



AUSTRALIAN INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL
Leading to a Bright Future

LOWER SECONDARY CURRICULUM HANDBOOK (YEARS 7-10 AND IGCSE) 2021 - 2022

An **inspired** school



CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION.....	5
SUBJECT ALLOCATIONS	5
YEARS 7 AND 8.....	5
YEAR 9 AND 10.....	6
YEAR 11.....	6
ASSESSMENT AND REPORTING.....	7
EXAMINATION AND REPORTING SCHEDULE.....	7
COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS.....	7
PROGRESS REPORTS.....	7
FORMAL WRITTEN REPORTS.....	7
CHECKPOINT TESTS.....	7
ACADEMIC PROBATION.....	8
HOMEWORK.....	8
HOMEWORK GUIDELINES.....	8
YEAR LEVEL HOMEWORK.....	8
ENGLISH ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE (EAL) PROGRAMME.....	9
YEAR 7-10 SUBJECT DESCRIPTORS.....	10
ART AND DESIGN.....	10
DRAMA.....	10
DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY.....	11
ENGLISH.....	11
IGCSE GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES.....	11
HUMANITIES.....	12
INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY.....	12
LANGUAGES (CHINESE, KOREAN, VIETNAMESE).....	12
MATHEMATICS.....	13
MUSIC.....	13
PHYSICAL EDUCATION (INCLUDING SWIMMING & DANCE).....	13
SCIENCE (BIOLOGY, CHEMISTRY, PHYSICS).....	14

IGCSE GUIDANCE & SUBJECT SELECTION 15

CORE SUBJECTS..... 15

OPTIONS 15

SUBJECT PREFERENCE SELECTIONS 15

CONSIDERATIONS..... 15

YEAR 11 SUBJECT GUIDES..... 16

IGCSE ENGLISH FIRST LANGUAGE 16

IGCSE ENGLISH SECOND LANGUAGE..... 17

IGCSE ENGLISH LITERATURE 18

IGCSE MATHEMATICS 19

IGCSE ADDITIONAL MATHEMATICS 20

IGCSE GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES 21

CHINESE LANGUAGE (IB FOUNDATION) 22

KOREAN LANGUAGE & LITERATURE (IB FOUNDATION) 23

VIETNAMESE LANGUAGE & LITERATURE (IB FOUNDATION) 24

VIETNAMESE NATIONAL CURRICULUM STUDIES 25

CORE PHYSICAL EDUCATION 26

IGCSE ART AND DESIGN 27

IGCSE BIOLOGY 28

IGCSE BUSINESS STUDIES 29

IGCSE CHEMISTRY..... 30

IGCSE DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY 31

IGCSE ECONOMICS..... 32

IGCSE GEOGRAPHY 33

IGCSE INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)..... 34

IGCSE MUSIC..... 35

IGCSE PHYSICS 36



INTRODUCTION

Year 7 - 10 programmes at the Australian International School (AIS) reflect our culturally diverse student body and extend the inquiry-based approach that the IB Primary Years Programme offers while also preparing the students for the rigours, challenges and demands of the Cambridge International Lower Secondary curriculum, the Cambridge Checkpoint assessment and ultimately the IGCSE external examinations. Because IGCSE is delivered as 1 year programme at AIS, the Middle School Programme effectively extends from Year 7 to Year 10.

AIS operates within a culture that combines a positive, caring and supportive learning environment with a climate of high quality expectations and self-accountability. We recognise the special qualities and needs of each student as an individual. In partnership with parents and students, we seek to provide a rigorous programme to enhance and extend understanding, skills and attitudes. The education of the ‘whole student’ is the central mission, and the students are also provided with opportunities to both explore and enrich their artistic, physical and social skills in an English speaking environment.

The School Vision and Values form the foundation of our curriculum. This is enriched by a wide range of resources to allow opportunities in all fields for our students in our changing and challenging global environment.

We value greatly the unique opportunities that living in Vietnam and Ho Chi Minh City provide. We also value the positive and special relationships that develop in a school with students and families from many different nationalities. Our students are able to experience the unique interaction of a truly multinational community and celebrate their own culture as well as the cultures of others. We encourage understanding and awareness of the rich cultures and traditions of Vietnam through numerous programmes.

SUBJECT ALLOCATIONS

YEARS 7 AND 8

Major Core

English (1 st or 2 nd Language)	Humanities	Mathematics	Science
<p>Languages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vietnamese 1st Language for Vietnamese students • Korean 1st Language for Korean students • Chinese 2nd Language for all other students <p>Note: Vietnamese National Studies is compulsory for Vietnamese students and is delivered after school</p>			

Minor Core

Art	Design Technology	Drama
Music	P.E. (including Dance & Swimming)	

YEAR 9 AND 10

Major Core

English (1 st or 2 nd Language)	Humanities (Year 9)	Global Perspectives (Year 10)	Mathematics	Science
<p>Languages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vietnamese 1st Language for Vietnamese students • Korean 1st Language for Korean students • Chinese 2nd Language for all other students <p>Note: Vietnamese National Studies is compulsory for Vietnamese students and is delivered after school</p>				

Minor Core

Art	Design Technology	Drama
Information Technology	Music	P.E. (including Dance & Swimming)

YEAR 11

Compulsory Subjects

IGCSE English Language/Literature or IGCSE English 2 nd Language	IGCSE Mathematics	Physical Education (Non-IGCSE)
<p>Either, one of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IB Foundation Vietnamese • IB Foundation Korean • IB Foundation Chinese 2nd Language 	<p>Or:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IGCSE Global Perspectives 	
<p>Note: Vietnamese students who opt not to study IB Foundation Vietnamese must attend Vietnamese National Studies after school.</p>		

Preferences:

Students select <u>three</u> of the following IGCSE subjects:		
Art	Chemistry	ICT
Biology	Design Technology	Music
Business Studies <i>or</i> Economics	Geography	Physics

ASSESSMENT AND REPORTING

Assessment is a continuous process that has both formal and informal components that can motivate students and provide information about their knowledge, strengths and needs and gives faculty, students and families, information about attainments and progress.

- A variety of assessment practices provide information so that learning can be evaluated and next steps can be appropriately developed.
- Standardised and non-standardised assessments are used to determine the potential, status and progress of students.
- Each week students in Years 7-10 will sit a standardised test in one of four subjects: English, Humanities, Mathematics and Science. These subjects will be tested in a 4 week rotational cycle.
- Assessment benchmarks are based on the school's curriculum and the standards set by those external programmes to which the school subscribes.
- Families receive written information about their son/daughter's progress through a regular formal reporting cycle.

Assessment is a continuous process throughout the school year. The process informs the planning cycle (assess, plan, teach, assess). It also provides all stakeholders with information about each student's strengths and needs.

EXAMINATION AND REPORTING SCHEDULE

Ongoing assessment happens throughout the year at AIS. This takes many forms in order to give students of all learning styles access to be able to show what they know. This then informs both the student and teacher about areas where they are achieving and areas for continued development.

COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS

Parents may convey concerns to teachers via email, phone-call or letter. An after-school appointment may be useful to discuss concerns.

PROGRESS REPORTS

Progress Reports are sent home to parents and students at the end of Term One. The grade on the report will reflect the work completed by the student throughout the term.

FORMAL WRITTEN REPORTS

Formal written reports include written comments by each subject teacher. They are sent home to parents and students at the end of each semester.

CHECKPOINT TESTS

In Term 3, Year 9 students sit Checkpoint tests in English, Mathematics and Science. Checkpoint is not a formal qualification with a certificate, although a Statement of Achievement is produced. Cambridge Checkpoint is ideal for those beginning courses leading to Cambridge IGCSE examinations in English, Mathematics and Science. They also provide benchmark for students and teachers with regards to a student's overall ability.

Cambridge Checkpoint Tests:

- Are valued and accepted throughout the world for their high standards of assessment
- Are delivered worldwide through a network of schools, colleges and training providers
- Provide a good indication of potential Cambridge IGCSE results
- Were created with an international audience in mind so they are suitable for students of all cultural and language backgrounds

- Provide teachers with detailed information about the strengths and weaknesses of their pupils in order to focus on their teaching
- Can be taken at a convenient time so as not to disrupt lessons.

There are two papers in each subject, each approximately one hour in length. They are excellent preparation tests for Cambridge IGCSE examinations, by allowing students to experience an internal exam.

All the questions have been tested by Cambridge to ensure they are suitable for 14 year olds and provide useful information and feedback. Marks are carefully analysed and a report is produced on students' work. This process takes about 4 weeks.

Each student will receive a Statement of Achievement and a report that provides more detail about their individual performance. Results are given as Checkpoint scores between 0.0 (weakest) and 6.0 (strongest). The average score is between 3.0 and 4.0. The report gives a score for the subject as a whole and for the main topics. Teachers can then identify any important strengths or weaknesses.

ACADEMIC PROBATION

If a student consistently experiences serious academic difficulties coupled with motivation problems, he/she will be placed on Academic Probation. If this happens, the student's parents and the School will agree on a specific plan of action for the probation period. This plan may include specialised testing at parental expense, conferences or a learning support programme. At the conclusion of each semester, the student, parents, teachers, and Deputy Head of School will review the probation plan. A decision based on what is best for the student will be made for

the following semester. On rare occasions, the decision may result in a request for parents to find more appropriate educational services for their son / daughter. This action is taken only when existing resources have been exhausted and the student's needs demand another school situation. Recommendations regarding a particular student's education are made keeping the best interests of that student in mind.

HOMEWORK

At AIS we believe homework is an integral part of the learning experience. Homework reinforces the knowledge and skills acquired throughout the school day and is an important means to keeping families informed about their children's progress and the School's instructional programme. Homework promotes the development of good study habits, effective time management and prepares students for the requirements of homework in Middle and Senior school.

HOMEWORK GUIDELINES

- Homework will reinforce skills and knowledge already learned and therefore can be completed independently by the student.
- Teachers will modify homework expectations for students who receive assistance from the EAL staff.
- Homework will be assigned from Monday to Friday. Weekend homework will be set when daily classroom assignments have not been completed.
- Homework times are given as 'approximates' as students work at different speeds and will find tasks to be of varying difficulty.
- All questions and issues regarding student homework should be discussed directly with the Year Level or subject teacher.
- Teachers will use ManageBac to communicate daily homework tasks and expectations.
- Students are required to complete all homework set.

YEAR LEVEL HOMEWORK

The homework for the Secondary School will include all subject areas. Homework should take a reasonable length of time and serve as consolidation of skills and learning from the class and preparation for future lessons.

ENGLISH ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE (EAL) PROGRAMME

All Students will be tested prior to entry to determine if they require language support to access the mainstream curriculum. The AIS benchmarks will determine whether the student will be placed in;

1. Mainstream with no support.
2. Mainstream with English as Additional Language (EAL) support.
3. Intensive English Language Programme. (IELP).

EAL Programme

The EAL programme aims to support the students who may have difficulty in accessing the mainstream curriculum. The focus is to develop their English language skills; reading, writing, speaking and listening. The EAL lessons also focus on the students’ understanding of the vocabulary from subject areas such as Science and Humanities. The lessons are in Period 9 of the School day and students are required to attend 3 periods per week.

IELP Programme

The IELP aims to develop the students’ English skills to a level so they can access the mainstream curriculum. This means the students will be in English lessons for twenty or more periods per week with an EAL specialist teacher. The lessons are very structured and follow the Cambridge Second Language Course. The programme enables students to have a solid foundation of English literacy skills. The students do not attend Science, Humanities, and some of the minor core subjects during the time they are in the IELP class.

Assessment

The IELP students are assessed at the end of Terms 2, 3 and 4. Parents will receive a report of their son/daughter’s progress at the end of Terms 2 and 4. After students complete a full semester in the IELP Programme, students may join a mainstream Science class. Upon exiting the IELP Programme and entering the EAL Programme, students study a full, mainstream programme.

The EAL students are assessed at the end of Terms 2 and 4. Parents will receive a report stating whether their son/daughter will continue or exit the EAL Programme.

Benchmarks Entry and Exit Points for English Support at AIS

INTENSIVE ENGLISH LANGUAGE Programme (IELP)				
YEAR LEVEL	TEST CAMBRIDGE	DURATION	INTENSIVE ENGLISH	ENGLISH AS AN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE
7	KET	1:50	45-60%	60% +
8	KET	1:50	45-65%	65% +
9	PET	2:15	45-60%	60% +
10	PET	2:15	45-65%	65% +

ENGLISH AS AN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE Programme (EAL)

YEAR LEVEL	TEST CAMBRIDGE	DURATION	ENGLISH AS AN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE	MAINSTREAM
7	KET	2:15	60-80%	80% +
8	PET	2:15	60-70%	70% +
9	PET	2:15	60-80%	80% +
10	FCE	4:00	45-50%	50% +
11	FCE	4:00	45-60%	60% +

Factors Influencing Success in the Language Support Programmes.

Students entering the Language Support Programme will experience greater success if they are motivated to engage in English beyond the classroom. Students need to read English comics, books, magazines and newspapers to increase their vocabulary as well as understanding of English outside the classroom. It is important students watch English movies and television to hear and understand native speakers. Socialising in English will assist their speaking and listening skills.

Students need to take risks and learn making mistakes are a means of learning more about English. Encouragement and praising small successes will lead students to a positive learning attitude.

The length of time a student is in a English Language Support Programme will vary and a key factor will be their motivation.

YEAR 7-10 SUBJECT DESCRIPTORS

ART AND DESIGN

"Every child is an artist. The problem is how to remain an artist once he grows up." – Pablo Picasso

At AIS we believe that Visual Arts is an essential part of a broad and balanced education providing experiences that promote creativity, self-expression, communication, aesthetic awareness and the development of problem solving. The study of Visual Arts focuses on both the development of personal ideas and responses as well as skills and processes. Experiences in the Visual Arts stimulate risk taking, creative potential and an awareness of other cultures and the world in which we live.

There has been an exponential increase computer created and manipulated of images in recent years. Students learn how to make sensible and creative use of internet access for investigation in Art. Students learn how to use creatively image-viewing and image-manipulation software to develop their artworks.

At the end of Year 9, successful students are offered the option of higher art studies in Year 10 onwards. These studies can lead to internationally recognised qualifications in art studies: the IGCSE and IBDP.

DRAMA

In Year 7 -10 Drama the focus is on the practical. Students participate in activities to develop fundamental dramatic skills, techniques and practices. They will explore several different forms of theatre through improvisation, play building, voice and movement workshops and scripted texts.

By creating and presenting Drama students develop:

1. How to use voice and movement to communicate to an audience
2. The ability to create and portray a character
3. Script-writing and storytelling skills
4. An understanding of the history and importance of theatre
5. A critical eye for performance

This is all done in a dynamic and exciting environment where students can explore and engage safely and confidently.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

"People ignore design that ignores people" – Frank Chimero

The study of Design and Technology offers students the opportunity to utilise creative thinking in combination with practical and technological skills to design and make products that meet human needs. Stimulating contexts provide a range of opportunities for students to identify real needs and opportunities and to respond with ideas and products/solutions that consider and develop their understanding of aesthetic, technical, cultural, social, industrial and environmental issues. Students have the opportunity to explore a range of materials, tools, equipment and innovative technologies, including CAD and CAM, both as individuals and as members of a team. Through the study of Design and Technology students learn to innovate, are able to apply creative thinking, develop confidence in using practical skills and gain awareness of the impacts of current and future technologies.

ENGLISH

"Grammar is a piano I play by ear. All I know about grammar is its power" – Joan Didion

The AIS English Language Programme is offered to students in Years 7 – 9. The programme provides explicit English Language instruction through the study of International topics and themes. The aim of the programme is to improve the English language proficiency and academic skill level of students through the development of the four key strands of reading, writing, speaking and listening.

Students further their study of the English Language Syllabus in Years 10-11. Here they develop the ability to communicate accurately, appropriately and effectively in speech and writing. While there is a strong emphasis on reading and writing skills, speaking and listening will also be a key focus to promote effective communication across the curriculum and beyond into the global community.

The syllabus will help students to understand and respond appropriately to what they see, hear and experience, and to enjoy the full variety of the English language. Students will be encouraged to use relevant vocabulary, to employ correct grammar, spelling and punctuation, and to display a sense of style and audience. In addition, it will complement their other studies by developing general skills such as the ability to analyse, make inferences, order facts and present opinions. Students will develop the ability to respond to texts in the three main forms (Prose, Poetry and Drama) and understand the ways in which writers' choices of form, structure and language shape meaning. The ability to produce informed, independent opinions and judgments on literary texts, and to communicate clearly the knowledge, understanding and insight relating to literary study is also promoted.

Through the study of literature students are encouraged to read, interpret and evaluate literary texts. They will develop an understanding of texts in terms of literary meaning, relevant contexts and deeper themes or attitudes. This study of literature allows students to explore areas of universal human concern, thus leading to a greater understanding of themselves and others.

IGCSE GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES

"The key to growth is the introduction of higher dimensions of consciousness into our awareness". – Lao Tzu

Beginning in Year 10, IGCSE Global Perspectives is a course that is cross-curricular, stretching across traditional subject boundaries. It taps into the way today's students enjoy learning – including group work, seminars, projects, and working with other students around the world. The emphasis is on developing the ability to think critically about a range of global issues where there is always more than one point of view. IGCSE Global Perspectives encourages awareness

of global problems and offers opportunities to explore possible solutions through cooperation and collaboration. The course values, supported, divergent thinking and opens minds to the great complexity of the world and of human thought and emotion. Topics may include: Belief systems, biodiversity and ecosystem loss, climate change, conflict and peace, disease and health, education for all, employment, family and demographic change, fuel and energy, humans and other species, language and communication, law and criminality, poverty and inequality, sport and recreation, technology and the economic divide, trade and aid, tradition, culture and identity, transport and infrastructure, urbanisation, water, food and agriculture.

HUMANITIES

Geography, History

"The calling of the humanities is to make us truly human in the best sense of the word" – J. Irwin Miller

The study of Humanities in years 7-10 allows students to develop their knowledge and experience of societies and our planet. The study of Humanities is designed to engage students in learning about societies and the environment both in the past and the present. A student develop a sense of their place in the world and enables them to extend their knowledge, skills and experiences so that they can effectively participate and contribute in local and global communities as informed, confident and responsible citizens. Humanities promotes an understanding of culture and heritage, continuity and change, cause and consequence, similarity and difference, resources and economic activity, the environment, and social organisation. Students will further develop their inquiry, values exploration and social decision making skills. The course will also facilitate the development of cross curricula skills, such as communication, co-operation, numeracy, literacy, study and self-management.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

"Having seen what computers can do we now know they will actually invent our future" – Bill Gates

The aims of the Computing course are to develop an understanding of the main principles of solving problems using computers, the range of applications of computers and the effects of their use, the organisation of computer systems including software, data, hardware, communications and people, and to acquire the skills necessary to apply this understanding to developing computer-based solutions to problems.

Through the study of ICT students will grow in their awareness of how applications are used in the workplace, and will consider the impact of new technologies on methods of working and on social, economic, ethical, and moral issues. Students will find their developing skills are useful to them in their work across the curriculum. The ICT syllabus contains a combination of theoretical and practical studies focusing on the ability to use common software applications, including word processing, spreadsheets, databases, interactive presentation software, electronic mail, web browsers and website design. Assessment of practical tasks is hardware and software independent.

LANGUAGES (Chinese, Korean, Vietnamese)

"One language sets you in a corridor for life. Two languages open every door along the way". – Frank Smith

The study of a foreign language complements other areas of study by encouraging the use of skills with a more general application. Research has shown that mathematical and verbal skills improve with each additional year of foreign language study. Studying a foreign language can also improve analytic and interpretive capacities.

Students will deepen their knowledge of vocabulary, grammar, culture, and literature. Students obtain an insider's view of another culture and a new view of their own. Studying a new language, reading other peoples stories, and connecting with people in their own language can be a source of pleasure and surprise.

Chinese Mandarin

The aim for students learning Mandarin Chinese as a foreign language is to develop an ability to use the language effectively for purposes of practical communication. The courses are based on the linked language skills of listening, reading, speaking and writing, and these are built on as students' progress through their studies. The courses at a Middle School level offer insights into the culture and civilization of countries where the language is spoken, thus encouraging positive attitudes towards language learning and towards speakers of foreign languages.

Korean Literature

Korean Literature is taught to all Korean students in Years 7 – 9 in mixed ability classes. Students cover four key areas of study throughout an academic year including: Literature, Reading, Writing and Cultural Studies. The language of instruction is Korean.

Vietnamese National Studies

Vietnamese National Studies is taught to all Vietnamese students in Years 7 – 9. Students cover four key areas of study throughout an academic year including: Vietnamese Culture, History, Geography and Literature. The language of instruction is Vietnamese.

MATHEMATICS

"The mathematician does not study mathematics because it is useful, he studies it because he delights in it, and he delights in it because it is beautiful" – J. H. Poincare

The study of Mathematics has a rich and varied 4000 year history. No education would be complete without this time honoured discipline of the mind, which is considered a language in its own right. While there are many practical applications of mathematics, it also contains elements of philosophy and the skills that students learn can be utilised in a variety of situations. Such skills include the ability to analyse logically; to recognise when and how a situation may be represented mathematically; identify and interpret relevant factors; and, where necessary, select appropriate strategies. Students will also learn to use mathematics as a means of communication with emphasis on the use of clear and correct expression. They will acquire the mathematical foundation necessary for further study in this or related subjects. Students are encouraged to develop their mathematical knowledge and skills in a way which encourages confidence and provides satisfaction and enjoyment. They will develop a feel and appreciation for numbers and for patterns and relationships in Mathematics. There will be an emphasis on solving problems, conducting investigation and modelling tasks and presenting and interpreting results.

The Year 10 Mathematics programme provides the foundation for IGCSE Mathematics which most students sit at the end of Year 11. Able Year 10 students are accelerated and sit the IGCSE Mathematics examination at the end of the year. In Year 11 they can then progress to the challenging IGCSE Additional Mathematics programme.

MUSIC

"Music washes away from the soul the dust of everyday life" – Berthold Auerbach

Listening, performing and composing fosters students' aesthetic and emotional development, self-discipline and creative skills. Students are encouraged to appreciate and enjoy music in local and world- wide contexts as they develop a perceptive, sensitive and critical response to the music of high art, folk and popular styles. Each style is placed in its historical and cultural context.

The major part of the IGCSE examination in Year 11 is related to both the Western European musical tradition and the music of other cultures is always represented. Students will develop a deeper understanding of music in its wider cultural context and be able to communicate understanding, supporting judgments by argument based on evidence.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION (INCLUDING SWIMMING & DANCE)

"Exercise alone provides psychological and physical benefits. However, if you also adopt a strategy that engages your mind while you exercise, you can get a whole host of psychological benefits fairly quickly" – James Rippe, M.D.

Physical Education is an integral part of the educational process, where concepts and activities contribute to the physical, intellectual, socio-emotional and spiritual development of every student. The aim of physical education is the development of autonomous, life-long learners who readily participate in physical activity on a regular basis. Every participant will develop characteristics commonly associated with goal setting, social responsibility, and personal achievement. The aim of the physical education programme is to engender life-long physical participation.

Swimming is an integral part of the P.E programme. As well as having obvious benefits in terms of health and fitness, being able to swim is an essential life skill. Students have the option of substituting one period of P.E per week for Dance. Dance is an art form learned from many cultures and is also an enjoyable, health promoting physical activity.

SCIENCE (Biology, Chemistry, Physics)

"Science is nothing but developed perception, interpreted intent, common sense rounded out and minutely articulate" – George Santayana.

Students in Years 7-10 follow a combined science programme which exposes them to all the major disciplines but also shows their interdependency. This programme also develops their practical scientific skills in parallel with their scientific analysis and thinking skills in preparation for specialization in Year 11 and beyond.

Biology

The study of Biology offers a combination of theoretical and practical studies leading to an understanding of the concerns and basic principles of biology, with emphasis on human biology. Students will develop scientific abilities and skills relevant to the study of biology in relation to the four main areas of syllabus content. These are: characteristics and classification of living organisms, organisation and maintenance of the organism, development of the organism and continuity of life, and relationships of organisms with one another and with their environment.

The course will stimulate an interest in, and concern for, the environment. It will prepare students to become confident citizens in a technological world, and to take an informed interest in scientific matters; it will also form a basis for more advanced study. Biology places considerable emphasis on understanding and use of scientific ideas and principles in a variety of situations, including those which are well-known to the learner and those which are new to them. The programme features a variety of learning experiences designed to enhance the development of skill and comprehension. Learners develop transferable life-long skills relevant to the increasingly technological environment in which people find themselves.

Chemistry

In 1886, John Wesley Hyatt, synthesised the first plastic created in the USA. He was trying to win the \$10,000 first prize for a substitute for the fast vanishing ivory used in the manufacture of billiard balls. Today, tens of thousands of synthetic materials influence the quality of our lives – most for our benefit although there are unfortunately, notorious exceptions. It would be difficult to imagine life without medicines, fuels, plastics and antiseptics, to name just a few commodities vital to our lifestyles. Chemistry is a fundamental branch of science that enables us to understand materials that are an essential part of our everyday lives and leisure. Through the study of Chemistry we are able to appreciate and explain the basic make-up of matter and how substances interact. The study of Chemistry can lead to careers in a wide variety of fields including medicine, geology, environmental studies, engineering, food science, forestry, teaching at secondary or tertiary levels, forensic science, dentistry, agricultural science and analytical chemistry. While Chemistry is an academic subject, it is intrinsically based on laboratory work. Theory is complemented by experiments in which you develop practical skills such as the use of modern laboratory equipment, powers of observation and the ability to communicate results and conclusions.

Physics

The Physics syllabus offers a combination of theoretical and practical studies leading to an understanding of the basic principles of Physics. Students will gain awareness of the study and practice of science and will understand that scientific applications have both beneficial and detrimental effects on the individual and the environment. The course will prepare students to become confident citizens in a technological world, and to take informed interest in scientific matters. Students will develop abilities and skills that are useful in everyday life and develop relevant scientific attitudes such as concern of accuracy and precision, objectivity, enquiry, initiative and inventiveness. The course develops an interest in, and care for, the environment in relation to the environmental impact of Physics and its applications. It promotes awareness that the study and practice of Physics are co-operative and cumulative activities, and are subject to social, economic, technological and cultural influences and limitations. The use of IT is promoted as an aid to experiments and as a tool for the interpretation of experimental and theoretical results.

IGCSE GUIDANCE & SUBJECT SELECTION

Students entering Year 11 are given guidance on subject content and subject preferences for IGCSE. Each year in Term 3 a subject preferences information booklet is issued for students in Year 10 who will be progressing into Year 11 and taking IGCSE the following academic year. In addition, information will be given at the Parent Information Evening and subject teachers and academic advisers are always willing to offer guidance to students at this important time.

The handbook provides information on the different subjects and an explanation of which subjects are compulsory and optional. Students who join the school after the start of the school year may find that some classes are full and that all their subject preferences are not available.

The information that follows is the handbook for students in Year 11 in 2017-18. While it can be used as a guide for students in later years, the combinations of subjects available may change.

CORE SUBJECTS

- IGCSE English (Literature or 1st Language or 2nd Language)
- IGCSE Mathematics
- One of Vietnamese* or Korean* or Chinese 2nd Language* (all IB Foundation) OR IGCSE Global Perspectives
- Physical Education (Non-IGCSE)
- Vietnamese National Studies (Literature, Vietnamese History and Geography) is compulsory for Vietnamese students.
- If Vietnamese isn't taken as a language preference in the school day, then that student will automatically be entered for classes after school. (Non-IGCSE)

OPTIONS

- | | | |
|-----------------------------|---|-------------------|
| • IGCSE Art | • IGCSE Economics * | (ICT) |
| • IGCSE Biology * | • IGCSE Geography | • IGCSE Music |
| • IGCSE Business Studies | | • IGCSE Physics * |
| • IGCSE Chemistry * | • IGCSE Information and Communications Technology | |
| • IGCSE Design Technology * | | |

SUBJECT PREFERENCE SELECTIONS

- Students will take three subjects from the options list
- Not all students will be able to take their first three options, as some subjects will take place on the timetable at the same time.
- AIS will arrange the timetable so as many people as possible can take their top three preferences
- If a student has an unusual combination of options, he/she will be less likely to be able to take their top three choices

CONSIDERATIONS

- Some subjects **MUST** be taken at IGCSE to be taken in Year 12 at IBDP. These are shown with an asterix*
- It is always better to take a subject at IGCSE if a student wishes to take it at IBDP, even if it isn't compulsory

YEAR 11 SUBJECT GUIDES

More information about the IGCSE programmes can be found on the CIE public website by at <http://www.cie.org.uk/programmes-and-qualifications/cambridge-secondary-2/cambridge-igcse/subjects/>

IGCSE ENGLISH FIRST LANGUAGE

Full subject title	English First Language - Extended
Syllabus number	0500
% Coursework	0%
% Oral assessment	0%
% Final exam	50% Reading Passages 50% Directed Writing and Composition
Some topics covered	A wide range of topics ranging from current affairs to student interest will be used as a vehicle to develop an understanding of various text types.
Course description	First Language English learners develop the ability to communicate clearly, accurately and effectively in both speech and writing. They learn how to employ a wide-ranging vocabulary, use correct grammar, spelling and punctuation, and develop a personal style and an awareness of the audience being addressed. Students are also encouraged to read widely, both for their own enjoyment and to further their awareness of the ways in which English can be used. The course also develops more general analysis and communication skills such as synthesis, inference, and the ability to order facts and present opinions effectively.
What do students need to know about this course before they choose it for IGCSE?	This is not a Literature course, but one in which the students will be expected to read widely and analyse both what is written and how it is written. Style and audience are key features of written tasks.
What types of students do well in this course?	Students for whom English is their first language, who wish to pursue English as their Language A option for the IB Diploma Programme.
What types of students struggle with this course	Students who gain less than a C grade at Year 10 may struggle with this course.
What kind of activities are done in class regularly?	Reading and analysing a variety of text types. Writing responses to texts and completing narratives in response to a number of stimuli. Taking notes, making summaries, answering questions orally, small group discussion, as well as practice examination exercises for reading and writing.
What kind of activities are done in class occasionally?	Research projects.
What do students like the most about this course?	The students enjoy the opportunity to undertake creative writing, writing and presenting speeches and debating.
What do students like the least about this course?	Reading for meaning (analyzing texts) is a large component of this course, as is writing for different audiences. This can be challenging at times but will lead to life-long skills.
Other information	The core course can be studied, but students will only be eligible for grades C-G.

IGCSE ENGLISH SECOND LANGUAGE

Full subject title	IGCSE English Second Language – Oral Count-in, Core and Extended Options	
Syllabus number	0511	
% Coursework	0%	
% Oral assessment	15%	A 15 minute oral examination is conducted by certified coursework examiners in Vietnam, and moderated internationally by Cambridge.
% Final exam	70%	Reading and Writing
	15%	Listening
Some topics covered	People of the World, The Natural Environment, Social Media, Sports & Games, Endangered Species.	
Course description	This course teaches the productive skills of writing and speaking, and the receptive skills of reading and listening for the purpose of communicative English. It is not a Literature course. There is an international perspective and students will become familiar with a range of western conventions which will benefit them in situations where English is the language spoken. A range of social registers from formal to informal will be covered in the course. The styles of communication which are included are appropriate to use in dealings with official and semi-official bodies, in studying for academic or occupational purposes, in places of work, or in using public services.	
What do students need to know about this course before they choose it for IGCSE?	Students who enter the Core class still have the opportunity to sit the Extended examination provided they reach the level required by the end of Semester One.	
What types of students do well in this course?	Students for whom English is their second language, who wish to pursue English as their Language B option (SL or HL) for the IB Diploma Programme. Students need some prior experience speaking, reading and writing English.	
What types of students struggle with this course?	Students who gain less than a C grade at Year 10 may struggle with this course.	
What kind of activities are done in class regularly?	Reading Comprehension, writing formal and informal letters, writing articles, writing summaries, taking notes, listening comprehension, oral communication, completing forms. Taking notes, answering questions orally, summary writing, small group discussions, grammar drills, practice examination exercises for reading and writing, listening practice, speaking practice.	
What kind of activities are done in class occasionally?	Research projects and oral presentations.	
What do students like the most about this course?	The work is divided into skills therefore students can practise and get really good at one skill at a time. This builds students' confidence and they can see their progress. Students enjoy researching topics and issues which interest them and have some flexibility in how they present this information.	
What do students like the least about this course?	Reading skills are needed for writing, listening, and oral skills therefore students must practise reading and vocabulary again and again. This is hard work but very rewarding.	
Other information	The course is studied by all students and allows them access to the IBDP English B course in Year 12.	

IGCSE ENGLISH LITERATURE

Full subject title	IGCSE English Literature
Syllabus number	0475
% Coursework	0%
% Oral assessment	0%
% Final exam	100%
Some topics covered	The course includes the study of selected classic and contemporary novels, plays and poetry.
Course description	<p>Skills include in-depth analysis of classic and contemporary Literature texts studied in class, planning and developing coherent arguments, reader-response theory.</p> <p>and the relationship between literature and society. Oral expression is emphasised as students are required to articulately express their thinking about texts using appropriate language. Students also need to demonstrate an ability to write within strict timed conditions.</p>
What do students need to know about this course before they choose it for IGCSE?	<p>This course is a demanding, 100% examination based course. Students study literature topics for two exam papers:</p> <p>Paper 1: Poetry and Prose – two essays: 1 hour 30 mins 50%</p> <p>Paper 2: Drama – two essays: 1 hour 30 mins 50%</p>
What types of students do well in this course?	Students planning to sit IGCSE English Literature should be avid readers, able to engage in debate, be well-informed about their world and be open to ideas that challenge their current position. They must be prepared to source and study extra material and to prepare practice essays on an on-going basis.
What types of students struggle with this course	Students who do not receive C grade or higher for Year 9 English.
What kind of activities are done in class regularly?	Regular activities include:, essay writing, internet research, peer and self-assessment, brainstorming, textual annotations, character role-play, group projects and presentations.
What kind of activities are done in class occasionally?	Quizzes, drama performances, viewing media performances of texts studied.
What do students like the most about this course?	It is thought-provoking and relevant with regard to current world-wide societal, cultural and political issues.
What do students like the least about this course?	The course is text oriented and all assessments are in essay form.
Other information	Entry for this course is at the recommendation of the English Coordinator. This subject is generally studied over 2 years.

IGCSE MATHEMATICS

Full subject title	IGCSE Mathematics
Syllabus number	0580
% Coursework	0%
% Oral assessment	0%
% Final exam	100%
Some topics covered	Number, Algebra, Measurement, Trigonometry, Statistics & Probability.
Course description	<p>IGCSE Mathematics is a fully examined course which encourages the development of mathematical knowledge as a key life skill, and as a basis for more advanced study. The syllabus aims to build students' confidence by helping them develop a feel for numbers, patterns and relationships, and places a strong emphasis on solving problems, presenting and interpreting results.</p> <p>There are two options at this level: Extended and Core. All the material in the Core curriculum is covered within the Extended scheme. The extended Maths course prepares students for the IBDP Higher Level and Standard Level Mathematics. The Core Mathematics course prepares students for the IBDP Mathematics Studies.</p>
What do students need to know about this course before they choose it for IGCSE?	Mathematics is compulsory. Students will be placed into either the Core or Extended class depending on their previous performance in Mathematics.
What types of students do well in this course?	Logical, hardworking students.
What types of students struggle with this course	Unmotivated, disorganised students.
What kind of activities are done in class regularly?	Investigations, Mathematics Website challenges and activities, Text book problems, solving mathematics problems, graphing, worksheets, formative assessment.
What kind of activities are done in class occasionally?	Quizzes, constructions, outdoor investigations.
What do students like the most about this course?	The variety of applications that are used to help students grasp mathematics concepts.
What do students like the least about this course?	In all mathematics courses, there is daily homework. Students who are not engaged and motivated to do their best will not like this.
Other information	Students wanting to take IBDP Higher level Mathematics must take the Extended Mathematics IGCSE paper and achieve at least a grade A.

IGCSE ADDITIONAL MATHEMATICS

Full subject title	IGCSE Additional Mathematics
Syllabus number	0606
% Coursework	0%
% Oral assessment	0%
% Final exam	100%
Some topics covered	Number, Algebra, Exponentials, Logarithms, Binomial theorem and Calculus.
Course description	<p>IGCSE Additional Mathematics is a fully examined course for students who have sat the IGCSE Extended Mathematics examination and gained at least a high B.</p> <p>The course continues on from Extended Mathematics including pre-IB topics such as exponentials, logarithms, binomial theorem and calculus in preparation for IBDP Higher and Standard Level Mathematics</p>
What do students need to know about this course before they choose it for IGCSE?	Mathematics is compulsory. Students will be placed in this class based on their past performance in Mathematics.
What types of students do well in this course?	Logical, hardworking students.
What types of students struggle with this course	Unmotivated, disorganised students.
What kind of activities are done in class regularly?	Investigations, Mathematics Website challenges and activities, Text book problems, solving mathematics problems, graphing, worksheets, formative assessment.
What kind of activities are done in class occasionally?	Quizzes, constructions, outdoor investigations.
What do students like the most about this course?	The variety of applications that are used to help students grasp mathematics concepts.
What do students like the least about this course?	In all mathematics courses, there is daily homework. Students who are not engaged and motivated to do their best will not like this.
Other information	It is highly recommended that students wanting to take IBDP Higher level Mathematics should get at least a B in Additional Mathematics.

IGCSE GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES

Full subject title	IGCSE Global Perspectives
Syllabus number	0457
% Coursework	30% Individual Research Project 35% Group Project
% Oral assessment	0%
% Final exam	35%
Some topics covered	For the Group project students choose a topic from a list of prescribed topics such as 'Human Rights' or 'Disease and Health'. Students then choose a topic for the Individual Report. Examples are: 'The Digital World' and 'Changing Communities'. The Examination will be based on one topic such as 'Education for All' or 'Globalisation'. Given the wide range of optional topics, the course emphasises analytical and evaluative skills over content.
Course description	IGCSE Global Perspectives is a ground breaking new course that is cross-curricular, stretching across traditional subject boundaries. It taps into the way today's students enjoy learning – including group work, seminars, projects, and working with other students around the world. The emphasis is on developing the ability to think critically about a range of global issues where there is always more than one point of view.
What do students need to know about this course before they choose it for IGCSE?	IGCSE Global Perspectives encourages awareness of global problems and offers opportunities to explore possible solutions through cooperation and collaboration. The course is not about getting everybody to think identically; rather it is a matter of opening minds to the great complexity of the world and of human thought, and opening hearts to the diversity of human experience and feeling.
What types of students do well in this course?	Open, internationally minded students who enjoy vigorous discussion and debate and learning about other people's perspectives on the world.
What types of students struggle with this course	Students who struggle to appreciate other people's points of view, and who are very set in their ideas of right and wrong.
What kind of activities are done in class regularly?	Discussion, debate, research projects, oral presentations
What kind of activities are done in class occasionally?	Students learn social research skills to collect data. This avoids too narrow a focus on computer based research.
What do students like the most about this course?	Learning about the world and how they can be a force for good in changing the destiny of our planet and societies.
What do students like the least about this course?	Writing essays.
Other information	This subject is compulsory for all students in Year 10. Students who do not do a language continue the course to completion in Year 11. It is excellent preparation for IBDP Theory of Knowledge and the IBDP Extended Essay.

CHINESE LANGUAGE (IB FOUNDATION)

Full subject title	IB Foundation Chinese
Syllabus number	Students may opt to enter IGCSE Chinese: Either: 0509 - Chinese as a First Language Or 0523 - Chinese as a Second Language
% Coursework	0%
% Oral assessment	0%
% Final exam	0509: Paper 1 - Reading 60%; Paper 2 - Writing 40% 0523: Paper 1 - Reading and Writing 70%; Paper 2 - Speaking 30%
Some topics covered	Self, family, home, neighbourhood and region, everyday life, school facilities, future career planning, daily essentials, shopping, food and beverages, health, weather and climate, transportation, travel, festivals and holidays, hobbies.
Course description	Students will be able to express personal meaning by studying about 20 topics. Students will also have better understanding of China at the same time by developing Chinese communication skills. Students will leave with a better understanding of the Chinese language, culture and grammar.
What do students need to know about this course before they choose it ?	Students will do better if they have learned Chinese for 2 years previously and therefore have a good foundation. This course is strongly recommended for any student who intends to take Language A or B Chinese at IBDP level next year.
What types of students do well in this course?	Hard working students who are willing to speak and read different topics on Chinese culture, even they start at a low level.
What types of students struggle with this course?	Students who struggle with pronunciation and have too little previous vocabulary
What kind of activities are done in class regularly?	Word cards, sentence cards, watch video, group work and pair work, lots of speaking, listening exercises.
What do students like the most about this course?	New vocabulary, expressing their own ideas with basic Chinese sentences.
What do students like the least about this course?	0547 - Writing an essay over 150 words as exam practice 0509 - Writing an essay between 400-600 Chinese characters
Other information	Chinese students are recommended to take this course to ensure success at IBDP Chinese next year. Students are advised not to take this subject if they have no prior experience of the Chinese language.

KOREAN LANGUAGE & LITERATURE (IB FOUNDATION)

Full subject title	IB Foundation Korean Language and Literature
Syllabus number	0521 (NB: Students may opt to enter IGCSE First Language Korean).
% Coursework	0%
% Oral assessment	0%
% Final exam	Reading 50% Writing 50%
Some topics covered	Topics are different every year because students discuss current issues. For literary texts, they read a variety of works because the exam papers have unseen texts only.
Course description	This course is for first language Korean speakers. The course trains students in formal essay writing and text analysis and provides a qualification for students in their native language.
What do students need to know about this course before they choose it for IGCSE?	Students should read a variety of texts and know how to analyse them. This must not be limited to what is taught in class. The course involves lots of writing tasks because the most part of the exam is writing. This course is strongly recommended for any student who intends to take Language A Korean at IBDP level next year.
What types of students do well in this course?	Students who do their best, complete all the work and refer to teacher's feedback and the marking scheme for improvement
What types of students struggle with this course?	Students who do not spend sufficient time preparing their assignments.
What kind of activities are done in class regularly?	Analysing texts, written comparisons, argumentative, descriptive and narrative essays.
What kind of activities are done in class occasionally?	Discussion and debate.
What do students like the most about this course?	The atmosphere, relationship with the teacher, speaking Korean.
What do students like the least about this course?	Writing essays regularly.
Other information	Korean students are recommended to take this course to ensure success at IBDP Korean next year.

VIETNAMESE LANGUAGE & LITERATURE (IB FOUNDATION)

Full subject title	IB Foundation Vietnamese Language and Literature
Syllabus number	N/A
Assessment	Summative and Formative Assessments.
Some topics covered	Vietnamese Folk Literature, Vietnamese Classic Literature & World Literature.
Course description	This course is for first language Vietnamese speakers. The course trains students in formal essay writing and text analysis and provides a qualification for students in their native language.
What do students need to know about this course before they choose it?	Students should read a variety of texts and know how to analyse them. This must not be limited to what is taught in class. The course involves lots of writing tasks because the largest part of the exam is writing. This course is strongly recommended for any student who intends to take Language A Vietnamese at IBDP level next year.
What types of students do well in this course?	Students who like reading and exploring different kinds of texts. Students who understand that language and literature are creative processes that encourage the development of imagination and creativity through self-expression.
What types of students struggle with this course	Students who cannot read or write fluently in Vietnamese.
What kind of activities are done in class regularly?	Reading, discussing and debating. Analysing texts and writing literary commentaries & expository.
What kind of activities are done in class occasionally?	Presenting information.
What do students like the most about this course?	The atmosphere, relationship with the teacher, speaking Vietnamese.
What do students like the least about this course?	Writing essays regularly.
Other information	Vietnamese students are recommended to take this course to ensure success at IBDP Vietnamese next year.

VIETNAMESE NATIONAL CURRICULUM STUDIES

Full subject title	Vietnamese National Curriculum Studies
Coursework	Vietnamese Textbooks (Lich Su & Dia Ly Lop 10).
% Oral assessment	N/A
% Final exam	Contributes 20% to the final grade of those studying Vietnamese Language & Literature.
Some topics covered	Vietnamese History and Geographical features.
Course description	This course is compulsory for all students who are registered with the school under a Vietnamese passport. It is available after school.
What do students need to know about this course before they choose it?	There are no formal requirements for students undertaking the course. Students who take this course will often have finished the course-books Lich Su & Dia Ly Lop 9.
What types of students do well in this course?	Students who enjoy learning about their heritage and who value their language and history as part of their identity. Also students who are willing to work hard at the complexities of written Vietnamese.
What types of students struggle with this course	Students who cannot read or write fluently in Vietnamese. Students who don't value their Vietnamese identity.
What kind of activities are done in class regularly?	Reading, discussion, group work, pair work, individual work.
What kind of activities are done in class occasionally?	Research projects and presentations.
What do students like the most about this course?	Learning about their heritage, culture, heroes and history.
What do students like the least about this course?	The vocabulary needed for understanding the texts. Learning facts and figures.
Other information	This course is run after school and also forms part of the Vietnamese Language and Literature course.

CORE PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Full subject title	Core Physical Education
Syllabus number	N/A
% Coursework	N/A
% Final exam	N/A
Some topics covered	Invasion sports, striking sports, net and wall sports, aquatics.
Course description	This course is designed to give students the opportunity to participate in physical activity at least two periods a week.
What do students need to know about this course before they choose it?	Core PE is compulsory for all Year 11 students.
What types of students do well in this course?	Students who have an enthusiastic approach to physical activity, and possess practical sporting and aquatic skills.
What types of students struggle with this course?	Students who either have limited sporting skills and/or who limit their involvement in practical classes.
What kind of activities are done in class regularly?	Students participate in a number of practical activities with a focus on improving interpersonal skills trying to encourage students to enjoy physical activity and to exercise regularly. A variety of sporting contexts are also explored.
What kind of activities are done in class occasionally?	A variety of practical activities and sports.
What do students like the most about this course?	The opportunity to participate in physically active lessons at school, where they have an opportunity to mix with other Year 11 students, develop social skills and enjoy a variety of physical activities and sports.
Other information	Year 11 Core Physical Education classes are compulsory and will consist of two practical classes each week.

IGCSE ART AND DESIGN

Full subject title	IGCSE Art and Design
Syllabus number	0400
% Coursework	50% (August – December)
% Oral assessment	N/A
% Externally set task	50% (January – April)
Course description	The IGCSE Art and Design syllabus aims to encourage a personal response by stimulating imagination, conceptual and critical thinking, powers of observation and analytical ability. Students gain confidence as they develop technical skills in two and three dimensional form and composition, and are able to identify and solve problems in visual and tactile forms. Students also learn how to develop ideas from initial attempts to final solutions. An ideal foundation for further study, IGCSE Art and Design also develops a greater awareness of the role played by the visual arts in society and in history, broadening cultural horizons and individual experience. Success in this course prepares students for IBDP Art and Design.
What do students need to know about this course before they choose it for IGCSE?	This is a time-consuming and demanding course that requires a lot of studio time outside of regular classes. An emphasis is placed on both the processes involved in art making as well as creating finished pieces. Students are expected to work in their sketchbook throughout the week outside of class.
What types of students do well in this course?	Students who have a passion for Art. Also, students who have prior experience and have developed a range of art skills and attitudes. To succeed in this course students need to be independent, motivated and hard working.
What types of students struggle with this course	Students with little background/ experience in Art. Also students who underestimate the demands of the course and chose it for the wrong reasons.
What kind of activities are done in class regularly?	Development of technical skills through practice. Development of original responses to themes or starting points. Practicing specific skills and approaches, to include individual study of the work of established artists. Process work including: research and investigation, developing ideas, composition and technical skills, self-evaluation exercises, creating finished artworks.
What kind of activities are done in class occasionally?	Analysis of artworks (as a class/ group), group critiques.
What do students like the most about this course?	Students have a lot of choice about the direction they want to pursue for the coursework component.
What do students like the least about this course?	Not all students are prepared for the amount of time they should be spending in the studio.
Other information	The course is a good foundation for taking IBDP Visual Art. Although there are no entry requirements students should be careful not to take this course as an 'easy option', as the coursework requirements are substantial and a reasonable degree of technical (drawing) skill is required.

IGCSE BIOLOGY

Full subject title	Biology
Syllabus number	0610
% Coursework	0%
% Oral assessment	0%
% Final exam	Paper 1 or 2 Multiple choice - 30% of total marks Paper 3 or 4 Theory paper - 50% of total marks Paper 6 Alternative to practical paper - 20% of total marks
Some topics covered	Cells and cell processes, animal nutrition, plant nutrition and transport, respiration and transport in humans, coordination and homeostasis, plant reproduction, human reproduction, inheritance and evolution, organisms and the environment, human influences on the environment.
Course description	As well as a focus on Biology, and with an emphasis on human Biology, the IGCSE Biology syllabus enables students to better understand the technological world in which they live, and take an informed interest in Science and scientific developments. Students learn about the basic principles of Biology through a mixture of theoretical and practical studies.
What do students need to know about this course before they choose it for IGCSE?	An understanding of scientific methodology, how experiments are conducted fairly, what variables are and how they affect an experiment. Basic understanding of human body systems and function, such as the circulatory, respiratory, digestive and reproductive systems. How plants produce their own food by photosynthesis and how living things are linked to one another in their environment.
What types of students do well in this course?	Students with a good command of English. Biology is a very descriptive Science. Students need to be able to explain biological processes in great detail using very scientific language. Students with good Maths skills. All of the Sciences require students to record, present and manipulate numerical data.
What types of students struggle with this course?	Students who lack good reading and writing skills in English will struggle with all of the new vocabulary and the lengthy explanations required to answer exam questions effectively. Students who aren't prepared to spend time learning the definitions and theory well. Students who struggle to apply their knowledge to new situations. Students who think Biology is the easy Science.
What kind of activities are done in class regularly?	Videos and animations to engage students and show biological principles in action. Presentations to deliver key theory and practical experimental work to learn the skills for paper 6. Students regularly use the internet for research and produce presentations and leaflets/posters for display. We play games to reinforce learning and use past papers to develop effective examination skills.
What do students like the most about this course?	Human Biology, especially the heart, lungs and eye as they dissect these organs.
What do students like the least about this course?	Learning vocabulary and definitions.
Other information	This course prepares students for IBDP Biology and may help with some parts of IBDP Environmental Systems and Societies.

IGCSE BUSINESS STUDIES

Full subject title	IGCSE Business Studies
Syllabus number	0450
% Coursework	0%
% Oral assessment	0%
% Final exam	Paper 1 Written Paper - 50% Paper 2 Written Paper - 50%
Some topics covered	Understanding business activity, people in business, marketing, operation management, financial information and decisions, external influences on business activity.
Course description	The Cambridge IGCSE Business Studies syllabus develops learners' understanding of business activity in the public and private sectors, and the importance of innovation and change. Learners find out how the major types of business organisation are established, financed and run, how their activities are regulated, and the role of people in business. IGCSE Business Studies is accepted by universities and employers as proof of an understanding of business concepts and techniques across a range of different businesses. A foundation for the study of IBDP Business Management, the syllabus also encourages a better understanding of the world in which students live.
What do students need to know about this course before they choose it for IGCSE?	No prior study is required.
What types of students do well in this course?	Less academic students who are interested in commerce will find Business Studies more accessible than Economics. Literacy and numeracy skills are important in the study of Business Studies. Students should also be able to read and interpret charts and graphs.
What types of students struggle with this course?	Students with poor literacy skills often struggle to understand some areas of the course.
What kinds of activities are done in class regularly?	Cases Studies, classroom experiments, class individual response systems, computer simulations, context-rich problems, cooperative learning, documented problem solving, interactive lectures, interactive lecture demonstrations, interdisciplinary approaches to teaching, writing, student research, using media to enhance teaching and learning.
What kinds of activities are done in class occasionally?	Tests, assignments and examinations
What do students like the most about this course?	This course gives students an increased understanding of real world events.
What do students like the least about this course?	Learning vocabulary and definitions.
Other information	None

IGCSE CHEMISTRY

Full subject title	IGCSE Chemistry
Syllabus number	0620
% Coursework	0%
% Oral assessment	0%
% Final exam	Paper 1 or 2 Multiple choice - 30% of total marks Paper 3 or 4 Theory paper - 50% of total marks Paper 6 Alternative to practical paper - 20% of total marks
Some topics covered	Introduction and basic atomic structure, bonding and the periodic table, chemical calculations, physical Chemistry, chemical reactions, nature's materials, organic Chemistry.
Course description	Cambridge IGCSE Chemistry will help students gain knowledge and understanding of the subject, learn how to handle information and solve problems, and learn experimental skills and techniques of investigation. Together, these will help students both develop a deep understanding of Chemistry, and prepare them to become confident citizens of an increasingly technical world.
What do students need to know about this course before they choose it for IGCSE?	This is a demanding and fast paced course which requires a lot of personal study. There is a significant amount of practical work. While Chemistry is an academic subject, it is intrinsically based on laboratory work. Theory is complemented by experiments in which you develop practical skills such as the use of modern laboratory equipment, powers of observation and the ability to communicate results and conclusions.
What types of students do well in this course?	Students who have a genuine interest in Science and are willing to work hard in their own time. In addition to having strong mathematical and numerical ability students who would have a good chance at success in the course would have, or want to develop, the following skills: analytical and problem-solving skills, abstract thinking, time management and organisational skills, written and oral communication, monitoring and maintaining records and data, teamwork, IT and technology skills, practical laboratory skills.
What types of students struggle with this course	Students who find it difficult to spot patterns, struggle with analytical or abstract thinking, very weak mathematic or numerical skills and disorganised students would find this course very challenging.
What kind of activities are done in class regularly?	Practical laboratory work, learning games, research, quizzes.
What do students like the most about this course?	Experiments and investigations.
What do students like the least about this course?	Calculations
Other information	It is essential to take IGCSE Chemistry if you wish to study IBDP Chemistry. In addition, it is a requirement if you wish to study Medicine in the future and other medically-based degrees such as nursing and bio-medical research.

IGCSE DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

Full subject title	IGCSE Design and Technology
Syllabus number	0445
% Coursework	50% Paper 5 Project: Individual design project. Internally assessed, externally moderated.
% Final exam	Paper 1 Design: Assesses design ability. 25% of total marks. Paper 3 Resistant Materials elective – Test knowledge of design and materials and their processing. 25% of total marks.
Some topics covered	Observe and identify needs, research, idea generation, health and safety, development of ideas, communicating with others, Design and Technology in society, aesthetics, anthropometrics and ergonomics, energy, control, mechanical control (static and dynamic), permanent fastenings.
Course description	Design and Technology prepares students for their future within a rapidly changing technological society. In the course students identify, consider and solve problems. Students gain technical and design awareness and develop skills such as initiative, resourcefulness, enquiry and ingenuity whilst also developing communication skills central to design, making and evaluation.
What do students need to know about this course before they choose it for IGCSE?	This is a demanding course in terms of the assessment requirements through both examinations and project work. Creativity, independent thinking and organisation skills are key elements to success in the written components. Confidence, combined with the ability to work safely and accurately, is key to success in the practical elements.
What types of students do well in this course?	Students who have a good command of English and who are able to apply technological terminology correctly and appropriately. Students who are able to think creatively to solve problems through designing and planning and who are confident in working with a range of materials, media and tools. Students who are able to convey ideas graphically.
What types of students struggle with this course?	Students who have the expectation that the course primarily involves “making things” find it difficult. While there are practical elements to the course, there is also a substantial amount of theory that is covered, culminating in two examinations and a substantial design portfolio requirement. Students who are unable to manage their time and meet deadlines will struggle.
What kind of activities are done in class regularly?	Group discussion, brainstorming, graphical communication, portfolio development, research, practical demonstrations, practical workshop activities.
What do students like the most about this course?	Students enjoy utilising various forms of technology in the development of solutions to various design situations.
What do students like the least about this course?	Design Technology is run as a one year course requiring students to be able to manage and schedule their independent study time to include Project Portfolio and practical work.
Other information	Students who do not achieve a C grade or higher at Year 10 level will struggle to achieve at the IGCSE level. In addition, students should be aware that, like Art and Design, this option requires a considerable time commitment.

IGCSE ECONOMICS

Full subject title	IGCSE Economics
Syllabus number	0455
% Coursework	0%
% Oral assessment	0%
% Final exam	Paper 1 Multiple Choice - 30% Paper 2 Structured Question - 70%
Some topics covered	Scarcity, Opportunity Cost and Choice, Economics Systems and How Markets Work, Money, Finance, and Banking, The Labour Market, Types of Business Organizations, The Role of Government in an Economy, Inflation, Unemployment, and GDP, Economic Development, International Trade.
Course description	The IGCSE Economics syllabus will develop an understanding of economic terminology and principles and of basic economic theory. Students will learn about the economics of developed and developing nations and how these interrelate. They will also learn to handle simple data and undertake economic analysis, evaluate information and discriminate between facts and value judgments in economic issues. A foundation for further study at IBDP, the syllabus also encourages a better understanding of the world in which students live, and helps them play an active part in the decision-making process, whether as consumers, producers or citizens of the local, national and international community.
What do students need to know about this course before they choose it for IGCSE?	No prior study is required.
What types of students do well in this course?	Literacy and numeracy skills are important in the study of Economics. Students should also be able to read and interpret charts and graphs.
What types of students struggle with this course?	Students with poor literacy skills often struggle to understand some areas of the course.
What kinds of activities are done in class regularly?	Cases Studies, classroom experiments, class individual response systems, computer simulations, context-rich problems, cooperative learning, documented problem solving, interactive lectures, interactive lecture demonstrations, interdisciplinary approaches to teaching, writing, student research, using media to enhance teaching and learning.
What kinds of activities are done in class occasionally?	Tests, assignments and examinations.
What do students like the most about this course?	This course gives students an increased understanding of real world events.
What do students like the least about this course?	At times the pace of an IGCSE course can be a little overwhelming.
Other information	None

IGCSE GEOGRAPHY

Full subject title	IGCSE Geography
Syllabus number	0460
% Coursework	0%
% Oral assessment	0%
% Final exam	Paper 1: 45% of final mark Paper 2: 27.5% of final mark Paper 3: 27.5% of final mark
Some topics covered	Population and settlement, the natural environment, economic development and the use of resources.
Course description	IGCSE Geography is course that teaches about the world in which we live. The study of Geography is unique in that it is a link between the Sciences; History, Business, Economics, Biology, Physics and Chemistry. This course teaches skills that can be used in the Sciences and the course content complements other courses e.g. renewable energy in Physics, weathering in Chemistry, ecosystems in Biology, migration in History and industry, tourism and agriculture in Business and Economics.
What do students need to know about this course before they choose it for IGCSE?	Students need to know the interests they have about the world in which we all live. Students considering taking the course should only really choose to study the subject if they have an interest in it and enjoy studying it. Geography looks at both human and physical Geography and their interactions, so there is something for everyone to enjoy.
What types of students do well in this course?	Students who have a genuine curiosity of how the world works. A student of this caliber will perform well because their own interests and curiosity will drive them to learn more about our world and our responsibility in preserving it.
What types of students struggle with this course	Because the topics of the course cover a wide area, students rarely struggle with this course. If students do struggle it is due to English proficiency.
What kind of activities are done in class regularly?	Activities range from group/pair work presentations, individual presentations, personal research an investigation.
What kind of activities are done in class occasionally?	Essays
What do students like the most about this course?	Students like that there is a variety of topics within the content that interest them. There are foreign concepts/ideas, different from other classes because we have to study about faraway places and things.
What do students like the least about this course?	Given the amount of new content, students least like the amount of reading and independent research required for the course.
Other information	It is recommended that students take IGSCCE Geography if they wish to study it later at IBDP level.

IGCSE INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

Full subject title	IGCSE Information and Communications Technology
Syllabus number	0417
% Coursework	0%
% Oral assessment	0%
% Final exam	Paper 1 - Written paper testing theoretical knowledge, weighted at 40% of available marks Paper 2 - Practical test, weighted at 30% of the available marks Paper 3 - Practical test, weighted at 30% of the available marks
Some topics covered	The theoretical element (40%) include types and components of computer systems, input and output devices, storage devices and media, computer networks, data types, the effects of ICT, the ways in which ICT is used and systems analysis and design. The practical element (60%) includes communication, document production, data manipulation, integration, output data, data analysis, website authoring and presentation authoring.
Course description	Cambridge IGCSE ICT will show students how to analyse, design, implement, test and evaluate ICT systems. Students will also consider the impact which new technologies will have on ways of working and the social, economic and ethical issues associated with them.
What do students need to know about this course before they choose it for IGCSE?	This course has a heavy practical element with two 2.5 hour practical exams alongside the 2 hour written paper. Students should consider their relationship with a computer before taking on this course! Careers: A qualification in ICT is a good foundation for any career based in the technology world from using applications successfully in business to web design, graphic design, games developers, programming, app builders, 3D modellers, architects, almost any job you can think of uses a computer and specialist kinds of software. Computer literacy is very important in the modern world.
What types of students do well in this course?	There are no pre-requisites for studying this course but an interest in technology is essential. Students who find using a computer straight forward and intuitive should do well in this course.
What types of students struggle with this course?	Students who find using computers confusing or that computers 'don't make sense' perhaps might not do so well on this course.
What kind of activities are done in class regularly?	Practical work, games, discussions and debate.
What kind of activities are done in class occasionally?	Role plays, group presentations.
What do students like the most about this course?	Exploring software programmes and discussing technology in the modern world.
What do students like the least about this course?	Certain practical elements such as databases and spread-sheets.
Other information	An IGCSE in ICT is a very useful course to study if you wish to take ITGS (Information Technology in a Global Society) at IB level.

IGCSE MUSIC

Full subject title	Music
Syllabus number	0410
% Coursework	30% Performing 30% Composing
% Oral assessment	N/A
% Final exam	40% Listening Examination
Some topics covered	Western classical music, world music, composition skills and performance skills.
Course description	Music is one of the most enjoyable and creative subjects and provides students with an opportunity for self-expression and creativity. Students are required to push their performance abilities, their composition skills as well as developing the comprehension and listening skills.
What do students need to know about this course before they choose it for IGCSE?	Prior experience in music is necessary. You will need to have a skill in performing an instrument, which can include the voice, and should have an outside instrumental teacher or vocal coach.
What types of students do well in this course?	Any student with a passion for music. Students that can show dedication and commitment to improving their musical skills. Students who take this course will realise a lot of work happens outside of the classroom as well as inside the classroom.
What types of students struggle with this course?	Students who cannot see projects through to the end. Students who are unwilling to try new things and be adventurous.
What kind of activities are done in class regularly?	Individual and group performances, music history and culture. Aural training, music theory exercises, music composition.
What kind of activities are done in class occasionally?	Individual and group performances, music history and culture. Aural training, music theory exercises, music composition.
What do students like the most about this course?	Playing and creating music.
What do students like the least about this course?	Students tend to enjoy most areas of the course, but time demands provide the biggest issues, as time needs to be dedicated to practising.
Other information	Entry requirements include a basic knowledge in music theory and proficient ability in a musical instrument.

IGCSE PHYSICS

Full subject title	IGCSE Physics
Syllabus number	0625
% Coursework	0%
% Oral assessment	0%
% Final exam	Paper 1 or 2 Multiple choice - 30% of total marks. Paper 3 or 4 Theory paper - 50% of total marks. Paper 6 Alternative to practical paper - 20% of total marks.
Some topics covered	Forces and motion, waves and sounds, energy, thermal effects, rays and waves, electricity, electrons and electronics, magnets and currents, atoms and radioactivity.
Course description	The IGCSE Physics course consists of a basic treatment of kinematics, mechanical energy, thermal Physics, electricity and magnetism, electronics and elementary nuclear Physics. These topics serve as a foundation for those wishing to continue with Physics beyond Year 11. To be successful in this course, students will need to have a degree of competence with Year 10 Mathematics methods.
What do students need to know about this course before they choose it for IGCSE?	This subject relies on understanding, not memorising. You cannot memorise Physics. A competence in basic Mathematics methods should be a prerequisite.
What types of students do well in this course?	Students that are good at Maths and/or genuinely like Physics.
What types of students struggle with this course?	Students who cannot think logically and who lack the ability to do basic Mathematics with competence.
What kind of activities are done in class regularly?	Lab practical's and investigations.
What kind of activities are done in class occasionally?	Interactive websites.
What do students like the most about this course?	The logical, sequential nature of Physics, practical experiments.
What do students like the least about this course?	Memorising formulas.
Other information	It is recommended to take Physics IGCSE if you wish to do Physics at IBDP next year. Physics is essential for students who may wish to study Engineering.





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