A rewarding learning experience!

Year 9 Options Booklet

RESPECT • OPTIMISM • COMMUNITY • KINDNESS

Contents

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Baccalauréat Subjects

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And I say also unto thee,
that thou art Peter,
and upon this
ROCK
I will build My church;

Introduction

You are about to start the most important stage of your education so far, as over the next few months you will be able to make some choices about which subjects you'd like to continue to study through to the end of Year 11.

All students will complete the following **CORE** curriculum which includes:

- English Language
- Mathematics
- Science
- English Literature
- Religious Studies

All students **MUST** choose ONE English Baccalaureate subject from:

- Computer Science
- Geography
- History
- Modern Foreign Languages (French, Polish, Spanish)

All students will then choose any **TWO additional subjects** from a wide range of subjects and types of qualification.

It is crucial that you choose subjects that will match your interests and abilities. If you already know what you'd like to do after Year 11, at Post 16 or at Post 18, you may need to check that your choices will allow you to do this.

When selecting your subjects, take the time to carefully review the information in this booklet, along with details from subject mini assemblies and any other insights you've gathered. Choose courses that align with your strengths and interests, keeping in mind the different types of assessment each subject involves. Some courses have a significant amount of controlled assessment, which can be challenging if you have multiple deadlines to manage. However, if you are well-organised, enjoy independent work, and thrive in project-based learning, these courses could be a great fit for you. Remember GCSEs are a two-year educational journey. You will not be able to change courses once you submit your application, so take your time and make choices that set you up for success and a rewarding learning experience!

The English Baccalaureate (EBacc)

At SPHS, all students are guided through the English Baccalaureate (EBacc) to ensure they have the best possible choices for their future after GCSEs. In addition to the core subjects, studying a foreign language alongside either History or Geography will allow you to achieve the EBacc. This academic pathway is highly valued by both universities and employers, providing you with a strong foundation for future opportunities. Research from the UCL Institute of Education has shown that students who study EBacc subjects have greater prospects in further education and are more likely to continue in full-time study. For those aspiring to university or higher education, following the EBacc is the ideal route to keep as many options open as possible.

Timeline of events

Thursday 13th & 20th March

Parent Evening
RIMS: Thursday 13th March
LACE: Thursday 20th March

Wednesday 12th March

OPTIONS – An Introduction
A cohort assembly delivered by Mr DeYoung to explain to Year 9 students how the OPTIONS process will work

From Tuesday 18th March

Information Assemblies by Subject
Two weeks of mini assemblies via TEAM's to provide students with key insights into each GCSE subject, helping them make informed decisions about their option choices based on course content, expectations, and future opportunities

Thursday 3rd April @ 5.15pm

OPTIONS Parent Information Evening
Aims to inform parents and students about the GCSE options process, subject choices, and key considerations before the completion of the application form

Thursday 3rd April @ midnight

OPTIONS Application Form Open
OPTIONS choices must be made online via Edulink. Please follow the guidance given in terms to the **MUST, ONE** and **TWO** choice categories

Sunday 7th April @ midnight

OPTIONS Submission Date
Please think carefully about your choices as once submitted they cannot be changed.

Frequently asked questions

What are the core subjects and why do I have to study them?
At SPHS, we are committed to ensuring that all students leave school with strong literacy, numeracy, and scientific skills, along with a broad set of essential life skills. To support this, all students continue to study English Language, English Literature, Mathematics, Science, and Religious Education. Additionally, PHSE and PE remain part of the timetable as important non-examined subjects, promoting personal development and well-being.

What if I don't know what I want to do when I leave school?
This is normal for students in Year 9. The most important thing is that you choose subjects that you enjoy and interest you as this will ensure that you get the best grades possible.

What if I already know what I want to do for a career?
Check with your subject teachers that your choices will allow you to follow this career after Year 11.

What if I start the course in Year 10 and realise that I've made a wrong decision?
It's important to choose your subjects carefully, as there is no option to change courses once you have started in Year 10. To make the best decision, take the time to thoroughly consider your options. Speak to current Year 10 and 11 students about their experiences, listen to advice from subject assemblies, attend the Options information evening and discuss your choices with teachers and parents. Thinking carefully now will help ensure you select the courses that are right for you and set yourself up for success.

What are good reasons for choosing a subject?

- You are good at it
- You think you will enjoy it
- It goes well with your other choices
- The types of assessment suits you (exams or controlled assessment)
- You are interested in the knowledge and skills it develops
- It will give you plenty of choice in the future

What are not good reasons for choosing a subject?

- Your friends are doing it
- Other students say it's easy
- You like the teacher you have now
- You did not have time to research the subject properly
- Someone else thinks it's a good idea but you disagree

Careers advice and guidance

Many Year 9 students are unsure about their future career path

Which is why our core programme provides a strong foundation of subjects that are valued by post-16 centres, colleges, universities, apprenticeships, and employers. If you do have an idea of the subjects you would like to pursue further, it's important to check whether specific GCSEs are required. For example, some universities require A-Level Art for architecture courses, meaning you would need to take Art at GCSE.

Throughout Years 10 and 11, you will follow a careers programme designed to develop both your personal and employability skills. This programme will help you identify your strengths, interests, and future aspirations, ensuring you feel confident about your next steps beyond school.

Mrs Sarah Beeton is SPHS award winning Careers, Information, Advice and Guidance advisor. Mrs Beeton is available to support students and parents/carers with careers decisions. She will be available to speak to at the Year 9 Options Evening and can also be contacted by email at sbeeton@sphs.uk.com

Careers Bulletin

visit the dedicated website
careers.sphs.uk.com

Types of Qualifications

SPHS offers two classes of qualification:

GCSEs

- Graded 9 – 1 (9 is the highest grade)
- The majority are assessed with exams at the end of Year 11
- A few practical based subjects include coursework (eg Art, Photography, Drama, Music, Product Design)

BTECs, Cambridge Nationals and Level 1/2 Awards

- Graded from Level 2 Distinction* (highest grade) to Level 1 Pass
- Between 25% and 40% exam with the remainder as coursework/practical. Exams are taken during the course rather than at the end and in some cases can be retaken.
- Has more practical and vocational elements combined with the academic.
- Coursework must be completed during an 'assessment window' in school. It is important, therefore, that a student taking a subject with coursework has excellent attendance.

Art

Qualification: GCSE Art & Design (Art, craft and design)
Exam Board: AQA
Contact: Mrs Allen
kallen@sphs.uk.com

Course Description

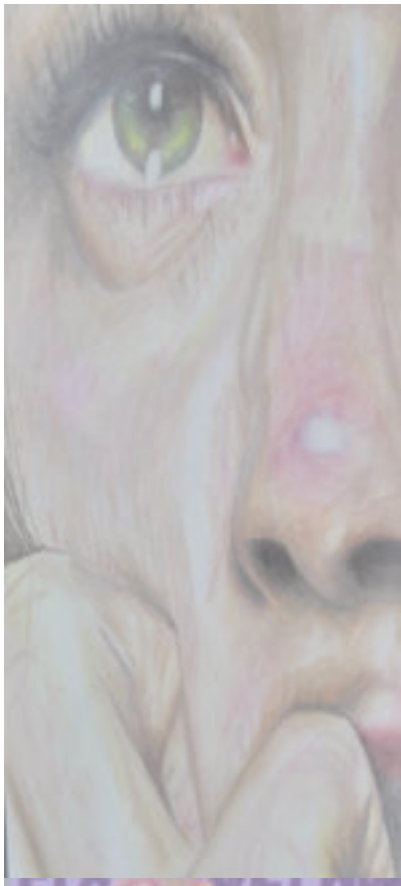
GCSE Art encourages students to explore the work of a wide range of artists, techniques and materials in a personal and exciting way. You will develop new skills and techniques and build upon skills you already have working in a range of media including drawing, painting, printing, collage, textile art, photography, digital art, and mixed media.

What will I learn?
GCSE Art encourages students to explore the work of a wide range of artists, techniques and materials in a personal and exciting way. You will develop new skills and techniques and build upon skills you already have working in a range of media including drawing, painting, printing, collage, textile art, photography, digital art, and mixed media.

Assessment
The course comprises a coursework portfolio made up of three units of work worth 60%. Students research, experiment and develop ideas to generate an outcome. We use a range of themes to inspire units of work and support students to develop their work in areas of their own interest.

The exam unit which is worth 40% is structured in a similar way to the coursework unit. Students choose a theme from a selection set by the exam board and spend 2 months researching, exploring and developing ideas for an outcome which is then completed in the 10-hour timed exam session. Students will use materials of their own choice.

Where can it take me?
Art students enjoy studying GCSE Art, they are prepared to work hard and keen to explore new ideas, techniques and processes. You will be guided and offered enrichment opportunities including working with visiting artists. Many students go on to study A-Level Art at St Peter's and gain places at art colleges and universities, enabling them to begin careers such as architecture, marketing, landscape architecture, illustration, animation, fashion, costume design, primary teaching, interior and gaming design, becoming a part of the exciting and thriving industry of visual arts and creative media.



Business Studies

Qualification: GCSE
Exam Board: OCR
Contact: Mr J Versaci
jversaci@sphs.uk.com

Course Description

GCSE Business will provide you with an insight into the world of business and the external environment which impacts day-to-day decision making and long-term strategies. If you enjoy problem solving, thinking creatively, calculations and working with numbers plus learning about local, national and international business this is the course for you! You will learn about how and why businesses operate in the way that they do, their key elements and essential business functions, including: production, marketing, finance and managing people. It is essential to have a keen interest in the world around you, regularly following the news and being an observant consumer.

What Will I Learn?

Business 1 – Business Activity, Marketing and People

You will explore the role of business and enterprise and the decisions that need to be made when starting up a business. You will learn about meeting customer needs and the importance of marketing decisions such as getting the product, pricing, promotion and place correct. You will look at the role of human resources and the importance of motivating and managing staff effectively. The first term is crucial in developing a sound understanding of the way businesses are classified through their legal status, setting objectives and how businesses can grow.

Business 2 – Operations, Finance and Influences on Business

You will be introduced to the role of the operations function learning about production processes, the importance of quality and how to manage relationships with suppliers. Clearly a business cannot function without finance so you will look at the role of the finance department and how a business should manage its finances to stay competitive. This unit involves some complex calculations, so you need to be confident with maths and able to interpret financial information. Finally, you will explore how the wider world impacts the business and the importance of the economic climate.

Assessment

Business 1 (50%): Exam consisting of Section A: 15 multiple choice questions. Section B: 3 case studies with a range of data response, analysis and evaluative higher mark questions.

Business 2 (50%): Exam consisting of Section A: 15 multiple choice questions. Section B: 3 case studies with a range of data response, analysis and evaluative higher mark questions.

Where can it take me?

You can continue your study to A-Level Business or take a vocational qualification that will enable you to learn about business from a work-related perspective. You may follow this with a degree in business studies or other related subjects such as law, accounting, human resources, marketing or ICT.

Computer Science

Qualification: GCSE
Exam Board: OCR
Contact: Mr Drumm
kdrumm@sphs.uk.com

Course Description

GCSE Computer Science is engaging and practical, inspiring creativity and problem solving. It encourages students to analyse problems in computational terms and devise creative solutions by designing, writing, testing and evaluating software programs. These problem-solving skills are not only essential for developing applications and writing code, there are also applicable to other subject areas and even to everyday life. The course also includes details of how computers function, both stand alone and when networked together. The capabilities and applications of computer systems are also an important aspect of the GCSE Computer Science course.

What Will I Learn?
Component 1 - Computer Systems
This course component will introduce you to the central processing unit (CPU). You will learn about the structure of the CPU, its cache and the role of various registers during the fetch-decode-execute cycle. You will also learn about computer memory and a range of technologies used to create primary and secondary storage devices. You will learn how computers represent data such as text, images and audio, including an in-depth study of the binary and hexadecimal number bases. The workings of wired and wireless networks, network topologies, network protocols, system security and system software are also covered in detail in this component. In addition, you will study the ethical, legal, cultural and environmental concerns associated with computer science.

Component 2 - Computational thinking, algorithms and programming
Computational thinking is one of the core concepts in GCSE computer science. You will learn techniques needed to approach a range of problems both logically and methodically including abstraction, functional decomposition and algorithmic thinking. Of course, computer science involves a lot of programming. You will learn to code in a number of programming languages such as Python, Visual Basic, JavaScript and SQL. You will study and implement a number of standard sorting and searching algorithms such as the bubble sort, insertion sort, merge sort, linear search and binary search. The role of logic gates, truth tables and computational logic are also covered in this component.

Assessment
Component 1 - Computer Systems (50%): 1 hour and 30 minutes written exam including a mixture of short and long answer questions worth 80 marks.

Component 2 - Computational thinking, algorithms and programming (50%):
1 hour and 30 minutes written exam including a mixture of short and long answer questions worth 80 marks.

Where can it take me?
A GCSE in computer science is essential if you want to study computer science at A-Level. Ultimately, computer science skills are useful in a wide range of fields including: software development, medicine, aeronautics, cyber security, engineering, computational linguistics, music, architecture, product design, digital art and animation, and much more.

3D Design – Set / Interior / Graphic Design

Qualification: GCSE
Exam Board: AQA
Contact: Miss V Deacon
vdeacon@sphs.uk.com

Course Description

In 3D Design with a focus on Set / Interior / Graphic design, students will experiment with a range of processes, skills, media and materials using hand and computer skills mainly based in the atrium design studio.

Students will learn how to apply a creative approach to problem solving, consider and develop original ideas from initiation to realisation, analyse critically their own work and the work of others, express individual thoughts and choices confidently, take risks, experiment and learn from mistakes.

What Will I Learn?
An array of 2D Design and 3D Design techniques within set / interior and graphic design. Students to focus on sketching skills, generation of ideas, modelling and making final outcomes.

Students can choose from a selection of areas of study within the set / interior and graphic design industry including:

- *Theatre Design*
- *Illustration*
- *Packaging Design*
- *Marketing*
- *Multimedia Design*
- *Logo Design*
- *Interior Architecture*
- *Advertising*
- *Signage*

Assessment
Component 1: Students will complete a personal portfolio in one of the areas above. The portfolio will consist of research, initial ideas and design developments resulting in a final make. This is worth 60% of their GCSE.

Component 2: Students must present a personal response to an externally set broad-based thematic starting point by the exam board. This component allows students opportunities to develop and explore ideas, experiment with media, materials, techniques and processes. This is worth 40% of the GCSE.

Where can it take me?
You can continue to study 3D Design at A-Level and in any creative pathway.
You may follow this with a degree or apprenticeship in any design field.

3D Design - Architecture

Qualification: GCSE
Exam Board: AQA
Contact: Miss V Deacon
vdeacon@sphs.uk.com

Course Description

In 3D Design with a focus on architecture, students will experiment with a range of processes, skills, media and materials using hand and computer skills.

Students will learn how to apply a creative approach to problem solving, consider and develop original ideas from initiation to realisation, analyse critically their own work and the work of others, express individual thoughts and choices confidently, take risks, experiment and learn from mistakes.

What Will I Learn?
An array of 2D Design and 3D Design techniques within architecture. Students to focus on sketching skills, generation of ideas, modelling and making final outcomes on an architectural influence of their choice.

Assessment
Component 1: Students will complete a personal portfolio in one of the areas above. The portfolio will consist of research, initial ideas and design developments resulting in a final make. This is worth 60% of their GCSE.

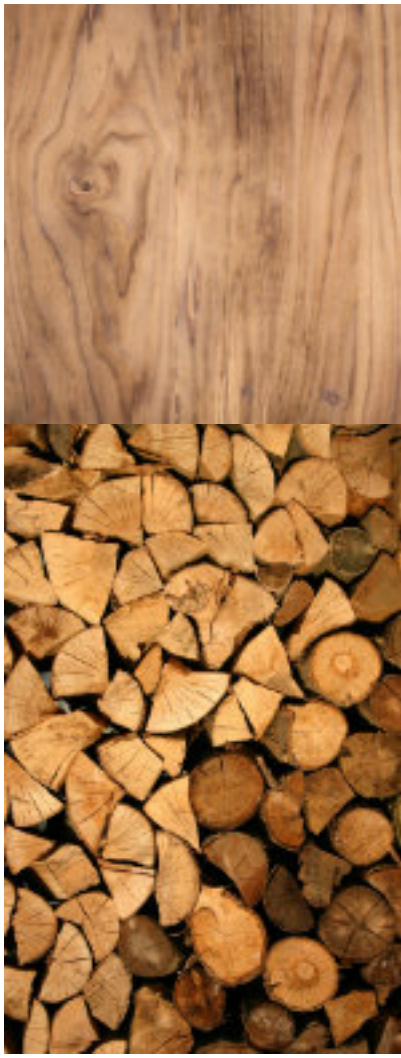
Component 2: Students must present a personal response to an externally set broad-based thematic starting point by the exam board. This component allows students opportunities to develop and explore ideas, experiment with media, materials, techniques and processes. This is worth 40% of the GCSE.

Where can it take me?
You can continue to study 3D Design at A-Level and in any creative pathway. You may follow this with a degree or apprenticeship in any design field.

3D Design - Resistant Material (Wood Based)

Qualification: GCSE
Exam Board: AQA
Contact: Miss V Deacon
vdeacon@sphs.uk.com

Course Description



In 3D Design with a focus on architecture, students will experiment with a range of processes, skills, media and materials using hand and computer skills.

Students will learn how to apply a creative approach to problem solving, consider and develop original ideas from initiation to realisation, analyse critically their own work and the work of others, express individual thoughts and choices confidently, take risks, experiment and learn from mistakes.

What Will I Learn?
An array of 2D Design and 3D Design techniques within the workshops. Students to focus on sketching skills, generation of ideas, modelling and making final outcomes.

Students can choose from a selection of areas of study mainly working with timber in the workshops:

- Product design
- Furniture design
- Lighting design
- Landscape design
- Sculpture

Assessment
Component 1: Students will complete a personal portfolio in one of the areas above. The portfolio will consist of research, initial ideas and design developments resulting in a final make. This is worth 60% of their GCSE.

Component 2: Students must present a personal response to an externally set broad-based thematic starting point by the exam board. This component allows students opportunities to develop and explore ideas, experiment with media, materials, techniques and processes. This is worth 40% of the GCSE.

Where can it take me?
You can continue to study 3D Design at A-Level and in any creative pathway.
You may follow this with a degree or apprenticeship in any design field.

Drama

Qualification: GCSE
Exam Board: AQA
Contact: Mrs G Skyrme
gskyrme@sphs.uk.com

Course Description

GCSE Drama is an exciting and challenging course which focuses on performing, presenting and evaluative skills, providing opportunities for you to work as part of a team in both scripted and devised drama. You will develop essential communication and presentation skills during the course which transfer to the workplace in any profession. Indeed, previous drama students have gone on to occupations ranging from theatre and theatre administration, teaching and the law to medicine, the services, business enterprise, construction and marketing.

What Will I Learn?
You will study 2 plays over the course of the two years: 1 for your written exam and 1 for your practical exam. You will watch live theatre – both streamed via the National Theatre and visits to the theatre – and analyse the performers' skills in performance. You will enjoy exploring a range of styles and practitioners, learning more about the styles you enjoy and using your creativity to devise your own piece of Drama. As a Drama student, you will develop excellent interpersonal skills that you will be able to use in any career. You will have access to one of the fastest growing industries in the UK: the creative industries are growing at more than twice the rate of the rest of the UK economy and employ nearly 2 million people in this country. The UK are world leaders in this industry.

Assessment
Component 1: Understanding drama – written exam (1 hour 45 minutes), open book, 80 marks, 40% of GCSE. 3 sections: A = 4 Multiple choice (4 marks); B = 4 questions on a given extract from the set play chosen (44 marks); C = one question on the work of theatre makers in a single live production (32 marks)

Component 2: Devising drama (practical). You are marked on the process of creating your devised piece through your Devising log (60 marks). You are also marked on your Devised performance (20 marks). 40% of GCSE – marked by teachers and moderated by AQA (completed in year 10)

Component 3: Texts in practice (practical). You are marked on your performance of two extracts from one play. Each extract is marked out of 20 (40 marks). 20% of GCSE – marked by a visiting examiner from AQA (completed in year 11)

Where can it take me?
Whilst a number of our GCSE students do go on to study Drama or Acting at A-Level/Level 3 and then degree level and now work in the creative arts industry; many of our students have applied the skills they have developed through their work in Drama in the following areas: Hair and Beauty, Law, Construction Management, Teaching, Policing and the Intelligence Service amongst others.

As well as developing your knowledge of Drama, you will develop an empathy and understanding of the world that is valued by all professions.

Elite Performance Pathway

Qualification: N/A
Exam Board: N/A
Contact: Mr T Green
Tgreen2@sphs.uk.com

Course Description

The Elite Performance Pathway (EPP) is designed to give aspiring athletes the best chance to cope with a professional sports environment. The programme is a world-class initiative, with a proven-track record of transitioning athletes into professional sport and/or further educational opportunities. After moving through the foundation and developmental stages of the programme, athletes are invited back to perform the next level of the programme. An invite back to the programme at KS4 will often reflect the consistent efforts and attitudes to learn at KS3, as well as engagement in our multisport approach to athletic development.

What Will I Learn?
Strength and conditioning (S&C) pursue parallel avenues to PE when working with youth. For example, long-term athletic development aims to develop health and fitness, improve physical performance, reduce the risk of injury and develop the confidence and competence of all youth.

Exercise within an S&C environment offers similar opportunities for students to develop both interpersonal (e.g., relationship building, empathy, assertiveness) and intrapersonal (e.g., resilience, self-worth) skills.

When looking to develop athletic competencies, physical training interventions with young individuals should aim to build foundations of athleticism that enable participation in sports and physical activity with effective, efficient, and safe technique. Training programmes should include a broad range of skills that can be adapted and used in a variety of environments. Athletic motor skill competencies (AMSC). AMSC's are seen as the building blocks for more developmentally advanced movement skills and sequences. Individuals with higher levels of movement exposure typically have a greater repertoire of skills to apply to a greater variety of physical activities. An S&C programme that encompasses all of these AMSC should ensure that youth are well equipped to overcome the challenges in both sport and daily tasks, with the aim of progressing on a talent pathway.

Assessment
Students will receive regular athletic testing relevant to their sport. However, more of the generic testing will include measures of power, speed, strength, mobility and metabolic testing. On completing the programme, learners will receive a portfolio documenting their entire five-year journey with us on the programme.

Where can it take me?
As mentioned above, the programme has a proven-track record of transitioning youth into high-level sport. This course would be ideal for athletes wishing to compete at the highest level possible for them. Collaboration with academies and coaches ensures that students manage the demands of being a 'student athlete'. Above all, the EPP prioritises attendance and enjoyment, creating an environment where students feel empowered to grow, balancing effort and achievement in equal measure.

English Language & English Literature

Qualification: GCSE
Exam Board: AQA
Contact: Ms E Farrell
efarrell@sphs.uk.com

Course Description

English Language consists of two papers: Paper 1 is fiction and Paper 2 is non-fiction. In both papers, students are given unseen extracts which they are expected to read, understand, infer, and analyse. Both papers also include an extended writing piece. In Paper 1, students write creatively, inspired by a picture or stimulus printed in the exam. In Paper 2, students present a viewpoint in the form of a letter, article, or newspaper.

In English Literature, there are also two papers. In Paper 1, students write two extended essays focused on *Macbeth* and *A Christmas Carol*. In Paper 2, students explore modern texts and poetry. They examine Priestley's *An Inspector Calls* and focus on a poetry anthology of fifteen poems on 'Love and Relationships' before applying these skills to the unseen poetry section, where they read, understand, and analyse poems they haven't been explicitly taught in class.

What Will I Learn?
English Language explores both fiction and non-fiction texts. You will develop the skills needed to become independent critical thinkers, regularly evaluating the methods writers use and their impact on shaping the reading experience. You will select evidence from the text to prove your ideas and be exposed to a vast range of genres, writers, and eras.

In Literature, you will study a range of texts: a Shakespearean play, a modern play, a novel, poetry from an anthology, and unseen poetry. You will learn to read texts for meaning, connect them to their context, and consider the writer's message and intentions. You will also learn to remember quotations from set texts, as your exam is 'closed book,' meaning you won't have a copy of the text with you.

Assessment
English Language
Paper 1: 4 reading questions based around an extract totalling 40 marks.
Section B: creative writing task totalling 40 marks.
Paper 2: 4 reading questions based around two extracts totalling 40 marks.
Section B: writing to present a viewpoint task totalling 40 marks.

English Literature
Paper 1: A) essay on 'Macbeth (30 marks) B) essay on 'A Christmas Carol (30 marks)
Paper 2: A) essay on 'An Inspector Calls' (30 marks) B) Poetry comparison (30 marks) C) Unseen Poetry questions totalling 32 marks

Where can it take me?
You can continue your study to A-Level English Literature or English Language and Literature. You may follow this with a degree in English or other related subjects such as law, marketing, copywriting, journalism or teaching.

Food & Nutrition

Qualification: GCSE
Exam Board: AQA
Contact: Miss V Deacon
vdeacon@sphs.uk.com

Course Description

GCSE Food Preparation and Nutrition is a course which focuses on the theory of food knowledge and practical cooking skills to ensure students develop a thorough understanding of nutrition, food provenance and the working characteristics of food materials.

What Will I Learn?
Practical Cooking Skills: Students develop and demonstrate proficiency in various cooking techniques and food preparation methods.

Food Science: The course explores the chemical and physical properties of food, how different cooking methods affect food, and the science behind food preservation.

Nutrition and Health: Students learn about essential nutrients, balanced diets, the impact of food choices on health, and how to plan nutritious meals.

Food Safety: The course emphasises the importance of food hygiene, safe food handling practices, and understanding food borne illnesses.

Food Provenance and Choice: Students explore the origins of food, different food production methods, and learn to make informed food choices.

Assessment
Paper 1 is a written exam worth 50% of the GCSE and is based upon the theoretical knowledge of food preparation and nutrition from the five core topics.

The Non-exam assessment (NEA) is marked out of 100 and is worth 50% of the GCSE. It is completed in class, marked by classroom teachers and moderated by the exam board.

Where can it take me?
It can lead to further studies or careers in the food industry, catering, hospitality, and related fields.

Geography

Qualification: GCSE
Exam Board: AQA
Contact: Mr A Williams
awilliams@sphs.uk.com

Course Description

Studying Geography develops a huge range of skills, more than any other subject and because of this it compliments many other subjects and career choices. Geographers have many skills which are valued by employers; important life skills, personal learning and thinking skills, ICT skills, data and numerical skills and functional skills, as well as developing a critical way of thinking about the world. The course is split into 3 distinct units, Unit 1 looks at the physical/natural world and how we interact with it. Unit 2 investigates the challenges faced in the human environment, such as cities and with development and resources. Unit 3 is focussed on fieldwork and skills, and this involves 2 days of field trips in the summer term of Year 10.

What Will I Learn?
Unit 1 – Living with the Physical Environment
The Challenge of Natural Hazards (Earthquakes, volcanoes and tropical storms), The Living World (ecosystems), The Coastal environment, and River Landscapes.

Unit 2 – Challenges in the Human Environment
Urban issues and challenges, The changing economic world, and the challenge of resource management.

Unit 3 – Geographical Application and Skills
This unit consists of the physical (river meanders) and human (urban regeneration) fieldwork experiences, and a pre-release issue evaluation that is studied in Year 11.

Assessment
Unit 1 – Exam (1 Hour 30m) – 35% of the GCSE
Unit 2 – Exam (1 Hour 30m) – 35% of the GCSE
Unit 3 – Exam (1 hour 30m) – 30% of the GCSE

Where can it take me?
Geography is a facilitating subject which addresses a wide range of dynamic issues. In the 21st Century the role of the geographer has become more important in society. The Covid-19 pandemic is a recent situation that can be analysed and investigated through the ideas and concepts we learn in geography. Even before the pandemic, discussions on sustainability and the way we deal with environmental issues are still seen as one of the greatest challenges facing the world. The introduction of AI and how it will impact the world of work is an idea that will most definitely impact your life in the near future, and is something that workers will have to grapple with.

Over the course of many decades issues that have dominated our conscious minds such as war in the Middle East, deforestation in the Amazon and the exponential growth of world population has led to Geography being seen as a subject that is highly regarded by universities and employers. The ideas, concepts and skills that we learn at GCSE Geography will stay with you throughout your life and equip you well in any job/careers that you wish to pursue.

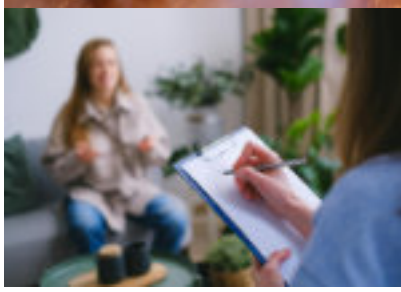
Health & Social Care

Qualification: BTEC L1/L2 Tech Award

Exam Board: Pearson

Contact: Mr E Freeman

Efreeman@sphs.uk.com



Course Description

Health and Social Care is a practical, work-related course. In the course students gain understanding of the expected development and factors that affect a person's life. This is then considered for when anyone needs support due to challenges in their life. Pupils learn about what people in the caring services do and the skills they need. This course is made up of 3 units - 2 of which are internally assessed through portfolio work and one of which is assessed through an examination.

What Will I Learn?

Students learn a base knowledge on which they then build and adapt their understanding to specific examples and case studies. This will involve students in:

- Working on individual assignments
- Researching information on the Health and Social Care Services in the local community
- Planning and evaluating work
- Analysing case studies to propose action plans for individuals
- Reflecting on own skills and attributes as a professional

Assessment

Human Lifespan Development – Controlled Internal Assessment Worth 30% - Spring Year 10

This unit will explore how individuals develop physically, emotionally, socially and intellectually over time. You will investigate how various factors, events and choices impact individuals' growth and development. You will then discover how people adapt to life events and cope with making changes.

Health and Social Care Services– Controlled Internal Assessment Worth 30% - Autumn Year 11

This unit will allow you to investigate which health and social care services are available whilst identifying why people might need to use them. You will discover who's involved in providing these services and explore what might stop people from accessing them. Finally, you will look at the care values the sector has to make sure people get the care and protection they need.

Health and Well Being - External Assessment Worth 40%- Summer Year 11

This unit will allow you to learn what 'being healthy' means to different people, explore the different factors that might influence health and wellbeing and identify key health indicators and how to interpret them. You will also assess an individual's health using what they've learned creating a health and wellbeing improvement plan for that person, which includes targets and recommendations of support services available. Finally, you will reflect on the potential challenges the person may face when putting the plan into action.

Where can it take me?

Health and Social Care provides a good background for students who are interested in working within the caring professions or further study on health related and/or people-orientated courses.

History - EBACC

Qualification: GCSE
Exam Board: AQA
Contact: Mr D Slaughter
dslaughter@sphs.uk.com

Course Description

The AQA GCSE History course offers students an engaging and comprehensive exploration of key historical events, periods, and themes that have shaped the modern world. Through a mix of both British and world history, students will develop a deep understanding of the past, fostering critical thinking, historical analysis, and the ability to evaluate different perspectives.

What Will I Learn?
There are four Units that you will study, split across the two papers:

Understanding the Modern World (paper one)
Germany, 1890-1945: Democracy and dictatorship - This period of study focuses on the development of Germany during a turbulent half century of change. It was a period of democracy and dictatorship – the development and collapse of democracy and the rise and fall of Nazism.

Conflict and Tension, 1918-1939
This focuses on the end of WWI and the build-up to WW2, looking at the Peace Treaties, League of Nations and the Rise of Hitler. How did the nations of 1918 assure another world war of such a scale would never happen again, only for 20 years to pass and the countries to break this promise?

Shaping the Nation (Paper two)
Health and the people, c1000-present - students will take a whistle stop tour throughout history looking at the bizarre and wonderful advancements in medical practice- from trepanning and the four humors to seismic advancements such as the birth of the NHS. A must study topic for inspiring doctors on how NOT to cure people!

Elizabethan England, c1568-1603
Students will study one of Britain's greatest Queens and the last 35 years of her reign; rebellion, invasion, religious uncertainty and what life was really like during the 'Golden Age' of the last Tudor monarch.

Assessment
Paper one (50%): Exam consisting of two distinct sections, 8 questions ranging from 4-16 marks, 2 hours long.
Paper two (50%): Exam consisting of two distinct sections, 8 questions ranging from 4-16 marks, 2 hours long.

Where can it take me?
Beyond GCSE: History is a very popular option at A-level, but it is also, according to the *Informed Choice University Guide,* a subject that keeps your career path and degree options wide open. A History enthusiast? History lends itself to other great subjects such as Sociology (Offered at GCSE and A-Level) and Politics (offered at A-level).

The range of careers that History lends itself to including Law, Journalism, Politics, project management, researcher

Modern Foreign Language – EBACC

Qualification: GCSE
Exam Board: AQA
Contact: Mrs S Lord
slord@sphs.uk.com

Course Description

In GCSE French/Spanish/Polish you will build on the languages skills and knowledge you already have, developing them further while studying the following topics:

- Your home town, your region & abroad
- education, training and employment
- Your home & daily activities
- Social media, entertainment, celebrity culture, influencers
- sports, free-time, fitness and health

What Will I Learn?

1. How to UNDERSTAND the language:
Listening skills Reading skills

2. How to COMMUNICATE in the language:
Speaking skills Writing skills

3. To develop a deeper understanding of the countries & culture where the language is spoken.

Assessment

Listening (25%): Listen to a variety of tasks, many of which are multiple choice.
Reading (25%): Read a variety of texts, many of which are multiple choice.
Speaking (25%): A 10-minute conversation with your teacher, based on 2 photos and a role play which you prepare.
Writing (25%): Two short paragraphs and a translation from English into the language

Where can it take me?

Studies have proven that learning a language has a huge number of benefits, which are useful to you and also what employers are looking for:

- Develop higher intelligence
- Develop skills in planning, prioritising, decision-making
- Develop better focus, concentration and attention
- Develop better memory and memorisation skills
- Develop mental flexibility
- Have a better understanding of your native language
- Improved listening skills
- Become more creative

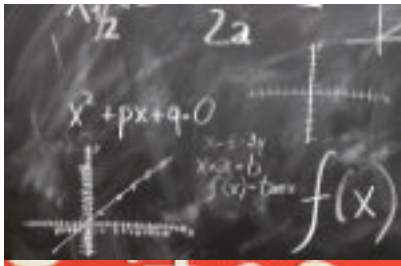
Learning a language is a skill for life and something students enjoy and find rewarding. Employers are actively seeking people who know more than one language, so a GCSE in any language can help you secure a job, and you don't have to be fluent. You could start an apprenticeship where your language skills can be an immediate advantage, or you can continue your studies to A-Level French. You could follow this with a degree in French and choose to include either another language or other modules in your degree from a huge range of options. Contact the university you are interested in to find out what options you can include such as business, photography, ICT, creative writing – the potential combinations are endless.

Mathematics - Core

Qualification: GCSE

Exam Board:
Edexcel - Higher
AQA - Foundation

Contact: Mrs C Sarson - csarson@sphs.uk.com



Course Description

The Maths GCSE is split into 5 different topics: Number, Algebra, Ratio + proportion, Geometry and Probability + shape. The table below illustrates the topic area weightings for the assessment of Foundation and Higher Tier.

Topic	Foundation	Higher
Number	25%	12 - 18%
Algebra	20%	27 - 33%
Ratio & Proportion	25%	16 - 23%
Geometry	15%	17- 23%
Probability and Statistics	15%	12 - 18%

What Will I Learn?
GCSE Maths should enable students to:

1. Develop fluent knowledge, skills and understanding of mathematical methods and concepts
2. Acquire, select and apply mathematical techniques to solve problems
3. Reason mathematically, make deductions and inferences and draw conclusions
4. Comprehend, interpret and communicate mathematical information in a variety of forms appropriate to the information and context.

Further information can be found using the specification links below.
Higher Tier Specification : Edexcel Higher Maths GCSE
Foundation Tier Specification: AQA Foundation Maths GCSE

Assessment
Students will sit 3 exam papers for Maths GCSE.
Paper 1: Non-Calculator, 90 minutes
Paper 2: Calculator, 90 minutes
Paper 3: Calculator, 90 minutes
The papers do not cover specific topics. Any topic can appear in any paper

Where can it take me?
Completing a GCSE in mathematics opens the door to various career opportunities even without further formal education. Many employers value the analytical and problem-solving skills developed through studying maths. For instance, roles such as receptionist, customer service representative, health care assistant, fitness manager and bookkeeper often require a solid understanding of mathematics. These positions involve tasks like managing appointments, handling payments and maintaining financial records where mathematical proficiency is beneficial. Pursuing higher education in mathematics opens further doors to a multitude of advanced career opportunities across various industries. This may include data analysis, actuary, quantitative analyst, or operations researcher. Higher education in mathematics provides a solid foundation for a diverse range of careers each offering unique challenges and rewards.

Media Studies

Qualification: GCSE
Exam Board: Edugas
Contact: Mr C Jones - cjones@sphs.uk.com

Course Description

The Media Studies department at St Peter's has a track record for excellent results and destinations in the sixth form, and we're delighted to announce that from September 2025 we will be offering the Eduqas GCSE Media Studies at KS4. Over the two years, students will study different media industries such as the newspaper industry, the film industry and the music industry. Students will learn about the evolution of the crime television genre, studying 'The Sweeney' and 'Luther' in detail. The course also involves a 30% coursework component, which requires students to design their own DVD cover and marketing poster for a film concept. We will teach pupils the key skills required for analysing any media product: media language, representation, audiences and context.

What Will I Learn?
Pupils will learn about different media industries, including the newspaper industry, the film industry, and the music industry, and they will focus on the crime television genre, looking at how characters and events are presented to the viewer. They will also learn how to take professional looking photographs with our suite of digital cameras, and how to edit these photographs using Affinity Photo, a cutting-edge digital editing programme, to create magazine covers, posters, and adverts.

Assessment
Component 1 – Exploring the Media. 1 hour 30 minutes exam paper, worth 40% of the total qualification. Topics covered include Exploring Media Language and Representation on magazine covers, print adverts, and film posters, and exploring Media Industries and Audiences, focussing on newspapers, film, and video games.

Component 2 – Understanding Media Forms and Products. 1 hour 30 minutes exam paper, worth 30% of the total qualification. Topics covered include television drama and music video.

Component 3 – Coursework creating a media text, worth 30% of the total qualification. Pupils have to plan, design and create marketing materials (usually a film poster and DVD cover although the brief changes each year) for a new film.

Where can it take me?
Past students who have done Media Studies at St Peter's in the past have gone on to a vast array of careers in the media industry and other sectors.

The skills taught on the course can lead to careers in marketing and advertising, event management, journalism, web design, photography, games design and graphic design, as well as many more opportunities. Several of our ex-students at KS5 have gone on to apprenticeships and jobs in the media industry, and we even have past pupils that have gone on to work on production of films and TV shows such as The Great British Bake Off, Casualty, and the Transformers franchise.

Music

Qualification: GCSE
Exam Board: EDUQAS
Contact: Mrs Perfect
CPerfect@sphs.uk.com

Course Description




GCSE Music offers you the opportunity to perform, compose and listen to music. If you are already having instrumental or singing lessons, this is an excellent subject to choose. If you enjoy composing, either live or using music software, this is the right course for you. If you would like to broaden your understanding of music, including classical, popular, jazz and world, then this course will give you greater appreciation of the diverse musical styles that exist today.

What Will I Learn?

- Perform on your own and in a group.
- Explore how great pieces of music were put together, then when you have learnt some of the techniques, compose your own music. This could involve using computer software, writing for a specific purpose, writing songs etc.
- Listen to a variety of music and learn how to identify the facts about what you hear. You will already have heard about the elements of music in your Key Stage 3 lessons. At GCSE you focus on how these are used for different purposes.

Assessment

One of the many benefits of choosing this course: 60% of the total marks are coursework-based!
Component 1: Performing coursework (30%)
A minimum of two pieces (one solo and one ensemble) performed on any instrument or voice
Grade 3 is the standard level and can score full marks if played perfectly
Component 2: Composing coursework (30%)
Two pieces: one free composition in any style and one in response to a set brief
Component 3: Appraising examination (40%)
Listening examination, comprising of 8 questions, two on each area of study:

Area of Study 1: Musical Forms and Devices
Area of Study 2: Music for Ensemble
Area of Study 3: Film Music
Area of Study 4: Popular Music

Where can it take me?

Music is a creative, academic and practical subject which is highly respected by Higher Education establishments and future employers. The GCSE course prepares you thoroughly for A-Level Music and for a wide variety of careers. It also incorporates essential transferrable skills such as commitment, team-work, independence, resilience, time-management, listening, presentation & analytical skills.

At the same time, you will find many opportunities to develop your confidence and improve your personal wellbeing both independently and as part of a wider community. It can also give you opportunities to travel, meet people and get the most out of life.

The recent World Economic Forum's Future of Jobs Report, identifies analytical and creative thinking as the most important skills required by employers globally. When business leaders across the world were surveyed, they voted creativity as the most important workplace skill to help their businesses survive and grow.

Sport

Qualification: BTEC Level 2 Tech Award in Sport

Exam Board: Pearson (Edexcel

Contact: Miss L Windsor
lwindsor@sphs.uk.com

Course Description

This course is ideal for exploring the range of provision available for different types of participants, barriers to participation and ways to overcome these. They will also research equipment and technological advances in a chosen sport and how to prepare our bodies for participation in relation to components of fitness and the effects on performance. Learners will be assessed in one practical sport, explore the role of officials in their chosen sport and learn to lead drills to improve other participants' sporting performance through coaching sessions. Understanding will also be gained relating to the importance of fitness and the different types of fitness for performance in sport. They will also develop an understanding of the body and fitness testing. The qualification recognises the value of learning skills, knowledge and vocational attributes to complement GCSE subjects and provide an insight to the sports industry.

What Will I Learn?

Component 1: Preparing Participants to Take Part in Sport and Physical Activity

- Sports provision and barriers to participation
- Technology in sport
- Planning and delivering a suitable warm up (practical)

Component 2: Taking Part and Improving Other Participants' / Sporting Performance

- Components of Fitness/ Training methods
- Practical performance of both isolated skills and competitive game in chosen sport (practical)
- Rules and regulations of a chosen sport
- Planning and delivering a coaching session to improve participants performance in a chosen sport (practical)

Component 3: Developing fitness to improve other participants' performance in sport and physical activity

- Components of Fitness
- Training Methods
- Adaptations of the body to exercise

Assessment

Component 1 = 30% - Practical & Theory (Controlled Assessment)
Component 2 = 30% - Practical & Theory (Controlled Assessment)
Component 3 = 40% - Theory (Exam)

Where can it take me?

A-Levels as preparation for entry to higher education in a range of subjects
Study of a vocational qualification at Level 3, such as a BTEC National in Sport (2016), which prepares learners to enter employment or apprenticeships, or to move on to higher education by studying a degree in the Sport Sciences or teaching sectors.





Religious Education

Qualification: GCSE
Exam Board: AQA B
Contact: Mr C McDonald
cmcdonald@sphs.uk.com

Course Description

Our GCSE enables you to focus in depth on the Catholic faith, by looking at beliefs, teachings, practices, sources of authority and forms of expression within Catholic Christianity. Students will broaden their understanding of religion by studying the beliefs and practices of another major world faith – Judaism. The GCSE also affords the opportunity of studying contemporary ethical issues through Catholic and other religious and non-religious perspectives.

What Will I Learn?
This specification will not only help students understand theological concepts and religious doctrines, but it will also promote and equip students with valuable skills for their future development, such as analytical and critical thinking, the ability to work with abstract ideas, leadership and research skills.

Assessment
Paper 1 – Roman Catholicism:

- Written exam: 1 hour 45 minutes
- 96 marks, plus 3 marks for spelling, punctuation and grammar (SPaG)
- 50% of GCSE

Paper 2 – Thematic Studies (A and C) and Judaism

- Written exam: 1 hour 45 minutes
- 96 marks, plus 3 marks for spelling, punctuation and grammar (SPaG)
- 50% of GCSE

In each exam:

- Students must answer all the questions
- Each topic is marked out of 24 marks
- There will be one five-part question per topic of 1, 2, 4, 5 and 12 marks

The 12-mark questions will require extended writing and test analysis and evaluation

Where can it take me?
Studying Religious Education at GCSE helps you develop valuable skills such as critical thinking, debating, and understanding different cultures and beliefs. These skills are highly valued in many careers, including law, healthcare, teaching, journalism, social work, and public services. RE also provides a strong foundation for further study in subjects like Philosophy, History, Politics, and Sociology. Whether you're interested in exploring ethical issues, working with people, or understanding the world around you, RE GCSE opens the door to a wide range of opportunities.

Science - Dual Core

Qualification: GCSE
Exam Board: AQA
Contact: Mr P Taylor
ptaylor@sphs.uk.com

Course Description

What Will I Learn?
The AQA Combined Science course provides a broad curriculum in Biology, Chemistry, and Physics, offering students a strong foundation in essential scientific principles.
In **Biology**, key topics include cell biology, the structure and function of organs, and the body's response to infection. Students also study bioenergetics, including photosynthesis and respiration, alongside homeostasis, inheritance, evolution, and ecology, fostering an understanding of living systems.
In **Chemistry**, students explore atomic structure, bonding, and the periodic table. They investigate quantitative chemistry, chemical changes, reaction rates, and energy changes in reactions. Other topics include organic chemistry basics, chemical analysis methods, the Earth's atmosphere, and resource sustainability, illustrating how chemistry addresses global challenges.
In **Physics**, the course covers energy transfers, electricity, the particle model, and atomic structure. Students also study forces, motion, waves, and electromagnetism, developing insights into the physical laws that shape our universe. This well-rounded curriculum develops analytical thinking, problem-solving skills, and scientific knowledge essential for advanced studies and diverse careers in science, technology, and other fields.

Assessment
Six Papers: (Either FT which is the normal Tier level or HT)
The assessment consists of six papers, with two papers for each science subject (Biology, Chemistry, and Physics).

Topic Coverage: Each paper assesses knowledge and understanding from specific topic areas within the respective science subject.

Question Types: Questions will include multiple-choice, structured, closed short answer, and open response questions.

Where can it take me?
This course opens doors to a wide range of exciting opportunities. With a solid foundation in science, you can pursue advanced studies in subjects such as Biology, Chemistry, or Physics. It also prepares you for careers in medicine, engineering, environmental science, and beyond. The skills you gain – problem-solving, analytical thinking, and data interpretation – are not only crucial for scientific fields but also highly sought after in industries like technology, business, and education. A science GCSE is vital for all careers because it cultivates universal skills like logical reasoning, critical thinking, and data evaluation. These abilities are integral to decision-making, problem-solving, and effective communication in any job. From understanding technology in the workplace to making informed health or environmental decisions, science empowers you to engage thoughtfully with the world. Whether you aim for a science-driven career or not, this course equips you to adapt and thrive in a fast-evolving, knowledge-driven society.

Sociology

Qualification: GCSE
Exam Board: WJEC/EDUQAS
Contact: Mrs Ruth Ewens
rewens@sphs.uk.com

Course Description



Sociology is a social science which offers students the opportunity to develop their knowledge and understanding of social behaviour, status and identity in the UK and other societies. Sociology explains how we learn the social rules of human behaviour. It examines how our values are influenced by our family, education and peer groups. It explores how we develop social identities and how our identities are influenced by our nationality, gender, age, ethnicity, social class and the mass media. Sociology seeks to explore issues such as why some individuals and groups have more power and opportunities than others.

What Will I Learn?
Students will learn about issues such as changing roles in the family, how the concept of 'childhood' has changed over time, the decline of marriage and the increase in divorce. Students will learn why there are such significant differences in exam results according to pupils' backgrounds. Students will learn about the different types of schools in the UK such as comprehensives, grammar and private and assess their impact. Students will develop knowledge and understanding of how sociologists conduct research and analyse data about society using a range of different methods such as questionnaires, observations and interviews. Students will learn about the role of the police, the courts and prisons in England and Wales. They will learn about key patterns in offending and the different sociological explanations for crime. Students will consider key contemporary issues such as misogyny and institutional racism in policing. Students will learn about differences in status and wealth in the UK and the ways in which social class, gender, ethnicity, age and disability can increase or decrease our chances of having a financially stable life in the UK today.

Assessment
Component 1: Understanding Social Processes: 1 hour 45 minutes. Short answer questions for 1-5 marks, two 8 mark questions, one essay worth 12 marks and two essays worth 15 marks.

Component 2: Understanding Social Structures: 1 hour 45 minutes. Short answer questions for 1-6 marks, three 9-mark questions and one essay worth 15 marks.

Where can it take me?
Sociology develops skills such as analysis, debating, evaluation and essay writing. Sociology is useful for students considering careers in law, the police, the NHS, teaching, market research, social work, journalism, politics, local government, business management and much more!

Triple Science

Qualification: GCSE

Exam Board: AQA

Contact: Mr P Taylor
ptaylor@sphs.uk.com

Course Description

The AQA Separate Science course offers an in-depth study of Biology, Chemistry, and Physics. Unlike Combined Science, it allows students to study each subject independently and in greater depth. Ideal for those passionate about science, it builds a strong foundation in theory and lab skills. The AQA exam board structures the course to prepare students for scientific careers or further education, equipping them for advanced studies in fields like Medicine, Engineering, and Research.

What Will I Learn?
The AQA Separate Science course covers Biology, Chemistry, and Physics in greater depth than Combined Science, with each subject studied independently. Biology includes cell biology, genetics, and human biology. Chemistry covers atomic structure, reactions, and the periodic table. Physics explores forces, energy, waves, and electricity. Unlike Combined Science, this course allows specialisation for a deeper understanding. It also includes practical work to develop investigative skills. Ideal for students pursuing careers in Medicine, Engineering, or Research, it provides a strong foundation for A-Level sciences.

Assessment
The AQA Separate Science course is assessed through written exams for each of the three subjects—Biology, Chemistry, and Physics. Each subject has two exam papers: one covering core content and the other covering more advanced material.

Paper 1 – Focuses on the first half of the subject's content (e.g., cells, energy, atomic structure), assessed through multiple-choice, short-answer, and extended writing questions.

Paper 2 – Covers the second half of the subject's content, including more complex topics, with a mix of question types, including those based on practical experiments and data analysis.

Practical skills are embedded within the exams, with questions related to core practical experiments. While there is no separate practical exam, your practical knowledge will be assessed in the written papers. Each exam is graded on a scale of 1 to 9, with 9 being the highest grade. These exams are typically taken at the end of the course, after two years of study.

Where can it take me?
Studying Separate Science opens doors to a wide range of rewarding careers, particularly in Engineering and Medicine. With in-depth knowledge of Biology, Chemistry, and Physics, you will be well-prepared for advanced studies in these fields. In Engineering, you could explore sectors such as civil, mechanical, electrical, or biomedical engineering, where scientific expertise and problem-solving are key. In Medicine, the comprehensive understanding of biology and chemistry will prepare you for careers as a doctor, nurse, pharmacist, or researcher. Additionally, Separate Science serves as an excellent pathway to A-Level science courses at St. Peter's, where you can further specialise in the sciences of your choice. Whether you focus on Biology, Chemistry, or Physics, the strong foundation provided by Separate Science will help you succeed in A-Levels and beyond, paving the way for careers in scientific research or professional healthcare.