

**CHOICE OF G.C.S.E.
COURSES
2008**

Bloxham School

INTRODUCTION

All pupils follow broadly the same curriculum in the Third Form. However, before embarking on the two-year GCSE course pupils have the opportunity to choose to do certain subjects in three option blocks. The aim of this booklet is to describe all the courses followed in the Fourth and Fifth Forms and to explain the procedure for making the necessary choices.

The National Curriculum

We have developed our curriculum to take account of national changes whilst retaining flexibility and choice in our option blocks.

All pupils will study

Religious Education	2 periods per week
English	6 periods per week
Mathematics	5 periods per week
French	5 periods per week
Science	9 periods per week
Physical Education	1 period per week

There are then three option blocks. Pupils study **one** subject from each block. All blocks are taught for four periods per week.

Block 1
Business Studies
Geography
History

Block 2
Art
Geography
German
Latin
Music
Spanish

Block 3
Art
Design & Technology
Electronics
History
Music
Textiles Technology

Procedure for choosing subjects

We are anxious to ensure that the decision to study a subject is taken after careful thought and consultation. The most important event is the Third Form Parents' Meeting at 7.00 p.m. on Sunday 10th February, when you will have an opportunity to consult those who teach your son/daughter. Housemasters and Housemistresses will also be present at this meeting. The form at the back of this booklet must be returned to Mr Cooper by Wednesday 27th February 2008.

CORE SUBJECTS – Examined

ENGLISH

Board: AQA

Coursework (English 40%, English Literature 30%)

All pupils at Bloxham in their Fifth Form year are entered for Key Stage 4 GCSE examinations in both ENGLISH and ENGLISH LITERATURE. At the end of the two-year course they are awarded grades in each of these subjects.

For ENGLISH, assessment will be based on a terminal examination (60%) and coursework (40%). There will be two exam papers, covering different kinds of writing, and response to both non-literary material and a selection of poems from other cultures and traditions. The coursework, some of which will also count towards the Literature award, covers media studies, Shakespeare, twentieth century drama and pre-twentieth century prose, as well as the candidate's own creative writing.

ORAL skills are also assessed as an element of the coursework for English.

For ENGLISH LITERATURE, assessment will be based on a terminal examination (70%) and coursework (30%). The examination will cover a post-1914 prose text and a selection of pre- and post-1914 poetry.

In this combined course, therefore, candidates will be required to explore and practise the use of language in a variety of contexts and for a range of purposes, to interpret different kinds of writing – both literary and non-literary, and to study works of prose, poetry and drama both from their own time and from earlier centuries.

In both ENGLISH and ENGLISH LITERATURE, two tiers of papers will be set, and candidates from Bloxham are normally entered for the higher tier, targeting Grades A* to D.

MATHEMATICS

Board: Edexcel

No coursework

Mathematics is one of the core subjects in the National Curriculum, and is designed to develop investigational and practical skills, as well as the traditional computational and manipulative processes, logical thought and abstract reasoning.

GCSE Mathematics covers the attainment targets of *Using and applying Mathematics, Number and Algebra, Shape and Space* and *Data handling*. The assessment of GCSE Mathematics is by terminal examination.

We follow the Edexcel GCSE linear syllabus. The two terminal examinations, each of which count for 50% of the final GCSE, seek to give the candidates plenty of opportunity to show what they understand.

Those entering the Fourth Form in 2008 will be placed into one of four sets according to their ability. In 2010, candidates are entered for the tier which enables them to achieve the highest grade of which they are capable. Pupils will be entered at the highest tier which allows the most able to aim for A and A* grades. Only pupils in set 4 will be considered for entry at the Foundation tier where a C grade is the maximum. In addition to the above, it is hoped that all pupils in set 1 will also be entered for the OCR Additional Maths qualification.

FRENCH

Board: Edexcel

No coursework

All Fifth Formers at Bloxham, except those following the Dyslexia Course and those who do the *English as a Foreign Language* course, enter for GCSE in French. We follow the syllabus of Edexcel Board, whose aims include:

To develop the ability to use French effectively, imaginatively and creatively for practical communication; to develop an awareness of the nature of language and language learning; to acquire learning skills of a more general application, such as use of reference materials and information technology; to develop pupils' understanding of themselves, their own culture and that of other countries; and to provide enjoyment and intellectual stimulation.

Four Attainment Targets (ATs) are tested in the exam. They are:

1. to understand and respond to the spoken language (AT1)
2. to communicate in speech (AT2)
3. to understand and respond to the written language (AT3)
4. to communicate in writing (AT4)

Each of these ATs will be tested at either Foundation or Higher tier. Foundation tier papers are targeted at Grades C – G, Higher tier papers at Grades A* - D. Candidates will normally enter for the Higher Tier papers in most or all ATs, but this system allows for flexibility and will enable all pupils to aim for the highest grade of which they are capable.

THE SCIENCES

Board: AQA

Centre-assessed unit (25%)

Science is one of the core subjects in the National Curriculum with the GCSE exam being the national test for Key Stage 4.

Pupils at Bloxham School will follow separate science courses in Biology, Chemistry and Physics. The year group is streamed by ability and is taught by subject specialists. All sets follow a similar path, with work for the centre-assessed unit, based on normal class practical work, being taken at intervals during the course. The first part of the course has been covered in the third form.

Assessment:

Biology centre-assessed unit	25%	internally assessed
Biology	75%	3 x 45 minute exams
Chemistry centre-assessed unit	25%	internally assessed
Chemistry	75%	3 x 45 minute exams
Physics centre-assessed unit	25%	internally assessed
Physics	75%	3 x 45 minute exams

After the trial exams in the fifth form a decision will be made as to whether the candidates should sit the Higher (grades A* to D) or Foundation (grades C to G) papers.

RELIGIOUS STUDIES

Board: AQA

No coursework

All pupils are prepared for the Religious Studies Short Course GCSE (Religious Studies B, Unit 2: *Key Beliefs, Ultimate Questions and Life Issues*). This will be assessed by one examination at the end of the 4th or 5th Form. There will be no coursework element. This course covers many PSE elements.

The main areas of study are:

- a) *Key Christian teachings* which will be about the nature of God, Salvation Eternal Life and Resurrection. There will also be study of Christian forms of worship and Christian Ethics of love and forgiveness.
- b) *Questions of Meaning* involving study of arguments for and against belief in God, religious responses to the question of suffering, and arguments about the possibility of life after death.
- c) *Life Issues* involving the study of Abortion, War and Peace and issues surrounding prejudice.
- d) *Planet Earth* including study of the Origins of Life, human attitudes to animals and environmental issues.

Those candidates who take the Short Course GCSE examination at the end of the 4th Form may, depending on their other timetable commitments, be able to convert their award into a Full Course qualification via a further examination at the end of their 5th Form year.

CORE SUBJECTS – Non Examination

Pupils will have one period per week of Physical Education, in addition to the normal games commitment. This will enable them to experience new activities and acquire skills in them.

BLOCKED SUBJECTS

HISTORY

Board: AQA

Coursework (25%)

What do I need to know or be able to do before taking this course?

You have been studying some of the content and developing the skills required for this course through the work you have been doing in the Third Form.

What will I learn on this GCSE course?

You will learn about the history of the 20th century and so gain a knowledge and understanding of the events and ideas which have shaped the world in which you live. You will learn to analyse original sources, distinguish fact from opinion, and construct relevant and logical arguments. These skills have a wide-ranging application beyond the subject and in many vocational as well as academic areas.

How will I be assessed?

You will take 2 examination papers and submit coursework. Answers will be in the form of short essays or paragraphs where you will explain historical problems by use of your own knowledge and contemporary sources/documents (speeches, articles, statistics, photographs and cartoons).

Paper 1 Conflict in the Modern World (outline)

International Relations 1900-63

Britain in The First World War (37.5% of the total marks; 75 minutes)

Paper 2 Governments in Action (depth)

Russia/The USSR 1914-41

The USA 1919-41 (37.5% of the total marks; 75 minutes)

Coursework

Germany 1918-39

Britain in the The Second World War

You will present personal studies on:

Hitler's rise to power

Bomber Command 1939-45

(25% of the total marks; 2,500 words in total)

For what kind of pupil is this course suitable?

You need to be interested in the past and to enjoy the topics we have been studying this year. You will want to improve your word-power and your ability to argue logically. You will need a reasonably efficient memory for facts, but no more than for most other subjects. You will need to be organised and work hard.

GEOGRAPHY

Board: AQA

Coursework (25%)

What do I need to know or be able to do before taking this course?

Geography GCSE is a two-year course building on foundations laid down in the Third Form. Pupils to the school can still take the course without serious disadvantage.

What will I learn on this GCSE course?

Candidates will learn about the world in which they live while gaining various analytical skills. These include the interpretation of Ordnance Survey maps, aerial photographs, satellite images or graphs. A physical geography element investigates rivers, coasts and glacial landscapes. Such topics as settlement, agriculture, resources and tourism are examined in a human geography component. Examples are taken from around the globe though local fieldwork is also a major feature.

How will I be assessed?

The course followed is the AQA's Specification A. This involves 2 formal exams, worth 75% of the final mark, and a coursework component worth the remaining 25%. The first exam tests Geographical Techniques and Physical Geography. The second paper examines Human Geography. Normally pupils will take the higher level papers targeted at grades A* - C.

The coursework comprises one major piece of fieldwork. It is started in the second part of the Summer Term of the Fourth Form. Data is collected by the candidate over the summer holiday and processed thereafter for final submission after the Long Exeat of the Michaelmas Term in the Fifth Form. Initial advice and direction is given by the set teacher but thereafter the final product is very much the responsibility of the pupil.

For what kind of pupil is this course suitable?

The course demands a mixture of factual knowledge, the understanding of processes and evaluation of contemporary issues related to geographical phenomena. Few pupils fail to master these requirements and interest is regarded as the key when selecting the subject. In return for hard work geography candidates will gain a life-long interest and a variety of essential skills for deployment in all walks of life.

BUSINESS STUDIES

Board: Edexcel

Coursework (25%)

What do I need to know or be able to do before taking this course?

Business Studies will be new to all pupils and so no prior knowledge of the subject is assumed or required. What is important is that you have a lively and enquiring mind, an interest in finding out about business and finance and an ability to communicate your ideas effectively.

What will I learn on this GCSE course?

Business Studies is a subject that can help pupils to acquire the understanding, knowledge and skills relevant to the changing world of work. The course aims to develop a critical understanding of all aspects of business and how it operates, addressing questions such as:

- how are businesses owned, organised and controlled?
- what are, or should be, the aims and objectives of business?
- how can people in business best be managed, developed and motivated?
- how can products be made most efficiently and sold most effectively?
- what are the essential components of successful financial management?
- how can products be successfully marketed and sold to consumers?

How will I be assessed?

The course is assessed both through written examinations (75%) and coursework (25%). One written paper, based around a business case study, tests your understanding of the subject material and your ability to apply it in different situations. The coursework project is a major research investigation into launching a new business, offering you the opportunity to pursue your own research and to develop skills of information handling, selection, interpretation and presentation.

For what kind of pupil is this course suitable?

This course will appeal to you if you:

- like doing a subject which is real, relevant and often practical
- enjoy keeping up with what's going on in the world of business and finance
- appreciate the importance of being a responsible consumer, citizen and employee
- wish to develop your skills of communication, numeracy, ICT and self-organisation
- want to broaden your options, choosing a subject which can lead on to Sixth Form study or stand alone as a useful qualification for the future.

GERMAN

Board: Edexcel

No coursework

What do I need to know or be able to do before taking this course?

You should have studied German for at least a year already, and have some understanding of basic vocabulary and grammar. As German is a second foreign language in school, you should be keeping up well with your French.

What will I learn on this GCSE course?

You will learn to talk and write about yourself, your family and interests, and how to cope with situations in which you may find yourself in a German-speaking country, such as shopping, buying food or tickets, or staying at hotels and camp-sites.

How will I be assessed?

There are four sections to the examinations at the end of the two years, each section worth 25% of the total mark. The sections are:

1. Listening
2. Speaking
3. Reading
4. Writing

You can take a Foundation Level paper or a Higher Level paper in each of these sections.

For what kind of pupil is this course suitable?

You should be interested in learning German, have a good memory, be motivated, and show ability in languages studied previously.

You will have the opportunity to take part in the exchange with our partner school in Konigstein, a small town near Frankfurt.

SPANISH

Board: Edexcel

No coursework

What do I need to know or be able to do before taking this course?

You will not need to know a huge amount, but revising work done in the Third Form will be useful. You will need to be enthusiastic and willing to learn.

What will I learn on this GCSE course?

You will develop the ability to use language effectively for purposes of practical communication, and to use language imaginatively and creatively. You will also develop an awareness of the nature of language and language learning whilst acquiring the skills and attitudes which will form a sound basis for further study, work and leisure. You will learn to speak, listen and understand, read and write in Spanish.

How will I be assessed?

You will have four terminal examinations, requiring you to demonstrate an ability to:

- understand and respond to the spoken language
- communicate in speech
- understand and respond to written language
- communicate in writing

For what kind of pupil is this course suitable?

You will need to be hard working and interested in languages. If you enjoy travelling, this may be the course for you.

You will have the opportunity in the Fifth Form to take part in a residential visit to Murcia and experience Spanish culture.

LATIN

Board: OCR

No coursework

What do I need to know or be able to do before taking this course?

Pupils will have studied Latin for approximately three years and reached a good level of proficiency. They should also have an interest in finding out about the ancient world.

What will I learn on this GCSE course?

The study of Latin at GCSE level will provide candidates with an opportunity to study the language and literature of ancient Rome, and elements of the culture, language and social and political life of the Roman civilisation.

Particular areas of study include:

- The Latin language
- Latin texts in their original language.
- The Roman Army, Social Life, the City of Rome, Women, the Empire, Roman Britain and Roman Religion are studied as background topics.

How will I be assessed?

Assessment is at Higher Tier (with grades A* - D available). Candidates will take Papers 1, 2, 4 and 5.

Paper titles are:

- Paper 1: Language 1
- Paper 2: Verse literature
- Paper 4: Prose literature
- Paper 5: Roman Life topic

For what kind of pupil is this course suitable?

The course is suitable for pupils who are interested in languages and the ancient world. A knowledge of Latin will be particularly useful for those who pursue their study of a romance (French or Spanish) language to a high level.

MUSIC

Board: OCR

Coursework (60%)

What do I need to know or be able to do before taking this course?

GCSE Music is an exciting course that will develop your interest and understanding of how music is created through a very practical approach. Essentially, anyone with a musical interest can study for GCSE Music although students who have already reached about ABRSM Grade 3 will be at an advantage.

What will I learn on this GCSE course?

You will learn in a very active way. We will explore all musical genres through listening, appraising, composing and performing. There will be many opportunities for sharing music with your friends on the course. You learn very effectively if you do something, talk about it and show others how to do it ... and that's what we'll do. And, of course, you also have access to over twenty specialist staff.

How will I be assessed?

Skills in composing, performing and listening/appraising are assessed in three ways.

Coursework	An integrated project and some further project work	60%
	Two compositions <i>One related to a piece you perform and one related to an Area of Study (either Dance Music or Traditions and Innovations)</i>	
	Two performances <i>One solo and one as part of an ensemble</i>	
	An appraisal <i>Describing how you think you have done</i>	
Terminal Task	A melody-writing exercise	15%
Exam	A Listening Paper (75 minutes)	25%

For what kind of pupil is this course suitable?

Music is a subject to be shared and enjoyed. It is a great springboard to many courses beyond GCSE. It is true that, essentially, anyone with a musical interest can study for GCSE Music

ART

Board: AQA

Coursework (60%)

What do I need to know or be able to do before taking this course?

- Pupils will be encouraged to follow the unendorsed option which allows for a greater breadth and flexibility in the course.
- Willingness to develop basic drawing skills and artistic appreciation and awareness through coursework and studio learning.

What will I learn on this GCSE course?

- Creative and imaginative skills.
- Communicating and expressing ideas, feelings and meanings in art, craft and design.
- Investigative, analytical, experimental and interpretative skills, aesthetic understanding and critical skills.
- Understanding conventions of art and design and different cultures.
- Use of artistic materials.

How will I be assessed?

Coursework - 60% of total marks

Two, three or four units of coursework in the chosen options

Response to all assessment objectives.

Centre-assessed and moderated by AQA.

The Controlled Test examination - 10 hours - 40% of total marks

Candidates are to respond to one starting point.

Four weeks preparatory period and 10 hours of supervised time.

Set by AQA, centre-assessed and moderated by AQA

For what kind of pupil is this course suitable?

For a wide range of abilities and for those who are interested in exploring art.

DESIGN & TECHNOLOGY: RESISTANT MATERIALS

Board: Edexcel

Coursework (60%)

What do I need to know and be able to do before taking this course?

Most pupils will have completed the Bloxham Third Form technology circus and many will have studied technology in the First and Second Form too. All the skills and knowledge that have been acquired will be extremely useful for the study of design and technology to GCSE. This background is not essential, but it will be assumed that all pupils wishing to take this course have a basic knowledge of designing and making products, and they enjoy these activities.

What will I learn on this GCSE course?

To present your design ideas in a clear way through various free-hand drawing techniques.

To present your final design ideas using computer aided design packages.

To plan practical projects.

To create your ideas in a variety of materials including plastic, wood and metal.

To test and evaluate the things you have made and other products.

To use all the equipment in the school workshop when appropriate.

To use computer-aided manufacturing equipment.

To identify potential projects.

Research techniques.

About industrial processes and applications.

About mechanisms and mechanical systems and other appropriate components.

To use strategies to develop ideas.

To recognise the needs of potential users of the products you design and make.

How will I be assessed?

Pupils will be assessed on their ability to acquire and apply knowledge, skill and understanding:

- Of materials, components, processes, techniques and industrial practices
- When designing and making quality products
- When evaluating processes and products

Scheme of assessment

- | | |
|--|-----|
| • Final one and a half hour exam | 40% |
| • Internally assessed design and make coursework project | 60% |

For what kind of pupil is this course suitable?

This course is appropriate for a wide range of pupils with a variety of interests and abilities. Those with artistic or creative talents will do well but this is certainly not essential. The pupils who are keen to learn and work hard are always the most successful in this subject. If you have enjoyed design and technology in the past it is likely that you will continue to do so up to GCSE. If you are thinking you might suit a technical, creative or business career then this subject will give you good grounding.

D & T: TEXTILES TECHNOLOGY

Board: AQA

Coursework (60%)

What do I need to know and be able to do before taking this course?

Most pupils will have completed the Bloxham Third Form technology circus and many will have done textiles in the First and Second Forms. All skills and knowledge acquired will be extremely useful for the study of GCSE. Though this background is not essential, it will be assumed that in order to embark on this course, some basic knowledge of designing and making products and an enjoyment of textiles would already have been experienced.

What will I learn on this GCSE course?

- Presentation of design skills using various techniques.
- Use of computer for design solutions and pattern making.
- Detailed planning of practical projects.
- A variety of decorative and constructional techniques including:
machine embroidery
stencilling – free machine embroidery etc.
- Use of sewing machines: Bernina 1008
Bernina overlocker
Bernina computerised
- Knowledge and use of fibres and fabrics.
- Understanding of manufacturing processes and production systems.
- The importance of evaluation and testing of products.

How will I be assessed?

External Exam (40%)

Pupils will be assessed on their ability to acquire and apply knowledge, skill and understanding:

- *when designing and making quality products;*
- *when evaluating processes and products and examining the wider effects of design and technology on society.*

For what kind of pupil is this course suitable?

This course is appropriate for a wide range of pupils with a variety of interests and abilities. Those with artistic or creative talents will do well but this is certainly not essential. The pupils who are keen to learn and work hard are always the most successful in this subject. If you have enjoyed textiles in the past it is likely that you will continue to do so up to GCSE. If you are thinking you might suit a technical or creative career then this subject will give you good grounding.

ELECTRONICS

Board: AQA

Coursework (40%)

What do I need to know or be able to do before taking this course?

It is assumed that the background knowledge which pupils have in the subject will be limited to the introductory courses run within the Technology Department for pupils in the First, Second and Third Forms. If for some reason this experience is missing, then it need not in itself exclude a pupil from the course. However, a basic scientific literacy and numeracy will be assumed.

What will I learn on this GCSE course?

The course starts by considering discrete components and simple circuit analysis using modern test equipment. The course quickly moves on to the use of Integrated Circuits and the design of complex circuits based upon a systems approach. From an early stage pupils work on their own Breadboard. This enables them to gain the individual confidence and expertise required for the examination project work.

During the course pupils will learn how to:

- Develop an awareness of the impact of Electronics on society through a researched assignment.
- Identify situations where an electronics solution is appropriate.
- Design and build circuits which fulfil specific design specifications.
- Apply basic circuit theory to predict circuit behaviour and aid fault finding.
- Make use of IT through an appropriate CAD package.

How will I be assessed?

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|----|------------------------------|------------|
| a) | Terminal examination: | 75% |
| | A single paper | |
| b) | Coursework | 25% |
| | Practical Project (25%) | |

For what kind of pupil is this course suitable?

The course neatly combines the academic and practical abilities of a pupil which are needed for the study of a modern technology. A pupil who is going to be successful in the subject will have a basic interest in this technology and an expectation of good grades in both Mathematics and Physics. Indeed, a pupil following the Single Subject Physics course will find good mutual support between the Physics and Electronics courses.

The subject would form a valuable grounding for anyone wishing to pursue a career in Electronic/Electrical Engineering as well as providing a wider experience for many other Science related courses, many of which use electronic systems for data-gathering, monitoring and control.