

# **GCSE OPTIONS BOOKLET 2025**

# **BORDEN GRAMMAR SCHOOL**



## **A GUIDE FOR PARENTS & STUDENTS IN YEAR 9**

**Please keep this booklet for  
the Year 9 Options Evening on  
Wednesday 5th February and  
for the Parents' Evening on  
Thursday 27th February (4-  
6:30pm)**



BORDEN  
GRAMMAR  
SCHOOL

# WELCOME

---

“Welcome to the Borden Grammar School options booklet, the purpose of which is to offer some guidance and advice, as well as to debunk some myths about the whole options process. It is inevitable that students will see this as a big moment, and to some extent it is. Other than possibly choosing us as their secondary school, it is the first time in their academic life that they get a real choice. However, it is important to keep the decisions made here in perspective and to reassure students that it is unlikely that any decision they make will impact negatively on their future. Hopefully this booklet will help do this by answering some frequently asked questions and by providing some specific course material.”

**Ashley Tomlin (Headteacher)**

## ARE MY CHOICES LIMITED?

We already make sure that our students follow a broad and balanced curriculum, taking all subjects through to the end of year 9 and giving them everything they need to be successful at Key Stage 4. Since our students are very able, some core subjects will have already started delivering some GCSE content in Year 9 to keep them fully challenged, but because all students do this, it means all subjects can be accessed. That said, it is always important to make choices for the right reasons.

## WHAT ARE THE KEY REASONS TO CHOOSE A SUBJECT?

There are broadly three main things to consider when making your choice of subject:

1. **Enjoyment:** If you enjoy learning about a subject, you are more likely to work hard in it and more likely to do well at it.
2. **Career:** Whilst your career decisions may well change over time, and you may not have any idea what you want to do, this should be considered. This is most important if you want to pursue something in a very specific career i.e. something language or arts based.
3. **Ability:** It is always a good idea to choose a subject you are good at. This will help with enjoyment, career and your success in the future.

## WHAT CORE SUBJECTS WILL I DO AT KEY STAGE 4?

All students will take GCSE courses in English Language, English Literature and Mathematics as well as triple Science, Biology, Chemistry & Physics. All students will continue with Sport and Personal Development. The fact that all pupils follow a common core of GCSE subjects means that career options are kept open. The additional subjects that pupils select can reflect current career ideas, strengths and interests.



BORDEN  
GRAMMAR  
SCHOOL

## WHAT ELSE MUST I CHOOSE?

In addition, students are required to choose two subjects from the following four options: French, Geography, History or Spanish. These subjects are part of the 'English Baccalaureate', along with English, Mathematics and Science and are academic subjects highly valued by the Russell Group, 24 of the leading Universities in the country. The Russell Group also values the language skills promoted by studying a Modern Foreign Language.

## WHAT IS THE ENGLISH BACCALAUREATE?

Most often described as 'The Ebacc', this is not actually a qualification, but a series of subjects that are seen as the 'gold standard' of the education system in the UK. Whilst there is no requirement to do this, it is a recommendation that students aiming to go to top universities should have both a 'humanity' and a language. It is also recommended more generally for able students because it provides a balanced curriculum, keeping options open for the future.

## WHAT OTHER SUBJECTS CAN I DO?

In 2025-2026 there are numerous option subjects available including a route to stretch and challenge those students with a particular interest in Mathematics who can choose to study two GCSEs in Statistics and Further Mathematics across Year 10-11. It is always good to consider 'balancing' your choices with some subjects that are very 'academic' and others that are more active or creative.

## WHAT'S THE POINT IN CARRYING ON IN YEAR 9 ONCE I'VE TAKEN MY OPTIONS?

All subjects are important throughout the whole of Year 9. This cannot be stressed too strongly. Pupils who make progress in all subjects throughout the year are in a far stronger position at the start of Year 10 than those who do not give of their best. The information given in this booklet, together with the Year 9 Options Evening on Wednesday 5th February and Year Parents' Evening on Thursday 27th February and audit grades will give parents and pupils sufficient information to make necessary decisions, but do ask further questions if required. The options choices form will be circulated as a Google Form for you and your son to fill in electronically, and this should be returned after the parents' information evening on 5th February and needs to be completed by Friday 7th March 2025.

## WHERE ELSE CAN I GET ADVICE?

Students will have had some opportunity to discuss the demands of each subject at GCSE with their present teachers, either in person or via email. If there is any doubt about his suitability for a subject then your son should consult his teacher for advice. This applies in particular to Art, Computer Science, Music, PE and dual linguists (French and Spanish). There are also plenty of guidance sites on the internet, but if they are still struggling, then send them in the direction of their Head of Year.



BORDEN  
GRAMMAR  
SCHOOL

## IS THERE COURSEWORK? IF SO, WHO MARKS IT?

Students now take many more exams than they did five years ago. There are also now many fewer subjects that include non-Examination Assessment (Coursework or controlled assessments). Where they do occur, they must be undertaken under conditions specified by the exam board; they are marked by school staff, and moderated by the exam boards. Borden has an appeals procedure relating to internal assessment decisions. If parents have concerns about an assessment, they should discuss them with the teacher in order to understand the basis on which the assessment has been made. If the matter is not able to be resolved the formal appeals procedure can be used.

## WILL I GET ALL THE SUBJECTS I CHOOSE?

Sometimes, where too few students choose a particular subject, it may be necessary to ask those concerned to select a different option. Occasionally, a student will not be able to take the exact combination of subjects they choose, if this situation arises, it will be discussed with the student who will be asked to make a new choice. Equally, there may be limitations on the number of students who can take a particular popular option subject. This is why it is important to choose a reserve subject you are happy to study and continue to apply yourself to all subjects.

## WHAT GRADES SHOULD I BE AIMING FOR?

To some extent the answer for this will depend on the individual and the particular subject. However, we do know that our students are able and so should, theoretically, be aiming for the top grades (7 to 9). In education we are now in an era when students' "Best 8" GCSEs are becoming an increasing part of the vocabulary of those with an interest in education. As it is highly likely that your son will continue his education in the Sixth Form at Borden he should be aware that in order to do so he must obtain a field of 'good grades' at GCSE. Whilst students may be able to progress to key stage 5 without very good grades, their choices may be limited and they are unlikely to do as well in the Key Stage 5 courses they pursue. Significantly, for those students planning on going to university your GCSEs are the only external exams you will have completed prior to making applications in a few years' time! Therefore, it is very important that you select your choices carefully and are fully committed to them.

## ASSESSMENT AT GCSE:

The majority of subjects studied at Key Stage Four assess using grades 1 to 9, with 9 being the top grade. The new national strong pass is a grade 5, which is the equivalent of a C+ in 'old GCSE' language whilst grades 7-9 are equivalent to an A-A\*. Therefore, our students should be aiming for these grades. In addition, the top 2 to 3% of the country will be awarded a grade 9 which is the equivalent of an A\*\*. The average GCSE grade in recent years achieved by a Borden student has been a grade 6, which is the equivalent of a B+ in the 'old GCSE' language.



**BORDEN  
GRAMMAR  
SCHOOL**

## Year 9 Courses

### CORE

English  
(Language &  
Literature)

Mathematics

Science  
(Biology,  
Chemistry &  
Physics)

EBACC

### OPTIONS

1

Geography  
History  
French  
Spanish

2

Geography  
History  
French  
Spanish

3

Geography  
History  
French  
Spanish  
Art, Craft & Design  
Business Studies  
Computer Science  
Design & Technology  
Drama  
Further Mathematics  
Information Technology  
Music  
Physical Education  
Religious Studies  
Statistics

4

Geography  
History  
French  
Spanish  
Art, Craft & Design  
Business Studies  
Computer Science  
Design & Technology  
Drama  
Further Mathematics  
Information Technology  
Music  
Physical Education  
Religious Studies  
Statistics





BORDEN  
GRAMMAR  
SCHOOL

# THE CORE CURRICULUM

**ENGLISH**

**ENGLISH LITERATURE**

**MATHEMATICS**

**SCIENCE**

**BIOLOGY  
CHEMISTRY  
PHYSICS**

**PLUS SPORT & PERSONAL  
DEVELOPMENT (PD)  
INCLUDING CAREERS EDUCATION**



BORDEN  
GRAMMAR  
SCHOOL

# GCSE

## ENGLISH LANGUAGE & LITERATURE

These are **two separate GCSEs**, but there is significant overlap in terms of skills and part of the text content. All pupils are required to take both subjects. The courses run concurrently, though we switch from one to the other as necessary. There is no coursework element: all work will be geared towards exam success. We use AQA exam board. All exams are in the summer of Year 11.

### ENGLISH LANGUAGE

The specification offers two equally-balanced papers, relating reading sources to the topic and theme of writing tasks. The reading sources act as stimulus for writing tasks, providing students with a clear route through each paper.

#### **Paper 1:** 1 hour 45 minutes

Explorations in Creative Reading and Writing, looks at how writers use narrative and descriptive techniques to engage the interest of readers.

Section A: Reading - one literature fiction text

Section B: Writing - descriptive or narrative writing

#### **Paper 2:** 1 hour 45 minutes

Writers' Viewpoints and Perspectives, looks at how different writers present a similar topic over time.

Section A: Reading - one non-fiction text and one literary non-fiction text

Section B: Writing - writing to present a viewpoint

Speaking and Listening skills no longer carry weighting towards the final GCSE grade, but instead will receive a separate endorsement on the results, and will be tested by one assessed piece marked in school.

### ENGLISH LITERATURE

#### **Paper 1:** 1 hour 45 minutes (40% of GCSE)

Section A: Shakespeare: students will answer one question on one play. They will be required to write in detail about an extract and then to write about the play as a whole.

Section B: The 19th-century novel: 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 2:** 2 hours 15 minutes (60% of GCSE)

Section A: Modern texts: students will answer one essay question from a choice of two on a modern prose or drama text.

Section B: Poetry: students will answer one comparative question on one named poem printed on the paper and one other poem from their chosen anthology cluster.

Section C: Unseen poetry: students will answer one question on each of two unseen poems and one comparative question.

The best thing pupils can do to prepare themselves from now on is to read as many books and feature articles of good quality as possible. This will help them in all writing-based subjects.



BORDEN  
GRAMMAR  
SCHOOL

# GCSE MATHEMATICS

All students follow a three year course (Y9 – Y11) of Mathematics at the higher tier of the Edexcel Mathematics (1MA1) syllabus which covers grades 9 – 4.

The course builds on the content, knowledge and skills developed in the Key Stage 3 Program of Study for Mathematics. The aims of the course are that students:

- develop fluent knowledge, skills and understanding of mathematical methods and concepts
- acquire, select and apply mathematical techniques to solve problems
- reason mathematically, make deductions and inferences, and draw conclusions
- Comprehend, interpret and communicate mathematical information in a variety of forms appropriate to the information and context.

Mental calculation is encouraged as calculations without the aid of a calculator will be tested. Estimation, understanding of 3-D shape, practical activities, use of ICT and data collection may also be incorporated into schemes of work.

The qualification contains:

- Number
- Algebra
- Ratio, proportion and rates of change
- Geometry and measures
- Probability
- Statistics.

The assessment of the GCSE course will be three 90 minute written papers each contributing 33.3% of the qualification. Paper one will be non-calculator and papers two and three will be calculator. All papers will be taken in the summer of Year 11.



BORDEN  
GRAMMAR  
SCHOOL

# GCSE SCIENCE

All students in Year 9 study Biology, Chemistry and Physics and follow the course material for triple Science. In Year 10, students are placed in mixed ability sets. All sets study the same triple Science curriculums and will receive a separate GCSE in Biology, Chemistry and Physics. Students can progress to Science A Levels in Biology, Chemistry and Physics following the Triple science pathway.

All pathways are 100% linear and exam based. All students will sit two exams in each discipline. For Single Science the exams are 1hr 45 minutes long. The modules in Biology, Chemistry and Physics are outlined below. There are optional foundation tier papers for all three sciences for students that are struggling to thrive on higher tier question styles and complexity.

## Modules Covered in Biology, Chemistry and Physics

### Biology (1BIO/1H and 1BIO/2H)

- Overarching concepts in biology
- Cells and control
- Genetics
- Natural selection and genetic modification
- Health, disease and the development of medicines
- Plant structures and their functions
- Animal co-ordination, control and homeostasis
- Exchange and transport in animals
- Ecosystems and material cycles

### Chemistry (1CHO/1H and 1CHO/2H)

- Formulae, equations and hazards
- Overarching concepts in chemistry: atomic structure, the periodic table, ionic bonding, covalent bonding, types of substance, calculations involving masses
- States of matter
- Methods of separating and purifying substances
- Acids
- Obtaining and using metals
- Electrolytic processes
- Reversible reactions and equilibria
- Transition metals, alloys and corrosion
- Quantitative analysis
- Dynamic equilibria and calculations involving volumes of gases
- Chemical cells and fuel cells
- Groups 1, 7 and 0
- Rates of reaction
- Fuels
- Heat energy changes in chemical reactions
- Earth and atmospheric science
- Hydrocarbons



BORDEN  
GRAMMAR  
SCHOOL

# GCSE SCIENCE

- Polymers
- Alcohols and carboxylic acids
- Bulk and surface properties of matter including nanoparticles

## **Physics (1PH0/1H and 1PH0/2H)**

- Overarching concepts of physics: motion, forces and conservation of energy
- Light and the electromagnetic spectrum
- Radioactivity
- Astronomy
- Energy - Forces doing work
- Forces and their effects
- Static electricity
- Magnetism and the motor effect
- Electromagnetic induction
- Particle model – 2
- Forces and matter



BORDEN  
GRAMMAR  
SCHOOL

# OPTION SUBJECTS

**ART, CRAFT & DESIGN**

**BUSINESS STUDIES**

**COMPUTER SCIENCE**

**DESIGN & TECHNOLOGY**

**DRAMA**

**GEOGRAPHY**

**HISTORY**

**INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY**

**MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES:**

***FRENCH & SPANISH***

**MUSIC**

**PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

**RELIGIOUS STUDIES**

**STATISTICS & FURTHER MATHEMATICS**



BORDEN  
GRAMMAR  
SCHOOL

# GCSE ART, CRAFT & DESIGN

## ADMISSIONS

This exciting and personalised course is aimed at students that like practical work from model making to painting and photography. It is intended to suit the needs of students who have an interest and aptitude in **Art as well as Design**. The most artistically creative students achieve the highest results with work produced that is inspiring and individual. Students must have a verbal recommendation from their KS3 Art teacher before they opt for GCSE Art.

## SYLLABUS COURSE AQA 8201 – Art, Craft and Design

Students can develop their skills in **painting, drawing, sculpture, printmaking, digital photography, model making, architectural drawing, graphics and mixed media work**. Drawing is an integral part of the beginning of projects then students can move on. Students intending to take GCSE Art should be highly motivated and enjoy working on their artwork in their own time. Each pupil is required to spend a minimum of one hour a week on project homework. Students will need to demonstrate a high degree of commitment and self-discipline combined with a good technical and creative ability. Along with practical work, a high level of theoretical and conceptual understanding is developed over the two years.

## YOU WILL LEARN HOW TO:

- Record observations, experiences and ideas in a variety of ways including drawing and photography.
- Analyse and evaluate images reflecting on your own and others artwork to move forward.
- Develop and explore ideas, experimenting with a range of art techniques to select and refine your work.
- Make a personal response; a sustained piece of work that you have worked towards.

## GCSE CONTENT

COMPONENT 1: **Portfolio worth 60% of the GCSE**. Students submit a portfolio comprising a sustained project and a selection of further work which represents their course of study.

COMPONENT 2: **Externally set assignment worth 40% of the GCSE**. Students respond to their chosen starting point from an externally set assignment paper relating to their chosen title.

## ASSESSMENT

The Art Department will continually assess the work throughout the course. This will, in the main, take the form of tutorials and written targets given on Google classroom where appropriate. All work will be internally marked at the completion of units and externally moderated by a representative of AQA.

## BEYOND GCSE

A Level Art and A Level Photography are offered in the department. We support students with university portfolios and interview techniques. Creative degrees could lead to career opportunities in the fields of architecture, advertising, business, website building, graphic design, multimedia, film and television, photography, theatre, product design, fashion design and industrial design amongst others.



BORDEN  
GRAMMAR  
SCHOOL

# GCSE BUSINESS STUDIES

## Is this the right subject for me?

This course promises to be engaging and inspiring, and reflects the demands of a truly modern and evolving business environment in the UK and beyond, and will obviously incorporate BREXIT. Students who study this course may well find that it provides a secure foundation for further study in Business and Finance-related disciplines that are offered in the Sixth Form. The qualification will enable students to develop as commercially minded and enterprising individuals and helps them to succeed in their chosen pathway.

**Business contexts:** through studying this qualification students will:

- apply knowledge and understanding to different business contexts. These include businesses ranging from small enterprises to large multinationals and businesses operating in local, national and global contexts
- develop an understanding of how these contexts impact on business behaviour
- use business terminology to identify and explain business activity
- apply business concepts to familiar and unfamiliar contexts.

**Business decision making:** through studying this qualification students will:

- apply knowledge and understanding to business decision making, including: the interdependent nature of business activity, influences on business, business operations, finance, marketing and human resources.
- develop problem-solving and decision-making skills relevant to business
- investigate, analyse and evaluate business opportunities and issues
- make justified decisions using both qualitative and quantitative data, including its selection, interpretation, analysis and evaluation, and the application of appropriate quantitative skills.

## Qualification at a Glance

**Content and Assessment Overview:** the Pearson Edexcel Level 1/ Level 2 GCSE (9–1) in Business consists of two externally-examined papers. Students must complete all assessments in May/June in any single year.

### Theme 1: Investigating Small Business (Paper code: IBS0/01)

Written examination: 1 hour and 45 minutes, 50% of the qualification, 90 marks.

#### Content overview:

- 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 Assessment overview

The paper is divided into three sections: Section A: 35 marks, Section B: 30 marks, Section C: 25 marks. The paper will consist of calculations, multiple-choice, short-answer and extended-writing questions. Questions in Sections B and C will be based on business contexts given in the paper. Calculators may be used in the examination.



BORDEN  
GRAMMAR  
SCHOOL

# GCSE

## BUSINESS STUDIES

### **Theme 2: Building a Business (Paper code: 1BS0/02)**

Written examination: 1 hour and 45 minutes, 50% of the qualification, 90 marks.

#### Content overview:

- Topic 2.1 Growing the business
- Topic 2.2 Making marketing decisions
- Topic 2.3 Making operational decisions
- Topic 2.4 Making financial decisions
- Topic 2.5 Making human resource decisions Assessment overview

The paper is divided into three sections: Section A: 35 marks Section B: 30 marks Section C: 25 marks. The paper will consist of calculations, multiple-choice, short-answer and extended-writing questions. Questions in Sections B and C will be based on business contexts given in the paper. Calculators may be used in the examination.



BORDEN  
GRAMMAR  
SCHOOL

# GCSE COMPUTER SCIENCE

This exciting GCSE gives you an excellent opportunity to investigate how computers work, how they're used and to develop computer programming and problem-solving skills. You'll also do some fascinating in-depth research and practical programming using Python. The course will help you learn about critical thinking, analysis and problem solving.

## Requirements

A strong aptitude for mathematics is essential, as is a logical and enquiring mind. You should enjoy problem solving in creative and innovative ways.

## Aims

- Understand and apply the fundamental principles and concepts of Computer Science, including abstraction, decomposition, logic, algorithms, and data representation.
- Analyse problems in computational terms through practical experience of solving such problems including designing, writing and debugging programs.
- Think creatively, innovatively, analytically, logically and critically.
- Understand the components that make up digital systems, and how they communicate with one another and with other systems.
- Understand the impacts of digital technology to the individual and to wider society.
- Apply mathematical skills relevant to Computer Science.
- Have fun and leave school with a Computing qualification of the highest level, essential for whatever career path you choose.

## What will I study?

### Component 01: Computer systems:

You will become familiar with the impact of Computer Science in a global context through the study of the ethical, legal, cultural and environmental concerns associated with Computer Science.

#### Content:

Systems architecture; memory and storage; computer networks, connections and protocols; network security; systems software; ethical, legal, cultural and environmental impacts of digital technology.

### Component 02: Computational thinking, algorithms and programming:

You will be introduced to algorithms and programming, learning about programming techniques, how to produce robust programs, computational logic, translators and facilities of computing languages and data representation. You will become familiar with computing related mathematics.

#### Content:

Algorithms; programming fundamentals; producing robust programs; Boolean logic; programming languages and Integrated Development Environments.

### Practical programming:

Students are given the opportunity to undertake programming challenges during their course of study, which will allow them to develop their skills to design, write, test and refine programs using high-level programming language

Students will be assessed on these skills during the written examinations, in particular component 02 (section B)



BORDEN  
GRAMMAR  
SCHOOL

# GCSE COMPUTER SCIENCE

## How will you be assessed?

- Computer systems and programming: 1 hour 30 minutes, written paper (50% of the total GCSE).
- Computational thinking, algorithms and programming: 1 hour 30 minutes, written paper (50% of the total GCSE).

Exam Board: OCR Syllabus J277

<https://www.ocr.org.uk/qualifications/gcse/computer-science-j277-from-2020/>



BORDEN  
GRAMMAR  
SCHOOL

# GCSE DESIGN & TECHNOLOGY

This is a course that combines both theoretical and practical aspects of Design Technology. The majority of the theory, 50% of the final grade, will be delivered through a practical application; however, at times there will be dedicated theory lessons in order to fully understand the subject content. The remaining 50% of the final grade is awarded from a coursework project, where it is essential that students use the iterative design process and document thoroughly the development of their work. An ability to work independently is vital.

The course makes full use of the school CNC routers, laser cutters and 3D printers for both modelling and making of products. Designing takes place through drawing, modelling and CAD programmes such as 2D Design and SpaceClaim. This course is the ideal foundation for A Level Product Design.

## ADMISSIONS

Students must have a verbal recommendation from their Key Stage 3 DT teacher before they opt for GCSE Design and Technology and preferably be a 3+ or above in Year 9.

## SYLLABUS [AQA Design and Technology 8552](#)

### YOU WILL LEARN HOW TO:

- Use the iterative design process of exploring, creating and evaluating
- Produce a design brief and specification.
- Use a range of materials, techniques and processes to realise designs.
- Produce a clear and detailed portfolio of work
- Analyse how products are developed, designed and manufactured.
- Understand the environmental impact on designing and manufacturing products.

## GCSE CONTENT

**2 hour written exam** – 100 marks, 50% of the final GCSE grade where 15% of the marks are Mathematics questions in a Design Technology context as well as a mixture of multiple choice, short answer questions and extended response questions.

**Non-Exam Assessment NEA (coursework)** – 100 marks, 50% of the final GCSE grade, this consists of a design and make task. The NEA will take 30–35 hours approximately. The task is chosen from a range of challenges that are released annually by AQA on 1st June in the year prior to the submission of the NEA.

## ASSESSMENT

Written paper: Externally assessed by AQA.

Non-Exam Assessment (NEA): Work is internally assessed by teachers and moderated by AQA.



BORDEN  
GRAMMAR  
SCHOOL

# GCSE DRAMA

## What will I be expected to do?

The three elements that make up the course are as follows:

- **Component 1: Understanding drama, 40% of the GCSE**
  - A written examination, which tests students on their knowledge and understanding of drama and theatre, a studied set play and their ability to analyse and evaluate a professional live performance.
- **Component 2: Devising drama, 40% of the GCSE**
  - Creation of a devised piece of drama, including a performance and a written devising log.
- **Component 3: Texts in practice, 20% of the GCSE**
  - Performance of two scenes from the same play, selected by students and agreed by the teacher.

*All candidates will be required to perform publicly as part of the course and there will be as many opportunities for performance as possible to build skills and confidence throughout the course. It is also recommended that you attend drama club rehearsals each week after school, or join a drama group outside school to develop your skills performing with others.*

## You will enjoy this course if you want to study a subject that:

- Involves performing on stage
- Includes watching and learning about a wide range of theatrical genres and plays.
- Helps you with script writing and performance of your own plays
- Allows you to collaborate and perform plays with others
- Supports you in learning more about how to use sound, lighting, costume and develop stage management skills

## Progression after GCSE Drama:

- GCSE Drama is a good preparation for further study and a solid foundation for courses such as A Level Drama and Theatre Studies, BTEC National Diplomas in Drama, Performing and Production Arts, Level 3 courses in Technical Theatre.
- In addition to this, GCSE Drama helps develop a wide variety of skills and is useful in pursuing careers in the theatre industry, broadcasting, community arts, entertainment, law, events management, teaching and generally any job which involves communication and expressive skills.



BORDEN  
GRAMMAR  
SCHOOL

# GCSE GEOGRAPHY

## Is this the right subject for me?

Geography helps you to make sense of the world around you. It is hands on, it is relevant and it is fun. The Edexcel B GCSE course is a good mix of topics such as urban issues, world development, extreme environments, coasts and hazards to name but a few. The course will give you the chance to get to grips with some of the big questions which affect our world and understand the social, economic and physical forces and processes which shape and change our world.

There are so many ways of learning in Geography. It is very practical with opportunities to learn new skills such as modern computer based mapping (called GIS), map skills, interpreting photographs, fieldwork skills, presenting, role play and debating techniques.

You will improve your literacy through your report writing and written work and make practical use of your numeracy skills when you interpret data and construct graphs.

Fieldwork, or working outside the classroom, is a really important part of Geography. Whether you complete studies locally or take advantage of the chance to travel further away it will be a brilliant opportunity to experience some of the things you have learnt about in class, see things differently and of course have fun.

Geography is a subject which can form part of the Ebacc. It is a solid academic subject and well respected by universities and employers alike.

There has never been a better time to study Geography so make the choice to go places with Geography by taking this subject at GCSE.

## How will I be assessed?

Units 1 and 2	Unit 3
Examinations (37.5% each)	Examination (25%)
<b>Global Geographical issues</b> <b>UK Geographical issues</b> The exam papers for these units are resource based. You will have maps, photographs and diagrams to help you answer the questions. Questions will range from short questions up to larger extended writing questions.	<b>Making Geographical Decisions</b> is a decision making exercise based on pre-release resources. These will consist of a colour resource booklet on a geographical issue or location. Your teacher can work with you on the resources. Questions will assess your understanding of the resources in relation to environmental issues and sustainability.



BORDEN  
GRAMMAR  
SCHOOL

# GCSE HISTORY

History at GCSE continues the themes studied across Key Stage 3. The course covers aspects of medieval, early modern and twentieth century world history, which will develop critical, analytical and communication skills through the exploration of themes and interpretation.

In terms of content we study the following:

**1. Weimar and Nazi Germany, 1918-1939 (Paper Three, 30%)**

This modern depth study should enable learners to understand the impact of the Nazi dictatorship on people's lives both within Germany and across occupied Europe. It explores the interplay of political, economic, social, racial and cultural forces at work in both Weimar and Nazi Germany societies.

**2. Early Elizabethan England, 1558-1588 (Paper Two, 20%)**

This British depth study should enable learners to understand the complexity of early-Elizabethan society and the interplay of political, religious, economic, social and cultural forces within it.

**3. Superpower Relations and the Cold War, 1941-1991 (Paper Two, 20%)**

This period study will allow students to investigate the origins of the Cold War, how early tensions between the East and West started after World War Two and intensified. Studies will then take place into 3 of the most significant events in the Cold War leading into the collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War.

**4. Migrants in Britain, c.800 to the present (Paper One, 30%)**

This thematic study and historic environment study should enable students to understand changes and continuities within Migration to Britain from c.800 to the present. The study should reveal wider changes to the reasons for, experiences of and impact of migration across the period. Students will also undertake a study into Notting Hill, 1948-1970 whilst developing the enquiry skills.

## **Assessment**

Paper One – 52 marks – **1hr 15 minutes**

Paper Two – 64 marks – **1hr 45 minutes**

Paper Three – 52 marks – **1hr 20 minutes**

## **Why should you do History?**

History is a respected qualification as it demonstrates an enquiring mind, essential for a wide range of Higher Education courses and careers in management, central government, the civil service, law or journalism. However, students will find that the analytical skills gained through the study of History will be extremely useful for any career they might choose to pursue.



BORDEN  
GRAMMAR  
SCHOOL

# GCSE

## INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Digital Media is a key part of many areas of our everyday lives and vital to the UK economy. Production of digital media products is a requirement of almost every business, so there is huge demand for a skilled and digitally-literate workforce. This qualification will help students develop specific and transferable skills such as research, planning and review, working with others and communicating creative concepts. The qualification's hands-on approach has strong relevance to the way young people use the technology required in creative media.

### Requirements

Learners who are taking this course should normally have followed the Lower School Programme of Study in Computing

### What will I study?

The mandatory units of Creative iMedia in the media industry and Visual identity and digital graphics underpin the qualification and reflect key industry skills. The Creative iMedia in the media industry unit is assessed through an examination and contributes 40% of the marks.

#### Unit R093: Creative iMedia in the media industry

In this unit students will 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

#### Unit R094: Visual identity and digital graphics

In this unit you will learn 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

#### Unit R097: Interactive digital media

In this unit you will 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



BORDEN  
GRAMMAR  
SCHOOL

# GCSE

## INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

### How will you be assessed?

Unit R093: Creative iMedia in the media industry

Written paper, 1 hour 30 minutes – 70 Marks – 40%

Unit R094: Visual identity and digital graphics

Centre assessed task, OCR moderated – 50 Marks – 25%

Unit R097: Interactive digital media

Centre assessed task, OCR moderated – 70 Marks – 35%

Exam Board: OCR Cambridge Nationals in Creative iMedia (120 GLH) code J834

<https://www.ocr.org.uk/qualifications/cambridge-nationals/creative-imedia-level-1-2-j834/>



BORDEN  
GRAMMAR  
SCHOOL

# GCSE

## MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

Students may choose one or both of the languages that they have studied at Key Stage 3. An increasing number of able linguists are choosing both because, as we use the same examination board for each, students find that it can be a huge help to follow both courses simultaneously. The study of a foreign language is also necessary for students who wish to achieve an EBacc.

Universities view languages favourably and employers value a CV that shows achievement in MFL. As the demand for language skills is expanding in fields as varied as business, international relations, diplomacy and security, the knowledge of a foreign language will give future job-seekers the edge in an increasingly globalised and competitive job market. Furthermore, whether it be for business or pleasure, learning a language provides young people with a skill for life and undoubtedly facilitates picking up a new foreign language in the future.

### **GCSE AQA FRENCH (8658) AND SPANISH (8698)**

Both courses build upon the groundwork done at Key Stage 3 and the GCSE course actually begins in Year 9. By the end of Year 9, students know how to talk about themselves, their family and friends, their hobbies, etc. In Year 10 and Year 11, students will have the opportunity to revisit topics, consolidate their understanding of French/Spanish grammar and expand their topic-based vocabulary. Students continue to develop all four language skills (Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing) with each accounting for 25% of the total GCSE grade.

Assessment is set in the context of these three themes for each subject:

#### **French:**

- Theme 1: People and lifestyle
- Theme 2: Popular culture
- Theme 3: Communication and the world around us

#### **Spanish:**

- Theme 1: Identity and Culture
- Theme 2: Local, national, international and global areas of interest
- Theme 3: Current and future study, and employment

#### Paper 1: Listening (25%)

- Understanding and responding to spoken extracts
- Dictation of short, spoken extracts

#### Paper 2: Speaking (25%)

- Speaking using clear and comprehensible language to undertake a role-play
- Carry out a reading aloud task
- Talk about visual stimuli

#### Paper 3: Reading (25%)

- Understanding and responding to written texts
- Translating from French/Spanish into English

#### Paper 4: Writing (25%)

- Writing text in the language in a lexically and grammatically accurate way
- Translating from English into French/Spanish



BORDEN  
GRAMMAR  
SCHOOL

# GCSE MUSIC

## What will I be expected to do?

The three elements that make up the course are as follows:

- **Component 1: Performing, 30% of the GCSE**
  - Audio recorded submission of 4–6 minutes of solo and ensemble performance. You will be expected to take instrumental or vocal lessons during this GCSE. It is advisable to start lessons as soon as possible if you do not play an instrument already and you will need to give considerable time to improve your skills to the required standard. It is also recommended that you attend one band or choir rehearsal per week after school, to develop your skills performing with others. Students and parents who may be concerned about the financial implications of instrumental lessons are advised to contact the school as help may be available in a number of circumstances with this cost.
- **Component 2: Composing, 30% of the GCSE**
  - Two compositions (4–6 minutes) created as coursework during the course, using Mac computer software, in a range of musical styles.
- **Component 3: Appraising, 40% of the GCSE**
  - A listening and written examination lasting 1 hour 15 minutes testing your knowledge of many styles and genres of music, from traditional western classical music, to pop and rock, film music and music from other cultures around the world. The examination will test your knowledge of a selection of pieces you will have studied in these areas and other similar pieces.

## You will enjoy this course if you want to study a subject that:

- Involves performing (singing or playing an instrument)
- Includes listening to and learning about many different styles of music
- Helps you to write and arrange your own music
- Allows you to play and perform music with others in rock groups, bands and singing ensembles
- Supports you in learning more about how to use a recording studio and music software

## Progression after GCSE Music:

- GCSE Music is a good preparation for further musical study and a solid foundation for courses such as A Level Music and Music Technology, BTEC National Diplomas in Music, Popular Music, Music Technology, Performing Arts and Musical Theatre.
- In addition to this, GCSE Music helps develop a wide variety of skills and is useful in pursuing careers in the music industry, publishing, the Armed Forces, entertainment, teaching and generally any job which involves communication and expressive skills.



BORDEN  
GRAMMAR  
SCHOOL

# GCSE PHYSICAL EDUCATION

This specification follows on from the Key Stage 3 Physical Education programme of study by providing students with exciting opportunities to lead a healthy and active lifestyle by choosing from a variety of roles and activities in which to participate in physical activity.

The content of the GCSE Physical Education specification is designed to enable students to enjoy and understand the benefits of living a healthy and active lifestyle; to provide a route to further study in Further Education awards, such as A Levels and/or the new Diplomas, and to Higher Education in PE as well as to related career opportunities.

Pupils who have an interest in selecting GCSE PE should bear in mind that there has been a shift within the new specification to change the weighting of assessment towards the theoretical side of the course. This change has been reflected in the Year 9 curriculum this year. Students have completed a 6 lesson block of theory work with a GCSE style exam at the end to test suitability and aptitude for the course.

## **The aims of this course are to encourage pupils to:**

- Be inspired, motivated and challenged, and enable them to make informed decisions about further learning opportunities and career pathways
- Develop knowledge, understanding, skills and values to develop and maintain their performance in physical activities and understand the benefits to health, fitness and well-being
- Develop theoretical knowledge and understanding of the factors that underpin physical activity and sport and use this knowledge to improve performance
- Understand how the physiological and psychological state affects performance in physical activity and sport
- Perform effectively in different physical activities by developing skills and techniques and selecting and using tactics, strategies and/or compositional ideas
- Develop their ability to analyse and evaluate to improve performance in physical activity and sport
- Understand the contribution which physical activity and sport make to health, fitness and wellbeing
- Understand key socio-cultural influences which can affect people's involvement in physical activity and sport.

## **The course consists of two sections:**

**Written Examination Paper:** 2 x 1½ hour Examination papers (60% of overall GCSE)

**Non-Exam Assessment:** Practical Performance assessments (40% of overall GCSE)

### **Non-Exam Assessment: Practical Performance in Physical Activity and Sport**

This is assessed internally by the subject teacher and moderated by the exam board. Assessment is made from a variety of activities of which the best 3 performance scores for students are selected. Other sporting activities performed outside of practical PE lessons may also be used when circumstances allow. The Non-Examination Assessment counts for 40% of the overall GCSE Total.



BORDEN  
GRAMMAR  
SCHOOL

# GCSE PHYSICAL EDUCATION

## **Examination Assessment – 60%**

This takes the form of two 1½ hour papers taken at the end of Year 11. Each of these examinations will count for 30% of the overall GCSE Score. The two exams will cover the following topics;

### **Paper 1: The Human Body and Movement in Physical Activity and Sport**

- Applied Anatomy and Physiology
- Movement Analysis
- Physical Training
- Use of Data

### **Paper 2: Socio-Cultural Influences and Well-Being in Physical Activity and Sport**

- Sports Psychology
- Socio-Cultural Influences
- Health, Fitness and Well-Being
- Use of Data

The style for both of these question papers has been designed to include a mixture of multiple choice questions, some structured questions and extended written answer questions.

It is expected that students looking to take GCSE PE as an option in Key Stage 4 are able to have demonstrated suitable levels of practical performance, focus and engagement during their previous and future performances within Key Stage 3 PE.



BORDEN  
GRAMMAR  
SCHOOL

# GCSE

## RELIGIOUS STUDIES

The GCSE course consists of two components, which are studied during Key Stage 4 and examined at the end of the two-year period. The assessment is through two examinations.

**1. The Study of Religions** – Beliefs and teachings & practices in:

- a. Christianity
- b. Islam

This paper is 1 hour and 45 minutes long and worth 50% of the total GCSE.

**2. Religious, Philosophical and Ethical Studies**

Students study the following four themes from the perspective of Christianity:

- a. Theme A; Relationships and families
- b. Theme B: Religion and Life
- c. Theme C: The Existence of God & Revelation
- d. Theme D: Religion, Peace & Conflict

This paper is 1 hour and 45 minutes long and is worth 50% of the total GCSE.

Religion has helped shape our culture, society, politics and laws. For life in general and a career which involves dealing with people and making balanced decisions, Religious Studies GCSE provides the knowledge and skills on which to build; and is a highly valued qualification for universities and employers alike.

Students from Borden Grammar School who have gained Religious Studies qualifications have gone on to be academics, serve in the armed forces, bankers, barristers, doctors, journalists, police officers, solicitors and education.



BORDEN  
GRAMMAR  
SCHOOL

# GCSE

## STATISTICS & FURTHER MATHEMATICS

Upon completion of this course your son has the opportunity to achieve the equivalent of two GCSE qualifications.

Students looking to take this option should have a good interest and keen enthusiasm for Mathematics and be looking to take it beyond GCSE level.

### GCSE STATISTICS

All pupils taking this course will follow the linear course of Statistics at the higher tier of the Edexcel Statistics (1ST0) syllabus which covers grades 9 - 4.

The course complements the Edexcel GCSE in Mathematics and will be run during the course of Year 10. The content is based on good practice in Statistics and emphasises the theoretical, practical and applied nature of the subject. It is suitable for cross-curricular studies and activities and provides a background for the study of Statistics beyond GCSE level. The key subject aims and objectives are to enable students to develop statistical fluency and understanding through:

- the use of statistical techniques in a variety of authentic investigations, using real-world data in contexts such as, but not limited to, population, climate and sales, etc.
- identifying trends through carrying out appropriate calculations and data visualisation techniques
- the application of statistical techniques across the curriculum, in subjects such as sciences, social sciences, computing, geography, business and economics, and outside the classroom in the world in general
- critically evaluating data, calculations and evaluations that would be commonly encountered in their studies and in everyday life
- understanding how technology has enabled the collection, visualisation and analysis of large quantities of data to inform decision-making processes in public, commercial and academic sectors, including how technology can be used to generate diagrams and visualisations to represent data
- understand ways that data can be organised, processed and presented, including statistical measures to compare data, understanding the advantages of using technology to automate processing
- applying appropriate mathematical and statistical formulae, and building on prior knowledge.

This qualification is assessed through two externally-examined written papers which are 1 hour 30 minutes each and worth 50% each. The intention is that these examinations will be taken in the Summer of Year 10.

### FURTHER MATHEMATICS

The AQA Level 2 Certificate in Further Mathematics is an un-tiered Level 2 linear qualification for learners who:

- either already have, or are expected to achieve, grades 7, 8 and 9 in GCSE mathematics
- are likely to progress to A-Level study in Mathematics and possibly Further Mathematics.



BORDEN  
GRAMMAR  
SCHOOL

# GCSE

## STATISTICS & FURTHER MATHEMATICS

All pupils taking this course will follow the linear course which is graded from 9 to 5. It will run during the course of Year 11.

The course offers the opportunity to stretch and challenge high achieving students as an introduction to some AS level topics that will help them to develop skills in:

- Number
- Algebra
- Coordinate Geometry (2 dimensions only)
- Calculus
- Matrix Transformations
- Geometry

The focus will be on higher order mathematical skills, particularly in algebraic reasoning, thus extending students' skills and competencies. This qualification places an emphasis on higher order technical proficiency, rigorous argument and problem solving skills. It also gives an introduction to calculus and matrices and develops further skills in trigonometry, functions and graphs.

This qualification is assessed through two written papers which are 1 hour 45 minutes each. Paper 1 is non-calculator and worth 50% of the qualification and Paper 2 is calculator and worth 50% of the qualification. The intention is that these examinations will be taken in the summer of Year 11.



# GCSE EXAMS INFORMATION

Subject	Description	%
Art	Controlled Assessment	60%
	Externally set assignment	40%
Biology	Written paper 1	50%
	Written paper 2	50%
Business Studies	Written paper 1	50%
	Written paper 2	50%
Computer Science	Written paper 1 (Computer systems and programming)	50%
	Written paper 2 (Computational thinking, algorithms and programming)	50%
Chemistry	Written paper 1	50%
	Written paper 2	50%
Design Technology	Written paper	50%
	Non-Exam Assessment NEA (coursework)	50%
Drama	Written paper	70%
	Practical component	30%
English Language	Written paper 1 (Explorations in Creative Writing & Reading)	50%
	Written paper 2 (Writers' Viewpoints & Perspectives)	50%
English Literature	Written paper 1 (Shakespeare & 19th century novel)	40%
	Written paper 2 (Modern texts & Poetry)	60%
Further Mathematics	Non-calculator paper	50%
	Calculator paper	50%
Geography	Written paper 1	37.5%
	Written paper 2	37.5%
	Written paper 3	25%
History	Written paper 1 (Thematic Study)	30%
	Written paper 2 (Period Study and British Depth Study)	40%
	Written paper 3 (Modern Depth Study)	30%
IT	Written paper	40%
	Centre assessed task 1	25%
	Centre assessed task 2	35%
Mathematics	Non-calculator paper	33.3%
	Calculator paper 1	33.3%
	Calculator paper 2	33.3%
Modern Foreign Languages French & Spanish	Listening paper	25%
	Reading paper	25%
	Writing paper	25%
	Speaking exam	25%
Music	Performing music	30%
	Composing music	30%
	Listening and Appraising paper	40%
Physical Education	Written paper 1	30%
	Written paper 2	30%
	Practical assessment and written analysis of performance	40%
Physics	Written paper 1	50%
	Written paper 2	50%
Religious Studies	Written paper 1	25%
	Written paper 2	25%
	Written paper 3	50%
Statistics	Written paper 1	50%
	Written paper 2	50%



BORDEN  
GRAMMAR  
SCHOOL

# USEFUL INFORMATION



## **KENT CHOICES**

This includes details about career options in the local area.



## **UNIFROG**

A really useful website for students to look at career options and look at requirements and routes for different careers.



## **RATE MY APPRENTICESHIP PARENT HUB**

A range of useful information regarding Apprenticeships.



## **BGS OPTIONS VIDEO**

Link to a previous Options Evening video, slightly different options but with the same type of information.



## **Y10/11 CURRICULUM OVERVIEWS**

This will give you further detail on what to expect from GCSE courses.



BORDEN  
GRAMMAR  
SCHOOL

# GET IN TOUCH

We hope that you find this booklet useful. Please don't be worried about asking lots of questions and do talk to us at any point if you need further guidance.

## **CONTACT US :**



01795 424192



[www.bordengrammar.kent.sch.uk](http://www.bordengrammar.kent.sch.uk)



[school@bordengrammar.kent.sch.uk](mailto:school@bordengrammar.kent.sch.uk)



*Avenue of Remembrance  
Sittingbourne  
ME10 4DB*

