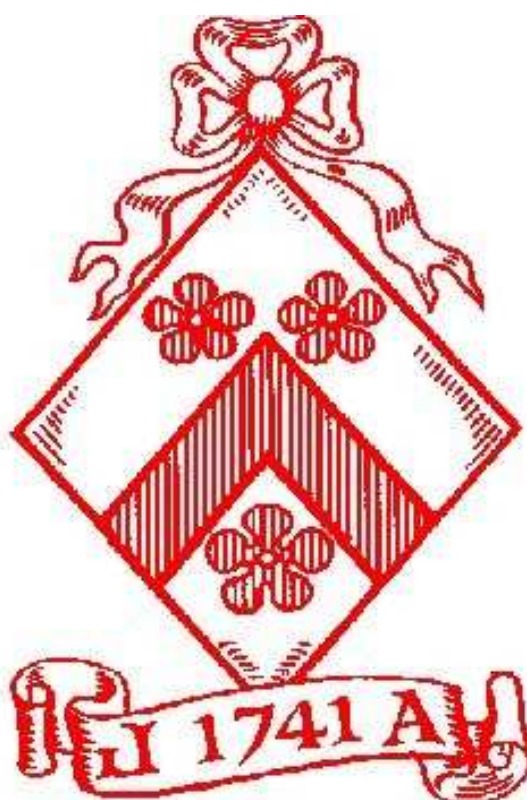


# **JAMES ALLEN'S GIRLS' SCHOOL**



# **GCSE CHOICES 2009**

## INTRODUCTION

In the Spring Term you will be making your choices for GCSE. At this stage, the curriculum will still be broad, so that you can continue to extend your knowledge and skills in a central core of subjects while beginning to make choices in other areas, based on your own abilities and preferences. This curriculum will ensure that as many opportunities as possible remain open to you, both for further study, at school and in higher education, and for your future career.

The GCSE curriculum at JAGS combines a core of compulsory subjects – English Language and English Literature, Mathematics, Biology, Chemistry and Physics – with choices taken from 3 different areas: Modern Languages, Humanities and Creative/Practical subjects. You will also take courses in PSHCE and PE. Individual Music lessons will, as far as possible, be timetabled in Rec and lunchtimes. You will choose a total of 10 or 11 GCSE subjects (as the new GCSE science curriculum leads to 3 separate GCSEs), and it is important that your workload is manageable to allow you to continue to pursue other interests. You should, therefore, only choose 11 subjects if you are extremely keen to pursue all the option subjects you have chosen. For most people 10 subjects will provide a better balance of lessons, study time and extra-curricular activities.

It is important that you keep as many options open as possible, and you should bear the A level curriculum in mind, which encourages breadth and from which you will be choosing 4 or 5 subjects. You should not be too quick to see yourself as a ‘scientist’ or a ‘humanities’ student, as combinations of these subjects will be encouraged right up to A level, and universities will be looking for students with breadth as well as depth in their choice of subjects. In making your choices listen to your parents, teachers and friends, but remember: *THE CHOICE AND THE WORK ARE YOURS.*

## MAKING YOUR CHOICE

Your choice should be based on:

- ◆ What is available;
- ◆ What you enjoy;
- ◆ What you are good at; and,
- ◆ What you might need for future study and careers.

You might have difficulty deciding which subjects to choose and be reluctant to opt for one course at the expense of another. It is therefore important to check which can be studied in the Sixth Form without a GCSE background and which cannot. Where the GCSE is a requirement for A Level, a pass at grade A is usually expected. There is often the chance to pick up subjects at a later stage during further and higher education.

First, look into the content of the course. A summary of each course can be found in this booklet. Make sure that it matches up with your abilities and interests and, if necessary, talk to girls in Years 10 and 11. It is always sensible to check how much coursework is involved so that you do not overload yourself.

Your interest must be in the subject itself, not the teacher. A poor reason for choosing a subject would be just because you like your teacher, since it is possible that a different member of staff would teach you next year.

A more positive indicator would be that you are successful in the subject, can cope competently with its demands and enjoy the lessons. Unfortunately we are not always good at the things we like and sometimes do not like the things at which we are good.

Some careers need certain subjects. If you have a particular career in mind you can find out what is required by using a computer database, such as KUDOS, and the careers sections in the library. For more information or advice you should consult your form teacher, however, by the end of Year 11 you might have very different aspirations. Fortunately the core subjects will help you to keep your options open.

Recommendations could be important. Your parents will have views and there are certainly advantages in listening to their advice. Your teachers will know your strengths and weaknesses, how you cope under pressure, how well you are likely to perform in your coursework. Your friends, too, may try to persuade you to follow their course.

**Remember: it has to be your choice, your work, your results!**

Where you have strengths or particular talents – be they practical, numerical, creative, expressed orally or in writing – you are likely to have greater confidence in your own ability to succeed and those subjects might well lead on to interests at a higher level.

**So listen to advice, think about it seriously and then choose your own GCSE course.**

**Core subjects** all girls **MUST** study:  
 English Language and English Literature  
 Mathematics  
 Biology, Chemistry and Physics

**Option subjects:** all girls must study 1 subject from each of groups 1-3

**1. Modern Foreign Languages**

French  
 French AS  
 German  
 Italian  
 Japanese  
 Russian  
 Spanish

**2. Humanities**

Classical Civilisation  
 Geography  
 History  
 Religious Studies

**3. Creative/Practical /Aesthetic**

Art  
 Design & Technology  
 Drama & Theatre Arts  
 Information Technology  
 Music  
 Physical Education

**4. Classical Languages**

Greek (ancient)  
 Latin

N.B. If you have already completed a GCSE in a Modern Foreign Language you may wish to choose a subject from group 1 but may choose another option from a different block.

**Additional subjects:** all girls may study one or two additional subjects from the 4 groups above, to make a total of 10 or 11 GCSE subjects; i.e. choosing one additional option subject will make a total of 10 GCSE subjects.

The following pages describing the GCSE courses have been drawn up by Heads of Departments to help you decide which subjects are best suited to your abilities and interests. They will answer your questions on the content and structure of the course, the balance between examinations and coursework requirements and, most importantly, the interest and relevance of the subject itself for you. Many of the GCSE courses will be changing in 2009. Where a particular examination board has not yet been chosen, a general description of the subject has been included and this should provide enough information to decide if the subject might be for you.

## ART & DESIGN

### The course

Art and Design aims to encourage the development of your personal interests and ideas through the use of a very varied and extensive range of media:

Painting	All media
Drawing	All media
Textiles	Batik, tapestry, canvas work, appliqué, machine embroidery, 3D textiles
Printing	Lino, relief printing, dry-point and mono print
Sculpture	Carving and construction
Photography	Digital
Collage	Various media
Mixed media	
ICT	As a tool for expressing and developing your ideas and as an end in its own right

The GCSE Art and Design course consists of one examination and a coursework portfolio. The course is designed to be a general course and enables pupils to explore a range of 2 and 3 dimensional approaches to their studies.

The themes for the coursework portfolio are wide-ranging and varied and allow for personal interpretation. Each member of staff teaches their own specialisation to every girl on a rotating system whereby they are taught by two teachers each week. The course encourages self motivation, sensitivity and visual awareness. It will improve your powers of observation and creativity, practical skills, personal expression, appreciation and understanding of art both critically and culturally. Your ability to analyse, select and abstract will progress and develop with studio investigations and working visits to sites of interest, museums and galleries.

The Department aims to help improve your ability in making art, by stimulating your curiosity in the surrounding visual environment. The course is engaging and exciting, requiring you to be receptive to new ideas, willing to explore and work ambitiously. Through the course you should gain new insight and enjoy the process of visual discoveries. Staff in the Art Department are teachers and artists and they are very happy to answer any questions you may have about the GCSE course.

<b>Examining Board:</b>	Under review
<b>Coursework:</b>	Completed during the first four terms (60%)
<b>Examinations:</b>	Begins February and is completed by Easter in Year 11(40%)
<b>A Level Access:</b>	A Level Art cannot be studied without GCSE Art

# CLASSICAL CIVILISATION

## The course and its content

This is an ideal course for anyone with a broad interest in the ancient world, covering as it does both Greek and Roman, literary and civilisation topics. No prior knowledge of any topic is required. No language work is involved; all the literature is studied in translation.

If you enjoy stories from mythology or are interested in how Romans and Greeks lived (perhaps you have visited sites or watch TV programmes about this?) you would enjoy Classical Civilisation. Equally, this course can be used to give a broader context to the study of an ancient language; there is no restriction on taking Classical Civilisation at GCSE in addition to Latin or Greek.

You will study **four** topics in total, from a mixture of literature and civilisation. These include:

Everyday life in Athens or Rome;

Homer's *Odyssey* or Ovid's *Metamorphoses*;

Community life in Sparta or Pompeii;

A research project based on Greek or Roman literature, the Olympic Games or Roman Britain.

Classical Civilisation involves an enormous variety of sources, both literary and archaeological. An important aspect of the subject is the opportunity to examine these in museums, exhibitions and archaeological sites. We are lucky to have the help of the British Museum Education Service, who are always willing to arrange special sessions for us. There will also be the opportunity to go to talks about the ancient world and to performances of Greek plays: a Festival of Greek Drama is an annual event in London, and there are performances of Greek plays in ancient Greek (with English subtitles) in London, Oxford and Cambridge.

**Examining board:** OCR (see [www.ocr.org.uk](http://www.ocr.org.uk) for full details)

**Coursework:** Unit A354 Culture and Society Controlled Assessment = 25% of total marks

You will complete **one** research task (word limit 2000 words)

**Examinations:** In addition to the coursework, the subject is examined in **three written papers**, taken at the end of the course:

Unit A351 City Life (1 hour) = 25% of total marks

Unit 352 Epic and Myth (1 hour) = 25% of total marks

Unit A353 Community Life (1 hour) = 25% of total marks

**A Level Access:** A level Classical Civilisation can be studied without GCSE Classical Civilisation.

# DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

## Aims and Objectives

A GCSE in design and technology will encourage you to be inspired, moved and changed by following a broad, coherent, satisfying and worthwhile course of study. DT brings together a broad range of designing and making skills to allow you to design innovative products according to a structured process. If you enjoy problem solving and making things, you will enjoy this subject. Design is a constantly evolving process requiring a broad range of skills and knowledge and if you take this GCSE we will help you become better project managers, designers and makers.

### **A GCSE in design and technology course will enable you to:**

- Actively engage in the processes of design and technology to develop as effective and independent learners;
- Make decisions, consider sustainability and combine skills with knowledge and understanding in order to design and make quality products;
- Explore ways in which aesthetic, technical, economic, environmental, ethical and social dimensions interact to shape designing and making;
- Analyse existing products and produce practical solutions to needs, wants and opportunities, recognising their impact on quality of life;
- Develop decision-making skills through individual and collaborative working;
- Understand that designing and making reflect and influence cultures and societies, and those products have an impact on lifestyle; and,
- Develop skills of creativity and critical analysis through making links between the principles of good design, existing solutions and technological knowledge.

### **DT Resistant Materials will give you the opportunity to:**

- Design creatively by generating, developing, planning and communicating ideas;
- Make products by working safely with tools, equipment, components, materials and ingredients;
- Apply systems and control, CAD/CAM, digital media and new technologies, where appropriate; and,
- Analyse and evaluate processes.

### **The course**

The course is taught through a series of design and make projects which include core teaching topics. Past projects include short problem solving exercises, workshop practice such as making salt and pepper pots, CAD/CAM practice and making a fully working radio using a simple to build electronic circuit. The coursework project is set within a timed period and set to a theme by the examination board; we give you guidance as to what might be suitable projects. In the past pupils have designed and made: lights for bunk beds, storage for cramped rooms, picnic equipment. There is always something that needs to be improved or a new market to design for and you will find the subject stimulating and rewarding.

**If you enjoyed the work done in Yr7-9 and enjoy problem solving, you will enjoy this course.**

### **Assessment:**

- 40% external assessment  
All questions are compulsory and it is marked externally
- 60% controlled assessment; this is set to a theme given by the examining board and completed under supervision. This work is internally assessed and externally moderated.

**A Level Access:** A level DT cannot be studied without GCSE DT

## DRAMA

Drama is an exciting and challenging subject. You will develop an insight into and an understanding of stage craft. Lessons focus on practical workshops that develop and build on existing drama skills, styles and conventions and introduce all the technical aspects of theatre practice. We take you to the theatre at least once a term so that you learn to analyse critically what you see and to inspire and encourage you to use some of these ideas in your own practical work.

**PRACTICAL COMPONENT** (Coursework – internally assessed, externally moderated).

The AQA syllabus is followed. 60% of the course is examined through two practical assessments carried out during Years 10 and 11.

Practical options include:

- Devised Drama
- Acting
- Theatre in Education
- Physical theatre
- Set Design
- Lighting Design
- Sound Design
- Mask design
- Puppets
- Make up
- Costume
- Props
- Stage Management

You will explore a range of the options listed above in Year 10 and then spend approximately six weeks preparing your chosen options. Emphasis is very clearly placed on your creative flair and ability to work effectively as part of an ensemble. You are given guidance, but have to get used to making your own decisions and organising the content of your own rehearsals. You will be given excellent technical support, if you have chosen to follow a design route during the course.

At the end of each practical assessment you will complete a portfolio evaluating your contribution to the final performance, analysing how you have developed skills and abilities during the rehearsal period. You are encouraged to look at weaknesses as well as strengths and use this document as a means of improving your future practical work.

**WRITTEN COMPONENT** (Externally set and marked):

40% of the course is examined through a written paper taken at the end of Year 11.

The written paper comprises three sections:

Section A - Practical work completed during the course

Section B - Study and performance of a scripted play

Section C - Study of a live theatre production seen

Candidates must answer Section A and choose one further question from Section B or C.

**A Level Access:** A level Drama and Theatre Studies can be studied without GCSE Drama.

# ENGLISH

## The course

Girls are prepared for both English Language and English Literature, which are awarded as separate certificates. However, the girls are taught both courses simultaneously, and the coursework for both is presented in a joint folder.

The basic criteria specified by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority comprises the following:

### **English Language**

Oral Assessment in a variety of tasks and purposes, including short talks given to the form at the end of Year 10, group discussions and paired tasks

Written Work in a wide range of forms: imaginative, factual, persuasive and analytical; for example: stories, descriptions, argued essays, literary appreciation including the study of comparative texts.

Reading Material will include non-fiction material and media analyses of articles, advertisements, leaflets and so forth, as well as a wide range of literature: Shakespeare, prose (both pre-20<sup>th</sup> Century and contemporary) and a study of literature written in English but from a different culture e.g. American, Australian, South African.

### **English Literature**

Wide ranges of texts are studied, including Shakespeare, 20<sup>th</sup> Century drama, pre- and post 20<sup>th</sup> Century poetry and prose.

### **Examining board:**

OCR

### **Coursework:**

English Language: 40% (written coursework and oral assessment)  
English Literature: 30%

### **Examinations:**

English Language: 60%  
English Literature: 70%

### **A Level Access:**

A Level English cannot be studied without GCSE English

## FRENCH (GCSE)

French is one of the world's major international languages: it is spoken by over 200 million people in 43 countries, on five continents. Knowing French increases your chances of communicating in a non-English-speaking country and the prestige of French art, music, dance, literature, fashion, cuisine, and cinema makes French a culturally important foreign language.

### The course

If you enjoy communicating with other people, finding out how language works and learning about different countries and cultures, studying GCSE French is an excellent choice for you!

Having studied French at Key Stage 3, you are well prepared to do a French GCSE course! You already know a lot of the vocabulary and grammar you will need for GCSE. You know how to talk about yourself, your family and friends, your hobbies, where you live, school, holidays, food and drink. You will build on these topics during your GCSE course, as well as moving on to new topics such as fashion, the internet, media etc. Therefore, you are already part way there!

The course aims to enable you to use your French with confidence in a large number of contexts and to appreciate modern French society and culture. You will be able to share your interests, ideas and opinions with other people who speak French.

Contemporary France and French-speaking countries are brought into the classroom with up-to-date material from magazines and newspapers as well as songs and films both documentary and artistic. You will learn about the countries where French is spoken and get a lot more out of a trip there.

Of course you will learn to understand a lot more French when you hear it or read it and be able to say and write a lot more in French but there are many other reasons for taking a French GCSE course. Language training develops skills which are useful in a wide range of future careers, such as the ability to communicate clearly, being confident about speaking in public, using problem-solving strategies etc.

Finally, you will add an international dimension to your choice of GCSE subjects, which is something many future employers and higher education providers look for.

**Examining board:** Under review

**Coursework:** None

### Examinations:

**Listening (20%), Reading (20%) & Writing (30%)** : assessed by examination

**Speaking (30%)**: assessed externally (There is additional preparation for the oral test in small groups in Year 11.)

All girls are entered for the Higher Tier examination.

**A Level Access:** A Level French cannot be studied without GCSE French.

## FRENCH AS LEVEL FOR POST GCSE CANDIDATES

### The course

This course has been designed to give you a profound understanding of the French language. Not only will you know more about the mechanics of the language – like grammar and vocabulary – but also about how people live and use language on a day-to-day basis. We have aimed to make the French A Level compelling by basing the study topics around lifestyle and social topics that you will be interested in.

In the first year you will study four main topics:

- **Media:** Television, Advertising, Communication technology
- **Popular Culture:** Cinema, Music, Fashion/trends
- **Healthy Living/Lifestyle:** Sport/exercise, Health and well-being, Holidays
- **Family/Relationships:** Relationships within the family, Friendships, Marriage/partnerships

These build on what you have studied at GCSE and cover a wide range of interesting and engaging issues. The common thread amongst these is discovering how people speak at a personal level, and what their individual views are on these everyday topics.

Although not strictly part of the AS syllabus, literature is an integral part of the AS course at JAGS. As part of the 2-year programme, students may study works from famous French authors and poets such as Baudelaire, Camus, Sartre, Maupassant, Mauriac to name but a few.

**Examining board:** AQA

**Examinations:**

#### **Unit 1 (2h) Listening/Reading/Writing**

Both in the listening and reading sections, tasks involve transfer of meaning into English and 2-4 items require short target-language or non-verbal responses. There is also a cloze test comprising ten discrete sentences and in each case candidates will be required to manipulate a given noun/verb/adjective. In the writing section, candidates respond to one question from a choice of three. There is one question on three of the four AS topic areas.

This accounts for 70% of your marks.

#### **Unit 2 (35mins including 20mins preparation time) Speaking**

The first part of the examination is based on a card with five questions printed on each card which will form the basis of the discussion. Candidates are also expected to respond to broader issues within the sub-topic area prescribed on the card.

The second part is a conversation which will cover three of the four AS topics. The candidate will start speaking on a chosen topic and the remaining two topics in the conversation will be chosen by the examiner from the topics prescribed for AS, avoiding any overlap with the topic of the stimulus card discussed in Part 1 and with the candidate's nominated topic.

This accounts for 30% of your marks.

## GEOGRAPHY

“Geography is all about the world in which we live and on which we depend. Landscapes, places and the fragile environment are all interwoven.” (The Royal Geographical Society)

Geography at GCSE will help you to understand some of the key issues facing society today: eg. why are the number of severe hurricanes increasing? What energy resources are sustainable? Why is Britain concerned about an ‘ageing population’? Why is the poverty gap growing between the economically richer and poorer countries of the world? Can we reduce damage from earthquakes?

The new Geography syllabus has more optional topics than in the past but will include core aspects of the subject:

**The Physical World**, such as rivers, coasts, glaciated and volcanic landscapes;  
**The Human World**, such as population and settlement; and,  
**Development and Sustainability.**

Skills you will acquire:

- ❖ written description and analysis;
- ❖ graphical skills, maps and various other techniques;
- ❖ statistical techniques; and,
- ❖ practical fieldwork and observation.

You will have the opportunity to develop as effective and independent learners and learn to appreciate the importance of places and environments at a local, national and global scale.

### Group Fieldwork during the course:

2 full days:                      Practical River Studies in Kent  
Romney Marsh, Rye and Winchelsea beach (settlement and coastal processes)

Local Fieldwork:                Dulwich Park and Dulwich Village

The **coursework** (25%) will be based on your practical field work but written up under controlled conditions in school. The subject for investigation will be drawn from the ‘core’ topics studied and will use data collected during field trips.

Geography is a subject which combines well with sciences, arts and humanities and offers a variety of skills useful in many careers.

**Examining Board:**        Under review

**A level Access:**            A level Geography can be studied without GCSE Geography.

# GERMAN

## The course

More people speak German as their native language than any other language in Europe. Learning German can connect you to 120 million native speakers around the globe including such diverse countries as Argentina, Namibia, Turkey and Romania amongst others. Many people also learn German as a second language, particularly in Central Europe. In fact it is the third most popular foreign language taught worldwide and the second most popular in Europe after English!

GCSE German is an enjoyable way to improve on your skills in speaking, reading, understanding and writing the language. The emphasis throughout is on effective communication and every girl will have the opportunity to practise her German on the Key Stage 4 exchange trip.

Having studied German at Key Stage 3, you are well prepared to do a German GCSE course! You already know a lot of the vocabulary and grammar you'll need for GCSE. You know how to talk about yourself, your family and friends, your hobbies, where you live, school, holidays, food and drink. You will build on these topics during your GCSE course, as well as moving on to new topics.

The course aims to enable you to achieve a high standard of communication in German. The range of topic areas covered is very wide and includes study and discussion of a great variety of contemporary issues such as fashion, the internet and media to name but a few. This enables you to use your German with confidence in a large number of contexts and to find out more about contemporary German society and culture. The language is brought to life in the classroom by using a great variety of resources and media, such as magazines, music videos, films, internet sites and so on.

Studying a modern foreign language adds an exciting international dimension to your choice of GCSE subjects and you will learn skills which are useful in a wide range of future careers. You will also create greater opportunities for yourself to work for companies with international links or to even work abroad!

**Examining board:** Under review

**Coursework:** None

### Examinations:

**Listening (20%), Reading (20%) and Writing (30%):** assessed by examination

**Speaking (30%):** assessed externally (There is additional preparation for the oral test in small groups in Year 11.)

All girls are entered for the Higher Tier examination.

**A Level Access:** A Level German cannot be studied without GCSE German.

# CLASSICAL GREEK

## The course and its content

The language, literature, mythology, philosophy, art and history of the ancient Greeks have had an immense influence on our own civilisation. Learning Greek gives you a chance to find out about all these aspects of the ancient world through the language of the Greeks themselves. If you are enjoying studying Latin and have a good understanding of how the language works, then you will welcome the challenges of Greek.

You may take Greek with Latin or Classical Civilisation if you wish. If you are considering reading Classics at Oxford or Cambridge, although prior knowledge of ancient Greek is not required, it is a considerable advantage. Few schools offer this subject, so this is a valuable opportunity for anyone interested in the ancient world.

You will develop your knowledge of the language through a course book that has been specially designed for students of your age, enabling you to make rapid progress through the basics of the language while gaining an insight into the life and culture of ancient Greece.

From this we progress to the study of 'real' Greek literature. You will read extracts from *Iphigenia in Aulis*, a play by the great tragedian **Euripides** as well as selections from **Lysia's** speech in the law courts of Athens in the case of the *Murder of Herodes*. As in Latin and Classical Civilisation, you will have the opportunity to extend your understanding of the subject by studying artefacts in the British Museum and other national collections. You will also go to talks about ancient Greece and to performances of Greek plays: a Festival of Greek Drama is an annual event in London, and there are performances of Greek plays in ancient Greek (with English subtitles) in London, Oxford and Cambridge.

**Examining board:** OCR (see [www.ocr.org.uk](http://www.ocr.org.uk) for full details)

**Coursework:** There is no coursework in this subject

**Examinations:** The subject is examined in written papers, taken at the end of the course.

Unit B401 Language (1 hour) = 25% of total marks: tests your understanding of unseen Greek through translation from Greek and comprehension questions: the passages will recount a story or stories drawn from mythology or Greek domestic life.

Unit B402 Language (1 hour) = 25% of total marks: tests your understanding of unseen Greek through translation from Greek and comprehension questions: the passages will recount a story or stories drawn from history.

Unit B403 Prose Literature (1 hour) = 25% of total marks: tests your knowledge, appreciation and understanding of one of two Greek prescribed prose texts.

Unit B404 Verse Literature (1 hour) = 25% of total marks: tests your knowledge, appreciation and understanding of one of two Greek prescribed verse texts.

**A level Access:** A level Greek cannot be studied without GCSE Greek.

# HISTORY

## The course

As well as providing you with a backdrop to the world we live in, the study of history at GCSE develops essential skills, such as the ability to analyse and evaluate evidence and to understand abstract concepts. The capacity for reasoned argument and balanced judgement and the opportunity to present your ideas fluently and coherently are vital outside the discipline of history as well as being a very useful basis for humanities subjects at A Level!

We study Modern World History because this gives you the opportunity to study Twentieth Century History in both outline and depth, thus giving you an insight into and an understanding of the contemporary world.

The course consists of:

**Examining Board:** Under review

**One Outline Study:** The Cold War and Superpower Relations

**Two Depth Studies:**

- 1) Russia: Tsardom to Communism
- 2) **Either** British History Depth Study  
**Or**, USA and Vietnam, 1964-75\*

**Coursework:** Historical Enquiry on **either** British History Depth Study **Or** USA and Vietnam 1964-75\*

The coursework counts for 25% of the total marks awarded at GCSE.

**Examinations:** The depth and outline studies are examined via two examination papers that total 75% of the marks.

**A Level Access:** A Level History can be studied without GCSE History

\* (At least one British History Unit must be studied).

# INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

## Introduction

The purpose of the course is to look at how computers work, to give you skill and confidence with the many kinds of computer program you might come across at school or university or in employment, to help you understand how computers can be used effectively and where they cannot be used, how computers affect jobs and society, the use of the Internet and the Web, how programs are constructed and tested, how projects are planned and so on.

### Requirements and aims:

This course is open to *anyone* wanting a more thorough knowledge of the subject. You do not need to have done *any* ICT before. You simply need to be interested in the subject and want to know more about how computers work and how they can be used effectively. You do not have to have a computer at home, but it helps. You will have *all* the school facilities available for your use, including laptop computers.

The aim of the course is to encourage you to think creatively and logically. You will gain confidence and experience using a wide range of software and hardware. In addition, you will get the opportunity to design, implement and test simple programs for a variety of applications, for example, playing a game or teaching people their times tables.

### The contents of the course:

The course involves plenty of practical, hands on work using software such as desktop publishing and word processing, spreadsheets, presentation software, databases, graphics, video editing, Web design, animation, CAD, computer control and robotics, expert systems, voice recognition and much more. If you have used some of these programs before, it is an opportunity to look at some of the more advanced features.

The theoretical part looks at how computers work, binary numbers, logic, communications (including mobile phones), networks, techniques for solving problems and designing and creating programs, types of computer-related jobs, project management, legal and criminal issues such as viruses and spam, the social effects and even the history and future of computers, how to install and maintain hardware and software plus a lot more.

### Why should you choose this course?

Good computer skills are valuable in all walks of life. Although many people can use computers reasonably effectively, a good understanding of what is really going on 'inside the box' is an enormous advantage. It gives you confidence and an ability to adapt to new programs.

If you are interested in problem solving, programming or doing puzzles, then you will enjoy this subject. You do not have to be great at Mathematics, just able to think simply and logically about a problem and break it down into simple tasks.

With small groups and lots of hands-on experience, it is both fun and rewarding.

### Other information

We also offer ECDL that will give you basic practical computer skills using certain programs.

**A level Access:** A level Computing can be studied without GCSE Information Technology.

# ITALIAN

## The course

The course aims to develop the ability to use the language effectively for practical communication both in speech and writing. It will also foster understanding and awareness of Italy, its people and their way of life. It will offer enjoyment, a sense of achievement and intellectual stimulation.

The course will build on the knowledge of Italian acquired in Years 8 and 9 to develop understanding of the spoken and written forms of Italian in a range of contexts reflecting the pupils' interests and maturity. It will enhance their ability to communicate effectively by increasing the range of vocabulary and structures and extending, at the same time, their knowledge of grammar and their ability to apply it. Equal emphasis will be given to listening, reading, speaking and writing skills in order to achieve the overall aim of understanding and communicating in Italian.

Pupils will have the opportunity to work together developing and improving their skills through creative activities such as role-plays, songs, games, poetry writing, presentations and discussions.

## The content

Topic areas with related sub-topics are:

### **Media and Culture**

- Music/film/reading
- Fashion/celebrities/religion
- Blogs/internet

### **Sport and Leisure**

- Hobbies/interests
- Sporting events
- Lifestyle choices

### **Travel and tourism**

- Holidays
- Accommodation
- Eating, food, drink

### **Business, work and employment**

- Work experience/part-time jobs
- Product or service information

**Examining board:** Edexcel

**Coursework:** None

**Examinations:** 100% terminal examination in listening, speaking, reading and writing

**A Level Access:** A Level Italian cannot be studied without GCSE Italian

# JAPANESE

## The course

If you enjoy learning about other cultures and ways of life and are intrigued by a non-European language with a different script (in fact several different scripts), this is the right course for you. You will be at an advantage if you have attended a taster course in Year 9.

Japan has a fascinating culture and is an important economic power. Japanese grammar is relatively easy : no genders, no cases, no plural endings, no adjectival agreement and no verb endings.

You will master the basics of the language and develop listening, reading, writing and oral skills that will enable you to communicate in everyday situations. You will be amazed at how much you learn in such a short time but you will need to be able to organise your time well in order to practise new characters very regularly.

The course will introduce you to Japanese history and culture using authentic materials, tapes and videos. Visits are planned to the Japan Centre in Central London. A trip to Japan is planned for Easter 2009.

During the 2-year course you will learn to :

- Read and write Hiragana and Katakana
- Read and write 200 kanji characters
- Apply language skills across a range of contexts
- Become familiar with Japanese culture

Topics covered include :

- Education, training and employment
- Family, home and daily routine
- Media, entertainment and youth culture
- Social activities, fitness and health

**Listening, Reading & Writing:** assessed by examination

**Speaking:** Assessed externally after a one-to-one recorded oral examination with your own teacher. (There is additional preparation for the oral test in Year 11.)

**Examination board:** Edexcel

**Coursework:** None

**Examinations:** Tests in all 4 skills = 100%  
Oral, listening, reading and writing. All skills have equal weighting.

**A Level Access:** A Level Japanese cannot be studied without GCSE Japanese

# LATIN

## The course

If you enjoy studying Latin now, you are certain to find the GCSE course stimulating. The work you have already done in Years 7 - 9 is an excellent foundation for it. Note that you may take Latin with Classical Civilisation or Greek, if you wish. Latin helps develop your mental dexterity and analytical skills, and as such is highly valued by employers and universities. A GCSE in Latin is a distinctive qualification, and we are fortunate in being able to offer it at JAGS.

## Content

Initially we continue to use the Cambridge Latin Course, building on the grammar and vocabulary we have already covered in Years 7 - 9. By reading the stories about the characters and their lives, the plot becomes increasingly entertaining as the scene shifts to Rome.

From this we progress to the study of 'real' Latin literature. You will read and discuss prose extracts from an anthology of Latin writing which has been specially chosen to be interesting and enjoyable for GCSE candidates, including **Caesar**, **Tacitus** and **Pliny** writing about Britain in the time of the Druids. You will also read a selection of Latin poetry by authors such as **Virgil**, **Ovid** and **Horace**. As in Greek and Classical Civilisation, you will have the opportunity to extend your understanding of the subject by studying artefacts in the British Museum and other national collections, and to go to talks about ancient Rome and Classical literature.

**Examining board:** OCR (see [www.ocr.org.uk](http://www.ocr.org.uk) for full details)

**Coursework:** There is no coursework in this subject

**Examinations:** The subject is examined in written papers, taken at the end of the course.

Unit A401 Language (1 hour) = 25% of total marks: tests your understanding of unseen Latin through translation from Latin and comprehension questions: the passages will recount a story or stories drawn from mythology or Latin domestic life.

Unit A402 Language (1 hour) = 25% of total marks: tests your understanding of unseen Latin through translation from Latin and comprehension questions: the passages will recount a story or stories drawn from history.

Unit A403 Prose Literature (1 hour) = 25% of total marks: tests your knowledge, appreciation and understanding of one of two Latin prescribed prose texts.

Unit A404 Verse Literature (1 hour) = 25% of total marks: tests your knowledge, appreciation and understanding of one of two Latin prescribed verse texts.

**A Level Access:** A level Latin cannot be studied without GCSE Latin

# MATHEMATICS

## The course

The Mathematics Syllabus aims to enable you to:

1. Develop a positive attitude to Mathematics
2. Consolidate basic skills and meet appropriately challenging work
3. Apply your mathematical knowledge and understanding to solve problems
4. Think and communicate mathematically – precisely, logically and creatively
5. Appreciate the place and use of Mathematics in society
6. Apply mathematical concepts to real life situations
7. Work co-operatively and in an independent, practical and investigative way
8. Acquire a firm foundation for further study.

As well as being taught to solve numerical, algebraic and spatial problems and how to look critically at collecting, processing and interpreting data, you will learn how to estimate and calculate probabilities of events. Using a calculator efficiently for calculation and graph plotting is built into the course.

**Examining board:** OCR (Syllabus A J512)

**Coursework:** There is no coursework component for the final examination.

**Examinations:** There are 2 examination papers, each worth 50% of the final mark.

**A Level Access:** A Level Mathematics cannot be studied without GCSE Mathematics

# MUSIC

## The course

GCSE Music gives you the opportunity to become a more rounded musician and to discover some really exciting music, in both challenging and familiar styles. You need to be about Grade 4 standard at the start of the course.

You will be given the opportunity to deepen your awareness of the different styles through listening, composing and performing work relating to four different 'Areas of Study'. These cover classical, contemporary, world and pop music; from variations to minimalism and electronic music, to Britpop and dance music, to African drumming and fusions.

Music Technology is an important part of the course. *Sibelius* and *Cubase* are used for composition and you will learn how these programmes can best help when preparing coursework.

Involvement in active music making within the school is essential, be it in Symphony Orchestra, Jazz Band, Chamber Choir or any other group. You are also expected to take full advantage of other performing opportunities such as the House Music Competition and the Piano Festival.

**Examining board:** Edexcel

**Coursework:** Performance: 30% of final marks  
Composition: 30% of final marks

**Examinations:** Listening: 40% of final marks

**A Level Access:** A Level Music cannot be studied without GCSE Music

# PHYSICAL EDUCATION

## The course

GCSE Physical Education is an extension of the core curriculum aimed at those pupils who wish to advance their practical and theoretical understanding of this subject.

There are four units in the course and the GCSE is a double award thus the pupils gain two GCSE's.

### **Unit 1 Knowledge and Understanding for The Active Participant**

Students will develop their knowledge and understanding of the following roles that the active participant can adopt: player/performer, organiser, leader/coach, choreographer and official. They will also learn the reasons how a variety of factors such as disability, gender and age can play a part in physical development. There is a strong link with biological effects that also affect performance and the concept that different areas of fitness training can affect performance.

**Assessment is by external examination and this is 20% of the award.**

### **Unit 2 The Active Participant**

Students will have the opportunity to participate in two of the above named roles with at least two performances being as a player or participant from the following areas of activity: games, gymnastics, dance, athletics, life saving and outdoor activities and fitness and health activities.

**Assessment is internal and moderated by an examiner. It is 30% of the award.**

### **Unit 3 Knowledge and Understanding for The Involved Participant**

This unit covers topics such as administration of sport, fitness testing, training and the effect on performance, diet and first aid.

**Assessment is by external examination and this is 20% of the award.**

### **Unit 4 The Active Participant**

This is an extension of unit 2 and the students will have four internal assessment again from the roles mentioned in unit 1.

**Assessment is internal and moderated by an external examiner. It is 30% of the award.**

**Examining Board:** AQA

**A level Access:** A level PE can be studied without GCSE PE

# RELIGIOUS STUDIES

## The course

Religious Studies GCSE is an end in itself, teaching you to understand those for whom commitment to their faith is important, increasing your general knowledge and making you think about things that matter. It is also an excellent basis for the study of RS and Philosophy at A Level.

## Content

1. You will discuss a wide range of up-to-the-minute, controversial ethical issues, comparing Christian views with others'. These issues will include:
  - *Morality and decision-making*
  - *Religion and human relationships* (including marriage, divorce, sexual relationships, children and the elderly)
  - *Religion and medical ethics* (including the sanctity of life, birth control, fertility treatment, abortion, suicide, euthanasia and the use of animals in medical research)
  - *Religion and equality* (including racism and sexism)
  - *Religion, peace and justice* (including attitudes to war, violence and pacifism, crime and punishment and social injustice)
  - *Environmental issues*
  - *Religion and the media* (including freedom of speech and censorship.)
2. You will learn about the history, practices, beliefs and culture of Judaism (as one of the world's major religions and the basis for Christian Ethics).  
You will study
  - *The History of the Jewish People*
  - *Major Divisions and Different Interpretations*
  - *Anti-Semitism, The Holocaust, Zionism and the Middle East crisis*
  - *Festivals, Fasts and Special Days*
  - *Places and types of worship and pilgrimage*
  - *Observance at home (such as the kosher food laws) and in the Community*
  - *Celebrations associated with passage through life (birth, bar-mitzvah, marriage and death)*
  - *Sacred writings*

For both parts you will need to acquire factual knowledge, understand the responses that accompany religious commitment, evaluate issues and form your own opinions.

As part of the course you will have the opportunity to listen to visiting speakers and go on outings, to add to your enjoyment of the course.

In conclusion, this is definitely a subject for those who aim to enter one of the caring professions, for those who are curious and for those who have opinions and who like to express them!

**Examining board:** OCR

**Examinations:** Two examinations of 2 hours each, one for each part of the course (as detailed above), amounting to 100% of the final marks.

**A Level Access:** A Level Religious Studies can be studied without GCSE Religious Studies

# RUSSIAN

## The course

- Are you thinking of a career in which foreign languages are important or beneficial?
- Russia has a rich culture waiting to be explored in greater depth.
- Russian GCSE will be a challenge – are you ready for it?

Russia has a rich literary culture to explore and many people think that over the next 20 years Russia will become a powerful economic force in the world. Be one of the few to speak Russian well!

## Content

The course will cover the four common topic areas as set out by the Board:

- Out and About;
- Customer services and transactions;
- Personal information; and,
- Future plans, education and work.

The speaking and writing units will relate to the following broad themes:

- Media, travel and culture; and,
- Sport, leisure and work

There is flexibility and choice in the speaking unit, and students are free to focus on any aspect of **one** of these two themes above.

<b>Examining board:</b>	Edexcel
<b>Coursework:</b>	None
<b>Examinations:</b>	The examination tests your skills in listening, speaking, reading and writing. There will be 4 papers: listening (27%), speaking (23%), reading (27%) and writing (23%).
<b>A Level Access:</b>	A Level Russian cannot be studied without GCSE Russian

## SCIENCE

Girls continue with nine lessons per week in Science. Each girl will have three lessons per week in each of the three Science subjects. They are prepared for separate GCSEs in Biology, Chemistry and Physics. Each subject is assessed by a combination of terminal examinations and coursework, which takes the form of class practical work and a written test.

## BIOLOGY

### The course

The content for Biology includes:

*B1*

Homeostasis, drugs, infectious disease, immunity, ecology and environment, variation, genetic modification and evolution.

*B2*

Cell biology, cellular transport, photosynthesis, energy transfer in food chains, enzymes, genetic inheritance.

*B3*

Exchange surfaces, mammalian transport, microbiology and biotechnology

**Examining board:** AQA

**Coursework:** Practical task and written examination carried out in class making up 25%.

**Examination:** 3 written papers (Biology 1, Biology 2 & Biology 3) making up 75%.

**A Level Access:** A Level Biology cannot be studied without GCSE Biology

## CHEMISTRY

### The course

The content of Chemistry includes :

*C1*

Rocks and building, rocks and metals, crude oil, products from oil including polymers, plant oils, the changing world.

*C2*

Structure and bonding, structure and properties, reaction quantities, rates of reaction, energy changes, electrolysis, acids, alkalis and salts.

*C3*

Development of the Periodic Table, further acids and bases, water, energy calculations, chemical analysis.

**Examining board:** AQA

**Coursework:** Practical task and written examination carried out in class making up 25%.

**Examination:** 3 written papers (Chemistry 1, Chemistry 2 and Chemistry 3) making up 75%

**A Level Access:** A Level Chemistry cannot be studied without GCSE Chemistry.

# PHYSICS

## The course

The content of Physics includes:

*P1*

Heat transfer, using energy, electrical energy, generating electricity, electromagnetic waves, radioactivity, the origins of the universe.

*P2*

Motion, speeding up and slowing down, work, energy and momentum, static electricity; current electricity, mains electricity, nuclear physics.

*P3*

Turning forces, light and sound, electromagnetism, stars and space.

**Examining board:** AQA

**Coursework:** Practical task and written examination carried out in class making up 25%.

**Examination:** 3 written papers (Physics 1, Physics 2 and Physics 3) making up 75%

**A Level Access:** A Level Physics cannot be studied without GCSE Physics

# SPANISH

## The course

Spanish GCSE is a lively way to learn to speak, read and write the language and find out about Spain's and Latin America's varied and enchanting culture. Having studied Spanish at Key Stage 3, you are well prepared to do Spanish at GCSE level! You already know a lot of the vocabulary and grammar you will need for GCSE. You will build on these topics during your GCSE course, as well as moving on to new topics. Therefore, you are already part way there! The course is designed to help you communicate in many areas of life from everyday activities to the international world. It aims to encourage enjoyment, provide intellectual stimulation and it is the stepping stone for AS/A2 Spanish.

Studying Spanish at GCSE adds an international dimension to your choice of GCSE subjects, which is something many future employers and universities look for. The advantages of modern languages for anyone wishing to work successfully in the international world are evident. Furthermore, language training also develops many skills which are useful in a wide range of future careers, such as the ability to communicate clearly, being confident about speaking in public, using problem-solving strategies etc.

Spanish is the third most commonly spoken language in the world and, in terms of number of native speakers, it second only to Mandarin Chinese! It is the official language in more than twenty countries and is one of six official languages of United Nations. Whether you wish to trek around Perú in your gap year or work for the European Union, or you simply would like to be able to order some food whilst soaking up the sun on one of the Costas, Spanish is the language for you!

**Examining board:** Under review

### Examinations:

**Listening (20%) and Reading (20%)** : assessed by examination

**Writing (30%) and Speaking (30%)**: assessed externally (There is additional preparation for the oral test in small groups in Year 11.)

All girls are entered for the Higher Tier examination.

**A Level Access:** A Level Spanish cannot be studied without GCSE Spanish.