



# NORTH CESTRIAN GRAMMAR SCHOOL

YEAR 10 GCSE OPTIONS BROCHURE 2010 – 2012  
V1.0



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## **YEAR 10 GCSE OPTIONS**

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## **GCSE CURRICULUM – YEARS 10 AND 11**

The School offers a carefully structured curriculum designed to allow each pupil to make the most of their potential. The aim is to develop individual academic skill, encouraging each pupil to work with increasing confidence knowing that the demands made of them pose realistic challenges in line with established personal performance. The ultimate aim is to maximise the opportunity of gaining a minimum of five GCSE passes graded at between A\* and C. This is the level at which we can confidently expect a pupil to be prepared for the challenge of “A” Level study.

Many pupils will exceed this expectation and for them the challenge is to pass all subjects with the highest possible grades. These pupils should study nine GCSE subjects with a core content of Mathematics, English, Science and ICT. Wherever possible, we try to arrange the timetable to allow pupils a free choice in mixing their options, in the knowledge that motivation and understanding are enhanced when they have chosen subjects in which they have real interest. However, it is important to achieve a balanced package. In cases where options appear misbalanced, or if there is a timetabling problem, we will ask to discuss the matter further with parents.

For some, the challenge of attaining five GCSE passes at Grade C or better is a considerable one and for these pupils the Year 10A package is designed to offer a reduced number of GCSE options allowing additional curriculum time to reinforce learning. All the key components of a balanced curriculum have been built into this package to reinforce examination performance in English, Mathematics, Science and ICT whilst still allowing time for two options chosen from humanities, arts and communication. These arrangements significantly increase the likelihood of GCSE success as the pupils can focus on the most important subjects. The additional classroom time means that topics can be most carefully explained and reinforced, coursework can be more closely monitored and there is a reduction in learning pressure as examinations approach. Success in six GCSEs will still leave each pupil well placed for “A” Level study and their results are likely to be better than if they had been forced to continue on a full programme of nine GCSE courses.

The final decision on the number of subjects to be chosen by each pupil must lie with the School, but it is anticipated that it will come as no surprise. Our knowledge of each pupil and psychometric testing enables us to pinpoint those who would benefit from a reduced examination load. Our process of consultation involving both pupils and their parents is intended to build on that knowledge so that the curriculum which is embarked on leaves pupils, parents and staff confident that the very best results will be achieved in two years time.

In the end we want every pupil to be delighted with their GCSEs knowing that they do them real credit and represent a real improvement in standards of achievement over the five years since arrival at North Cestrian.

We are confident that together we can make this a reality.

GCSE Pass rate:	2009	84%
	2008	87%
	2007	81%

# **STANDARD YEAR 10 CURRICULUM**

Each pupil studies Mathematics, English Language and English Literature, Science and ICT plus a further FOUR options, which are listed below.

## **CORE SUBJECTS**

	Periods
Science	6
English	4
Mathematics	4
Games	2
ICT and PE	1
Form Period, Careers & PSE	1
Options (4 subjects x 3 periods)	<u>12</u>
	30

## **OPTIONAL SUBJECTS**

Business Studies  
French  
Geography  
History

Art & Design  
Design & Technology  
Music  
PE

## **10A CURRICULUM**

Each pupil studies Mathematics, English Language, English Literature, Science and ICT, plus a further two options chosen from the list below. Pupils will be allowed to express a preference for these options but the School will make the final decision in line with the best interests of the pupils and the feasibility of setting.

### **CORE SUBJECTS**

	<b>Periods</b>
English	5
Mathematics	5
Science	5
ICT	2
Form Period, Careers + PSE	1
Games	2
PE	1
European Studies	1
Options (2 subjects x 4 periods)	<u>8</u>
	30

### **OPTIONAL SUBJECTS**

Geography	Design + Technology
History	PE
Art + Design	

This list comprises subjects that may be offered. It may not be possible to provide the full range of options and the list will be finalised later in the year.

## **YEAR 10 INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY**

In Year 10 all pupils will follow the OCR CLAIT course which comprises the following units:

1. File Management and e-Document Production
2. Creating Spreadsheets and Graphs
3. Database Manipulation
4. e-Publication Creation
5. Create an e-Presentation

In order to gain a Clait Level 1 three units are required. The expectation is that in Year 11 pupils will progress to the Clait Diploma by completing a further two units. (Unit 1 is compulsory). All units are internally assessed and moderated by the examination board.

This qualification is equivalent to a GCSE and is an acceptable entry point for pupils who wish to study Information Communication Technology at an advanced level.

## **SCIENCE AT GCSE**

All students in Year 10 follow the Core Science AQA Specification 4461. Modules are taken in March and June providing the opportunity to bank a full Science GCSE by the end of the year. These modules can be retaken in Year 11 in November, March and June to achieve a higher grade.

During Year 11 Additional Science AQA Specification 4463 is followed. Modules are taken in June.

In the Core Science the Modules are multiple choice tests which are answered on a special answer sheet. In the Additional Science there are compulsory structured questions of different lengths, providing opportunity for extended prose writing and incorporating calculations and data response.

Both the Core and Additional course are weighted equally between the three individual sciences of Biology, Chemistry and Physics and lead directly on to "A" Level in any or all of the subjects.

# **INFORMATION ABOUT GCSE OPTIONS**

## **ART AND DESIGN - OCR**

From September 2009 students will follow the new Art and Design Course which encourages learners to consider a wide range of approaches to individual expression in terms of materials, process and techniques.

In Year 10, students will follow a foundation course in which they are given the opportunity to work in a wide variety of media, such as painting, printmaking, ceramics, photography and sculpture as well as studying the artwork of expert practitioners.

In Year 11, learners produce a portfolio of work for assessment over a period of 45 hours which is worth 60% of the qualification followed by a 10 hour practical test which is worth the remaining 40% of the total.

## **BUSINESS STUDIES - AQA**

GCSE Business Studies provides students with the opportunity to explore the dynamic world of business, covering topics such as Entrepreneurship, Marketing, Finance and People in Business.

### **Assessment**

From 2009, the assessment of students will change and students will have external examinations in both Year 10 and Year 11. In addition, there will be a “controlled assessment” which requires students to create a piece of coursework on the topic of “Investigating Businesses”.

Students will have the opportunity to research real businesses and visits to companies such as Cadburys, and Coca-Cola will support students’ learning beyond the classroom.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY - RESISTANT MATERIALS - AQA**

This subject is concerned with the activity of designing and making, which is delivered through wood, metal and plastics. It may also involve limited work in mechanisms.

The aims of the subject are to encourage pupils to consider the effects and implications of a technological activity; to give pupils opportunities to develop practical abilities and the confidence to design and make products for identified purposes.

Assessment at GCSE is by means of a written paper, module 1 (40%), for which the Board issues a preparation sheet giving details of the design context for the paper. Coursework, module 2 (60%), consists of two elements, designing and making, and should occupy 40 hours of supervised time.

The subject content is very wide ranging including activities related to industrial practice. Pupils are encouraged to investigate, disassemble and evaluate familiar products and apply skills and knowledge from other subjects such as, mathematics and science.

Design and Technology follows the AQA Syllabus. It is an excellent subject to satisfy all the key skills and has good progression to AS and A2 Level.

## **DRAMA GCSE - EDEXCEL**

Drama GCSE offers students the opportunity to experience all aspects of theatre, developing performance skills in script and devised theatre units as well as learning new techniques in theatrical production. Technical specialities include stage management, lighting, sound, set design, mask and properties.

Emphasis is placed on positive teamwork to solve creative and logistical problems. A demanding course, Drama seeks to promote individual prowess alongside social skills. Clear commitment to rehearsals, to the creative process and to the other course members is vital.

### **Assessment is via:**

- two units of practical coursework (each accompanied by supporting written documentary evidence) (60%)
- a practical examination (40%).
- A major element of the course is practical performance and students are actively encouraged to work with touring theatre companies and to visit a variety of plays throughout the course, in addition to department led visits.

## **FRENCH - AQA**

The course is designed to prepare pupils for the GCSE examination, the purpose of which is to assess the candidate's ability:

to understand the spoken language  
to understand the written language  
to communicate in the spoken language  
to communicate in the written language.

During the two years' study every effort will be made to ensure that maximum progress is achieved in the four skills mentioned above, and pupils will be entered for the examination at levels appropriate to their attainment. Each of the skill areas is examined at Foundation or Higher Level. Some candidates may be advised in due course to only enter at Foundation Level for these skill areas.

Experience shows that pupils who have been to France benefit greatly and their enjoyment and appreciation of the subject have been enhanced. This is even more important as most of the text of the examination is in French.

## **GEOGRAPHY - AQA**

The advantage of Geography as an option at this stage lies in the fact that it is not only a major Arts subject at AS and A2 level, but it also combines well with Science subjects in the Sixth Form. The GCSE course entails a significant amount of reading and writing as well as studying numerical material.

In common with other GCSE subjects, Geography will undergo significant Specification changes from September 2009. We will teach AQA Specification A which has three parts:

1. A paper on Physical Geography (37.5%)
2. A paper on Human Geography (37.5%)
3. Coursework/Fieldwork which involves an investigation on an aspect of local Geography. It presents the opportunity to produce an extended piece of work over a long period of time. (25%)

The course will be examined by modules rather than end-of-course examinations as at present. The first module will be examined at the end of Year Ten.

**HISTORY** - **AQA**

This popular and successful two year course contains three elements.

**Unit 1** - **International Relations:** **(37.5%)**

Conflict and Peace in 20<sup>th</sup> Century

The origin of the First World War

Peacemaking 1918-1919

League of Nations

Hitler's Foreign Policy

Origins of the Second World War

**Unit 2** - **Twentieth Century – Depth Studies** **(37.5%)**

The Roaring 20s: USA 1919 – 1929

Hitler's Germany, 1929 – 1939

**Unit 3** - **Historical Enquiry** **(25%)**

The British People in War

Those who choose to undertake this course must be capable of retaining factual knowledge and possess competent reading and writing skills. An awareness of, and interest in, current political issues will be a distinct advantage.

## MUSIC – EDEXCEL

### Why YOU should study music at GCSE

- Recent studies show students who study music are higher achievers at secondary and higher education.
- Studying Music and musical instruments teach students the value of sustained effort to achieve excellence and concrete rewards of hard work.
- Music performance teaches young people to conquer fear and task risks.
- Do you like music? If so you studying it will teach you the skills to create your own compositions.
- If you are interested in Music Technology.
- If you would like to create your own music using Music Technology.
- If you would like to broaden your knowledge of all types of music including classical, popular and world.
- If you would like to be challenged, moved and changed by following a broad, coherent, satisfying and worthwhile course of study.
- Studying music encourages students to evaluate their own and others' work.
- If you would like to develop broader life skills and attributes, including critical and creative thinking, aesthetic sensitivity, emotional awareness, cultural understanding, self-discipline, self-confidence and self-motivation.

## COURSE OUTLINE

### Unit 1 – performing

#### **Overview of content**

One solo performance and one ensemble performance

### Unit 2 – Composition

#### **Overview of content**

Two compositions, or two arrangements, or one composition and one arrangement.

### Unit 3 – listening and appraising

#### **Overview of content**

- Knowledge and study of set works in the Areas of Study

#### **Overview of assessment**

A 1-hour and 30-minute written paper

## AFTER GCSE

If you enjoyed the course you can consider pursuing this subject at AS or A Level in MUSIC or MUSIC TECHNOLOGY. Your listening skills will enhance the aural perception needed in language examinations. Your performing skills will give you confidence in standing in front of an audience, useful when presenting on a subject in your future job.

The course will develop both the theoretical and practical knowledge of Physical Education. The theoretical elements of the course are Health and Fitness, Principles of Training, Factors Affecting Individual Performance and Participation and Social and Cultural Factors Affecting Participation. The practical elements of the course will cover performance, analysis and officiating and the production of a Personal Exercise Programme.

The students will be given the opportunity to experience a wide variety of sports which cover the National Curriculum Activity areas which will be used for their final assessments. The opportunity also exists for students to use some sports which they participate in outside of school that is covered by the AQA approved list.

The course is not one to be taken lightly and requires students to have both a good practical background and be diligent with academic studies.

**Examination**

**Knowledge and Understanding for the Active Participant.**

Theory – 40% of total marks. Written paper. 1½ Hours.

Includes a pre release scenario.

**The Active Participant.**

Practical – 60% of total marks.

4 Assessments from at least 2 groups/ways of thinking:  
at least 2 as player/performer.

## **STUDIES BEYOND GCSE**

At the age of sixteen the majority of our pupils go on to "AS" Levels, or some form of Further Education, and you should bear in mind that the decisions you make now will affect your choices in the future.

Remember the following points:

- a) Only pupils who are talented in Mathematics, Sciences and French will be able to cope with these subjects at AS Level.
- b) Those to whom this does not apply should look very carefully at History, Geography Business Studies or Economics. These are very popular subjects at "AS" Level, and they will qualify you for a very wide range of careers in Commerce and Management.
- c) The School has a strong reputation in practical subjects such as Art and Design and excellent facilities in technical subjects which include Music Technology, ICT and Design Technology. These are excellent choices for a broad based curriculum but before making a decision a pupil should consider both their natural aptitude for the subject and their commitment to it. All these courses involve a substantial amount of coursework and success depends upon a pupil's ability to rise to the challenge involved in producing design folders and practical models over an extended period.

The following subjects are available in our Sixth Form:

Art & Design	Economics	Information Technology
Biology	English Literature	Mathematics
Business Studies	French	Music Technology
Chemistry	Geography	Physical Education
Design Technology	History	Physics

Each student chooses four subjects and these are then grouped into 5 timetable blocks attempting wherever possible to allow students maximum flexibility of choice. The rest of their time-table currently consists of:

Games	-	2 periods
Form Period, Careers and PSHE	-	2 periods
Private Study	-	5 periods



North Cestrian Grammar School  
Dunham Road  
Altrincham  
Cheshire  
WA14 4AJ

**0161 928 1856 | [office@ncgs.co.uk](mailto:office@ncgs.co.uk)**