encourage confident decision making regarding their subject choices and to ensure successful career paths beyond school. The opportunities encompass external experience as well as Careers Education lessons within School.

The School Careers programme covers self-awareness, decision making, transition skills and options advice. Employability skills and the future jobs market are also explored.

The Lower Fifth (Year 10) all participate in a Work Enrichment Week, usually towards the end of the Summer Term. Work experience, virtual work experience and/or shadowing are also encouraged in the Fifth and Sixth Forms.

Towards the end of the Lower Fifth, students take part in Morrisby psychometric profiling, which assists further in their Sixth Form and post-school choices as well as providing suitable career suggestions based on individual strengths and characteristics. (For further information, refer to www.morrisby.com).

In the Upper Fifth, students concentrate on the choices available for the next stage, on positive decision making and how to build employability skills. Individual interviews can take place with students to ensure they maximise their GCSE grades and select the most appropriate A Levels or IB courses for their career interests. Careers interviews with the Head of Careers also ensure that students are supported with their career ideas, options at 16+, and with individual careers action planning.

The Careers Office (located in the Trevelyan Library) has an extensive range of resources aimed at assisting students with career and educational choices. The school also has specialist software licenses in place to provide enhanced careers and educational information resources, including Unifrog (specialising in higher education support).

The Fifth Form careers programme leads to a wide ranging Sixth Form programme which prepares students for entry to university and employment. The aims of careers education are to aid decision-making, relevant to individual talents and achievements, and to address the issues experienced by young people joining the world of work with its wide variety of challenges and skill requirements.

Many students will not have a clear idea of what they would like to do when they are older, and if they do these ideas can change over time, this is normal. At this stage it is essential to keep open as many doors as possible. A balanced combination of subjects at GCSE level would be: Mathematics, English, Sciences, a foreign language, a humanities subject and a practical/arts subject.

Chosen subjects could be selected by considering the following:

- Am I likely to be good at these subjects?
- Will I enjoy these subjects?
- By not choosing certain subjects, am I going to close any possible careers doors?
- What skills do I wish to develop?

Virtually all careers are kept open by studying the core five or six subject areas. However, for many, but not all, A Level or IB subjects, it is wise to have studied them at GCSE level. Please note that GCSE Combined Sciences represent a nationally accepted pathway for progression to A Levels in Biology, Chemistry and Physics.

We hope this offers some guidance but please do not hesitate to ask your teachers, tutors and me for advice in your final choice of subjects.

Rowena Hector

Deputy Head – Academic

The Sidcot Learning Wheel

Sidcot's approach to teaching encourages individual thought and exploration, whilst making sure all students have the support they need to grow as individuals with their full range of talents recognised and celebrated. The Learning Wheel links our values to the teaching and learning that goes on throughout the School, everyday.



A&Q: ADVICES AND QUERIES FROM QUAKER SOCIETY OF FRIENDS

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Exam Board: AQA

8202 – Fine Art

8205 – Three Dimensional Design

Students can take both of the above endorsements, if they chose to study Art in two option blocks.

What will I be studying?

The GCSE Art course is very flexible. You can develop a personal artistic style, expressing your own creativity and individualism. You do this based on your own interests, cultural background and choice of media. The course enables you to take responsibility for your artistic development. We offer a sound structure of lessons, specialist teaching, workshop sessions, extra-curricular activities, visits from practising artists and trips to art galleries. You bring to the subject your enthusiasm, commitment and passion.

Depending on the sort of work you choose to do, you might enter for the Fine Art syllabus, which will be based on drawing, print-making and painting or Three-Dimensional Design, which is ceramics and sculpture.

How will I be assessed?

Portfolio of work. Over the course you will build up a portfolio of work. Assessment is based on a complete record of the work that you have done over the course, both final pieces and sketchbooks that show all your thinking and working out. The sketchbooks will include research into art and artists, evidence of experimentation with materials and techniques, evidence of your inspiration, examples of first hand resources, your practice, explorations and experimentations, and how you have thought through your ideas to reach the creation of your finished works. This portfolio of work is 60% of the final mark.

Externally Set Task

The examination paper is issued at the start of the Spring Term of the second year, when you are given several weeks preparation time. As with the portfolio, you use this time to build up a sketchbook of research and development work, which culminates in ten hours of sustained, focused study, spread over two consecutive days. The externally set task is 40% of the final mark.

Is there anything else I need to know about this subject course?

Since all of the work you produce is assessed, you need to work hard right from the start of Lower Fifth. All the work you produce will contribute to your final grade.

Whether you are an excellent draughtsman, or a filmmaker/photographer who is not so keen on drawing, or a ceramicist/sculptor, but not so confident at the written side of things, you can achieve well in this course. Essays are not required, although any notes you do make are useful in describing to your teacher and the assessor how your ideas are progressing, and what your intentions are in your work. At Sidcot, we tend to set broad themes which you respond to in a personal way. We teach you aspects that you individually want to develop, whether this is drawing, painting or printing, or ceramics or digital. It really depends on how and where you want your project to go. The emphasis of the GCSE course is on 'development' and 'process', as well as on the creation of finished work for exhibition. You will be taught techniques and skills, but the emphasis will be on you and your own creativity.

Portfolio of work 60%

Externally set task 40%

Further information

Please contact Johannah Egan
johannah.egan@sidcot.org.uk

Art - Photography

Exam Board: AQA

8206 – Photography: lens-based
and light-based media

What will I be studying?

The Photography GCSE is a chance to explore both the historical and contemporary approach to image making. With advertising, apps and technology developing at a rapid rate, we begin by investigating what creates a successful image, exploring camera techniques and formal elements of design. If you are interested in Art and Design but prefer working with technology, this will be the course for you.

At Sidcot, we tend to set broad themes which you respond to in a personal way. We teach you aspects that you individually want to develop, whether this is editing, darkroom or studio lighting or camera less techniques. It really depends on how and where you want your final project to go. The emphasis of the GCSE course is on 'development' and 'process', as well as on the creation of finished work for exhibition.

You will still have an element of drawing to record your plans for images but they could be called diagrams! Essays are not part of the course requirements but you will need to record research and written annotations explaining your interests and ideas.

How will I be assessed?

The examination paper will be given at the start of the Spring Term of the second year, when students have several weeks of preparation time. As with the portfolio, you use this time to build up a sketchbook of research and development work, which culminates in ten hours of sustained, focused study, spread over two consecutive days. The externally set task is 40% of the final mark.

Is there anything else I need to know about this subject course?

Since all of the work you produce is assessed, you need to work hard right from the start of Lower Fifth. All the work you produce will contribute to your final grade. Sketchbooks can be presented digitally or in books depending on the suitability of presentation for the project.

Portfolio of work 60%
Externally set task 40%

Further information

Please contact Johannah Egan
johannah.egan@sidcot.org.uk

Business Studies

Exam Board: Edexcel

Syllabus Number: 1BS0

What will I be studying?

Topic 1

- Topic 1.1 Enterprise and entrepreneurship
- Topic 1.2 Spotting a business opportunity
- Topic 1.3 Putting a business idea into practice
- Topic 1.4 Making the business effective
- Topic 1.5 Understanding external influences on business

Topic 2

- Topic 2.1 Growing the business
- Topic 2.2 Making marketing decisions
- Topic 2.3 Making operational decisions
- Topic 2.4 Making financial decisions
- Topic 2.5 Making human resource decisions

How will I be assessed?

This IGCSE has two examination papers at the end of the course:

Paper 1: 1 hour 30 minutes – 50%

Written examination consisting of calculations, multiple-choice, short-answer and extended-writing questions. Candidates answer all questions. 90 marks. Externally assessed.

Paper 2: 1 hour 30 minutes – 50%

Written examination consisting of calculations, multiple-choice, short-answer and extended-writing questions. Candidates answer all questions. 90 marks. Externally assessed.

Is there anything else I need to know about this subject course?

Students will need to have a genuine interest in, and be willing to follow the news media with particular reference to business and economics items. There will be an opportunity to set up and run a mini-enterprise during the course.

Examination method

Written exam 100%

Further information

Please contact Alex Lickorish:
alexander.lickorish@sidcot.org.uk

Computer Science

Exam Board: Edexcel

Syllabus Number: 1CP2

Overview

The course gives you a real, in-depth understanding of how computer technology works. You will be familiar with the use of computers and other related technology from your other subjects and elsewhere. However, this course will give you an insight into what goes on in the hardware, including computer programming.

The course provides excellent preparation for higher study and employment in the field of Computer Science. The increasing importance of information technologies means there will be a growing demand for people who are qualified in this area. Students who have taken a GCSE in Computing and who then progress to study the subject at A Level or University will have an advantage over their colleagues who are picking up the subject at these levels.

The course will develop critical thinking, analysis and problem-solving skills through the study of computer programming, giving you a fun and interesting way to develop these skills, which can be transferred to other subjects and even applied in day-to-day life.

The course provides excellent preparation for students who want to study or work in areas that rely on these skills.

What will I be studying?

Unit 1CP2/01

What algorithms are, what they are used for and how they work. Writing programme code. Components of computer systems; ability to construct truth tables, produce logic statements and read and interpret pseudo-code. Understanding of computer networks, the internet and the worldwide web. Emerging trends in computing technologies, the impact of computing on individuals, society and the environment.

Unit 1CP2/02

Applications of computational thinking, what algorithms are, what they are used for and how they work; writing program code. Binary representation, data representation, data storage and compression, encryption and databases.

How will I be assessed?

Unit 1CP2/01 Principles of computer science.
Written paper, 1 hour 40 minutes, 80 marks.
50% of total GCSE marks.

Unit 1CP2/02 Application of computational thinking.
Written paper, 2 hours 50% of total GCSE marks.

Non-Exam Assessment (NEA)
20 hours class time.

Further information

Please contact Matthew Jarman
matthew.jarman@sidcot.org.uk

Design Technology

Exam Board: AQA

Syllabus Number: 8552

What will I be studying?

During this practical and creative course, students will have the opportunity to explore a range of materials using both technological and traditional manufacturing methods. The use of computer-aided design and computer-aided manufacture will be incorporated, using the full range of modern facilities available in the Design and Technology Faculty.

Students will gain a base knowledge of a wide range of material areas, including papers and boards, metal based materials, textile based materials, and electronic and mechanical systems. Students will specialise in wood-based materials and polymer-based materials, gaining more in-depth knowledge of these material areas.

How will I be assessed?

The assessment pattern incorporates the following in a 50% – 50% split between written examination and internally assessed project work.

Written examination

What's assessed?

- Core technical principles
- Specialist technical principles
- Designing and making principles

How it's assessed

Written exam: 2 hours
100 marks
50% of GCSE

Questions

Section A – Core technical principles (20 marks).

A mixture of multiple choice and short answer questions assessing a breadth of technical knowledge and understanding.

Section B – Specialist technical principles (30 marks).

Several short answer questions (2–5 marks) and one extended response to assess a more in depth knowledge of technical principles.

Section C – Designing and making principles (50 marks).

A mixture of short answer and extended response questions including a 12-mark design question.

Non-Exam Assessment (NEA)

What's assessed?

Substantial design and make task. Assessment criteria: Investigating, Designing, Making, Analysing and Evaluating. Students will produce a working prototype and a portfolio of evidence (max 20 pages).

How it's assessed

Non-Exam Assessment (NEA): 30–35 hours approx.
100 marks. 50% of GCSE.

Is there anything else I need to know about this subject course?

This course will appeal to those students who have an interest in any of the following: design, engineering, creativity, problem solving and working practically in a range of materials.

Further information

Please contact Gemma Chapman
gemma.chapman@sidcot.org.uk

Drama

Exam Board: WJEC Eduqas

Syllabus Number: C690QS

What will I be studying?

The WJEC Eduqas GCSE in Drama which we deliver is an exciting, inspiring and practical course. The specification promotes involvement in and enjoyment of Drama, as performers and/or designers. It provides opportunities to attend live theatre performances and to develop skills as informed and thoughtful audience members.

GCSE Drama students are given opportunities to participate in and interpret their own and others' drama and have the option to work practically as performers and/or designers in Components 1 (Devising) and 2 (Scripted).

Students will investigate a practitioner or genre of drama, work collaboratively to develop ideas to communicate meaning and experiment with dramatic conventions, forms and techniques to produce and realise a piece of original theatre. They will also have the opportunity to participate in the performance of an extract from a play text.

Learners will demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of drama, including their ability to interpret texts for performance and analytical evaluate live performance in a written examination. However, the preparation for this assessment, is practical from the perspective of a performer, designer and/or director and we ensure we prepare our students well for the task of explaining how theatre works on paper, taking the play from the page to the stage first, and then back again, transporting readers into a visualisation of candidate's own creative interpretations of the set text's explored and showing how they understand theatre as an audience member.

Is there anything else I need to know about this subject?

This specification builds on subject content which is typically taught at Key Stage 3 and provides a suitable foundation for the study of Drama at A Level. In addition, the specification provides a coherent, satisfying and worthwhile course of study for learners who do not progress to further study in this subject, supporting valuable skills such as collaboration, communication, presentation and confidence.

Examination method

Practical coursework: 60%.

40% Devising (Component 1) Internally marked

20% Scripted extract (Component 2) Externally marked

40% Written exam 'Interpreting Theatre' (taken at the end of Upper Fifth):

Further information

Please contact Ebba Scherer
ebba.scherer@sidcot.org.uk

English Language & Literature

Exam Board: AQA

Syllabus Numbers:

8700 – English Language

8702 – English Literature

What will I be studying?

English Language

All students practice the important skills of English Language which include opportunities for: directed writing, analysis of writers' language choices, summary skills, descriptive and discursive writing. AQA's integrated course allows students to access a wide range of texts studied covering 19th, 20th and 21st century writers. Fiction and non-fiction are probed and students are coached to develop the key skills of analysis, in order that they feel confident exploring language impact. They learn to appreciate how writers employ literary devices to shape meanings and create effects for and upon the reader. Writers are encouraged to practice coherence, clarity and accuracy.

The course culminates in two equally balanced papers, relating reading sources to the topic and theme of writing tasks.

English Literature

A range of writing is analysed to study how writers communicate their ideas about the world and how readers may respond to them. The syllabus develops a critical understanding of the ways in which literary texts are a reflection of, and an exploration of, the human condition. The way context shapes writing is explored through a wide range of genres and texts from 17th, 19th, 20th and 21st century texts. The course culminates in two external exams.

How will I be assessed?

There are two written exams for each qualification. Additionally, for Language, there is a compulsory NEA Speaking and Listening component which is recorded and sent to AQA. Distinction, Merit and Pass grades are awarded.

English Language. 8700

There are 2 exams of 1 hour 45 minutes, each 50% of the final grade.

Paper 1: Explorations in Creative Writing.

- Section A: Reading. One prose extract. 4 questions.
- Section B: Writing. Descriptive or narrative task. 80 marks.

Paper 2: Writers' viewpoints and Perspectives.

- Section A: Reading: Thematically linked fiction and non-fiction texts. 4 Questions.
- Section B: Writing: Discursive writing. 80 marks.

English Literature. 8702

Paper 1: 1 hour 45 minutes. 40%.

- Section A: Shakespeare, Macbeth and others.
- Section B: 19th century novel. 64 marks.

Paper 2: 2 hours 15 minutes. 60%.

- Section A: Modern texts. Set prose or drama texts. An Inspector Calls and others.
- Section B: Poetry AQA Anthology. Poems past and present. Love and relationships. Power and Conflict.
- Section C: Unseen poetry analysis and comparison. 96 marks.

Continued on page 18

English Language & Literature

Is there anything else I need to know about these courses?

All students will sit their exams at the end of Upper Fifth; there are no controlled assessments or coursework pressures. We're enthused by the breadth of texts on the syllabi and confident that freedom from administrative constraints will enrich student creativity and flair. Released teaching time allows us to practise exam timing, essay techniques and consolidate all core skills. Two separate GCSEs are awarded at levels 9-1.

All texts in the exam are unseen. Although there is no award for speaking and listening, there is a non-examined assessment in spoken language and oracy is highly valued by us as a means of rehearsing good ideas and planning responses which emulate the successes of the modelled extracts.

Assessment objectives are shared across all parts of the exam and both subjects. Students benefit from the transferable skills. Students also enjoy the range of texts' for reading stimulus and engage with creative as well as real and relevant contexts.

We value many author and poet visits, theatre trips, competitions and visits to enrich all students' experiences.

Further information

Please contact Kerry Egan
kerry.egan@sidcot.org.uk



Geography

**Exam Board: Cambridge Assessment
International Education**

Syllabus Number: 0976

What will I be studying?

The syllabus aims are to encourage the development of a 'sense of place' and an understanding of relative location on a local, regional and global scale, with an awareness of the characteristics and distribution of a selection of contrasting physical and human environments. This is done by encouraging an understanding of some of the processes affecting the development of such environments, the spatial effects of the ways in which people interact with each other and with their environments, and the development of an understanding of different communities and cultures throughout the world, with an awareness of the contrasting opportunities and constraints presented by different environments.

Students are encouraged to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of a wide range of processes, spatial patterns and interactions, and the importance of scale and changes through time, contributing to the development of physical, economic, social, political and cultural environments and their associated effects on the landscape.

The IGCSE specification places considerable emphasis on skills and analysis, particularly the analysis and interpretation of a wide range of geographical data, including use of maps, and to recognise patterns and deduce relationships through the techniques of observing, collecting, organising and presenting data.

The syllabus allows the opportunity for judgement and decision making in personalised and independent learning; students should be able to reason and make judgements (including evaluation and conclusions), gain aesthetic appreciation of the Earth, as well as an appreciation of the attitudes, values and beliefs of others in cultural, economic, environmental, political and social issues which have a geographical dimension, and develop a willingness to review their own attitudes in the light of new knowledge and experiences, through the processes of decision making within a geographical context.

The key text used for this specification is going to be the 4th edition of the Cambridge IGCSE Geography textbook – published by Hodder.

Fieldwork is carried out in Lower Fifth involving a visit to Burnham-on-Sea. This visit brings geography to life outside the classroom, supports the development of essential field work skills and prepares students for Paper 4; Geographical Investigations which accounts for 28% of the final GCSE grade. The Geography Department also runs international enrichment trips every two years; this year we're going to Rome, Pompeii and Sorrento. These trips are always popular and offer a real opportunity to see Geography in action, experience different cultures and countries and develop good friendships with peers.

Geography

Topics covered in Lower Fifth

Physical Geography - examined in Paper 1

- Changing River Environments
- Changing Coastal Environments
- Changing Ecosystems
- Tectonic Hazards
- Climate Change

When studying impacts within geography these are:

- positive and or negative
- social, economic and environmental
- at a range of scales (local, regional, national, global)

Geographical Investigations - examined in Paper 4

Physical and Human field work is carried out in the summer term of Year 10, in Burnham-on-Sea. The enquiry skills and techniques developed on this trip support the preparation for the Geographical Investigations Paper 4, which is an alternative to coursework.

Topics covered in Upper Fifth

Human Geography - examined in Paper 2

- Changing Populations
- Changing Towns and Cities
- Development
- Changing Economies
- Resource Provision

Students will study examples drawn from a variety of environments and from a wide range of countries at different levels of development. Sustainability is considered across all topic areas.

Why Choose Geography at Sidcot?

- Inspiring, enquiry-led curriculum
- Excellent access to local field sites
- A strong culture of outdoor learning
- Practical skills development and global awareness
- Experienced, supportive teaching staff

Geography gives students the tools to understand the changing world around them—and to shape a more sustainable future.

How will I be assessed?

Paper 1: Physical Geography

(1 hour 45 minutes) 36% 75 marks

Paper 2: Human Geography

(1 hour 45 minutes) 36% 75 marks

Paper 4: Geographical Investigations

(1 hour 30 minutes) 28% 60 marks

Further information

Please contact Claire Meek
claire.meek@sidcot.org.uk

Meet the Geography Team

Miss Claire Meek – Head of Geography

Mr Dave King – Geography Teacher

Mrs Christina French – Geography Teacher

Our passionate and experienced Geography teachers lead a supportive and dynamic learning environment, encouraging students to ask big questions and connect local fieldwork with global challenges.

History

Exam Board: Cambridge Assessment
International Education

Syllabus Number: 0977

What will I be studying?

The course offers students an opportunity to study the major global developments of the 20th century. They will also have the opportunity to look in depth at the history of at least one non-European region. This is an exciting course that prepares students wishing to go on to study the subject at IB or A Level, or simply to develop their understanding of global issues.

The course helps students develop both their historical knowledge and valuable, transferable skills, such as presenting clear and logical arguments and interpreting evidence.

Students are given the opportunity to participate in a four-day visit to Berlin, Germany, in Lower Fifth.

Why study History?

History helps you develop the skills to look beyond the headlines, to ask questions properly, and to express your own opinions.

History trains your mind and teaches you how to think and process information. History students are rounded individuals who develop an understanding of both past and present. The pursuit of historical events and people is fun – a form of time travel.

IGCSE History involves you in empathetic exercises which allow you to appreciate that people in the past were not just 'good' or 'bad', but motivated in complex and inconsistent ways, just like us.

The IGCSE course allows you to understand the modern world and how the past has influenced the present.

How will I be assessed?

There are three papers which are a combination of structured recall questions and source-based questions. There is no coursework.

Paper 1: (40%)

- International relations since 1919 including:
 - > The Treaty of Versailles
 - > Causes of WW2
 - > The Cold War
- The USA 1919–41 including:
 - > The Roaring Twenties
 - > The Wall Street Crash
 - > The New Deal

Paper 2: (33%)

A sourced-based exam paper on a prescribed topic on 20th Century history.

Paper 3: (27%)

The USA 1919–41

Examination method

Written exam 100%

Further information

Please contact Samantha Bowen
samantha.bowen@sidcot.org.uk

Leiths CTH Level 2 Certificate in Culinary Skills

'Exam Board:'
leiths.com



A practical GCSE-style course written and run by Leiths and accredited by the Confederation of Tourism and Hospitality (CTH).

A modern culinary course which will prepare students in Years 10 and 11 for a valuable industry-recognised qualification. The course can also contribute to progression in the Sixth Form at Sidcot. Leiths can also help to secure a wide range of weekend and holiday job opportunities in the restaurant and hospitality sector.

What will I be studying?

The core food preparation skills are taught week by week through a wide variety of seasonal recipes. Students cook every week and quickly gain a thorough working knowledge of a wide range of ingredients and recipes.

Is there anything else I need to know about this subject course?

Example dishes that students will cook include soy glazed salmon, crispy chicken with Dijon mustard sauce, and banana and Rolo melting middle cakes.

Leiths involves additional course/equipment fees, which can be discussed with Faculty staff.

How will I be assessed?

The final grade of Pass (55-69%), Merit (70-84%) or Distinction (85%) is awarded at the end of the course after two 2-hour practical cooking assessments, an online food hygiene and allergen exam and a 20-question theory test.

Further information

Please contact Huw Meredith
huw.meredith@sidcot.org.uk

Mathematics

Exam Board: Edexcel

Syllabus code: 04/Ma1A

What will I be studying;

- Number
- Algebra
- Ratio and Proportion
- Rates of Change
- Geometry and Measures
- Probability
- Statistics
- Differentiation of Polynomials

How will I be assessed

Two exam papers at the end of the course, both are calculator based. There is no controlled assessment in IGCSE Mathematics.

Examinations

Two papers of two hour duration. All topics may be assessed on either paper. There will be a mixture of question styles and question length on both papers that will examine topic knowledge and the ability of students to apply that knowledge and problem solve.

In both papers, questions tend to get more challenging as the student progresses through the paper.

Is there anything else I need to know about this subject course.

This subject is crucial for all students, and we are proud in the Mathematics Faculty that recently all students have gained a grade 4 and higher, and that we have a record of high performing students moving on to success in A Level mathematics and Further Mathematics.

Time is essential in the crucial IGCSE years and it is important that all students arrive at all Mathematics lessons properly equipped. In addition to their fully charged devices, they will need a calculator. We would prefer that students used a Casio FX-85GTCW (available from the library or online) as this is the model that we will be using to model solutions in class.

Additionally, students will need a 30cm ruler, hb or h pencil, eraser, sharpener, protractor and compasses. In addition, a black pen will be needed for some assessed tasks.

Students in the top set will be offered the opportunity to study an additional qualification that extends beyond IGCSE Mathematics.

Examination method

Written exam 100%.

Available grades: Higher 4 – 9
Foundation 1 – 5

Most students will study the Higher course, however some may choose to take the Foundation level assessment where they may find this more beneficial.

Further information

Please contact Andy Cox
andy.cox@sidcot.org.uk

Modern Languages

Exam Board: Edexcel

Syllabus Number (French): 1FR1
Syllabus Number (German): 1GN1
Syllabus Number (Spanish): 1SP1

What will I be studying?

Aims

To encourage students to communicate confidently and coherently in speech and writing. To encourage students to express and develop ideas spontaneously and fluently. To deepen students knowledge about how language works. To develop awareness and understanding of the culture and identity of the country where the language is spoken.

To develop language-learning skills both for immediate use and to prepare students for further study.

Content

The content is defined in terms of six common themes and grammar is developed on an ongoing basis. My personal world, lifestyle and wellbeing, my neighbourhood, media and technology, studying and my future, and travel and tourism.

How will I be assessed?

The skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing are assessed through final examinations at the end of Upper Fifth. There are two levels of entry: foundation and higher.

Paper 1: Speaking

(Internally conducted, externally assessed.
Communicate in the target language through:

- A reading aloud task
- A transactional role play
- A picture description and follow-on conversation

Paper 2: Listening and Understanding - 25%.

Understanding of standard spoken language in a range of settings. Response to multiple-response and short answer open response questions. There is a dictation where each extract is played three times.

Paper 3: Reading

Demonstrate understanding of a text through:

- Questions in English
- Questions in the target language
- Translation into English

Paper 4: Writing - 25%.

Communicate in the written form, express and justify points of view in the target language.

Foundation tier – a picture description task, two open response questions and one translation into the target language.

Higher tier – two extended response questions and one translation into the target language

Is there anything else I need to know about this subject course?

Students need a minimum of one full year's experience learning that language prior to taking GCSE.

All components must be entered in the same tier. Entry can vary as appropriate to the candidate's perceived competence. Grades are awarded using a scale of 1-9.

For Native-Speakers of Russian, Italian, Mandarin and Cantonese, we provide delivery of the Course with specialist Teachers once a week over one year.

Examination method

100% final examination at the end of Upper Fifth.

Further information

Please contact Clare Winchester-Snell
clare.winchestersnell@sidcot.org.uk

Exam Board: AQA

Syllabus code: 8271

What will I be studying?

Component 1: Understanding music

What's assessed?

- Listening
- Contextual understanding

How it's assessed

Exam paper with listening exercises using excerpts of music.

Questions:

Section A: Listening (68 marks).

Section B: Contextual understanding (28 marks).

The exam is 1 hour and 30 minutes. This component is worth 40% of GCSE marks (96 marks in total).

Component 2: Performing music

What's assessed?

- Music performance

How it's assessed

As an instrumentalist and/or vocalist and/or via technology:

Performance 1: Solo performance (36 marks)

Performance 2: Ensemble performance (36 marks).

A minimum of four minutes and a maximum of seven minutes of performance in total is required, of which a minimum of one minute must be the ensemble performance. This component is 30% of GCSE marks.

Non-exam assessment (NEA) will be internally marked by teachers and externally moderated by AQA. Performances must be completed in the year of certification.

Component 3: Composing music

What's assessed?

- Composition

How it's assessed

Composition 1: Composition to a brief (36 marks)

Composition 2: Free composition (36 marks)

A minimum of three minutes and a maximum of four and a half minutes of music in total is required. This component is 30% of GCSE marks. Non-exam assessment (NEA) will be internally marked by teachers and externally moderated by AQA.

Examinations

Written exam 40%.

Coursework 60%

Is there anything else I need to know about this subject course?

This is a new syllabus with completely new areas of study that are appealing and reflect developments in 21st century music, whilst retaining essential subject content. There is a greater practical approach and weighting given to performance and more options including rapping, turntablism and music technology. This is to allow the students to demonstrate their full ability with maximum flexibility.

Throughout the course there will be the opportunity to see and hear live music both within the School day and by visiting venues in and around Bristol.

Further information

Please contact Paul Woolley
paul.woolley@sidcot.org.uk

Religious Studies, Philosophy & Applied Ethics (short course)

Exam Board: OCR

Syllabus code: J125

Please note that this short course is the equivalent to approximately 0.5 GCSE.

Philosophy and Applied Ethics is a living subject which asks big questions and evaluates ethical issues as they evolve within a global context. The course encourages students to explore and evaluate their own beliefs whilst studying Christianity and Islam.

Students begin this course in the Upper Fourth (Year 9) as part of the core curriculum. Students take lessons (off timetable) during the Lower Fifth (Year 10) in order to study the required units of work*. These sessions offer enrichment for more able students and involve a more tutorial teaching approach with philosophical discussion. Exams are taken at the end of Lower Fifth. There is a mock exam in January.

What will I be studying?

Section A

Learners are required to study the beliefs and teachings of:

- Christianity
- Islam

Section B

Learners study the theme 'Relationships and families' within the Christian faith.

Topics include:

Relationships and families, religious teachings about the nature and purpose of families in the 21st century, sex, marriage, cohabitation and divorce. Issues related to the nature and purpose of families;

roles of men and women; equality; gender prejudice and discrimination.

Section C

Dialogue between religious and non-religious beliefs and attitudes in Christianity.

Topics include:

Dialogue within and between religions and non-religious beliefs; how those with religious and non-religious beliefs respond to critiques of their beliefs, including the study of a range of attitudes towards those with different religious views – inclusivist, exclusivist and pluralist approaches.

Is there anything else I need to know about this subject course?

Students are encouraged to follow current affairs and news, listening out for items with religious or cultural relevance in order to enrich and reinforce concepts being studied in lessons. Visitors representing religious and non-religious communities will be invited to deliver presentations in lessons.

Examination method

Written exam 100%

*These off timetable lessons may well coincide with other activities that students are interested in, meaning choices may have to be made regarding students' individual preferences.

Further information

Please contact Mark Van de Poll
mark.vandepoll@sidcot.org.uk

The Sciences

Exam Board: AQA

Syllabus Number (Biology): 8461
Syllabus Number (Chemistry): 8462
Syllabus Number (Physics): 8463
Syllabus Number (Combined Science): 8464

In the Lower and Upper Fifth (Years 10 and 11) all students continue to study each of the Sciences: Biology, Chemistry and Physics. The teaching builds on the foundation of knowledge and skills established in the Third and Fourth Forms (Years 7 to 9) and provides a broad and balanced Science education, which is an important asset in an increasingly technological world.

Combined Science

Most students at Sidcot will take the Combined Science course (worth two GCSEs). Success in this course provides the necessary background for progression to study Biology, Chemistry, Physics or Psychology at A Level or in the IB Diploma in the Sixth Form. There are two periods per week for each subject.

Triple Science

Through the options, students can also choose to study three separate GCSEs in Biology, Chemistry and Physics. These courses have an additional period per week in each of the Sciences, which is needed to cover the extra content. This course gives students who may wish to study science beyond GCSE additional scientific experience. It is a good choice for anyone who enjoys science and wishes to dedicate as much time as possible to this area of study.

What will I be studying?

For both options students study the same topics, with the depth of coverage being greater for Triple Science.

Biology

- Cell biology
- Organisation
- Infection and response
- Bioenergetics
- Homeostasis and response
- Inheritance, variation and evolution
- Ecology

Chemistry

- Atomic structure and the periodic table
- Bonding, structure and the properties of matter
- Quantitative chemistry
- Chemical change
- Energy changes
- The rate and extent of chemical change
- Organic chemistry
- Chemical analysis
- Chemistry of the atmosphere
- Earth's Resources

Physics

- Forces
- Energy
- Waves
- Electricity
- Magnetism and electromagnetism
- Particle model of matter
- Atomic structure
- Space physics

The Sciences

How will I be assessed?

The assessment is through written exams. There is a programme of practical work and this is assessed on the written papers.

Controlled Assessment

There are no controlled assessments, but over the two years of study, students are required to complete a series of experiments which are supplied by the examination board. For Combined Science, there are 16 practicals in total, and for each science of Triple Science, there are eight. The experiments are not assessed, but on the written papers. 15% of the marks are for questions related to experimental work.

Examinations

Combined Science: There will be six exams each of 75 minute duration, with two exams for each science. Each paper will cover different subject content.

Triple Science: For each of the sciences there will be two exams, each lasting 1 hour and 45 minutes. The papers examine different course content.

For Triple Science, the grades for each GCSE will be from 9 down to 1.

For Combined Science, there will be a 17 point grading system from 9-9, 9-8 through to 2-1, 1-1.

Some of the questions will test mathematical skills. For Combined Science, 20% of the questions will be of this type, and for Triple Science, the percentages will be Biology 10%, Chemistry 20% and Physics 30%.

All examinations are at the end of Upper Fifth. Students can sit foundation tier papers which access grades 1 - 5, or higher tier papers for grades 4 - 9.

Is there anything else I need to know about this subject course?

No

Further information

Please contact Tamara Reed
tamara.reed@sidcot.org.uk

Textiles (Art & Design)

Exam Board: OCR

Syllabus code: J174

What will I be studying?

Textiles is an opportunity to look at both garment and fabric design. It could be high fashion, interiors, costume design or installation textiles. Whatever your interests, this course allows you to delve into the highly creative world of soft materials.

The course includes surface pattern decoration, fabric printing and dyeing. We explore many textile techniques to build a comprehensive body of work, both manipulating and creating texture through experimentation. Fabric construction is also developed with felting, weaving, knitting and crochet. Students are taught pattern drafting and garment construction, culminating in the making of a final commercial product of choice.

The course also immerses students into the world of textiles through museum and gallery visits and a yearly trip to Italy to help with fashion knowledge and inspiration. Whatever your passion for fashion, this course will assist in your knowledge of darts, seams, zips and fabrics, a real opportunity to be your own creative force and develop a skill for life.

We concentrate on sketch book studies to build presentation and drawing ability. Students learn fashion illustration techniques to best showcase their creativity and design skills.

Examination method

Coursework 60%, to include sketch book studies and finished textile outcomes.

Controlled Task 40%

How will I be assessed?

The exam is made up of two parts, a 60% coursework element and 40% controlled task from an exam board theme. The qualification is internally marked and externally moderated.

Is there anything else I need to know about this subject course?

This is an exciting course that links directly to our A Level studies to industry. Many of our students have gone on to study at acclaimed Universities such as St Martins, London college of Fashion, Loughborough University, and many more.

Further information

Please contact Donna Ralph
donna.ralph@sidcot.org.uk

English (as a second language)

Exam Board: Cambridge Assessment
International Education

Syllabus Number: 0991

For this course, there is no set list of knowledge that you must learn. Instead, you will study practical communication skills in listening, speaking, reading and writing. You will understand what is implied but not directly stated. You will use a variety of resources to build up your skills in reading and writing and practise writing for different purposes and audiences. You will listen to a range of spoken material, including talks and conversations. You will have conversations on a variety of topics and develop your skills in responding accurately and clearly in different situations.

How will I be assessed?

Examinations: 100% of final mark.

Reading and writing: 2 hours (extended tier),
1 hour 30 minutes (core tier) (60%).

Listening: 50 minutes (extended tier),
40 minutes (core tier) (20%).

Speaking: 10-15 minutes (20%).

Is there anything else I need to know about this subject course?

Unless otherwise advised this is a required course for overseas students whose first language is not English. The course develops reading, writing, listening and speaking skills and benefits students in their wider academic studies. Resources for students are available at:

www.cambridgeinternational.org

Further information

Please contact the Simon Forrester
simon.forrester@sidcot.org.uk

EAL (English as an additional language)

Students whose first language is not English are assessed and may be offered the opportunity to study an IGCSE in English As An Additional Language alongside or instead of first language English GCSE. They may also be offered a programme of individual or small group English lessons, which are put in place to develop their general English language skills and to help them with English for their subjects.

Students who require additional support usually have one 50-minute individual lesson per week and where it is deemed that more than one lesson is required this can be arranged in consultation with parents and/or guardians. The teacher will design an individual programme of work according to the specific language learning needs of each student.

EAL lessons are charged at an hourly rate for individual lessons, with students paying for a block of ten lessons at the start of each term. In some cases, this will need to be supplemented with further payments depending on the number of lessons taught.

EAL Exams

Where appropriate, students are encouraged to enter externally assessed EAL exams, we use the Cambridge Assessment English exams, which are recognised worldwide:

KET for Schools (Key English Test for Schools)

Cambridge FFS (First for Schools)

CAE (Cambridge Advanced English)

Cambridge IGCSE English as a Second Language

These exams test reading, writing, listening and speaking skills, use of English (grammar) and vocabulary.

As these exams are external, they carry a small charge to sit. Please contact us for further details.

Foreign Language Exams

Overseas students may take a GCSE examination at the end of the Upper Fifth in their native language e.g. Chinese, Malay, Indonesian, Russian, Thai and Japanese.

Further information

Please contact the Simon Forrester
simon.forrester@sidcot.org.uk

Tech Award in Sport

Exam Board: Pearson

Syllabus Number: QN: 603/7068/3

Tech awards are the same size and rigour as GCSE's, widening learners' options at Key Stage 4.

Who is this qualification for?

The Pearson BTEC Level 1/Level 2 Tech Award in Sport is ideal for you if you are a student in Year 10 and 11 and would like to find out more about the sport industry. This course allows you to develop knowledge and associated practical skills that can be used when working in the sport industry. The qualification is the same size and level as a GCSE.

Year on year, the sport industry shows continued growth in employment and forecasts suggest this trend will continue. This comes from increased knowledge and understanding of the benefits of regular participation in sport and physical activity. Sport England provides well-documented research of these benefits, including improvements in physical and mental wellbeing, economic development, individual development and social and community development (2020). These contribute significantly to the quality of a person's life and, as such, there is a need to ensure there are sufficient people working in the industry to meet this demand and encourage regular participation in sport and physical activity. There has never been a better time to study sport.

How will I be assessed?

Two year course overview:
60% assessments and 40% exam.

Component 1: Preparing Participants to Take Part in Sport and Physical Activity

30%. Internal Assessment. Externally moderated.

Learners will explore the different types and provision of sport and physical activity available for different types of participants, barriers to participation, and ways to overcome these barriers to increase participation in sport and physical activity. They will also research equipment and technological advances in a chosen sport or physical activity, and how to prepare our bodies for participation in sport and physical activity.

Component 2: Taking Part and Improving Other Participants Sporting Performance

30%. Internal Assessment. Externally Moderated.

Learners will investigate the components of fitness and their effect on performance, take part in practical sport, explore the role of officials in sport and learn to apply methods and sporting drills to improve other participants' sporting performance.

Component 3: Developing Fitness to Improve Other Participants' Performance in Sport and Physical Activity

40%. External exam. Externally marked.

Learners will be introduced to and develop an understanding of the importance of fitness and the different types of fitness for performance in sport and physical activity. They will also develop an understanding of the body and fitness testing.

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Tech Award in Sport

Why choose a BTEC Tech Award in Sport?

The Tech Award is for learners interested in taking a hands-on course alongside their GCSEs that will offer them an insight into what it is like to work in the sector.

The Tech Award gives learners the opportunity to develop sector-specific applied knowledge and skills through realistic vocational contexts. They will explore the different types and providers of sport and physical activity, as well as the equipment and technology available. Building on this, they will look at individuals' differing needs, to gain an understanding of how to increase participation in sport while further developing their knowledge and understanding of anatomy and physiology in a contextualised way. They will then apply their knowledge and skills to planning and delivering sports activity sessions for participants in practical sessions.

In addition, this qualification enables learners to develop sector-specific skills, such as sports analysis and sports leadership, as well as personal skills, including communication, planning, time management, and teamwork, through a practical and skills-based approach to learning and assessment.

The internally assessed components are task-based and largely practical, allowing learners to demonstrate their skills and ability – and their understanding of the theoretical content – in a way that suits them.

This course builds on and uses the knowledge and skills from GCSEs. It can be complementary learning for GCSEs in Business and Biology. Successful completion of this course opens up progression to A Levels or the study of a vocational qualification at Level 3, such as a BTEC National in Sport, which we offer in the Sixth Form

Further information

Please contact Immy Mills
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