



Year 11

Information Booklet

September 2025

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TOP TIPS FOR GCSE SUCCESS

- 1.** Revise in short blocks, 20 mins.
- 2.** Keep a diary/record.
- 3.** Focus on your weakest areas.
- 4.** Use range of revision techniques.
- 5.** Recap, revise and rest
- 6.** Note taking that suits you. Post its, concept maps, postcards. Use colour.
- 7.** Create a revision zone at home.
- 8.** Involve others, teachers, family and friends.
- 9.** Test yourself, others, past papers, websites.
- 10.** Believe that you can do this, consider what is at stake.

Year 11 Information Briefing



Thank you for your continued support, the dedication and maturity displayed by your child during the period of lockdown and during last academic year was exceptional. The year group have already made tremendous efforts towards their GCSEs so far and I am looking forward to seeing the results achieved next summer. The year will be challenging and demanding for your child but it is also exciting and rewarding. This booklet will help in fostering a successful year for all students.

Contents

We have put together a range of information within this booklet under the following areas:

1. Key Dates
2. VI Form Information
3. Key information and dates for core subjects (English, maths, RE, science)
4. Key information and dates for option subjects
5. Advice to parents/carers
6. Revision advice

I very much hope that you will find this information useful. Please feel free to give feedback or share other forms of help you would like the school to consider. Our Exam Officer will send out further details regarding Examination Board regulations as we approach the “Mock” exams later this term, however students should get used to only writing in BLACK pen, and take into account that all watches are now banned from public examinations and so they should get used to looking up at an analogue clock (with hands) to check the time remaining during an exam.

I feel immensely proud of the achievements the year group have made to date and I am delighted to have had the privilege to be the Year Leader of such a fantastic group of students. I will do my utmost this year to help them in any way I can. To that end, please do not hesitate to get in touch with me about any aspect of your child’s education or well-being.

Yours sincerely,

Mr Jamie Redmayne
Year 11 Leader

Year 11 Key dates 2025-26



2025

6th October	Progress & Attitude to Learning grades issued
8th October	Year 11 Academic Mentoring Day
10 th October	INSET day
3 rd November	INSET day
November	Sixth Form Application Assembly
20th November	6th Form Open Evening
13th November	6th Form Application Process starts.
19 th November	IMMERSION DAY
24th November	Progress and Attitude to Learning report issued
24th - 28 th Nov	Mock examinations (core subjects)
18 th December	Christmas Markets and Liturgy

2026

5th – 9 th January	Mock Examinations (option subjects)
23 rd January	Next Step reports
3rd February	Year 11 A level Taster Day
29 th January	Y11 Parents' Evening
9 th February ☒	INSET day
2 nd March onwards	VI form meetings start
13th March	Progress & Attitude to Learning grades issued
27th April	INSET day

May and June - GCSE examinations

***all provisional dates**

St Wilfrid's VI Form

St Wilfrid's has a highly successful, academic and caring VI Form with an excellent reputation for successfully preparing students for university and employment. We are exceptionally proud of all that our VI Form students achieve, and we welcome applications from our current Year 11 St Wilfrid's students and external applicants.



- VI Form Applications are via our online system. In November 2025 you will receive a welcome email to your school email address inviting you to register for the VI Form Application. Once registered you will be able to complete the VI Form Application
- There will be a VI Form Taster Day in January 2026. It will be an opportunity to learn something about the expectations of the VI Form and to find out more about individual subjects.
- VI Form meetings with a member of the Leadership Team as part of the VI Form application process will be held after the students have received their mock results.
- After the meeting, students will be offered a conditional place subject to attaining a good attendance and behaviour record. Some subjects require higher than a grade 5 to study at A Level. There are some Level 3 BTEC subjects available.
- Enrolment day will come after the students receive their GCSE results, date to be confirmed. On enrolment day students will be given the opportunity to discuss results and agree final A Level option choices.

GCSE assessment and grading

Since September 2016, all GCSE subjects have been teaching their new specifications, using the 9-1 grading system. August 2019 saw all students awarded grades from 9-1 in all subjects.

In addition to driving the re-design of all of the subject specifications and also the grades awarded for them, the government have stated that Grade 5 is what is considered as a 'good pass grade'. This is roughly equivalent to a high C grade / low B grade on the old system. A 'standard pass' is considered to be a Grade 4.



As a school we have discussed and developed a personalised approach to target setting, and each student's target for every subject has been carefully considered on an individual basis.

However, we will be constantly reviewing these targets in the light of any new statistics produced by the Department for Education and the exam boards, as well as tracking individual student achievement and progress in the assessment tasks that they are completing. Therefore, please do not be surprised if target grades are changed during the course of the year.

You will receive a formal report home on a regular basis with all of the target and attainment data, but you will also be able to access live data whenever you wish using the go4schools website.

The chart shows the mapping between the new GCSE grading structure (9-1) and the current GCSE grading structure (A*-U). It includes callouts for 'GOOD PASS (DfE)' and 'AWARDING'.

NEW GCSE GRADING STRUCTURE	CURRENT GCSE GRADING STRUCTURE
9	
8	A*
7	A
6	B
5	
4	C
3	
2	D
1	E
	F
	G
U	U

GOOD PASS (DfE)
5 and above = top of C and above

AWARDING
4 and above = bottom of C and above

English Language & English Literature

English Language

Exam board: AQA

Exam specification: 8700

The specification is designed to inspire and motivate students, providing appropriate stretch and challenge whilst ensuring that the assessment and texts are, as far as possible, accessible to all students.

It enables students to develop the skills they need to read, understand and analyse a wide range of different texts and write clearly.

There are two equally-balanced papers, each assessing reading and writing in an integrated way. Speaking and listening skills of presenting, responding to questions and feedback use of Standard English are assessed by the class teacher throughout the year.

Assessment

All texts in the examination will be unseen.



Paper 1: What's assessed?

Section A: Reading

One literature fiction text

Section B: Writing

Descriptive or narrative writing

Paper 2: What's assessed?

Section A: Reading

One non-fiction text and one literary non-fiction text

Section B: Writing

Writing to present a viewpoint

English Literature

Exam Board: AQA

Specification: 8702

AQA have designed the English Literature specification to inspire, challenge and motivate every student, no matter what their level of ability. A range of texts are included to cater for the needs of teachers and students in all educational contexts. There are texts that will be familiar, as well as new ones that will inspire young readers. It's fully co-teachable with GCSE English Language, so students will benefit from the transferable skills.

Assessment

All assessments are closed book: any stimulus materials required will be provided as part of the assessment.

Paper One - What's assessed?

Shakespeare plays (Romeo and Juliet)

Students will answer one question on their play of choice. They will be required to write in detail about an extract from the play and then to write about the play as a whole

The 19th-century novel (A Christmas Carol)



Students will answer one question on their novel of choice. They will be required to write in detail about an extract from the novel and then to write about the novel as a whole.

Paper Two - What's assessed?

Modern prose or drama texts (Blood Brothers)

Students will answer one essay question from a choice of two on their studied modern prose or drama text.

The poetry anthology

Students will answer one comparative question on one named poem printed on the paper and one other poem from their chosen anthology cluster.

Unseen poetry

Students will answer one question on one unseen poem and one question comparing this poem with a second unseen poem.

Mathematics

Exam Board: AQA

Specification: 8300

'Maths is for everyone. It is diverse, engaging and essential in equipping students with the right skills to reach their future destination, whatever that may be'

There are three 90-minute examinations, two calculator and one non calculator. Each paper will be worth one third of the Mathematics GCSE. There are two tiers, higher tier covering Grades 4 to 9, and foundation tier covering grades 1 to 5. Decisions regarding tier of entry for the final exam will be made after Christmas in year 11. Unless students are expected to gain a grade 6+ it is likely that they will be entered for the Foundation tier paper.

The major changes from the previous specification are that there is more content at both Foundation and Higher Tiers, which is reflected in the greater assessment time. Some of the content that has been traditionally examined in the higher tier exam has been transferred to the foundation tier. The style of questions has changed with a greater focus on problem solving, reasoning & interpreting. Students have access to a variety of online support materials, including tutorial videos.

Revision

Revision for your Maths GCSEs should have already started. Like with all revision it is quality as well as quantity which are important. To revise Mathematics, you need to do the Maths!

Revision drop in club is on a Wednesday afterschool. Students should be using Educake regularly



to revise topics they have met in year 10. Each month students are set an 'a little maths every day' revision calendar on Satchell that they can attempt

Mathematics staff are happy to be contacted to give you further information to help support your child with their revision. To aid in this revision the Maths department offers a range of resources to help revision at home. Revision Guides and resources are available to order at a reduced rate from school.

The Maths department website <https://stwilfridscrawley.sharepoint.com/sites/Maths> has links to recommended websites and further course information.

We provide free access to the following subscription websites:

- www.justmaths.co.uk/online this provides the "Top60" revision videos covering common topics on the Higher and Foundation tiers, along with corresponding worksheets
username - SWStudent password - StWilfrids
- www.educake.co.uk/secondary/maths/ students log in with the office 365 button and school details.

We recommend the use of the following free websites:

- <http://corbettmaths.com/contents> 5-a-day revision materials and explanatory videos and worksheets available.
- www.onmaths.com

Equipment in Lessons

Finally, it is vital that every remaining maths lesson runs as smoothly as possible, for this reason the students must have their correct equipment with them for every lesson. Most importantly they MUST have the scientific calculator which they intend to use in the exam. It will be too late to expect a student to get used to using a new or different model calculator any closer to the exams. Can we also remember that to every lesson in the school students are also expected to always have:

- A black pen & pencil
- A highlighter
- A ruler
- A rubber
- A protractor & pair of compasses
- And a scientific calculator (FX83GTX is available from school via parentpay)

It is really important that students have their own scientific calculator to use in and out of school (and should not be relying on the calculator function on phones etc at home)



This list is the same as the required list of equipment for the exam. On the day of a GCSE exam, however, these should be carried within a CLEAR pencil case or bag.

Religious Education

Exam Board: Pearson

Specification: Religious Studies A 1RA0

Catholic Christianity	Islam	Themes
Catholic Beliefs	Islamic Beliefs	Believing in God
Catholic Practices	Islamic Practices	Relationships and families
Sources of Wisdom		
Forms of Expression		

At the end of Year 11 there will be **three** exams. One will assess the Catholic Christianity element of the course, one on Islam and the last on Philosophical and Ethical themes. The Catholic Paper is 1 hour 45 and will be **worth 50%** of students' final grades. The other two exams are 50 minutes and are both **worth 25%** of their final grade. In RE there is **no coursework** so it is **100% exam**. That means that it is essential for students to revise fully for all three papers to get a good grade.

Helpful Points for parents and students:

- We will be providing intervention sessions for those who need extra support as highlighted by previous assessments and their class teachers.
- We will provide several revision materials to support them, and they can purchase a revision guide from parent pay if they haven't got one.
- After school Revision Sessions have begun after school on Tuesdays and are open to anyone who feels they need the support.



- After mocks those who have clearly underperformed will again be invited to compulsory intervention sessions.
- Ongoing revision of topics covered so far at home throughout y11 will greatly assist students achieving their potential by keeping the content fresh in their minds.
- RE staff are available in the department each day for advice.
- Completing as many practice questions as they can and hand them to their teacher to be marked.

Staff contact emails

Mrs C. Baldwin: Subject Leader for RE	c.baldwin@stwilfrids.com
Mr C. Franke: Deputy Head teacher	c.franke@stwilfrids.com
Ms. Thompson	a.thompson@stwilfrids.com
Mr S. Kirwan	s.kirwan@stwilfrids.com
Mr Hickey	c.hickey@stwilfrids.com
Mr F. Ford	j.ford@stwilfrids.com

Science

Exam board: AQA

Exam specification: Combined Science – Trilogy (8464)

This qualification is linear with students sitting 6 terminal examinations at the end of Year 11. The course has an equal amount of Biology, Chemistry and Physics content and prepares students for the Alevels in those subjects should they choose to take them in sixth form. There are no coursework deadlines and there are no controlled assessments.

Students who are under performing will be offered intervention sessions with one of their teachers. Afterschool revision lessons will begin in the new year.

Biology

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



Chemistry

8. Atomic structure and the periodic table
9. Bonding, structure, and the properties of matter
10. Quantitative chemistry
11. Chemical changes
12. Energy changes
13. The rate and extent of chemical change
14. Organic chemistry
15. Chemical analysis
16. Chemistry of the atmosphere
17. Using resources

Physics

18. Energy
19. Electricity
20. Particle model of matter
21. Atomic structure
22. Forces
23. Waves
24. Magnetism and electromagnetism

Assessments

There are six papers: two biology, two chemistry and two physics. Each of the papers will assess knowledge and understanding from distinct topic areas.

Assessment	Date 2026 (provisional)	Topics Covered	How it's assessed
Biology Paper 1	Tuesday 12 th May	1 – 4	75 minute written exam
Chemistry Paper 1	Monday 18 th May	8 – 12	75 minute written exam
Physics Paper 1	Tuesday 2 nd June	18 – 21	75 minute written exam
Biology Paper 2	Monday 8 th June	5 – 7	75 minute written exam
Chemistry Paper 2	Friday 12 th June	13 – 17	75 minute written exam
Physics Paper 2	Monday 15 th June	22 - 24	75 minute written exam



As well as assessing knowledge and understanding of the Science curriculum, the papers assess the 21 required practicals the students complete in class and in the Physics paper the 21 equations studied in class as well.

Helpful Resources:

<https://www.educake.co.uk/> <http://www.aqa.org.uk/exams-administration/exams-guidance/find-past-papers-and-mark-schemes> <http://science.stwilfrids.com/>
https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=aqa+gcse+science+revision
<https://www.youtube.com/c/Freesciencelessons>
[AQA GCSE Science Revision Playlist \(B1, B2, B3, C1, C2, C3, P1, P2 and P3\)](#)

Art

Exam board: AQA

Exam specification: 8202

This year we will focus on completing the coursework portfolio. Students will work on their extended project from September until January. In January all coursework is submitted for a final portfolio check and then students begin Component 2 – Exam. Students will use lesson and homework time to complete the exam preparatory work which will be marked alongside the piece they complete in the final 10 hour Timed examination in May. Component 1 - Coursework will contribute 60% towards their final grade and Component 2 – The externally set project and final exam piece will contribute the other 40%.

GCSE DEADLINES

Exam board: AQA

Exam specification: 8202

The evidence for Component 1 and 60% of the final grade should be completed by the end of January 2026 in readiness to begin the exam supporting studies. The final practical exam will be sat in May 2023 over a two-day period (10 hours) and along with the supporting studies will contribute 40% of the final grade.

GCSE DEADLINES

End of October 25

All coursework for portraits should be complete

End of January 26

All component 1 – coursework should be complete for final assessment in March 23

May 26

Final submission and assessment of Component 2 Timed Examination Supporting studies and final exam sat.



Year 11 coursework tasks are as follows:

- Contemporary Portrait – Investigation sheets x 2
- Contemporary Portrait – Ideas development sheets x 1
- Contemporary Portrait Final Piece x 1
- Personal extended project development sheets x 4
- Final Personal extended project piece x 1

Business Studies

Exam board: Edexcel /Pearson

Exam specification: 9BS0

Course overview:

Students have been studying topics around two different themes.

Theme One: Investigating small business.

Enterprise and Entrepreneurship, including how and why business ideas come about and the role of entrepreneurship.

Spotting a business opportunity. Including conducting market research and understanding competition. Putting a business idea into practice. This focuses on making a business idea happen through identifying aims and objectives and the financial aspect.

Making the business effective. Students have explored a range of factors that impact on the success of a business including location and the marketing mix.

Understanding external factors in business. Students have explored how businesses respond to a range of factors outside of their control.

Theme Two: Building a business

Growing the business. This includes the impact of globalisation and the ethical and environmental questions that businesses face.

Making marketing decisions. Students explore each element of the marketing mix in more depth.

Making operational decisions. This topic focuses on meeting customer needs through the design, supply, quality and sales decisions a business makes.

Making financial decisions. Students will explore the tools a business has to support decision making, including ratio analysis.

Making human resources decisions. This focuses on recruitment, training, and motivation and decisions that a business needs to make relating to organisational structure.

Assessment:

The course is assessed through two examinations.



Written examination one. Theme One.

This paper is 1 hour and 45 minutes long.

This examination is 50% of the qualification and consists of calculations, short and answer and extended writing questions.

Written examination two. Theme Two.

This paper is 1 hour and 45 minutes long.

This examination is 50% of the qualification and consists of calculations, short and answer and extended writing questions.

Computer Science GCSE

Exam board: **OCR**

Specification: **J277**

OCR Computer Science GCSE: This course is assessed via two written exam papers, each 1 ½ hour in length, which students sit in the summer term of Year 11.

J277/01: Computer systems – Written exam worth 50% of total GCSE

This component will assess:

- 1.1 Systems Architecture
- 1.2 Memory and storage
- 1.3 Computer networks, connections and protocols
- 1.4 Network security
- 1.5 Systems software
- 1.6 Ethical, legal, cultural and environmental impacts of digital technology.

J277/02: Computational thinking, algorithms and programming – Written exam worth 50% of total GCSE

This component will assess:

- 2.1 Algorithms
- 2.2 Programming fundamentals
- 2.3 Producing robust programs
- 2.4 Boolean logic
- 2.5 Programming languages and Integrated Development Environments

This paper has two sections: Section A and Section B. Students must answer both sections. All questions are mandatory.

In Section B, questions assessing students' ability to write and refine algorithms must be answered using **either** the OCR Exam Reference Language **or** Python.

Deadlines for homework and the assessments are set by individual teachers and can be seen on showmyhomework.co.uk.



Creative iMedia

Exam board: **OCR**

Specification: **J834**

OCR Creative iMedia: This course is assessed via one written 1 ½ hour exam paper, which students sit in the summer term of Year 11, and two pieces of coursework.

R093: Creative iMedia in the media industry – Written exam 40% of the final grade

In this unit students learn about the media industry, digital media products, how they are planned, and the media codes which are used to convey meaning, create impact and engage audiences. Topics include:

- The media industry
- Factors influencing product design
- Pre-production planning
- Distribution considerations

The R093 exam paper consists of two parts – A and B:

Part A – Knowledge Recall (PO1)

- **Focus:** Testing students' ability to **recall facts and definitions**.
- **Question Types:** Mostly **low-tariff questions** (1–2 marks).
- **Format:** Short answers, often requiring just a word or sentence.
- **Topics:** Media industry sectors, media products, job roles, and terminology.
- **Example:** Identify one category of audience segmentation.

Part B – Application and Evaluation (PO2 & PO3)

- **Focus:** Applying knowledge to scenarios and evaluating media-related decisions.
- **Question Types:** **Medium to high-tariff questions**, including extended responses.
- **Format:** Scenario-based questions requiring detailed answers.
- **Skills Tested:**
 - **PO2:** Apply knowledge and understanding.
 - **PO3:** Analyse and evaluate using examples and technical terms.
- **Example:** Describe how a target audience might influence the content of a promotional campaign.



Exam Tips

- Use the **scenario** in your answers—start with the name of the person or company mentioned.
- **Underline key information** in the question to stay focused.
- Understand **command words** like *identify*, *describe*, and *discuss*—each requires a different depth of response.

R094: Visual identity and digital graphics – A set coursework assignment worth 30% of the final grade

This is assessed by completing a set assignment. In this unit students learn to how to develop visual identities for clients and use the concepts of graphic design to create original digital graphics to engage target audiences. Topics include:

- Develop visual identity
- Plan digital graphics for products
- Create visual identity and digital graphics

R097: Interactive digital media – A set coursework assignment worth 30% of the final grade

This is assessed by completing a set assignment. In this unit students learn how to plan, create and review interactive digital media products. Topics include:

- Plan interactive digital media
- Create interactive digital media
- Review interactive digital media

R094 and R097 are externally moderated by OCR.

Deadlines for homework and the assessments are set by individual teachers and can be seen on showmyhomework.co.uk.

Dance

Course Overview

Exam board: AQA

Exam specification: 8236



COURSE REQUIRMENTS

Component 1 - Performance and Choreography 60%

Performance:

- Solo Set Phrases - 2 set phrases chosen out of 4 (30 secs in length). To be assessed in November.
- Duet/Trio - Using motifs from 2 other remaining set phrases (3 minutes minimum). To be assessed in March.

Solo/Group Choreography:

Based on stimulus set by AQA; choice of Paper released in examination year. **To be assessed in March 2026.**

- 1 dancer (2 minutes minimum)
- 2-5 dancers (3-3.5 minutes)
- **Please note:** Group choreography rehearsals are expected to take place weekly and completed outside of lesson time

Component 2 - Dance Appreciation 40%

Students are assessed on three topics;

- Choreographic processes and performance skills
- Critical appreciation of own work
- Critical appreciation of others work

You will study 6 different British works in depth:

Dance work	Dance company	Choreographer
<i>Artificial Things</i>	Stopgap Dance Company	Lucy Bennett
<i>A Linha Curva</i>	Rambert Dance Company	Itzik Galili
<i>Infra</i>	The Royal Ballet	Wayne McGregor
<i>Shadows</i>	Phoenix Dance Theatre	Christopher Bruce
<i>Within Her Eyes</i>	James Cousins Company	James Cousins
<i>Emancipation of Expressionism</i>	Boy Blue Entertainment	Kenrick H2O Sandy

All our formal deadlines fall in Year 11 for Dance. However, students will be asked to complete mock exams throughout the lead up to the above dates, preparing and recording performances throughout the year. They will also be encouraged and invited to perform at our Evening of Dance and Performing Arts Evening to showcase their choreography and performances at the end of the year. We encourage all students who are taking GCSE Dance to attend a contemporary dance class outside of school, this will aid in your son or daughter's performance skills. Students will follow the GCSE (1-9) grading criteria. Students can use their Dance Anthology Guides and free GCSE Dance Revision Guide to support with revision.



The GCSE Dance exam period for practical is between March and May, therefore the school will set an appropriate date between these months. The theory exam will be towards the middle of June.



Drama

Exam board: WJEC EDUQAS

Exam specification: C690QS

Component 1 – 40% - Performance/Design

Students choose one stimulus set by the exam board, either a famous image, quote, lyrics or theme and in groups, devise a piece of original and unique theatre based around the stimulus. They must perform the piece in the style of an influential practitioner, whom they will explore during the course. They must produce a written or recorded portfolio explaining and justifying their artistic choices and write an evaluation of the final performance after the event. They will perform their devised pieces to an audience in the summer term of Year 10.

Component 2 – 20% - Performance/Design

Students will study two extracts from a play-text which will then be performed to an audience. Students will be able to fully immerse themselves in their character, with costume, lighting and sound and will perform in front of a visiting examiner in January of Year 11. Students must know their lines off by heart and act naturalistically in character. Their understanding of character and narrative, as well as their use of a range of performance/design skills will be assessed. Students can be examined as either a performer or designer.

Component 3 – 40% - Exam

1 hr 30 minutes written exam

Section A: set text analysis of *An Inspector Calls* by J.B. Priestley, considering how they would direct, perform and design sections for performance.

Section B: a review of a piece of theatre seen during the course. This could look at how design aspects such as lighting or sound were used to create meaning, or how performance skills such as voice and movement communicated ideas to the audience.

Theatre and workshop opportunities

In preparation for the written exam, we will go to the theatre to see live performances throughout the course, which the students must analyse and evaluate critically and skilfully. They will write about this play in the summer examination.

Students will also have the opportunity to watch visiting theatre companies such as Theatre Centre, as well as take part in workshops with theatre practitioners such as Gecko, Splendid and Frantic Assembly. This will aid students enormously in building up their confidence, honing their acting talent and performance skills and broadening their knowledge and understanding of a wider range of performance styles, which is linked to the exam criteria.



Enterprise BTEC level 1 / 2

Exam board: Pearson/Edexcel BTEC Level 1 /2 Tech Award 2022

Qualification number: 603/7063/4

Course overview

Students undertake three different components of work over the two years. Two are these are set assignments, and one is an exam.

Component one: Exploring enterprises	Set assignment completed in class.	Completed in year 10.
Component two: Planning and pitching a micro enterprise	Set assignment completed in class.	To be completed by December year 11.
Component three: Promotion and Finance for Enterprise.	2 hour examination	To be taken in the summer of year 11.

Students need to pass all three components to be awarded a grade of a Level 1 Pass, Level 1 Merit, Level 1 Distinction, Level 2 Pass, Level 2 Merit, Level 2 Distinction & Level 2 Distinction*.

Component one

Students will explore different enterprises to develop their knowledge and understanding of the characteristics of enterprises and the skills needed by entrepreneurs to be successful. Students will explore how enterprises use market research to find out about their customer needs and competitor behaviour and how internal and external factors may affect enterprises.

Students will complete a set assignment based on their research of a business of their choice. This will take approximately 15 hours of class time.

Component two

Students will generate two realistic ideas for a micro-enterprise and choose one of these to plan within budget. They will individually present their business plan for their idea and review the production and delivery of their presentation to make recommendations for improvements. This will be completed as a set assignment and take approximately 15 hours of class time.

Component three

This is the exam component. Students will explore how marketing is used by enterprises and the factors that influence how enterprises identify and target their market. Learners will complete financial documents and statements and explore how to use them to monitor and improve the performance of an enterprise in order to make decisions and recommend strategies for success.

Exam theory will begin in January of year 11 and students will take a 2 hour examination in the summer.



Geography

Exam board: AQA

Exam specification: 8035

The course is divided into three sections:

Living with the natural environment (35%)

- The challenge of natural hazards – tropical storms, volcanoes and earthquakes
- The living world – looking at different biomes and comparing the hot desert to the rainforest ecosystems
- Physical landscapes in the UK – a look at rivers and coasts of the UK

Challenges in the Human environment (35%)

- Urban issues and challenges – looking at megacities in the world, including slum settlements
- The changing economic world – students investigate why the reasons and consequences of countries at different stages of development
- The challenge of resource management – natural resources like energy resources, water and food and how these are managed by populations.

Geographical applications (30%)

- Issue evaluation – Students will receive a pre-release booklet with information about a case study and will have time to look at this issue before their exam in lesson. They will then be assessed on this. The topic of the booklet changes every year.
- Fieldwork – students will complete two days of fieldwork over the course and will be questioned about what they have done.

The GCSE Geography course is 100% exam. All exams take place at the end of year 11.



History

Exam board: Edexcel

Exam specification: GCSE (9 - 1) in History (1HI0)

Year 11 continues the varied Edexcel GCSE history course which we began in Year 10 with Weimar and Nazi Germany, Early Elizabethan England, and the first part of the American West. The Summer homework on this will be due in during their first lesson back. The American West will be completed before the end of the Autumn term, to be followed by the final thematic unit, Crime and Punishment in Britain c1000-present. This includes an in-depth study of the conditions in Whitechapel of the late 1800s, when Jack the Ripper was at large. A visit to Whitechapel for a guided tour to understand this era, and to the London Dungeon, is being planned for the end of January.

Assessment

All the assessment for the GCSE takes place in exams at the end of the course.

Paper 1 is the Crime and Punishment unit, featuring the Whitechapel Historic Environment.

Paper 1: Thematic study and historic environment (Paper codes: 1HI0/10–12)

<i>Written examination: 1 hour and 15 minutes</i>

<i>30%* of the qualification</i>

<i>52 marks (16 for the historic environment, 36 for the thematic study)</i>
--

Paper 2 consists of the American West paper followed immediately by the Early Elizabeth paper.

Paper 2: Period study and British depth study (Paper codes: 1HI0/2A–2W)
--

<i>Written examination: 1 hour and 45 minutes</i>

<i>40%* of the qualification</i>

<i>64 marks (32 for the period study and 32 for the British depth study)</i>
--

Paper 3 is the Weimar and Nazi Germany paper, and features an in-depth evaluation of the students' source and interpretation analysis and evaluation skills.

Paper 3: Modern depth study (Paper codes: 1HI0/30–33)
--

<i>Written examination: 1 hour and 20 minutes</i>

<i>30%* of the qualification</i>

<i>52 marks</i>

To study History A Level the minimum grade that a student will need is a grade 4, with an equal grade in English. We follow the Edexcel 9HI0 course, a fascinating one that focuses on the fight of various people for their rights against oppression. This includes the struggle against apartheid in



South Africa, the USA in the Twentieth Century, which includes the Civil Rights era, and Irish history from the 1798 rebellion to the establishment of an Irish state free of British control. Students will also complete a coursework unit on the Holocaust, taking advantage of the department's expertise in this field.

For more information please contact Miss Patience: s.patience@stwilfrids.com



Health and Social Care BTEC Level 1 / 2 Award

Exam board: Pearson/Edexcel BTEC Level 1/Level 2 Tech Award

Qualification number: 603/7047/6

Students will be studying the new Pearson BTEC Level 1/Level 2 Tech Award in Health and Social Care. The qualification has three components that focus on the assessment of knowledge, skills and practices. The three components are, Human Lifespan Development, Health and Social Care Services and Values and Health and Wellbeing.

Components 1 and 2 take the form of controlled assessment using a Pearson Set Assignment completed in lesson time.

Component 3: Health and Wellbeing is a 2hr exam set and marked by Pearson, completed under exam conditions.

Components

Learners are required to complete and achieve all three components in the qualification.

Pearson BTEC Level 1/Level 2 Tech Award in Health and Social Care				
Component number	Component title	GLH	Level	How assessed
1	Human Lifespan Development	36	1/2	Internal
2	Health and Social Care Services and Values	36	1/2	Internal
3	Health and Wellbeing	48	1/2	External Synoptic

Component 1 Human Lifespan Development.

This component involves studying how people grow and develop over the course of their life, from infancy to old age, this includes physical, intellectual, emotional and social development and the different factors that may affect them. An individual's development can be affected by major life events, such as marriage, parenthood or moving house, and you will learn about how people adapt to these changes as well as the types and sources of support that can help them.

Component 2 Health and Social Care Values.

This component will give you an understanding of health and social care services and will help you develop skills in applying care values which are common across the sector. Providing good health and social care services is very important and a set of 'care values' exists to ensure this happens. Care values are important because they enable people who use health and social care services to get the care they need and to be protected from different sorts of harm.

Component 3 Health and Wellbeing.

In this component, you look at the factors that can have a positive or negative influence on a person's health and wellbeing. You will learn to interpret physiological and lifestyle indicators and what they mean for someone's state of health. You will learn how to use this information to design an appropriate plan for improving someone's health and wellbeing, including short- and long-term targets. Additionally, you will explore the difficulties an individual may face when trying to make these changes.



Media Studies

Exam board: AQA

Exam specification: 8572

Course overview

70% Exam (Media 1 and Media 2)

30% Non-exam assessment (NEA)

Students will study a range of media forms and media products and analyse them by applying the Theoretical Framework: **Media Language**

Media Representations

Media Industries

Media Audiences

They will learn subject specific terminology and media theory and how to apply it, as well as how products reflect the social, cultural, historical and political contexts in which they were produced.

Exams: Both exams include a mixture of short, medium & extended response questions.

Media One 35%

Section A: Media Language and Media Representations

Section B: Media Industries and Media Audiences

Questions in these sections will be on the following forms:

1. Magazines - Year 10
2. Advertising & Marketing – Year 10
3. Newspapers
4. Video Games
5. Radio
6. Music Video – Year 10
7. Online media
8. Film (Industry only) – Year 10

Media Two 35%

1. Based on a screening from any one of the television Close Study Products & can test any area of the theoretical framework.
2. Online, Social and Participatory media
3. Video Games
4. Newspapers



Modern Foreign Languages (French and Spanish)

Exam board: AQA

Exam specification: French: 8652 Spanish:8692

Students in Year 11 will continue to build on their knowledge of key vocabulary areas and grammar, and will work this year to develop and reinforce their knowledge of the AQA vocabulary list that they worked on in Year 10.

All students will take four exams:

1. 25% listening exam
2. 25% reading exam
3. 25% writing exam
4. 25% speaking exam

The exams are tiered as Foundation and Higher, and students will enter the same tier for all four papers.

The tier decision will be made following discussion between student and teacher after the mock exams. The mock exams will take place in January 2025 and will cover all examined skills.

Lessons will involve a variety of activities to practise these skills and to develop cultural knowledge of countries where the target language is spoken. Students will have the opportunity to practise speaking exam skills with our current A Level students, and will be able to request an appointment with their teacher as needed.

All skills are assessed by final examination. There is no controlled assessment in French or Spanish. Exam practice and end of topic assessments will be carried out throughout the year and will contribute to the current progress grade. Students will be tested each week on vocabulary that they are accumulating as part of their homework. They will also have a piece of written homework each week. Additional support in grammar and exam technique will be available before school. Students have access to the textbook resources through www.kerboodle.com and should also use app.senecalearning.com to develop their vocabulary knowledge. All students will have a revision workbook that is theirs to keep, and should be using this to prepare for their exams.

If you have any questions, please contact L.Hall@stwilfrids.com



Music

Exam board: WJEC/Eduqas
Exam specification: C660QS

ALL Music Coursework is submitted in Year 11. This is worth 60% of the final GCSE grade. There is ONE Listening and Appraising exam at the end of the course in June and this makes up the remaining 40% of the final GCSE grade.

Component 1: Performing (30% of your GCSE)

Deadline for Performing Portfolio: Friday 13th February 2026

Deadline for completed SOLO performance: Friday 17th October 2025

You must perform 4-6 minutes of music, and one of your chosen pieces must link to one of the areas of study, i.e. Musical Forms, Music for Ensemble, Film Music or Popular Music. Also, one of the pieces you perform **must** be an ensemble, or group piece, which lasts for at least one minute. Your performance pieces should be grade 3 or higher in standard. You will be assessed on **accuracy, technical control, expression, and interpretation**. All performances must be recorded and **you must have the sheet music or tab for the part(s) you are playing**. Interim deadlines will be shared on SatchelOne for performances.

Component 2: Composing (30% of your GCSE)

Deadline for Composing Portfolio: Friday 13th February 2026

Deadline for completed FREE CHOICE composition: Friday 14th November 2025

You must compose two compositions. One must be in response to a brief which will be set by Eduqas on 1st September in Year 11. The second composition is a free choice composition, for which you will set your own brief. Interim deadlines will be set for each piece and are written in your planners. For both compositions, you need to keep a composition log which will be signed by both yourself and your teacher. The total duration of **both** your compositions must be between **3 minutes and 6 minutes** long. You will be penalised if your work is too short, or too long! You **must** also produce a score or detailed written description of the music plus a lead sheet for each composition outlining the melody, the chords, tempo and performance directions (dynamics, articulation etc.). You will also have to complete a composition log booklet. **There will be a GCSE Music Coursework Clinic every Tuesday and Wednesday until 4.30pm in F62.**

Component 3: Appraising (40% of your GCSE)

Written Examination: Friday 5th June 2026

This is a listening exam which will last for 1 hour and 15 minutes (but may run over due to the length of the excerpts of recorded music chosen).

There will be **eight** questions, **two** on each of the following areas of study:

AoS1: Musical Forms and Devices

AoS2: Music for Ensemble

AoS3: Film Music

AoS4: Popular Music



Two of the eight questions will be based on our set works which are 'Africa' by Toto, and 'Badinerie' by J S Bach.

*We recommend the Illuminate WJEC/EDUQAS GCSE Music Revision Guide (**Revised Edition**) ISBN: 9781912820788

**We also recommend the excellent resources on BBC Bitesize.

*** All students have access to Focus on Sound, our Music Revision and online lesson subscription for use in both school and at home.



PHOTOGRAPHY

Exam board: AQA

Exam specification: 8204

This year we will focus on completing the coursework portfolio. Students will work on their extended project from September until January. In January all coursework is submitted for a final portfolio check and then students begin Component 2 – Exam. Students will use lesson and homework time to complete the exam preparatory work which will be marked alongside the piece they complete in the final 10 hour Timed examination in May. Component 1 - Coursework will contribute 60% towards their final grade and Component 2 – The externally set project and final exam piece will contribute the other 40%.

GCSE DEADLINES

The evidence for Component 1 and 60% of the final grade should be completed by the end of January 2026 in readiness to begin the exam supporting studies PowerPoint. The final practical exam will be sat in May 2026 over a two-day period (10 hours) and along with the supporting studies will contribute 40% of the final grade.

GCSE DEADLINES

End of October 25

All coursework for Truthful Representations should be complete

End of January 26

All component 1 – coursework should be complete for final assessment in March 26

May 26

Final submission and assessment of Component 2 Timed Examination Supporting studies and final exam sat.

Year 11 coursework tasks are as follows:

Truthful representations project

Personal extended project

Photobook of final pieces component 1

Component 2 Preparatory Work



Physical Education GCSE PE

Exam board: AQA

Exam specification: 8582

Students will soon be embarking on their controlled assessment on analysis of performance worth 10% of their practical. Students will be assessed in three practical activities; these can both two team or individual and one of the other. Each will need to offer three performances worth a combined 30% of the GCSE grade. The moderation of this will be between March and May.

Theory topics are divided across papers, helping students to see which part of the specification they are being assessed on in each exam.

Paper 1 (1hour 15 mins exam) 22nd May The human body and movement in physical activity and sport will be assessing: Applied Anatomy and Physiology; movement analysis (biomechanics) and Physical Training

Paper 2 (1hour 15mins exam) 1st June Socio-cultural influences and well-being in physical activity and sport will be assessing: Sports Psychology; socio-cultural influences and health and well-being.

Level 1/2 BTEC SPORT

Exam board: Edexcel/Pearson BTEC Tech Award in Sport

Exam specification: 603/7068/3

All students have studied component 1: preparing participants to take part in sport and physical activity.

Students are working on completing their component 2: taking part and improving other participants sporting performance which will be assessed between October to December.

Students will then move on to component 3 which is a written exam, in exam conditions looking at topics associated with developing fitness to improve other participants performance in sport and physical activity.

Product Design (Design & Technology)

Exam board: OCR



Exam specification: J310

GCSE Product Design qualification is made up of two assessed units.

Unit 1

Principles of Design and Technology 2 hours written paper 50% of total GCSE

This unit brings together the learners 'core' and 'in-depth' knowledge and understanding. The question paper is split into two sections. A minimum of 15% of the paper will assess learners' mathematical skills as applied within a design and technology context.

Unit 2

Iterative Design Challenge project. 50% of total GCSE.

This component offers the opportunity for learners to design, model and make a product. Pupils are given a choice of challenges will be released on 1 June each year.



Psychology

Exam board: OCR

Exam specification: J203

Course overview:

Students take both components 1 and 2 to be awarded the OCR GCSE (9–1) in Psychology. Learners will be required to study psychological ideas, processes, techniques and procedures, through the following topics

Component 1: Criminal psychology; Development; Psychological problems and Research methods.

Component 2: Social influence; Memory; Sleep and dreaming and Research methods.

For each topic, students will be required to study two core studies to support the content of related theories. For each core study, students should ‘tell the story’ of the study by considering the background, method, design, sample, materials/apparatus, procedure, results, conclusions and criticisms.

As part of their study, learners will be required to develop knowledge and understanding of the five core areas of psychology this includes;

- Biological – an understanding of biological concepts within psychology, including neuroscience and genetics as contributors to behaviour;
- Cognitive – an understanding of thought, information and mental processing as contributors to behaviour;
- Social – an understanding of the social area of psychology, the impact of social and environmental factors on behaviour and the influence of groups;
- Developmental – an understanding of how individuals change throughout their lives, with a particular focus on childhood and how both nature and nurture can affect individuals;
- Individual differences – an understanding of the complex nature of human behaviour and experiences and why and how people are different.

Revision:

We encourage our students to purchase an OCR GCSE Psychology textbook, however we do have departmental copies that can be loaned if needed: [https://www.amazon.co.uk/My-Revision-Notes-GCSE-](https://www.amazon.co.uk/My-Revision-Notes-GCSE-Psychology/dp/1510423222/ref=asc_df_1510423222/?tag=googshopuk-21&linkCode=df0&hvadid=310856639426&hvpos=&hvnetw=g&hvrnd=15138623877729919186&hvpone=&hvptwo=&hvgmt=&hvdev=c&hvdvcmdl=&hvlocint=&hvlocphy=9045865&hvtargid=pla-563841071899&psc=1&th=1&psc=1)

[Psychology/dp/1510423222/ref=asc_df_1510423222/?tag=googshopuk-21&linkCode=df0&hvadid=310856639426&hvpos=&hvnetw=g&hvrnd=15138623877729919186&hvpone=&hvptwo=&hvgmt=&hvdev=c&hvdvcmdl=&hvlocint=&hvlocphy=9045865&hvtargid=pla-563841071899&psc=1&th=1&psc=1](https://www.amazon.co.uk/My-Revision-Notes-GCSE-Psychology/dp/1510423222/ref=asc_df_1510423222/?tag=googshopuk-21&linkCode=df0&hvadid=310856639426&hvpos=&hvnetw=g&hvrnd=15138623877729919186&hvpone=&hvptwo=&hvgmt=&hvdev=c&hvdvcmdl=&hvlocint=&hvlocphy=9045865&hvtargid=pla-563841071899&psc=1&th=1&psc=1)

We also encourage students to practice past paper questions and mark using mark schemes, that can be found in their classroom or online here:

<https://www.ocr.org.uk/qualifications/gcse/psychology-j203-from-2017/assessment/>



Assessment:

The course is assessed through two examinations.

The examination will be 2 written papers lasting 1 hour and 30 minutes and will consist of short and medium style questions, as well as one extended essay question worth 13 marks.



Textiles

Exam board: AQA

Exam specification: 8204

This year we will focus on completing the coursework portfolio. The coursework which constitutes the evidence for Component 1 and 60% of the final grade should be completed by the end of January 2025 in readiness to begin the exam supporting studies. The final practical exam will be sat in May 2025 over a two-day period (10 hours) and along with the supporting studies will contribute 40% of the final grade.

GCSE DEADLINES

End of September 25

All coursework for 'Exploring the World Around Us' (Natural and Urban Landscape work) should be complete, including 2 final outcomes.

End of January 26

All component 1 – Extended project (Year 11 coursework) should be complete for final assessment in March 26.

May 26

Final submission and assessment of Component 2 Timed Examination Supporting studies and final exam sat.

Year 11 coursework tasks are as follows:

Urban Landscape – Ideas development

Urban Landscape – Final Piece

Extended Project – Prep Work

Extended Project – Ideas development

Extended Project – Final Piece



Travel and Tourism BTEC level 1 / 2

Exam board: Pearson/Edexcel BTEC Level 1 /2 Tech Award 2022

Qualification number: : 603/7048/8

Course overview

Students undertake three different components of work over the two years. Two are these are set assignments and one is an exam.

Component one: Travel and Tourism organisations and destinations.	Set assignment completed in class.	Completed in year 10.
Component two: Customer needs in travel and tourism.	Set assignment completed in class.	To be completed by December year 11.
Component three: Influences on global travel and tourism.	2 hour examination	To be taken in the summer of year 11.

Students need to pass all three components to be awarded a grade of a Level 1 Pass, Level 1 Merit, Level 1 Distinction, Level 2 Pass, Level 2 Merit, Level 2 Distinction and Level 2 Distinction*.

Component one

Students will investigate travel and tourism organisations in the UK, their ownership, aims, key products and services, and how they work together. They will explore the role of different consumer technologies within the travel and tourism industry. Students will understand the different types of tourism and different types of visitor, and will investigate the features of and routes to popular tourist destinations.

Students will complete a set assignment based on their research. This will take approximately 15 hours of class time.

Component two

Students will investigate how organisations use market research to identify travel and tourism trends and identify customer needs and preferences. They will apply their understanding by exploring how specific needs are met by organisations and how travel planning meets customer needs and preferences

This will be completed as a set assignment and take approximately 15 hours of class time.

Component three

This is the exam component. Students will understand the positive and negative influences of different factors on global travel and tourism, and how these factors can affect global tourist destinations and travel and tourism organisations. They will also learn about the factors that influence visitors and how these may affect their choice of destination.



Exam theory will begin in January of year 11 and students will take a 2 hour examination in the summer.



E-learning Support for Students

Every student has a SatchelOne ShowMyHomework account, this is where student's regular homework will be recorded. <https://www.satchelone.com/>
Students log in using the "log in with O365 button"

A parent app is available to allow you to track and monitor student work. For more details about the parent app contact Mrs Denyer via smh@stwilfrids.com

Student rewards, attainment data and written reports are all detailed using the student and parent Go4Schools accounts. Please follow the instructions on the school [website](#).

You can use the MyChildAtSchool (MCAS) app to track behaviour points and attendance as well as review school reports.

Students also have free access to Microsoft Office 365. Students can access the web version via the school website, but this subscription also includes 5 free downloads to use on computers and devices at home. Students are expected to check their school email regularly and know how to access Microsoft TEAMS as this is where staff will share additional resources and work related to school closure absences.

Different subject areas provide e-learning resources to support students with their studies, eg Educake, Kerboodle & Activlearn.

The image shows a screenshot of the St Wilfrid's Catholic School website. The top navigation bar includes links for HOME, OUR SCHOOL, LEARNING, PARENTS, SIXTH FORM, ADMISSIONS, NEWS & EVENTS, and RECRUITMENT. A secondary navigation bar features icons for YouTube, Twitter, Staff, Students, and Contact, with the 'Students' link highlighted by a yellow circle. Below the navigation is a large banner image of students in school uniforms. On the right side, a red sidebar titled 'In this section' lists 'Microsoft 365', 'Show My Homework', and 'Unifrog', with 'Microsoft 365' also highlighted by a yellow circle. A blue arrow points from the 'Students' link in the navigation bar to the 'Microsoft 365' link in the sidebar. Below the main website screenshot, the text 'Students' is displayed, followed by a breadcrumb trail: HOME > STUDENTS.



Advice to Parents/Carers

Your main role over the next few months is to help build confidence and support the revision process.

You must take a real interest in your son/daughter's exam preparation even to the extent of sacrificing some of your own time to offer help. Some of you may be nervous because you are not sure your help will be welcome, or because you think that you don't know enough about a particular subject. I hope some of the suggestions offered will allay your fears.

The first step is to familiarise yourself with your son/daughter's study plan. It is very easy to draw up a study plan but not so easy to stick to it. Go through it with the student and encourage them to keep to it. Some evenings they will not feel like doing much work. This may be the time to offer to test them on something they have already learnt. Someone taking an active interest can provide the motivation needed.

You will of course have to use your judgement. They may be genuinely tired and in need of a relaxing evening and an early night. It is as important to recognise when to stop, as it is to know when to push a little. You may have to remind them to re-schedule the work missed.

Sometimes the best way to help is to try to reduce other pressures.

Making time to listen is very important. Get him/her to talk about the work in progress, any problems with it, and possible solutions. They have been studying the subject and may well come up with answers with a little encouragement. If they are really stuck, get them to ask their teacher; and then remember to ask them what the answer was when they come home.

Going over a topic and testing them on the main points is a very useful way of helping. Try to avoid the temptation to catch them out on detail as this can shake their confidence. Take care not to display your knowledge, which may not be relevant to the course they are following.

Not all students have the same self-discipline. Just because he/she is up in the bedroom for two hours does not mean he/she is studying! It may be a good idea to get into the routine of ending each study session with a few test questions or simply taking a look at what has been done and a brief discussion about it.

Students can get irritable as the pressure builds towards the exams. (Some can get irritable under normal circumstances). Try not to nag. If things do not seem to be going well, arrange to come in and discuss it with one of the teachers.

Your support and interest may be the deciding factor between grades.



Revision Advice

1.0 Introduction

It is widely thought that sitting written Examinations is the most effective way of assessing someone's knowledge and understanding of a particular subject in an objective and provable way at a standard which is readily understood by the nation as a whole. In fact, the system of "viva" examinations (a grilling by a panel of experts) provides a far more rigorous method of assessing a person's true understanding of a subject but is too expensive to be used widely and is usually reserved for university examinations. Recognising that exams are not ideal, that they operate within a strictly defined set of rules, and that there are techniques for enhancing your performance within those rules, is the first stage in performing well in exams. It is the aim of this booklet to raise your awareness of some of these issues. Read it carefully and share it with your parents/carers so that they can help you.

1.1 The GCSEs

The General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) exams used in England and Wales are graded 1-9. GCSE grades are the criteria by which people are selected to proceed to higher and further education, and are recognised by employers when shortlisting candidates for interview. It is important to realise that the number of GCSEs passed in one go is often looked for (except in cases of illness), and retake passes may be of lesser value (though still worth having). For many college courses and jobs a grade 4 or better at GCSE are the entry requirements. Many people become extremely successful having failed to achieve this standard at age 16, but options become closed to you and progress becomes more difficult. For most jobs, good grades in English and Maths are essential.

These days many GCSE final grades are made up from written exams. You should be fully aware of any coursework requirements if there are any as most teachers spend much of Year 11 trying to extract the highest quality coursework possible from inexperienced students who have not quite appreciated the gravity of the situation. Coursework is obviously vital, but the aim of this booklet is to concentrate on passing written exams.

Written exams work like this; a list of knowledge or skills, called a syllabus, is published which is the content on which the examiners will ask a range of questions. Now it is not possible to ask questions on everything covered by a 2 year syllabus in a 2 hour exam, so to ensure that you learn everything the examiners keep top secret which bits they are going to ask you about. You could think to yourself "I only need 65% to achieve a Grade 5, so I'll only bother to learn 70% of the syllabus and answer 70% of the questions". This is an extremely dangerous game to play. It assumes that you will get the questions you answer 100% correct, which is unlikely, and that the questions will be evenly distributed. Two questions on a subject you have not learned will spell disaster. Your teacher will have covered the syllabus, so make every effort to cover all of it in your revision programme.



2.0 Now, on to “How to Pass those Exams”

Passing exams falls into two distinct phases, the preparation beforehand, and sitting the exam on the big day. Of the two the preparation is everything and should render the exam a trivial formality which is an insult to the intelligence. This does actually happensometimes!

2.1 The Preparation

The preparation phase falls into three main tasks. Accumulating the required knowledge, learning the knowledge, and practising exam questions.

2.2 The Knowledge

It may come as some surprise to know that there are really two limitations on you learning anything (yes, that includes Einstein’s General Theory of Relativity and other really difficult ideas). These limitations are; the way that the information was presented to you; and the time in which you were allowed to learn it. Teachers have limited time to convey all the required information and so may have to go too fast for you, or may not have time to repeat everything in a form which you find easier to understand and remember. Therefore the onus is on you to fill in any gaps in your understanding of the knowledge. “The Knowledge” is outlined in the syllabus and is what you are going to be asked questions on in the exam. Learning all of it is vital, as is knowing the sort of questions you are going to be asked as this may well influence how, and in what form you learn the knowledge. Are you going to be asked to regurgitate facts, are you going to be asked to display some skill, are you going to have to solve an unseen problem, are you going to have to build a coherent argument from a set of data? Knowing what is required of you should be fairly obvious from the various exercises and tasks your teacher has invited you to do during the course. Did you do them when asked and can you do them now? Do you have to catch up?

So the first thing to do is review and rewrite your notes in the light of what you need to know and what you will be asked to do, fill in any gaps and rewrite things in simplified form. This process is **called compiling a set of revision notes**. This is the first step and is very important. You need to prepare yourself psychologically and logistically for this first stage. *Psychology* means your mental approach; *logistics* means your physical organisation for the task.

Psychology What do you want to achieve? How hard are you prepared to work to achieve this? Are you prepared to dedicate four months of your life to achieving your aims? Setting yourself high standards and being single minded enough to realise them takes self-belief and self-confidence but will help to define you as an adult person. Convince yourself that you are a loser and you certainly will be, but decide to go for it and you will surprise yourself and be admired by others. Can you take responsibility for your own future? However well you did, will you be able to say, “I tried my best”?



(Psyche yourself up for the work ahead, **you** must convince yourself **to go for it**).

Logistics Having committed yourself to the task ahead the next job is to organise the time and space at home in which you are going to work. This could involve a whole range of things; like rearranging the furniture in your bedroom (or removing the fuse from your TV); organising some other quiet space to work; negotiating times of the day when other members of your household will cause minimal noise; changing meal times to suit your work pattern better; putting up shelves to accommodate your rapidly expanding volumes of revision notes; fixing that annoying dripping tap which you can hear from your workspace; explaining to your boy/girlfriend that those two hour evening phone calls are going to have to be curtailed for the next few months; and so on, you know the sort of thing.

This process is important as it is a first practical step for yourself and is saying to other people “This is important to me, please respect my desire to be successful in this”.

2.3 Now back to those Revision Notes

Having organised yourself psychologically and logistically the compiling of revision notes can begin. A definite description of how to do this is difficult to offer as what will be most successful for you will depend on your strengths and weaknesses and your psychological make up. However some broad guidelines are possible:-

1. The notes should be a simplified distillation of the syllabus content.
2. The notes should be in a form that you can easily understand and remember.

If you have a clear and concise set of notes which you have been compiling during the course of your studies, then this process should not be too difficult. You may have to fill in any gaps you have, and you may have to re-interpret information which you failed to understand properly first time round. Arrange a consultation with your teacher to review difficulties if necessary. Revision notes should be a concise summary of your class notes, and may take a different form to narrative prose. Spider diagrams or other charts, or an essay plan may be a more effective way of committing something to memory. Some people advocate the use of cards which you can whip out at any available opportunity during the day for perusal. This might work for you, but you will not learn something by just reading it, and there is a limit to how much you can get on one card. The trick in the exam then, is to remember your revision notes and then have the ability to rework them into a coherent answer to the question.

An example of a chart summarising the essential information given in this section is shown above as one possibility. The exact form of such a note is personal to you, but the process of understanding and rewriting your notes in simplified form is a vital first step to



a firm grasp of the knowledge. Aim to have completed your revision notes by the start of the Easter holidays.

2.4 Learn the Knowledge

It is important to realise that learning anything is an active process which requires work and mental effort on your part. Passively reading revision guides or listening to tapes while asleep just will not work! You must make every effort to learn your revision notes so that you can reproduce any page of them from memory. To do this, follow these easy stages:-

1. Read your page of revision notes
2. Cover up your page of revision notes and reproduce it from memory.
3. Check your version against the original
4. Repeat this process until you have learnt the page.

Having clear, concise revision notes containing all the relevant information helps this process greatly. Having witty acronyms or phrases as part of your notes can help to jog your memory. Although difficult at first you will find learning becomes easier as you make progress and become better at it and this will give you a growing sense of achievement and pride in yourself.

Now to repeat this simple process on a scale which will allow you to take in enough information to pass 10 GCSEs all in one go requires you to:-

2.5 Live the Exam Life

Exams take place on weekdays from 9.15am for morning exams and 1.15pm for afternoon exams. For your morning examinations ensure that you arrive for 8.45am ready for entry into the examination hall, for afternoon exams you should be in school by 12.45pm.

To do well you need to organise your life so that you can work at a sustained high level for this length of time during these hours of the day. This is just like training for a sporting event or rehearsing for a performance. You need to practise operating at or above the required level so that you can reproduce this on the day. To establish how to do this here are some guidelines:-

1. **Work** Work for 6 hours a day 6 days a week during the Easter holidays and study leave. Remember to get used to working hardest between 9.15 and 12.00 and 1.15 and 4.00. Work for at least 2 hours a night on schooldays.



2. **Sleep** Establish a regular sleeping pattern which sees you at your most alert during those important times of the day. Get your body used to the routine and do not vary it (by attempting to work late into the night occasionally for example) as this will induce “jet lag” and make you feel dopey. Too much sleep can also induce lethargy.
3. **Exercise** Take regular exercise. 15 minutes three times a week is minimum. Stick to something you are happy with, the list is endless (running, swimming, skating, squash, aerobics, rollerblading to name but a few). Arrange to go with a friend as this gives mutual support and relieves the loneliness of working on your own. Vigorous exercise is excellent for relieving stress, as are yoga and relaxation techniques. These also help ensure a good night’s sleep.
4. **Food** Eat a balanced healthy diet which supplies energy at the times of the day when you most need it. Do not over eat just before an exam as digesting food makes you feel lethargic. Caffeine containing drinks like tea, coffee and coke are stimulants and their use as exam performance enhancing drugs is controversial.

Furthermore, their use must be weighed against the need to sit in an exam for 2 hours without wanting to go to the toilet. This is one of the worst feelings in the world! If you practise with caffeine and then do your exams without it then your performance will suffer.

5. **Living your life** Within the constraints of the four factors above living normal life is important for maintaining your sanity, so do some of it. Be careful not to injure yourself (sitting exams with a broken right arm has obvious drawbacks)

2.6 Organising your Learning

Having set yourself into a positive lifestyle, being organised about the nitty-gritty of learning the knowledge saves times and effort. When you sit down to work do so with the intention of working at a high, exam like work rate. Quality time is important. The order in which you revise each subject depends on the order in which you sit the exams.

Devise a long-term time-plan which starts with the beginning of the Easter holidays, and ends with your last exam, showing what you will be doing on a daily basis. Keep a record of hours spent on each subject so that you can check you are not favouring your favourite ones. You should really spend more time on your weaker subjects.

A typical day could involve:- In the morning work for 20 minutes at a time when memorising your revision notes and then give yourself a 5 minute break. At the end of a two-hour session try to reproduce everything you have learned in that session. Keep your notes to remind yourself of what you forgot to help you when you come back and review this area. After lunch work for a further 2 hours recapping at the end, and then repeat again in the evening. Fit everything else (eating, exercise, sleeping, living your life) around this routine. This is just an



example of what to do in a day. What counts is what works for you. You will have to experiment to find out, and it will certainly involve working hard.

2.7 Practice Examination Questions

Once you have comprehensively learned the knowledge for a subject the best way of reinforcing that knowledge is to do practice exam questions in exam conditions. To do this you need some past papers which your teacher might be able to supply you with at a price! Revision lessons in school might well include this activity, but you cannot get too much practice. Your teacher will help with any answers of which you are unsure.

3.0 Examination Technique

Before we consider the details of examination technique it is worth going back to those two familiar stalwarts' *psychology* and *logistics*.

Psychology: this is perhaps the most crucial factor in success in exams. Having self-confidence and self-belief dispels any notions of debilitating exam nerves. Everyone gets exam nerves, they are important because the adrenaline produced enhances your performance, and gives you that "switched on" feeling. However, nerves should not reach such a level that they are a problem in themselves. To do this take mental preparation. Psyche yourself up by thinking,

"I have worked hard and I know a lot about this subject. My performance doing practice exam questions proves that I can do well in this exam. I am going to walk into the exam room prepared to work as hard as I can for the duration of the exam".

Think positively, banish all negative thoughts, they are worthless and may hinder you. Do not worry what other people might think of you, the person to be honest with is yourself, and if you have genuinely tried your best then what other people think does not matter. They will admire you for trying hard.

Logistics: If you have been living the exam life then logistics should be no problem. You should arrive outside the exam hall with the correct equipment in a clear plastic bag, honed to a peak of mental perfection. But practically, make sure you stick to your sleeping pattern, have a reasonable breakfast, psyche yourself up for work, have the right equipment (a black pen, an HB pencil for maths and science graphs, a ruler and spares of everything, particularly pens!).

3.1 Be aware of Those Exam Rules

Exams are conducted in strict conditions to ensure scrupulous fairness. The rules and regulations on display will be vigorously enforced. Serious misconduct in one exam will



result in the Exam Boards deciding whether they will allow any of your other results to stand, and whether they will allow you to take any exams in the future. Remember not to take prohibited written materials into the exam (so conveniently breaking an arm to provide a place to conceal revision notes will not work), and do not attempt to communicate to anyone else by whispering, Morse Code or any other means.

Make sure you have a good stock of BLACK pens as your exam paper will be scanned by the exam board and you don't want any of your work not to be able to be seen. You are not allowed to take a watch into the exam hall so make sure you can read an analogue clock (one with hands) as these will be on display in the exam hall for you to check the time you have left in your exam.

Having established these basics it is worth knowing

3.2 How to sit an Exam

Prepare yourself mentally outside. You should be psyched up for work, but serene and quietly confident. Those people around you joking or displaying bravado are not mentally prepared and will waste the first 15 minutes getting themselves into the correct frame of mind. Ignore them and concentrate on yourself.

Walk into the room as directed, sit down at your seat, and get out your equipment.

Fill in any required details as instructed by the invigilator. Do not turn your question paper over until the exam is formally started. Check you have the correct paper!

The exam starts. Read the instructions on the paper (the rubric). You should be familiar with how many questions to answer from each section from doing past papers, but double check that the structure of the exam has not changed.

Read the whole paper and highlight which questions you are going to answer, if it is an exam where you have a choice. Make sure you decide to answer questions from sections you have studied!

HYDRATION (DRINKING)

By the time you get thirsty, you are already dehydrated.

You should be drinking about 2 litres of fluid each day! Tea and coffee actually dehydrate you. If you drink lots of tea and coffee when you are studying, try and get into the habit of having a cold drink too, for every cup of tea you drink, have a cup of water or juice. If you do this, and



sip your way through a litre of water or juice during the day, you will be well hydrated. You'll be surprised at the difference this will make. Your urine is the best indicator of how well hydrated you are. The paler its colour, the better. Use this as a guide to monitor your level of hydration. Don't start the day with a tea or coffee on its own, drink the same quantity in water or juice.

If you do not drink any tea or coffee, sip your way through two litres of water or juice during each day.

WHAT ABOUT STIMULANTS?

Some people use stimulant drinks e.g. red bull. Recognise that these can help you when you want to do creative thinking and work, but they are not at all useful for precise thinking (like Maths). Also recognise that whilst these drinks may keep you going for a short time when you are tired, this 'high' will be followed by a definite 'low' while your body recovers. These stimulants are legal, but should be used with care and caution!

A good food day!

Breakfast : Cereal/Toast with a hot drink and a cold drink plus piece of fruit.

Snack : Fruit with a cold drink and perhaps a yoghurt.

Lunch : Baked potato with beans and cheese plus plenty to drink.

Snack : Fruit and a cold drink.

Supper : Meal with meat (or substitute), pasta (or other carbohydrate food and two types of vegetable and plenty to drink.

Study Snack : Cereal or yogurt – keep it light so you can sleep easily!

Keep sugary foods for a treat, or use them as a 'reward' to yourself – don't use these foods as regular snacks – it really DOES matter!

Remember to drink plenty.

Exercise is essential to keeping you alert, and feeling good about yourself. Break up study periods with a brisk walk, a game of football, or hitting a tennis ball. You will release your tensions, and feel focused when you return to study.