YARM SCHOOL

GCSE Curriculum & Options

2026-27

Educating for life

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Third Year - GCSE Option Choices

Introduction

Pupils in the Third Year at Yarm have some significant choices to make about their course of study at GCSE for the next two years. The aim of this booklet is to set out these choices and to provide some advice to parents and pupils. Further advice is given during the Parents' Evening discussions. In addition, individual advice is always available from:

- Tutors
- The Head of Year (Mrs Thania Troya)
- The Head of Middle School (Mrs Kath Gratton)
- Subject Teachers
- Heads of Department
- Head of Careers (Mr Tom Newman)
- The Deputy Head Academic (Mr Darren Morton)

It is relatively early in the pupils' secondary education, so our core curriculum ensures that – whatever their options – pupils continue to follow a broad range of subjects and avoid ruling themselves out of future careers.

Core Curriculum

All pupils study seven core subjects plus Games and SPaCE (Social, Personal & Citizenship Education). The Core Subjects are:

- English Language
- English Literature
- Mathematics
- Language†
- Biology*
- Chemistry*
- Physics*

In these subjects, pupils are placed into ability bands or sets by the Heads of Department as a result of a variety of indicators, including internal examination results and advice from classroom teachers. Our goal is to find the group that is most suitable for the pupil.

† Pupils choose a core GCSE language. This must be one of the two languages they currently study in the Third Year.

* Some pupils will study for the Combined Science GCSEs, rather than for separate Science GCSEs. The decision about the science course pathway is confirmed by the Science Co-ordinator when the Third Year summer reports are released.

Options

Pupils provisionally choose three options from the list below:

Art	Geography	Music
Classical Civilisation	German*	Physical Education
Computer Science	History	Religious Studies
Design Technology†	Latin*	Spanish*
French*		

*Pupils currently study two languages in the Third Year. One language is retained as the core GCSE Language. It is possible to continue the other language by choosing it as an option. Pupils may only choose a language as a GCSE option if they currently study the language in the Third Year.

† In Design & Technology pupils opt for an element of specialisation by electing to study Resistant Materials ***or*** Textiles. It is **not possible to study Resistant Materials *and* Textiles** as an option combination because they are the same GCSE qualification course.

Initially we offer a free choice from this list, but ultimately these subjects have to be arranged into three timetable option blocks. **On occasion, if there is insufficient interest, a particular option subject may therefore not run**. Although we do our best to be flexible and accommodate everyone's preferences, in a few cases it may therefore not be possible to offer the exact combination requested. If this happens parents will be contacted to discuss further options.

Advice in Choosing Options

The Deputy Head (Academic) will speak to pupils to explain the GCSE programme and option choices.

There are three basic principles to bear in mind when choosing options:

1. **Career Intentions.**
   This may be a factor in some cases, although our core curriculum is designed to ensure that pupils do not make decisions which limit them too much at this early stage. Pupils receive a careers briefing from the Head of Careers (Mr Newman) and he is readily available for consultation by pupils and parents.
2. **Ability in the Subject.**
   Some pupils may be limited in their choice of subjects by the difficulties they may experience. Others will want to play to their strengths and

choose their strongest subjects. Advice is available from subject teachers at the parents' evening or by contacting them directly at school.

3. **Enjoyment of the Subject.**
   This is often, quite reasonably, the key factor once the previous two have been considered. It stands to reason that pupils tend to work harder, and thus are likely to achieve higher grades, in the subjects that they enjoy most. They should consider ***not just what they have studied in a subject so far, but what the GCSE course will entail.*** Some details are given in this booklet, but there will also be some presentations for the pupils, either in lessons (for those subjects already being studied) or in separate talks (for new subjects).

It is important NOT to base choices on what friends may be doing, or on the basis of which member of staff may be teaching a subject.

Making Choices

All Third Year parents will be contacted by email in January with information about the process for submitting option preferences. On the basis of this information option blocks will then be constructed, with the aim of accommodating as many initial choices as possible. Where there is any problem with providing the initial choice of options, Mr Morton will contact parents to explore an alternative choice.

EXAMINING BOARDS

AQA	Assessment and Qualifications Alliance (www.aqa.org.uk)
EDEXCEL	Edexcel Ltd (www.edexcel.org.uk)
OCR	Oxford Cambridge and RSA examinations (www.ocr.org.uk)
CAIE	Cambridge (www.cambridgeinternational.org)

Further details of specifications can be found on the examination boards' websites.

SUBJECTS

ART AND DESIGN (AQA) FINE ART

This course promotes creative learning through various processes and techniques and is designed to encourage and develop skills in areas such as drawing, painting and mixed media. GCSE pupils will study the working practices of both contemporary artists and masters: this will inform their own creative work.

Art and Design is a Non-Exam Assessment (NEA) course which means that there is no written examination at the end of the course. Over the course of two years, each pupil will create a portfolio of coursework and a body of work in response to an externally set task, both of which are assessed in school, followed by moderation by the Examination Board. The coursework and the externally set task are assessed against four Assessment Objectives and pupils must show evidence that they have fulfilled these objectives.

The coursework portfolio carries 60% of the marks. The portfolio must include:

1. **A sustained project** developed in response to a subject, theme, task or brief, evidencing the journey from initial engagement with an idea(s) to the realisation of intentions. This will give students the opportunity to demonstrate, through an extended creative response, their ability to draw together different areas of knowledge, skills and/or understanding from across their course of study.
2. **A selection of further work** resulting from activities such as trials and experiments; skills-based workshops; mini and/or foundation projects; responses to gallery, museum or site visits; work placements; independent study and evidence of the student's specific role in any group work undertaken.

The work submitted for this component will be marked as a whole. Pupils should carefully select, organise and present their portfolio and must ensure that it provides evidence of meeting all four assessment objectives. They must identify and acknowledge sources which are not their own and provide evidence of drawing activity and written annotation.

Work selected for the portfolio should be presented in an appropriate format and could include: mounted studies, sketchbooks, visual diaries, journals, photographs, film, 3D work and paintings.

The externally set task carries 40% of the marks.

AQA will provide a separate externally set assignment with seven different starting points. Pupils must select and respond to **one** starting point from their chosen title.

The externally set assignment provides students with the opportunity to demonstrate, through an extended creative response, their ability to draw together different areas of knowledge, skills and understanding in response to their selected starting point.

The extended creative response must explicitly evidence pupils' ability to draw together different areas of knowledge, skill and understanding from initial engagement with their selected starting point through to their realisation of intentions in the 10 hours of supervised time.

Our aim is that at least two gallery visits will take place over the course of the two-year programme. The aim of these visits is to provide inspiration, whilst also developing the pupils' understanding of contemporary and historical artists.

We will expect all pupils to work in their sketchbooks at home and this will include evidence of drawing activity and written annotation; therefore, they will be expected to have their own basic equipment for use at home.

For further information or advice please contact the Head of Department, Mr Innes Buchanan (innes.buchanan@yarmschool.org)

CLASSICAL CIVILISATION (OCR)

Classical Civilisation is a humanities subject, in which pupils learn about the ancient Greek and Roman worlds, through a study of both ancient literature and material culture, such as buildings and artefacts. All literature is studied in translation — there is no requirement to have any knowledge of Latin or ancient Greek. That said, Classical Civilisation can complement the study of Latin very well, and it would in principle be possible for pupils to study both. There is no requirement to have studied Classical Civilisation in Third Year to opt for this subject at GCSE.

There are two components to the course, each assessed in a 90-minute examination paper, and each containing a mix of short answers on literary and archaeological stimulus material, as well as some more extended pieces of writing.

The first component of this course is Greek and Roman Myth and Religion. In this module, pupils study the Greco-Roman pantheon of gods — their roles and characters, how they were portrayed in art — the portrayal of the heroes Herakles and Theseus in both stories and in art, the foundation myths of both Athens and Rome, the key religious festivals held every year, and attitudes to death and burial with stories about mythological figures journeying to the Underworld.

The second component is the Homeric World. This topic deals with a world that was ancient even to the ancient Greeks. Pupils study the archaeological sites of Mycenae, Troy and Tiryns in the Bronze Age period, learning about how the inhabitants lived, as well as how the sites were discovered and what we can learn from the artefacts found there. Pupils also read a portion of Homer's Odyssey, the great Greek epic poem that tells the story of Odysseus' adventures coming home from the (semi-)mythical Trojan War.

This course offers an excellent grounding in the history and culture of the ancient Greek and Roman worlds, as well as training pupils in valuable analytical and critical skills through the study of archaeology, history and literature.

For further information or advice please contact the Head of Department, Mr John Hall (jsh@yarmschool.org).

COMPUTER SCIENCE (OCR) - Computer Science J277

The role of Computer Science as a discipline and as an underpinning subject across Science and Engineering is growing rapidly. Businesses today require an ever increasing number of technologically-aware individuals: this specification has been designed with that trend in mind.

As part of this GCSE course, pupils will discover how a computer system works. They will look at the different hardware components, how computer systems connect to each other and the internet; how the internet works; how computer systems make a difference in the current society. They will also develop their own pieces of software, using primarily the Python programming language.

Fourth Year Practical lessons Learning in depth hardware components with practical elements of taking apart desktop computers. Pupils will also learn programming code using Python and apply this to real life problems to create their own solutions. **Fourth Year Theory lessons** Pupils will look in depth at the components that make up a computer system. They will explore how data is shared between devices and how computers affect society.	**Fifth Year Practical lessons** Pupils will engage in several short, but increasingly challenging, programming projects using Python. **Fifth Year Theory lessons** Pupils will look at computer security, including threats and how to protect computer systems from those threats. Additionally, pupils will look at data representation and different types of software.

External Assessment Overview

Component	Marks	Duration	Weighting
Component 01: Computer systems Pupils are assessed on their understanding of the central processing unit (CPU), computer memory and storage, data representation, wired and wireless networks, network topologies, system security and system software. They are also assessed on the ethical, legal, cultural and environmental concerns associated with computer science.	80	1 hour 30 mins	50%
Component 02: Computational thinking, algorithms and programming Pupils apply knowledge and understanding gained in component 01. They have the opportunity to demonstrate their skills and understanding of computational thinking: algorithms, programming techniques, producing robust programs, computational logic and translators.	80	1 hour 30 mins	50%

Practical Programming Assessment

Pupils are given the opportunity to undertake programming tasks during their course of study, allowing them to develop their skills to design, write, test and refine programs using high-level programming languages. Pupils will be assessed on these skills during the written examinations, in particular component 02 (section B).

Contact: For further information or advice please contact the Head of Department, Mr Mark Bridle (mark.bridle@yarmschool.org).

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

Design and Technology GCSEs at Yarm School build on the skills and knowledge pupils have already developed in the lower school. They increasingly work independently on creating and developing their own ideas using the specialist manufacturing equipment available (CAD CAM, CNC, 3D Printing and new machinery). We have two distinct pathways available, each of which focuses on a specialist material area:

Design Technology – **Resistant Materials** (Cambridge IGCSE 0979)

- 50% Examined Unit – Assessed over two separate papers
- 50% Non-exam Assessment – Design and Make Project

The Cambridge IGCSE Design Technology syllabus enables pupils to identify, consider and solve problems through an iterative process of creative thinking, designing, developing and modelling. To do this effectively, pupils acquire a broad range of subject knowledge through working with diverse materials, tools and equipment, whilst developing formal design skills and the use of CAD CAM & CNC 3D Printing, as well as other modern and traditional approaches. They will gain an understanding of materials, their properties and how to use these to create a product that is sparked by their interest.

Design Technology – **Textiles** (AQA GCSE 8552)

- 50% Examined Unit - One written paper
- 50% Non-exam Assessment - A Design and Make Project

Pupils are taught a wide range of design and technical skills, including garment construction, which will enable them to work to a brief and produce a meaningful textile product. The product is supported by a comprehensive portfolio of development work (NEA) which mirrors the same path a designer would follow in the real world. Gaining knowledge of material origins and properties, design principles, modern industry challenges and developments, global issues and historical design movements, pupils are able to further enhance their coursework and undertake the written exam unit.

Both pathways provide an ideal basis for further study of Design Technology at A Level and university, preparing pupils for their future within a rapidly changing technological society.

There is a small additional fee for certain material purchases for some projects at GCSE. Further information on the GCSE courses can be obtained from the Head of Design Technology, Mr Daniel Spence (ds@yarmschool.org).

ENGLISH LANGUAGE (Edexcel IGCSE) and ENGLISH LITERATURE (Cambridge IGCSE)

Every pupil at Yarm School is entered for two separate IGCSE English qualifications. These are taught concurrently, in banded ability groups.

IGCSE English Language teaches the pupils to respond to challenging reading material, analyse and compare the ways writers achieve effects, and write mature and accurate prose of their own. These three skills are assessed with a coursework folder of creative and analytical writing - worth 40% of the overall grade - and a single exam at the end of Fifth Year - worth 60% of the overall grade.

Alongside this, we deliver Cambridge's IGCSE English Literature course, which offers a chance for pupils to engage closely with three significant literary works: a novel, a play and a collection of poetry. Individual class teachers are able to choose different texts from within the confines of the syllabus to ensure that their pupils enjoy – and are appropriately challenged by – the literature they encounter. Pupils are encouraged to develop personal responses to these three texts, which are then assessed over the course of two exams at the end of Fifth Year. There is also a third exam which requires students to respond to unseen literature, testing the analytical skills they will have honed over the course.

For further information or advice please contact the Head of Department, Mr Liam Gilbert (ljg@yarmschool.org).

GEOGRAPHY (Cambridge 0976)

Geography is a wonderfully diverse and dynamic subject that enables pupils to develop an appreciation and understanding of the world. It fosters a unique knowledge of the nature of some of our most topical affairs, whether in the field of politics, or in environmental studies, with global warming and resource depletion high on the international agenda. The study of these contemporary issues and the development of a sense of environmental responsibility are critical in our 21st century global society.

The great breadth of Geography as an academic discipline is one of its real strengths. It develops many important skills and uses a variety of approaches, including developing an aptitude for decision-making, use of GIS, data handling, communication, teamwork and problem solving.

The wide range of attributes which Geography develops, including an awareness of different cultures, makes it one of the most relevant subjects for young people today.

The Course:

The Yarm School Geography Department currently follows the Cambridge IGCSE course. This is a linear examined course that is divided into three sections. Paper 1 Physical Geography. Paper 2 Human Geography and Paper 4 Geographical Investigations.

Paper 1 Physical Geography - Written Paper – 1 hour 45 mins External paper – 75 marks – 36%

Structured questions containing short answer and extended response items. Some items are based on source material.

Candidates study the following five topics:

• Changing river environments • Changing coastal environments • Changing ecosystems • Tectonic hazards • Climate change.

Paper 2 Human Geography - Written Paper – 1 hour 45 mins External paper 75 marks – 36%

Structured questions containing short answer and extended response items. Some items are based on source material.

Candidates study the following five topics: • Changing populations • Changing towns and cities • Development • Changing economies • Resource provision

Paper 4 Alternative to Coursework –Written Paper -1 hour 30 mins External paper– 60 marks (28%)

Two compulsory questions containing short answer and extended response items. Some items are based on source material.

Candidates are set a series of tasks on issues relating to the topics covered on Paper 1 and Paper 2. Questions test the methodology of questionnaires, observation, counts and measurement techniques, and involve testing hypotheses appropriate to specific topics. Questions also test processing, presentation, analysis and evaluation of data

The questions involve an appreciation of a range of techniques used in fieldwork studies. Pupils will participate in a range of fieldwork trips in order to explore a variety of fieldwork techniques.

For further information please contact the Head of Department, Mrs Kirsten Baines (klb@yarmschool.org).

HISTORY (AQA)

History is a fascinating, engaging and challenging subject which allows pupils to enhance their understanding of the world that we live in and helps them to understand the origin of modern political and social problems. In an ever-changing world, the GCSE History course offers an excellent opportunity to understand the reasons for change (for example, the defeat of Hitler and Nazi Germany) as well as studying change over time. Pupils will study some of the most significant and dramatic events of the 20th century alongside a key period of British history.

History challenges pupils to look beyond what is obvious. They are taught to analyse information, to form opinions and hypotheses, and to question the credibility of the evidence they are presented with. They learn to construct arguments, to reach conclusions and to pose pertinent and perceptive questions; transferable skills valuable both to other subjects and to later life. History remains one of the most traditional and widely recognised of the GCSE subjects, acknowledged for its academic rigour and for its value in terms of general education and citizenship. History is also an important subject in the development of communication and English language skills.

The course:

At Yarm, we follow the AQA GCSE specification. This requires pupils to study the following elements:

- one period study, which focuses on two key developments in a country's history over at least a 50 year period. We study Germany 1890-1945.
- one thematic study, which focuses on changes in Britain over a significant period of time. We study the development of medicine in Britain c1000-present day.
- one wider world depth study, which focuses on international conflict and tension. We study the conflict and tension during the interwar period 1919-1939.
- one British depth study including the historic environment. We study the Norman Conquest 1066-1100.

Assessment:

The AQA GCSE is assessed by two examinations at the end of the course.

Paper 1

- This examination assesses the period study and the wider world depth study,
- Written exam: 2 hours
- 84 marks (including 4 marks for spelling, punctuation and grammar)

- 50% of GCSE

Paper 2

- This examination assesses the British History components, the thematic study of change over time and the British depth study.
- Written exam: 2 hours
- 84 marks (including 4 marks for spelling, punctuation and grammar)
- 50% of GCSE

For further details of the course please contact the Head of History, Mr Tim Taylor (tdt@yarmschool.org).

LATIN (OCR)

Latin is a language and literature subject chosen by those who have enjoyed the study of this ancient language in Third Year and who wish to continue to develop their skills, and through doing so get a window into the ancient world. This subject is free-standing and can be studied on its own; in principle it would also be possible for pupils to study both Latin and Classical Civilisation, which is a subject that can complement the study of Latin very well.

There are three components to the course, each assessed by examination: a 90-minute language paper, as well as two 60-minute literature papers. The language paper contains questions that will be familiar to pupils who already study Latin: translation tasks and language comprehension questions. There is a defined vocabulary list for this paper. The two literature papers — verse and prose — give pupils an opportunity to read real Latin authors in depth, and explore what makes this literature so effective. Pupils answer questions on these prepared set texts, on the author's style and use of language, in a similar way to how they do in their English lessons.

The prose set text for the coming examination cycle is the Roman novelist Apuleius' story of Cupid and Psyche, in which the god of love wounds himself with his own arrow and falls in love with a mortal woman, visiting her in secret. The verse set text is taken from book 2 of Virgil's *Aeneid*, in which the Trojan priest Laocöon tries to persuade his people not to bring the wooden horse inside the city of Troy, and is gruesomely silenced by Athene.

Latin is a multi-disciplinary subject that helps pupils develop a range of skills. In their language work, pupils build their English vocabulary and strengthen their understanding of grammar and how languages function. Pupils have commented in the past that studying Latin has helped support their learning

in other languages. The particular way that Latin is studied encourages pupils to develop a both detail-focused way of working and a systematic approach to tasks. When looking at set text literature a lot of time is spent analysing rhetorical forms and authorial style across a range of genres and this complements pupils' studies of English Language and Literature. There is also the joy here of learning to appreciate some wonderful literature, and being able to explore an ancient world that can be both very familiar and influential on our own, as well as very strange. The skills Latin teaches are appreciated by many academic institutions and employers.

For further information or advice please contact the Head of Department, Mr John Hall (jsh@yarmschool.org).

MATHEMATICS (Edexcel)

The Syllabus

Mathematics is a compulsory subject and currently all pupils work towards the Edexcel IGCSE (Specification A, code 4MA1). The syllabus covers the following areas:

Number and Algebra	Shape, Space and Measure	Handling Data
● Numbers and the numbering system ● Solving numerical problems ● Equations, formulae and identities ● Sequences, functions and graphs ● Calculus	● Geometry ● Vectors and transformation geometry	● Statistical averages ● Statistical diagrams ● Probability

Problem-solving and mathematical reasoning may be examined in any of the areas above.

Tiers of Entry

There are two overlapping tiers of entry and students will be entered for one of these based upon their performance and ability in the subject. In previous years we have successfully entered the majority, and on most occasions all, of our pupils for the higher tier. Due to the overlap of the content for both tiers, the final decision regarding which level of entry for an individual does not need making until after the Fifth Year mocks.

Assessment

For each tier there are two written papers of equal weighting that are taken at the end of the course in May/June. As there is no coursework, these two papers together carry 100% of the total marks. A scientific calculator can be used in both papers and pupils are encouraged to familiarise themselves with the operations available on their calculator from the beginning of the course.
Our top set mathematicians are expected to work at an accelerated pace and therefore have time to extend upon the IGCSE syllabus over the two year period. This will allow for the introduction of a Further Mathematics syllabus, namely AQA Level 2 certificate in Further Mathematics. This course will be delivered within the IGCSE allotted time frame and culminate in a final exam at the end of Fifth Year. These top set students will therefore be awarded two separate grades: one for Mathematics and one for the Further Mathematics certificate.

For further information or advice please contact the Head of Department, Mr David Yates (djy@yarmschool.org).

MODERN LANGUAGES (Edexcel)

Aims

The IGCSE courses have traditionally emphasised the use of the foreign language in practical communication. The new specification, which came into operation in 2017, incorporates this tradition, as well as seeking to accommodate other issues - the importance of target language explanation and of imaginative language use, for instance.

Pupils will select at least one of their two Third Year languages (from French, German, Spanish and Latin) as a core GCSE language. They may also continue with the other language currently studied in the Third Year by choosing it as a GCSE option.

Assessment Objectives

In common practice from the First Year onwards, pupils are tested in four communicative skill areas:

AO1 Understand and respond to spoken language
AO2 Communication in writing
AO3 Understand and respond to written language
AO4 Communication in speech

The specification content, which is examined in each AO, is based upon the following topic areas:

a) Home and abroad
b) Education and employment
c) Personal life and relationships
d) The world around us
e) Social activities, fitness and health

Assessment is by examination (25% per Assessment Objective) at the end of the course. Pupils are expected to have such a sound working knowledge of the target language that they are able to work in all AOs through this medium without the aid of a dictionary.

The department operates its own system of continual assessment throughout the Fourth Year and Fifth Year.

Trips

In Third, Fourth and Fifth Year, every pupil is encouraged to take part in a 'language and culture' trip to France, Germany or Spain.

For further information or advice, please contact the Head of Modern Languages and French, Mr Adam Bridges (ajwb@yarmschool.org), or the Head of German, Mr Tom Fellows (tef@yarmschool.org), or the Head of Spanish, Mrs Beverley Addison (bw@yarmschool.org).

MUSIC (Eduqas)

Music is a subject which allows those who take it at GCSE to develop and hone transferable skills promoting analytical thinking, creativity and confidence. The Eduqas GCSE course enables pupils to develop their performance and composition skills, whilst providing the opportunity to explore a range of musical styles and cultures through the study of a wide variety of music and two contrasting set works. There are plenty of opportunities to make use of music technology through the composition and performance components.

Pupils will acquire an understanding of theoretical and technical principles, which they will be able to apply to their own creative work. Those who are competent in performing music at a level of Grade 4 and higher are able to score marks in the higher band for performance. Less traditional methods of performance are also accepted. A large amount of theoretical knowledge is not a prerequisite, but basic theory and general knowledge of the musical elements are required. Those pupils who have studied Music in the Third Year should have this knowledge, as should many others who have studied music independently.

DISCOVERY

Pupils discover a diverse range of musical styles during the course relating to four areas of study. Two Areas of Study centre around a set work whilst the other two encourage a wide range of listening and appraising activities to become familiar with the musical techniques and concepts used in their development.

Areas of Study and Set Works:

Area of Study 1: Musical Forms and Devices

Set work: Bach - Badinerie from Orchestral Suite No.2

Forms: Binary, Ternary, Rondo, Minuet and Trio, Variation, Strophic

Devices: use of musical techniques such as sequence, ostinato and pedal, for example

Area of Study 2: Music for Ensemble

Exploration of sonority and texture in musical ensembles through the study of Chamber music, Musical Theatre, Jazz and Blues

Area of Study 3: Film Music

Exploring the use of musical elements in Film Music and how specific techniques are developed to enhance action and enjoyment for the audience. A range of film genres is covered including, for example, action, fantasy, drama and horror.

Area of Study 4: Popular Music

Set work: Africa by Toto

What are the musical features of Rock and Pop music? Study focuses on how these are fused with other musical styles from around the world as well as understanding how Bhangra music is structured and performed.

ASSESSMENT REQUIREMENTS

Component 1: Performing (30% Coursework)

Pupils perform one solo work and one ensemble work, both of which are recorded for external moderation. These performances can be recorded and assessed at any time during the Fifth Year and the combined length should be between 4 and 6 minutes. One piece must link to one of the four Areas of Study.

Component 2: Composing (30% Coursework)

Pupils will submit two compositions, one of which is free choice and the other is a response to a given brief, of which there will be four to choose from. These briefs relate to the areas of study in Component 3 and they are

released by Eduqas at the beginning of Fifth Year. The combined time of the two compositions should be between 3 - 6 minutes.

The compositions will be completed during music lessons and pupils present the composition for external moderation in the form of a score or annotation (written description) and a recording. Additional support is offered through activities and after school sessions.

For those with an interest in music technology, pupils are able to undertake technology-based creative assignments.

Component 3: Appraising (40% Exam)
This 1 hour 15 minutes examination takes place at the end of the course and pupils are required to answer questions based on short recorded examples of music taken from the four Areas of Study (Musical Forms and Devices, Music for Ensemble, Film Music and Popular Music)

The exam paper consists of 8 questions (two per area of study) with one on each of the set works. The remaining questions focus on identification of musical features within different musical extracts. These might focus on naming instruments, describing aspects of melody or texture or making comparisons between extracts. Most are short answer form questions worth between 1 and 3 marks. There is one 10 mark question which requires more detail but this can be bullet pointed.

Theoretical understanding is examined through questions which require the notation of rhythm and pitch and identification of chord changes and cadences.

For further information or advice please contact the Director of Music, Mrs Lucy Miller (lucy.miller@yarmschool.org)

PHYSICAL EDUCATION (AQA)
If you love playing sport, and are interested in theoretical aspects of participation and performance, then studying PE at GCSE and beyond could be a good decision for you. You will learn about how the body systems work, how to train to improve performance, how we learn skills and the psychological theories that underpin performance. You will also examine the social and cultural influences on sport in the UK.

Pupils will engage with a mixture of theoretical and practical work. They will learn how to analyse and evaluate performance, making effective plans for improvement. In addition, the course helps pupils build up communication

and social skills, as well as analysis and evaluation skills, and enables them to improve fitness and develop performance in a range of different activities.

The Course:
At Yarm School we will be following the AQA GCSE PE Specification. The course is split into three compulsory components.

1- THE HUMAN BODY & MOVEMENT IN PHYSICAL ACTIVITY & SPORT

Paper 1: Written exam: 1 hour 15 minutes- 78 marks- 30% of GCSE

What's assessed

- Applied anatomy and physiology
- Movement analysis
- Physical training
- Use of data

2- SOCIO-CULTURAL INFLUENCES AND WELL BEING IN PHYSICAL ACTIVITY & SPORT

Paper 2: Written exam: 1 hour 15 minutes- 78 marks- 30% of GCSE

What's assessed

- Sports psychology
- Socio-cultural influences
- Health, fitness and well-being
- Use of data

3- NON EXAMINED ASSESSMENT- PRACTICAL PERFORMANCE IN PHYSICAL ACTIVITY & SPORT

What's assessed

Practical performance in **three** different physical activities in the role of player/performer (one in a team activity, one in an individual activity and a third in either a team or in an individual activity).

Please note that whilst it is possible to support some of these assessment activities during the course of normal PE lessons in school, it is clearly not possible to support all of the possible practical activities. Parents are advised to explore with the Director of Sport whether it will be possible to support particular practical activities in school. If a child engages seriously with an activity beyond school it might be possible to use this as practical evidence but this would also need to be explored and agreed with the Head of Academic PE.

Analysis and evaluation of performance to bring about improvement in one activity (written coursework).

- **Assessed by teachers**
- **Moderated by AQA**
- **100 marks**
- **40% of GCSE**

TEAM ACTIVITY LIST	INDIVIDUAL ACTIVITY LIST
Acrobatic Gymnastics	Amateur Boxing
Association Football	Athletics
Badminton	Badminton
Basketball	Canoeing/Kayaking (Slalom)
Camogie	Canoeing/Kayaking (Sprint)
Cricket	Cycling
Dance	Dance
Figure Skating	Diving
Futsal	Equestrian
Gaelic Football	Figure Skating
Handball	Golf
Hockey	Gymnastics
Hurling	Rock Climbing
Ice Hockey	Sailing
Inline Roller Hockey	Sculling
Activity List Cont...	
Lacrosse	Skiing
Netball	Snowboarding
Rowing	Squash
Rugby League	Swimming

Rugby Union	Table Tennis
Sailing	Tennis
Squash	Trampolining
Table Tennis	Windsurfing
Tennis	
Volleyball	
Water Polo	

For further details please contact the Head of Academic PE, Mr Phil Cummins (philip.cummins@yarmschool.org).

RELIGIOUS STUDIES (AQA)

The Religion, Philosophy & Ethics Department offers the AQA Religious Studies (Specification A) course at GCSE level.

Course Outline:

This academically respected course – which is taught by two experienced subject specialists – comprises two papers:

Paper 1: The study of the Beliefs and Practices of two world religions- Hinduism and Christianity.

Paper 2: Philosophy and Ethics. This paper explores topics such as sexuality, marriage, divorce, gender, abortion, euthanasia, the origins of life, arguments for the existence of God, the problem of evil and suffering, racial discrimination, polygamy, homosexuality, life after death, as well as the concepts of human rights and social justice.

What skills will this course develop?

- Critical thinking: the ability to analyse and evaluate evidence and scholarship.
- Essay writing and comprehension: writing developed arguments demonstrating knowledge and understanding.
- Communication skills: every lesson is characterised by rich debate and discussion to help refine your ideas and listen to a range of perspectives.
- Teamwork and collaboration: working with your peers to deliver presentations and research projects.

- Acquiring a suitable foundation for study of related subjects including philosophy, law and psychology.

Information on Assessment

- There is no coursework or controlled assessments.
- Pupils are examined in the two papers at the end of Fifth Year.
- Both papers are 1 hour 45 mins.
- Each paper is worth 50% of the qualification.

In short, if the prospect of learning to think critically and independently about some of life's truly challenging questions whilst securing a first class qualification appeals, then this course of study is for you.

For more information or advice please contact the Head of Department, Mrs Sophie Lodge (sophie.lodge@yarmschool.org)

SCIENCE SUBJECTS (AQA)

Science is a fascinating subject that helps us understand the natural world and our place in it. Science also develops important skills such as observation, analysis, evaluation, and problem-solving. At GCSE level, Science covers a wide range of topics from Biology, Chemistry, and Physics, as well as practical work and thinking scientifically.

At Yarm School, pupils undertake one of two different courses. Each course offers the best route to success for different pupils. The decision about the science course pathway is made by the school. It reflects performance in the end-of-year summer examinations and attainment in assessments over the course of the Third Year, along with professional discussion in the Science department. The aim is to find the best route to success for each child.

1. **Combined Science: Trilogy**: This course leads to the attainment of two GCSE qualifications while comprehensively covering all three core science disciplines.
2. **GCSEs in Biology, Chemistry, and Physics**: This rigorous programme results in three separate GCSE qualifications, delving deeper into each specific scientific discipline.

Both courses have lessons in Biology, Chemistry, and Physics taught by subject specialists. They also have the same amount of teaching time: two periods a week for each science discipline.

Pupils who excel in their Science exams at the end of the Third Year (typically grade A or better in each Science) will typically follow the course that leads to three GCSE qualifications. These pupils will cover additional content in their lessons to prepare them for the extra demand of this course. We recommend the three-GCSE route based on Third Year exam results and teachers' insights. Pupils need to cope with the significant additional demands and time pressures of this course.

Both pathways lay a strong foundation for future A-level studies in the Sciences, provided the entry requirements are met.

There is no coursework requirement for these qualifications; understanding of practical and investigative work is assessed in the written examinations. Pupils must participate in various required practical activities throughout the course to prepare for related written questions. Each of the Sciences offers ample opportunities for hands-on practical work, aiding comprehension of theoretical concepts, and nurturing practical skills.

Combined Science: Trilogy

This course entails assessment through six written papers: two each for Biology, Chemistry, and Physics. Each paper contributes 16.7% towards the final grade, comprising a 1 hour and 15-minute written exam evaluating knowledge and understanding across distinct topic areas. Assessments include diverse question formats such as multiple-choice, structured, calculations, short answer, and open response questions.

The specification assesses the following different areas of study:

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 Changes, Energy Changes, the Rate and Extent of Chemical Change, Organic Chemistry, Chemical Analysis, Chemistry and the Atmosphere, Using Resources.

Physics:

Energy, Electricity, Particle Model of Matter, Atomic Structure, Forces, Waves, Magnetism and Electromagnetism.

GCSEs in Biology, Chemistry and Physics

Each of these individual GCSEs is assessed through two equally-weighted written papers of 1 hour 45 minutes each. These examinations test

understanding and knowledge of specific topic areas through multiple-choice, structured, calculations, short answer, and open response questions.

Although these specifications assess the same areas of study as the Combined Science course, pupils will also study additional content in each of the areas of study.

For further information please contact the relevant Head of Department:
Mr Tom Newman (Biology): ten@yarmschool.org
Mr Ted Baker (Chemistry): edward.baker@yarmschool.org
Dr Paul Prideaux (Physics & Science Coordinator): pdp@yarmschool.org

SPaCE (Non-Examined)

All pupils in the Fourth Year follow a non-examined core course in Social, Personal and Citizenship Education (SPaCE). The course has three key areas that students study: Health and Wellbeing; Relationships; and The Wider World. These units broadly follow the PSHE Association's Key Stage 4 schemes of work. Topics covered include: mental health; financial decision making; healthy relationships; exploring influence; addressing extremism and radicalisation and the world of work. This core SPaCE experience sits alongside an I.T. short course designed to develop pupils as confident users of G-Suite tools.

In the Fifth Year, pupils follow a compulsory non-examined course in SPaCE, exploring a variety of important topics and personal development areas. Areas covered include: building for the future; next steps; communication in relationships; independence and families.

SPaCE is where our pupils are prepared for the world beyond the classroom and how to navigate the challenges of adolescence. SPaCE is fundamental to the school's ethos of 'Educating for Life'.

For further information please contact the Head of SPaCE, Mr Ivey (rai@yarmschool.org).

GCSE Independent Reading List

Parents sometimes express concern because their son or daughter doesn't read as often as they might wish. There is no doubt that a committed reading habit - as well as being a source of great pleasure - is fundamental to pupils' personal development and academic progress. Even pupils who do read

frequently can become ‘stuck in a rut’ and feel unsure what to read next. We hope that the list below might help pupils and parents to discover some rewarding novels that they will enjoy reading and feel challenged by. Pupils should aim to protect time in their week for reading and should ensure that school holidays also provide scope for exploring more demanding (and fulfilling) texts.

The texts in bold have been IGCSE set texts at some point over the life of the Literature syllabus currently taught at Yarm School. They are therefore rich, complex texts that reward attentive reading. The others have made it onto the list because keen readers have responded well to them in the past. While there is certainly no formal requirement for our students to read all of the books on this list, we certainly think they would benefit enormously from reading some of them ahead of - or during - their IGCSE course. Pupils are challenged to explore some of these texts!

Chinua Achebe, ***Things Fall Apart***

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, ***Purple Hibiscus,*** or *Half of a Yellow Sun*

Jane Austen, ***Pride and Prejudice***

Raymond Bradbury, *Fahrenheit 451*

Charlotte Brontë, ***Jane Eyre***

Charles Dickens, ***Hard Times,*** or ***Great Expectations***

George Eliot, ***Silas Marner***

F. Scott Fitzgerald, ***The Great Gatsby***

William Golding, ***Lord of the Flies***

Zora Neale Hurston, ***Their Eyes Were Watching God***

Harper Lee, *To Kill a Mockingbird*

Toni Morrison, *Beloved*

George Orwell, ***1984***

Mary Shelley, ***Frankenstein***

Robert Louis Stevenson, ***The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde***

Jeanette Winterson, *Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit*

Markus Zusak, *The Book Thief*

YARM SCHOOL

Bring Your Ideas. Together, we'll shape them.

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