

Durham School for Girls Doha



IGCSE Options Booklet

2026-2027



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Welcome from the Head of Secondary

Choosing IGCSE subjects can be a daunting task. However, it should be seen as an exciting time. Students can think about what they may want to become in the future and make a plan towards achieving this. IGCSEs mark the first step in obtaining the Thanaweya, and it is important that students have a good knowledge of their options and where that might lead. The school has provided this booklet and option selection event to enable families to make informed decisions.

Students will need to pass the Thanaweya to graduate from school, and to proceed to university. The next two years will shape what can be done next. It is important that students work hard, keep up their studies and attend school. School attendance and good achievement are linked, so we expect at least 90% attendance from our girls.

Our aim is for DSGD girls to experience a safe, supportive, and inclusive learning environment where they will flourish.

Our curriculum aims to nurture creativity and critical thinking, fostering confidence, leadership, resilience, and a love of learning. We encourage students to embrace the challenge of IGCSEs and develop skills that will assist them to thrive in an ever-changing world.

I hope that you will find this booklet useful.

Ms Wendy Jones
Vice Principal and Head of Secondary

What are IGCSEs?

IGCSE stands for International General Certificate of Secondary Education.

IGCSEs are 2-year courses that are internationally recognised as the gold standard in education. At the end of 2 years, students will take externally set examinations. These are monitored and regulated by the UK Government by The Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation (OFQUAL).

IGCSEs are approved by the Ministry of Education in Qatar. Exams are scheduled by the Exam Board and are non-movable. These usually take place between April and June of year 11. Some IGCSE courses may have exams at the end of year 10, also in April to June.

The syllabus and exam content are standardised for all international students who take these qualifications, regardless of where they live. The exam schedule is prepared in the UK and examination times are fixed and set. This does mean that as a school we have no control over this and it is possible that in Year 11, some final papers could fall on a Friday, or a holiday.

Examination fees. IGCSE exam fees are charged by the Examination Board and the cost for each exam is set in the UK. Exam fees are **not** included in DSGD school fees and parents will be charged per exam in addition to school fees. An approximate charge per exam is around 600 QR although this does differ from one subject to another.

Please note that all school fees must be paid in full before exam entries can be paid for.

The Ministry of Education Leavers Certificate Requirements
The 'Thanaweya'

At Durham School for Girls, we follow guidance provided by the Ministry of Education to ensure that students meet the requirements of the Thanaweya. There are a number of successful routes to achieve the Thanaweya, and the IGCSE component is of vital importance. We ensure that the curriculum offered is appropriate and therefore students complete studies in 8 IGCSE subjects as well as Islamic Studies and PE to ensure they can gain the required number of passes.

If your daughter does not meet the minimum requirements at the end of year 11, they may not be able to progress to year 12.

IGCSE	AS Level	A Level	Compulsory Subjects
7 IGCSE Passes	3 AS Level Passes	None	Islamic Studies (Ministry curriculum)
7 IGCSE Passes	1 AS Level Passes	1 A Level Pass	Islamic Studies (Ministry curriculum)
5 IGCSE Passes	4 AS Level Passes	None	Islamic Studies (Ministry curriculum)
5 IGCSE Passes	2 AS Level Passes	1 A Level Pass	Islamic Studies (Ministry curriculum)

Durham School for Girls Code of Conduct and Values.

At Durham School for Girls, it is more than just academics, we aim to support students to be the best that they can be in all walks of life. The Durham Code of Conduct is MARK.

These values are the code of the whole school community: staff, students and parents. The MARK values underpin the core meaning of The Durham Family.

M	A	R	K
Moral Integrity	Ambition	Responsibility	Kindness
<p>We demonstrate a desire to do the right thing.</p> <p>We act in private as we do in public.</p> <p>We have the courage to say and do the right thing.</p> <p>We stand firm for what is right.</p> <p>We challenge things we think wrong and are open to challenge from others.</p> <p>We are accountable for failure as well as success, and do not allocate blame.</p> <p>We can be relied upon to do what is right.</p> <p>We demonstrate and promote honesty.</p>	<p>We achieve our goals by consistently working toward them.</p> <p>We go above and beyond the call of duty.</p> <p>We aim for the best in 'me and them' and take pride in all we do.</p> <p>We seek help and support before giving up and identify lessons in setbacks.</p> <p>We encourage all to develop maximum potential and support others to achieve.</p> <p>We embrace opportunities, challenge, and seek to develop our skills and talents.</p> <p>We identify opportunities for School Development.</p>	<p>We do what we say we will.</p> <p>We are punctual and prompt in all that we do.</p> <p>We use our resources responsibly, developing and caring for our environment.</p> <p>We act before being asked and consistently deliver on expectations.</p> <p>We prepare thoroughly for all tasks.</p> <p>We encourage autonomy in all and seek leadership.</p> <p>We acknowledge and seek to resolve problems.</p> <p>We pioneer better ways of doing things.</p>	<p>We are open and approachable to all.</p> <p>We welcome and listen to the opinions of others.</p> <p>We look to engage and involve all in the community.</p> <p>We attend to newcomers and those in need of help and build relationships actively.</p> <p>We are positive in responding to questions.</p> <p>We support each other and stand up for fellow colleagues and pupils.</p> <p>We acknowledge individual needs within the community.</p> <p>We speak positively of the School community.</p>

Attendance

Excellent attendance is obligatory when entering the Year 10 programme. Girls need to be responsible for being independent learners, following up on work, completing assignments and attending classes. The Ministry of Education and school have a minimum target of 90% attendance for every student.

The Curriculum

Students will study a maximum of 8 IGCSE subjects.

The following are **core subjects** and all students will study them:

Compulsory subjects for Year 10 including IGCSE and non-examined subjects

- English (IGCSE 1st or 2nd Language – chosen by the English teaching team)
- Mathematics (IGCSE)
- Arabic (IGCSE)
- Islamic Studies (Ministry curriculum)
- PE (non-examined)
- Two or three IGCSE Science subjects (chosen from Biology, Chemistry and Physics)

Subject options for 2026/2027 academic year (pupils will choose two or three options depending on their science choice above)

- Art – Fine Art
- Art –Textiles
- Business Studies
- English Literature
- Food and Nutrition
- Geography
- Global Perspectives
- History
- ICT
- Psychology
- Travel and Tourism

Students will study either two or three science subjects. If a pupil wants to study all three individual science subjects, then they must choose Triple Science as one of their optional subjects.

OPTION BLOCK A	OPTION BLOCK B	OPTION BLOCK C
Art Textiles	Fine Art	Business Studies
Business Studies	Business Studies	English Literature
Global Perspectives	History	Food and Nutrition
Food and Nutrition	ICT	Geography
Travel and Tourism	Psychology	ICT
	Travel and Tourism	Physics (for Triple Science students)

The Options Process

- Consider your strengths and interests. Choose subjects you enjoy and excel at.
- Think about future career plans. Some university courses or career paths may require specific subjects.
- Balance your workload. Aim for a mix of subjects that challenge you without overwhelming your schedule.
- Seek advice. Talk to teachers and your parents for input and to support in your decision-making process.

Next Steps

Step 1

- Read the booklet and see what excites you.
- Look at how the course is assessed – Course work or exams?
- Choose your options on what you like, what you are good at and what might be useful in the future.
- Talk to your teachers

Step 2: Complete the options form and return to your form tutor by Thursday 19th February 2026

Step 3: You may be seen individually to discuss your options

Step 4: Work hard to develop good foundations in learning throughout year 9.

Important Deadlines

- **Options Event** for parents and students with subject teachers: **Monday 2nd February 2026** (2.30pm-4.00pm)
- **Subject Selection Deadline: Thursday 19th February 2026**
- **Start of IGCSE Courses:** Start of Term 1 (August/September 2026)
- **Window for Option changes:** 3 weeks following the start of the course.

Frequently Asked Questions

- **Can I change my subjects later?** Subject changes may be possible in the first 3 weeks of the course, but are subject to availability in the class and school policy.
After this is will not be possible to change a subject, because too much learning time will have been lost, and you will not be able to catch up.
- **Are there prerequisites for some subjects?** At IGCSE students can choose the non-compulsory Option subjects freely within the option blocks. Only one subject can be chosen in each block.
- **Who can I contact for help?** Your form tutor, head of year and subject teachers are available to answer questions and provide guidance. Ms Rebecca Saunders (Deputy Head of Academics) oversees the curriculum and she is also available to answer questions.
- **What if I'm unsure about my future career?**
If you're unsure about your future career, choose subjects that keep your options open and align with a broad range of career paths. Subjects like Sciences, Humanities, and Arts can provide a well-rounded education. You can also talk to our university and careers counsellor, who can help advise you.
- **Can I drop a subject?**
No. Research shows these students still don't perform any better in their other subjects. The IGCSE years are a time of developing learning habits, study skills and many other characteristics, such as resilience, problem solving and tenacity. We feel it is very important that you develop these characteristics and do not give up when learning is hard.
- **What if I struggle with a subject?**
Seek help from your teachers or tutors if you're struggling with a subject. They can provide additional support, resources, or alternative learning strategies to help you succeed.
- **How do I balance my IGCSE subjects with other commitments?**
Effective time management and organisation are key to balancing your IGCSE subjects with other commitments such as extracurricular activities and personal interests. Create a study schedule and prioritise your tasks to ensure you stay on track with your academic goals.
- Attendance and Academic progress are linked. Attendance should be 90 %+ to ensure academic success. Girls will not be able to progress to A Levels / year 12 anywhere, if they do not achieve the required IGCSE results.
- **Can I take exams early?**
No. The course is two years for a reason. It is not possible to learn everything that comes up in the exam in a shorter time. Some courses are modular, and there are specific time frames for the exams.

Who can I talk to for advice?

- Subject teachers - they will be available on Options event and in school at anytime
- Your form tutor
- Head of Year: Ms. Kara (kcrankshaw@durhamqatar.com)
- Deputy Head Academic: Ms. Rebecca (rsaunders@durhamqatar.com)
- Head of Secondary: Ms. Wendy (wjones@durhamqatar.com)
- University and Careers Counsellor: Ms. Sara (skurat@durhamqatar.com)
- Your parents

Information on IGCSE Subjects Core Subjects

Subject: Arabic (First Language)	Exam Board: Cambridge	Specification Code:7180
Course Aims:		
<p>The aims are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • enable students to communicate accurately, appropriately and effectively in writing • enable students to understand and respond appropriately to what they read • encourage students to enjoy and appreciate a variety of language • enable students to acquire a wide range of vocabulary and apply it alongside accurate grammar and spelling • complement the students' other areas of study by developing skills of a more general application (e.g. analysis, synthesis, drawing of inferences) • promote the students' personal development and an understanding of themselves and others. 		
Content Overview:		
<p>Cambridge IGCSE (9–1) Arabic offers learners the opportunity to develop practical communication skills in reading and writing.</p> <p>Learners are encouraged to read a wide variety of texts and to engage with a diverse range of social and cultural topics throughout the course and use the knowledge gained to inform their own writing. They will be able to communicate facts and express their own viewpoints in writing and write effectively for different purposes and audiences. This will enable learners to become appreciative and independent users of Arabic.</p>		
Assessment Overview:		
All candidates take:		And:
<p>Paper 1 1 hour 30 minutes</p> <p>Writing 50%</p> <p>50 marks</p> <p>Candidates answer two questions.</p> <p>In Section A candidates answer one question from a choice of two questions.</p> <p>In Section B candidates answer one question from a choice of three questions.</p> <p>Externally assessed</p>	<p>Paper 2 1 hour 30 minutes</p> <p>Reading 50%</p> <p>50 marks</p> <p>Candidates answer all questions.</p> <p>Written exam consisting of exercises that test a range of reading comprehension, grammar and writing skills.</p> <p>The task types are multiple-choice questions, short-answer questions and a summary.</p> <p>Externally assessed</p>	

Arabic and Islamic studies are compulsory subjects for Arab and Qatari students, as it is essential for them to obtain their Thanaweya certificates.

Course Aims:

The aims are to enable students to:

- develop the language proficiency required to communicate effectively in Modern Standard Arabic at level A2 (CEFR Basic User), with elements of level B1 (CEFR Independent User)
- offer insights into the culture and society of countries and communities where Arabic is spoken
- develop awareness of the nature of language and language learning
- encourage positive attitudes towards speakers of other languages and a sympathetic approach to other cultures
- provide enjoyment and intellectual stimulation
- develop transferable skills (e.g. memorising, drawing of inferences) to complement other areas of the curriculum
- form a sound base of the skills, language and attitudes required for progression to work or further study, either in Arabic or another subject area.

Content Overview:

The subject content is organised into five main topic areas that support vocabulary learning, grammar study, and understanding of Arabic-speaking cultures:

- everyday activities
- personal and social life
- the world around us
- the world of work
- the international world.

The syllabus develops students' reading, listening, writing, and speaking skills through familiar topics and everyday communication.

Assessment Overview:

All assessments will take place at the end of Year 11.

All candidates take all four papers. Candidates are eligible for grades A* to G. All papers test Modern Standard Arabic.

Paper Skill Duration Weighting Marks Description Assessment

Paper 1	Approximately 50 minutes	Paper 2	1 hour
Listening Marks 40 Candidates listen to recordings and answer multiple-choice and matching questions. Externally assessed	25%	Reading 45 marks Candidates read texts and answer multiple-choice, matching, and short-answer questions. Externally assessed	25%
Paper 3	Approximately 10 minutes	Paper 4	1 hour
Speaking 40 Marks One role play and conversations on two topics. Internally assessed and externally moderated	25%	Writing 25% 45 marks One form-filling task, one directed writing task, and one extended writing task (email/letter or article/blog). Internally assessed and externally moderated	

Subject: English Language (First Language)	Exam Board: Cambridge	Specification Code: 0500
<p>Course Aims:</p> <p>The aims are to enable students to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • read a wide range of texts, fluently and with good understanding, enjoying and appreciating a variety of language • read critically, and use knowledge gained from wide reading to inform and improve their own writing • write accurately and effectively, using Standard English appropriately • work with information and with ideas in language by developing skills of evaluation, analysis, use and inference • listen to, understand, and use spoken language effectively • acquire and apply a wide vocabulary, alongside a knowledge and understanding of grammatical terminology and linguistic conventions. 		
<p>Content Overview:</p> <p>Cambridge IGCSE First Language English offers candidates the opportunity to respond with understanding to a rich array of reading texts during the course.</p> <p>Candidates will use these texts to inform and inspire their own writing and write in a range of text types for different purposes and audiences.</p> <p>Candidates will develop both their speaking and their listening skills, delivering a presentation, and responding to questions and engaging in conversations.</p> <p>Candidates are encouraged to become appreciative and critical readers, writers, speakers and listeners.</p>		
<p>Assessment Overview:</p> <p>All candidates take two papers. Paper 1, and Paper 2. Candidates will be eligible for grades A* to G.</p> <p>All candidates take:</p>		
Paper 1	Paper 2	
<p>Reading – 2 hours 50% - 80 marks Structured and extended writing questions Questions will be based on three reading texts Externally assessed</p>	<p>Directed Writing and Composition – 2 hours 50% - 80 marks Extended writing question and a composition task Externally assessed</p>	

Course Aims:

The aims describe the purposes of a course based on this syllabus.

The aims are to:

- develop learners’ ability to use English effectively for the purpose of practical communication
- form a solid foundation for the skills required for further study or employment using English as the medium
- develop learners’ awareness of the nature of language and language-learning skills
- promote learners’ personal development.

Content Overview:

Learners will be presented with a variety of stimuli that will build up their skills in reading and writing. They will learn to select relevant details, understand the difference between what is directly stated and implied, and practice writing for different purposes and audiences. Learners will listen to a range of spoken material, including talks and conversations, in order to develop listening skills.

Learners will engage in conversations on a variety of topics, and develop their skills in responding to different situations and audiences with a degree of accuracy and clarity.

Cambridge IGCSE English as a Second Language will enable learners to become independent users of English, and to be able to use English to communicate effectively in a variety of practical contexts.

Assessment Overview:

Syllabus code 0510 (Speaking Endorsement)

All candidates take three components.

Candidates who have studied the Extended syllabus content should be entered for Paper 2, Paper 4 and Component 5.

These candidates will be eligible for grades A* to E.

Paper 2	Paper 4
2 hours Reading and Writing - 70% 80 marks Six exercises testing a range of reading and writing skills Externally assessed	50 minutes Listening - 30% 40 marks Candidates listen to several short extracts and longer texts, and complete a range of task types, including short-answer questions, gap filling, matching, multiple choice and note-making. Externally assessed

Component 5 - Speaking

Approximately 10–15 minutes

Speaking Separately endorsed

30 marks

Following a 2–3 minute warm-up conversation, candidates engage in a 6–9 minute discussion with the examiner on a given topic.

Internally assessed/externally moderated

Subject: Mathematics	Exam Board: Pearson Edexcel	Specification Code: (A) (Modular) (4XMAF/4XMAH)
Course Aims:		
<p>The Pearson Edexcel International GCSE in Mathematics (Specification A) (modular) is designed to allow students to develop mathematical knowledge, understanding, and skills in a structured format. Below is an outline of its components and structure.</p>		
<p>This course allows pupils to:</p>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To develop their problem-solving and reasoning skills. • To notice and realise the application of mathematics in the real world. • To understand how to use mathematics up to IGCSE level and create a firm foundation for those wishing to study the subject further. • For students to have a positive attitude to mathematics and to achieve the best of their ability, with confidence and enjoyment. 		
Content Overview:		
Course Components		
<p>1. Qualification Overview</p>		
<p><u>Levels Offered:</u> Foundation Tier and Higher Tier.</p>		
<p>Foundation Tier: Grades 5–1.</p>		
<p>Higher Tier: Grades 9–4.</p>		
<p>2. Modular Units</p>		
<p>The specification is divided into six units:</p>		
<p>These are essential for both Foundation and Higher Tier students.</p>		
<p><u>Number</u></p>		
<p>Concepts of arithmetic, fractions, decimals, percentages, ratios, and proportions. Operations involving integers, surds, and indices.</p>		
<p><u>Algebra</u></p>		
<p>Simplifying expressions, solving linear and quadratic equations, and understanding sequences. Graphs of functions, including straight lines, quadratics, and simple transformations.</p>		
<p><u>Geometry and Measures</u></p>		
<p>Properties of shapes, angles, and constructions. Perimeter, area, volume, and units of measurement.</p>		
<p>Coordinate geometry and transformations.</p>		
<p><u>Statistics</u></p>		
<p>Data collection, representation, and analysis. Measures of central tendency (mean, median, mode) and spread (range, quartiles). Probability basics.</p>		
<p>Higher-Level Units (Exclusive to Higher Tier students)</p>		
<p><u>Advanced Algebra and Functions</u></p>		
<p>Advanced manipulation of algebraic expressions and equations. Working with exponential functions, logarithms, and binomial expansions.</p>		
<p><u>Further Geometry and Trigonometry</u></p>		
<p>Advanced trigonometric identities and solving problems in 2D and 3D geometry. Circles, tangents, and geometric proofs.</p>		
<p>Assessment Overview:</p>		
<p>The final assessment is completed in two parts. Unit 1 will be assessed at the end of Year 10 and Unit 2 will be assessed at the end of Year 11. Each paper is weighed at 50% and is assessed through a 2-hour examination set and externally marked. Both examination papers are calculator based. The total number of marks for each paper is 100 marks.</p>		

Subject: Biology	Exam Board: Pearson Edexcel	Specification Code: 4XB11
<p>Course Aims:</p> <p>The aims and objectives of this qualification are to enable students to learn about unifying patterns and themes in biology and use them in new and changing situations. Alongside acquiring knowledge and understanding of biological facts, terminology, concepts, principles and practical techniques. Students have the opportunity to apply the principles and concepts of biology, including those related to the applications of biology, to different contexts and evaluate biological information, making judgements on the basis of this information.</p>		
<p>Content Overview:</p> <p>The course is structured into two units, each combining elements from key topic areas:</p> <p>Biology Unit 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Nature and Variety of Living Organisms – Students learn the characteristics shared by all living organisms and explore the diversity of life forms, including plants, animals, fungi, bacteria, and viruses. • Structure and Functions in Living Organisms: Part 1 – Covers levels of organisation from cells to systems, detailed cell structure, the role of biological molecules, and processes such as diffusion, osmosis, and active transport. <p>Biology Unit 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Structure and Functions in Living Organisms: Part 2 – Focuses on transport systems in plants and animals, excretion processes, and coordination and response, including the nervous and hormonal systems. • Reproduction and Inheritance – Explores sexual and asexual reproduction, genetic inheritance, variation, and the role of DNA in determining characteristics. • Ecology and the Environment – Examines organisms in their habitats, feeding relationships, nutrient cycles, and human impacts on ecosystems such as pollution and climate change. • Use of Biological Resources – Investigates food production methods, selective breeding, genetic modification, cloning, and the importance of nutrition, respiration, and gas exchange in maintaining life. <p>This integrated approach ensures students develop a comprehensive understanding of biological principles, processes, and applications across both units.</p>		
<p>Assessment Overview:</p> <p>Unit 1 (Year 10) Assessed through a 1 hour 40-minute written examination set and marked by Pearson. This paper accounts for 50% of the qualification and includes a mix of multiple-choice, short-answer, calculation, and extended open-response questions.</p> <p>Unit 2 (Year 11) Also assessed through a 1 hour 40-minute written examination, weighted at 50% of the qualification. The question styles are similar to Unit 1, testing knowledge, application, and problem-solving skills.</p> <p>General Assessment Features Both papers use a variety of question types and allow the use of a calculator. Students are expected to apply their understanding to familiar and unfamiliar contexts, with questions requiring both theoretical knowledge and practical application.</p>		

Course Aims:

The aims and objectives of this qualification are to enable students to learn about unifying patterns and themes in chemistry and use them in new and changing situations, as well as acquiring knowledge and understanding of chemical facts, terminology, concepts, principles and practical techniques. Students will have the opportunity to apply the principles and concepts of chemistry, including those related to the applications of chemistry, to different contexts.

Content Overview:

The course is organised into **two units**, each integrating elements from four key topic areas:

- **Principles of Chemistry** – covering states of matter, atomic structure, the Periodic Table, chemical formulae, bonding, and electrolysis.
- **Inorganic Chemistry** – exploring alkali metals, halogens, gases in the atmosphere, the reactivity series, extraction and uses of metals, and chemical tests.
- **Physical Chemistry** – focusing on energetics, rates of reaction, reversible reactions, and equilibria.
- **Organic Chemistry** – introducing crude oil, alkanes, alkenes, carboxylic acids, esters, and synthetic polymers.

Both units combine theoretical knowledge with practical applications, ensuring students develop a strong understanding of chemical principles across all four topic areas.

Assessment Overview:**Unit 1 (Year 10)**

Assessed through a 1 hour 40-minute written examination set and marked by Pearson. This paper accounts for 50% of the qualification and includes a mix of multiple-choice, short-answer, calculation, and extended open-response questions.

Unit 2 (Year 11)

Also assessed through a 1 hour 40-minute written examination, weighted at 50% of the qualification. The question styles are similar to Unit 1, testing knowledge, application, and problem-solving skills.

General Assessment Features

Both papers use a variety of question types and allow the use of a calculator. Students are expected to apply their understanding to familiar and unfamiliar contexts, with questions requiring both theoretical knowledge and practical application.

Course Aims:

The aims and objectives of this qualification are to enable students to learn about unifying patterns and themes in physics and use them in new and changing situations. Students will acquire knowledge and understanding of physical facts, terminology, concepts, principles and practical techniques. They will apply the principles and concepts of physics, including those related to the applications of physics, to different contexts and evaluate physical information, making judgements on the basis of this information. Whilst appreciating the practical nature of physics, developing experimental and investigative skills based on correct and safe laboratory techniques.

Content Overview:

The course is divided into **two units**, each integrating key topic areas to provide a thorough understanding of physical principles and their applications:

Unit 1

1. **Forces and Motion** – Learn about units, movement and position, and how forces affect motion, shape, and momentum.
2. **Electricity** – Explore mains electricity, energy and voltage in circuits, and the concept of electrical charge.
3. **Energy Resources and Energy Transfer** – Understand energy transfers, work and power, and methods of electrical generation from various energy resources.
4. **Solids, Liquids and Gases: Part 1** – Study density, pressure, and changes of state in matter.

Unit 2

5. **Waves** – Investigate wave properties, the electromagnetic spectrum, and the behaviour of light and sound.
6. **Solids, Liquids and Gases: Part 2** – Extend understanding to ideal gas molecules and related principles.
7. **Magnetism and Electromagnetism** – Learn about magnetic fields, electromagnetism, and electromagnetic induction.
8. **Radioactivity and Particles** – Explore radioactivity, nuclear fission and fusion, and their applications.
9. **Astrophysics** – Examine motion in the universe, stellar evolution, and cosmology.

This structure ensures students develop strong theoretical knowledge alongside practical and mathematical skills, preparing them for further study and real-world applications.

Assessment Overview:**Unit 1 (Year 10)**

Assessed through a 1 hour 40-minute written examination set and marked by Pearson. This paper accounts for 50% of the qualification and includes a mix of multiple-choice, short-answer, calculation, and extended open-response questions.

Unit 2 (Year 11)

Also assessed through a 1 hour 40-minute written examination, weighted at 50% of the qualification. The question styles are similar to Unit 1, testing knowledge, application, and problem-solving skills.

General Assessment Features

Both papers use a variety of question types and allow the use of a calculator. Students are expected to apply their understanding to familiar and unfamiliar contexts, with questions requiring both theoretical knowledge and practical application.

Subject: Core PE (Mandatory, non-examined subject)

Course Aims:

At Durham School for Girls, students in Year 10 and Year 11 participate in Core PE once a week, following the UK National Curriculum for Physical Education.

The programme aims to promote lifelong participation in physical activity, support personal well-being, and encourage students to lead healthy, active lifestyles beyond school.

Lessons focus on developing competence and confidence in a range of physical activities, improving fitness, teamwork, and leadership skills. Students take part in both individual and team sports, including athletics, games, fitness training, and creative activities, with an emphasis on enjoyment, personal challenge, and maintaining physical and mental health.

The curriculum also provides opportunities for students to take on different roles, such as performer, coach, and official, helping them build communication, responsibility, and resilience — key attributes that contribute to overall character and success in later life.

This subject is not optional, and it is an important part of the school curriculum that all students are expected to take seriously.

Information on IGCSE Subjects Optional Subjects

For your optional subjects you will need to choose additional subjects to study. For these options think about:

- Will this subject link to something I want to do in the future
- Is this something I would really enjoy
- Will I be able to cope with the content of this subject.

You will be asked to choose a subject from each option block but also have a backup subject if we cannot accommodate all your first choices. The subjects offered this year are:

OPTION BLOCK A	OPTION BLOCK B	OPTION BLOCK C
Art Textiles	Fine Art	Business Studies
Business Studies	Business Studies	English Literature
Global Perspectives	History	Food and Nutrition
Food and Nutrition	ICT	Geography
Travel and Tourism	Psychology	ICT
	Travel and Tourism	Physics (for Triple Science students)

We cannot guarantee your top choices, however, will endeavor to match your preferences where possible.

Course Aims:

Textile Design is a versatile practice involving the creation, selection, manipulation and application of materials such as fibers, yarns and fabrics, using processes including weaving, stitching, dyeing, embellishing and printing to create artistic and functional outcomes.

Students will develop creative ideas through practical exploration and informed decision-making, working across decorative, expressive, and applied textile processes. Textile designers also play an important role within the fashion, theatre, performance, interior and retail industries, and students are encouraged to explore both traditional and contemporary contexts.

This course develops creative confidence, technical understanding, and visual communication, allowing students to develop a personal style supported by experimentation, research, and making.

Content Overview:

The course is made up of two components, each weighting 50% of the final grade:

1. **Component 1:** Personal portfolio must include supporting studies and personal responses, demonstrating evidence of the four assessment objectives. This component is internally set and externally assessed. Students are required to submit three sheets of supporting studies and one final outcome.
2. **Component 2:** Externally set assignment is a body of work based on an externally set theme. This component is externally set and assessed. There will be a 10-hour period under exam conditions where students will work unaided to produce a personal response, with reference to their preparatory studies.

The skills developed throughout the course include recording from observation, researching textile designers, experimenting with processes and materials, developing design ideas, evaluating work, and producing purposeful outcomes using appropriate textile techniques. Students work across areas such as: Fashion and costume, Printed and dyed textiles, constructed textiles, embellished and stitched textiles, digital textiles, soft furnishings and interiors

Assessment Overview:

Assessment includes:

An ongoing personal portfolio (Component 1)

An externally set examination with preparatory work (Component 2)

Assessment Objectives:

- AO1: Develop ideas through investigations and research
- AO2: Refine work through experimentation and sampling
- AO3: Record ideas, textile processes and observations
- AO4: Present a personal and meaningful final outcome

Each assessment objective contributes equally to the final grade.

This International GCSE qualification is graded on a 9–1 scale, with 9 being the highest grade.

The final result is awarded using the combined marks from both components. Individual components are not graded separately.

Subject: Fine Art	Exam Board: Pearson Edexcel	Specification Code: 4FA1
Course Aims:		
<p>Fine Art can be defined as work developed primarily to communicate aesthetic, intellectual or purely conceptual ideas and meaning rather than to serve a practical or commercial function. For example, work may arise from personal experiences, thoughts and feelings, or from observation and recording of people, places and things in new and imaginative ways.</p> <p>Throughout the course, students develop an understanding and application of the formal elements alongside a range of creative skills including mark-making. Visual communication is used thoughtfully to document artistic development and support personal intentions. The course nurtures confident, independent learners who experiment, reflect and refine ideas through practical exploration and informed research.</p>		
Content Overview:		
<p>The course is made up of two components, each weighting 50% of the total final grade:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Component 1: Personal portfolio must include supporting studies and personal responses, demonstrating evidence of the four assessment objectives. This component is internally set and externally assessed. Students are required to submit three sheets of supporting studies and one final outcome. <li>2. Component 2: Externally set assignment is a body of work based on an externally set theme. This component is externally set and assessed. There will be a 10-hour period under exam conditions where students will work unaided to produce a personal response, with reference to their preparatory studies. <p>The skills developed throughout the course include recording experiences and observations, undertaking visual and contextual research, selecting and organising visual and tactile materials, experimenting with techniques, analysing artists' work, evaluating outcomes, and making independent creative decisions. Students work across areas such as drawing, painting, mixed media, sculpture, printing and lens-based media.</p>		
Assessment Overview:		
<p>Assessment consists of: An on-going personal portfolio (Component 1) An externally set examination with preparatory work (Component 2)</p> <p>Students are assessed using four Assessment Objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AO1: Develop ideas through investigations and demonstrate critical understanding of sources <li>• AO2: Refine work through experimentation with materials and processes <li>• AO3: Record ideas, observations and insights <li>• AO4: Present a personal and meaningful final outcome <p>Each objective contributes equally to the final grade.</p> <p>This International GCSE qualification is graded on a 9–1 scale, where 9 is the highest grade. The final grade is awarded using the combined marks from both components. Individual components are not graded separately.</p>		

Course Aims:

The Pearson Edexcel International GCSE in Business qualification enables students to:

- Develop an interest in and enthusiasm for the study of business
- Develop an understanding of business concepts, business terminology, business objectives and the integrated nature of business activity
- Understand how the main types of business are organized, financed, and operated
- Develop and apply knowledge, understanding and skills to contemporary business issues in a wide range of businesses from small enterprises to large multinationals and businesses operating in Local, national, and global context
- Develop critical-thinking and enquiry skills to distinguish between facts and opinion, calculating, interpreting, and evaluating business data, to help build arguments and make informed judgements
- Develop an understanding of the dynamics of business activity and the related considerations of ethics and sustainability for global businesses

Skills that will be developed will be to introduce students to the world of small businesses and to consider what makes someone a successful businessperson. Students will know how to develop an idea, identify an opportunity, and turn that into a successful business. How to make a business effective and manage money.

Content Overview:

The course is split into five units:

Unit 1 Business Activity and Influences on Business

This section covers the various objectives of a business, changing business environments and the criteria for judging success. The focus is on the importance of having clear business objectives and how the business environment provides opportunities for, and imposes constraints on, the pursuit of these objectives

Unit 2 People in Business

This section looks at people in organizations, focusing on their roles, relationships, and management in business

Unit 3 Business Finance

This section explores the use of accounting and financial information as an aid to decision making

Unit 4 Marketing

This section focuses on identifying and satisfying customer needs in a changing and competitive international environment

Unit 5 Business Operations

This section examines the way organizations use and manage resources to produce goods and services

Assessment Overview:

The two-paper model gives students better opportunities to focus on real-life business scenarios covering small and large businesses. We will test knowledge, understanding, analytical and evaluation skills in five sections: Business Activity and Influences on Business, People in Business, Business Finance, Marketing and Business Operations.

Paper 1: Investigating small businesses – 50% of the final grade 4BS1/01

Paper 2: Investigating large businesses – 50% of the final grade 4BS1/02

Course Aims:

The aims are to enable students to:

- enjoy the experience of reading literature
- understand and respond to literary texts in different forms and from different periods and cultures
- communicate an informed personal response appropriately and effectively
- appreciate different ways in which writers achieve their effects
- experience literature’s contribution to aesthetic, imaginative and intellectual growth
- explore the contribution of literature to an understanding of areas of human concern.

Content Overview:

The syllabus enables learners to read, interpret and evaluate texts through the study of literature in English.

Learners develop an understanding of literal meaning, relevant contexts and of the deeper themes or attitudes that may be expressed.

Through their studies, they learn to recognise and appreciate the ways in which writers use English to achieve a range of effects, and will be able to present an informed, personal response to the material they have studied.

The syllabus also encourages the exploration of wider and universal issues, promoting learners’ better understanding of themselves and of the world around them.

Assessment Overview:

All candidates take Paper 1 Poetry and Prose, Paper 3 Drama and Paper 4 Unseen
 Candidates will be eligible for grades A* to G.

Paper 1	Paper 3	Paper 4
1 hour 30 minutes Poetry and Prose - 50% 50 marks Two questions on two texts: one poetry and one prose Externally assessed	45 minutes Drama (Open Text) - 25% 25 marks One question on one set text Externally assessed	1 hour 15 minutes Unseen – 25% 25 marks One question requiring critical commentary on unseen poetry or prose Externally assessed

Course Aims:

The aims are to enable students to develop:

- an understanding of nutrition and health problems associated with diet
- an understanding and awareness of how socio-economic factors affect diet
- an understanding of eating patterns and dietary needs both for people of different ages and for differing groups within society
- an awareness of how the position of the consumer differs in developed and less-developed economies and how to assess the effectiveness and validity of claims made by advertisers
- an aesthetic and social sensitivity to dietary patterns
- an interest in the creative side and enjoyment of food and the skills necessary for food preparation and food preservation
- food-related knowledge and skills so that they can organize and manage family resources effectively according to the needs and lifestyles of family members
- an ability to make informed judgements and choices about the use of food available to the family unit in everyday life
- an awareness of relevant mandatory and other necessary safety and hygiene requirements

Content Overview:

Food and Nutrition enables students to develop knowledge and practical skills that are directly relevant to everyday life. The course explores the role of food and nutrition within a modern, changing and multicultural society, allowing students to understand how dietary choices are influenced by lifestyle, culture and resources.

Students apply theoretical knowledge alongside practical cooking skills while considering factors such as personal and family needs, budgeting, food availability and the relationship between diet and health. The subject encourages informed decision-making, independence and an understanding of how nutrition impacts overall wellbeing.

Assessment Overview:

The final assessment is made up of two components, where candidates will be eligible for grades A* to G. All assessments will take place at the end of Year 11.

Paper 1 (Theory Test): 2 hour written paper consisting of short-answer questions, structured questions, and open-ended essay questions. It assesses Assessment Objectives AO1, AO2 and AO3 and is externally assessed. 100 marks 50% of total marks

Paper 2 (Practical Test): Paper 2 is the practical test and is also worth 50% of the final grade. It includes a 1 hour 30-minute planning session followed by a 2-hour 30-minute practical examination. During the planning session, candidates are given their allocated test question and are required to complete three preparation sheets. In the practical examination, candidates prepare and present food products under exam conditions. This component assesses AO1, AO2 and AO3 and is internally assessed and externally moderated.

Subject: Geography	Exam Board: Pearson Edexcel	Specification Code: 4GE1
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Course Aims:

The aims and objectives of this qualification are to enable students to:

- apply and build on the fundamental building blocks of geographical knowledge
- actively engage in the process of geographical enquiry to develop as effective and independent learners, and as critical and reflective thinkers with enquiring minds
- develop their knowledge and understanding of geographical concepts and appreciate the relevance of these concepts to our changing world
- develop a framework of spatial awareness in which to appreciate the importance of the location of places and environments at a range of scales
- appreciate that people have different views of, and attitudes to, the world, its environments and its issues
- acquire, develop and apply practical geographical enquiry skills
- undertake geographical investigations that include both primary and secondary data collection, presentation and analysis, drawing conclusions, and evaluating the whole geographical investigation
- develop and apply their learning to the real world through fieldwork
- develop their awareness of global issues and recognise the challenges of moving towards a sustainable future.

Content Overview:

Paper 1 – Physical Geography (40% of total GCSE)

- River Environments
- Coastal Landscapes
- Hazardous Landscapes
- Fieldwork related questions

Paper 2 – Human Geography (60% of total GCSE)

- Rural Environments
- Urban Environments
- Global Issues – Fragile Environments & Climate Change

Assessment Overview:

- **Paper 1:** Examination of 1 hour and 10 minutes, consisting of two sections. The questions are a mixture of multiple-choice, short-answer, data-response and open-ended questions. Paper 1 is made up of two sections, Section A and Section B. Section A Candidates choose two out of three questions on: river environments, coastal environments, hazardous environments. Whereas, Section B Candidates choose one out of three fieldwork-related questions on: river environments, coastal environments, hazardous environments.
- **Paper 2:** Examination of 1 hour and 45 minutes, consisting of three sections. The questions are a mixture of multiple-choice, short-answer, data-response and open-ended questions. Paper 2 is made up of three sections, Section A, Section B and Section C. For Section A Candidates choose two out of three questions on: economic activity and energy, rural environments, urban environments. For Section B Candidates choose one out of three fieldwork-related questions on: economic activity and energy, rural environments, urban environments. For Section C Candidates choose one out of three questions on: fragile environments and climate change, globalisation and migration, development and human welfare

Subject: Global Perspectives	Exam Board: Cambridge	Specification Code: 0457
Course Aims:		
<p>Global Perspectives empowers students to explore real-world issues from multiple viewpoints. It develops skills needed for modern life, study and careers such as research, critical thinking, collaboration, reflection, communication and evaluation. Students will learn how global issues affect individuals, communities, and the wider world, and will be encouraged to form evidence-based opinions and solutions.</p> <p>Students will become more confident, responsible, reflective, innovative and engaged global citizens, able to analyse information and justify their perspectives with reasoning.</p>		
Content Overview:		
<p>Rather than being a content-heavy knowledge subject, Global Perspectives is skills-focused. Students explore global topics through enquiry, discussion, research and project work.</p> <p>Topics include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Climate change, energy & resources • Media & communication • Digital world & technology • Migration & urbanisation • Poverty & inequality • Health & wellbeing • Globalisation & development • Values, identity & culture • Conflict, peace & politics • Environment, water, food & sustainability <p>Students investigate issues at local, national and global levels and are encouraged to compare different viewpoints before forming their own evidence based conclusions.</p>		
Assessment Overview:		
<p>Students complete three components across the two-year course:</p> <p>Component 1 – Written Exam (1hr 25m) Description: Source-based exam analysing global issues, perspectives, evidence and arguments. 35% of total Grade</p> <p>Component 2 – Individual Report Description: Independent research project (1500–2000 words) on a global issue chosen by the student. Must include contrasting local/national & global perspectives. 30% of total Grade</p> <p>Component 3 – Team Project Description: Group research and action project on a local issue linked to a global theme. Includes teamwork, action, and reflection. 35% of total Grade</p> <p>Assessed skills include analysis, evaluation, collaboration, communication, research and reflection.</p>		

Subject: History	Exam Board: Pearson Edexcel	Specification Code: 4HI1
Course Aims:		
<p>The aims and objectives of this qualification are to enable students to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • develop and extend their knowledge and understanding of specified key events, periods and societies in history; and of the wide diversity of human experience • engage in historical enquiry to develop as independent learners and as critical and reflective thinkers • develop the ability to ask relevant questions about the past, to investigate issues critically and to make valid historical claims by using a range of sources in their historical context • develop an awareness that different people, events and developments have been accorded historical significance and how and why different interpretations have been constructed about them • organize and communicate their historical knowledge and understanding in different ways and reach substantiated conclusions. 		
Content Overview:		
<p>The topics to be covered across the two years of study are as follows:</p> <p>Depth studies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Development of Dictatorship: Germany 1918–1945 - A Divided Union: Civil Rights in the USA, 1945–1970 <p>Historical investigation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Origins and Course of the First World War, 1905–1918 <p>Breadth Studies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Changes in Medicine, c1848–c1948 		
Assessment Overview:		
<p>History consists of two mandatory papers, All the assessments for International GCSE History will take place at the end of the two years of study.</p> <p>Paper 1 – Depth studies. Students are assessed through an examination based on</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Development of Dictatorship: Germany 1918–1945 - A Divided Union: Civil Rights in the USA, 1945–1970 <p>Students answer two questions, one on each of the depth studies they have studied. (50 % of total IGCSE)</p> <p>Written examination: 1 hour 30 minutes</p> <p>Paper 2 – Investigation and Breadth studies Students are assessed through an examination based on their historical investigation and breadth study in change.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Changes in Medicine, c1848–c1948 -The Origins and Course of the First World War, 1905–1918 <p>Students answer two questions, one question on their historical investigation, and one question on their breadth study in change. (50 % of total IGCSE)</p> <p>Written examination: 1 hour 30 minutes</p>		

Subject: ICT	Exam Board: Cambridge	Specification Code: 0417
Course Aims:		
<p>The aims are to enable students to develop:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An understanding of the basic components, use and application of different ICT systems and networks • The skills to analyse, design, implement, test and evaluate ICT systems • The skills to understand the impact of current and new technologies on methods of working in the outside world • The ability to recognise potential risks when using ICT, and use safe, secure and responsible practice. 		
Content Overview:		
<p>Cambridge IGCSE Information and Communication Technology provides learners with the ability to use a broad range of ICT skills and encourages knowledge and understanding of the development of ICT systems, networks and their safe use. This course provides learners with the ability to understand the rapid change of ICT in a technology-based world and the impact ICT has on the world. Learners in a modern ICT based world need to have the ability to gather, process and manipulate data; this course helps learners to fulfil this. The combination of knowledge and skills in Cambridge IGCSE Information and Communication Technology gives learners a solid foundation for further study. Candidates who achieve grades A* to C are well prepared to follow a wide range of courses including Cambridge International AS & A Level Information Technology. Students study the following topics:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Types and components of computer systems 2. Input and output devices 3. Storage devices and media 4. 4 Networks and the effects of using them 5. The effects of using IT 6. ICT applications 7. The systems life cycle 8. Safety and security 9. Audience 10. Communication 11. File management 12. Images 13. Layout 14. Styles 15. Proofing 16. Graphs and charts 17. Document production 18. Databases 19. Presentations 20. Spreadsheets 21. Website authoring 		
Assessment Overview:		
<p>All candidates take three components. Candidates will be eligible for grades A* to G.</p> <p>Paper 1: Theory (1 hour 40 minutes) worth 40% of the final grade. Questions will be based on sections 1–21 of the subject content and externally assessed.</p> <p>Paper 2: Document Production, Databases and Presentations (2 hour 15 minutes) worth 30% of the final grade with 70 marks. This test assesses the practical skills needed to use the applications covered in sections 17, 18 and 19 of the subject content. Candidates must demonstrate the practical skills relevant to sections 11–16. All tasks are compulsory and externally assessed.</p> <p>Paper 3: Practical Component 3 (2 hours 15 minutes) Spreadsheets and Website Authoring worth 30% of the final grade with 70 marks. This test assesses the practical skills needed to use the applications covered in sections 20 and 21 of the subject content. Candidates must demonstrate the practical skills relevant to sections 11–16. All tasks are compulsory and externally assessed.</p>		

Subject: Psychology	Exam Board: Pearson Edexcel	Specification Code: 1PS0
Course Aims:		
<p>The aims and objectives of this qualification are to enable students to: use specialist vocabulary, psychological concepts, terminology and convention to engage in the process of psychological enquiry.</p> <p>Students acquire knowledge and understanding of psychology, developing an understanding of self and others, and how psychological understanding can help to explain everyday social phenomena as well as an understanding of how psychological research is conducted, including the role of scientific method and data analysis.</p> <p>Students have the opportunity to present information, develop arguments and draw conclusions through a critical approach to psychological evidence, developing as reflective thinkers. They will develop an understanding of the relationship between psychology and personal, moral, social and cultural issues, and develop an understanding of ethical issues in psychology.</p> <p>Alongside developing an understanding of psychological issues, the contribution of psychology to individual, social and cultural diversity, and how psychology contributes to society.</p>		
Content Overview:		
<p>The course is made up of three sections:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Section A which are the compulsory topics of development, memory, neuropsychology, psychological problems and social influence. These are all examined in Paper 1. • Section B student study two of the following: criminology, the self, perception, sleep & dreaming and language, thought & communication. These are examined in Paper 2. • Section C (Research Methods) examined across both Paper 1 and Paper 2. 		
Assessment Overview:		
<p>The Pearson Edexcel GCSE (9–1) in Psychology consists of two externally-examined papers.</p> <p>Paper 1 is 1 hour and 45 minutes in length consisting of six sections and students must answer all questions in each section. The first five sections will contain multiple-choice, short-open and open-response questions. The sixth section will contain two extended open-response questions. These questions will focus on debates within psychology and the interrelationships between the core areas of psychology. This paper accounts for 55% of the overall GCSE grade.</p> <p>Paper 2 is 1 hour and 20 minutes in length and is made up of six sections. The paper will include calculations, multiple-choice, short-open, open-response and extended-writing questions. The paper will include questions that target mathematics at Key Stage 3. Calculators may be used in the examination. This paper accounts for 45% of the overall GCSE grade.</p> <p>Students must complete all assessments at the end of Year 11.</p>		

Subject: Travel and Tourism	Exam Board: Cambridge	Specification Code: 0471
Course Aims:		
<p>The aims are to enable students to develop:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • understanding of the nature of travel and tourism, globally, nationally and locally. • understanding of the positive and negative impacts of travel and tourism and how these can be managed. • understanding of the importance of sustainability and resilience in travel and tourism. • awareness of the importance of the customer in the travel and tourism industry. • understanding of the importance of marketing in travel and tourism. • communication skills and awareness of different values and attitudes in relation to travel and tourism. 		
Content Overview:		
<p>The course is comprised of 5 topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction to the main travel and tourism destinations and concepts. This topic introduces the main travel and tourism definitions and concepts that need to be fully understood. It covers the different types of tourists, destinations and the different reasons for travelling. • Global tourism: This topic looks at the demand and appeal of destinations and the different impacts of travel and tourism. It considers how destinations can be managed by maximising the positive impacts of tourism and minimising the negative impacts for the benefit of the community and country. • Travel and tourism organisations: There are many different organisations involved in travel and tourism and learners will need to understand the role of each type of organisation. Learners need an understanding of the types of products and services available, their appeal, and how these are being provided sustainably. Travel and tourism involve many different types of transport. • Customer service: The customer is at the centre of travel and tourism. Customer service is an essential part of the industry. • Destination marketing: All destinations try to gain a competitive advantage over others to encourage more tourists to visit. This topic looks at how destinations can be marketed and the organisations involved in marketing. 		
Assessment Overview:		
<p>The assessment is made up of two components. Both components are assessed at the end of Year 11.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paper 1 is 1 hour-30 minutes in length and accounts for 50% of the overall IGCSE grade. Paper 1 focuses on key terms and components and is comprised of four scenario-based questions – covering the introductory key concepts, customer service and impacts of tourism at destinations. • Paper 2 is 2 hours in length and accounts for a further 50% of the overall IGCSE grade. Paper 2 is made up of short answer questions based around four scenario-based questions – focusing on the management and marketing of destinations. 		