



Repton School

GCSE Curriculum Booklet

February 2010

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Deputy Head (Academic): T. C. Owen

The following subjects are studied by all pupils throughout A and O Block: English, Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry and Biology. The vast majority of pupils also take French as a core modern foreign language. Currently in Science the majority of pupils are entered for the AQA Science examinations in Science and Additional Science (two GCSEs), whilst the higher sets are in addition entered for the further examinations in Biology, Chemistry and Physics, which will enable them to gain three GCSE grades. At present, most native speakers of English follow two GCSE courses in English and English Literature and are entered for the higher tier examinations and most pupils for whom English is an additional language follow the English course only and sit the foundation tier papers.

In addition to the core subjects, three other subjects are chosen from the following: Art, Business Studies, Classical Civilisation, Design and Technology: Resistant Materials, Drama, Geography, German, History, Latin, Latin with Classical Greek (“Gratin”), Music, Physical Education, Religious Studies, Spanish and Three Dimensional Studies.

During the Lent term of B Block, each pupil discusses possible GCSE choices with a wide variety of staff at Repton: teachers, heads of academic departments, tutors and Housemasters and Housemistresses. Each pupil then provides an initial indication of choice of subjects so that the process of timetabling can begin. Timetable constraints will prevent a completely free choice of GCSE courses, so a provisional column structure is then produced and pupils make their final choice of subjects based on that column structure, as amended from time to time.

The choice of the optional GCSEs is important and should not be based solely on the pupil’s likes and dislikes. Each pupil should select a combination of subjects appropriate to his or her academic abilities. He or she should also take into account future plans for the Sixth Form and beyond. A very high GCSE points average is essential for entry to some courses at the more prestigious universities, and it may be that some GCSE subjects are considered to provide a more rigorous preparation for further study than others. Some A-level subjects and combinations of subjects are not viewed favourably by the Oxbridge colleges. Cambridge University has published some advice on this matter which can be viewed on the university’s website. Whilst other top academic universities have not yet followed suit, they may also have misgivings about certain subjects and combinations.

There are some subjects which have a high practical content and a pupil should only choose these if he or she is capable of performing well in them. There are some subjects that a pupil will not be able to take at A-level unless he or she has achieved at least a grade B or a grade A (depending on the subject) in that subject at GCSE.

Unless there are good reasons for not so doing, each pupil is advised to choose at least one Humanities subject (Classical Civilisation, Geography, History or Religious Studies). Pupils should not study both Art and Three Dimensional Studies. This year, those students who wish to take Classical Greek should be prepared to take it as part of a Latin with Classical Greek course (“Gratin”): further details are given later in this booklet.

The Deputy Head (Academic), the Director of University Entrance, Housemasters, Housemistresses and tutors will be able to offer advice if required and Heads of Department can give detailed information about their subject areas.

Section A: Core subjects

English and English Literature

Head of Department: I. W. McClary

The vast majority of Reptonians follow the AQA specifications for English Language and English Literature. Pupils for whom English is a second language follow the AQA specification for the single award of GCSE English. This course is almost identical to the English Language course, but combines the Shakespeare element from the English Literature course in a slightly different form.

English Language

The ability to communicate accurately and effectively in a variety of styles and for a variety of purposes remains central to the English syllabus. 20% of the marks available are for speaking and listening tasks, and 40% of the course is assessed through controlled assessment, which includes creative writing, an essay on a literary text and a study of English as a spoken language. One examination, worth 40%, is sat at the end of the course. This assesses pupils' ability to respond to a range of unseen non-fiction texts and to write informatively and analytically.

English Literature

The English Literature course involves the study of five texts across a range of genres and cultures. 75% of the course is assessed by two exams which comprise responses to three set texts and one unseen poem. Controlled assessment makes up the remaining 25% of the course and requires candidates to write an essay linking a Shakespeare play with another text from the literary heritage.

Changes by QCA to the nature of GCSE assessment in English mean that pupils will no longer be able to complete or redraft coursework in their own time but will be required instead to complete internally assessed tasks under controlled conditions. Such 'controlled assessments' are, in effect, examinations. The difference is that pupils will have more time to complete tasks and have some knowledge of the task beforehand.

Mathematics

Head of Department: M. A. Sanderson

The IGCSE syllabus involves Geometry, Algebra, Number, Shape and Space and Data Handling and is assessed by two written papers in the summer term of O-Block. Calculating aids are permitted in both examinations, each of which is two hours long.

Most pupils will study for the Higher Tier, thereby enabling them to achieve any grade up to and including A*. Pupils in the top set follow an accelerated course, and sit the IGCSE exam at the

end of A Block; they then follow a further, more advanced Mathematics course in O Block. Pupils in lower sets could be recommended to sit the GCSE foundation tier papers where the maximum grade attainable is a C.

French

Head of Department: S. L. Checketts

We hope that you will find the study of French both challenging and stimulating, a valuable skill for your future.

The language you learn will vary according to your ability and to the knowledge you have already acquired, but it will be drawn from 4 essential areas: lifestyle, leisure, home and environment, work and education.

In the GCSE examination the skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing are assessed separately, mainly in French. For the listening and reading papers you will be entered for either Higher or Foundation tier and these decisions will be made in the Lent Term, taking into account both the professional opinion of your teacher as well as your performance throughout the GCSE course. We expect the majority of you to take the Higher tier throughout. However, some may take the Higher tier in some skills and the Foundation tier in others, some may take the Foundation tier in all skills. If you take Foundation tier papers only you will be limited to grade C. It is not essential to take the Higher tier in everything to gain an A grade but it is strongly advised. Your writing is examined through controlled assessments. Dictionaries are no longer permitted in modern language examinations, so the need to develop a wide vocabulary is very important.

The skill of being able to speak and understand French confidently and effectively has never been more important than it is in the European context of today. The syllabus that we use in the Lower School (AQA) is admirably suited to developing that skill. In addition, we hope to develop your awareness of the nature of language and knowledge of French culture, and to lay the firmest foundations possible for further study of French if you choose to carry on to AS or A-level.

Science

Head of Departments: S. M. Ingleston (Biology)
D. Morris (Chemistry)
J.S. Mitchell (Physics)

In the science departments we aim to give students opportunities to:

- acquire scientific knowledge and develop an understanding of science;
- develop an interest in and enjoyment of science;
- develop experimental and investigative abilities;

- develop an understanding of the nature of science; and
- develop an understanding of the role of science and technology in society.

All pupils study Biology, Chemistry and Physics to GCSE. The sciences are taught separately and by subject specialists, but links between the sciences and with ICT and technology are stressed where appropriate. All pupils currently are prepared for examinations within the AQA science syllabus. Some pupils follow the Science and Additional Science courses (leading to the award of two GCSEs), but the more able scientists are also entered for the further examinations in the three separate sciences (leading to the award of three GCSEs). Either mode of entry is regarded as a good foundation for A-level study.

The decision as to which course is most suitable for each pupil is decided at Christmas of A-block with minor adjustments in summer of A-block. It is based on internal examination results and discussion between the three science departments. Assessment at GCSE, for both courses, is by written examination (75%) and internal assessment of scientific investigations and practical skills (25%).

Section B: Optional subjects

Art and Design

Head of Department: J. H. Bournon

The GCSE course includes foundation training in drawing, painting, printmaking, ceramics, three-dimensional and mixed media studies, and an appreciation of their context in the History of Art. In the second year of the course the pupils will use this knowledge to undertake two pieces of work, one self-devised project over the period of a term and the controlled test, the theme of which is set by the OCR our examination board.

The pupils will visit the London galleries at least once during the course and are exposed to the work of practicing artists in many disciplines through the programme of exhibitions in the Art School and Gallery No. 1.

Although we encourage all to opt for Art as a timetabled subject, provision is made for those who cannot do so by means of extra-curricular lessons on Tuesday and Thursday evenings and half-holidays. The Art School's facilities are available to all pupils every day out of lesson times, with at least one member of the Art staff present.

The GCSE provides not only a firm foundation in advanced art skills for pupils of all abilities, but also encourages them to develop as independent artists through the range of work and the creative atmosphere in the department.

A description of the Three Dimensional Studies course, which is taught by the Head of the Art Department, is given later in this booklet.

Business Studies

Head of Department: M. M. Carrington

Business Studies at GCSE gives an excellent overview of all aspects of business activity. The course begins with a look at how business activity influences so many aspects of our lives. Over the two years pupils learn about the production of goods and services, how to market what has been produced and the role of people within a business. They will become familiar with elementary Balance Sheets and Profit and Loss accounts, as well as looking at how businesses are legally structured and organised. The external influences section of the course covers the business impact of issues such as the economy, law and ethics.

We follow the OCR Business Studies specification. The course is examined in three sections, two of which are written papers where candidates use their knowledge to respond to specific business problems and situations. The smaller written paper will initially be examined at the end of the A Block year. The larger written paper is based on pre-released material which gives the students much of the information on which the exam questions will be based. This will be examined at the end of the O Block year. Within the course there is also an element of controlled assessment worth 25% of the final grade. This gives students the opportunity to investigate an actual organisation and apply some of the ideas studied to a real business situation.

The course suits anyone with a healthy interest in the world of business. It is an excellent springboard into either Business Studies or Economics at A-level but it will also be of benefit to students who do not intend to study the subjects beyond GCSE.

Classical Civilisation

Head of Department: R. G. Embery

This course is aimed at people who have enjoyed the B Block Classical Civilisation course and are interested in exploring the literature and culture of the ancient world. We follow the OCR syllabus, which is wide-ranging and consists of the following elements:

- Unit 1: City Life in the Classical World: *Rome*.
- Unit 2: Epic and Myth: *Homer, The Odyssey*.
- Unit 3: Community Life in the Classical World: *Pompeii*.
- Unit 4: Culture and Society in the Classical World: This unit will be assessed by means of controlled assessment, which has taken the place of coursework. Candidates will be required to write an essay in controlled conditions on *Sophocles' Antigone*.

Design and Technology: Resistant Materials Technology

Head of Department: I. Settingington

Design and Technology at GCSE is a challenging, demanding and stimulating course. You will experience much of the course through a hands-on approach by working with a variety of materials and graphical techniques. Projects can be developed through the use of computer facilities for CAD/CAM and other IT applications. The final grade at GCSE is taken from Controlled Assessment (60%) and written paper (40%). We follow the course offered by AQA with code reference 4560.

Controlled Assessment

Although a number of projects are produced during the first year of the course, both individually and as part of a team, the project produced in the final year is likely to be the one used for assessment. The project has to be selected by the candidate from AQA approved focus areas, and must include a 3D piece with a supporting folder. The department is available during outside of lesson time for work to be moved forward.

Written Paper

There is one examination. The paper relates to a theme set by the examination board and examines your knowledge of design, understanding of materials, manufacturing processes, safety procedures and applications of technology.

Design Technology develops visual, creative and technical expertise. These are valuable skills both generally and, if studied in subsequent years, in relation to engineering and design, but not exclusively so. The course demands energy and enthusiasm and will offer a unique approach to your academic work.

Drama

Head of Department: J. C. Sentance

GCSE Drama (AQA) is suitable for those who enjoy all aspects of drama and theatre and who are prepared to work hard with others towards a common end. Everyone has the opportunity to study and perform from scripted plays, have 'hands-on' experience of technical aspects (lighting, sound, etc.) and 'devise' (groups creating drama from one or more stimuli) during the two years. There will also be one or two theatre visits during the course. (It should be noted that there will be a charge for these visits, amounting to approximately £20 per trip.)

Coursework (60%) is assessed by the teacher and moderated externally. On three or four occasions during the two years the pupils will prepare and perform a piece, in small groups, to an audience and the two best marks will be chosen, each worth 30%. On each occasion pupils may specialise in acting or in a design or technical skill. A quarter of the marks are awarded for the preparation process (during which they must show understanding of the skills involved) and

three quarters for the final presentation of the piece.

The written examination (40%) requires two questions to be answered in ninety minutes, one on a piece of practical work completed during the course and one on a scripted play.

All those taking Drama GCSE have the opportunity to be involved in the many dramatic activities at Repton School and, of course, by 2011 they will also benefit from the multi-million pound refurbishment of the 400 Hall theatre.

Geography

Head of Department: N. J. Collins

A. McKenzie (from Michaelmas 2010)

The GCSE Geography course is concerned with a variety of physical and human topics, ranging from environmental issues such as global warming and resource depletion, to patterns of migration and refugee movements. Pupils will investigate and discuss thought-provoking issues such as the impact of rapid population growth and uncontrolled urbanization, the growth of newly industrializing countries and the impact of natural hazards upon countries at different levels of development. Geography helps pupils develop a number of different skills. As well as having to work independently, Geographers will have the opportunity to problem-solve in small groups and will learn how to correctly interpret graphs, maps, satellite images and photos. They will also undertake fieldwork exercises and use ICT to further their understanding of topics covered in class.

The Edexcel Specification B has four components and each unit is worth 25% of the final GCSE grade.

<p>Unit 1: Dynamic Planet Restless Earth Climate and Change Battle for the Biosphere Water World River Processes and Pressures Extreme Climates</p> <p>Assessed through a 1 hour exam with a mixture of short and long answer structured questions.</p>	<p>Unit 2: People and the Planet Population Dynamics Consuming Resources Living Spaces Making a Living Changing Cities Development Dilemmas.</p> <p>Assessed through a 1 hour exam with a mixture of short and long answer structured questions.</p>
<p>Unit 3: Making Geographical Decisions</p> <p>Assessed through a 1 hour exam with a mixture of short and long answer structured questions. A pack of resource material is pre-released prior to sitting the exam for students to study. The topic will change from year to year but will relate to</p>	<p>Unit 4: Researching Geography</p> <p>Assessed through a piece of investigative fieldwork based on one of the topics chosen by Edexcel. Students write up their fieldwork report under controlled conditions.</p>

global issues such as sustainability and environmental management.	
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Case studies are a key aspect of GCSE Geography and can range in scale from the local (using South Derbyshire to illustrate changing population trends), to the global (looking at improving standards of living in less developed nations). Whenever possible, contemporary case study examples are used to demonstrate how the human and physical environments interact. For example, looking at the impact and management of recent natural disasters in order to bring the outside world into the confines of the classroom.

History

Head of Department: N. F. Pitts

The GCSE History course involves the study of twentieth century modern world history. The pupils follow the Edexcel exam board specification and topics covered include the Peace Settlement following the First World War, the origins of the Second World War and the Cold War. Pupils also study in depth the history of Germany between the World Wars and the history of America following the Second World War. Students are thus enabled to look at the past from both above (political and diplomatic history) and below (social and economic history).

There are three examination papers. One paper tests knowledge and this is sat at the end of A-block. The other papers are primarily concerned with testing the candidates' skills in handling historical sources (such as photographs, cartoons and newspapers) and applying their own knowledge in response to these documents. There is also a piece of controlled assessment, which is based on pupils' study of Northern Ireland, 1968 – 1999.

Students are taught to develop a range of historical skills which they can apply to other periods if they choose to take the subject further. However, the modern period is the medium chosen to develop these skills because of the abundance of source materials (particularly film) and because most students regard this period as being the most 'relevant'. It certainly provides them with an unrivalled opportunity of gaining a valuable insight into the background to today's world.

Latin

Head of Department: R. G. Embery

All pupils who have enjoyed studying Latin in B Block will find the GCSE course well within their grasp. There are two main aspects to the OCR syllabus:

- Language: most of the first year is spent consolidating the linguistic knowledge that has been developed in B Block. To help candidates, a defined vocabulary list is published by the board.
- Literature: in the second half of the course candidates develop their appreciation of Latin literature by reading set texts, both in prose and verse. As an alternative to one of the set

texts candidates may choose the Sources for Latin option, which looks at the primary evidence for aspects of Roman life.

There is no controlled assessment.

Latin with Classical Greek (“Gratin”)

Head of Department: R. G. Embery

This joint course in Greek and Latin (“Gratin”) is aimed at capable Latinists who have enjoyed having a taste of Greek in B Block and would like to study both languages to GCSE level within one option slot. This rigorous and intensive course involves the study of Greek on a fast track alongside Latin and will appeal to students with a genuine interest in languages, especially those who might later consider a course in classical languages at university. The structure of the OCR Classical Greek syllabus is exactly the same as for Latin.

Modern Foreign Languages (German and Spanish)

Head of Department: S. L. Checketts

We hope that you will find the study of a second modern foreign language an exciting challenge which will stretch and inspire you. It is likely that you will study either German or Spanish alongside French and therefore it is extremely important that you develop strong language skills before deciding to become a ‘dual linguist’. It is however a pathway that can be extremely rewarding, as well as demanding.

In the GCSE the skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing are assessed separately, mainly in the target language (German or Spanish). For the listening and reading papers you will be entered for either Higher or Foundation tier and these decisions will be made in the Lent Term, taking into account both the professional opinion of your teacher as well as your performance throughout the GCSE course. As dual linguists we expect the majority of you to take the Higher tier throughout. However, some may take the Higher tier in some skills and the Foundation tier in others, some may take the Foundation tier in all skills. If you take Foundation tier papers only you will be limited to grade C. It is not essential to take the Higher tier in everything to gain an A grade but it is strongly advised. Your written work and speaking ability are examined through controlled assessments. Dictionaries are no longer permitted in modern language examinations, so the need to develop a wide vocabulary is very important.

You will have the opportunity to make use of the Language Centre, the modern language department's new computer assisted language learning facility. This new facility provides extensive opportunities for working on listening, speaking and audio-visual materials and much of this material is also available on the school network via personal or House computers.

The skill of being able to speak and understand a foreign language confidently and effectively

has never been more important than it is in the European context of today. The syllabuses that we use in the Lower School (AQA) are admirably suited to developing that skill. In addition, we hope to develop your awareness of the nature of language and knowledge of foreign cultures, and to lay the firmest foundations for further study of foreign languages if you choose to carry on to AS or A-level.

Music

Head of Department: A. J. R. Bowley

Have you ever thought about the music you listen to? Why do you like some music and not other? This course will let you study music of many different styles, from classical and world music, through to musical theatre, rock and pop, and the many forms of club dance music.

The Edexcel syllabus we use is ideal for pupils with good instrumental skills best equipping them for the study of music in depth that the syllabus encourages, combining performing (30%), composing (30%) with listening and analysis (40%). There are exciting opportunities to use music technology for composition, for which students are given a full and progressive training. The syllabus encourages students to make music individually and in groups, and to develop a life-long love and understanding of music.

Students' studies are approached through twelve sets works from four Areas of Study, focusing on the one hand on written and aural analytical work, including learning and applying a wide range of technical vocabulary, on top of contextualizing and justifying opinions about the works. The Areas also act as a stimulus for developing creative musical ideas through performance and composition. For 2010-12, the units are as follows:

- Area 1: *Western classical music 1600 – 1899*
Set works by Handel, Mozart and Chopin
- Area 2: *20th century music*
Set works by Schoenberg, Bernstein and Reich
- Area 3: *Popular Music in Context*
Set works by Miles Davis, Jeff Buckley and Moby
- Area 4: *World Music*
Set works from Scottish, Indian and African folk traditions

The final examination consists of the following papers:

- Paper 1: *Performing Music (30%)*
Pupils will perform one solo piece and perform/direct one ensemble piece to a standard on average of approximately Grade 4 level difficulty.
- Paper 2: *Compositions (30%)*
Two compositions (of up to 4 minutes combined length) are completed in any styles within two of the Areas of Study. This is most effectively and frequently conducted using the range of software packages in the music technology suite.
- Paper 3: *Listening and Appraising (40%)*

A written paper lasting 90 minutes based on all four Areas of Study. For the first component there is a range of listening questions including multiple choice, grid completion, and free response to musical extracts from the set works; in the second component, students' analytical and stylistic understanding of a selection of the set works, including their quality of written communication, is assessed.

Physical Education

Head of Department: S. J. Clague

Pupils will study the AQA Full Course (Single Award) and the GCSE consists of a written examination (Unit 3) and practical assessment (Unit 4).

Unit 3: Knowledge and Understanding for the Active Participant (40% of the GCSE)

At the end of the two year course, candidates will sit a 1.5 hour written paper worth 80 marks. Section A consists of Objective tests (12.5%) and short answer questions (37.5%). Section B consists of extended written answers based on a scenario issued as pre-release material (50%)

Students will look at:-

The range of physical activities and the different roles that the active participant can choose from

1. Range of activities & roles
2. Individual differences
3. The demands of performance
4. The difference between aerobic and anaerobic exercise
5. Characteristics and benefits of leisure and recreation

Linking physical activity with diet, work and rest for personal health and a balanced healthy lifestyle

1. Health, fitness and a healthy active lifestyle
2. Training
3. Diet

Making informed decisions about getting involved in a lifetime of healthy physical activity that suit individual needs

1. School influences
2. Cultural and social factors
3. Opportunities and pathways for becoming or remaining involved in physical activities
4. International and other social factors

Unit 4: The Active Participant (60% of whole GCSE)

Students will undertake four practical activities from two different profiles (each marked out of 20) and one assessment in 'Evaluating and Improving Performance' (marked out of 10).

Religious Studies

Head of Department: D.T. Clark

The GCSE in Religious Studies appeals to anyone who enjoys thinking through issues and who is interested in developing skills of analysis, argumentation and critical thinking.

We study AQA Specification B, which is comprised of two separate modules:

Religion and Morality

This module deals with issues which have an impact on the lives of people across the globe. It includes a study of Crime, Drugs, Wealth and Medical Ethics such as Euthanasia and Abortion. In each case, you will investigate how two different religions respond to these issues and also to develop your own perspectives.

Philosophy and Ultimate Questions

This module is taken in O-block and seeks to deal with some of the most challenging philosophical questions ever asked. These include life after death and the conflict between religion and science. This unit also involves comparing two religious viewpoints and also involves studying the views of non-religious philosophers.

Assessment is based on an examination for each module – there is no coursework or controlled assessment in RS.

Why Study Ethical and Religious Studies?

- The material itself is inherently interesting and gives you the chance to back up the opinions you already have with hard evidence.
- Your imagination, powers of interpretation and observation will be stirred. We have showpiece class debates at the end of units which have been very popular this year.
- You will develop skills in essay writing and discussion which will be very useful in other subjects and in the future.
- The Department makes great use of interactive media and resources, like videos, visits out of school and the IT centre.
- It is a great platform from which you can go on to study Philosophy and Ethics at A-Level.

Three-Dimensional Studies

Head of Department: J. H. Bournon

The Three Dimensional Studies course, which is part of the Art syllabus and taught by the Head of Department, embraces the disciplines of sculpture, drawing and architectural design. This is a very practical course devoted entirely to the making of sculpture. However, all the sculptors will develop their drawing skills by keeping a sketchbook in which they record and visualize the ideas for their work. They will also study aspects of the history of sculpture as a related contextual activity to inform their work. The first year of the GCSE course is tailored to the natural talents of the members of the group and encourages the ambitious development of ideas through the projects. The second year is devoted entirely to the self-directed work of the pupil. Over the past few years many Lower School and Sixth Form artists have made sculpture that has referred to architecture for its shape and design. Some have subsequently used the work for their portfolio submissions to gain entry to Art School and university architectural courses. Recently Reptonians have taken up three dimensional Art and Architectural places at Glasgow School of Art, Kingston University, Bath, Newcastle, The Architectural Association and the Bartlett School of Architecture, London University.

The Art Department has set up links with the Faculty of Architecture and the Built Environment at Nottingham University. A programme of reciprocal visits is planned with the tutors and students from the University.