



INTRODUCTION

The time has come for Year 10 pupils to choose the subjects they wish to study for GCSE examinations in June 2014.

Larne Grammar School aims to provide a broad and balanced curriculum which meets the requirements of the Revised Curriculum but, most importantly, addresses the needs and aspirations of our pupils.

This booklet provides details of each of the GCSE subjects on offer together with information about the choices available and the way in which different subjects are made available to pupils.

A booklet, of course, cannot contain all the possible information a parent or pupil may require. We hope, therefore, that you will be able to attend our Year 10 Parents' Evening on Tuesday 14th February where you will have an opportunity to discuss these important decisions with relevant members of staff.

Choices made now will also determine the structure of the timetable for next year; therefore it is important to ensure that the GCSE subject choice form is returned by **Monday 27th February**. It should also be noted that timetabling structures may not permit changes to subjects at a later date.

Making Decisions

How do you make a decision?

Over the last few months the importance of knowledge and information in the decision-making process has been emphasised in the Employability classes.

- Do you have a career in mind?
- Are there specific subjects which you should choose at *A level* for this career?
- Do you have in mind a third level (university) course?
- Where do you see your strengths lying in terms of the different parts of the school curriculum?

Many pupils will base their decisions on whether they enjoy the subject or not.

No one can predict the future trends in employment and opportunity, and so a balance of courses is recommended. We would encourage you to choose a variety of courses to avoid disappointment in the future – unless you have a clear career goal in mind.

Choose those courses which will motivate you and courses which you will enjoy.

Are some courses more valuable than others?

Teachers would say 'No' and some employers would say 'Yes'. The most important aspect of present-day education is to provide the necessary skills and knowledge base for pupils to pursue a productive career path. The breadth of the courses on offer should ensure that you can do that.

What about spare time activities?

Years 11 and 12 should be a time for learning and a time for experiencing new things. Time management will be very important in the next few years.

What part can parents/guardians play?

Parents and guardians know their children best and therefore have a key role to play in the decision making process.

Research has shown that most children will turn to their parents for advice and support during this period in their lives.

General advice for choosing subjects

Choose subjects which:-

- (a) You are good at,
- (b) You like best,
- (c) You find interesting,
- (d) You need for your future career,
- (e) The method of assessment suits you.

Avoid choosing subjects because:-

- (a) Your friends are choosing them.
- (b) You 'like' the teacher. (You may have a different teacher in Year 11),
- (c) You can't think of anything else,
- (d) You have been told that it is 'easy'.

Careers Guidance Available

Careers Lessons

All Year 10 students receive career lessons in employability. If students have any queries, they may consult their class teacher during these lessons or a member of the Careers Department at any time. Parents wishing to discuss issues or seek information about their child's career choice are invited to contact the Careers Coordinator– Mrs R Cooper or Assistant Careers Coordinator Ms P Weir.

Use of Carers Room and Library

What resources are there?

- Magazines: a wide range of magazines exist covering general topics (Careers and Higher Education) for school leavers at 16 and 18 as well as publications from the armed services.
- Prospectuses: at present, there is a mixture of prospectuses from English, Scottish, Welsh, Northern Irish and the Republic of Ireland universities.
- Information on related careers has been placed in box files on the shelves in the main careers room.
- Information from universities on specific courses has been placed in box files on the shelves of the office in the careers suite.
- GAP: a range of material exists on the various opportunities available for taking a year out prior to university entry.

When can students use the Careers Room and Library?

If students are interested in looking at the resources in the careers room, they may come at registration time.

Many of the resources in the careers rooms are also available in the library which is open at all normal library hours.

Internet Resources

Many resources are now available online. Students will have had some time in school to access these resources but it would be strongly recommended that they also consult them at home.

Below is a list of some useful websites:

- www.careersviceni.com – an excellent website that has online questionnaires to match students with careers and provides a wealth of information on what is involved in different careers. It also provides contacts for apprenticeships.
- www.careersa-z.co.uk – this website provides information on different jobs.
- www.ucas.com – UCAS is the organisation through which students apply for university education in the UK. Students will be able to find out course requirements for different degree courses.
- University own websites – by looking at a university's own website students will be able to find detailed information on course requirements for that institution.

- www.apprenticeships.org.uk – provides information on organisations that are offering apprenticeships throughout the UK.
- www.prospects.ac.uk – this website provides much information on employment prospects with different degree courses.
- www.unistats.co.uk – This website is useful for those considering a university education. It compares entry requirements between different institutions and also provides information on what graduates with different degrees and from various universities are doing once they have left university.
- www.dfes.gov.uk/qualifications - Information on qualifications.

Exam boards – It may be useful to look at the specifications of various subjects by going to the exam board’s website. Most subjects that are studied in this school are produced by AQA and CCEA exam boards.

AQA (Assessment and
Qualifications Alliance)
www.aqa.org.uk

CCEA (Northern Ireland Council
for the Curriculum, Examinations
and Assessments)
www.ccea.org.uk

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS FOR SPECIFIC UNIVERSITY COURSES

(based on 2012 entry)

Please use this information as a guide only, as different universities will have different entry requirements. It is also impossible to cover all courses thus it is imperative that good quality research is carried out by students.

ACCOUNTANCY/FINANCE

- GCSE Maths at grade B is usually essential e.g. QUB, Liverpool John Moores, Sheffield, Nottingham, Ulster.
- Some will ask for AL Maths, QUB does not.
- 2012 entry grades ranged from AAA for Accounting in QUB to AAA - AAB for Ulster.

*To do Accountancy it isn't essential to be a brilliant mathematician but you do have to be numerate and enjoy working with figures and to exact detail.

ARCHITECTURE

- This course demands high entry requirements and that is reflected in GCSE requirements: most universities will be looking for subjects which are A or B at GCSE. Some will specify high attainment in Maths, Art or Physics at GCSE.
- An ideal combination of AL subjects would be Maths, Art and Physics.
- Some universities will clearly require some combination of Art, Maths and Physics e.g. Bath, Nottingham, whilst others may show a preference for Art and Maths e.g. QUB.
- Other universities will require an Art portfolio on interview e.g. Cambridge while others do not specify AL subjects e.g. Newcastle, Liverpool.
- 2012 entry were ABB at QUB and BBB at Ulster.
- A' level Maths is a requirement for some universities, while for others it is not. However, it certainly would be a useful subject to have.

COMPUTING/I.T.

- Many universities will require an A or B in GCSE Maths e.g. QUB, Leeds, Liverpool, Warwick.
- Some university Computing courses will require AL Maths and perhaps a science e.g. Durham, Nottingham, York, QUB.
- IT courses may only specify GCSE Maths.
- 2012 entry was BBB for Computer Science at QUB and BBB at Ulster.
- Both QUB and Ulster now offer Computer Games Development as a course.
- Be aware that ICT at GCSE and 'A' level is very different from Computer Science.

DIETETICS

- A strong GCSE portfolio is required.
- Some universities will specify two Science subjects at A level, of which Chemistry may be preferable
- 2012 entry ranged from BBB at Ulster to BCC at Coventry
- The University of Ulster now requires applicants in this subject to sit an aptitude test (HPAT). This development has allowed the university to lower some of its grades in this health-related area.
- Work experience is very important for this career.

DENTISTRY

- For such a heavily subscribed course, all universities are looking for high grades (A or A*) at GCSE. QUB is requiring 5A*s and 4As as the minimum requirement at GCSE.
- Some universities require all 3 sciences at GCSE. Other universities are happy to accept Biology and Chemistry as the only science GCSE subjects e.g. Edinburgh and Newcastle.
- 2012 entry at QUB was AAA + A(AS), of which an A was expected in Chemistry and from either Biology, Maths, or Physics. The third A level subject may be any other suitable academic subject.
- It is important that students are realistic when considering this as a career as academic requirements are high and it will only be the top few students in a year group who will meet the entrance requirements.

ENGINEERING

- AL Maths and Physics essential for any aspect of Engineering.
- 2012 entry was AAB in MEng and BBB in BEng at QUB (Maths and 1 science essential) and BBB at MEng and BBC at BEng at Ulster.

FORENSIC SCIENCE

- A strong GCSE performance in Maths and science required.
- Some universities will require AL Chemistry alongside another science (usually Biology).
- This is a degree that is popular but job opportunities do not match the number of graduates.

LAW

- For the top courses, good GCSE grades (A or A*) are essential. Recently QUB began looking at GCSE results in order to choose candidates for its oversubscribed course.
- Most courses will not specify particular AL subjects, unless the course is Law with a foreign language.
- 2012 entry were AAA from QUB and AAB at Ulster.

MEDICINE

- Very high GCSE grades required by all Medical Schools. QUB will be looking for a minimum of 5A* and 4As at GCSE. Edinburgh University stated that the average applicant is offering 6A* at GCSE and the top one third between 8* and 11 A*.
- Chemistry essential alongside Biology at AL. The third A level may be another science subject (some universities prefer this) or any other suitable academic subject.
- 2012 entry was AAA + A (AS) at QUB.
- The majority of universities now require applicants to sit an aptitude test (either the BMAT or UKCAT).
- Some universities require all 3 sciences at GCSE . Other universities are happy to accept Biology and Chemistry as the only science GCSE subjects e.g. Edinburgh and Newcastle.
- Some would prefer a non-science as the third subject.
- It is important that students are realistic when considering this as a career as academic requirements are high and it will only be the top few students in a year group who will meet the entrance requirements.

NURSING

- At GCSE, Ulster will be looking for grade B and above in Maths and science.
- Some universities will specify a science at AL (particularly Biology) while others may have it as a preference or not specify any subjects.
- 2012 entry ranged from BBC at Ulster to BC/CCD if AL Biology or Chemistry was offered OR CCC for all other AL subjects at QUB.

PHARMACY

- A strong GCSE portfolio is required.
- AL Chemistry essential along with another science.
- 2012 entry ranged from AAB at QUB (including Chemistry and another science) and AAB at Ulster (including Chemistry) to ABB at Robert Gordon.

PHYSIOTHERAPY

- This is a very popular course which will require a strong GCSE portfolio.
- Some universities will specify sciences, particularly Biology while others will see them as a preference.
- The University of Ulster now requires applicants in this subject to sit an aptitude test (HPAT). This development has allowed the university to lower some of its grades in this health-related area.
- Examples for 2012 entry was BBB at Ulster (requiring 1 science AL), ABB at Northumbria and BBB at Glasgow Caledonian.

PSYCHOLOGY

- Most universities looking for good Maths and science grades at GCSE.
- A few courses will specify AL subjects but most ask for science as preferred or have no set subjects.
- This is a popular course which is oversubscribed at QUB. 2012 entry ranged from ABB at QUB to BBB at Ulster.
- Psychology is a science and requires both scientific and mathematical ability.

SPEECH THERAPY

- A strong GCSE portfolio is required.
- Some universities will specify a science AL e.g. Sheffield and London while others will not for Speech Therapy.
- 2012 entry for Speech Therapy ranged from an AAB in Manchester to BBB in Ulster.
- The University of Ulster now requires applicants in this subject to sit an aptitude test (HPAT). This development has allowed the university to lower some of its grades in this health-related area.
- Work experience is very important for this career.

OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY

- A strong GCSE portfolio is required.
- For Occupational Therapy, some will require a science e.g. Sheffield Hallam, others prefer science (particularly Biology) e.g. East Anglia, while others have no clear preference e.g. Ulster.
- 2012 entry for Occupational Therapy at Ulster was BBB.
- Work experience is very important for this career.

SOCIAL WORK

- Most universities will have no set subjects
- 2012 entry; QUB required ABB and Ulster required BBB.
- Applicants must have experience in employment or voluntary work of a social nature.

SPORTS STUDIES/SCIENCE

- A good GCSE portfolio is required.
- These are high demand courses and consequently the grades demanded will be high. Also, some sort of representative honours at Ulster level will be helpful.
- Courses which are Sports Science may require science AL, particularly Biology e.g. Heriot-Watt, Edinburgh. Others may not specify e.g. Ulster.
- In 2012 entry into Sports Studies at Ulster was AAB.

VETERINARY MEDICINE

- A very strong GCSE performance necessary (A*) as there are only seven universities offering this course and they are heavily subscribed.
- Chemistry essential alongside 2 other choices from Science and Maths.
- Most universities require all 3 sciences at GCSE.
- 2012 entry ranged from AAA to the lowest of BBB (a pre-vet course).
- Some would prefer a non-science as the third subject.

TEACHER TRAINING COLLEGES

- Local training colleges are Stranmillis University College, St Mary's University College, both of which are affiliated to QUB. Students will be expected at A2 level to offer at least one National curriculum subject which is taken as a Main subject e.g. at Primary level they range from Art and Design, English, History, Maths and Science; at Secondary level, Business Studies to Technology.
- In 2012 Stranmillis had one of the highest requirements for English/Maths/History etc. at AAB.
- **Some Universities (particularly Scottish) require English Literature at GCSE or A level or both.**

CONCLUSION

Even at this stage of school, it is important for pupils to think ahead in terms of the subjects they may wish to do at AS/AL. Certainly for some courses, choosing specific GCSEs will be important now. Also, increasingly it seems that performance at GCSE is used as a criterion when deciding upon applications to university courses.

The grades required for particular courses reflect their popularity and cause them to be oversubscribed. Therefore, their grades will be higher than other courses. It is important that pupils begin to think of this now and be aware not only of the subjects they need to take at AS but the grades which may be required in the future.

Compulsory **Subjects**

Double Award Science

Overview

All pupils are required to study a balanced science curriculum until the end of Year 12. All our pupils are prepared for the higher level, Double Award Science (non-modular) syllabus. The pupils study Biology, Chemistry and Physics and the combined time spent on these subjects will use the time of two GCSE subjects and hence they are awarded two grades. The marks achieved from the 3 exams and coursework are averaged and allows the pupils to achieve A*A*, AA, BB, CC etc.

Course Content

The main topics covered in Chemistry are:

Atomic Structure and Bonding, Electrolysis, Solids, Liquids and Gases, Elements, compounds and mixtures, Useful products from metal ores and rocks, Acids, Bases and Salts, Chemical Change, Reactivity Series, Equations, Quantitative Chemistry, Rates of Reaction, The Periodic Table, Metals and their Compounds, Non-Metals and their Compounds, Water and Organic Chemistry.



The main topics covered in Biology are:

- Life and living processes – plant and animal structure from single cells to complex systems.
- Environment – relationship between plants and animals and their environment.
- Variation – study of DNA and inheritance.

The main topics covered in Physics are:

Electricity, forces, motion, radiation, light and sound.

Coursework/Assessment

- Theory papers sat in May/June 2013. Two in Biology, Two in Chemistry and Two in Physics. Each subject is worth 25% of the total mark.
- Three practical investigations (one in Biology, one in Chemistry and one in Physics) carried out during the two years of study. Overall the practical assessment is worth 25% of the total marks.

Teaching Methods

Detailed course notes are provided for all GCSE students. Teaching methods include whole class teaching, group work, active learning tasks, discussion, personal research, use of ICT, creative activities and role play. The theory is supported by many practical investigations and fieldwork is carried out in the school grounds. A programme of homework and tests, all compiled from past examination questions, is used to help teachers and pupils assess understanding and learning.

Course Content

Science is essential for many careers. Please seek specialist advice from your individual Chemistry, Biology and Physics teachers.



English Language

Overview

Clear, accurate communication is the goal of English at GCSE and this will involve developing and enhancing pupils' skills of talking and listening, reading and writing.

English at GCSE builds on the knowledge, understanding and skills developed within Key Stage 3. A course based on this specification will also facilitate the study of English and related subjects at a more advanced level.

Course Content

The course is built around three pieces of Controlled Assessment: *The study of Spoken Language; The Study of Written Language and Writing Creatively*. These, together with two examinations in which Personal Writing, Reading Multi-Modal Texts, Functional Writing and Reading Non-Fiction are assessed, form the core of our study.

Assessment

The two year course prepares students for an exam which consists of two papers:

Paper 1 (1 hour 30 minutes: 20%)

Section A: Personal Writing

Section B: Reading Multi-Modal Texts

Paper 2 (1 hour 30 minutes: 20%)

Section A: Functional Writing

Section B: Reading-Non Fiction

Speaking and Listening will be worth 20% and the other three pieces of Controlled Assessment will be worth a further 40%.

Teaching Methods

We will employ whole class teaching, group work, paired discussion, pupil presentations, role play and ICT.

Careers and Further Study

Jobs as varied as law, journalism, publishing, consultancy, teaching, broadcasting and librarian are just a few of the areas that an English degree can help you enter. The skills acquired – of articulacy in spoken and written language, problem solving, an understanding of team-work, are all much prized in the world of work.

Mathematics

Overview

Mathematics is a compulsory subject at GCSE and we follow the CCEA Specification. It is a subject that opens doors and provides opportunities: doors to employment and further/higher education courses. The study of Mathematics can develop a host of skills that are essential to students continuing in their studies as well as those entering the workplace. These include problem solving, logic and reasoning and attention to detail.

Course Content

GCSE Mathematics builds on the knowledge, understanding and skills developed at Key Stage Three under the main areas of study:- Using and Applying Mathematics; Number and Algebra; Shape, Space and Measures and Handling Data.

Assessment

A new specification has been introduced for GCSE Mathematics which has a two-tier entry system. The range of grades available at each tier is set out below.

Level	Grade Available
Foundation	G, F, E, D, C
Higher	D, C, B, A, A*

Pupils who study the Higher Level course will sit either paper T3 or T4 followed by completion paper T6. Pupils who study the Foundation Level course will sit either paper T1 or T2 followed by completion paper T5.

The new two-tier system will not contain coursework.

Teaching Methods

Year 11 is split into six classes containing approximately 15 – 20 pupils each. The classes follow mainly the same work scheme until the mock examinations in January of Year 12. Decisions are then made on the tier of entry which best suits individual pupils. Teaching methods are similar to those used at KS3.

Careers and Further Study

- Higher Tier GCSE Mathematics is an excellent foundation for studying A level and beyond.
- A level Mathematics is a requirement for most degrees in engineering and product design and sometimes for architecture and computing. Many science degrees ask for two Sciences or Mathematics for entry.
- Careers related to mathematics include: actuary, architect, engineer (all types), economic and statistical services, scientific research and development, mathematics teacher, accountant, banking, personal financial services, insurance and IT related careers.

ICT

Overview

Pupils learn about computers and how they are used in the real world. The emphasis is very much on learning what computers can do and using them to solve problems, rather than focusing on how computers work. There is a lot of practical work, with 60% of the final mark being from controlled assessment..

Course Content

We study the CCEA ICT full course and further information is available on their website www.ccea.org.uk.

There are two main aspects to the course:

Theory – Pupils will examine the various components of a computer system and how they work, what you can do with various computer programs available eg. databases and how computers are used in different applications.

Practical – Pupils will learn how to use the various computer facilities available in school and then use these to produce five pieces of controlled assessment. The five pieces of controlled assessment involve spreadsheets, databases,, PowerPoint, website design (including graphic manipulation) and games development.

The course has been running for a year and a half and pupils enjoy the large practical element.

Assessment

The five coursework elements form 60% of the final mark. The theory is assessed in one two hour examination paper, worth 40%. The paper will involve some elements related to practical work.

Teaching Methods

In theory pupils are given notes specifically written for the CCEA course. PowerPoint presentations will be used for nearly all topics and a lot of effort has gone in to producing a variety of tasks to help reinforce the ideas required for the theory examination. Homeworks will generally be set at the end of each topic. Additional notes on practical work needed for the theory examinations will be given out prior to each examination.

For practical work both handouts and PowerPoint presentations will be used, with pupils also given individual help on a frequent basis. Specific tasks have been developed to help pupils learn the skills required to perform well in controlled assessment.

Careers and Further Study

This course provides valuable practical experience in using the Microsoft Office package and this will be useful in almost any future career or study experience. The course also provides very valuable background material for studying ICT at A level and is of some use in preparing pupils for A level Computing.

Optional **Subjects**

You must select 4 of these subjects.

Additional Mathematics

Overview

The Additional Mathematics course is more demanding than GCSE Mathematics. It is an interesting and enjoyable course for those who achieve good results in Mathematics and find the subject challenging and satisfying. It is essential that pupils who choose to study Additional Mathematics enjoy the subject as they will spend a greater percentage of their time on Mathematics. We would not recommend Additional Mathematics as a choice for pupils who consistently achieve lower than average marks. Ideally, pupils should be appearing regularly in the top third of the class in Mathematics examinations. Anyone interested in the study of Additional Mathematics should speak to their Mathematics teacher for advice.

Course Content

The subject content is divided into two main sections: Pure Mathematics and Applied Mathematics. Applied Mathematics is further divided into Mechanics and Statistics.

Pure Mathematics continues the study of algebra and trigonometry beyond the requirement of GCSE Higher Tier. It also introduces some new topics: E.g. Logarithms and Calculus.

Mechanics is a branch of Mathematics that is introduced for the first time in this subject. It introduces the concept of a vector and considers two examples of vector quantities (force and displacement) that can help explain what happens in the world about us.

Statistics develops concepts introduced in Handling Data in GCSE Mathematics and introduces two new topics: Time Series and Bivariate Analysis.

Assessment

There are two written papers. Each lasts two hours and carries a maximum mark of 100. Paper 1 addresses Pure Mathematics.

Paper 2 addresses Applied Mathematics. There are equal numbers of questions addressing Mechanics (50 marks) and Statistics (50 marks).

There is no coursework requirement in GCSE Additional Mathematics.

Teaching Methods

There is usually one Additional Mathematics class. The content of the Pure Mathematics course tends to be taught in Year 11 with Mechanics and Statistics in Year 12.

Careers and Further Study

- Additional Mathematics is beneficial for the study of A level Mathematics and beyond but is not a requirement.
- Students with a qualification in A level Mathematics have experienced success in further and higher education as well as careers in accountancy, finance, statistics, computer programming, engineering, medicine, psychology, dentistry and teaching among others.

Art and Design

Overview

GCSE Art and Design will provide a natural progression for pupils who have enjoyed Art and Design at Key Stage 3. They will continue to develop skills of communication and using ICT. The course also provides opportunities to develop their skills in problem solving, self management and working with others. The study of art and design promotes and enriches students' overall educational experience by presenting them with stimulating and challenging practical work in both 2 D and 3 Dimensions. This includes drawing, painting, graphic design, printmaking, textiles, lens-based media, 3D design, Sculpture and Ceramics and Critical and contextual studies. The aims of the course will encourage students to develop (1) intellectual, imaginative creative and intuitive powers; (2) investigative, analytical, experimental, practical, technical and expressive skill, aesthetic understanding and critical judgement. Interest and enjoyment are central to the aim of study.

Course Content

Students are required to complete two units. Unit 1: The Core Portfolio. This unit covers the core skills of visual language, media, materials, techniques and new technology. A portfolio reflecting the breadth and depth of experience in art and design gained in the course. (See overview)

Unit 2 is an externally set examination called Working to a Stimulus.

Assessment

All students work is internally marked and externally moderated by CCEA in the summer term.

Course Structure: Year 11 & 12 (Total of four terms). The portfolio coursework component contributes 60% of total GCSE Level. The edited portfolio consisting of no more than 20xA2 sheets and one activity that is fully realised.

In February, Unit 2: Working to a Stimulus examination paper is released and contributes the remaining 40%. Students will have approximately 6 – 8 weeks (a minimum of 15 hours) to produce preparation work and 10 hours to produce a final outcome in 2D or 3D. There are four assessment objectives:

AO1: Develop their ideas through sustained and focused investigations.

AO2: Refine their ideas, through experimenting.

AO3: Record ideas, observations and insights relevant to their intentions in visual forms 2D/3D.

AO4: Present a personal response in any combination of media.

NEW – All pupils have the opportunity to achieve additional vocational qualifications in specialist areas with the introduction of CCEA level 2 Creative Crafts, where 6 pathways are currently being offered. This qualification is in addition to CCEA GCSE Art and Design.

We are delighted to report the huge success of these qualifications achieved from January 2011 – January 2012. Painting and Drawing skills – 22; Mixed Crafts Skills – 5; Fashion Skills – 13; Textile Skills – 5; Ceramic Skills – 2; Pottery – 2. In total 49 pupils have gained this qualification.

Teaching Methods

Much of the curriculum time is devoted to practical work. A variety of teaching methods used include; note taking, whole class teaching, paired and group work, discussion, personal research, collaborative work, investigation, use of ICT and design and experimentation using a variety of media. Visits to galleries and museums.

Careers & Further Study

There is a breadth of Art and Design courses available of which a Foundation course is the usual requirement for entry. BA Honours courses would include Fine Art, Fashion Design, Graphic Design and Multi Media, Illustration, Interior design, Photography and Digital Imaging, Textile Design, Product Design, Architecture Studies (also Landscape Architecture), Ceramics and Sculpture. A2 level Art and Design would be a desirable entry qualification. Other courses include History of Art, conservation and museum restoration work.

Business Studies

Overview

No matter how young or old everyone is affected by the activities of business and Government.

Business Studies helps students understand more about how and why businesses operate in the way that they do. Students are able to relate what they study to everyday activities, such as purchasing goods, and the news reported in the media.

Business Studies can open up a wide range of opportunities for further learning. As well as developing students' knowledge and understanding of the world of business. This course helps students develop a range of skills such as: **decision making; interpreting and managing information; and devising solutions to problems and issues.**

The results achieved by candidates in the Business Studies department are consistently among the best in the school, with students of this subject frequently achieving results within the top three places in Northern Ireland.

Course Content

The CCEA GCSE Business Studies specification includes two units.

- Unit 1: Business Start Up includes three sections, **Business Start Up** (which contains ownership, sources of finance, business aims, stakeholders, customers, resources and entrepreneurs), **Production** (which contains types and methods of production, quality and Health and Safety) and **Marketing** (which contains market research and the marketing mix).
- Unit 2: Business Development includes four sections, **Finance** (which contains cash flow, ratios and break-even), **Managing People** (which contains recruitment, selection and developing people), **Business Growth** (which contains business success and failure, growth, international business and e-commerce) and **Business Plan**.

For more information visit: www.ccea.org.uk

Assessment

- Unit 1 is a written examination lasting 1 hour 20 minutes and represents **35%** of the total course weighting.
- Unit 2 is a written examination lasting 1 hour and 40 minutes and represents **40%** of the total course weighting. This unit will be taken by students at the end of year 12.
- Controlled Assessment – students will complete one task from a range of tasks released in September of year 12. This represents **25%** of the course.

Teaching Methods

A variety of teaching methods and resources are used to deliver the course such as case studies, investigations, simulations, DVDs and industrial visits, for example to Tayto; it is also likely that GCSE Business Studies students will have the opportunity to participate in a mini company programme. Much learning is also based on discussion and debates on recent, topical business and Government events and actions.

A major focus when preparing candidates for GCSE Business Studies is on the key assessment objectives and examination technique. As such ample training is provided to build the skills required.

Careers & Further Study

Business Studies is a very flexible qualification. It can aid many further and higher education courses in areas such as Accountancy, Business Studies, Economics, Marketing, Law, Finance, Management and many others. We have had many students who have studied A Level Business Studies and followed a diverse range of career paths. Some examples include Dentistry, Medicine, Engineering, Agriculture, Teaching and Physiotherapy to name a few.

Classic Civilisation

Overview

Classical Civilisation (Short Course) has been introduced:

- For those pupils who choose Religious Education from the option blocks.
- So that these pupils will also have 9.5 GCSE qualifications to maintain parity with those who choose 9 subjects and also sit a GCSE in RE Short Course.
- Because it relates well to the AS Religious Education module on the Christian Church in the Roman World

Course Content

The Classical Civilisation module followed focuses on Social Life in Rome in the 1st century AD. Students will study the daily life of Romans including slavery, family relationships, roles of men, women and children, education, religion of the Romans and Roman entertainment eg gladiatorial shows, the Roman baths etc. Students will study sources in the form of writings, pictures etc..

This subject also compares life for the Romans with life in the UK today to which all pupils will be able to easily make a contribution.

Assessment

Students will be assessed regularly when completing each sub topic. The formal assessment will be a written paper at the end of Year 12 and Controlled Assessment which will be completed in Year 12 under controlled conditions. The grade achieved at GCSE will count as points to return to Year 13 consistent with the points for RE Short Course.

Teaching Methods

The class will be taught using a variety of teaching methods such as whole class teaching, group work, research, ICT and power point presentation to name a few. Ideally a trip to Rome would be our aim but this would depend on several different factors but is presently under consideration.

Careers and Further Study

We would encourage students who have enjoyed the RE and Classical Civilisation course to pursue their studies at AS and A2 levels.

The skills, abilities and knowledge gained from this course of study will be vitally useful for further study and should add to the pupils understanding of the society into which Christianity was born.

Courses and professions which would benefit from this subject are many and varied as per Religious Education and History.

English Literature

Overview

To be successful in work and life you need many skills: to understand and respect people and cultural differences; to gain and retain knowledge and the ability to read critically while developing skills of evaluation. These, together with shaping and supporting an argument, are the stuff of English Literature.

Although English Literature is not compulsory in Larne Grammar School we believe the majority of pupils would benefit from taking this subject. GCSE English Literature is an excellent preparation for English Literature at AS level and it is recommended that pupils take the subject at GCSE if they intend to continue with it beyond this level. English Literature has always proved to be a popular choice at A level in its own right but now, with the advent of AS levels, there is the added possibility of using English Literature to complement a mainly science orientated course.

Course Content

Three areas are studied for the exam: drama, poetry and prose. The texts we have chosen include: 'To Kill a Mockingbird', 'Animal Farm', 'Dancing at Lughnasa', 'All My Sons', 'Blood Brothers' and a poetry anthology.

The selection of texts has proved enjoyable, relevant and enlightening.

Assessment

Examinations are taken in June of Year 12 and are worth 75% of the final GCSE mark. The single piece of Controlled Assessment, the Study of Linked Texts, is worth 25%.

There are two examinations:

Study of Prose: 1 hour (25%)

Study of Drama and Poetry: 2 hours (50%)

Teaching Methods

We will employ whole class teaching, group work, paired discussion, pupil presentation, role play and ICT. We will also make every effort to take pupils to the theatre to see productions of their drama text.

Careers

English Literature A levels have always been highly regarded and a degree in this subject is viewed similarly. Jobs as varied as law, journalism, consultancy, teaching, broadcasting and librarian are just a few of the areas that an English degree can help you enter.

Note that GCSE English Literature is a requirement for degrees in education at many Scottish universities and colleges.

French

Overview

Studying a Modern Language is no longer compulsory at Larne Grammar School. However, it is hoped that students will realise the benefits, advantages and many career opportunities that arise from having a qualification in another language.

At GCSE level, students should derive enjoyment and benefit from language learning and be inspired, moved and changed by following a broad, coherent, satisfying and worthwhile course of study. The course also aims to encourage students to recognise that their linguistic knowledge, understanding and skills help them to take their place in a multilingual, global society.



Course Content

Following on from the Curriculum Objectives at Key Stage 3, the course at GCSE has been divided into three contexts for learning. Context 1: The individual – a focus on students' lives, homes and interests, and those of others in the target language country. Context 2: Citizenship – a focus on lifestyles, attitudes and customs in both the home and target language countries. Context 3: Employability – a focus on education and employment in both the home and target language countries.

Assessment

Candidates will be assessed in the four communication skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing. The assessment of the speaking and writing elements of the course, which constitute 30% each, will be controlled; students will prepare and complete two tasks for each under supervision. The reading and listening elements of the course, which constitute 15% each, will consist of one externally assessed written paper for each; pupils can be entered for Higher or Foundation tier for these papers.

Teaching Methods

The French course incorporates a variety of teaching methods including paired work, use of ICT, listening exercises, reading comprehensions and written work. Pupils will also have the opportunity to meet with the Foreign Language Assistant; such time spent with the native speaker of the language will develop the pupils' ability to communicate more effectively and confidently in the target language.

Careers & Further Study

The course has been designed to provide a suitable foundation for further study and/or practical use of the language, as well as a coherent, satisfying and worthwhile course of study for students who do not progress to further study in the subject. Career paths taken with the study of a Modern Language include: interpreting, translating, diplomatic work, teaching, international business, journalism, immigration and customs, international sales, voluntary service overseas and many more.



Geography

Overview

Switch on your television, listen to the radio or pick up a newspaper and the environment seems to be top of everyone's agenda. We are constantly bombarded with facts and figures relating to the need for energy conservation and climate change. The study of Geography involves the synthesis of facts, figures, ideas and perspectives to help us understand and protect the world we live in. By studying geography students learn about important contemporary issues such as global warming, desertification, deforestation, loss of biodiversity, contrasts in economic development and natural disasters.

Course content

The course consists of two theory papers and a piece of controlled fieldwork assessment.

- Theory Module 1 – Understanding Our Natural World.
This paper is divided into three themes: The dynamic landscape, our changing weather and climate, and the restless earth.
- Theory Module 2 – Living In Our World.
This paper is divided into three themes: People and where they live, contrasts in world development and managing our resources.
- Controlled Fieldwork - This is focused on the production of an investigation into the characteristics of the Glenarm River.

Assessment

Each theory module is assessed by a written paper lasting 1 hour 30 minutes. The controlled fieldwork is assessed through the production of a 2000 word report.

Each theory paper is worth 37.5% of the final marks with the fieldwork report worth 25% of the final mark.

Teaching methods

The increased flexibility in the Revised GCSE Geography specification has allowed the Geography Department to adopt active learning and teaching methodologies. This allows the teachers to develop each pupil's skills and abilities concurrently with their knowledge and understanding. This approach actively engages students in their learning and makes learning a more relevant, enjoyable and motivational experience.

Careers & further study

Geography is a requirement for the study of A level Geography and the latter is accepted for the university study of numerous subjects including Accountancy, Finance, Business and Management, Dentistry, Law, Engineering and Medicine. Related careers include cartographer, landscape architect, town planner, civil engineer, and careers in travel and tourism.

Geography is an adaptable subject and is in the unique position of qualifying as an arts or science subject at university. This makes it an ideal additional A level to core career subjects.

Home Economics

Overview

GCSE Home Economics will be of interest to pupils who enjoy practical cookery and the study of food and nutrition. Students learn about the inter-relationships between diet, health, family, home and choice and the management of resources. Home Economics gives a valuable insight into:

- what's in the food we eat everyday;
- how to plan and cook nutritious and economical meals;
- the importance of good nutrition and health; and
- the role of the consumer in modern eating patterns.



Course Content

The course is contained in three units:

Unit 1: Diet and Health, and Consumer Awareness

Students learn about food and how to provide healthy diets for family members at different stages of life. Special diets and Dietary disorders are studied as well as how to keep food safe. Students have opportunities to learn how to be discerning consumers and effective managers of resources.

Unit 2: Diet and Health (Controlled Assessment)

Unit 3: Consumer Awareness (Controlled Assessment)

Further information: http://www.ccea.org.uk/home_economics/

Assessment

40% written examination, 60% school based controlled assessment.

Unit 1: Examination. 1hour 30mins.

Unit 2: Diet and Health, 40% controlled assessment. This includes research and a cookery practical involving planning, preparing and cooking at least three dishes.

Unit 3: Consumer Awareness, 20% controlled assessment.

Teaching Methods

Teaching methods include whole class teaching, group work, discussion, personal research and use of ICT. Detailed course notes are provided and theory is supported by practical cookery lessons

Careers and further study.

GCSE Home Economics is a valuable foundation for A level Home Economics. Home Economics is useful for courses such as dietician, food technologist, food science, physiotherapy, teaching and social work.

History

Overview

GCSE History is interesting and enjoyable, a subject for those with an inquiring mind.

We use the examination provided by CCEA. This specification gives students opportunities to explore key political, economic and social events that have helped shape today's institutions, governments and societies.

Course Content and Assessment

History students take GCSE History at the Higher Tier level; it is for students who wish to achieve a grade A*–D. Students must complete three units of study.



Unit 1, Study in Depth: This is externally assessed in a 2 hour examination. The paper has two sections and is worth 50% of the final grade. Section A assesses through the use of short structured questions the work on Germany, 1914-1941, and Section B in a similar manner assesses Peace, War and Neutrality: Britain, Northern Ireland and Ireland and the Second World War 1932-1949.

- **Unit 2, Outline Study:** The Unit 2 Outline Study is The Cold War 1945-1991. This is externally assessed in a 1 hour 15 minute examination at the end of Year 12 and is worth 25% of the final grade. The paper requires candidates to answer 2 questions. The first one is based on sources; the other is a piece of extended writing.

- **Unit 3, Investigative Study:** Unit 3 is a controlled assessment (formerly called coursework) that requires students to investigate the treatment of the Jewish Community and apply their historical skills in responding to the controlled assessment task. This will be set by CCEA and marked by teachers. It is worth 25% of the final grade.

Teaching Methods

Staff provide all the material necessary to ensure that course content is covered, and teaching is by whole class teaching, group work, discussion, personal research, etc. as required by the task. Homework tasks based on past examination questions, are used to help teachers and pupils assess understanding and learning.

Careers

History helps you develop an understanding of both past and present. A lack of historical knowledge prevents people from truly understanding the world they live in. History also helps provide you with the skills employers are looking for.

Related careers include those of solicitor, barrister, archaeologist, museum/gallery worker, journalist, media researcher, teacher and diplomat. A good grade in History at A Level and beyond is considered to be evidence of an ability to think and to communicate.

Sport and Physical Education

Overview

GCSE PE is ideally suited to boys and girls who can demonstrate good practical ability in sports, one of which must be a team game. It would be beneficial to play for a school team or have achieved a similar standard by playing regularly for a recognised club outside school. **Any pupil wishing to study GCSE PE will be assessed by the PE Department as to their physical ability before study can commence. In particular candidates must be proficient at volleyball.**

Course Content

Theory: The theory element is very straightforward and covers areas such as designing and implementing training programmes, training methods, the relationship between exercise and health and the study of issues such as drugs, the media and sponsorship.

Practical: Pupils can choose any sports from the recognised list published by AQA. However, all pupils will do volleyball, volleyball officiating and circuit training, meaning they have only to provide one activity themselves. Further information on approved activities can be found at: www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/pe-specifications.php

Double Award PE – there may also be the opportunity to increase the depth of study and receive two GCSEs in PE.

Assessment

- Unit 1 – 1 hour 30 minute written paper worth 40%
- Unit 2 – Assessment of four sports as a participant, umpire or coach worth 60% **Full marks are achievable in this area.**

Last Year 71% of students achieved an A* or A grade

Teaching Methods

The course is taught in a similar fashion to any other GCSE subject. Two fifths of the allocated time is committed to the theoretical areas and three fifths to the practical activities. Students are also expected to be doing a competitive sport and practicing volleyball in their own time. A lot of the classwork is based around the C2K Learning Resources with students accessing lesson notes prior to the lesson taking place.

Careers & Further Study

The GCSE course is an ideal platform to lead into AS and A2 level Physical Education and only in exceptional circumstances would a pupil be allowed to study PE at A level having not done so at GCSE. The Leisure and Tourism industry is one of the biggest employers in Northern Ireland and PE AS/A2 provides an excellent basis for further study in this field. It is also particularly suitable for those wishing to study teaching, leisure management, physiotherapy, psychology or sports development. **PE is not viewed as a lesser subject for University admissions.**

Religious Education

Overview

Religious Education is a statutory subject up to end of Year 12. Studying RE at Larne Grammar is an opportunity to learn new concepts as well as form and develop opinions while listening and learning from the opinions of others.

We, in the RE Department, endeavour to:

- develop the students' interest in and enthusiasm for the study of religion and relate it to the wider world.
- Encourage our students to reflect on and develop their own values, opinions and attitudes
- Enhance the spiritual and moral wellbeing of our students along with their personal, social and cultural development.
- Encourage an attitude of tolerance and respect for others.

Course Content

This course is modular and pupils will study one module entitled 'An Introduction to Christian Ethics'. This will give an opportunity to deal with such issues as relationships, abortion, euthanasia, capital punishment, environment, justice, racism, pacifism and war. The other modules we teach are 'An Introduction to Philosophy' when our students learn about creationism and science, arguments for the existence of God, the problem of evil and suffering, opinions on life after death and the nature of God. The current Year 11 is studying Christianity through Mark's gospel. This involves learning about the identity of Jesus, his parables and miracles but relating these to contemporary equivalents.

Assessment

This course involves NO coursework but is entirely assessed through examination papers. There will be one paper per module.

Those pupils who choose to study only the Short Course will only sit one of the modules.

Those who opt for the Full Course will cover two modules as well as being entered for a Short Course in Classical Civilisation, giving an additional GCSE qualification.

The points awarded to the grades in the Short Course will be half the value of those awarded for the Full Course. ie an A* will count as 2 points for the Short Course and 4 points for the Full Course.

Teaching Methods

These will vary from class to class and teacher to teacher but will involve whole class teaching, group work, personal research, ICT, invited speakers, multi media presentation, debate and class discussion. This is not an exhaustive list.

Careers and Further Study

To continue studying RE at AS level students must have a grade B in their module(s). In exceptional circumstances this criterion may be reconsidered.

The relevance of RE to everyday life and contemporary society cannot be denied. The skills developed and used in RE tie in well with certain other subjects, for example History, English and Modern Languages although different combinations have been seen.

RE is a useful subject for any career involving people and particularly Teaching, Law, Policing, Journalism, Human Resources, Ministry, Anthropology, Youth and Community Work and Social Work.

Spanish

Overview

Studying a Modern Language is no longer compulsory at Larne Grammar School, however it is hoped that students will realise the benefits, advantages and many career opportunities that arise from having a qualification in another language.

At GCSE level, students should derive enjoyment and benefit from language learning, and be inspired, moved and changed by following a broad, coherent, satisfying and worthwhile course of study. The course also aims to encourage students to recognise that their linguistic knowledge, understanding and skills help them to take their place in a multilingual, global society.



Course Content

Following on from the Curriculum Objectives at Key Stage 3, the course at GCSE has been divided into three contexts for learning.

Context 1: The individual – a focus on students' lives, homes and interests and those of others in the target language country.

Context 2: Citizenship – a focus on lifestyles, attitudes and customs in both the home and target language countries.

Context 3: Employability – a focus on education and employment in both the home and target language countries.

Assessment

Candidates will be assessed in the four communication skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. The assessment of the speaking and writing elements of the course, which constitute 30% each, will be controlled; students will prepare and complete two tasks for each, under supervision. The reading and listening elements of the course, which constitute 15% each, will consist of one externally assessed written paper for each; pupils can be entered for Higher or Foundation tier for these papers.



Teaching Methods

The Spanish course incorporates a variety of teaching methods including paired work, use of ICT, listening exercises, reading comprehensions, and written work. Pupils will also have the opportunity to meet with the Foreign Language Assistant; such time spent with the native speaker of the language will develop the pupils' ability to communicate more effectively and confidently in the target language.

Careers & Further Study

The course has been designed to provide a suitable foundation for further study and/or practical use of the language, as well as a coherent, satisfying and worthwhile course of study for students who do not progress to further study in the subject. Career paths taken with the study of a Modern Language include: interpreting, translating, diplomatic work, teaching, international business, journalism, immigration and customs, international sales, voluntary service overseas and many more.

Technology and Design

OVERVIEW

- This course allows pupils to develop transferable skills which will benefit them in vocational training and employment.
- The course will build on the knowledge, skills and understanding of Key Stage 3.
- Technology and Design encourages pupils to develop their skills through design drawings (both formal and informal) and follow this through to the manufacture of products that will incorporate a control system.
- Pupils must be prepared to work independently and collaboratively to develop decision making skills.
- The use of ICT will be an integral part of the course including the use of animated software in the study of electronics, pneumatics and in the use of CAD for development and final presentation of ideas including dimensioned working drawings.
- Pupils will be required to explore ways in which aesthetic, technical, economic, environmental, ethical and social dimensions interact to shape design and making.
- Pupils will need to analyse existing products and develop practical solutions to needs, wants and opportunities, recognising their impact on quality of life.
- Pupils will be encouraged to develop skills of creativity and critical analysis through making links between existing solutions, technological knowledge and the principles of good design.



COURSE CONTENT

The examining board for the subject is NICCEA. Full details of the specification can be found at <http://www.rewardinglearning.org.uk/support/spec-changes/>

The course is covered through 4 units. Unit 1 covers the subject core and Unit 2 is the Systems and Control element of the course focussing in particular on Electronic and Microelectronic Control Systems.

The third unit is a Design Assignment (coursework); the final unit is a major Design Project (coursework) incorporating Systems Design and Manufacture.

ASSESSMENT

Unit 1 and Unit 2 – each unit is assessed through a one hour examination paper (externally marked) worth a total of 40% of the overall mark.

Unit 3 - set by the teacher, worth 20% and is internally assessed and externally moderated.

Unit 4 - identified by the pupil within the parameters of the subject content. It gains 40% of the final mark and is internally assessed and externally moderated.



TEACHING METHODS

A variety of teaching methods are used from whole class teaching and note taking, personal research, discussion, investigations, designing, use of ICT, use of resources and practical work.

CAREERS & FURTHER STUDY

The GCSE qualification in Technology and Design could lead to the GCE AS/A2 course in Design and Technology or to other courses in the following areas;

Modern Apprenticeships

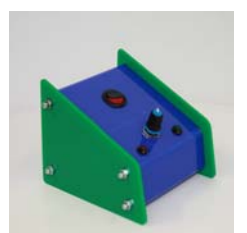
Engineering - electrical/mechanical

Product design

Architectural Courses

Teaching

Other courses where a non specified subject is required.



Music

Overview

GCSE Music provides the opportunity for students to develop their understanding and appreciation of a range of different kinds of music based around three key topics. Students will learn how to analyse and evaluate music, as well as develop creative thinking skills. Throughout the course, students will have the opportunity to extend their own musical interests through performing, composing and listening – the three strands that make up the GCSE music course.



For the performance element of this course, it is not a pre-requisite to have attained graded examination on an instrument. However, any student wishing to study GCSE music should be a competent performer on their chosen instrument or have vocal aptitude. Pupils are advised that weekly lessons must be organised outside the normal school timetable and parents/guardians are responsible for the cost of the instrumental/vocal lesson.

Course Content

The course contains three compulsory components: Composing, Performing, and Listening. The areas of study are wide and incorporate a range of musical styles and genres from c.1650 to the present day.

Assessment

Listening	-	35%	-	Study of 3 areas of study	-	one examination
Performing	-	35%	-	Perform 1 solo and 1 ensemble piece		
Composing	-	30%	-	Create 2 contrasting compositions		

Teaching Methods

Detailed notes and musical scores are provided for all GCSE students. Teaching methods include whole class teaching, group work, discussion, personal research, one to one teaching, use of ICT – namely through composition.

The listening component is taught through analysing live and pre recorded music, notating scores, studying set pieces of music and composers, ranging from Beethoven to Snow patrol. The performance component is taught through lessons with individual musical tutors and also regular practise and performance time. All pupils studying GCSE music are required to be involved in musical groups within the school as this helps to develop both their individual and ensemble performance skills. The composing component is taught largely through one to one time. The pupils will be trained in how to use Sibelius (music composing software) and a majority of the time will be spent using keyboards and then Sibelius to compose. A firm understanding of music notation and theory is a bonus, but not essential, as this will be taught and developed in class. Students will make use of ICT across all areas of musical activity. They will develop knowledge, understanding and skills relating to ICT in present day music making. Regular trips to the theatre are also organised in which pupils can study the performance skills of others and gather inspiration for their own compositions.

Careers and Further Study

Further study options would be AS and A level music, AS and A level performing arts, various courses at Institutes for Further Education to study music, sound engineering, music theatre etc.

Related careers include: Musician (band or orchestral), singer (band, solo, opera, choral), conductor, composer, careers in the recording industry, sound technician, sound engineer, television/radio presenter, television/radio researcher, music teacher, music therapist, arts administrator/manager, music retailer/publisher, actor/actress in musical theatre.

