



DEUTSCH-SCHWEIZERISCHE INTERNATIONALE SCHULE
GERMAN SWISS INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL | 德瑞國際學校



GERMAN SWISS INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

Year 10 Options 2025

CAMBRIDGE
IGCSE

INTERNATIONAL GENERAL CERTIFICATE
OF SECONDARY EDUCATION

Subject Options for Year 10

Year 9 is an important time at GSIS. Not only is it the last year of the Lower School, but students also have to make choices about subjects to be studied to I/GCSE level. This booklet gives the relevant information about the courses offered at GSIS. In the next few weeks, students and parents will also have the opportunity to discuss options at the Options Evening (24 January 2024) and then subsequently with individual teachers on the Parent Information Days in February.

Years 10 and 11 lead to the General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) and/or International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE). These courses culminate in formal, public examinations, usually written in the final months of Year 11. They are designed to be taken by students of a broad range of ability, so the range of possible grades is wide.

At GSIS students must study at least eight subjects. There are four core compulsory subjects: Mathematics; German; English Language; and English Literature. These are all taught to IGCSE level, except in the case of those students who have already taken the IGCSE in German in Year 9 – these students take the Advanced Supplementary (AS Level) course in German, usually accompanied by the Deutsches Sprachdiplom I. Some students may progress far enough to take the Deutsches Sprachdiplom II.

In addition, everyone must also choose at least one Science IGCSE, and one of the Humanities I/GCSEs: Economics; History; or Geography. Students are also encouraged to take at least one Creative Subject at I/GCSE: Art & Design; Music; or Drama. This requirement is to ensure that all students study a balanced mix of subjects. In addition to their academic subjects, students have two periods of Physical Education (PE) each week; this course is not examined and does not lead to an I/GCSE qualification. For all subjects, the I/GCSE syllabus determines the direction of the course. The content of the subject and the methods of assessment are explained in this booklet and should be read carefully.

After I/GCSE there are two more years of study in school and during these two years this year group will undertake the International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma. The I/GCSE programme provides the students with an established and rigorous pathway into the rewards and challenges of the IB Diploma. Naturally, the subject choices that are made for I/GCSE will have an influence upon the subjects selected for the IB Diploma. However, not choosing a subject at I/GCSE will not necessarily preclude a student from taking this as an IB Diploma subject. Further information regarding the pathway to the IB Diploma will be provided during the Options Information Evening.

The decisions to be made are important and should be considered thoroughly. There is a great deal of information in the pages that follow and plenty of time and opportunity to discuss options. Please read this booklet carefully and talk to your subject teachers, parents and anyone else you trust. Accompanying this booklet is a form, which needs to be completed and returned to your class teacher by **Monday, 21 March 2025**. The form will also be provided as a discrete document via email and in hard copy.

*The following abbreviations are used throughout this booklet.

- GCSE: General Certificate of Secondary Education
- IGCSE: International General Certificate of Secondary Education
- CIE: Cambridge International Examinations

GCSE, IGCSE & Grades

GCSEs are the UK (except Scotland) standard qualification for students at age 16. Students study academic courses for two years (Y10 & Y11) and these culminate in a final examination, success in which earns the certificate for that subject. GCSEs were first awarded in 1988, replacing the old 'O-Level' qualification. GCSEs may be awarded by a variety of examination boards, all of whom are overseen by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) in the UK.

IGCSEs are the international version of GCSEs, with some UK-centric content replaced by international examples. At GSIS, we follow IGCSE courses awarded by two separate examination boards: Cambridge International (CIE) and Pearson Edexcel. There is no difference in status between GCSE and IGCSE qualifications. Both are regarded as academically rigorous and are recognized as such by Universities and the like around the world.

Traditionally, I/GCSEs have been graded on a scale A*-G {A-G before 1994}. For most purposes, grades C and above are considered passing grades and this is certainly the case at GSIS. Over 99% of our students achieve this standard, with the vast majority achieving A* or A.

Following a (relatively) recent UK government review of the GCSE qualifications, this grading scheme changed to a numerical scale 9-1 for all GCSE courses, and this was implemented as well in IGCSE courses offered by Edexcel. Under this new scheme 9 is the highest grade and grades 4 and above are considered good passes. CIE IGCSE courses will retain the A*-G grading scheme.

For the current Y09 cohort at GSIS (examinations May 2027) the table below summarizes the grading applied to each subject offered:

CIE IGCSE Subjects Graded A*-G	Edexcel IGCSE Subjects Graded 9 – 1	Edexcel GCSE Subjects Graded 9-1
English Language	Geography	Art & Design
English Literature	History	
Mathematics		
Biology		
Computer Science		
Chemistry		
Physics		
Drama		
Economics		
Chinese		
French		
German*		
Music		

Grade comparison:

Edexcel IGCSE and GCSE	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	U	
CIAE IGCSE	A*		A	B		C	D	E	F	G	U

***Note that students taking IAS German (Edexcel) will be graded on the IAS scale A-E.**

Year 10

Year 10 represents the beginning of a new phase of school, the Upper School. For Year 10, students are divided into classes alphabetically according to their surname. They meet one lesson a week with the class teacher for the class period. For all other lessons, they are divided into teaching groups within the subjects chosen.

As all I / GCSE courses are highly structured and follow examined syllabi, it is important that students realise the level of commitment expected. The increased workload and greater number of hours spent in study can prove demanding. It is essential, therefore, to plan and, if need be, reduce other commitments. Students also need to be aware that some subjects require coursework and that such extended pieces are usually completed over a period of weeks. Thus, organising one's life outside school constructively and efficiently to cope with the challenges of I/GCSE is essential. A mature approach to studying and ensuring that there is a balance between school and leisure time is vital for success.

As part of the Upper School, students are also expected to assume a greater degree of responsibility not only for their learning, but also for their conduct. The expectations are that students follow school rules and behave maturely, respectfully and responsibly in school and on school outings.

Whilst Year 10 is an exciting time, adapting to I/GCSE can be difficult. Should there be a problem, it is important that you do not let it build up. Talk to the subject teacher, class teacher or the Head of Year 10 (Ms Paula Wymond).

Extra-Curricular Activities

Education is about more than just the academic curriculum. It encompasses the development of the individual as a responsible member of society. To enhance this aim, the school offers the Extra-Curricular Activities (ECA) Programme to give students the opportunity to participate in a number of activities that extend beyond the academic curriculum.

The school offers a range of sports from Basketball and Badminton to Hockey and Netball. Similarly, there is a range of different musical and creative activities available: Orchestra and School production to the School Newspaper and Debating. For service, some students are able to assist in various areas around the school such as in the libraries, or to get involved in student-led ECAs, Academic Societies or indeed to propose service-based projects of their own. These activities are open to both streams and provide an opportunity for students to meet and work together.

Participation in creative projects, sports and community service encourages young people to share their energies and special talents within teams and to develop awareness and concern for others, as well as the ability to work cooperatively.

The school day runs from 7.35am to 3.20pm from Monday to Friday in Year 10 and above. There are no taught lessons on a Friday after 1.15pm, but students in Year 10 and Year 11 are expected to sign up to an Extra-Curricular Activity (ECA) that takes place on a Friday afternoon. For those students with a substantial commitment to in-school ECAs that happen after school from Monday to Thursday, this expectation is relaxed, although there may be times when they are asked to participate in specific Friday afternoon activities and events. For further questions, please contact the Deputy Head of ESD, Ms Susan Hood (shood@gsis.edu.hk).

Please do not organise tuition or other out-of-school activities on any day before 3.20pm.

Discovery week takes place in October of each year. All Year 10 students are expected to participate in a week-long activity, often involving a trip outside Hong Kong. All activities aim to provide a varied educational experience, encourage friendship, sensitivity and understanding. For more information on Discovery week, please contact Mr Simon Misso-Veness via email at smisso-veness@gsis.edu.hk.

BYOD (Bring Your Own Device)

In GSIS the English Secondary Department (ESD) operates a BYOD policy for all year groups. All secondary students are required to bring a fully charged device to school that adheres to our minimum requirements. Teachers will expect students to have a device during class that will be used for teaching and learning.

External Examinations

All Public Examinations are set and marked by the Examining Boards in the UK, which dictate the regulations and procedures. As an examination centre, GSIS is required to follow the prescribed timetable, and all rules and regulations. The name of the examination board and the syllabus number are given for each subject. Please note that Dutch (CIE IGCSE 0515), Japanese (EDEXCEL GCSE 2JA01), and Spanish (EDEXCEL GCSE 2SP01) are also available, although the school does not provide tuition.

GCSE and IGCSE Public Examinations generally take place in May and June of Year 11. The only exceptions are in the languages for those students who are deemed ready for early entry. In some subjects students will have to complete coursework or oral assessments, which contribute to their final grade. These usually take place before the written examinations.

Formal school examinations are held in the summer term of Year 10 and mock examinations in January of Year 11. For questions relating to examinations, please contact our examinations office Ms Deborah Crouch via email at dcrouch@gsis.edu.hk.

Plagiarism & Examination Regulations

While the Internet is an important resource for research, and we encourage its use, we must warn students against submitting work which is even partly plagiarised. The consequences are very serious. Apart from normal disciplinary procedures, a note will be placed in the student's personal file and it may be mentioned in any reference written for a new school or college. The Examining Boards have informed us that it is the responsibility of the Centre (that is GSIS) to ensure that all submitted coursework at GCSE is the original work of the student. They have also warned that if they detect an act of plagiarism, they have the right to cancel all the certificates to be awarded to that student for that sitting. This would have catastrophic consequences for a student as his/her examination certificates form the basis of admissions to both UK and US Universities.

We cannot stress enough the need for, and the benefit of, independent and original work. We are confident that the students of GSIS are more than capable of producing fine work on their own, without recourse to any outside source.

The regulations for the conduct of public examinations are both rigorous and strict. Any breach of examination regulations may lead to disqualification, not only for the exam in question, but for all exams during that session. The notice for candidates pertaining to these regulations produced by CIE is available here: <http://www.cie.org.uk/images/86457-information-for-candidates.pdf>. The other exam boards follow almost identical regulations.

GSIS will also apply sanctions to students found to have plagiarized in submissions of work for internal use (e.g. homework assignments)

Tuition

In general, we do not encourage extra tuition, except where it has a clearly defined aim. Long-term support tends to undermine the work completed in school, as students can become over-reliant on external help and have difficulty developing the skills necessary for independent study. Excessive time spent in tuition is rarely beneficial to a child's development or progress. If tuition is needed, please exercise caution before appointing a tutor. Ensure that the tutor is qualified and experienced and can add value to your child's education. Under no circumstances should tutors be doing your child's homework or other assignments on their behalf.

Careers and University Counselling

Students entering the IGCSE course at 13 or 14 years of age should not be expected to have concrete plans for Higher Education or careers! The best approach to subject choices at this age is to keep options as open as possible. The compulsory subjects at GSIS and the options available for students to choose are designed to facilitate this and to leave a broad range of options available at IB Diploma level and beyond.

Subject choices at I/GCSE may have an impact on degree course choices at university. This only really applies to systems like the UK and Hong Kong where university admission is based on a chosen degree subject. The competitive degree courses at selective universities require a B grade in English and Mathematics at I/GCSE. Some university degree courses have additional required or preferred subjects at I/GCSE. A list of some of the university degree courses that are popular with GSIS students and their related preferences and requirements is provided below:

- **Accountancy/Finance** – No specific subjects outside Mathematics and English.
- **Architecture** – Art is usually required. Physics is recommended, together with a balanced choice of other subjects.
- **Business Management** – No specific subjects outside Mathematics and English.
- **Economics** – No specific subjects outside Mathematics and English. Economics may be helpful.
- **Engineering** – Physics and sometimes Computer Science are recommended.
- **English/English Literature** – A number of universities require a modern or classical language at I/GCSE.
- **Languages** – The language to be studied at degree level is normally required at I/GCSE.
- **Law** – No specific subject requirements. A good balance of I/GCSEs recommended
- **Medicine, Dentistry, Veterinary Science** – High grades in the Sciences and a broad range of subjects are required. Universities vary in terms of requirements and preferences, but the safest approach is to take all three experimental sciences (Chemistry, Biology and Physics).

- **Politics, International Relations** – A foreign language may be required. History and/or Geography may be helpful.
- **Psychology** – A Science is normally required.

These recommendations are given as examples for guidance only and it is important to check the individual requirements for courses carefully when applying to university in Year 13.

NB: Top UK universities prefer that all I/GCSE examination grades are achieved in one sitting and may not accept re-sits in I/GCSE qualifications.

The University Guidance department at GSIS provides information and advice on opportunities and pathways and to Higher Education. Throughout the school year, they organise numerous events about Higher Education in different countries, different professions and careers, university entrance requirements, admissions testing and university information days.

Please feel free to contact our advisors by email or to request a meeting if you would like further guidance on subject choices or preparation for university: Ms Claire Wilkins, Head of University Guidance (cwilkins@gsis.edu.hk)

Choosing Your Subjects

In Year 10 and Year 11, all students study:

- English Language
- English Literature
- German
- Mathematics (All students take IGCSE Mathematics, students in Set X also study the Further Pure Mathematics course, but not all take the exam)
- Physical Education (not examined)

There is then a choice of 5 or 6 optional I/GCSE subjects:

- Art & Design
- Biology
- Chemistry
- Computer Science
- Drama
- Economics
- Geography
- History
- Music
- Physics
- Chinese (offered as both 2nd language and as a foreign language)
- French

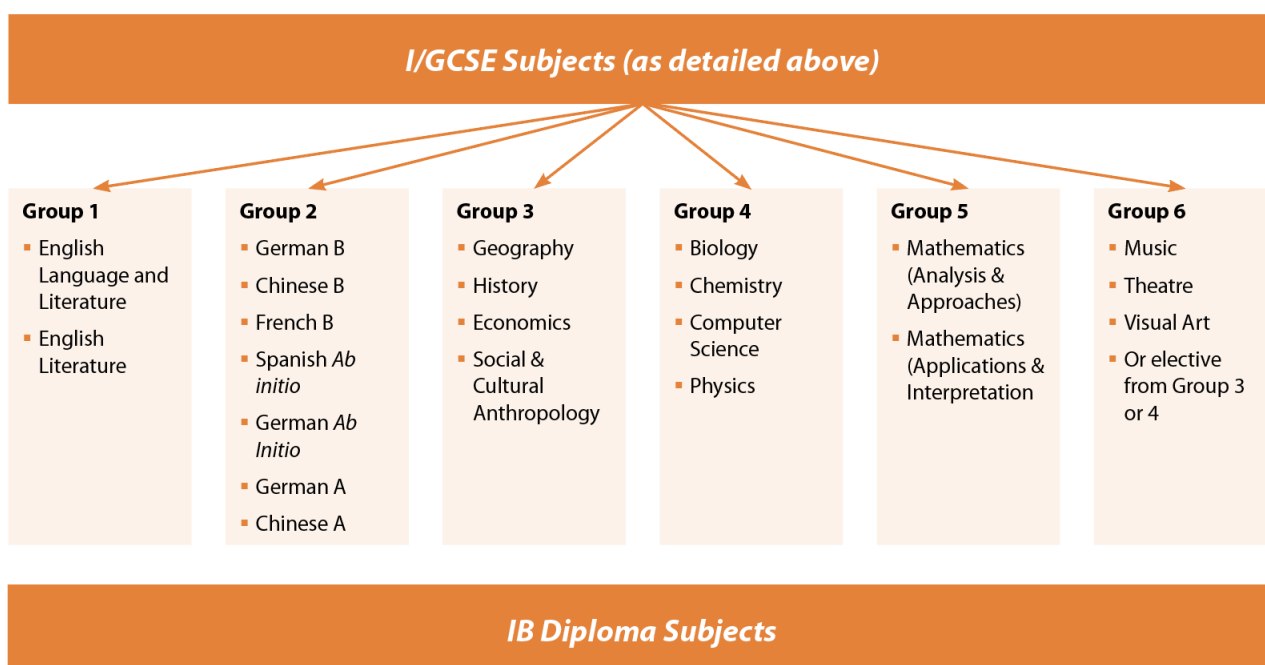
Mapping to the IB Diploma (Y12 & Y13)

Following the I/GCSE years, students in the ESD will enter the IB Diploma in Years 12 & 13. In Y11 there will be another set of options to consider for the IB Diploma. Whilst this is still some way off, it is worth bearing in mind when selecting options for Y10 & Y11.

In the IB Diploma, all students study a common core and they must also choose six subjects from six groups (it is possible to replace the Group 6 selection with an additional Group 3 or Group 4 subject).

Three subject choices are at Higher Level (HL) and three are at Standard Level (SL).

The diagram below shows the subjects currently on offer for the IB Diploma at GSIS and the pathways into these subjects from I/GCSE.



Notes

In Group 2, most students will take a Language 'B' { "Language Acquisition" } – the prerequisite for this is a good I/GCSE in the appropriate language. Some particularly proficient students may select Language 'A' { "Studies in Language and Literature" } leading to a bilingual diploma. 'Ab initio' (from startup) is for students with no experience in the language

Generally speaking, we would expect students to obtain at least an I/GCSE Grade B (or equivalent) in subjects which they hope to study at SL in the IB Diploma and at least a Grade A (or equivalent) in subjects which they hope to study at HL.

Frequently Asked Questions

Is it possible to take more than 6 optional subjects?

Unfortunately not. The maximum number of subjects that can fit into the school week is 10. These are the 4 compulsory subjects, 6 options plus Physical Education and the Class Period.

Can I choose my teachers?

No. Teachers are allocated to classes based upon a number of factors. All of our teachers are experienced I/GCSE teachers.

Can I choose my group/class?

The combination of subjects that you choose will, by and large, dictate the groups to which you are allocated. We endeavour to ensure that every student gets their first choice of subject courses and that groups are of a reasonable size. It is not advisable to make your options choices on the basis that you wish to be in the same group(s) as your friends

What should I do if I am unsure as to which subjects to choose?

The best thing to do is to seek advice from your teachers and, if needed, the University counsellors. If you are still undecided between 2 options, choose the one that you think most likely and write a note in the 'comments' section of the form

What happens if I do not submit the form by Friday, 21 March?

After the deadline, we begin planning our timetable for next year. If you have not submitted your choices by that time, you risk missing out on your first choice of subject as the various classes become filled.

Can I change my choices after the deadline?

Yes, but there are caveats. Firstly, as noted above, there is a risk that classes will become full and you may not be able to take a particular subject or combination. That being said, we will make every effort to accommodate changes. If you wish to change your choices, please email Mr Ken Stevenson (kstevenson@gsis.edu.hk) as soon as possible.

Can I change subjects after the start of the I/GCSE courses (Y10).

If there are valid reasons for the change, we will do our utmost to accommodate you. It is beneficial if any requests to change subject options are made as soon as possible. The cut-off date for subject changes is 30 September. After this time, too much material will have been covered to make a change feasible.

Where can I get more information?

The options evening is on Tuesday, 13 February 2025 at 6.00 pm in the IB Hall. Here you will have the opportunity to get more information on the options process, I/GCSE subjects and any other matters relating to Y10/11 at GSIS. For more information on specific courses, visit the relevant exam board website (www.cie.org.uk; www.edexcel.org.uk). As always, the best source of information is to ask your teachers. The Parent Information Days will be on 10 and 12 March 2025.

If I only take 5 optional subjects, what happens for the rest of my timetable?

In these cases, you will have blank spaces on your timetable. These are to be used for study for the subjects that you are taking. You are expected to be in the library at these times and to work productively there. Students who do not opt for the full 10 I/GCSE subjects will need to discuss their choices and plans with Mr Stevenson before their timetable is confirmed.

Can I take extra subjects in my own time (i.e outside of school)?

The answer is yes, but a very guarded yes. The I/GCSE courses are challenging both in terms of academic content and time demands – beware of over-committing as this can be detrimental to academic progress and personal wellbeing. In addition, taking “extra” examinations out of school can have serious implications for future University applications if not managed properly. Please consult with our examinations officer, Ms Deborah Crouch (dcrouch@gsis.edu.hk), before committing to any extra I/GCSE course outside of GSIS. Do not, under any circumstance, enroll in an I/GCSE exam outside of school in a subject that you are studying at GSIS.

Appendix 1 – Options Form

I/GCSE Options Form 2025

THIS FORM MUST BE COMPLETED AND RETURNED TO YOUR CLASS TEACHER BY 21 MARCH 2025.

NAME: CLASS:

Compulsory Subjects

The subjects below are taken by all GSIS students in Y10/11

Compulsory Subjects	
English Language	☐
English Literature	☐
Mathematics	☐
German	☐
PE (not examined)	☐

Optional Subjects

Choose a maximum of six subjects from the groups below: (see note a)

Humanities (see note b)	
Economics	☐
Geography	☐
History	☐

Sciences (see note d)	
Biology	☐
Chemistry	☐
Computer Science	☐
Physics	☐

Creative Arts (see note c)	
Art	☐
Drama	☐
Music	☐

Languages (see note e)	
French	☐
Chinese	☐

Total number of optional subjects selected: _____

Additional Comments (if any): _____

Signature of Parent or Guardian: _____ Date: _____

Notes on the Options Form

a) The timetable at GSIS allows for no more than six optional subjects. This gives a total of ten I/GCSE subjects. Most students will opt for the full six but, under some circumstances, students may be allowed to take fewer subjects. (note that Additional Maths does not count as one of the ten)

b) The Humanities subjects make Group 3 of the IB Diploma. At IB level, students are required to take at least one Group 3 subject. At I/GCSE level, it is required that students opt for at least one Humanities subject.

c) The Creative Arts form Group 6 of the IB Diploma. At IB level, students are encouraged to take at least one Group 6 subject. At I/GCSE level, it is recommended that students opt for at least one Creative Arts subject.

d) The Sciences & Computer Science form Group 4 of the IB Diploma. At IB level, students are required to take at least one Group 4 subject.

Gaining a good grade at I/GCSE Biology, Chemistry or Physics is a prerequisite for the study of these subjects at IB Diploma level. At I/GCSE level, it is recommended that students opt for at least two Science subjects, in order to keep their options open for the IB Diploma. At least one of these subjects is required at I/GCSE Level

e) The Languages form Group 2 of the IB Diploma. At IB level, students are required to take at least one Group 2 subject. This could be German (compulsory in Y10 & 11), Chinese or French.

For Y10 & Y11, it is recommended, but not required, that students continue with the additional language (Chinese or French) that they currently study in Y09. We are not able to offer beginners courses in these languages in Y10 or Y11 so students wishing to transfer to a different additional language (Chinese to French or vice versa) need to have suitable experience in the destination language in order to access the IGCSE course.

Appendix 2 – Subject Information

Art and Design

EDEXCEL GCSE 1AD0

At German Swiss International School we follow the Edexcel GCSE in Art, Craft and Design, which is a broad and flexible course that requires students to develop their creative process through a practical and conceptual response. Throughout the course students will be introduced to a variety of materials, techniques and processes and are able to work in a variety of different media - painting, drawing, printmaking, sculpture, installation, film, photography, graphics design, textiles, photography, 3-dimensional design (sculpture, installation).

Throughout the course students explore how artists, craftspeople and designers from diverse cultures, times and societies have arrived at solutions and communicated meaning in their work. Students then use this knowledge when developing new ideas, recording observations and creating personal outcomes.

The course is structured to allow students to build up their confidence in developing a more personal and independent approach to art so that their art work becomes significant to them, their environment and their interests.

EXAMINATION

Coursework (60%)

Students follow two different themes for their course-work. Coursework is selected and arranged by the student into a final body of work, which will be exhibited at the end of Year 11. Both sketchbooks and final outcomes are assessed internally and moderated by a visiting Moderator.

Exam (40%)

The exam follows the same structure as the course-work, but students only have 10-12 weeks in which to prepare and work through Assessment criteria 1,2 and 3, before sitting a 10 hour timed exam which is spread over 2 days. The Examination Board send the exam paper out at Chinese New Year and the exam is written at the end of April/beginning May.

Assessment

Work is marked initially by the GSIS Art Staff. The students work will be exhibited at the end of May for the visiting examiner who will come from the UK to moderate the students work.

Biology

CIE IGCSE 0610

IGCSE Biology involves the study of living organisms; their structure, functions and interactions from a cellular to system level. Areas studied include:

- Cells, Biological Molecules and basic cellular concepts and metabolic processes
- Nutrition, Transport, Gaseous Exchange, Reproduction and Coordination in both plants and animals
- Genetics, Variation and Evolution
- Ecology and Human Impacts on the Environment

Each topic is reinforced through investigation, with a large proportion of class time involving practical work. This ensures that you obtain a thorough grounding in all of the major areas of Biology and are well-prepared for the practical skills component of your examination.

EXAMINATION

Biology is a CIE IGCSE subject and so students will be awarded with the grading scale of A* to G, with A* being the top grade. All candidates will follow the Extended Curriculum (Papers 2 and 4) and will be eligible for the award of grades A* to E. However, candidates who find this challenging could be entered for the less demanding Core Curriculum exam (Papers 1 and 3) which awards grades C to G only.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Biology combines well with Chemistry, Physics, Mathematics and Geography. If you are considering studying a science at University or are focussed on a science-based career, such as Medicine, Biotechnology, Pharmacology, Environmental Science or Conservation, Psychology etc.. it is likely that you will need to take two sciences as part of your IB Diploma. In order to keep your options open and to give you a solid platform for future science studies, we strongly recommend that you take all three sciences at IGCSE.

PAPER 1 (core) / PAPER 2 extended)	45 minutes	MULTIPLE CHOICE	30%
PAPER 3 (core) / PAPER 4 (extended)	1 hour 15 minutes	SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS	50%
PAPER 6	1 hour 15 Mins / 60 Mins	ALTERNATIVE TO PRACTICAL	20%

Chemistry

CIE IGCSE 0620

IGCSE Chemistry covers the behaviour of materials, how they are used in the world, and how they can be interconverted.

Apart from the advantages of being able to understand the chemical concepts referred to in the media, it is worth studying Chemistry if you are thinking of any career which involves materials. Not only scientific but medical, catering, engineering, art and design as well as other courses may specifically require Chemistry. It is often regarded as the 'central' science, with its understanding assisting in aspects of both Physics and Biology and is therefore a commonly required prerequisite for science and technology-based courses at university.

The IGCSE Chemistry course has a significant practical content and as much time as possible is devoted to supporting experimental work. As in all sciences, we are looking for patterns in the observations in order to develop unifying theories about why substances behave as they do. You will get the most out of Chemistry if you are 'the active type' and you like 'putting ideas together', but can also perform practical work in a safe, structured, and organised manner. During the course, you will learn the 'language' of chemistry – the chemical shorthand of symbols and formulae. You will also learn how science is studied and practiced, and become aware that the results of scientific research can have both good and bad effects on individuals, communities and the environment.

EXAMINATION

PAPER 2	45 minutes	MULTIPLE CHOICE	30%
PAPER 4	1 hour 15 minutes	THEORY (Extended)	50%
PAPER 6	1 hour 15 minutes	ALTERNATIVE TO PRACTICAL	20%

Chemistry is a CIE IGCSE subject and so students will be awarded with the grading scale of A* to G, with A* being the top grade.

Chinese

CIE IGCSE 0523 / 0547

Students taking Chinese are streamed into different pathways according to their previous learning experience and their competence. We are currently reviewing our pathways in Chinese with a view to offering sufficient challenge to all students as well as ensuring suitable preparation for the IB Diploma programme in Y12/13. For more information, please consult your current Chinese teacher. We offer two distinct courses in Chinese for Y10 & Y11. The course that you follow will be determined by your level of experience in Chinese at the start of Y10.

IGCSE Chinese (2nd Language)

CIE IGCSE 0523

This course is designed for students who have a significant level of experience in Chinese and can access more demanding material and examinations (usually from the advanced groups in Y09)

- The IGCSE exams may take place at the end of Y11.
- Successful completion of the IGCSE (2nd language) enables students to confidently choose Chinese Language B at both Higher and Standard Level for the IB Diploma
- For the top set in Chinese, the IGCSE course will be augmented by further learning, aimed at extending the knowledge and understanding of the language and introducing some concepts in literature in preparation for the IB programme. This opens the further option of selecting Chinese A (Language and Literature) for the IB Diploma
- All exams (reading, written and listening) are printed in both traditional and simplified characters. Oral examinations are conducted in Mandarin only.

IGCSE Chinese (Foreign Language)

CIE IGCSE 0547

This course is designed for students who have some background in Chinese and are looking to develop their skills (usually from the intermediate groups in Y09)

- The IGCSE exams will take place at the end of Y11
- Successful completion of the IGCSE (Foreign Language) enables students to confidently choose Chinese Language B at Standard Level for the IB Diploma
- All exams (reading, written and listening) are available in simplified characters only. Listening materials are recorded and Oral examinations are conducted in Mandarin only.

Chinese is a CIE IGCSE subject and so students will be awarded with the grading scale of A* to G, with A* being the top grade

Computer Science

CIE IGCSE 0478

The importance of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) education has been increasingly recognised by leaders of industry and education policy makers over the last few years. Consequently, schools have incorporated technology in primary and secondary curriculums to ensure that students are exposed to programming from an early age. At GSIS we have always recognised the importance of this by offering ICT in Years 7, 8 and 9 and have ensured that students can continue to improve their logic and problem-solving skills by offering Computer Science at both IGCSE and IB levels.

At the end of Year 9 students can choose IGCSE Computer Science where they will build on their knowledge of programming which is an essential skill for all students. Aside from this, many students find the rigour and challenge of computer programming extremely rewarding, as they develop a whole new approach to thinking and problem-solving.

The course also covers a look at hardware and software systems, logic, and microprocessor design, amongst other things. There are 2 interrelated sections: Theory and Practical. The breakdown is:

Computer Systems	Paper 1	1 hour 45 minutes exam	50%
Algorithms, Programming & Logic	Paper 2	1 hour 45 minutes exam	50%

The theory work covers:

- Aspects of computer hardware
- Aspects of computer software
- Data representation and transmission
- The internet and its uses
- Automated and emerging technologies

The practical side of the course covers:

- Algorithm design and problem-solving
- Programming
- Boolean logic
- Databases

The larger part of the course will be spent in practical work, mainly programming. This course is an excellent (although not obligatory) preparation for the IB Computer Science subject. It is also useful for anyone with an interest in computers as well as anyone who is likely to make use of computers in the course of their chosen career. Computer Science is a CIE IGCSE subject and so students will be awarded with the grading scale of A* to G, with A* being the top grade.

Drama

CIE IGCSE 0411

Through practical and theoretical study, students develop an understanding and enjoyment of drama, developing group and individual skills and studying ways to communicate ideas and feelings to an audience. They learn how to discover the performance possibilities of a text and other stimuli and devise dramatic material of their own. The final grading and assessment is a combination of a practical coursework portfolio and a formal written examination. (NB Students are always assessed as individuals even in group performance.)

During the course you will understand and enjoy drama by:

- developing your performance skills, both individually and in groups
- understanding the role of actor, director and designer in creating a piece of theatre
- consider ways in which ideas and feelings can be communicated to an audience
- discover the performance possibilities of plays and other dramatic stimuli
- devise dramatic material of your own.

ASSESSMENT

Components	Weighting
Component 1 Written examination (externally assessed) 2 hours 30 minutes The written examination has three sections. The questions in sections A and B relate to pre-release material of extracts from TWO different plays. In lessons students study and explore the extracts as practical theatre, investigating the performing and staging possibilities. NB: the extracts are not performed for an audience. Section A: (30 marks) There are 6-8 short-answer and extended-answer questions on extract one. Students answer all questions. Section B: (25 marks) Students answer two extended-response questions. Students answer ONE compulsory question (10 marks) and ONE question from a choice of two (15 marks). The questions in section C will refer to a devised piece of work that the students have developed and performed to an audience. Section C: (25 marks) Students answer two extended-response questions. Students answer both questions: one is worth 10 marks and the other is worth 15 marks.	40%
Component 2 Coursework (Internally assessed and externally moderated) Candidates submit three pieces of practical work. 1. One individual piece (3 minutes maximum): one performance of an extract from a play. 2. One group performance of an extract from a play (20 minutes maximum). 3. One group performance of a devised piece of theatre (20 minutes maximum). NB. Students are assessed as INDIVIDUALS even in group performances.	60%



One of the main aims of the ESD Drama Department is to give our students as many varied experiences of theatre and performance as possible and at IGCSE level this means that you will go on theatre trips and, when possible, be involved in workshops with professionals such as actors, make-up artists or lighting engineers.

Drama is a CIE IGCSE subject and so students will be awarded with the grading scale of A* to G, with A* being the top grade.

Economics

CIE IGCSE 0455

Economists as social scientists are interested in understanding how individuals, companies and governments affect each other in the local and global economy. Economics can help you understand why we cannot have everything in life for free; why coffee in one shop is more expensive than another shop; why full employment may not be possible and why international free trade is better than protectionism.

COURSE CONTENT

Students will study the follow topics during the two-year course:

- The basic economic problem. The first section of the syllabus introduces the fundamental ideas and concepts that underpin the study of economics including the basic economic problem, factors of production, opportunity cost and production possibility curves.
- The allocation of resources. The fundamental principles of resource allocation are considered through the price mechanism in a market economy. The market forces of demand and supply, market equilibrium and disequilibrium, and elasticity form the core of this section.
- Microeconomic decision makers. The microeconomy is an important area of study, and the approach to learning taken here is through the role of the major decision makers: banks, households, workers, trade unions and firms.
- Government and the macroeconomy. Governments have different macroeconomic aims, and conflicts often arise between the choice of measures used to achieve them. Variables must be measured to consider the causes and consequences of change, and appropriate policies applied.
- Economic development. As an economy develops there will be changes in population, living standards, poverty and income redistribution. Therefore, the effects of changes in the size and structure of population and of other influences on development in a variety of countries are explored.
- International trade and globalization. The importance of trade between countries and the growth of globalisation is explored. Principles such as specialisation, the role of free trade, the role of multinational companies, foreign exchange rates and balance of payments stability are considered.

There is no coursework in Economics, but students will be expected to do extended research and presentations as part of their homework.

EXAMINATIONS

All students will be required to sit two papers

Papers	Timing	Type of Questions	Weighting
1	45mins	30 multiple-choice items (all questions to be answered).	40%
2	2 hours & 15 mins	Structured questions. Candidates must answer Section A and three questions in Section B.	60%

Economics is a CIE IGCSE subject and so students will be awarded with the grading scale of A* to G, with A* being the top grade.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND ENGLISH LITERATURE

The six lessons allocated for English provide two distinct subject passes, English Language and English Literature.

SKILLS

- intelligent and close reading
- awareness of tone, form and style
- a sense of audience
- legibility and communication fit for purpose
- conventional spelling and punctuation
- empathy and sensitivity
- arranging/ordering/selecting material
- clarity of expression
- willingness to contribute orally

IGCSE First Language

CIE 0500

English Language is a two year course, and runs concurrently with English Literature. The course includes the study of fiction and non-fiction materials. As well as complementing other areas of study, students will gain skills for life, including

- the ability to communicate accurately, appropriately and effectively in writing;
- skills in reading, understanding and responding to a wide variety of written texts .

IGCSE CONSISTS OF TWO PAPERS, EACH WORTH 50%.

- **Paper 1:** Reading.
- **Paper 2:** Extended Writing and Composition.

Each paper lasts two hours and requires candidates to read and respond to unseen material.

IGCSE Literature English

CIE 0475

English Literature is a two year course, and runs concurrently with English Language. The course includes the study of Poetry, Prose and Drama set texts as well as unseen material.

Students will gain skills for life, including the ability to

- understand and respond to literary texts in different forms and from different periods and cultures;
- develop an understanding of literal and implicit meaning;

- appreciate different ways in which writers achieve their effects;
- communicate an informed, personal response to material they have studied

IGCSE consists of three papers, examined in May/June of Year 11.

- **Paper 1:** Set Texts. Students answer two questions, one on a prose text and one on poetry. 50% of the total grade.
- **Paper 3:** Drama. Students answer one question on a drama text. 25% of the total grade.
- **Paper 4:** Unseen. Students answer one question. 25% of the total grade.

French

CIE IGCSE 0520

Students studying French have begun the IGCSE programme in Y09. This programme continues in Y10 and Y11, with the IGCSE examinations at the end of Y11. The IGCSE qualifications will be leading to the IB French programme in Y12. As with all options, French is a two-year commitment for Y10 & Y11.

EXAMINATIONS

The IGCSE French qualification consists of four assessments, Paper 1: Listening, Paper 2: Reading, Paper 3: Speaking and Paper 4: Writing.

Paper 1: Listening

- The exam takes place in May of Y11. It is externally assessed and worth 25% of the IGCSE qualification.
- Students are assessed through an examination paper lasting approximately 50 minutes, set and marked by CIE.

Paper 2: Reading

- The exam takes place in May of Y11. It is externally assessed and worth 25% of the IGCSE qualification.
- Students are assessed through an examination paper lasting 60 minutes, set and marked by CIE.

Paper 3: Speaking

- The exam takes place in March or April of Y11. It is internally assessed and externally moderated, and worth 25% of the IGCSE qualification. Total assessment time is approximately 10 minutes.
- The examination is made up of three speaking tasks: one role play followed by two conversations based on the topic areas listed below.
 - Everyday activities
 - Personal and social life
 - The world around us
 - The world of work
 - The international world

Paper 4: Writing

The exam takes place in May of Y11. It is externally assessed and worth 25% of the IGCSE qualification. Students are assessed through an examination paper lasting 60 minutes, set and marked by CIE.

French is a CIE IGCSE subject and so students will be awarded with the grading scale of A* to G, with A* being the top grade.

Geography

EDEXCEL IGCSE 4GE/1

The Geography IGCSE is split into four units. The topics give students the opportunity to develop as effective and independent learners and as critical and reflective thinkers with enquiring minds. Amongst other things, it helps to develop an appreciation of differences and similarities between people's views of the world, its environments, societies, and cultures and to develop their responsibilities as global citizens.

UNIT 1: THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

- Coastal environments
- Hazardous environments

Unit 2: PEOPLE & THEIR ENVIRONMENTS

- Economic activity and energy
- Urban environments

Unit 3: PRACTICAL GEOGRAPHICAL ENQUIRY

- This allows for the development of practical geographical enquiry skills and fieldwork related to the investigation of the selected topics in units 1 & 2.

Unit 4: GLOBAL ISSUES

- Fragile environments
- Final assessment will be through two externally marked exams.

Geography is an Edexcel IGCSE subject and so students will be awarded with the grading scale of 9 to 1, with 9 being the top grade.

German

CIE (A* - G)

COURSE CONTENT

The subject content is organised in five broad topic areas which provide contexts for the acquisition of vocabulary and the study of grammar and structures. The study of these topic areas enables students to gain an insight into countries and communities where German is spoken.

- A. Everyday activities
- B. Personal and social life
- C. The world around us
- D. The world of work
- E. The international world

The syllabus gives students opportunities to develop and apply a wide range of foreign language skills. Candidates will be expected to read and understand a variety of written and spoken texts on familiar topics. Candidates will be required to demonstrate understanding of the main ideas, opinions and attitudes, as well as select and extract relevant details and deduce the meaning of occasional unknown words from context. They will also have opportunities to write in German on familiar, everyday topics, and to speak the language by taking part in everyday conversations.

ASSESSMENT

All candidates take all four papers. Candidates will be eligible for grades A* to G. All candidates take:

Paper 1: Listening (approximately 50 minutes)	
Externally assessed	25% of the International GCSE qualification
Overview of the assessment: Candidates listen to a number of recordings and answer multiple-choice and matching questions. The total number of marks for the paper is 40.	
Paper 2: Reading (1 hour)	
Externally assessed	25% of the International GCSE qualification
Overview of the assessment: Candidates read a number of texts and answer multiple-choice and matching questions as well as questions requiring short answers. The total number of marks for the paper is 45.	
Paper 3: Speaking (approximately 10 minutes)	
Internally assessed and externally moderated	25% of the International GCSE qualification
Overview of the assessment: Candidates complete one role play and conversations on two topics. The total number of marks for the paper is 40.	
Paper 4: Writing (1 hour)	
Externally moderated	25% of the International GCSE qualification
Overview of the assessment: Candidates complete one form-filling task, one directed writing task and one task in the format of an email/ letter or article/blog. The total number of marks for the paper is 45.	

German – Sprachdiplom

STUFENPRÜFUNG A2/B1

Also known as Deutsches Sprachdiplom I (DSDI) this exam tests that the candidate has reached the level of B1 on the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, which ranges from A1 (beginner) to C2 (near-native). The DSD I exam is taken as an additional qualification by students following the IAS Level course and also by some students who follow the IGCSE course. According to the official definition, a learner achieving the level B1:

- Can understand the main points of clear standard input on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc.
- Can deal with most situations likely to arise whilst travelling in an area where the language is spoken.
- Can produce simple connected text on topics which are familiar or of personal interest.
- Can describe experiences and events, dreams, hopes and ambitions, and briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions and plans.

At present the examination is held in February or March of Year 11. It is examined in two parts:

The written papers are all held on one day:	
Paper 1: Leseverstehen	24 marks of the total Sprachdiplom
▪ A multiple choice reading comprehension paper ▪ Externally assessed ▪ 60 minutes + 10 minutes transcription time	
Paper 2: Hörverstehen	24 marks of the total Sprachdiplom
▪ A multiple choice listening comprehension paper ▪ Externally assessed ▪ 40 minutes + 10 minutes transcription time	
Paper 3: Schriftliche Kommunikation	24 marks of the total Sprachdiplom
▪ An essay paper ▪ Externally assessed ▪ 75 minutes ▪ The oral exam is held on a separate day.	
Paper 4: Mündliche Kommunikation	24 marks of the total Sprachdiplom
▪ Internally assessed ▪ Two speaking activities: – Introductory dialogue with the examiner on topics related to the student's range of personal experience. – Candidates prepare a special topic of their choice, which they present for about five minutes, typically using Google Slides. This is followed by a discussion with the examiner. Candidates in the oral are given credit for their ability to interact with the examiners, as well as for the content and accuracy of what they say. ▪ Maximum 15 minutes	

Candidates who achieve at least 16 marks in Papers 1 and 2, and 12 marks in Papers 3 and 4 pass the Sprachdiplom at B1 level. They receive an official certificate.

International Advanced Subsidiary (IAS) Level

EDEXCEL WGN01

This course is offered to students who have successfully completed the IGCSE German examination in Year 9. Students in the IAS class will also usually sit for the DSDI exam.

There are four general topic areas in the IAS course:

1. Youth matters

Subtopics:

- Family relationships and friendships
- Peer pressure and role models
- Music and fashion
- Technology and communication

2. Lifestyle, health and fitness

Subtopics:

- Food and diet
- Sport and exercise
- Health issues
- Urban and rural life

3. Environment and travel

Subtopics:

- Tourism, travel and transport
- Natural disasters and weather
- Climate change and its impact
- Energy, pollution and recycling

4. Education and employment

Subtopics:

- Education systems and types of schooling
- Pupil/student life
- Volunteering and internships
- Jobs and unemployment

EXAMINATIONS

Paper 1 (WGN01/01): Spoken expression and response (Speaking) – 30% of the qualification

Paper 2 (WGN02/01): Understanding and written response (Listening, reading, grammar, and writing) – 70 % of the qualification.

History

EDEXCEL IGCSE 4HI1

The IGCSE History syllabus offers students the opportunity to examine some of the major areas of study from the 20th century: the Cold War, China's century of revolution, the Vietnam War, and the Civil Right Movement in the United States. The course focuses upon groups, individuals, and circumstances that have shaped contemporary society and students are expected to examine them through a conceptual framework. Students are expected to develop understanding of continuity, change, cause, consequence, and significance.

However, the emphasis of the course is as much on the development of historical skills as on the acquisition of knowledge. Students are expected to develop useful and transferable skills: critical source analysis skills, writing skills, argumentative skills, and presentation skills. In doing so, students will be expected to learn how to discuss history and ideas in a thoughtful and analytical way, which will make them informed citizens of the 21st century.

EXAMINATIONS

The examination consists of two 1.5 hour papers in which you will be required to answer questions of increasing difficulty on: "A World Divided-Superpower Relations 1943-72", "A Divided Union- Civil Rights in the United States 1945-74", "The Vietnam Conflict 1945-75", and "China- Conflict, Crises and Change 1900-89". The questions will be a combination of essay-style answers and responses to source materials.

History is an Edexcel IGCSE subject and so students will be awarded with the grading scale of 9 to 1, with 9 being the top grade.

Mathematics

CIE IGCSE 0607

Students will study all the basic methods of number, algebra and geometry and the concepts of trigonometry, probability & statistics, and vectors. While practising these skills, they will be encouraged to develop the ability to apply their knowledge in problem solving.

All students will require a Graphics Calculator. The Casio fx CG-50 is recommended and available from the school supplier.

In Years 10 and 11, students are divided into four sets (XH, XF, XF, 1E) according to their past performance in this subject, more able mathematics students going into the sets X. The IGCSE examination may be entered at two levels: Core and Extended. All students will follow the Extended Curriculum at GSIS and will be prepared for the Extended Curriculum examination in the summer of Year 11. The Core level (maximum grade C) is available for any student who might need that, but this is not often the case at GSIS.

EXAMINATIONS

EXTENDED CURRICULUM (followed by all students)

PAPER 2	1 hour 30 minutes	NON-CALCULATOR	40%
PAPER 4	1 hour 30 minutes	GRAPHICS CALCULATOR	40%
PAPER 6	1 hour 30 minutes	GRAPHICS CALCULATOR (INVESTIGATIVE QUESTIONS)	20%

CORE CURRICULUM (available if needed – maximum grade C)

PAPER 1	1 hour 15 minutes	NON-CALCULATOR	40%
PAPER 3	1 hour 15 minutes	GRAPHICS CALCULATOR	40%
PAPER 5	1 hour 15 minutes	GRAPHICS CALCULATOR (INCLUDES ONE) INVESTIGATIVE QUESTION	20%

Students achieving a C will be able to study IB Standard Level Mathematics: Applications and Interpretation.

Students intending to study IB Standard Level Mathematics: Analysis and Approaches in Year 12 should attain at least a B at IGCSE.

Students intending to study IB Higher Level Mathematics on either course in Year 12 should attain at least an A Grade at IGCSE

Mathematics is a CIE IGCSE subject and students will be awarded with the grading scale of A* to G, with A* being the top grade.

Additional Mathematics

CAMBRIDGE IGCSE 0606

Students in all X sets will, in addition to IGCSE Mathematics, also study IGCSE Additional Mathematics. The two subjects will be taught concurrently as the Additional Maths topics extend the IGCSE topics further. Additional Mathematics 0606 and IGCSE 0607 are examined separately.

Students intending to take IB Higher Level **Mathematics: Applications and Interpretation** or Higher Level **Mathematics: Analysis and Approaches** in Year 12 need to have a strong foundation in IGCSE Mathematics (at least grade A). Additional Mathematics IGCSE is strongly recommended for any student considering HL Mathematics (either course) in the IB Diploma. It is also recommended that HL Mathematics candidates not only learn the Additional Mathematics IGCSE syllabus, but also sit the Additional Mathematics IGCSE 0606 exam alongside their 0607 examinations. Students are recommended to have completed the Additional course in order to be able to succeed in the extremely rigorous IB Higher Level courses. Please bear in mind that there are many challenges in both Higher Level courses and Higher Level **Mathematics: Analysis and Approaches** is one of the most demanding courses in the whole IB Diploma.

Students will require a scientific calculator (not GDC). We recommend the Casio FX-991 EX which is available from our school supplier.

EXAMINATIONS – ADDITIONAL MATHEMATICS

PAPER 1 2 hours (50%) – Non-calculator.

PAPER 2 2 hours (50%) – Scientific Calculator required.

Additional Mathematics is a Cambridge IGCSE subject and so students will be awarded with the grading scale of A* to G, with A* being the top grade.

Music

CIE IGCSE 0410

Cambridge IGCSE Music gives students the opportunity to:

- listen to and learn about music from a wide range of historical periods and major world cultures
- develop their skills in performing music, both individually and in a group with other musicians
- develop their skills in composing music in a style of their own choice

When studying the Cambridge IGCSE Music syllabus, learners listen to, perform and compose music, encouraging aesthetic and emotional development, self-discipline, and, importantly, creativity. As a result, learners enhance their appreciation and enjoyment of music, an achievement that forms an ideal foundation for future study and enhances lifelong musical enjoyment.

Ideally students starting the IGCSE Music course in Year 10 would already have the following skills:

- Grade 5 level or above performing on one or more instrument(s) *
- Grade 5 theory

* It is not essential to actually have done the grade exam, simply to play around that standard. Students who play instruments like drums or guitar may not have taken music exams, but can definitely choose IGCSE Music as an option.

ASSESSMENT

All candidates take three components:

Component 1: Listening (40%)

A listening examination lasting c.1 hour 15 minutes, based on short recordings of a wide variety of music

Component 2: Performing (30%)

Two prepared performances; one individual and one ensemble (two or more students playing together). These are recorded in school in front of a small audience.

Component 3: Composing (30%)

Two contrasting compositions in any style of the student's choosing.

Physics

CIE IGCSE 0625

People often ask, “What is Physics?” The American Heritage Dictionary defines it as:

The science of matter and energy and of interactions between the two, grouped in traditional fields such as acoustics, optics, mechanics, thermodynamics, and electromagnetism, as well as in modern extensions including atomic and nuclear physics, cryogenics, solid-state physics, particle physics, and plasma physics.

A simpler answer to the question is “The study of everything”. Physics attempts to explain why the things and events that we observe are as they are in terms of a few simple rules. Someone once said that the aim of Physics was to reduce everything in the Universe to a single equation; this is simplistic but we are a long way from even approaching such closure so there is still plenty of scope for further important discoveries.

Today’s high-tech world offers many opportunities to people who have studied Physics and medicine and engineering are among many careers that usually require at least the GCSE to join the relevant university courses. Some subjects can be started in Year 12 but to successfully pursue the IB at either Higher or Standard Level in Physics without the IGCSE would be difficult. Even if you have no intention of continuing your studies after Year 11, what you learn can be of great use later in life: if you know how things work, the time, expense and inconvenience of finding somebody else to fix them can sometimes be avoided.

COURSE CONTENT

At GSIS we follow the Cambridge IGCSE syllabus. This retains a well-selected, wide-ranging coverage of the fundamentals that provides a good basis for further work in the field and has recently been extended to look at how those fundamentals are manifested in the Universe. It employs a somewhat more mathematical approach than most alternatives and this suits the majority of our students. Having said that, only those who really struggle with maths should be deterred by this, as it is still very simple.

EXAMINATIONS

All students study the Core + Supplement. It is a rare year indeed in which more than a few fail to achieve Grades A* or A.

PAPER 2	45 minutes	MULTIPLE CHOICE	30%
PAPER 4	1 hour 15 minutes	STRUCTURED QUESTIONS	50%
PAPER 6	1 hour	ALTERNATIVE TO PRACTICAL	20%

Physics is a CIE IGCSE subject and so students will be awarded with the grading scale of A* to G, with A* being the top grade.

