

Bloxham School



Choices of GCSE Courses 2011

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
Biology	3 periods per week
Chemistry	3 periods per week
Physics	3 periods per week
Physical Education	2 periods 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	Block 2	Block 3
Business Studies	Art	Art
Geography	Geography	Design & Technology
History	German	History
PE	Latin	Music
	Music	Textiles Technology
	Spanish	

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, 6th February, when you will have an opportunity to consult those who teach your son/daughter.

introduction

core subjects - examined

Board: WJEC

Controlled Assessment (English Language 60%, English Literature 25%)

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 LANGUAGE, assessment will be based on a terminal examination (40%) and Controlled Assessment (60%). There will be two exam papers, covering the reading and production of non-fiction texts. Controlled Assessment tasks, some of which will also count towards the Literature award, cover Shakespeare and poetry as well as a variety of the candidate's own writing. Pupils will also now study the use of Spoken Language as part of the course.

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

For ENGLISH LITERATURE, assessment will be based on a terminal examination (75%) and Controlled Assessment (25%). The examination will cover a set prose and drama text and a response to two unprepared poems.

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.

Pupils are placed into one of four sets, according to their ability. In both ENGLISH LANGUAGE and ENGLISH LITERATURE, two tiers of papers are set; after the trial exams in the Fifth Form, a decision will be made as to whether a student will be entered for the Higher Tier (grades A* - D) or the Foundation Tier (grades C – G). Most are entered for the Higher Tier, but this option allows us the flexibility to make the best decision for each pupil.

english

core subjects - examined

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 2011 will be placed into one of four sets according to their ability. In 2013, 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 several pupils in set 1 will also be entered for the OCR Additional Maths qualification.

mathematics

core subjects - examined

Board: AQA

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. Our aims in teaching languages at Bloxham are:

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) using controlled assessment tasks
3. to understand and respond to the written language (AT3)
4. to communicate in writing (AT4) using controlled assessment tasks

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.

french

core subjects - examined

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%	2 x 30 minute exams 2 x 45 minute exams
Chemistry centre-assessed unit	25%	internally assessed
Chemistry	75%	2 x 30 minute exams 2 x 45 minute exams
Physics centre-assessed unit	25%	internally assessed
Physics	75%	2 x 30 minute exams 2 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.

the sciences

core subjects - examined

Board: AQA

No Coursework

All pupils will be prepared for the full GCSE in Religious Studies. They will complete two papers. Religious Studies A, Unit 1: Christianity will be taken at the end of the 4th form, and Religious Studies A, Unit 7: Philosophy of Religion will be taken at the end of the 5th form. There is no coursework element.

The main areas of study are:

Unit 1: Christianity

1. Beliefs and Sources of Authority
2. Commitment and Membership
3. Places of Worship
4. Worship
5. Holy Communion
6. Festivals

Unit 7: Philosophy of Religion

1. The Existence of God
2. The Characteristics of God
3. Revelation and Enlightenment
4. The Problem of Evil
5. The Compatibility of Science and Religion
6. The Afterlife

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.

religious studies / theology

blocked subjects

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.

greater

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

A Portfolio of work as Two or three 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.

art

Board: Edexcel

Timed Assessment (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 timed assessment (25%). There are two written exams: one is taken at the end of the 4th form and has multiple choice questions and the second paper with short and long answer questions is taken at the end of the 5th form. The assessment project is a major research investigation 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.

Board: Edexcel

Controlled Creative Design and Make task (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 make decision, consider sustainability and combine skills with knowledge and understanding.
- 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 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.

resistant materials

design & technology

blocked subjects

Board: AQA

Unit 1 – Written Paper (40%) Unit 2 - 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?

Application of knowledge and understanding when developing ideas, planning, producing products and evaluating them.

A variety of decorative and constructional techniques including: machine embroidery, free machining, appliqué, seams and hems.

Use of sewing machines: Bernina 1008, computerized machines and overlockers

Knowledge and use of fibres and fabrics.

Understanding of manufacturing processes and production systems.

Considering conflicting demands that moral, cultural, economic and social values and needs can make in the planning and designing of products

How will I be assessed?

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

when designing and making quality products (Unit 2); 2);

when evaluating processes and products and examining the wider effects of design and technology on society (Unit 1).

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.

textiles technology

design & technology

blocked subjects

Board: AQA

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 new 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 whilst 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, volcanoes and earthquakes. Such topics as cities, population 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 Physical Geography and the second examines Human Geography; skills, with such resources as maps and graphs, are integrated into the question structure. Normally pupils will take the higher level papers targeted at grades A* - C. The coursework is undertaken exclusively on two fieldwork days and under supervision in class. Candidates are no longer allowed to spend long hours at weekends or in the holidays to complete coursework tasks.

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.

geography

blocked subjects

Board: AQA

Why choose this subject?

You should be interested in learning foreign languages. Germany is famous for innovation in the car industry, pharmaceuticals and banking. Learning German should make that skiing holiday in Austria or Switzerland that more enjoyable, too!

What will I learn on this GCSE course?

You will learn how to communicate in everyday situations, and how to use language imaginatively and creatively. We use an interactive online course (Kerboodle) and a textbook, and your teacher's work is supported by a German language assistant.

How will I be assessed?

You will have two continuous assessments:

Speaking x 2

Writing x 2

All CAs will take place during the Lent Term of your GCSE year and you will have had trial practices in the Summer Term of your 4th year as well as Michaelmas Term of your GCSE year.

There will also be two external examinations in May/June of your GCSE year:

Reading

Listening

For what kind of pupil is this course suitable?

You should be interested in travelling. German will also make it easy for you to learn other Indo-European languages one day (Swedish, Danish, Dutch etc.).

You will have the opportunity during your GCSE course to take part in a residential visit to Austria.

german

Board: AQA

Controlled Assessment (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 transferable skills have a wide-ranging application beyond the subject and in many vocational as well as academic areas.

How will I be assessed?

There are 3 examination papers. Questions will involve factual recall, the evaluation of causes and the assessment of sources/documents. Answers will be in the form of paragraphs, short essays and one extended piece of writing.

Paper 1: International Relations (1918-55) (1 hr 45 mins : 60 marks, 37.5%)

Paper 2: Depth Studies (1919-39)
the USA and the USSR (1 hr 45 mins : 60 marks, 37.5%)

Paper 3: Controlled Assessment
Britain at War (1914-18 and 1939-45)
(6 hrs write-up in normal lesson
time from notes following a term's
preparation: 40 marks, 25%)

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.

blocked subjects

Board: OCR (J281)

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 through the sources and evidence
which the Romans left behind them.

How will I be assessed?

Assessment is at Higher Tier (with grades A* - E available). Candidates will take Papers 1 and 2, plus two of 3, 4 and 5.

Candidates have to take:

Paper 1: Latin Language 1
Paper 2: Latin Language 2

Candidates have to take two of:

Paper 3: Verse literature
Paper 4: Prose literature
Paper 5: Civilisation through the sources

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.

latin

blocked subjects

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.

Unit 1: integrated tasks (30%)

In this unit you will record one performance and one composition for your instrument. You will also write a commentary which links both of these together.

Unit 2: practical portfolio (30%)

In this unit you will record one performance that shows an understanding of how parts work together in an ensemble. You will also produce a composition (or arrangement) based on one of your Areas of Study.

Unit 3: creative task (15%)

In 45 minutes you will create a short composition, based on a given stimuli which you can then present as a performance or in written form.

Unit 4: listening test (25%)

The listening test is a written exam in which you will listen to extracts of music and answer questions on them.

music

blocked subjects

Board: AQA

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 unitised examinations, requiring you to demonstrate an ability to:

- understand and respond to the spoken language
- communicate in speech using controlled assessment tasks
- understand and respond to written language
- communicate in writing using controlled assessment tasks

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 during your GCSE course to take part in a residential visit to Spain and experience Spanish culture.

spanish

blocked subjects

Board: OCR

Coursework: 10%

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

Pupils should have a keen interest in sport and be of a competent playing standard. An awareness of a balanced, healthy lifestyle will be advantageous.

What will I learn on this GCSE course?

You will learn in a very active way. Much emphasis will be on socio-cultural factors for participation, such as local and national provision, together with focus on balanced, healthy lifestyles and the impact of diet, work and rest. Targeting physical activity for maximum effect is also an essential part of the course. Overall, the content will be a valuable foundation for AS Physical Education.

How will I be assessed?

50% = Practical Performance in 4 sports

10% = 2 written coursework tasks (Controlled Assessment)

40% = 2 written examinations (each lasting one hour)

For what kind of pupil is this course suitable?

The course is suitable for pupils who are interested in sport and are practically competent in a number of areas. A real desire to develop an understanding of Physical Education through rigorous academic learning and practical involvement is a must.

physical education

