

The Curriculum in Blocks 4 and 5

An introduction to studies
starting in September 2010

February 2010

BLOCK 4 AND 5 CURRICULUM

SEPTEMBER 2010

CONTENTS

	Page
Introduction	3
Core GCSE/IGCSE courses	6
English	6
Mathematics	6
Science	6
Modern Foreign Languages	7
Bedales Assessed Courses, optional GCSEs and other externally assessed courses	8
Ancient Civilisations - BAC	8
Art - BAC	9
Classical Greek – GCSE	9
Classical Music - BAC	10
Computing – GCSE	10
Dance - BAC	11
Design (Product Design and Textiles) - BAC	12
English Literature - BAC	13
Geography - BAC	13
History - GCSE	14
ICT - European Computer Driving Licence	15
Latin - GCSE	15
Music - GCSE	16
Outdoor Work - BAC	16
Philosophy, Religion and Ethics - BAC	17
Theatre Arts - BAC	18
Non-examined core courses	19
Physical Education	19
Personal, Social and Health Education	19
Careers	19
Frequently asked questions	20

INTRODUCTION

How to use this booklet

This booklet refers to courses to be started by Block 4 in September 2010.

The introduction explains the rationale behind the curriculum, outlines subject choices, provides some guidance for students making their choice of subjects and describes the help available. The booklet then goes on to give details of all the available courses – both the core (compulsory) ones and the range of options surrounding them. At the end of the booklet (pages 20-21), you will find answers to some frequently asked questions.

Background to the 14 - 16 curriculum

Our unique curriculum was developed from an extensive review and consultation, but is now well established. It offers considerable scope for creativity and allows individual students to choose a programme in line with their particular abilities and interests; it reflects the Bedales ethos more fully than the entirely GCSE-based curriculum it replaced. In drawing it up, we had four aims in mind:

1. To reduce the pressure of external assessment, whilst enhancing the richness of learning taking place, and better preparing students for A Level and beyond.
2. To maintain a broad education for all to the age of 16.
3. To enable students to take examinations in their areas of strength.
4. To give students opportunities to pursue their interests and areas of expertise.

The system it replaced, whereby the majority of Bedales students took nine or ten GCSEs, had many limitations: syllabuses designed to cater for the whole ability range squeezed out opportunities for appropriate, imaginative and challenging work with particular groups and individuals, and time-consuming coursework in many subjects was tied to laborious, prescriptive mark schemes.

The curriculum comprises four areas:

1. Core GCSE/IGCSE subjects: English (single subject), Mathematics (IGCSE), Double Award Science (IGCSE) and a modern foreign language.
2. Core non-examined courses: Physical Education, Personal, Social and Health Education.
3. Bedales Assessed Courses (BACs).
4. Additional GCSE or other externally examined courses.

The scheme is best understood from the diagram below.

The subjects in each column will be timetabled together, so only one subject can be taken from any one column. The distribution of subjects in the lower half of the table has been arranged to maximise choice, but, inevitably, some subject combinations will not be possible.

In the light of the switch by Geography from GCSE to BAC, and of the evolving national picture regarding GCSEs, we have recently made some adjustments to the arrangement of subjects within the columns to help students have the broadest combination of subject choices.

Now that we are in the third year of BACS, a growing numbers of our students want to choose four BACs, rather than three BACs and a GCSE. However, some students may wish to maximise their number of GCSEs; if so, they are advised to take at least one extra GCSE on top of the five 'core' GCSEs.

	CORE CURRICULUM (5 GCSEs)				NON-EXAMINED CORE SUBJECTS	
	English (single subject)	Mathematics	Science: IGCSE Double Award	Modern Language: French German or Spanish	PE	PSHE
Periods per week	3	4	9	4	2	1

	BEDALES ASSESSED COURSES			GCSEs and BACs And other externally examined subjects	
	Art Classical Music Dance English Literature Theatre Arts	Art Design (Product Design and Textiles) Geography ODW PRE (Philosophy, Religion & Ethics)	Design (Product Design and Textiles) English Literature PRE (Philosophy, Religion & Ethics) Theatre Arts	Geography BAC Ancient Civilisations BAC Classical Greek GCSE History GCSE ICT ECDL	Latin GCSE French GCSE History GCSE Computing GCSE Music GCSE
Periods per week	4	4	4	4	4

** The placing of the sets for modern languages may be adjusted in the light of student choices and timetabling constraints.

How to build an individual student's programme

1. Everyone must take the five core GCSE/IGCSE subjects and the two core, non-examined courses (PE and PSHE). Each student will then take three or four other subjects, choosing from the Bedales Assessed Courses (BACs) and the additional GCSE or other externally examined courses.
2. In order to ensure that students maintain breadth, the following rules apply:
 - a) Each student must take one subject from Art, Dance, Design, Theatre Arts, Music or ICT.
 - b) Each student must take one from Ancient Civilisations, English Literature, Geography, History or Philosophy, Religion and Ethics.

Methods of assessment and reporting

Bedales Assessed Courses will be assessed and reported on the same basis as GCSE courses – i.e. on a scale running from A* to G – with A* to C being considered as pass grades. An external assessor or moderator is involved in setting the standards in each subject and all the courses have a centrally agreed grading system.

Keith Budge

Headmaster

CORE GCSE COURSES

ENGLISH

Head of Department: Graham Banks

Examining Board: AQA

Work in English continues to build around the detailed study of whole literary texts. All students take English GCSE in Block 5, which is compulsory nation-wide as part of the core of the National Curriculum.

There is one final paper which tests comprehension and writing skills in non-literary contexts.

Coursework accounts for 60% of the marks. Assessment in speaking and listening accounts for 20% and involves separate activities in planned presentation, role-play and discussion. The remaining 40% is for a folder of five essays carried out under controlled conditions: a study of some aspect of film or television, a piece of imaginative writing, and three critical essays on literary texts one of which must be a play by Shakespeare.

A considerable amount of time is spent on studying texts for controlled assessments for three reasons. The final exam itself is fairly straightforward but the skills involved can be developed through the coursework. It would be possible to cut corners and produce adequate coursework from lightweight material, but we believe that able students respond best to the challenge of demanding texts studied in detail. We also see this as an essential preparation for those who want to continue with the subject to A Level.

Written work is set fortnightly for prep and much of the time in class is spent in discussion, valuable in itself in developing critical and rational thinking, but also a continuous preparation for the oral part of the coursework.

MATHEMATICS

Head of Department: Sally Dawson-Couper

Examining Board: Edexcel

Students in the D and E sets are entered for the GCSE. All other students will be entered for IGCSE. There is no coursework on either course.

In GCSE, the final examinations consist of two papers, one calculator and one non-calculator. In IGCSE the final examination consists of two calculator papers.

SCIENCE

Head of Department: Richard Sinclair

Examining Board: Edexcel Double Award IGCSE (4SC0)

The Edexcel International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE) in Science (Double Award) is started in Block 3 and continued in Blocks 4 and 5. It takes approximately two-thirds of the subject content of each of the Edexcel IGCSE single sciences (Biology, Chemistry and Physics), and combines them into an IGCSE in Science (Double Award) specification worth two IGCSEs. It is designed to be an interesting and inspiring modern specification that provides a sound foundation to study in AS and A2 Biology, Chemistry and Physics. Examination is in the form of three written papers (of two hours each: Biology, Chemistry, Physics) and students are awarded two identical IGCSE Science grades.

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

Head of Modern Foreign Languages: Helen Farmer

Head of German: Helen Farmer

Head of Spanish: Ruth Carpenter-Jones

Head of French: Marie-Pierre Hamard

Examining Board: AQA

In today's world, knowledge of modern languages is an indispensable part of education. Through learning languages students learn an appreciation of different countries and cultures. The ability to communicate in another language is a life skill and provides opportunities for employment and travel. Learning a language enables students to develop their listening, speaking, reading and writing skills and supports the development of literacy in their own language.

The Bedales core curriculum requires each student to follow a course leading to a GCSE in at least one modern foreign language. Most students enter the school with knowledge of French, and courses in Spanish and German start in Block 3. One or two of these languages can be continued to GCSE. The GCSE course builds on the core skills of listening, reading, speaking and writing gained in Block 3 and prepares students for AS study. The four skills are examined, with listening and reading comprehension being worth 20% each. Speaking and writing will be examined by controlled assessment in class and are each worth 30% of the marks.

We use various resources and have selected courses which carefully match the board requirements and have a strong focus on controlled assessment and exam preparation. In French we use Expo, a lively, motivating course, which is differentiated (Higher and Foundation) to help students across the ability range achieve their goal. In German we finish Echo 2 and in Spanish Listos 2 then move on to the relevant GCSE textbooks.

Students are strongly advised to spend some time in the target language country to enhance their language skills. They also have regular conversation lessons in small groups with the foreign language assistants.

Lessons in a number of other languages such as Italian, Russian, Chinese and Japanese can be arranged on a private basis, leading to GCSE where appropriate.

OPTIONS – BEDALES ASSESSED COURSES, GCSEs and other externally examined courses

ANCIENT CIVILISATIONS - BAC	<i>Head of Department: Mike Lambert</i>
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The Ancient Civilisations BAC will introduce students to the history, literature and culture of a wide range of ancient civilisations. Although focused primarily on Greece and Rome, the course will explore the achievements of other peoples and periods, and will focus in detail on the consequences of the interactions of different cultures. The course has been running since September 2008, and has enabled students to explore a range of ancient civilizations through their architecture, archaeology, art and written records.

The course will provide an excellent introduction to A Level Classical Civilisation and will also be good preparation for other A Level subjects in which writing analytically, particularly about literature or history, is important. The Art and Architecture aspects will be relevant to students studying Art and Design.

Course Outline

The course will comprise five modules taught in four periods per week. These will be chosen from:

Art and Architecture

The development of art and architecture from Prehistoric Britain to Rome and beyond.

History

The study of an historical period in which different ancient cultures came into contact and conflict, such as the Persian invasion of Greece, Alexander's conquests, or Rome's wars with Carthage.

Roman Life

Roman Life explored through literary sources, local sites, and practical work.

Literature

A variety of literature may be studied, including Epic (Homer's *Iliad*) or Drama (a Greek tragedy and a comedy).

The Celts and their World

Aspects of the culture and civilization of the Celts from c. 500 BC to c. AD 800 studied by means of archaeology, ancient literary sources and practical work.

Empire and Religion

The Roman Empire's interaction with other religions.

Women in the Ancient World

An exploration of the social and political roles of women in the ancient world, through the media of visual arts, material culture and literature.

Assessment

Assessment of each module will incorporate a range of assessment methods. These will include an oral element (for example, a short presentation by the student), extended essays (one per module where this is the method chosen), end of term examination (for the History module), and continuous assessment. Assessment will be verified by an external moderator appointed by the school.

ART - BAC*Head of Department: George Hatton*

The course will offer the opportunity for students and staff to explore and gain experience in the following areas:-

1. Aesthetics An analysis of the basic language of Art. An investigation into Colour, Line, Shape, Pattern, Texture, Form, Volume and space.
2. Impression Objective analysis of the natural and man-made environment.
3. Expression The personal response to ideas and feelings.
4. Communication Investigation of the third major Symbolic field, the communication of ideas that cannot be achieved through Language and Number.
5. Environmental Issues The development of a critical awareness of the environment, and of man's ability to affect it in a positive or negative way.
6. Manipulation The exploration of the potential and qualities of a range of materials.
7. Art: Historical and Social Ideas in their context, with reference to a range of ethnic and national examples.

Students will choose three projects produced during the five terms of the course. These will form the main body of the final presentation and will be accompanied by the student's "visual diary". The work will be internally marked and externally moderated by a team of tutors from Winchester College of Art (The University of Southampton).

CLASSICAL GREEK - GCSE*Head of Department: Mike Lambert*

Examining Board: OCR

Requires no prior knowledge of Greek. GCSE Classical Greek will be available for the first time at Bedales as a timetabled subject in September 2010. This is an exciting opportunity for all students, as it offers those who have already had some success in Latin to broaden their knowledge and understanding of Classical languages, while providing a first chance to study a Classical language to those students who did not come to Bedales with Latin.

The study of Classical Greek is an excellent way of showing prospective universities how seriously a candidate takes their application for Classics and Bedales is one of only a handful of schools in the whole of the UK that can actually offer a qualified specialist in the subject. That said this will be a challenging course to complete in two years and students must be committed to working hard.

The OCR GCSE specification allows candidates the opportunity to study elements of the language, literature and culture of the classical Greek world. It assesses candidates' linguistic knowledge, their understanding and appreciation of literature in the original language, and their analysis, evaluation and response to evidence of Greek civilisation.

In the examination students will be required to answer a variety of comprehension questions in English, including questions about the derivation of English words from Greek as evidence of the continuing influence of the classical world on later times, as well as to translate short passages from Greek into English based on mythological, domestic and historical themes. They will also study two works of Greek literature, one prose and one verse. The prose text will either be a section of

Herodotus' Histories or a passage from Plato, while the verse set text will either be a section from Homer's Odyssey or one of Euripides' tragedies.

CLASSICAL MUSIC - BAC

Head of Department: Nicholas Glead

This course is designed for the musician who is academically ambitious. Specific musical genres will be studied with wider reference to their historical environments. Representative scores from within these genres will be analysed and annotated by students to encourage an understanding of the aesthetic aspirations of various ages and valuable insights into the methods of composition. Assignments requiring extended written analysis will be set. Further experience of composing will be received through studying and completing exercises using the principles of 18th century harmony and counterpoint. In order to develop a good aural perception, rhythm and melody dictation, spotting mistakes in performance and recognising musical styles will form part of the weekly programme. Students will be required to keep a compartmentalised, chronologically-ordered portfolio of all their work, including assignments, annotated scores, analyses and self-written lesson notes. Every student will also be required to receive instrumental and/or vocal tuition throughout the course and to develop both technical and interpretational skills. A short Recital (recorded for moderation) will take place at the end of term five. Participation in ensemble work will form a part of the continual assessment which is a hallmark of this course and necessary for every student's development as a musician.

The course is intended to give students knowledge and skills which will enable them to appreciate Music more fully as a practical skill, a cultural medium and a valuable academic discipline. It will provide them with a secure grounding in the theory and history of Music, as well as developing important powers of analysis and synthesis, all of which are necessary for further musical studies both at school and in places of higher education.

COMPUTING – GCSE

Head of Department: Susan Robson

Examining Board: OCR

This is a course that has real relevance in our modern world. While learners will no doubt already have some knowledge of computers and related areas, the course will give them an in-depth understanding of how computer technology works and a look at what goes on "behind the scenes". As part of this, they will investigate computer programming, which many learners find interesting.

Through the study of computer programming, students will develop critical thinking, analysis and problem-solving skills. For many, it will be a fun and interesting way to develop these skills, which can be transferred to other subjects and even applied in day-to-day life.

GCSE Computing is an excellent preparation for subjects where logical thinking and problem-solving skills are required, for example in engineering, financial and resource management, science and medicine. It can also give students a strong foundation for A Level Computing in the Sixth Form, should they choose to continue with this subject.

Students will study three units as follows:

- **Computer systems and programming:** A written exam paper that includes a mixture of short and long answer questions, some of which will require candidates to write program code. 40% of the qualification.

- Current trends in computing: A controlled assessment that involves a board-set investigative task. 30% of the qualification.
- Programming project: A controlled assessment, a programming task that enables candidates to design, develop and test a solution to a problem. 30% of the qualification.

DANCE - BAC

Teacher i/c Department: Jo Alldridge

The Bedales Assessed Course in Dance will involve developing skills in performance, choreography, appreciation and analysis via the study of Dance works, choreographic projects and performing opportunities. The course focuses on Dance in Britain in the last century and is contemporary in style; however, it must explore other genres and cultural elements.

Relationship to advanced courses

The course will prepare students for, and link effectively with, the A Level course as well as providing excellent study skills and a valuable broader knowledge that will benefit students wishing to study Theatre Studies, Design, Music and Art.

Syllabus at a glance

Term 1	Development of skills Performance Choreography Appreciation Theory of Dance	Term 4	Assessment Unit 3 Specialist study area.
Term 2	Assessment Unit 1 Performance	Term 5	Assessment Unit 4 Final choreographic task Assessment Unit 5 Final portfolio submitted
Term 3	Assessment Unit 2 Professional Dance work study.		

Aims

The aim of the course is to develop:

- understanding and appreciation of a range of Dance styles;
- aesthetic and artistic sensibility to Dance works;
- the knowledge, skills and understanding needed to perform, choreograph and appreciate Dance, including an awareness of its artistic contexts;
- life skills and attributes including decision making, critical and creative thinking, and the ability to co-operate with others.

Suitability for candidates of different abilities

The main requirements are a genuine interest in Dance. Commitment to develop Dance skills and an enthusiasm for knowledge and understanding of the subject are needed.

The Bedales Assessed Course in Design will comprise a mixture of practical exercises, theoretical knowledge and a range of core skills which are essential to the designing process. The syllabus is broad, emphasising the role of innovation and creativity, an awareness of the subject's historical background and a detailed understanding of the requirements of professional design and manufacture.

Bedales Design embraces a holistic approach to the subject and students will gain from across the materials areas during the initial weeks of the course. In Block 4 students can choose work predominantly of a **Textiles** or **Product Design** nature or an amalgamation of the two whilst learning core practical skills. The extended tasks are also designed to allow the students to work either exclusively within their chosen specialism or work in a multi-disciplinary manner across the department. The design theory and history elements will be taught concurrently across the subject specialisms. There is scope for students to work in such diverse areas as architecture, computer control, interior design, furniture, graphic or fashion design.

Aims

Students taking this course should:

- experience the joy and satisfaction of making;
- demonstrate their design capability which requires them to combine skills with knowledge and understanding in the manufacture of products of quality;
- develop positive and creative attitudes to designing, making and organisation;
- understand factors that make up the designing and making process;
- have an awareness of the iconic designers and periods of history in the last century;
- recognise the wider implications of design and manufacture in society.

Method of Assessment

- Portfolio Tasks – Students will complete a range of smaller material specific tasks in Block 4 which will be considered as a wider portfolio mark. Design related work carried out within the school but outside of BAC lessons can also be submitted as part of this portfolio.
- Extended Task – Students will be asked to respond to an open brief by investigating, designing and making a new product. This is an extended task that will take three terms to complete.
- At the culmination of the course the students will be asked to display their work and may attend a *viva voce* as part of the moderation process.

Relationship to advanced courses

The course will prepare students to continue with A Level Design as well as including skills and subject matter pertinent to Art specifically and presentation and planning skills applicable more broadly.

The Bedales Assessed Course in English Literature will involve the detailed study of eight literary texts. These will be a mixture of modern texts and canonical ‘classics’ written before 1900.

Syllabus at a glance

Term 1	Post 1900 novel	Post 1900 play
Terms 2 & 3	Pre or post 1900 novel	Post 1900 poetry text
	Pre or post 1900 play	
Terms 4 & 5	Pre 1900 novel	Pre 1900 poetry text
	Shakespeare play	

Range of texts to be studied:

- Three novels – at least one written before 1900 and at least one written since
- Three plays – at least one written before 1900 (one by Shakespeare) and at least one written since
- Two poetry texts – one written before 1900 and one written since. A ‘poetry text’ is taken here to mean a body of work by a single poet, by a recognised group of poets (e.g. the Romantics) or by poets with similarity of theme or method (e.g. Herbert and Hopkins).

An essay of about 800 words is to be written on each text. The final folder submitted for assessment should contain **four** essays. All three genres of prose, poetry and drama must be represented with at least one essay on texts written before 1900 and at least one essay on texts written after 1900.

Scheme of assessment

The course is assessed by means of a folder of four essays (one of which can be replaced by an extended spoken critical analysis) and a final examination. The examination will be on previously unseen material and will account for 20% of the overall mark.

The Block 4/5 students follow the new BAC Geography course (first taught in Sept 2009). The aim of this course is to provide a platform for students to expand their knowledge of Geography further through extensive study of the natural and built world, to investigate patterns in the world around us and to enable students to fully appreciate the opportunities the world offers them.

The course builds upon the knowledge gained in previous years and utilises the fundamental geographical skills. In Block 4, students study the principles behind “Sensing Place”, “Conservation of the Natural Environment”, “Sustainability” and “Ideals for the Future”. As part of the course, students undertake a residential field trip in Block 4 that reinforces many of the issues students will cover during the BAC course. It looks both at the human and physical aspects of the environment and gives a first hand experience of the world at its most inspiring!

In Block 5 the course turns to the wider representations of geography, both through news media and other sources. This enables students to explore the ways in which information is sourced and disseminated, and helps them to broaden their research skills and deepen knowledge through greater accessibility of information.

The final portion of the BAC is a place where students can dig deep into the subject and its cross curricular nature; a chance to explore issues on a variety of scales, both spatial and temporal, that have direct relevance to the everyday lives of young people in the 21st Century.

The Geography BAC provides the foundations for students thinking about taking the subject to A Level and beyond. The ways in which students are encouraged to access information and develop their learning skills offers them the chance to engage with many advanced concepts and the principles of individual research as preparation for A Level Geography and university courses in a range of different disciplines.

Assessment throughout the BAC is portfolio-based, and students complete a minimum of two assignments per unit; for final submission students must select a single piece from each unit for moderation both internally and externally. In addition students will undertake a synoptic viva at the end of Block 5. The methods by which students complete and present work are broad and, in most cases, the choice of the individual, thus giving a greater sense of the individual's talents and strengths.

HISTORY - GCSE

Head of Department: Jonathan Selby

Examining Board: Edexcel (1334)

We believe that the study of History in Block 4 and 5 can help to develop generally useful skills of **analysis, evaluation and construction of argument**. At the same time the course offers one of the few remaining opportunities in GCSE examinations for developing an argument in a piece of extended writing. The syllabus we follow is 'Modern European and World History'. The material studied follows on from the work done in Block 3.

In Block 4 students will work on Germany in the 1920's and 1930's focussing on the rise of Hitler and the Nazis and the development of the Nazi state. They will also study American History from 1945 to 1970. This unit covers all the central issues of the period such as McCarthyism, Martin Luther King, Malcolm X and the struggle for Civil Rights, and other protest movements such as the Hippies.

In Block 5 most lesson time will be spent studying 'Superpower Relations 1943-1991', which covers the Cold War up to the collapse of Communism in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. Particular attention will be paid to the causes of the Cold War and major incidents within it, such as the Cuban Missile Crisis and the Nuclear Arms Race.

During the span of the course, students will also complete coursework (now entitled Controlled Assessment) on an aspect of British History; currently we are studying Northern Ireland.

The course aims to provide access to the main political ideas that shaped the Twentieth Century and give an insight into the issues and conflicts that exist in contemporary society.

ICT (ECDL+)*Head of Department: Susan Robson*

Examining Board: BCS

The aim of this course is to achieve the ECDL Extra Level 2 certificate which is equivalent to a Grade B GCSE.

The ECDL Extra certificate is a modular qualification, allowing each module to be taken at the appropriate time during the two year course. The units include:

- IT User Fundamentals
- Using Email and the Internet
- Security for IT Users
- Word Processing
- Spreadsheet Software
- Presentation Software (PowerPoint)
- Improving Productivity Using IT

The course will be taught in practical sessions where students will learn skills, do a mini-project and then do a module exam. There is some theory teaching but most of this will be covered in a practical way where possible.

LATIN - GCSE*Head of Department: Mike Lambert*

Examining Board: OCR

The Latin GCSE course offers candidates the opportunity to study elements of the language, literature and culture of the Romans which have profoundly influenced so much of the modern world. Over the two years of the course students consolidate their knowledge of Latin, develop their ability to understand and appreciate literature in the original language, and learn to analyse, evaluate and respond to evidence of Roman civilisation.

Students read a selection of original prose and verse literature in Latin, respond to it critically, and investigate the historical and cultural context in which it was written. The study of these texts reinforces knowledge of the language generally, and the skills developed in approaching the literature critically are also transferable to English, History and other literature. The important skill of noticing details and seeing how patterns emerge when reading Latin are of course applicable to all subjects. The prose set texts for 2011 will be about the poisoning of the emperor Claudius and other notable events in Rome's gruesome history, and the verse text will be about the fall of Troy, described in Virgil *Aeneid* II.

In Block 4 the focus of the course is on the language and the development of grammar and vocabulary to GCSE level. Towards the end of this year students start work on the prose set text. Language work continues in Block 5 but more time is spent on literature. The prose set text is completed and then the verse set text is studied. The daily life of the Romans and their world is studied throughout the course and the course will include at least one visit to a relevant Roman archaeological site. Latin GCSE is essential for anyone wishing to study Latin at A Level. Latin GCSE does not involve coursework and the examination is split exactly 50% for the language and 50% for the literature.

Examining Board: EdExcel (1426)

GCSE Music approaches the subject in a broad and stimulating way, along the three paths of listening, performance and composition. Links are made between these disciplines.

Listening

A number of styles and forms are grouped into four areas of study: Western Classical Music, Music in the 20th Century, Popular Music in Context and World Music. Students will study set works in each Area of Study and have opportunities to develop musical ideas through composing and performance activities. Methods of analysis are explored with the help of scores and recordings (audio and video). During the course, and as a consequence of the character of most classes, it is usually possible to move beyond the requirements of GCSE and study style and analysis in greater depth.

Composition

Students will develop musical ideas in the form of compositions or arrangements. Two works based on two different areas of study will be submitted for assessment. Some students find composition a daunting prospect, but it often leads to outstandingly creative work.

Performing

All students will be required to perform as soloist and member of an ensemble during the course. Eventually, the two best performances will be offered for examination.

The introduction of set works in Unit 3 allows students to focus on specific works within an 'Area of Study'. In addition, they will gain an understanding of the 'Area of Study' as a whole by learning about the context within which the works were composed. Studying the set works will give students the opportunity to study pieces in more depth. This deeper study will open up the key musical concepts within the set works, which they can then apply to their own compositions. The set works will remain the same for the life span of the specification.

The BAC in Outdoor Work is entirely different from other courses. The success of the student is dependent upon the degree of effort and enthusiasm with which they approach the course, their reaction to the challenges which arise, and the execution of a practical project. It is a course which values and evaluates personal qualities, rather than just academic abilities.

The first two terms will consist of a Foundation Course, in which students will learn and improve practical skills. During the final three terms, students will apply themselves to a particular project of their own choosing, either on an individual or group basis. Projects have included renovation of a gypsy caravan, renovating a 1957 tractor, creating a herb/water garden, managing bees, recreating a bronze-age kiln, and blacksmithing. Sessions will be timetabled at four daytime periods per week.

The emphasis of the course is on a rounded personal and practical education and developing the skills which are needed in the work place. It should enable the student to be viewed in a broader perspective than is generally available to potential employers and University admissions tutors.

Assessment:

Students will be permitted a generous degree of freedom as to how the project is presented. Pupils may wish to maintain a log-book which lists: work to be completed; details of visits to relevant sites (museums, farms, etc.); expeditions (working horse shows, agricultural fairs, etc.); the aim of the individual project; personal assessments of the progress and outcome of the project; plans, drawings and photographs; comments from staff. They may keep a photographic record of events. Others will present the finished product and verbally discuss their thoughts and objectives. In all cases the emphasis will be on the observation of the pupils at work, looking at their commitment, enthusiasm, attainment in practical skills, social interaction, co-operation, initiative and creativity.

External assessment will be achieved by observing the pupil at work, interview and looking at the practical achievements, together with any reports or diaries.

PHILOSOPHY, RELIGION & ETHICS (PRE) - BAC

Head of Department: Carmody Grey

The Bedales Assessed Course in PRE is designed as a wide-ranging introduction to the key questions of philosophy, the major religious and intellectual traditions of the world in their historical contexts, and the ethical issues of the day.

- Unit 1:** **Western Traditions:** the development and key features of philosophy, religion, society and ethics in a western historical context;
- Unit 2:** **Islam and Eastern Traditions:** the development and key features of religion, philosophy, society and ethics in their eastern and Islamic historical contexts;
- Unit 3:** **The Art of Religion and Philosophy:** Aesthetics (what constitutes 'beauty'): art, literature & music in religion, including a comparison with secular approaches to the arts, and a distinction between western and eastern perspectives;
- Unit 4:** **a) Problems of philosophy:** knowledge, reality & the limits of science.
b) Religion in society: the relationship between religion and conflict. The Middle East as case study. A consideration of feminism.
- Unit 5:** **Independent Learning Project:** politics, theology and society: following in the footsteps of the great thinkers, students will consider what constitutes the ideal society. How should society be run? What role should religion play in an ideal state? How should the balance between the rights and responsibilities of citizens be achieved? In a summative task, students develop their own blueprint for a utopia, which they present in an imaginative format.

This course should appeal to anyone with an enquiring mind. Through discussion, debate and study of texts the course especially develops skills of self-expression and critical thinking. There is a focus, too, on developing independent learning skills. It links well with other arts subjects, as well as with the sciences, and is an excellent grounding for the AS & A Level in Philosophy of Religion and Ethics (RS).

The Bedales Theatre Arts Course will build on the current range of performance and study opportunities but will offer significantly greater breadth of choice through the innovative projects we aim to introduce each year. We will diversify across a range of styles and genres with the aim of offering genuine variety in terms of performance and design potential.

Relationship to advanced courses

The course will maintain the key elements of the GCSE but its greater range will deepen candidates' theatrical knowledge and practice, providing them with a far more effective preparation for the A Level Theatre Studies course. It will also provide excellent study skills that will benefit students wishing to study English Literature, History, Art and Design in the Sixth Form.

Course at a glance

The learning activities on the course are contained within five module assignments. The new course offers opportunities to learn and to develop knowledge and skills through a range of practical activities and written assignments, culminating in some exciting performances in our Theatre and Studio spaces.

NON-EXAMINED CORE PROVISION

PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND GAMES

Heads of Department: Alan Wright and Sonia Cartwright

P.E. and Games are compulsory for all. Blocks 4 and 5 have one double period of P.E. a week. The aim is to allow the individual to develop skills in various sporting activities. These include athletics, badminton, basketball, dance, fitness, tennis, swimming, lifesaving, volleyball, table tennis and handball.

In the Games programme we aim to achieve excellence in our major games and to compete against other schools but also allow others the opportunity to follow their sporting interests. Our major games are football, hockey, rugby (Block 4 only), girls' football, tennis, cricket and netball. Block 4 has three afternoon sessions whilst Block 5 has two linked with the Sixth Form. Students can choose from a wide menu of sporting activities. If students are not attracted to team sports in any Block they can opt to work in the Outdoor Work programme.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION (PSHE)

Head of Department: Sarah Chubb

PSHE aims to achieve a balance between delivering factual information and providing a space and language for students to explore and discuss issues – some pertinent to them now and some preparing them for situations and choices met in adulthood. The Bedalian ethos is at the heart of our approach.

There is a carousel system and students cover the following topics: Healthy Living (drugs, alcohol, smoking, healthy diet, sensible life choices); Current Affairs; Careers; Citizenship and Safe Sex (emotional and physical). We also try to provide a forum for discussing issues which arise out of daily Bedalian life.

CAREERS

Careers Adviser: Alison Mason

Higher Education Adviser: Vikki Alderson-Smart

Students are encouraged to start thinking about possible career interests in Block 4 through the PSHE programme. KUDOS – a computerised careers questionnaire which relates interests, preferences and subjects to types of career – is available to all students and serves as a helpful focus for their careers research. During the Block 5 year, students have the opportunity to attend 'taster' lessons in AS Level subjects and to discuss the implications of subject choices with tutors and Careers Department staff. All pupils in Block 5 are offered the chance to sit the COA Cambridge Profiling and Preview careers sessions; additionally they receive an individual interview in order to go through their personal report with trained advisors from COA; this further helps to inform their AS choices. During the first half of the Autumn term these students also attend informal tea time sessions with the Sixth Form where they have the opportunity to discuss life in the Sixth Form at Bedales. The department takes students from Block 5 upwards to the Portsmouth Grammar School Careers Fair in February and there is a careers afternoon organised in school for Block 5 and the Sixth Form during the Spring term. Students are encouraged to organise work experience wherever possible in areas which interest them throughout their time at Bedales but particularly post GCSE and AS Level.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

How did such a unique curriculum come about and how much have parents been consulted about its composition?

The decision to implement a new curriculum from September 2006 was taken in September 2004 after an in-depth curriculum review and a full process of consultation with parents and staff and universities. We held two forums and the responses ranged from neutral to extremely enthusiastic, with the majority showing a very strong level of support.

What were the school's reasons for implementing this curriculum?

The motivation for introducing these reforms has its roots in our desire as a teaching body to design a curriculum which both mirrors our ethos and suits our students. Throughout we have had the criterion that we must do nothing to disadvantage our students at university: with that in mind the most sensible course was to pursue reforms at 14 – 16 level and to do so in a measured way, retaining the “core” GCSEs. Teachers have been excited about delivering the new courses – and so have students when they find that they are working with material that is much more interesting and stimulating than the exclusively GCSE material that their predecessors would have been working with.

Why have you decided to devise your own courses rather than letting students take GCSE in Block 4 and/or take AS Level in Block 5?

These arrangements suit certain departments (we do early Mathematics with the top set, for example), but we do not think acceleration would work well if applied on a wider scale. There is an age-related element in the content and assessment methods of GCSE and A Level which means that accelerated programmes only work well for the most able in a subject. We have a wide ability range and a number of subjects are taught in mixed ability groups either as a policy or because sets are dictated by subject choices. In addition, the inherent drawbacks of the current GCSE and AS syllabuses apply at whatever time one takes them. Our aim is to make the learning more creative, not just to jump through the hoops faster. Furthermore, to increase the number of accelerated courses would only exacerbate the atmosphere of perpetual imposed assessment which we are trying to move away from.

Will students be effectively choosing their A Levels during Block 3?

Definitely not. GCSEs and Bedales Assessed Courses are both a preparation for A Level, and Bedales Assessed Courses are intended to prepare the ground for A Level work in general, as well as in subject-specific areas. Of course, any process of subject choice - including the existing system - has an influence on the future, but a wide range of options will remain open. Bearing in mind the A Level subjects accessed through the core curriculum, as well as optional subjects and those introduced in the Sixth Form (such as Economics and Psychology), students would have a dozen or so subjects from which to choose their four AS Levels.

Will the new curriculum, with a maximum of seven GCSEs and the possibility of taking only five, disadvantage our candidates at university and with other sixth forms?

We initially surveyed universities in the early stages of exploring this route and received a favourable response. In Autumn 2005 we sent a detailed questionnaire to selected departments in 80 universities, covering all the university applications of the previous year's Bedales A Level cohort. The response from 61 departments in 41 very varied universities has indicated clearly that a set of qualifications as described in this booklet would not disadvantage our candidates in applying to university. Some of the university responses have indicated, perceptively, that these courses may well prepare our students better for AS and A2.

We have approached Art schools which have confirmed that their entry requirements for Foundation Courses are based on portfolio evidence and (to a lesser extent) A Levels and core GCSE subjects, so that the new curriculum would not have any adverse effect on applicants.

We have also consulted the sixth form colleges to which a small number of our students most often apply. They have not only assured us that the changes will not be detrimental to their chances of entry, but have also commented on the potential benefits of these courses as a preparation for A Level. UCAS have listed BACs alongside GCSEs on their online application system and have included them in their UK Qualifications Handbook.

At the time of writing, students applying to universities with BACs are receiving offers from the full range of institutions, up to and including Oxbridge.

If you have any further queries please contact Alistair McConville on 01730 711587 or by email amconville@bedales.org.uk.