



Hurst

Choices Information

September 2025 Entry

Shell (Year 9)

Welcome



Dear Parents

The time has come for your son or daughter to start to make decisions about the subjects that they wish to study at Hurst next academic year. This booklet will give you an overview of the Shell curriculum, as well as the key information regarding each subject that we offer.

The Shell Curriculum

The Shell curriculum has been designed to allow pupils to start the GCSE journey across a wide range of subjects, before deciding which to continue with as they move into Remove. Throughout Shell, all pupils will be taught a core academic curriculum of English Language and Literature (taught jointly within English), Mathematics, Biology, Chemistry and Physics.

In addition to the core curriculum, pupils choose six subjects from Art, Computer Science, Dance, Design and Technology, Drama, French, Geography, History, Latin, Music, PE, REP and Spanish. Pupils who require Learning Support (LS) choose five subjects, with LS taking the place of the sixth.

Ordinarily, pupils must have previously studied any chosen language. However, if they have not studied a language but would like to, they should be willing to undertake a considerable amount of independent work in advance of our continuers' course starting. If this is the case, please contact me no later than February, and I will arrange for you to meet with the Head of our Languages Faculty.

Throughout the year, Personal, Social, Health, Citizenship and Economic Education (PSHCE) is covered weekly as part of a wider through-college course. Pupils will also take part in our bespoke enrichment programme spanning across a wide range of academic disciplines as well as the creative arts, whose purpose is to Ignite a love of learning.

The Subject Choices Process

In the first of a two-stage process, in early January, we will ask for the optional subjects to be ranked so that

your son or daughters most likely final choices are at the top of the list. This will provide us with the information we need to work out the combination of subjects within our 'option blocks' that ensures as many pupils as possible can choose their top six preferences. While we have tended to be quite successful in doing so, it may not always be possible to accommodate everyone's choices. In that case, we will endeavour to find a solution that suits as many pupils as possible.

In early February, we start the second stage of the process by releasing the option blocks and asking you to submit your son or daughters final six choices from the blocks. You should submit the choices as soon as possible so that pupils can be allocated to classes.

Note that pupils are allocated to classes as choices are received and if a subject becomes oversubscribed, we will maintain a waiting list, notifying you if your son or daughter is added to one. Five is the minimum number of pupils for which we would normally run a subject; if a subject has less than five pupils, we will notify those involved.

If, after you have submitted their final choices, your son or daughter changes their mind and wants to choose a different combination of subjects, do let us know as soon as you can. While we may not be able to guarantee the change will work, we will do everything we can to attempt to make it possible.

A question we commonly receive is, what subject combination would you recommend? While the choice is completely that of you and your son or daughter, when asked this question, our answer is always that we believe that a broad curriculum that includes one humanity, one language and one creative or practical subject keeps as many doors as possible open as you look to the selection of GCSE choices for the Remove year.

I hope that this booklet will provide you with the key information you need to make the right choices, but if you have any further questions, do get in touch and I will be happy to answer them.

Yours sincerely

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The Curriculum

Core Subjects	Optional Subjects - choose six (five with Learning Support)
These subjects are compulsory in the Shell year	Up to six subjects
English Language	Art
English Literature	Computer Science
Mathematics	Dance
Biology	Drama
Chemistry	Design and Technology (DT)
Physics	French
	Geography
	History
	Latin
	Music
	Physical Education (PE)
	Religion, Ethics and Philosophy (REP)
	Spanish



Art and Design

in the Shell year

GCSE Art and Design is a broad and flexible course where pupils will develop their visual skills and build a portfolio of work by completing a wide range of activities and in-depth assignments.

It is the right subject for pupils who enjoy:

- Developing visual skills and engaging with the creative process of art, craft and design
- Developing and refining ideas
- Visits to galleries, museums, workshops and studios
- Experimenting and taking risks with work, and learning from personal experiences.

If they take Art and Design pupils will:

- Develop and explore ideas
- Select and experiment with appropriate media, materials, techniques and processes
- Record ideas, observations and insights
- Present personal and meaningful responses

Throughout this course pupils will develop transferable skills which will prepare them for further study or the world of work, and useful to most subjects or careers that pupils wish to pursue:

- How to apply a creative approach to problem solving
- Consider and develop original ideas from initiation to realisation
- Critically analyse their own work and the work of others
- Express individual thoughts and choices confidently
- Take risks, experiment and learn from mistakes
- Project management

Examination board

OCR

Teaching approach

Pupils use a mix of modern technology and traditional techniques to respond critically to art and photography. Throughout the course they develop the skills to work independently and to sustain a response from a given brief to its realisation, identifying and resolving problems and developing a final outcome.

Art is a language of visual symbols, the formal elements of which can be learnt as in any language. It is also a subject that needs to go beyond the limitations of the timetable and requires pupils to make use of the extra activities offered within the Art School.

Course structure

Students joining the Art Department will discover a wide range of new materials, concepts and skills. The aim of the department is to foster an enquiring mind, an imaginative approach and the confidence to be able to express ideas visually as well as verbally.

The Shell year will have multiple projects. In the Lent and Summer Terms pupils will make an illustration/design based artwork revealing their personal ideas in response to a relevant topical issue.

At the end of the Shell course all students leave with a sketchbook including classwork and preps. Assessment will be easy to navigate and pupils will be informed clearly of the next step they need to take in order to progress.

Throughout the course there will be opportunities to develop expertise in Drawing, Painting, Ceramics, Photography, Creative Textiles and Sculpture.

Component 1: Personal Portfolio

In the Michaelmas Term the Remove will select a theme and commence a personal portfolio of work. They will visit a relevant place of interest to inspire their Fine Art practices in botanical drawing, painting, illustration and ceramic sculpture. A visit to some London Art Galleries will be pivotal to the Lent and Summer Term project where pupils will investigate a range of approaches to studying the structure and anatomy of the human form and how to capture, convey and express human feelings in artworks.

In the Fifth Form pupils will continue their theme for the Michaelmas Term and complete a final outcome.

Component 2: Set Task

An examination board theme will stimulate a 9 week preparatory period starting in January of the Fifth Form and completed with a 10 hour examination taken over 2 days. Whilst pupils will have structured lessons they will be leading the content of the project themselves and they will be encouraged to develop their individual ideas using media of their choice.

Examination structure

Component 1: Personal Portfolio (Coursework)

60%

Comprising work selected from the Remove and the Michaelmas Term of the Fifth Form.

Component 2: Set Task

40%

Comprising 9 week preparation and 10 hour (2 day) examination.

Non-examination assessment

Students submit a portfolio of 60% coursework by the deadline in the Summer Term.

Computer Science

in the Shell year

Computer Science appeals to students who are interested in the inner workings of a computer and are keen to design and create their own programs. The course suits those who are analytical in their approach and enjoy problem solving. Strong mathematical skills are a bonus.

Examination board

OCR

Teaching approach

There is a large emphasis on practical work with students developing the fundamental skills of programming by creating programs using a high-level programming language. Theory is taught in a dynamic way with practical examples used to highlight key concepts, allowing students to gain subject knowledge in preparation for the final exams.

Course structure

In Shell, key Computer Science concepts such as how computers represent data is explored. Pupils will learn about the binary number system, and how to convert numbers into and out of binary, and how to add binary numbers together. How a computer stores text, images and sound is explored through practical examples. Boolean logic is introduced.

Pupils will have practical experience of programming techniques and will work on creating a computer game using the LiveCode programming language. Pupils design the graphics for the game in a desktop graphics package, learn how to design algorithms to solve problems and how to describe algorithms using flowcharts. Programming fundamentals of variables, sequence, selection and iteration are explored.

Artificial Intelligence is investigated, with pupils exploring how this can be used in a positive way, while also examining the potential concerns and risks of this technology.

Component 1: Computer Systems

This component is focused on computer systems covering the physical elements of computer science and the associated theory.

Component 2: Computational Thinking, Algorithms and Programming

This component is focused on solving problems in a computational way, applying solutions through the use of algorithms and applying these in a high-level programming language.

Examination structure

Component 1: Theory Paper

Written Paper (90 minutes)
50% of the GCSE

Component 2: Theory Paper

Written Paper (90 minutes)
50% of the GCSE

Non-examination assessment

There is no coursework.

Dance

in the Shell year

The study of dance as an art form contributes to a pupil's aesthetic and social development as well as increasing their more traditional academic capabilities. As performers, students develop confidence and self-esteem. As choreographers, pupils employ the skills of problem solving and creativity and, in directing others, develop interpersonal and communication skills. As critics, pupils make informed responses, articulate their knowledge and opinions of professional works.

Teaching approach

The holistic study of selected professional dance works provides the context for learning through performance, choreography and critical appreciation enabling students to experience different cultural influences and styles of dance.

Course structure

The Shell will receive four lessons of dance per fortnight throughout the academic year. These sessions will introduce the students to a range of skills that are pertinent to the subject itself as well as being transferable to other areas of the curriculum. The sessions will therefore provide an awareness of physical and expressive skills, employment of lateral thinking in response to creative tasks and appreciation of the cultural and social context of dance.

Students will physically explore a dance style and independently respond to creative tasks as well as critically analyse the features of the work. Performance opportunities will be available throughout the year to celebrate the students developing ability and creativity via the Academic Dance Sharing in Lent Term and the Summer Term Performing Arts Project.

This course is designed to provide pupils with the fundamental skills that will enhance their live performances throughout their time at the College on the co-curricular side.

Design and Technology (DT) in the Shell year

This is a stimulating and forward-looking course where pupils can gain experience of, and a greater insight into some of the technological processes that affect us all. By studying Design & Technology in Shell, pupils build the skills, knowledge and understanding required to study GCSE Design and Technology. The digital amplifier project we make over the year prepares pupils with the basic material, systems and manufacturing foundation required to participate confidently and successfully in the GCSE years.

At GCSE, pupils will gain awareness and learn from wider influences on Design & Technology including historical, social, cultural, environmental and economic factors. Pupils will get the opportunity to work creatively when designing and making and apply technical and practical expertise. The GCSE course allows pupils to study core technical and designing and making principles, including a broad range of design processes, materials techniques and equipment. They will also have the opportunity to study specialist technical principles in greater depth.

The course is practically based and investigates a number of design problems which are resolved by the production of a final three dimensional artefact crafted predominantly in wood, metal or plastic. The systematic and logical problem solving approach is recorded in the production of a design portfolio where skills in the presentation of ideas, technical drawing and the use of IT are built up. The NEA represents a substantial proportion of the examination marks. Preparation for the written examination is covered in specific theory lessons. Theory lessons cover every aspect of the specification and are taught separately from practical lessons, although much of the theory dovetails with non-theory lessons.

This is not an easy GCSE option – pupils must be prepared to spend time in the department in addition to normal lessons and there will be a proportional charge for NEA materials used.

Examination board

AQA

Teaching approach

Pupils are taught to:

- Understand the basic design principles of line, form and colour and their application in designing
- Consider the conflicting demands that moral, cultural, economic, environmental, historical and social issues can make in the planning and designing of products
- Consider their own health and safety and that of makers, manufacturers, individual users and society at large
- Use graphic techniques and IT, including CAD, to generate, develop, model and communicate design proposals
- Produce and use detailed working schedules that will achieve the desired objectives in the time available, setting realistic deadlines for the various stages of manufacture, identifying critical points in the making process and providing alternatives to possible problems
- Be flexible and adaptable in their designing in order to respond to problems, changing circumstances and new opportunities
- Use tools and equipment safely, accurately and efficiently to achieve an appropriate fit, finish and reliable functioning in products that match their specifications
- Ensure, through testing, modification and evaluation, that the quality of their products are suitable for intended users and devise modifications where necessary that would improve performance

Shell project modules:

- Finger jointed pine amplifier casing
- Digital amplifier printed circuit board
- Acrylic amplifier designs
- Hand graphical presentation techniques
- 3D CAD drawing and rendering

Course structure

There are two units – a non-examination assessment worth 50% and a written paper worth 50%.

Examination structure

The written paper is two hours long and is designed to test the application of knowledge and understanding through a broad range of questions on different materials. Pupils will need to display specific material knowledge, and an understanding of core, specialist technical and designing and making principles.

Non-examination assessment

The NEA takes place during the final year of the course and is worth 50% of the final marks. It is internally assessed and externally moderated. Pupils are required to submit a concise design folder and/or the appropriate ICT evidence with a 3-dimensional outcome by the end of the Lent term.

Throughout the project pupils should address the industrial and commercial practices, and the moral, social, cultural and environmental issues arising from their work. Experience has shown that pupils are often highly motivated when they devise their own project outlines based on a personal interest or hobby. This is, therefore, to be encouraged.



Drama

in the Shell year

At GCSE level Drama mixes practical activity with the development of theoretical knowledge, encouraging students to 'learn by doing'. Students will learn how to develop a wide variety of material for performance, whilst enhancing their performance and technical skills to make practical progress. They will also develop their critical faculties in order to evaluate their own skills and the work of professional theatre makers experienced through live theatre visits and bespoke workshops.

Examination board

AQA

Teaching approach

Pupils are equipped with rehearsal techniques and drama skills to enable them to develop performance material.

They are encouraged to take risks in the rehearsal room and be supportive of the work of their peers. Pupils work in teams producing drama in collaboration to perform before an audience, hence creative co-operation and adaptability are essential skills. The course develops independent learning, allowing candidates to take responsibility for their own approach, development and output, with the teacher acting as a facilitator to ensure reflection is at the heart of progress. The course will build confidence, develop team work, problem-solving and practical performance skills, all of which are transferable skills to other areas of academic study and wider life.

Course structure

In the Shell year, pupils spend the Michaelmas Term workshopping different practitioners to develop a range of performance skills. During the Lent Term they will study a play from the perspective of Performer, Director and Designer. In the Summer Term, students begin a practical group project, culminating in an assessed performance. Throughout the year pupils will view live theatre performances and learn how to critique the work of theatre makers. Embedded in our curriculum is a continual enhancement of the students' confidence, communication, organisation and team-working abilities.

In Remove and the Fifth Form, students will study an additional play text and complete two practical units.

The final unit is a written examination, which will be taken at the end of the course. Students will be expected to:

- Show knowledge of both technical and performance aspects of theatre
- Write about a set text we have studied and practically explored in class
- Review a piece of live theatre

Essay writing is a key component of the GCSE Drama course and good English skills are essential.

The preparation for this examination will take the form of both practical workshops and theory classes.

Examination structure

The two practical units are worth 60% of the overall grade with the written examination unit being worth 40%.

One of the practical units (Component 2) is internally marked and externally moderated, the other (Component 3) is externally marked by AQA. The final written exam takes place at the end of the GCSE course.



English Language and English Literature in the Shell year

We follow the Edexcel International GCSE (IGCSE) syllabus for both English Language and English Literature.

The English curriculum covers all forms of literature. From Shell to A-level, we encourage pupils to engage with challenging texts that, we hope, speak to them about issues they find important and relevant.

Students study a Shakespeare text in each key stage of the curriculum along with other classical and contemporary drama, prose and poetry.

Creativity is key to our teaching and pupils are encouraged to develop their creative writing skills in co-curricular clubs and competitions. Similarly, we encourage wider reading at all levels of the school and subscribe to a range of literary magazines and websites.

Examination board

Edexcel (IGCSE)

Teaching approach

In English lessons, discussion, debate and personal interpretations are strongly encouraged. We use a range of teaching approaches and focus on skills-based learning.

English courses

In their English lessons in the Shell, students develop sophisticated literacy and literary skills. It is expected that students will become fluent independent readers, confident writers and effective users of the key oral competencies of speaking and listening. Students will enjoy the luxury of exploring a diverse range of literature, whilst following a scheme of study that allows them to develop and hone the skills required for the IGCSEs in English Language and English Literature.

Hurst English Department recognises that digital technology has revolutionised the way that the world accesses literature and accordingly students will be encouraged to utilise this technology to complement their studies.

English Language in the Shell year

Course structure (English Language)

The English Language course is designed to aid and assess pupils' development in the skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening. These skills are not only essential in many careers, they also underpin successful study at all levels.

Examination structure

The English Language examination consists of questions on unseen non-fiction texts. There is also a choice of two writing tasks, testing pupils on their ability to write accurate, well-structured and purposeful prose.

Non-examination assessment

There are two coursework pieces each for English Language.

English Literature in the Shell year

Course structure (English Literature)

Pupils undertake a range of reading, covering the English literary heritage and the three main genres: poetry, prose and drama. Pupils need to know their set texts well, having read them closely and formed their own judgements.

Examination structure

Pupils will be examined on the texts they have been studying in the Michaelmas and Summer Terms: a selection of poetry and a work of modern prose respectively. In the Lent Term, pupils complete a coursework-style essay on the Shakespeare text to prepare them for the demands of IGCSE.

Non-examination assessment

There are two coursework pieces each for English Literature.

Geography

in the Shell year

Geography is the study of the physical and human worlds and the way they interact. Understanding the impact of an ever increasing population on global and local natural systems and resources, and vice versa, is the great challenge of our day and explains the interest in and popularity of the subject at school and university level. Sustainability remains a key issue in which our students explore both within and outside the classroom.

Geography is highly topical and can open up a wide range of choices and careers later on for those who might go on to pursue it in the Sixth Form.

Examination board

Edexcel (IGCSE)

Teaching approach

We use a wide range of teaching and learning strategies. This includes discussion, role-play, research, independent learning, presentations, debates, use of IT including geography specific software and apps, internet-based programs, documentaries and fieldwork.

Course structure

All Shell students start the IGCSE Geography course during Year 9.

During the Shell year students cover two topics:

- Hazardous Environments
- Economic Activity and Energy

In the Remove and Fifth Form the following topics are covered:

- Urban Environments
- River Environments
- Fieldwork (Brighton and River Tillingbourne)
- Global Issues - Globalisation and Migration

Examination structure

There are two examination papers in IGCSE Geography:

Paper 1 'Physical Geography' tests

Hazardous Environments, River Environments and fieldwork from the River Environments (River Tillingbourne) trip.

Paper 2 'Human Geography' tests

Economic Activity and Energy, Urban Environments, Global Issues (Globalisation and Migration) and fieldwork from the Urban Environments (Brighton) trip.

Non-examination assessment

There is no coursework.

Trips

We run an international trip in the Remove year to support the curriculum and we also take pupils on local fieldwork trips to develop their skills and use these skills to complete section B in paper 1 and paper 2 of the exam.

History

in the Shell year

The IGCSE course is designed to give students an understanding of, and a passion for, modern world history.

This is a subject where classes debate rigorously, piece together the past using a range of fascinating documentary material, and learn how to write a convincing argument. Students will develop as critical thinkers, as they acquire knowledge, and will gain key analytical and evaluative skills. The course will investigate the role of key individuals and the causes and consequences of key turning points.

Most importantly historians at Hurst determinedly wrestle with the challenges of the course and love learning about the past.

Examination board

Edexcel (IGCSE)

Teaching approach

History is taught in a number of ways, using a great variety of materials. Pupils can expect to be using modern audio-visual equipment and information and communication technology; they can also expect to be analysing fascinating primary sources and historical interpretations.

Course structure

The IGCSE course covers four topics:

- Germany: development of dictatorship, 1918–45
- A world divided: superpower relations, 1943–72
- The Vietnam conflict, 1945–75
- China: conflict, crisis and change, 1900–89

The aim of the course is to develop the students' critical thinking skills, as well as an understanding of modern world history.

Examination structure

Paper 1: Depth Studies

50% of total IGCSE

1 hour 30 minutes

Topics 1 and 2

Paper 2: Investigation and Breadth Studies

50% of total IGCSE

1 hour 30 minutes

Topics 3 and 4

Non-examination assessment

There is no coursework.

Latin

in the Shell year

Are you someone who wonders about the origins of our culture?

Do you like reading fiction about heroes, gods, romance and epic fights to the death?

Do the mechanics of language and improving your English vocabulary hold a fascination for you?

Are you searching for a unique and multidisciplinary subject that will impress future employers?

If you answer 'Yes!' to all of these questions, Latin is the subject for you.

The main aim of the Latin course is to delve into some of the elements of classical civilisation, literature and language which have had a profound influence on modern societies.

We continue to follow the Cambridge Latin Course throughout the Shell and Remove years; in Roman Britain we see our hero Quintus pitched against the challenges posed by manipulative Salvius before we move to Rome to explore the reign of the Emperor Domitian, one of the nastier of the Roman emperors.

During the Remove year, Roman literature is introduced, read and studied alongside other source material; this allows pupils to apply Latin to its original context and explore the history behind the language.

The course is designed to fire the imagination of all who study it and stretch and challenge pupils of all abilities. The attention to detail, logic, communication and analytical skills that pupils develop through their study of Latin are crucial qualities for a CV and would be highly valued by any employer. Students of Latin are excellent applicants for a range of careers, including (but not limited to) law, finance, marketing and the civil service.

Examination board

Eduqas

Teaching approach

We use a range of teaching approaches through which students can enrich their learning and knowledge of Latin and the Roman worlds, develop certain skills of analysis which help with other subjects and strengthen their own use of the English language:

- Teacher-led sessions
- Small group and pair work
- Independent research
- The Cambridge Latin Course website for exercises and activities
- Kahoot, Quizlet, Blooket, Socrative and other websites and apps
- As part of the course, we plan to run a school trip to Italy to enrich pupils' understanding of the Classical World

Course structure

Shell

- Cambridge Latin Course Book 3. Comprehensions, translations and targeted grammatical exercises.
- There is a distinct move through the year towards the more complex Latin constructions; the year is used to lay the grammatical foundations for GCSE.
- Pupils are tested on GCSE vocabulary covered so far in the Latin course, which is particularly helpful for pupils new to the school who have not studied the Cambridge Latin Course before.
- We study aspects of Roman civilisation, specifically Roman Britain, and start to build the skills needed to deal with sources.

Remove

- Cambridge Latin Course Book 4 and departmental resources. By January, the majority of the grammar needed for GCSE will have been studied.
- The full GCSE vocabulary list is used, covering words already learnt with some more detailed grammar attached.
- The cultural topics include the city of Rome, emperors and the role of women.
- Students begin to study the Roman literature in Michaelmas term and have the opportunity to apply their language skills to real Latin texts that were written over 2000 years ago. Themes will include either 'Heroes and Villains' or 'Come Dine with me'.

Fifth Form

- Grammar consolidation through practice examination questions; we move from completing translations and comprehensions from the text book to those on historical and mythological topics which imitate the examination.
- Vocabulary learning is from the GCSE list, but we aim to test the words in an unfamiliar context (i.e. in a passage of Latin) as well as in standard vocabulary test format since this will be at least the third time the words have been tested.
- We will finish reading the literature by the end of the Michaelmas Term meaning revision of both literature papers begins in the Lent Term.

Examination structure

The GCSE breaks down into three components:

Component 1 Language

One paper, 1 hour 30 minutes
50% of qualification

Component 2 Literature and Sources

One paper, 1 hour 15 minutes
30% of qualification

Component 3 Latin Literature (Narratives)

One paper, 1 hour
20% of qualification

Non-examination Assessment

There is no coursework.

Additional information

Please note that pupils may only take this course if they have studied Latin before joining the Shell year.

Mathematics

in the Shell year

Mathematics covers many basic skills that will be needed in a variety of ways throughout life and because of this it is a compulsory subject for all middle school students.

Use is made of much of what is learnt in IGCSE Mathematics in the other subjects that students study. For example, in Science pupils may be asked to use formulae and solve equations, in Geography they will need to read charts, interpret diagrams and use statistics and in DT they will need to use measures and make scale drawings.

Many university courses require IGCSE Mathematics as an entry requirement, as do many jobs and careers.

Examination boards

Edexcel (IGCSE)

AQA Further Maths (Level 2 Qualification) this is an extra qualification that some students will sit in addition to Mathematics IGCSE

Teaching approach

While studying Mathematics pupils will be expected to:

- Use mathematical skills and knowledge to solve problems
- Use logic and reason to solve problems
- Break down problems into small steps in order to solve them
- Use the mathematics learnt to solve problems that might happen in real life
- Learn how to use a calculator to solve problems quickly and effectively

In common with many other schools, we have decided that we will not enter our top set for IGCSE at the end of the Remove; however, this policy is under constant review. Pupils in the top sets should expect to be stretched throughout the Remove and Fifth Form, often studying topics that are beyond the syllabus. These pupils in higher sets will be taught the content of AQA Further Mathematics Level 2 Qualification during Fifth form, having worked at a faster pace towards the end of Remove. They will be entered for this extra qualification if appropriate. In this way they will be ready to tackle Mathematics in the Sixth Form.

Course structure

Shell

During the Shell year, students will start their IGCSE course and have access to an IGCSE text book. They will revisit and build upon ideas that they will have come across previously in mathematics: Algebra, Shape and Space, Number and Proportion, Probability and Data Handling. We ensure that students have a good foundation of basic number work, including the four operations with decimals and fractions. Students will also meet standard form and index rules. Some of the algebraic techniques will include solving equations, factorising and rearranging formulae, which are key techniques for the IGCSE course. Students are encouraged to form links between algebraic expressions and graphical representations. Basic data handling skills are covered, including both representing and analysing data. Shape topics include common area formulae, units of measurement, Pythagoras, right angled trigonometry and circle theorems. In all aspects of the course real life problem solving is encouraged. Technology is planned into schemes of work to enhance learning where appropriate and mobile technology is particularly useful for revision purposes.

Remove and Fifth Form

In the Remove and Fifth Form the work is a natural progression from studies in the Shell and earlier years.

In the new IGCSE specifications, there is now a heavier emphasis on interpreting and analysing problems, and generating strategies to solve them.

Examination structure

There will be two calculator papers. For students who sit AQA Further Mathematics Level 2 Qualification there will be one non-calculator paper and one calculator paper in addition to the two IGCSE papers.

Non-examination assessment

There is no coursework.

Modern Languages (MFL): French and Spanish

in the Shell year

The ability to communicate effectively in a language other than your own is of increasing importance in today's world.

Our emphasis is on practical communication and we aim to provide a sound base of grammar, an insight into culture and civilisation, an awareness of the structure of the language and, most important of all, enjoyment and intellectual stimulation.

Examination board

Edexcel (IGCSE)

Teaching approach

We teach in a lively and communicative way. Our main aim is to ensure that pupils can understand spoken and written language and express themselves confidently, both orally and in writing. Grammar is taught alongside active communication skills so that pupils have the tools to use language creatively and accurately.

In addition to traditional text books we make considerable use of audio and video resources from the internet along with authentic materials from other sources. Pupils are also given the opportunity to develop their language skills and to make use of new technologies in the production of their work. The department aims to provide regular trips in order to promote and consolidate language learning along with an insight into culture and history.

Much of the teaching is conducted in the target language, but English is used for the explanation of grammar points and for clarification. We are fortunate to have native speaking language assistants who help us with preparation for the speaking assessment.

The Department aims to engender an enthusiasm for language that will encourage pupils to achieve the highest levels of academic success as well as giving them the important skills which they can use outside school and, hopefully, throughout their life.

Course structure

Shell

In the Shell pupils revise some of the key basics before moving on to more advanced topics that will lay the foundations for the IGCSE course. Pupils will learn how to talk in more detail about themselves, their friends and their families. They will learn to describe their free time activities and to give justified opinions on a range of different topics.

In terms of grammar, pupils study definite and indefinite articles; how to form the plural of nouns and adjectives; possessive adjectives and the conjugation of the present, past and future tense of regular verbs, reflexive verbs and some irregular verbs.

Remove and Fifth Form

In the Remove and Fifth Form, IGCSE languages are topic-based courses, covering the following five different subject areas:

- Everyday activities: home life and school, food, health and fitness
- Personal and social life: self, family and personal relationships, holidays and special occasions
- The world around us: home town and local area, environmental issues and climate change, people, places and customs
- The world of work: continuing education, careers and employment, language and communication in the workplace
- The international world: tourism at home and abroad, life in other countries and communities, world events and issues

Pupils learn how to cope with everyday situations within these topic areas, with the emphasis split between the four language skills: reading, writing, listening and speaking.

The language and grammatical structures gained during the foundation years are developed as pupils produce increasingly sophisticated language. Oral and written skills are furthered through the addition of more complex vocabulary and structures. Pupils learn how to manipulate and contrast the present, past and future tenses and to express their opinions on a variety of issues.

Examination structure

The IGCSE consists of three separate assessments which are based on the four skills (speaking, listening, reading, writing); each skill is worth 25%:

Listening

The listening examination takes 35 minutes. All questions and rubrics are in the target language.

Speaking

The speaking examination is conducted by the teacher and externally marked. It consists of a photocard and a conversation on two of the five topic areas.

Reading and writing

This examination is 1 hour 45 minutes and is split into a reading section and writing section. Exercises vary from multiple choice and gap-fills to answers in French and Spanish. In the writing section, candidates write about two of the five topic areas and then complete a gap-fill activity, which tests their grammatical knowledge and ability to

manipulate language. No dictionaries are allowed in any of the examinations, although pupils may use them when preparing for the speaking examination.

Non-examination assessment

There is no coursework, though pupils will be expected to prepare for the oral examination, and will have practised each of the topic areas thoroughly in advance.

Additional information

Please note that pupils may only select a modern foreign language if they have studied that language before joining the Shell year.



Music

in the Shell year

The Music course in the Shell, Remove and Fifth Form years follows the OCR specification.

After a foundation year in which performance, composition and listening skills are developed, students commence the GCSE course.

60% of the final GCSE examination is non-examination assessment and the remaining 40% is a written examination with listening questions.

Examination board

OCR

Teaching approach

All are welcome to study Music in the Shell. Whether you are keen to pursue music for GCSE and beyond or if you would like a year to explore and create through numerous musical styles and contexts. The Shell music course is open to everyone.

Course structure

Shell Music lessons cover listening, composing and performing skills and throughout the year students have the opportunity to: perform in groups/as a soloist, compose in groups/solo and undertake individual listening and comprehension tests. The following themes are covered:

1. Film and Video Game Music

Each class will observe the conventional tropes of music within Horror, Action and Romantic film. They will study what it is to use a Leitmotif, how recorded sound is utilised in film, the difference between diegetic and non-diegetic music and what it is to Mickey Mouse.

2. The Conventions of Pop

The class will look at performing pop arrangements of songs from the OCR GCSE Conventions of Pop area of study.

The class will hear Iconic Artists and the typical features of: Rock 'n' Roll of the 1950s and 60s, Rock Anthems of the 1960s and 70s, Pop Ballads of the 1970s, 80s and 90s and Solo Artists of the 1990s till the Present Day. Students will review their knowledge of music notation and look at lettering and performing pieces typical of the area of study whilst studying the style and context.

3. Rhythms of the World

Students will look at creating several practical compositions based on Rhythms of the World. The topic will cover listening work that focuses on: Indian Classical Music, Bhangra, Israeli and Palestinian music, African Drumming, Greek Music, Samba work and Calypso music.

4. Sampling and Arranging

The class will discuss and analyse what goes into the process of sampling in music and review the contemporary debates that have arisen since the process originated in the 1970s.

Students will firstly develop a composition based around a Soundtrap loop of their choice, with the awareness that the loop is in fact a pre-recorded sample. Then, the class will create a composition based around one of five vocal samples.

5. The History of Western Music

This course takes students through the traditional Western Music Timeline, from the Baroque Period to the 21st Century. Students learn about iconic composers, key works and musical trends throughout Western History.

Each week students focus on one composer of a new period and then begin to play a work of that composer on the keyboard or their chosen instrument.

6. Performance Assessment

Students will be given lesson time to prepare a performance of a piece and will then assess each other's work according to the GCSE Mark Scheme.

Examination structure

There are two non-examined elements (Components 1 and 2) and one examination.

Component 1

30% of total GCSE

Solo Performing 15%

Ensemble Performing 15%

Component 2

30% of total GCSE Composing

Component 3

40% of total GCSE

The final part of the course is a 105 minute listening and written examination which will be held in the Summer Term at the end of the Fifth Form.

Non-examination assessment

This accounts for 60% of the overall examination.



Physical Education (PE)

in the Shell year

Physical Education at GCSE is a broad, coherent and practical course, which encourages learners to be inspired, motivated and challenged by the subject. The course aims to equip learners with the knowledge, understanding, skills and values to develop and maintain their performance in physical activities and understand the benefits to health, fitness and well-being.

Examination board

OCR

Teaching approach

As a department, we take great pride in the standard and effectiveness of our teaching and learning techniques in the classroom. Lessons use a variety of different learning styles and methods to help achieve personal bests, promote fun and meta-cognitive learning. Our students will leave the course as more confident young people, who have been stretched and challenged on a regular basis.

Course structure

In the Shell year, pupils will start to study physical factors affecting their performance which includes applied anatomy and physiology. Lessons will be split into theory and practical sessions across the four lessons per fortnight. This continues as the pupils move into Remove and Fifth.

Component 01

Physical factors affecting performance:

- 1.1. Applied anatomy and physiology
- 1.2. Physical training

Component 02

Socio-cultural issues and sports psychology:

- 2.1. Socio-cultural influences
- 2.2. Sports Psychology
- 2.3. Health, fitness and well-being

Examination structure

Learners will start to explore the ways in which parts of the human body work and function during physical activity and the physiological adaptations that can occur due to diet and training. Learners will also develop their knowledge and understanding of the principles of training, why we train in different ways and how training plans can be made to optimise results.

There are two 60 minute examinations:

Paper 01 (30% of the total GCSE, 60 marks, 60 minutes) – Physical factors affecting performance.

Assessed in a mixture of objective responses including multiple-choice questions, short answers and extended response items.

Assessment in Paper 01 includes:

- 1.1.a. The structure and function of the skeletal system
- 1.1.b. The structure and function of the muscular system
- 1.1.c. Movement Analysis
- 1.1.d. The cardiovascular and respiratory systems
- 1.1.e. Effects of exercise on body systems

Paper 02 (30% of the total GCSE, 60 marks, 60 minutes) – Socio-cultural influences and sports psychology.

Assessed in a mixture of objective responses including multiple-choice questions, short answers and extended response items.

Assessment in Paper 02 includes:

- 2.1.a. Engagement patterns of different social groups in physical activities and sports
- 2.1.b. Commercialisation of physical activities and sport
- 2.1.c. Ethical and socio-cultural issues in physical activities and sport
- 2.2. Sport Psychology
- 2.3. Health, fitness and well-being

Non-examination assessment

Component 04 Practical performances (NEA)

Performance of three activities taken from the two approved lists:

- One from the 'individual' list
- One from the 'team' list
- One from either list

The practical options are worth 30% of the total GCSE. It is important to note that students must be assessed in a competitive environment and therefore should be regularly participating in the three sports that they choose.

For a full activity list please see:

<https://www.ocr.org.uk/Images/234827-gcse-guide-to-non-exam-assessment.pdf>

Component 05 Analysing and Evaluating Performance (NEA)

This component is worth 10% of the total GCSE. Pupils will complete this written task in 14 hours, which involves drawing on their knowledge and understanding to analyse and evaluate their own performance and implement an action plan to improve a chosen weakness within their sport.



Religion, Ethics and Philosophy (REP) in the Shell year

The study of Religion, Ethics and Philosophy (REP) has huge value in the 21st century, as we seek to unpack the nuanced debates of our time. At the core of our teaching is an interest in diverse beliefs and worldviews, and different ways of understanding the world around us.

Students of Religion Ethics and Philosophy (REP) are found working across almost every employment sector; an ability to understand and critically consider a range of viewpoints before reaching your own judgement is a highly prized skill in today's world. Ethicists work across industry (AI, medicine, pharmaceuticals, Government & Civil Service, charities, technology, science & research, law, and others).

Developing religious literacy in an increasingly pluralistic world is, some would say, a civic duty. And Philosophy ('love of knowledge') is increasingly offered at degree level to accompany Mathematics, Physics, Law, Economics, Biology, Medicine, Politics, and Sociology: an indication of its relevance across academic disciplines.

At GCSE level, REP enables students to study moral issues and philosophical questions such as 'What's the value of life?', 'What beliefs will you live by?' and 'Is euthanasia permissible?' This specification does not presuppose faith, and is designed to be accessible to persons of any religious persuasion or none. What is necessary is an interest in the beliefs and values of others.

Examination board

Eduqas

Teaching approach

The REP classroom is a safe environment to reconsider and challenge prior assumptions. Students are supported to express their ideas and learn to respectfully disagree with each other through a broad range of contemporary and ancient debates. Students encounter two faith systems in detail during GCSE REP: Christianity and Judaism. This is accompanied by an extensive study of ethics (euthanasia, abortion, environmental stewardship, relationships, censorship, etc). The subject is examined through a range of short answer questions and essays,

skills which students are supported to hone throughout the course, which commences in January of the Shell year.

The GCSE course aims to:

- Stimulate interest in and enthusiasm for a study of philosophy, ethics and theology
- Develop knowledge and understanding of aspects of faith and whether faith is reasonable
- Promote exploration of, and reflection upon, questions about the meaning of life
- Consider religious and non-religious responses to moral issues
- Master analytical skills and learn to argue well

Course structure

Shell

- Ethics: Good and Evil
- Judaism: Beliefs and Teachings
- Ethics: Life and Death

Remove

- Christianity: Beliefs and Teachings
- Ethics: Human Rights
- Judaism: Practices

Fifth Form

- Ethics: Relationships
- Christianity: Practices

Examination structure

This GCSE is assessed by exam only. There are three papers at the end of Fifth Form:

Component 1: Religious, philosophical and ethical studies in the modern world

Component 2: Christianity

Component 3: Study of a World Faith (Judaism)

Non-examination assessment

There is no coursework.

Science: Biology, Chemistry and Physics in the Shell year

The syllabuses followed are those of the Edexcel International IGCSE. These are GCSE equivalent qualifications that provide a rigorous background in the three Sciences, whilst avoiding the constraints of coursework.

All pupils will follow the Double Award specification in Biology, Chemistry and Physics during the Shell. Pupils will then have the opportunity to opt into the Triple Award Pathway during the Remove.

Triple Award

The full specification is studied and examined in each of Biology, Chemistry and Physics. Pupils will sit an IGCSE paper in each science and an extension paper in each science. This will lead to three separate IGCSE grades, one in each of the sciences. It is anticipated that many pupils will follow the Triple Award route, including those pupils wishing to study a Science subject in the Sixth Form.

Double Award

Pupils following the Double Award route will continue to study Biology, Chemistry and Physics as three separate Science subjects, however they will follow a reduced specification in each. Pupils will sit one terminal examination in each of Biology, Chemistry and Physics and they will be awarded two IGCSE grades based on the average mark achieved across the three examination papers.

Examination board

Edexcel (IGCSE)

Teaching approach

In practice the Science courses are tackled over three years as a significant start to the specification content is made in the Shell. Pupils will learn about the scientific process, performing practical and investigative work and covering the skills of investigation design, observation, measurement, data presentation and handling, drawing conclusions and evaluation. The courses aim to provide general scientific literacy, equipping pupils to question and engage in debate on the evidence used in decision-making, with substantial content to prepare for Sixth Form study of the Sciences.

Pupils will be encouraged to use both remote sensing equipment during lessons and their laptops for recording results and for research and revision.

Course Structure

Shell Biology

The course is an interesting and thorough course which builds on much that has already been established as a foundation in earlier years.

The year starts with a look at major biological concepts such as cell structure, diffusion and osmosis. We also look at life sustaining chemical reactions such as respiration and how these reactions are catalysed by enzymes. The students then consider microorganisms and how these can be useful in the food and drink industry. The Lent and Summer Terms are broadly devoted to disease in organisms and plant biology, where students have an in-depth look at the mechanisms behind defences against pathogens and experiments used to investigate the rate of photosynthesis in plants.

The Shell year is also used to establish a strong grounding in experimental work. Throughout the year there is a focus on planning, implementing and analysing investigations. Pupils will complete a number of practical sessions and, in doing so, develop an understanding of the scientific method which is examined in written papers at the end of the course.

Shell Chemistry

The course builds upon earlier material and ensures that all pupils, irrespective of their background, have certain chemical ideas established as they start going through IGCSE material. These ideas include the difference between physical changes and chemical reactions and between mixtures and compounds and the division of pure substances into elements and compounds. This is done with an emphasis on the consolidation and development of practical skills in the laboratory.

Early on in the year pupils learn about atomic structure and electron arrangement (and its connection with the Periodic Table) in order to expose the pupils to new ideas and concepts. The introduction of ionic bonding and writing chemical formulae also allows pupils to gain a solid foundation in the language of Chemistry.

A number of key reactions are revisited such as metals reacting with air and with water and acids reacting with metals, alkalis, bases and carbonates. These are used

as an opportunity to learn how to balance chemical equations, practice writing chemical formulae and consolidate practical skills. Pupils learn about covalent bonding and contrast this with ionic bonding that was taught earlier in the year. The chemistry of crude oil fractions is used to introduce pupils to organic chemistry and explore combustion and pollution further.

Shell Physics

The curriculum builds upon earlier concepts and introduces new ideas that are then developed further in the Remove and Fifth Form.

A broad range of the fundamental topics are covered including energy stores and transfers, waves and the electromagnetic spectrum, the essentials of forces and motion, density and pressure and the fundamentals of electricity and electric circuits. Wherever possible, practical work and demonstrations support the lessons to underpin the physical nature of the subject.

The initial topics studied help to support the more complex topics covered in the Remove and Fifth Form. These topics include ideal gases, light and sound, heat transfers, electromagnetism, particles, radioactivity and astrophysics. At the end of the course pupils will have a good understanding of a wide range of topics in Physics.

The key topic areas covered are given in the table below.

Examination structure

Science Double Award IGCSE		Extension material for the Science Triple Award IGCSE
Biology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The nature and variety of living organisms • Structures and functions in living organisms • Reproduction and inheritance • Ecology and the environment • Use of biological resources 	The Double Award topics taken further
Chemistry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Principles of chemistry • Inorganic chemistry • Physical chemistry • Organic chemistry 	The Double Award topics taken further
Physics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forces and motion • Electricity • Waves • Energy resources and energy transfers • Solids, liquids and gases • Magnetism and electromagnetism • Radioactivity and particles • Astrophysics 	The Double Award topics taken further

The assessment scheme takes the following form:

Double Award and Triple Award (all pupils)

Three x 2 hour written papers
(one for each of Biology, Chemistry and Physics).

Triple Award pupils only

Sit the following additional papers:
Three x 1 hour 15 minute written papers
(one for each of Biology, Chemistry and Physics).

Non-examination Assessment

There is no coursework.

PSHCE

in the Shell year

Here at Hurst the PSHCE (Personal, Social, Health, and Citizenship Education) programme is designed to equip students with vital life skills and knowledge that will help them navigate the complexities of modern life. The programme covers a wide range of topics, including mental and physical health and relationships, ensuring that students are well-prepared for their future.

The course is covered in co-educational groups which allows students to interact and learn from their peers in a diverse and inclusive environment. The curriculum follows the statutory guidance from the government, ensuring that all content is relevant, up-to-date, and meets national educational standards. It is a course designed to encourage our young people to develop their resilience and the ability to empathise, whilst also asking them to think independently.

In addition to the core curriculum, the PSHCE programme at Hurst includes sessions with visiting speakers who provide expert insights on various topics including diversity, human rights and identity, with finance and careers sessions organised and run by our in-house careers department. Citizenship is also a key component of the programme, with sessions dedicated to understanding civic responsibilities and the importance of active participation in the community.

The programme helps to raise awareness of current global and social issues. We provide pupils with the opportunity to reflect on all of these matters, and more, in a structured, supportive and open environment.

Learning Support in the Shell year

For a student who has a learning support need and requires some individualised support in Shell, it is necessary for them to study one less option subject and therefore they should choose 'Learning Support' in one option block. This will ensure that firstly, they have space in their timetable to accommodate Learning Support (LS) and secondly, allow some 'breathing space' for them to keep on top of their other subjects.

Following this path enables the student to have the opportunity of attaining the best possible grades in their other subjects.

Please do not hesitate to contact the Head of Learning Support if you have any queries.
jill.silvey@hppc.co.uk


Staff contacts for Shell

If you would like further information on any of the subject areas mentioned in this booklet then please get in touch with the relevant person from the list below.

Subject	Name	Email address
Art	Mr Cuerden	richard.cuerden@hppc.co.uk
Computer Science	Mr Crook	steve.crook@hppc.co.uk
Dance	Miss Dominy	nicola.dominy@hppc.co.uk
Design & Technology (DT)	Mr MacDonald	kaeran.macdonald@hppc.co.uk
Drama	Mrs Summers	mady.summers@hppc.co.uk
English Language and Literature	Mr Songer	matthew.songer@hppc.co.uk
Geography	Mr Hubbard	edward.hubbard@hppc.co.uk
History	Miss Clarke	joanna.clarke@hppc.co.uk
Latin	Miss Morton	tamsin.morton@hppc.co.uk
Learning Support (LS)	Mrs Silvey	jill.silvey@hppc.co.uk
Mathematics	Miss Ratford	abby.ratford@hppc.co.uk
Modern Languages: French	Mrs Butler	grace.butler@hppc.co.uk
Modern Languages: Spanish	Mr Garcia Marcos	jorge.garciamarcos@hppc.co.uk
Music	Mr Dean	cyrus.dean@hppc.co.uk
Physical Education (PE)	Mrs Cadwallader-Hughes	rebecca.cadwallader-hughes@hppc.co.uk
PSHCE	Mr Woods	ben.woods@hppc.co.uk
Religion, Ethics and Philosophy (REP)	Mr Hollins	aiden.hollins@hppc.co.uk
Science: Biology	Mrs Coombe-Tennant	emily.coombe-tennant@hppc.co.uk
Science: Chemistry	Mr Silvey	jon.silvey@hppc.co.uk
Science: Physics	Mrs Smith	naomi.smith@hppc.co.uk

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