



ST LAWRENCE COLLEGE



GCSE GUIDE



ST LAWRENCE
COLLEGE

WHY CHOOSE US?

WHY CHOOSE ST LAWRENCE FOR GCSEs?

Choosing where to study your GCSEs is an important step in shaping your future. Here, you will find a supportive and ambitious environment where every pupil is encouraged to achieve their full potential. Our approach combines individual attention, flexible learning pathways and exceptional facilities to ensure you are well prepared for success both in your exams and in life beyond school.

SMALL CLASS SIZES

Learning in small groups means you will benefit from greater individual attention from your teachers. Lessons are interactive, discussion-led, and allow for tailored feedback, helping you develop confidence in your subject knowledge and skills.

PERSONALISED ACADEMIC SUPPORT

Every pupil is known as an individual. Regular one-to-one guidance, mentoring, and progress tracking ensure you have the support you need to achieve your best. Whether you need extra help to master a topic or stretch challenges to push you further, the right support is always in place.

TAILORED GCSE PATHWAYS

We understand that no two pupils are the same. A wide choice of subjects and flexible timetabling means you can follow a pathway that reflects your interests, strengths, and future aspirations, creating a strong foundation for A Level or other post-16 options.

WORLD-CLASS FACILITIES

From modern science laboratories to fully equipped creative studios, outstanding sports facilities, and inspiring performance spaces, you will learn in an environment that encourages curiosity, creativity, and ambition. Every resource is designed to help you excel in your studies and explore your passions beyond the classroom.



HOW WE SUPPORT ACADEMIC GROWTH

Every pupil's academic journey is unique, and our approach is designed to help you reach your full potential. Through regular assessment, clear feedback and strong communication between teachers, pupils and parents, we ensure that your progress is recognised, celebrated and continuously built upon.

CONTINUOUS ASSESSMENT AND PERSONALISED FEEDBACK

Your progress is monitored throughout the year using a variety of assessments. Teachers provide individual feedback to help you understand your strengths and identify areas for improvement. This ensures you always know how you are performing and what steps to take next.

ACADEMIC TRACKING AND GRADE REPORTS

We use an academic tracking system to record your grades, monitor trends and set achievable targets. Reports are shared at regular intervals so you, your teachers and your parents can see your progress clearly.

PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS

We work closely with parents through detailed reporting and regular Parents' Evenings. These meetings provide an opportunity to discuss your academic progress, celebrate successes and agree on strategies for further improvement.



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LAYING THE GROUNDWORK

Year 9 is a vital stepping stone between the lower school and the GCSE years. Our programme follows the National Curriculum while making the most of the flexibility an independent education offers, ensuring pupils enjoy both breadth and depth in their studies.

Pupils follow a rich core of subjects, including:

- English Language and Literature
- Mathematics
- Biology, Chemistry and Physics
- French and/or Spanish
- Geography, History and Religious Studies

Creative and physical subjects such as Drama, Music, Art, Design Technology and Physical Education are equally important, giving pupils the opportunity to explore their interests and develop new skills before making their GCSE choices.

In some subjects, including Mathematics and French, pupils are grouped by ability to ensure they are both supported and challenged appropriately. All pupils also take part in a comprehensive PSHE, Careers and Study Skills programme, helping them build confidence, resilience and independence ahead of the more demanding GCSE years.

YEAR 9 FOUNDATION YEAR



WHAT TO EXPECT IN YEARS 10 & 11

In the Fourth and Fifth Forms (Years 10 and 11), you will follow a personalised academic programme that combines a strong core curriculum with option subjects that reflect your individual interests and strengths.

CORE SUBJECTS

All pupils take the following compulsory subjects:

- English Language (and English Literature for most pupils)
- Mathematics
- Science – either Triple Science or Dual Award

OPTION SUBJECTS

You will then choose three further GCSEs, following this structure:

- At least one Modern Foreign Language: French or Spanish
- At least two Humanities: Geography, History or Religious Studies
- At least two Creative or Performance subjects: Art & Design, Design Technology, Drama, Music or Physical Education

Native speakers of German may also take German as an additional GCSE. Pupils receiving EAL support can choose to take Additional EAL as one of their three options.

TAILORED PROGRAMMES AND FLEXIBILITY

Most pupils take nine GCSEs in total. For those advised not to take English Literature, or who follow the Dual Science route, a reduced number may be more suitable. Pupils with Additional Educational Needs receive personalised guidance and timetables to ensure their academic pathway is both ambitious and achievable.

DUAL AND TRIPLE SCIENCE EXPLAINED

Science can be studied as either a Dual Award (two GCSEs covering Biology, Chemistry and Physics) or as separate GCSEs in each subject (Triple Science). Triple Science is taught within the same timetable allocation and is ideal for those considering future studies or careers in science, technology, engineering or mathematics.



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ONE-YEAR GCSE PROGRAMME

Our One-Year GCSE Programme offers a unique and intensive route to gaining internationally recognised qualifications in just 12 months. Designed primarily for international students, it provides an immersive UK educational experience, a supportive boarding environment, and the skills and confidence needed for the next stage of education.

WHO THE COURSE IS FOR

This programme is ideal for:

- International pupils transitioning into the UK education system.
- Students wishing to study in the UK for a year and achieve GCSE qualifications.
- Those catching up on Year 10 studies or resitting after previous results.

Applicants must have a strong academic foundation and a sound level of English. For those needing more preparation, our two-year GCSE programme may be a more suitable option. The course is limited to sixteen students per year, and early application is strongly advised.

A FULLY INTEGRATED EXPERIENCE

Unlike many international GCSE programmes, our pupils are fully integrated into the main school community. You will join Year 11 Tutor Groups, live alongside both British and international boarders, and take part in all aspects of school life. This creates a truly immersive environment where language skills, cultural understanding and personal confidence grow naturally.

BOARDING ON CAMPUS

All GCSE boarders live on campus in comfortable, en-suite rooms within our boarding houses. This safe and structured setting offers excellent support for those living away from home for the first time and helps you adjust to studying in the UK.

ONE-YEAR GCSE



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ONE-YEAR GCSE CONT.

ONE-YEAR GCSE PROGRAMME CONT.

The programme is designed to deliver five GCSEs in one year:

- English
- Mathematics
- Biology
- Chemistry
- Physics

Additional opportunities may include:

- A GCSE in your native language
- A Level 2 Higher Project Qualification

The course is highly structured, with frequent homework, targeted feedback and close monitoring of progress. Teachers adapt lessons to stretch the most able and provide focused guidance for those needing extra support.

LIFE BEYOND THE CLASSROOM

You will be encouraged to join co-curricular activities and sports, with options ranging from House Plays and Choir to competitive sport and the Duke of Edinburgh's Award. Games and activities take place four times a week, and our sports programme is nationally recognised for its success in both boys' and girls' teams.

PREPARING FOR THE FUTURE

On completing the course, most pupils move on to Sixth Form to study A Levels. Our comprehensive careers education programme ensures you are well informed and confident in your next steps, with guidance provided through tutorials, workshops and one-to-one advice.

Minimum age: 15+



CHOOSING THE RIGHT SUBJECTS FOR YOU

Choosing your GCSE subjects is an exciting opportunity to shape your future. We guide you through a well-structured options process that balances personal interest with academic breadth, ensuring you have both variety and focus in your studies. Our option blocks are designed to accommodate as many individual preferences as possible, while also supporting your future academic and career goals.

HOW THE OPTIONS PROCESS WORKS

Michaelmas Term (Autumn)

You will begin discussing your interests, strengths and ambitions with your Tutor and subject teachers. This is the time to reflect on the subjects you enjoy and career goals.

Lent Term (Spring)

Suggested option blocks are shared, and you will be asked to list your preferred subjects. These preferences are carefully reviewed to help shape the final groupings. Parents are invited to attend an Options Information Evening to explore choices with you.

Summer Term

Your Option subjects are confirmed, and you can begin looking ahead to the start of your GCSE journey in Year 10.

GUIDANCE AND SUPPORT

You will receive personalised advice from Tutors, House staff, subject teachers and senior academic staff throughout the process. The final subject combinations aim to offer both choice and structure, ensuring your GCSE programme is well-rounded and suited to your ambitions.



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HIGH PERFORMANCE LEARNING AT GCSE

We are proud to be a High Performance Learning World Class School, one of the first 14 schools globally to achieve this prestigious recognition.

High Performance Learning is a research-based teaching and learning framework built on the belief that every pupil has the potential to become a high performer. It develops the attitudes, values and skills needed for success in school and in life beyond.

At GCSE, this approach is embedded into every lesson. You will be challenged academically while also being supported to grow as an independent, curious and resilient learner. We believe that intelligence is not fixed. With hard work, practice and the right mindset, it can be developed and strengthened.

During the Fourth and Fifth forms (Years 10 and 11), you will be encouraged to:

- Think critically, ask questions and make connections between subjects
- Build resilience and determination when faced with challenges
- Take increasing responsibility for your own learning
- Develop the habits and behaviours that lead to success in the present and future

Our High Performance Learning philosophy works hand in hand with the careers and life skills programme that runs alongside GCSE study. Together, they prepare you not only for GCSEs, but for a lifetime of learning, leadership and opportunity.

HIGH PERFORMANCE LEARNING



META-THINKING



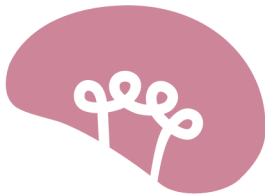
- meta-cognition
- self-regulation
- strategy planning
- intellectual confidence

LINKING



- generalisation
- connection finding
- big picture thinking
- abstraction
- imagination
- seeing alternative perspectives

CREATIVE



- intellectual playfulness
- flexible thinking
- fluent thinking
- originality
- evolutionary and revolutionary thinking

ANALYSING



- critical or logical thinking
- precision
- complex and multi-step problem solving



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HIGH PERFORMANCE LEARNING KEY



REALISING

- automaticity
- speed and accuracy



HARDWORKING

- practice
- perseverance
- resilience



EMPATHETIC

- collaborative
- concerned for society
- confident



AGILE

- enquiring
- creative and enterprising
- open-minded
- risk-taking



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ART & DESIGN

ART & DESIGN

EXAM BOARD : AQA

SPECIFICATION : ART & DESIGN (UNENDORSED)

Vibrant and dynamic, this specification gives pupils the freedom to study GCSE Art and Design in ways that inspire and bring out the best in all pupils, whilst equipping them with the skills to continue the subject with confidence at A Level and beyond. The qualification provides scope for innovation and curriculum development and offers opportunities to tailor courses of study to the individual needs of the pupils. Throughout the GCSE course we support and empower our learners to create works which demonstrate sensitivity to their subject matter as well as a distinctive application of their materials. We encourage individuals to engage with the real world, to explore their own ideas in two and three dimensions. This allows pupils to explore and develop their own ideas from an array of influences and gives flexibility with outcomes in terms of mediums and processes.

COURSE INFORMATION

The specification provides pupils with a range of creative, exciting and stimulating opportunities to develop and explore their personal interests in art and design. The course has been designed to allow pupils to develop knowledge and understanding during the course through a variety of learning experiences and approaches, including engagement with sources. This will allow them to develop the skills to explore, create and communicate their own ideas. Pupils will demonstrate these skills through the development, refinement, recording, realising and presenting of their ideas through a portfolio and by responding to an externally set assignment. They will need to be creative and well organised, capable of good time management, be self-motivated, diligent and use investigatory skills. It is a portfolio-based qualification and steady consistent working over two years gets results. Drawing is a key element of the course with a strong emphasis on independent work/ homework outside class. A grade 6 or higher in the 3rd Form would be advantageous.

ASSESSMENT

Component One: Portfolio - provides 60% of the overall GCSE grade. Pupils produce a portfolio that in total shows explicit coverage of the four assessment objectives: Develop, Refine, Record and Realise. It must include a sustained project evidencing the journey from initial engagement to the realisation of intentions and a selection of further work undertaken during the pupil's course of study. Component Two: Externally Set Assignment - provides 40% of the overall GCSE grade. Pupils respond to their chosen starting point from an externally set assignment / exam paper relating to their subject title, evidencing coverage of all four assessment objectives. There is a preparatory period of research and development followed by 10 hours of supervised time.





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BUSINESS STUDIES

BUSINESS STUDIES

EXAM BOARD : PEARSON EDEXCEL

SPECIFICATION : GCSE (9-1)IN BUSINESS (1BS0)

Business will help you to gain an understanding of different forms of business organisations, the environments in which they operate and business functions such as marketing, operations, human resources and finance. You will appreciate the role of people in business success and gain important skills, including; the ability to calculate and interpret business data, communication skills and analytical skills which will help you to analyse business situations and reach decisions or judgements. You will gain experience of problem solving, debating and working as part of a team. The subject keeps your options open in terms of A Level and BTEC courses, although many students opt form Economics and / or Business in the sixth form. In terms of careers, these are wide and varied and include; entrepreneur, management, accountancy, marketing, advertising, human resources, law, management consultancy, insurance, civil service, journalism, diplomatic service, education, tax, charity and investment banking.

COURSE INFORMATION

Prior knowledge of Business is not required however pupils must be prepared to carry out background reading, keep up-to-date with regards to developments in the world of business and learn the specialist language included throughout the course. The course overview is shown below:

Theme 1: Investigating small businesses

Topic 1.1: Enterprise and entrepreneurship

Topic 1.2: Spotting a business opportunity

Topic 1.3: Putting a business idea into practice

Topic 1.4: Making the business effective

Topic 1.5: Understanding external influences on business

Theme 2: Building a business

Topic 1: Growing the business

Topic 2: Making marketing decisions

Topic 3: Making operational decisions

Topic 4: Making financial decisions

Topic 5: Making human resource decisions

ASSESSMENT

Both Paper 1 (based on Theme 1) and Paper 2 (based on Theme 2) contain a variety of calculations, multiple-choice, short-answer and extended-writing questions. Business contexts are included in the paper. There is no controlled assessment option.

For more information please contact Mr C J Brown (Head of Department) cjb@slc.co.uk





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DESIGN & TECHNOLOGY

DESIGN & TECHNOLOGY

EXAM BOARD : AQA

SPECIFICATION : 8552

The focus of the course is on imaginative practical work. Pupils explore, design, create and evaluate prototypes to solve real world problems, gaining a broad understanding of technical, designing and making principles. They have the opportunity to work in a wide range of materials in some depth and are required to apply mathematical and scientific principles throughout their study. The course is suited to those considering careers in science or engineering subjects, as well as fashion, interior design, product design and architecture.

COURSE INFORMATION

Pupils with an aptitude for both scientific and creative learning would suit this subject. Science and mathematics are applied to enable pupils to realise realistic and innovative ideas. Those who enjoy working in real life situations, considering ethical and social issues and learning a wide range of practical skills will get the most from studying this subject. An awareness of current trends in interior design, fashion and technology are all requirements for success and candidates will be expected to investigate how a wide range of products are designed made.

ASSESSMENT

The course consists of 50% examination (including 15% mathematics and science) and 50% is a non-exam assessment (NEA). The examination is split into three sections, core technical principles, specialist technical principles and designing and making principles. For the NEA Pupils will be expected to produce a substantial design and make task based on a context provided by the examination board. Pupils will produce a working prototype and a portfolio of evidence of around 20 A3 pages.





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DRAMA & THEATRE STUDIES

EXAM BOARD : EDUQAS

SPECIFICATION : C690QS

Many transferrable and highly desirable skills are delivered through this course. Team work, time management, analysis and evaluation are built into each component and pupils will develop good verbal and written communication skills. The course links well with other subjects such as English, History and RS. It is a GCSE that offers pupils a chance to create, develop and innovate with the opportunity to explore all aspects of theatre.

COURSE INFORMATION

The course is split into three components, two of which are practical. All pupils will study a set text from an acting, directing and design point of view for the written exam.

EXAMINATION

Component 1: Devising Theatre (Non-exam assessment): internally assessed, externally moderated, 40% of qualification. Pupils participate in the creation, development and performance or design of a piece of devised theatre using either the techniques of an influential theatre practitioner or a genre, in response to a stimulus set by Eduqas. Pupils must produce: a realisation of their piece of devised theatre or design, a portfolio of supporting evidence and an evaluation of the final performance or design. Component 2: Performing from a Text (Non-exam assessment): externally assessed by a visiting examiner, 20% of qualification. Pupils study a text and create a performance or design using two sections of the text. Component 3: Interpreting Theatre (Written examination): 1 hour 30 minutes, 40% of qualification Section A - Set Text A series of questions based on one set text. Section B - Live Theatre Review One question, from a choice of two, requiring analysis and evaluation of a live theatre production seen during the course.

ASSESSMENT

The course requires long periods of group-work and as such, students cannot join or depart mid-year (September to June). Students are required to attend three compulsory theatre trips during the two-year course.

DRAMA & THEATRE STUDIES





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ENGLISH LANGUAGE

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

EXAM BOARD : EDEXCEL IGCSE

SPECIFICATION : 4EA1

English Language is one of the core subjects, and a good pass is an essential prerequisite for any A Level or university course.

COURSE INFORMATION

Teaching is in line with the National Curriculum, and the IGCSE course follows naturally on from the Key Stage Three programme followed by most schools. This is taught in parallel with IGCSE English Literature, and there is a significant overlap in skills between the two qualifications. Textbooks are available and published by Pearson, although not all teachers will choose to use these in the classroom.

ASSESSMENT

Paper 1: Non-fiction Texts and Transactional Writing (60% of the total GCSE)

Section A: Reading – a mixture of short- and long-answer questions related to a non fiction text from Part 1 of the Pearson Edexcel International GCSE English Anthology and one previously unseen extract

Section B: Transactional Writing – one 45-mark writing task, from a choice of two involving a given audience, form or purpose

Paper 2: Coursework approach (40% of total GCSE)

Assignment A: Students explore three short texts (provided by the exam board) through a chosen thematic focus, developing analytical skills.

Assignment B: An imaginative writing task designed to develop creativity while also assessing accuracy in communication, spelling, punctuation, and grammar.





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ENGLISH LITERATURE

ENGLISH LITERATURE

EXAM BOARD : EDEXCEL IGCSE

SPECIFICATION : 4ET1

Most first language pupils will study English Literature alongside Language; a very small minority will only study for the Language IGCSE.

COURSE INFORMATION

Pupils will study at least four texts, chosen by the teacher to offer appropriate stimulus and challenge to a particular group.

- * Modern Prose: To Kill a Mockingbird, Of Mice and Men, Things Fall Apart
- * Poetry: a range of poetry from Shakespeare to the present
- * Modern Drama: An Inspector Calls, A View from the Bridge
- * Literary Heritage: Romeo and Juliet, The Merchant of Venice, Macbeth

ASSESSMENT

Paper 1: Poetry and Modern Prose (60% of total GCSE)

Section A: Unseen poetry analysis (20 marks)

Section B: Anthology poetry – comparing two poems from the Edexcel Anthology (30 marks)

Section C: Modern prose – one question on a set text (40 marks)

Paper 2: Coursework approach (40% of total GCSE)

Assignment A: Students read and explore a modern drama play, allowing development of comprehension and critical reading skills, as well as their ability to produce clear and coherent writing

Assignment B: Students read and explore a literary heritage text (Shakespeare) encouraging analytical skills as well as the importance of social and historical context.



ENGLISH AS AN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE

EXAM BOARD : CIE

SPECIFICATION : 0772

Pupils for whom English is a second or additional language will prepare for the Cambridge University International GCSE in English as an Additional Language and will take the examination at the end of the Fifth Form (Year 11).



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EAL

COURSE INFORMATION

Pupils need to be able to develop the ability to use English effectively for the purpose of practical communication and to handle quite complex language fluently; interpret meaning in conversation and written texts; write confidently and in a variety of styles and handle formal and informal English appropriately. They must acquire the skills required for further study (university or further education colleges) or employment, using English as the medium of communication.

Grades are awarded from 9-1.

ASSESSMENT

01 – Reading – 1 hour paper. 25% of total IGCSE.

02 – Writing – 1 hour paper. 25% of total IGCSE.

03 – Listening – 40 minutes – multiple choice questions 25% of total IGCSE.

04 – Speaking Interview – Approx. 10 minutes, 25% of total IGCSE



FRENCH

EXAM BOARD : AQA

SPECIFICATION : 8652 (NEW SPECIFICATION – FIRST EXAMINATION IN SUMMER 2026)



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FRENCH

Many pupils in England choose to study French, due to the proximity of France. It is so easy to hop on a ferry and be enjoying a croissant and a café crème in France in under two hours. More than 220 million people speak French on the five continents. French is the second most widely learned foreign language after English, and the sixth most widely spoken language in the world. The ability to speak both French and English is an advantage on the international job market. A knowledge of French opens the doors of French companies in France and other French-speaking parts of the world (Canada, Switzerland, Belgium, and the continent of Africa). French is the international language of cooking, fashion, theatre, the visual arts, dance and architecture. A knowledge of French offers access to great works of literature in the original French, as well as films and songs. French is the language of Victor Hugo, Molière, Léopold Senghor, Edith Piaf, JeanPaul Sartre, Alain Delon and Zinedine Zidane. First and foremost, learning French is the pleasure of learning a beautiful, rich, melodious language, often called the language of love. French is also an analytical language that structures thought and develops critical thinking, which is a valuable skill for discussions and negotiations. Studying French at St Lawrence College allows pupils to learn the language in a small group where communication in the target language is encouraged and the pupils are given individual help. There are also weekly catch-up clinics where pupils can revise or obtain help with specific problems.

COURSE INFORMATION

Studying French at GCSE helps students develop practical language skills and cultural awareness while building confidence in communication. The course is based on three engaging themes:

- Theme 1: People and lifestyle – identity, relationships, health, education, and work.
- Theme 2: Popular culture – free time, customs, festivals, and entertainment.
- Theme 3: Communication and the world around us – travel, media, technology, the environment, and local/global issues.

Students are assessed in the four key skills — listening, speaking, reading and writing — each worth 25% of the final grade. Assessments include role-plays, conversations, translation tasks, dictation and extended writing. Exams are taken at either Foundation (grades 1–5) or Higher (grades 4–9) tier.

ASSESSMENT

GCSE French has a Foundation Tier (grades 1–5) and a Higher Tier (grades 4–9). Pupils must take all four question papers at the same tier. All question papers must be taken in the same series. Themes include a variety of topics grouped into three themes: People & Lifestyle, Popular Culture and Communication & The World Around Us.

Paper 1: Listening (25% of GCSE) - Understanding and responding to different types of spoken language

Paper 2: Speaking (25% of GCSE) - Communicating and interacting effectively in speech for a variety of purposes

Paper 3: Reading (25% of GCSE) - Understanding and responding to different types of written language

Paper 4: Writing (25% of GCSE) - Communicating effectively in writing for a variety of purposes Pupils sit all exams at the end of the course.



GEOGRAPHY

EXAM BOARD : CAMBRIDGE INTERNATIONAL ASSESSMENTS IGCSE

SPECIFICATION : IGCSE (9-1) GEOGRAPHY 0976

Geography acts as a bridge between the Sciences and the Humanities and therefore can be combined appropriately with a wide range of other studies, from Physics and Mathematics to Languages, History and Business Studies. Pupils explore case studies in the United Kingdom (UK), newly emerging economies (NEEs) and lower income countries (LICs). Topics of study include climate change, poverty, deprivation, global shifts in economic power and the challenge of sustainable resource use. Pupils find the course develops their ability to express themselves effectively in writing, and to design, carry out and present a project or investigation. These skills are relevant to a wide range of careers and courses of study.

Pupils also undertake a guided fieldwork process, culminating in their own written fieldwork reports which become their coursework. This is a shared processes, with the geography department guiding the pupils through the framework of the investigation and helping to collect data.

The broad nature of the subject encourages a diverse range of study skills. Fieldwork is an essential part of iGCSE studies and it provides pupils with some of their most fulfilling aspects of study. Across the course pupils have the opportunity to visit places from local to distant locations, including the optional fieldtrips to European locations every other October.

COURSE INFORMATION

Essential prior learning should include a working knowledge and understanding of the physical processes and cycles which shape the world, such as the rock and water cycles. Pupils will also be expected to be familiar with contemporary human issues that are shaping the world, environmentally, socially and economically. Equally essential is the need to be able to read maps, produce a variety of accurate graphs using excel and the ability to carry out an entire investigation.

Appropriate background (and ongoing) reading will include the use of newspaper/social media coverage of the ever changing issues in the world. Also encouraged is the regular use of the College's Library or digital resources to read around the subject to extend your knowledge and understanding whilst also an opportunity to be inspired further about this dynamic planet. The text book used at St Lawrence is the Hodder Education – Cambridge iGCSE geography – Third Edition.

ASSESSMENT

Paper 1 - 1 hour 45 minutes - Geographical Themes 45% of iGCSE. 75 marks, weighted to 100 marks.

- Candidates answer three questions, each worth 25 marks. Candidates must answer one question from each section. These themes cover the entirety of the two year course.
- Externally assessed

Paper 2 - 1 hour 30 minutes - Geographical Skills 27.5% of iGCSE. 60 marks.

- Candidates answer all the questions. Questions cover data handling and map skills.
- Externally assessed

Component 3 - Coursework - 27.5% of iGCSE. 60 marks.

- Teachers set one centre-based assignment of up to 2000 words.
- Centre-based assessment, with external moderation.

GEOGRAPHY





ST LAWRENCE
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HISTORY

HISTORY

EXAM BOARD : CAMBRIDGE

SPECIFICATION : 0977 IGCSE

We believe the overriding need of our learners is for a 20th century course to provide pupils with an understanding of the background in international relations to the contemporary situation. There is an opportunity for pupils to understand key ideas such as democracy and dictatorship, and to gain an insight into how the world they live in has come about. Pupils are able to explore historical concepts such as cause and consequence, change and continuity, and similarity and difference. They learn to appreciate different types and uses of historical evidence, and how to present clear, logical arguments. They develop lifelong skills, including creative thinking and problem-solving. These skills are useful in a large variety of management roles as well as in specific professions such as journalism and the law.

COURSE INFORMATION

No specific prior historical study is necessary. A strong aptitude for and facility with English language is preferred, due to the literary nature of the subject and its reliance on written historical sources and the views of historians. A list of key facilitator vocabulary is available on request

ASSESSMENT

Core Content: 20th Century International Relations since 1919

Depth Study: Germany, 1918-45

Coursework taken from an element of the Depth Study

Component 01: 2 hours written paper; 40% of total IGCSE; Core Content and Depth Study – Structured Essays

Component 02: 1 hour 45 minute written paper; 30% of total IGCSE; Source Questions on a topic from the Core Content

Component 03: Coursework; 30% of total IGCSE; Extended piece of writing based on Depth Study





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MATHEMATICS

MATHEMATICS

EXAM BOARD : EDEXCEL

SPECIFICATION : 4MA1 (A)

Mathematics is in the compulsory core curriculum. It is an essential qualification for further education. The syllabus and assessment style have been revised in recent years to bring them into line with equivalent international qualifications and produce a more forward thinking curriculum. Its aim is to be demanding, rigorous, inclusive and empowering. There is an increased focus on problem solving and application of skills in contexts relevant to real life. At St Lawrence College, we have small classes set by ability, allowing teachers to gain a greater understanding of pupils' needs and teach their lessons accordingly. This also provides pupils with the opportunity for greater support from the teachers at all levels to build confidence and promote progress.

COURSE INFORMATION

At St Lawrence College, we run a separate KS3 programme in Years 7 and 8, using the White Rose Curriculum. In Year 9, students begin the IGCSE curriculum, with the intent that the majority of the curriculum is completed by the end of Year 10, allowing Year 11 to be focussed on consolidation and extension, preparing for the IGCSE examinations. Pupils are required to provide their own mathematical equipment; Protractor, Compasses, Ruler and Scientific Calculator. We recommend the fx-83GT CW for students in Year 7-11.

Students taking A Level Maths may wish to use a more advanced or graphical calculator.

ASSESSMENT

The course builds on the KS3 curriculum including Number, Algebra, Ratio, Proportion and Rates of Change, Geometry and Measures, Probability and Statistics.

There are two tiers, Foundation (grades 1-5) and Higher (grades 4-9), decisions on tier of entry are made to suit the individual pupils and reviewed throughout the course.

The course is assessed through two equally weighted papers of 120 minutes and 100 marks. Both papers allow the use of a Calculator, though students will still need to demonstrate their understanding of the methodology.

Further details are available online:

<https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/edexcel-international-gcse/international-gcse-mathematics-a-2016.html>





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MUSIC

MUSIC

EXAM BOARD : EDUQAS

SPECIFICATION : C660QS

According to the World Economic Forum, creativity is going to be one of the most important and in-demand skills at work. When business leaders across the world were surveyed, they voted creativity as the most important workplace skill to help their businesses survive and grow. This means that the study of creative subjects, like Music, is becoming even more important and relevant to young people to give you the chance to succeed – whatever your ambitions. At the same time, you will find many opportunities to develop and improve your personal wellbeing both independently and as part of a wider community.

In GCSE Music you will have opportunities to develop your knowledge and understanding of a range of Musical styles and disciplines in a well-resourced department, taught by teachers who are passionate about wanting to develop the best musicians and music-making that we can. Your studies will encompass the interrelated skills of performance, composition and analysis, not only for the purposes of passing the exam itself, but also to enhance and develop your appreciation, enjoyment and understanding of one of the most universally loved subjects across the world.

COURSE INFORMATION

Because of the centrality of performance and practical music-making to the GCSE course, it is important that pupils are regularly playing an instrument or singing – individually and in ensemble with others (e.g. singing in a choir or playing in a band). It is desirable that pupils should be having regular instrumental or singing lessons, and essential that they continue to practise regularly throughout the course.

Pupils must be willing to listen actively to a wide variety of music in class and privately, and knowledge of notation and music theory is also very beneficial.

ASSESSMENT

Performance: 4-6 minutes of performing (must include at least one ensemble piece).

Composition: Two pieces: One in response to a brief set by WJEC – there are 4 to choose from each year. One free composition – ANY style in which you want to write.

Written Exam: 8 questions, 2 on each area of study: AoS 1 Musical Forms and Devices (including a set work*); AoS 2 Music for Ensemble (incl. Chamber Music, Jazz and Musical Theatre); AoS 3 Film Music; AoS 4 Popular Music (including a set work*).

*Current set works are: Bach – 'Badinerie' from Orchestral Suite No. 2 (AoS1), and Toto – Africa (AoS4).





ST LAWRENCE
COLLEGE

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

EXAM BOARD : EDEXCEL

SPECIFICATION : 1PE0

GCSE Physical Education is an ideal subject choice for Sports enthusiasts of all kinds. The course offers the opportunity to escape the classroom for an extra double period a week to take part in the practical activities available for assessment, which include badminton, trampolining and tennis alongside our major games of hockey, rugby and netball. It is also possible to be assessed in activities that pupils may take part in outside of school, such as skiing, horse riding, swimming, football and athletics. While being outstanding in Sport is not essential, those wishing to take GCSE should be able to perform the assessed activities to a good standard as 40% of the marks on offer come from the practical element. The theoretical aspects of the course touch on the diverse areas that make up Physical Education. Pupils get the opportunity to learn how their bodies and brains help them to perform during sport and exercise. They also get to debate some of the major issues in modern sport, such as commercialism, the use of Performance Enhancing Drugs and the role of technology. GCSE PE has a bit of something for everyone and the department's preferred style of delivery is doing rather than simply listening and reading. Theory topics are often delivered using small experiments or interactive group tasks that are designed to capture the imagination and trigger the memory. This course is the perfect introduction to academic Physical Education and would be an excellent precursor to the A-Level Sports course.

COURSE INFORMATION

In order to study GCSE Physical Education we ask that pupils have experience of playing a reasonable range of sports and that their standard of performance is sound at the start of the course. If a pupil's sporting experience is limited, it is suggested that sports courses are attended over the summer holidays to help prepare. A list of sports that can be assessed can be acquired from the Head of Academic Physical Education. It is also preferred that pupils wishing to study GCSE Physical Education have done reasonably well in Biology in the years leading up to the start of GCSE in the 4th form. Pupils wishing to prepare themselves for the theoretical aspects of the course, could begin with an interactive skeleton that allows them to learn the names and locations of the bones, joints and muscles in the human body

ASSESSMENT

The course is 60% theory. This is assessed using two examination papers

Component 1: Fitness and Body Systems (1hr45) 36% of qualification

Component 2: Health and Performance (1hr15) 24% of qualification

The course is 40% practical. This is assessed through the performance of three activities and written coursework.

Component 3: Practical Performance 30% of the qualification

Component 4: Personal Exercise Programme 10% of the qualification





ST LAWRENCE
COLLEGE

RELIGIOUS STUDIES

RELIGIOUS STUDIES

EXAM BOARD : AQA

SPECIFICATION : A8062

Religion plays an important role in our society and can influence what people think, feel, and believe. Through studying Religious Studies, students get a broad look at how religion and spirituality form the basis of our culture. Religious Studies also helps students develop marketable skills and aptitudes such as analytical and strategic thinking; research skills; critical judgement; the ability to work with abstract, conceptual ideas; an ability to negotiate and resolve conflict; problem-solving skills; leadership skills and an understanding of the impact of conflicting ideologies; and an appreciation of human diversity, belief systems, cultural and spiritual experiences. Being able to analyse, critically assess and evaluate differing opinions on beliefs is a unique focus of Religious Studies. Skills learnt can be transferred to many of your other subjects. These skills are particularly useful for future careers in law, education, social work, politics, medicine, administration or the media.

COURSE INFORMATION

Component one - pupils will study the following four themes. All questions are compulsory.

Theme 1: Relationships and Families

Theme 2: Religion and Life

Theme 3: Religion, Peace and Conflict

Theme 4: Religion, Crime and Punishment This component will be assessed by compulsory questions focusing on knowledge, understanding and evaluation of the identified themes.

Component two - pupils will study the beliefs, teachings and practices of Christianity This component will be assessed by compulsory questions focusing on knowledge, understanding and evaluation of the subject content.

Component three – pupils will study the beliefs, teachings and practices of one world faith - Islam This component will be assessed by compulsory questions focusing on knowledge, understanding and evaluation of the subject content.

ASSESSMENT

Component 1 (50%) Religious, Philosophical and Ethical Studies in the Modern World – 1 hr 45 minutes written exam
Component 2 (25%)- Study of Christianity and Component 3- Study of Islam (25%) – 1 hr 45 minutes written exam





ST LAWRENCE
COLLEGE

SCIENCES

SCIENCES

EXAM BOARD : AQA

SPECIFICATION : 8464 (COMBINED)

SPECIFICATION : 8461 (BIOLOGY), 8462 (CHEMISTRY), 8463 (PHYSICS)

The pupils are taught in small groups by specialist teachers in a very supportive but equally stimulating environment and the courses aim to challenge, stretch and maximise their scientific potential. They are encouraged to ask questions, develop their curiosity and independent thinking. We aim to make the pupils more aware of how science is changing our lives and how it is vital to the world's future prosperity. They are offered opportunities to explore beyond the classroom through STEM activities and competitions. We also organise a variety of trips that we think will be beneficial to their development. We offer clinics and targeted revision lessons. We have state of the art scientific equipment to use for the experimental work which along with our new Science and Technology Building will greatly enhance the pupils' experience. GCSE Science teaching begins at the start of the 3rd form. The early start allows greater depth of study and affords more time for effective consolidation and revision at the end of the course. The Science department has a wealth of expertise and talent. The teachers are well-qualified, enthusiastic and inspiring. Subject specialists teach the appropriate units focusing on their area of expertise.

COURSE INFORMATION

The school offers two separate science courses. There is the GCSE Combined Science – Trilogy (double award) and the triple Science course. The triple science course is taught in a similar time frame as the combined science course. It is examined as three separate subjects and consequently leads to three GCSEs in Biology, Chemistry and Physics. Clearly the pupils taking the triple science option will be required to cover more material in the same time allocation as those pupils taking the two GCSE Combined Science route. The pupils will build upon subject content which is typically taught at Key Stage 3. It is suitable for pupils of all abilities and helps them not only to understand theoretical concepts alongside developing practical science and problem-solving skills but also to be able to make links between different areas of knowledge. Resources: AQA GCSE Biology, Chemistry, Physics by Oxford University Press plus Kerboodle online pupil book.

ASSESSMENT

Combined science- Double Award- 2 GCSE grades

The curriculum provides the foundations for understanding the material world. In Biology, the pupils learn about cell biology, organization, infection and response, bioenergetics, homeostasis and response, inheritance, variation and evolution, ecology. In Chemistry, teaching starts with the fundamental ideas, putting the building blocks in place, before building on them in more detail. The topics cover atomic structure and the periodic table, bonding, structure and the properties of matter, quantitative chemistry, chemical changes, energy changes, organic chemistry, chemical analysis, the atmosphere and using resources. In Physics, the pupils will learn about energy, electricity, the particle model of matter, atomic structure, forces, waves, magnetism and electromagnetism.



Triple Science Award-Separate sciences - 3 GCSE grades

The Biology course contains all the topics as the Combined course but it also explores ideas about the brain, the structure of the DNA, cloning, decomposition, the theory of evolution, food production. The specification is designed to help them understand how Science can be used to explain the world in which we live and the impact humans have. Pupils can see how science is used to solve problems ranging from infectious diseases to creating GM crops. The Chemistry specification contains all the topics as the Combined science but it also explores the properties of transition metals and nanoparticles, titrations and reactions of alkenes and alcohols. It enables pupils to develop an understanding of chemical cells and fuels cells and their properties, spectroscopy, the Haber process and the use of nitrogen-based fertilisers. The pupils will engage with key ideas of universal application. In Physics pupils are likely to be engaged by the aspects of the specification that they can relate to their everyday life such as the efficiency of electrical appliances and braking distances as well as in larger concepts like electrical, magnetic and gravitational effects and our ideas and theories about the Universe. The course is designed to give pupils the tools and concepts they need to be able to construct a scientific approach to solving problems. Pupils will learn to ask and answer questions about a small number of key ideas in physics that describe the complex and diverse phenomena of the natural and man-made world.

Exams are taken at the end of year 11

Combined Science A

Biology Paper 1	70 marks	75 minutes
Chemistry Paper 1	70 marks	75 minutes
Physics Paper 1	70 marks	75 minutes
Biology Paper 2	70 marks	75 minutes
Chemistry Paper 2	70 marks	75 minutes
Physics Paper 2	70 marks	75 minutes

Triple Science

Biology

Biology Paper 1	100 marks	1 hour 45 minutes
Biology Paper 2	100 marks	1 hour 45 minutes

Chemistry

Chemistry Paper 1	100 marks	1 hour 45 minutes
Chemistry Paper 2	100 marks	1 hour 45 minutes

Physics

Physics Paper 1	100 marks	1 hour 45 minutes
Physics Paper 2	100 marks	1 hour 45 minutes

SPANISH

EXAM BOARD : AQA

SPECIFICATION : 8692 (NEW SPECIFICATION – FIRST EXAMINATION IN SUMMER 2026)



ST LAWRENCE
COLLEGE

SPANISH

With some 400 million speakers, Spanish is the fourth most commonly spoken language in the world. Only Mandarin, English and Hindi have more speakers. Spanish is an official language on four continents and is the mother tongue in 21 countries. Knowing another language, particularly one as widely spoken as Spanish will be extremely useful when you are looking for a job. With the world becoming ever more global, contact with people of other countries has increased tremendously in recent decades. Internationally, people who speak Spanish often have opportunities to work in trade or business fields. Other options include diplomacy, interpretation, and security applications, which all require a sensitivity and proficiency of another language. Learning Spanish can also help you to improve your knowledge of your own language. Spanish is from the Romance language family of languages, its roots coming primarily from Latin. English, too has many words of Latin origin. Because of this, knowing Spanish helps speakers of English (as well as some other European languages) broaden their vocabulary as well as understand the grammar of their native language. Often, these same Latin roots are at the base of many sophisticated words in English, so Spanish learners can also become more proficient in English. Studying Spanish GCSE at St Lawrence College allows pupils to study in small groups where use of the target language is encouraged. Pupils may also attend weekly catch-up clinics where they can ask for help with specific problems or go over something that they have not understood in class.

COURSE INFORMATION

Studying Spanish at GCSE enhances practical language skills and cultural understanding, enabling students to communicate confidently in real-world situations. The course is structured around three engaging themes:

- Theme 1: People and lifestyle – identity, relationships, health, education, and work.
- Theme 2: Popular culture – free time, customs, festivals, and entertainment.
- Theme 3: Communication and the world around us – travel, media, technology, the environment, and local/global issues.

Students are assessed in the four key skills — listening, speaking, reading, and writing — each contributing 25% to the final grade. Assessments include role-plays, conversations, translations, dictation, and extended writing. Exams are taken at either Foundation (grades 1–5) or Higher (grades 4–9) tier.

ASSESSMENT

GCSE Spanish has a Foundation Tier (grades 1–5) and a Higher Tier (grades 4–9). Pupils must take all four question papers at the same tier. All question papers must be taken in the same series. Themes include a variety of topics grouped into three themes: People & Lifestyle, Popular Culture and Communication & The World Around Us.

Paper 1: Listening (25% of GCSE) - Understanding and responding to different types of spoken language

Paper 2: Speaking (25% of GCSE) - Communicating and interacting effectively in speech for a variety of purposes

Paper 3: Reading (25% of GCSE) - Understanding and responding to different types of written language

Paper 4: Writing (25% of GCSE) - Communicating effectively in writing for a variety of purposes Pupils sit all exams at the end of the course.





SUPPORT EVERY STEP OF THE WAY

Academic success at GCSE is built on a strong foundation of care. During these crucial years, you will be supported in and out of the classroom by a dedicated team who understand how to bring out the best in every learner. Alongside subject-specific guidance, you will receive structured help across all areas of school life, enabling you to thrive with confidence and purpose.

LEARNING SUPPORT AND AEN

If you have additional educational needs, you will benefit from personalised strategies, specialist staff and flexible teaching methods. Support may include in-class assistance, small-group sessions or tailored study plans, ensuring that every pupil can make excellent progress.

ENGLISH AS AN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE (EAL)

Our experienced EAL staff will help you strengthen your academic English and succeed in GCSE coursework and exams. Additional EAL lessons can also be chosen as a formal GCSE option.

PASTORAL SUPPORT

Every pupil belongs to a House, where wellbeing is supported by a caring team of House staff and Tutors. Daily tutor time, Chapel services and our Christian ethos all contribute to a strong sense of belonging and personal growth.

PSHE, CAREERS AND LIFE SKILLS

You will follow a rich PSHE curriculum covering health, relationships, careers and study skills. This programme helps you navigate adolescence with resilience and prepares you for life beyond school.



ST LAWRENCE
COLLEGE

LIFE OUTSIDE LESSONS

Academic growth is just one part of your experience here. Our broad and inclusive co-curricular programme keeps you active, inspired and connected with the world around you. During the GCSE years, you will enjoy a wide variety of activities, clubs and sporting opportunities that build confidence, develop character and create lasting friendships.

Co-Curricular Highlights

- Games sessions three times a week (Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday)
- Afternoon activities on Wednesdays and Fridays
- Opportunities in music, drama, sport, debating, Duke of Edinburgh's Award and more
- Access to exceptional facilities including performance spaces, a modern sports centre, art studios and outdoor pitches
- Local and international trips that enrich classroom learning and spark curiosity about the wider world

BEYOND THE CLASSROOM



ST LAWRENCE
COLLEGE

READY TO BEGIN YOUR GCSE JOURNEY?

As you prepare to enter the GCSE years, our team is here to provide guidance, clarity and reassurance at every stage. Regular conversations with Tutors and subject staff will help you explore your options, track your progress and plan for the future with confidence.

Once you have read through this guide, the next step is to start thinking about your subject choices and to reach out with any questions.

CHECKLIST FOR FAMILIES

- Review the subjects on offer
- Attend the Options Information Evening in the Lent Term
- Discuss choices with your Tutor and subject teachers
- Submit subject preferences by the published deadline
- Keep in touch with the Academic Office for any follow-up advice

The GCSE years are an exciting chapter in your education, a time to explore your interests, develop new skills and lay the foundations for future success. With the right choices, commitment and support, you will discover what you are capable of and achieve more than you thought possible.

We look forward to working alongside you and your family as you take these next important steps. The journey begins now, and we are here to help you make it exceptional.

NEXT STEPS



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