



LOUGHBOROUGH  
Amherst School



GCSE

Option Choices 2023

# GCSE Choices 2023

## Why do we have GCSE Options?

We are coming up to the time when you need to start making decisions about the future of your education, and in particular, which subjects you would like to continue to study beyond Year 9 and towards GCSEs.

Pupils at Amherst can normally expect to take anything from six to ten GCSEs, depending on aptitude and capacity. There are **core subjects**, which everyone takes, and **optional subjects**, which allow you an element of choice in the balance and overall shape of your GCSE curriculum. In some circumstances, the academic load may be reduced. So, if you are an elite athlete following a recognised pathway to sporting excellence, or if English is not your mother tongue, or if you have a particular learning need that means you need the time to be reallocated, then your timetable will reflect this.

## Core Subjects

Most pupils at Amherst study English, Maths, Science and RS to GCSE. Information about those subjects is given below.

## Choosing your GCSE Options

Optional subjects give you the chance to choose to study those subjects that you find most interesting and enjoyable. We strongly believe that you should experience a range of subjects at GCSE, and so you are asked to choose your provisional options to give you a curriculum that is sufficiently broad to be of both interest and benefit to you.

## Optional Subjects

- Art and Design
- Business
- Computer Science
- Food Preparation and Nutrition
- French
- Geography
- History
- Music
- PE
- Spanish

## The Process of Choosing

If you already have some idea about the sort of career path you would like to follow, look into the entry requirements for that career. Your GCSE choices can have an impact on the A Level choices that you will have, which in turn can have an impact on your future post-18. Find out what you need to know. Speak to the subject teachers, particularly where you are unsure of what the GCSE course entails. Speak to your Form Tutor or to Head of Year for advice, if you are unsure where to begin.

Find out all you think you will need to know about the structure and content of the different GCSE courses, so that you know what you will be letting yourself in for.

When you have decided your preferred choice of subjects, please complete the GCSE Provisional Options Form and indicate your three options. If you have any specific requests that you would like us to consider, such as a reduced allocation of subjects, or if you have a particular interest in key subjects, there is an option to add additional comments to your Options Form.





## The Next Stage

You are asked to let us know your GCSE Provisional Options by completing the form before 09:00 on Monday 30 January. At Amherst, we form the final timetable blocks based on everybody's subject intentions, not the other way around, which means that most pupils are able to be allocated their first choice of subjects. From the information that we have on Monday 30 January, therefore, we will draw up timetable blocks that offer the best fit for the whole Year Group.

Once the GCSE Option Blocks are fixed, we will let you know. We will also let you know if your Option choices cannot be accommodated in good time, so that you have the chance to reconsider and review your choices in the light of the fixed Option Blocks.

### GCSE Provisional Options Form



**Mr Xinhai Lin**  
Assistant Head Academic



## IGCSE English Language and Literature

All pupils at Amherst work towards IGCSEs in English Language and Literature, gaining two separate qualifications.

English Language aims to equip pupils with the communication skills needed for future life and as such focuses on developing competency in reading and writing. Pupils study a variety of non-fiction and fiction texts and undertake both transactional and imaginative writing. The qualification is assessed by means of examination and coursework.

English Literature intends to develop pupils' skills as independent and critical readers. The study of texts such as Steinbeck's *Of Mice and Men* and Priestley's *An Inspector Calls* fosters the ability to explore authorial intent as well as encouraging detailed analysis of how this is conveyed. Assessment is by means of examination and coursework.



## Mathematics IGCSE (Edexcel 4MA1, 9-1)

*"Mathematics is the language with which God has written the universe."*

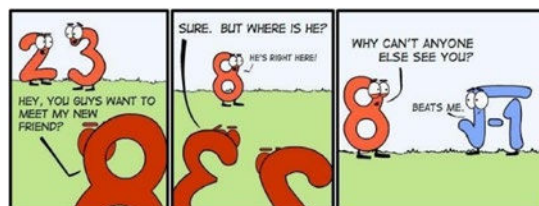
**Galileo**

Mathematics is an essential subject for all students, which has many applications in other areas of study. Edexcel IGCSE Mathematics encourages the development of mathematical knowledge as a key life skill, and provides excellent progression to the Edexcel A Level we offer. This is a fully examined course, through which learners develop not only knowledge and understanding of Mathematics, but also skills in creative thinking, enquiry and problem solving.

### Content

Students will study:

- numbers and the number system
- equations, formulae and identities
- sequences, functions and graphs
- geometry and trigonometry
- vectors and transformation geometry
- statistics and probability



Students should be able to demonstrate mathematical reasoning skills by:

- making deductions and drawing conclusions from mathematical information and drawing conclusions from mathematical information
- constructing chains of reasoning
- presenting arguments and proofs
- interpreting and communicating information accurately

We aim for all students to sit the higher tier examination, allowing them access to the top grades on the 9-1 scale. In some circumstances we may need to support a student by allowing them to sit the foundation tier paper if it is right for them.

### Assessment

#### Higher Curriculum, Grades 9-4

Mathematics A Paper 1H: 2hr examination, 50%

Mathematics A Paper 2H: 2hr examination, 50%

#### Foundation Curriculum, Grades 5-1

Mathematics A Paper 1F: 2hr examination, 50%

Mathematics A Paper 2F: 2hr examination, 50%



Students can use a scientific calculator for both papers (graphical calculators are not allowed). Students have access to a formulae sheet.



## Religious Studies

WJEC Eduqas GCSE grades 9-1: Route B Catholic Christianity and Judaism

Compliant with the requirements of the Bishops' conference of England and Wales.

Three year GCSE starting Year 9.

This is a three-component exam:

**C1. Foundational Catholic Theology:** Theme 1 Origins and Meaning, Theme 2 Good and Evil

**C2. Applied Catholic Theology:** Theme 1 Life and Death, Theme 2 Sin and forgiveness

**C3. Judaism:** Beliefs and teachings and practices

Areas for assessment:

Students need to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of religious beliefs, practices and sources of wisdom, including areas of Religious Art and Music. They need to evaluate and analyse these beliefs and practices and their significance and influence on religion and society.





## Science

You will study all three Sciences as part of the core curriculum, with the course normally leading to either three GCSEs in the Separate Sciences or two GCSEs in Combined Science. The teaching and learning of these courses started in Year 9.

All pupils study the same topics in Years 9 and 10. In Year 11 after consultation with staff, pupils and parents, some pupils will follow the AQA Separate Science route, studying additional topics to achieve three separate GCSEs in Biology, Chemistry and Physics. These additional topics are useful to bridge the gap between GCSE and the A Level Sciences. The rest of the year group will follow the AQA Combined Science route to achieve two GCSEs. Please note, it is still possible to study the Sciences at A Level with two good grades in Combined Science.

The GCSE Science exams have Higher or Foundation papers. For the Separate Sciences, the Higher tier grades range from 4 to 9 and Foundation tier grades range from 1 to 5. For the Combined Science course, the Higher tier will be awarded in the range 4-4 to 9-9 and Foundation tier in the range 1-1 to 5-5.

The AQA Science course covers many topical issues, including climate change, alternative energies, inheritance and variation. Practical work is an important aspect of the course and is tested within each of the two exam papers in each Science.





Loughborough Amherst School  
Gray Street  
Loughborough  
LE11 2DZ

01509 263901  
[amherst.admissions@lsf.org](mailto:amherst.admissions@lsf.org)  
[www.lsf.org/amherst](http://www.lsf.org/amherst)

🐦 @LboroAmherst    📷 @LboroAmherst    📘 @LboroAmherst