

GCSE Options

September 2026 to July 2028



Sutton Coldfield
Grammar School for Girls

Support with making GCSE Options subject choices

This booklet has been designed to help you make informed decisions about your GCSE subject choices. It includes information on all the subjects available at Sutton Girls, including both core subjects and those you can select as an option. Every course leads to a GCSE qualification, is studied over two years and will begin in September 2026.

You are about to begin an exciting new stage of your education. Some of the subjects in this booklet may be unfamiliar to you, so take time to explore the information carefully and ask plenty of questions to help you make well-informed decisions. Choosing your options is an important milestone, giving you the opportunity to shape your studies around your interests and strengths. Engage fully with the process by asking questions and seeking guidance from your teachers and others who can support you.

Remember that no matter which options you choose, a wide range of future career pathways will remain open to you. There are many different routes to the same destination, and retraining is likely to be a normal part of working life in the future, whatever career you decide to pursue.

Timeline of events

Thursday 8th January: Options Evening

Week beginning 12th January: GCSE Options assemblies for students

Week beginning 19th January: Options form goes live

Week beginning 26th January: Reports issued

Tuesday 10th March: Year 9 Progress Evening (online)

Thursday 12th March: Options form completed

Frequently Asked Questions:

What are option subjects?

Option subjects are those subjects which are not compulsory (core) qualifications at GCSE.

What are core subjects?

English Language; English Literature; Mathematics; Biology, Chemistry and Physics.

Modern Foreign Languages is compulsory, and you will get to choose either French or Spanish. Some students wish to choose both languages, this would then count as one core and one option subject.

You will also study **Personal Development** (once per fortnight) and core PE each week as part of a broad and balanced curriculum.

How many option subjects do I have to choose?

Three plus a language (French/Spanish).

Do I need to play an instrument to study Music GCSE?

It is important to speak to the music staff to support you in making this decision. It will be expected that you are playing at, or working towards, a minimum of a grade 4 or above to consider taking this qualification.

Can I change my mind in September?

This is not possible, as the timetable will be live and group sizes fixed. With all the information we provide to support you making the right choice, we hope that you will be very happy with your choices and enjoying them in full when the next academic year begins.



Support with making GCSE Options subject choices

How do I begin narrowing my choices?

- Make a list of the subjects you have to take at GCSE at SCGSG.
- Make a list of the option subjects.
- Think about the subjects you would like, enjoy and are good at.
- List the subjects you are thinking about.
- List the subjects you definitely want to continue.
- Check out the course details in this booklet.
- Attend the options evening, assemblies and speak to the staff.
- Speak to students who are or have taken the courses you are thinking about.
- Consider, are there subjects that are particularly relevant for your current thoughts about future plans and career ideas? Please be reassured though that you will not close any future career pathways because of your GCSE choices. The core GCSEs at SCGSG enable all potential career routes to be followed. Choose GCSE subjects based on your strengths and interests.
- Talk to your parents, other family members and friends.
- Do not choose a course because of a teacher or friend. Choose it because you want to study it for two years and potentially beyond.

Pathways to making a decision about future careers:

Year 9	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Students make options decision for GCSEs.
Year 10	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• GCSE courses commence.
Year 11	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• GCSE courses finish and final examinations take place.• Students make options decisions for A-Level study.
Sixth Form	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Students study 3 or 4 A-Levels from a choice of 20 subjects.• There is also the option to take the Extended Project Qualification (EPQ).• Entry to Year 12 is on the basis of academic ability demonstrated by achievement at GCSE. More information can be found here.
Next Steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Access to the top universities or degree apprenticeships are highly competitive and will depend upon the GCSE and A-Level grades, as well as wider personal and social skills, and involvement in wider activities.
Careers	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The vast majority of our students go on to university, however some may decide to pursue other apprenticeship or career options.• We offer wide-ranging support to help students to make these crucial decisions• More information about our Careers Programme can be found here.



Support with making GCSE Options subject choices

Provisional Option Blocks for Year 10 - 2026/27

Option A	Option B	Option C	Option D
Business Studies	Business Studies	Art	Business Studies
Computer Science	French	Business Studies	DT
Drama	Geography	Computer Science	Food
French	History	Drama	French
Geography	GCSE PE	DT	History
Music	Religious Studies	Food	Religious Studies
Religious Studies	Spanish	Geography	Spanish
Spanish		Spanish	Textiles

Subjects in Year 10 have been set in to four option blocks (A-D).

You are only able to choose one subject from each option block. We will also ask you for a reserve choice.

You are **required** to select at least one of Spanish or French.

You are not able to select both Art and Textiles or Art/Textiles and DT.

Please note that the option blocks are subject to change. While we aim to accommodate student choices, adjustments may be necessary due to factors such as class sizes, staffing availability, and timetable constraints. We appreciate your understanding and flexibility as we work to ensure the best possible learning experience for all students.

If you option choices cannot be accommodated, we will let you know.

The option form will go live on **Monday 19th January 2026**, you have two weeks to complete the form with an overall deadline for submitting options by **Thursday 12th March 2026**.



ART & DESIGN

at SCGSG

Head of Department:

Mrs S. Parkes

AQA - Specification 8201



GCSE Fine Art

This course builds on the skills taught in Years 7, 8 and 9 and is for those who want to realise their artistic ideas in a more thorough and in depth way. The course is structured to develop each student's individual skills within the broad based Art curriculum.

The syllabus allows and encourages experimentation across many areas of Art such as painting, print-making, photography and mixed-media.

How am I assessed?

Students will be expected to demonstrate their ability to:

- Analyse and evaluate images, objects and artefacts showing understanding of context;
- Develop and explore ideas using media, processes and resources, reviewing, modifying and refining work as it progresses.
- Record observations, experiences and ideas in forms that are appropriate to intentions;
- Present a personal response, realising intentions and making informed connections with the work of others.

Component 1 - 'Portfolio'

This is a collection of work completed across years 10 and 11 on a variety of subject areas that demonstrates skills and techniques in a variety of media. Students will develop an independent project from the areas that they have studied.

Component 2 - 'Externally Set Assignment'

This externally set task allows students to choose their own starting point from a selection available. This will be set by the exam board in January 2027.

Component

Weighting

ONE

Portfolio

60%

TWO

Externally Set

40%



GCSE and beyond...

Art at Sutton Girls provides students with skills that are transferable to many future pathways. Art A-Level is popular choice which hones the 'futureproof' skills of creativity, project management and manual dexterity and offers a doorway into many careers and subject areas as a result. Art and Design's next steps extend far beyond the creative industries and students have the autonomy to make their art personal and related to their own onward journey hence how this is complementary subject to a range of sectors, even Medicine!

There are also many careers within this thriving sector which may be of interest to our students, take a look at www.thecreativeindustries.co.uk to find out more.

BIOLOGY

at SCGSG

Head of Department:

Mr D. Pockson

AQA - Specification 8461

How is the course taught?

Students have four lessons of Biology a fortnight in Years 10 and 11, with a wide variety of learning experiences. Particular focus is given to practical work, both class practicals and teacher demonstrations, both of which develop students' understanding of key ideas and of how scientists develop their ideas.

The course content consists of 7 theory topics. It is designed so that students start off with cellular biology and by Year 11 covers the more global aspects of Biology.

What will I study?

The topics we cover at GCSE are:

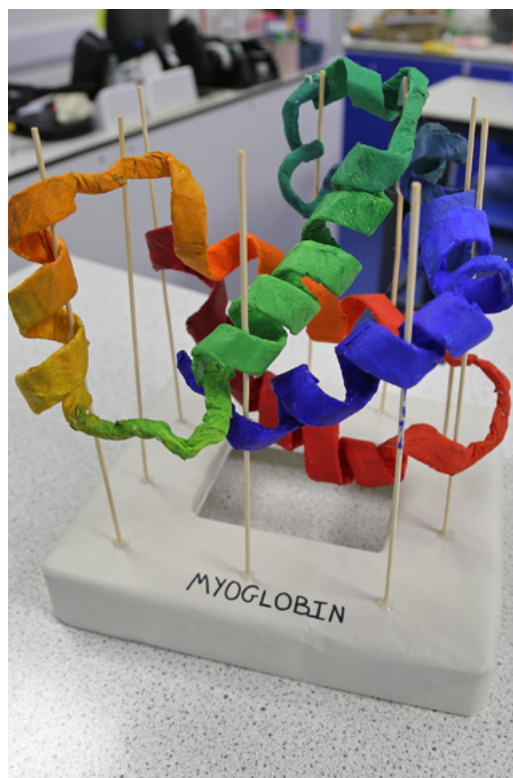
1. Cell Biology
2. Organisation
3. Infection and response
4. Bioenergetics
5. Homeostasis and response
6. Inheritance, variation and evolution
7. Ecology

How will I be assessed?

The GCSE Biology qualification is assessed by written examinations at the end of Year 11.

There will be two examinations of 1 hour and 45 minutes for GCSE Biology. Each examination paper will cover half of the subject content.

Paper 1 covers topics 1-4 and Paper 2 covers topics 5-7. There will also be questions on practical work in the examination papers. Each paper is worth 50% of the final mark.



Where might Biology take me?

After studying at GCSE, many of our students choose to continue at our Sixth Form and take the OCR A-Level Biology course.

Our students have gone on to study: Biological Sciences, Medicine, Dentistry, Optometry, Biomedical Sciences, Neuroscience, Veterinary Science, Pharmacy, Aerospace Engineering, Law and History.

Previous destinations include: Aston, Birmingham, Nottingham, Durham, Bristol, UCL, Oxford, Cambridge, Kings, Hull, Sheffield, Cardiff, York, Manchester, Leeds, Warwick, Loughborough, Portsmouth, Keele, Lancaster.

Other notes:

- A plethora of textbooks are available in the school library.
- Lots of resources can be found in the shared area/science and also shared with classes via Microsoft Teams.

There are eight practical tasks that must be completed during the course. These must be completed as part of the GCSE and may form the basis of some questions within the written papers.

BUSINESS

at SCGSG

Head of Department:

Mr M. O'Rourke

AQA - Specification 8132

Why study GCSE Business?

GCSE Business is an exciting and dynamic new subject choice at GCSE that helps you understand how businesses operate in the real world. Whether you're interested in launching your own business or working for a global company, this course equips you with essential skills such as problem-solving, decision-making, and critical thinking. You'll explore key topics like marketing, finance, operations and human resources, preparing you for success in an ever-changing economy. Studying GCSE Business will not only give you practical insights into the world around you but also help you develop a strong foundation for future studies and careers. We look at recent news stories and lots of interesting business case studies.

We believe you will find GCSE Business relevant, engaging and dynamic.



Units in Business:

There are six units for GCSE Business – two core units which are assessed on both GCSE papers in the summer of Year 11 and four functional area units, two of which are assessed on each of the papers as shown below.

Assessment consists of two papers (50% of the GCSE per paper - 1hr 45mins each):

Paper 1:

Influences of operations and HRM on business activity

- Business in the real world
- Influences on business
- Operations
- Human Resources

Paper 2:

Influences of marketing and finance on business activity

- Business in the real world
- Influences on business
- Marketing
- Finance



Next steps after GCSE Business

Choosing GCSE Business opens up a variety of exciting opportunities post-16. Many students progress to A-Level Economics. Here at Sutton Girls, the knowledge and skills gained can also support applications for Post-18 apprenticeships in industries such as finance, marketing, and management. In the long term, studying GCSE business can lead to careers in areas like entrepreneurship, law, finance, marketing, and human resource management, providing a solid platform for future success in the business world.

CHEMISTRY

at SCGSG

Head of Department:

Miss C. Duley

AQA - Specification 8462

Introducing the Department:

Students have four lessons of Chemistry a fortnight in Years 10 and 11, with a wide variety of experiences. Particular focus is given to practical work, both class practicals and teacher demonstrations, because these improve students' understanding of key ideas in science and of how scientists develop their ideas.

Eight of the class practicals are required practicals, which all students must complete.

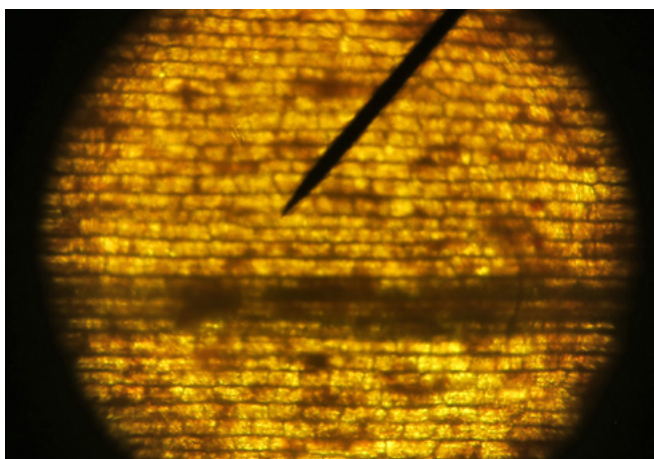
How will I be assessed?

The GCSE Chemistry qualification is assessed by written examinations at the end of Year 11.

There will be two examinations of 1 hour and 45 minutes for GCSE Chemistry.

Each examination paper will cover half of the subject content.

There will also be questions on practical work in the examination papers.



Exam requirements

Paper 1 units 1-5: 50% of GCSE

Paper 2 units 6-10: 50% of GCSE

Other notes:

- Textbooks available from the school library
- Resources on Microsoft Teams

Paper 1		Paper 2	
1	Atomic structure and the periodic table	6	The rate and extent of chemical change
2	Bonding, structure, and the properties of matter	7	Organic chemistry
3	Quantitative chemistry	8	Chemical analysis
4	Chemical changes	9	Chemistry of the atmosphere
5	Energy changes	10	Using resources
11	Key ideas	11	Key ideas

COMPUTER SCIENCE

at SCGSG

Head of Department:

Mrs C. Rudd

AQA - Specification 8525

The course:

This course will build on the knowledge, understanding and skills established through the Computer Science elements of the Years 7-9 programme of study.

The content has been designed not only to allow for a solid basis of understanding but to engage you and get you thinking about real world application.

Computer Science encourages students to:

- Understand and apply the fundamental principles of Computer Science, including abstraction, logic, algorithms, and data representation.
- Develop practical programming skills using Python to solve problems, including designing, writing and debugging programs.
- Think creatively, innovatively, analytically, logically and critically.
- Understand the components that make up digital systems, and how they communicate with one another and with other systems.
- Understand the impacts of digital technology to the individual and to wider society.
- Apply mathematical skills relevant to Computer Science.

Course content:

	Content Overview	Weighting
Computational Thinking & Programming Skills	Paper 1: 90 marks 2 hours Written paper (no calculators allowed) <i>Computational thinking, code tracing, problem-solving, programming concepts including the design of effective algorithms and the designing, writing, testing and refining of code.</i>	50%
Computing Concepts	Paper 2: 90 marks 1 hour and 45 minutes Written paper (no calculators allowed)	50%
Practical Programming	Students are to be given the opportunity to undertake a programming task(s) during their course of study which allows them to develop their skills to design, write, test and refine programs using a high-level programming language. Students will be assessed on these skills during the written examinations in Paper 1.	-

Where are they now?

After completing the A-Level Computer Science course, our most recent leavers have progressed to some of the top universities in UK such as:

- BA (Hons) Computer Science at Cambridge
- BSc Computer Science at Durham University
- Degree Apprenticeship with PwC at the University of Birmingham (degree paid for by PwC)

A-Level Computer Science prepares you very well for a range of degrees including:

- Computer Science
- Software Engineering
- Computer Games Development
- Information Systems
- Forensic Computing
- Computer Technologies
- Network Management
- Web Design and Services

DESIGN TECHNOLOGY

at SCGSG

Head of Department:

Mr J. Perks

AQA - Specification 8552

The course:

GCSE Design and Technology is an engaging and practical subject where creativity meets real-world problem-solving. In this course, you'll explore how problems are solved and how ideas are transformed into essential products and services that shape our everyday lives—from cutting-edge medical devices to sustainable solutions for global challenges.

This course is perfect for those who want to create rather than just study. You'll develop valuable workshop skills and gain hands-on experience with modern design technologies such as 3D printing, laser cutting, and computer-aided design (CAD)—skills that are in high demand in fields like medicine, engineering, dentistry, and biomedical sciences.



	Component	Weighting
1	Written Exam	50%
2	Design and Make Project (Internally marked - NEA)	50%



Non-exam Assessment (NEA):

What is assessed?

Students choose from a range of real-world design challenges set by the exam board and follow an **iterative design process**—researching, sketching ideas, modelling, prototyping, and evaluating their final outcome. The project is assessed through an **electronic design portfolio and a final prototype**, demonstrating their understanding of materials, manufacturing processes, and user needs.

How is it assessed?

The work is assessed by your teacher and moderated by AQA. Marks are awarded for **investigating the problem, generating and developing ideas, realising the prototype, and evaluating the final product**. The NEA allows students to showcase their ingenuity and practical skills, making it a valuable experience for those interested in design, engineering, or creative industries.

GCSE and beyond...

Your journey through Design and Technology can take you to many exciting career pathways, such as:

- Biomedical Engineer
- Product Designer
- Ergonomics Engineer
- Surgeon

These career options allow you to apply your Design and Technology skills in ways that make a real impact on people's lives and contribute to advancements in healthcare.

DRAMA

at SCGSG

Head of Department:

Mrs K. Downie

OCR - Specification J316

An introduction to GCSE Drama:

GCSE Drama provides a curriculum to ignite and engage students' creativity, passion and interests.

It also provides freedom for students to experiment and take risks with their work. It will provide opportunities to explore the work of others and to work independently to create their own drama performances making informed artistic choices.

GCSE Drama is a great subject to choose if you enjoy exploring ideas through practical work and like to use your imagination to create characters and stories. It gives you lots of transferable skills especially in public speaking which will help you in later life.

You don't need to be loudest or the most confident but you should enjoy the subject and be keen to take on the challenge!

Why choose Drama?

It allows students to study Drama in an academic setting, interrogating this art form and applying their knowledge and understanding to the process of creating and developing drama and to their own performance work.

A practical approach to assessment:

There's a high percentage of practical assessment (40%) which includes a portfolio.

Skills to help students stand out:

The specification aims to create independent thinkers with skills in research, working with others, analysis, communication, time management, IT, problem solving, planning and organising.

How is the course assessed?

Devising Drama (30%)

Students will create their own performance work based on a chosen stimulus from the examination board (10%). They will also produce a detailed portfolio documenting and explaining their creative process (20%).

Presenting and Performing Texts (30%)

Students will perform two scripted pieces demonstrating their acting skills in a live showcase (20%). They will also produce a written document communicating their intentions and key decisions made (10%).

Performance and Response (40%)

There is a written examination, Section A will be on a studied play assessing knowledge and understanding of how drama is developed and performed. Section B will be an analysis and evaluation of a live theatre performance they have seen using accurate subject-specific terminology.



GCSE and Beyond...

Students can choose to stay with us and build upon their GCSE experience and take up the A-Level Drama and theatre course. Students can go off to Drama school or to continue Drama at university.

Some of our students will study acting, musical theatre or they choose to focus on technical theatre!

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

at SCGSG

Head of Department:

Mrs J. Manning

AQA - Specification 8700

English Language & English Literature

Students will follow a coherent programme of English leading to **two separate GCSE qualifications** incorporating reading and writing. Speaking and listening skills are assessed separately.

These courses will help develop your ability to:

- Communicate your ideas, knowledge, feelings and points of view;
- Understand and respond sensitively to others;
- Read, enjoy and broaden your experience of literature and non-literary texts;
- Write confidently and accurately in a variety of situations.

What will I study in English Language?

Paper 1: Explorations into Creative Reading and Writing

Written examination: 1 hour 45 minutes

Reading (25%) – one literature fiction text

1 short question; 2 longer questions; 1 extended question

Writing (25%) – descriptive or narrative writing

1 extended writing question (24 marks for content, 16 marks for technical accuracy)

Paper 2: Writers' Viewpoints and Perspectives

Written examination: 1 hour 45 minutes

Reading (25%) – two linked texts: one non-fiction text and one literary non-fiction text

1 short question; 2 longer questions; 1 extended question

Writing (25%) – writing to present a viewpoint

1 extended writing question (24 marks for content, 16 marks for technical accuracy)

Non-examination Assessment: Spoken Language (previously Speaking and Listening).

A formal presentation with questions and feedback, this will be internally assessed.

Why study English Language?

GCSE English Language is more than just a qualification—it's a gateway to the world. Through this course, you'll develop the ability to read, understand, and analyse a wide range of texts, from fiction to non-fiction, while refining your own writing skills to communicate with clarity and confidence. Whether you're crafting compelling narratives, exploring persuasive techniques, or tackling unseen extracts, you'll gain the skills to think critically and express yourself effectively.

A strong grasp of English Language is essential for success in any career path, helping you to argue persuasively, write fluently, and interpret complex ideas with ease. This course also lays the foundation for further study, including A-Level English and beyond.



Where could English take me?

Our students have gone on to study not just English Literature at degree level, but also:

- History
- Civil Engineering
- Classics
- Sociology
- Psychology
- Law
- Medicine
- Pharmacy

We also have an excellent record of successful candidates who go on to study at Oxbridge as well as joining many great apprenticeships!

ENGLISH LITERATURE

at SCGSG

Head of Department:
Mrs J. Manning

AQA - Specification 8702

Why study English Literature?

GCSE English Literature allows you to step into the shoes of unforgettable characters, explore powerful themes, and engage with some of the greatest works ever written. Through studying plays, novels, and poetry, you'll develop the ability to analyse how writers craft their stories, use language for effect, and reflect the world around them.

This course not only strengthens your reading and analytical skills but also helps you form your own interpretations and articulate ideas with clarity and confidence. Studying literature fosters empathy, creativity, and critical thinking—skills that are highly valued in further education and any career path.



Required Reading:

Copies of the set texts can be borrowed from our school library, however we recommend purchasing your own copies for annotating:

An Inspector Calls - J. B. Priestley

Macbeth - William Shakespeare

The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde - Robert Louis Stephenson

Poetry anthology: Worlds and Lives Cluster (copies provided in school by AQA)

English Language & English Literature

Students will follow a coherent programme of English leading to **two separate GCSE qualifications** incorporating reading and writing. Speaking and listening skills are assessed separately.

These courses will help develop your ability to:

- Communicate your ideas, knowledge, feelings and points of view;
- Understand and respond sensitively to others;
- Read, enjoy and broaden your experience of literature and non-literary texts;
- Write confidently and accurately in a variety of situations.

What will I study in English Literature?

All assessments are closed book.

Paper 1: Shakespeare and the 19th Century Novel

Written examination: 1 hour 45 minutes (40%)

Section A: Shakespeare - Students will answer one question on the play they have studied. They will be required to write in detail about an extract from the play and then to write about the play as a whole.

Section B: The 19th Century Novel - Students will answer one question on the novel they have studied. They will be required to write in detail about an extract from the novel and then to write about the novel as a whole.

Paper 2: Modern Texts and Poetry

Written examination: 2 hours 15 minutes (60%)

Section A: Modern Texts - Students will answer one essay question from a choice of two on the prose or drama text they have studied.

Section B: Poetry - Students will answer one comparative question on one named poem printed in the examination booklet and one other poem from their chosen anthology cluster.

Section C: Unseen Poetry - Students will answer one question on one unseen poem and one question comparing this poem with a second unseen poem.



FOOD & NUTRITION

at SCGSG

Head of Department:

Mr J. Perks

AQA - Specification 8585

The course:

A fresh and exciting course, GCSE Food Preparation and Nutrition specification equips you with an array of culinary techniques, as well as in depth knowledge of key processes, nutrition and scientific understanding of ingredients and how they work.

The course has been designed to inspire and motivate you, opening your eyes to a world of career opportunities and giving you the confidence to cook with ingredients from across the globe with high level skills and creativity.



How will I be assessed?

1. Written examination of 1 hour 45 minutes (50%)
2. Non-Examination Assessment (NEA) (50%)

Component	Weighting
Written Examination	50%
NEA 1: Scientific Food Investigation	15%
NEA 2: Food Preparation Assessment	35%

Careers

GCSE Food and Nutrition provides valuable knowledge and skills that can lead to a variety of careers in the food industry, healthcare, and wellness sectors. The understanding of nutrition, food science, and health you gain from this course can be applied to careers that promote wellbeing, improve public health, and support medical advancements. Here are a few career options:

- Dietitian/Nutritionist
- Public Health Nutritionist
- Health and Wellness Coach
- Food Safety Specialist
- Food Technology Developer

Whether you're interested in supporting healthy lifestyles, advancing medical care through diet, or shaping food systems globally, GCSE Food and Nutrition opens the door to meaningful and impactful careers.

Non-exam Assessment (NEA):

What is assessed?

Students are given a task title for the scientific food investigation (NEA1) and the food preparation assessment (NEA2) which are set by the exam board. They both compromise of written coursework and a practical assessment.

How is it assessed?

The work is assessed by your teacher and moderated by AQA.

Marks are awarded in NEA1 for the sections Research, Investigation and Analysis and Evaluation with a total of 30 marks. Marks are awarded in NEA2 for the sections Research, Demonstrating technical skills, Planning for the final menu, Making the final dishes and Analysis and Evaluation with a total of 70 marks.

FRENCH

at SCGSG

Head of Department:

Miss E. Franklin

AQA - Specification 8652



Why learn a language?

Travel

Even a little knowledge of the language can make a difference in attitude when you meet people from other countries. Speaking another language helps to break down barriers.

Work and business

It can help you give an added advantage in your career if you work for an international firm or a company with international customers or contacts.

Music, film, arts and culture

If you like literature, films or music from other countries, learning the language will help your appreciation and understanding.

Exam Requirements

Each paper has a weighting of 25% of the final mark.

Paper 1: Listening

Paper 2: Speaking

Paper 3: Reading

Paper 4: Writing

GCSE French

Themes of study include: Identity and Relationships, Healthy Living and Lifestyle, Education and Work, Free-Time Activities, Customs Festivals and Celebrations, Celebrity Culture, Travel and Tourism, Media and Technology, The Environment and where people live.

These examinations will test your proficiency in the skills of: listening, reading, writing and speaking. Each skill will be tested in four equally weighted examinations at the end of the two year course.

The speaking test will consist of a role play, a read aloud card and a photo stimulus and discussion in French. This will be completed in the Spring Term of Year 11. The reading and listening papers will include comprehension questions to be answered in English, and a translation question into English on the reading paper. The writing paper will require you to translate some sentences into French, as well as writing two extended pieces about themes studied on the course.

In order to be successful you will need to work hard and adopt effective systems of organisation. Most importantly, you must enjoy the language and culture!

Students who are finding it difficult to decide upon a language, should consider studying both French and Spanish at GCSE level.



GCSE and Beyond...

Studying A-Level French at SCGSG provides a good foundation for further language studies in higher education (degree level or equivalent), with students going on to study:

- Modern Languages at the University of Birmingham
- French and Spanish at University of Oxford
- Linguistics, Modern Languages and Cultures at University of Sheffield

GEOGRAPHY

at SCGSG

Head of Department:

Mrs H. Chiverton

AQA - Specification 8035

Studying Geography at GCSE

Students will travel the world from their classroom, exploring case studies in the United Kingdom, higher income countries, newly emerging economies and lower income countries.

Topics of study include climate change, poverty, deprivation, global shifts in economic power and the challenge of sustainable resource use.

Students are also encouraged to understand their role in society, by considering different viewpoints, values and attitudes.

The course will encourage students to:

- Develop and extend their knowledge of locations, places, environments and processes in differing social, political and cultural contexts.
- Gain an understanding of the interactions between people and environments, change in places and processes over space and time, and the inter-relationship between geographical phenomena at different scales and in different contexts.
- Develop and extend their competence in a range of skills including those used in fieldwork, in using maps and GIS and in researching secondary evidence, and develop their competence in applying sound enquiry and investigative approaches to questions and hypotheses.
- Apply geographical knowledge, understanding, skills and approaches appropriately and creatively to real world contexts.

Course Content:

Component	Content	Weighting
Paper 1: <i>Living with the physical environment</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Natural Hazards• Ecosystems• Coastal Landscapes• River Landscapes	35%
Paper 2: <i>Challenges in the human environment</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Urban issues and challenges• The changing economic world• The challenge of resource management	35%
Paper 3: <i>Geographical applications</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Issue evaluation• Fieldwork• Geographical skills	30%

Fieldwork in Geography

The specification requires two days of fieldwork in both the physical and human environment.

We will visit Carding Mill Valley in Shropshire to investigate changes along the river channel as a day trip. We will then look at environmental sustainability in a local urban area.

This information is then used in Paper 3 of the Year 11 examination.



GCSE and beyond...

During the GCSE course, students will build a range of fieldwork, statistical and data analysis skills, whilst gaining knowledge about physical and human environments, providing foundational knowledge to continue into A-Level Geography at SCGSG. Studying Geography also develops skills which compliment other subjects such as Biology, Economics, Politics, Psychology, Sociology, and many more!

HISTORY

at SCGSG

Head of Department:

Mrs F. Heeks

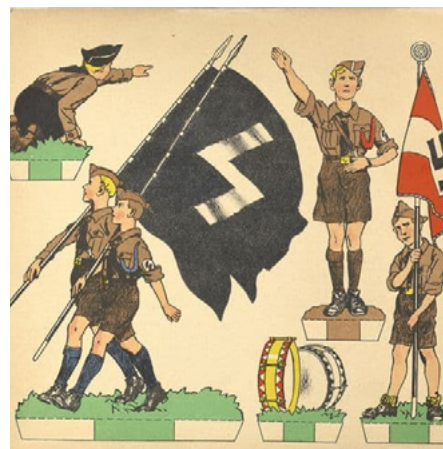
AQA - Specification 8145

An introduction to GCSE History

The History Department is delighted to be able to offer Year 9 a fantastic course which aims to provide students with a love for the subject and skills which will serve them in future education and the workplace.

This course allows you to really think about the people and events that have shaped the world around you. You will begin to understand how decisions taken as long as five hundred years ago or during the last century are still having a lasting impact today!

GCSE History is made up of two examinations:



Paper 1 - 2 hours (50%)

Understanding the Modern World: Germany 1890-1945 and the Inter War years 1918-1939

This is a wonderful opportunity to study the twentieth century in depth and find out why the world is the way it is today.

Issues you will consider include:

- Why the First World War failed to bring lasting peace.
- Why the 1930s saw the rise of so many aggressive dictators.
- Why Hitler and the Nazis were able to take total control of Germany.
- What it was like to live under Hitler's regime.

Paper 2 - 2 hours (50%)

Shaping the Nation: Power and the People 1170- the present day (Overview) and Elizabethan England 1568-1603

This is a chance to study a longer period of history identifying how the power of the monarchy has changed and how Britain's constitution and parliament developed.

Issues you will consider include:

- Just how powerful monarchs really were.
- When and how parliament became so important.
- How women won the vote in 1918.
- What kind of monarch Elizabeth I was.
- Why Elizabeth never married.



GCSE and Beyond...

After studying at GCSE, many of our students choose to continue at our Sixth Form to take the A-Level History course we offer. It is also very well suited for studying A-Level Politics, also available here at Sutton Girls.

Progression to university to read History or Law are popular pathways. Other students use the skills they have developed to access a wider range of courses and apprenticeships. These have included Classics, Political Science, English, Geography, Nursing, Medicine, Archaeology, Teaching and Economics.

History is a well-respected subject, both universities and employers recognise the skills it develops. What's more it doesn't close the door to any career. Our past students have gone on to successful careers in all sorts of areas including law, journalism, teaching, the media, politics, medicine, heritage management and public relations.

MATHEMATICS

at SCGSG

Acting Head of Department:

Mrs M. Appleton

Edexcel - Specification IMA1

A Universal Language

Mathematics is a universal language used throughout the world. As well as a fascinating subject in its own right, a sound understanding of mathematics opens the door to future opportunities. We encourage all students to enjoy mathematics, enabling them to select appropriate techniques in order to answer a wide variety of questions with confidence.

To enhance the course, we regularly provide problem solving challenges that apply newly learnt skills in a variety of contexts.

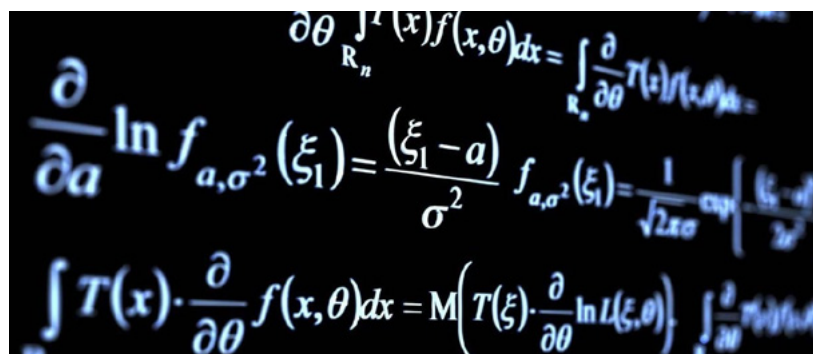
Mathematics is a popular subject, with many going on to study the subject at A-Level in the Sixth Form. The work done in Years 10 and 11 builds on the firm foundations laid down in previous years, preparing students thoroughly for GCSE and beyond.

How am I assessed?

The examination consists of **3 written papers**, each **1 hour 30 minutes**.

The papers are equally weighted towards the overall grade.

Paper 1 is non-calculator. For **papers 2 and 3**, students are allowed to use a **scientific calculator**.



The specification consists of six main topics:

Number	Upper and lower bounds of rounded or truncated numbers; Calculations with numbers in standard form; Recurring decimals
Algebra	Quadratic equations and inequalities; Surds; Graphs of quadratic functions; Algebraic Fractions; Rearranging formulae; Equations with indices; Parallel and Perpendicular graphs; Tangents to curved graphs; Approximate areas under curved graphs; Equations of circles; Simultaneous equations where one is a quadratic or a circle; Types of sequences; Iteration; Proofs
Ratio, Proportion and Rates of Change	Repeated percentage changes and reverse percentages; Graphs of variables that are in proportion; Compound measures
Geometry and Measures	Pythagoras and trigonometry in 3 dimensions; Graphs of the trigonometrical functions; Sine, cosine and tangent of 30°, 60°, 45°; Circle theorems; Sine rule, cosine rule, area of a non right-angled triangle; Sectors and segments; Volumes and surface areas of spheres, cones, pyramids; Areas and volumes of similar shapes
Statistics	Display of data, including cumulative frequency, box and whisker diagrams, histograms, scatter diagrams; Calculating averages and measures of spread for grouped data; Comparison of two sets of data using average and spread; Methods of sampling, questionnaires and biased samples
Probability	Use of tree diagrams and Venn diagrams to calculate probabilities; Conditional probability



MUSIC

at SCGSG

Head of Department:

Mr C. Collet

Edexcel - Specification 1MU0

GCSE Music:

GCSE Music is an ideal choice for those who sing or play a musical instrument in any style and who like to listen to a wide variety of music.

The course involves the integrated activities of Performing, Appraising (Listening) and Composing.

It will be expected that you are playing at, or working towards, a minimum of a grade 4 or above to consider taking this qualification.

Component 1: Performing Music (30%)

Students will be recorded performing a number of pieces of at least four minutes' combined duration.

- **Solo performance:** this must be of at least one minute in duration, and may comprise one or more pieces
- **Ensemble performance:** this must be of at least one minute in duration, and may comprise one or more pieces

The expected standard of difficulty of music to be performed is Grade 4, although extra credit may be available for pieces of Grade 5 or higher.

Component 2: Composing (30%)

Students compose two compositions, of at least three minutes' combined duration:

- One composition to a brief set by the exam board, of at least one minute in duration.
- One free composition set by the student, of at least one minute in duration.

Component 3: Appraising (40%)

Students will study a number of pieces of music in a variety of styles including 'classical' music (Beethoven, Bach), vocal music (Queen, Purcell), music for stage (songs from Wicked), music for screen (Star Wars) and musical fusions from non-western musical cultures. In the final exam students are asked questions based on their set pieces and also unfamiliar pieces.

About the Music Department:

- Over 200 students learn instruments in school,
- Numerous ensemble opportunities (two orchestras, two choirs, instrument-specific ensembles)
- Three concerts annually,
- Opportunities to perform in the annual school production,
- 25 computers running *Sibelius* music software.



GCSE and Beyond...

After studying at GCSE, many of our students choose to continue at our Sixth Form and take the A-Level Music course.

Former students have gone on to study the subject at The Royal College of Music, The Royal Northern College of Music, Leeds College of Music, The Royal Birmingham Conservatoire and the Universities of Birmingham, York, Sheffield and Liverpool. Graded examinations (practical and theory) from Grade 6 upwards can be counted towards UCAS points for university entrance.

PHYSICS

at SCGSG

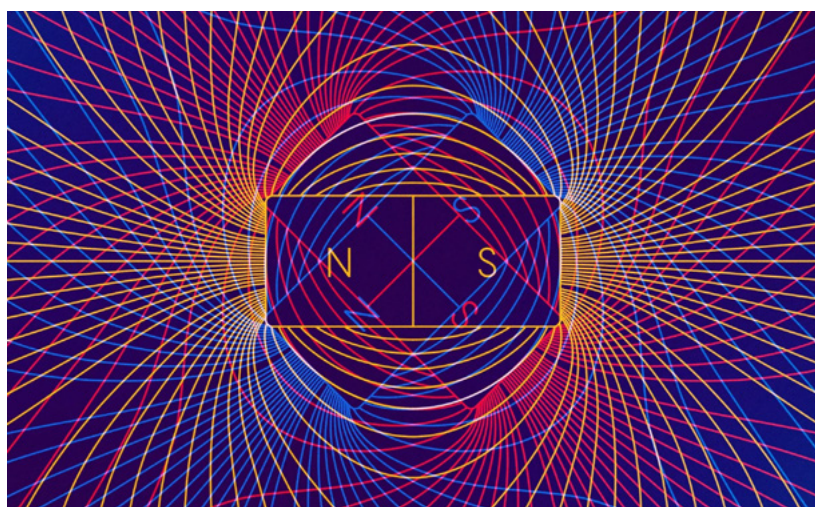
Head of Department:

Miss B. Thomson

AQA - Specification 8463

What is Physics?

You will be taught four lessons of Physics a fortnight in Years 10 and 11, with a wide variety of experiences. Particular focus is given to practical work, both class practicals and teacher demonstrations, because these improve students' understanding of key ideas in science and of how scientists develop their ideas. Eight of the class practicals are core practicals, which are a required element of the course.



How am I assessed?

The GCSE Physics qualification is 100% externally assessed by examination. There will be two examinations of 1 hour and 45 minutes. Each examination paper will cover half of the subject content and will be worth 50% of the total mark.

There will also be questions on practical work in the examination papers.

The topics we cover in GCSE Physics are:

Paper 1		Paper 2	
1	Energy	6	Forces
2	Electricity	7	Waves
3	Particle Model	8	Magnetism & Electromagnetism
4	Atomic Structure	9	Space Physics

GCSE and beyond...

Students can go on to study Physics at A-Level with us, which opens up opportunities to extend their work beyond the laboratory.

These include the opportunity to visit lectures by current researchers at Birmingham University, to subscribe to Physics Review magazine, and **a biannual trip to the particle physics research facility at CERN in Geneva!**



Physics + Maths

Thinking further ahead to A-Level study, when combined with Mathematics, Physics will enable you to progress to Higher Education and careers in fields such as:

- Physics
- Astrophysics
- Medical Physics
- Geophysics
- Space Science
- Engineering & Computer Science.

Materials Science and Chemical Engineering are options if you study Chemistry in addition to Physics and Mathematics.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

at SCGSG

Head of Department:

Mrs R. Hughes

AQA - Specification 8582

You could consider opting for GCSE Physical Education if you have a high standard of practical performance in a least two practical activities and be willing to learn more about the theoretical aspects of the subject.

Paper 1:

The human body and movement in physical activity and sport

What is assessed?

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

How is it assessed?

- Written examination of 1 hour 15 minutes
- A total of 78 marks (30% of GCSE)
- A mixture of multiple choice/objective test questions, short answer questions and extended answer questions



Paper 2:

Socio-cultural influences and wellbeing in physical activity and sport

What is assessed?

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

How is it assessed?

- Written examination of 1 hour 15 minutes
- A total of 78 marks (30% of GCSE)
- A mixture of multiple choice/objective test questions, short answer questions and extended answer questions

GCSE and beyond...

GCSE Physical Education provides students with a solid foundation in both theoretical and practical aspects of sport, fitness, and health.

The knowledge gained in areas such as anatomy, psychology, nutrition, and training principles is invaluable for those pursuing careers in sports science, coaching, physiotherapy, sports management, and teaching. Additionally, the course helps develop valuable workplace skills, including teamwork, organisation, communication, time management, and problem-solving.

By choosing GCSE PE, students not only gain a deep understanding of physical activity but also build a strong skill set that prepares them for both further education and the workplace.

Non-exam Assessment:

What is 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).

Analysis and evaluation of performance to bring about improvement in one activity.

How is it assessed?

Assessed by teachers, moderated by AQA (40% of GCSE) For each of their three activities, students will be assessed in skills in progressive drills (**10 marks** per activity) and in the full context (**15 marks** per activity). Students will be assessed on their analysis (**15 marks**) and evaluation (**10 marks**) of performance to bring about improvement in one activity.

RELIGIOUS STUDIES

at SCGSG

Head of Department:

Mrs A. Shah

**AQA Religious Studies A
- Specification 8062**

Personal Qualities:

GCSE Religious Studies will build on the skills and knowledge that students have developed during Years 7-9 in their RS lessons. The Options Course includes an in depth study of two religions. The Beliefs and Practices of believers are studied, along with 4 themes that include an exciting selection of religious, philosophical and ethical debates. The structure of the course is as follows:

Component 1: The Study of Religions: Beliefs, Teachings and Practices

Christianity:

Key Beliefs about God, the Trinity, Beliefs about Jesus Christ and Salvation.

Main Practices—Worship and Festivals, The Role of the Church in the Community and Across the World.

Sikhism:

Key Beliefs about the Nature of God, the Mool Mantra and the Guru Granth Sahib, The Nature of Human Life, Karma and Rebirth.

Main Practices—Worship and Service, the role of the Gurdwara, Festivals and Lifestyle: Vaisakhi and Divali, The Golden Temple and Life Events.



Component 2: Thematic Studies

Relationships and Families:

Sex, Marriage and Divorce, Families and Gender Equality.

Religion and Life:

Origins of Life, Pollution and Animal Rights, Abortion, Euthanasia, Beliefs about the Afterlife.

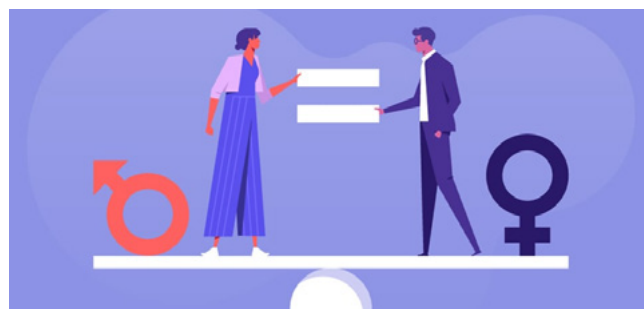
The Existence of God and Revelation:

Philosophical Arguments For and Against God, The Nature of God and Revelation.

Religion, Crime and Punishment:

Good and Evil, Causes of Crime, The Aims of Punishment, Criminals, The Death Penalty.

GCSE Religious Studies will be assessed by 2 separate examinations of 1 hour 45 minutes each.



Post-16 Opportunities

Religious Studies is an invaluable course for developing transferable skills useful for any Post-16 pathway, especially the A-Level course that we offer here at Sutton Girls.

These skills include being able to plan and write a convincing essay; developing logical and critical-thinking; being able to form a balanced and persuasive argument; viewing things from many perspectives; skills in analysis and evaluation, and problem-solving. We also study many ethical debates seen daily in the news which helps build thoughtful opinions on important and topical issues.

Careers and life after GCSE

RS is an excellent choice for many career path ways due to the transferable skills developed. Previously, students who have taken Religious Studies A-Level have gone on to study a wide variety of exciting courses including: Medicine, Law, Philosophy & Theology, Psychology, Languages, Music, Media and Film, Geography, English, Journalism, and Criminology.

SPANISH

at SCGSG

Head of Department:

Miss E. Franklin

AQA - Specification 8692

Why learn a language?

Travel

Even a little knowledge of the language can make a difference in attitude when you meet people from other countries. Speaking another language helps to break down barriers.

Work and business

It can help you give an added advantage in your career if you work for an international firm or a company with international customers or contacts.

Music, film, arts and culture

If you like literature, films or music from other countries, learning the language will help your appreciation and understanding.



GCSE Spanish

Themes of study include: Identity and Relationships, Healthy Living and Lifestyle, Education and Work, Free-Time Activities, Customs Festivals and Celebrations, Celebrity Culture, Travel and Tourism, Media and Technology, The Environment and where people live.

These examinations will test your proficiency in the skills of: listening, reading, writing and speaking. Each skill will be tested in four equally weighted examinations at the end of the two year course.

The speaking test will consist of a role play, a read aloud card and a photo stimulus and discussion in Spanish. This will be completed in the Spring Term of Year 11. The reading and listening papers will include comprehension questions to be answered in English, and a translation question into English on the reading paper. The writing paper will require you to translate some sentences into Spanish, as well as writing two extended pieces about themes studied on the course.

In order to be successful you will need to work hard and adopt effective systems of organisation. Most importantly, you must enjoy the language and culture!

Students who are finding it difficult to decide upon a language, should consider studying both French and Spanish at GCSE level.

Exam Requirements

Students must take all four question papers at the end of the 2-year course. Each paper has a weighting of 25% of the final mark.

Paper 1:	Listening
Paper 2:	Speaking
Paper 3:	Reading
Paper 4:	Writing

GCSE and Beyond...

Studying A-Level Spanish at SCGSG provides a good foundation for further language studies in higher education (degree level or equivalent), with some going on to study:

- French and Spanish at University of Oxford
- Linguistics, Modern Languages and Cultures at University of Sheffield
- Hispanic Studies at the University of Nottingham



TEXTILES

at SCGSG

Head of Department:
Mrs S. Parkes

AQA - Specification 8204

GCSE Textiles

The (Art & Design) Textiles GCSE course enables students to express their creativity through a diverse range of textile media.

Students explore how to convey ideas and meaning in their work where the outcome is developed using traditional and new textiles techniques and approaches. There is a great focus on the observational recording of the world around us as well as a more experimental approach.



Component

Weighting

ONE

Portfolio

60%

TWO

Externally set

40%



How am I assessed?

Students will be expected to demonstrate their ability to:

- Analyse and evaluate images, objects and artefacts showing understanding of context;
- Develop and explore ideas using media, processes and resources, reviewing, modifying and refining work as it progresses.
- Record observations, experiences and ideas in forms that are appropriate to intentions;
- Present a personal response, realising intentions and making informed connections with the work of others.

Component 1 - Portfolio

This is a collection of work completed across Years 10 and 11 on a variety of subject areas that demonstrates skills and techniques in a variety of media. Students will develop an independent project from the areas that they have studied, which will include natural forms, colour and landscape.

Component 2 - Externally Set Assignment

This externally set task allows students to choose their own starting point from a selection available and develop their own project with more independence. The final exam takes place over two days.

GCSE and Beyond...

Students may develop their interest in Textiles by opting to study Art & Design A-Level at Sutton Girls where we offer a broad course allowing for work to be produced in a wide range of materials, including Textiles! Students of A level Art have the autonomy to develop their work in their own personal direction using their individual skill set to their advantage which is an excellent springboard to further pathways within the booming Creative Industries and far beyond this sector. Creativity is likely to be extremely important in the future jobs market as an attractive employability skill. This course and further education within this subject area offer the opportunity to harness creativity alongside organisational skills which are transferable to many next steps.