



Balcarras School
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2023-2024 Revision Guide

GCSE: Preparing for success

Year 10

Name:



The Virtual Learning Environment - VLE

The VLE is an online extension of the classroom, which can be accessed by students, parents and staff, and aims to share information and resources in a simple, clear and intuitive way. Any device which has internet access can view the site at the following address:
balcarras.fireflycloud.net

The system, called Firefly, allows the opportunity for personalised learning for students and the ability for them to become increasingly independent and responsible for their learning and self-organisation. It also enables parents and guardians to support them at home, by viewing their homework, resources and potentially see their progression through the school. This has been designed to be as simple and easy to navigate as possible. To log on, new parents should visit the site address, and activate their account, using the email address the school holds on record as part of your contact information. Current parents should have their children added to their account already.

In September, every new student will be allocated a username and password to access this site and this is their normal student network login. When logging in from outside of school, students must include the last part of their email address that follows their username (####@balcarras.gloucs.sch.uk).

There are also mobile apps available for both parents and students, which can be downloaded from the appropriate app store. These are called Firefly for Parents and Firefly for Students, and are free.

When logging in for the first time, the same username and password must be used and the school code: **balcarras**, to link successful with our system.

School Network

Students can access the school network shared area (known as the **R: drive**) and download electronic resources provided by their teachers. They can also access their personal network area (known as the **H: drive**). This is available by either clicking on the Network link at the top of the school website homepage (**www.balcarras.gloucs.sch.uk**) or by selecting the Network option located on the dashboard of the VLE (**balcarras.fireflycloud.net**). Users will be directed to the FoldR website and students need to use their school username and password to log in. FoldR (By Minnow IT) is also available as an app for Android and iOS devices.

Online Safety

The school has a well-established ICT Code of Conduct. All pupils will be allowed access to the internet for school related activity. Anything not directly linked to schoolwork, such as playing or downloading games and accessing social media services is prohibited. Pupils who break the code of conduct, which is monitored by our network manager, will be sanctioned. This often includes having their network access revoked.

When outside of school, you should continue to use technology in a responsible manner. In particular, you should be mindful of how you use social media services, such as Instagram and TikTok. It is strongly recommended that you make your profiles private. You should also carefully consider how you communicate with other pupils on these platforms as this is often the cause of friendship issues within groups.

We also recommend that parents monitor computer, smart phone and tablet use at home. Support in this can often help prevent or mitigate problems caused by the use of social media. Parents of younger pupils should also be aware of the age restrictions many social media services have, the majority requiring users to be at least 13 years old..

Curriculum-related questions

Should you have any curriculum-related questions, please contact the relevant Head of Department.

You can do so by emailing Balcarras School at admin@balcarras.gloucs.sch.uk and requesting that your query be directed to the relevant Head of Department and your child's Head of House.

| Departments | Heads of Departments |
|----------------------|----------------------|
| Art | Mr D Hazael |
| Business Studies | Mr L Perry |
| Computing | Mr S Cooper |
| DT: Product Design | Mrs J Swanepoel |
| DT: Food & Nutrition | Mrs C Saunders |
| DT: Textiles | Mrs A Kinch |
| Drama | Mrs H Wranosky |
| English | Mr D Sharkey |
| Geography | Mrs A Searle |
| Health & Social Care | Mrs C Timpson |
| History | Mr M Stoker |
| Mathematics | Mr S Critchley |
| Modern Languages | Mr F Seguin |
| Music | Mr D Armstrong |
| Physical Education | Mr M Harvey |
| Philosophy & Ethics | Mrs H Ebanja |
| Science | Mr A Spring Wallis |

Science

Syllabus: AQA Combined Science: Trilogy **100% exam in Year 11**

Advice on revision guides: The science department will issue students a published CGP revision guide for the course in Year 10 that will cover all the content from Year 9 to Year 11. In addition to this, students will be given a revision pack produced by the department when revision starts in Year 11. This contains a glossary of key words, quiz questions, past paper questions and model answers.

The course contains a number of 'required practicals' that need to be revised for the examinations in Year 11. Students will be given their required practical booklet after the completion of the final practical. Required practicals are also covered in the revision guides. Additionally, Malmesbury School have produced some excellent videos of the GCSE required practicals, that are helpful for revision: search for 'Malmesbury science' on YouTube.

The Balcarras VLE contains the summary front sheets for each topic along with the resources used for each lesson. Students can access these if they miss a lesson or for revision. Other websites suitable for revision are as follows:

<https://app.senecalearning.com/login>

<https://www.bbc.com/education/examspecs/z8r997h>

<https://www.physicsandmathstutor.com/>

<http://freesciencelessons.co.uk/>

<https://www.s-cool.co.uk/gcse>

<https://cognitoedu.org>

<https://classroom.thenational.academy/subjects-by-key-stage/key-stage-4/subjects/combined-science>

The GCSE specification we follow can be found at the website below:

<http://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/science/gcse/combined-science-trilogy-8464>

Spanish

Syllabus: AQA **100% exam**

Advice on revision guides: An AQA Grammar and Translation workbook and a Vocabulary book will be available for students to purchase. Letters will be sent home with further details during the course of the year. We highly recommend that all pupils buy at least the Grammar and Translation workbook from the MFL department.

Students should also log onto the VLE and complete the activities in the GCSE Spanish section. Here students can access core vocabulary list, grammar notes and practice exercises. Further activities can also be found on the www.pearsonactivelearn.com website. All students have been told their login and password details in class.

Students will also find the following websites helpful:

www.languagesonline.co.uk - grammar section

www.linguascope.co.uk - intermediate vocabulary section.



September 2023

Dear Member of Year 10,

I hope that you have made a good start to your GCSE studies. The next two years will be very important ones for you and will have a large impact on your future options.

We want every student to achieve to the very highest level possible and we want to give you all the support we can. Every year we provide this booklet to students in Year 10 so that you are fully informed about each of your GCSEs and to give you some useful hints on exam preparation.

There will be a full set of mock exams in the summer term and in some subjects there will be controlled assessments during the year.

Much of the hard work needed to achieve good GCSE grades takes place in Year 10, so I would encourage all students to give their absolute best this year.

If you require any additional help or advice please speak to your teachers, who will be only too happy to help you and answer any questions.

The very best of luck.

Mr Gary Towers
Deputy Headteacher

Advice for Parents and Guardians

Making a difference:

Helping your child prepare for their GCSEs

These tips will be more relevant when your child is in Year 11 but this is advance warning!

General things you can do to help

- Provide a quiet place for study.
- Encourage the rest of the family to help by not disturbing revision.
- Praise hard work.
- Emphasise the need for plenty of sleep.
- Encourage planned relaxation time (too much study is not helpful).
- Help your child to forget about each exam as it is finished.
- Remind your child that the exam period will soon be over and that there will be a good break from school when they will be able to catch up on what they have been missing!

Useful revision tips

You can help your child by helping them to follow these tips:

- Plan for half-hour sessions or an hour at most.
- In the evenings after school, plan to revise one or two subjects only. Leave some time for relaxation.
- Plan to revise specific topics in each subject, **not** everything at once.
- Ensure that each session starts with tackling the most difficult topics first.
- Encourage that all resources are at hand.

Physical Education

Syllabus: AQA

60% exam / 40% practical coursework

Advice on revision guides: Revision guides are available at £3 each from the sports hall office.

Additional support material available on the VLE under physical education, including links to GCSE Bitesize.

Religion - Philosophy & Ethics

Syllabus: OCR

100% exam

2 hours Philosophy & Ethics / 1 hour Christian beliefs & practice / 1 hour Buddhist philosophy, beliefs & practice

Advice on revision guides: The textbook we will be using during the Christianity and Philosophy aspects of the course is: OCR GCSE (9-1) Religious Studies by Lorraine Abbott, Steve Clarke, Gordon Kay.

The textbook we will be using during the Buddhist philosophy aspects of the course is: Buddhism by Steve Clarke.

A good revision guide is: My Revision Notes OCR GCSE (9-1) Religious Studies by Lorraine Abbott.

Russian

Syllabus: Edexcel

100% exam

Advice on revision guides: Advice on revision guides: An extensive range of revision materials can be found on the Russian GCSE section of VLE. Here students can access the core vocabulary list, grammar notes and practice exercises. There are also past papers with mark schemes and an online version of our GCSE revision guide.

The following website may also be useful: <http://www.russianforeveryone.com/>

History

Syllabus: AQA History (8145)

100% exam

Paper 1 - Germany 1890-1945/ The Cold War 1945-1972 (studied in Year 10)

Paper 2 - Restoration England 1660-1685. Migration, Empires and People, AD790 - to the present day (studied in Year 11).

Advice on revision guides: Revision guides for the new GCSE (Grade 9-1) have been published that include some but not all of the topics we study. The department have created revision guides and resources for both paper 1 and paper 2 topics and students will be given copies of these (also available on the VLE). Students will also find useful materials on BBC Bitesize for Germany, Conflict & Tension and the Migration topics. Pupils will also be directed to Seneca which covers the majority of our topics. Pupils and parents are advised to talk to the class teacher for any further advice on revision resources.

Mathematics

Syllabus: Edexcel

100% exam

End of year 11- Three exam papers each 90 minutes long. One non-calculator paper and two calculator papers. Foundation tier grades 1-5. Higher tier grades 4-9.

In Year 10 students complete progress tests at the end of each half term. At the end of Year 10 students complete two exam papers - one non-calculator paper and one calculator paper.

Advice on revision guides: Pupils can use www.vle.mathswatch.com. Pupils should speak to their teacher for login information. We also recommend the Pearson target revision guides and the CGP practice exam papers. Both of which can be purchased from their maths teacher.

Music

Syllabus: WJEC Eduqas

40% Appraising — exam / 30% Performing / 30% Composing

Advice on revision guides: Textbooks are available to borrow from the department and resources are uploaded on the VLE under Music GCSE. Two revision guides are currently available. The Illuminate Publishing Music Revision Guide by Jan Richards will be made available to students in Year 11. A second WJEC & EDUQAS GCSE Music Revision Guide by David Ventura, published by Rhinegold Education, is available online if students wish to purchase their own copies. (Please note that the Listening Tests provided by the same publishers will be used in class and it is not necessary for students to purchase this.) Please note when looking at information online, it is WJEC Eduqas - there are differences from the WJEC Music course.

Advice during the spring term

- Get your child to check that they have all notes and books for revision. Get them to talk to their teacher if they are missing any.
- Check that they have a revision timetable which includes the dates and times of the examinations in May and June. Include any important dates (such as birthdays) when you want them to take some time off from revision.
- Include in the timetable a plan for revision.
- Spread revision out evenly so that subject demands match to the exam timetable.

During the exam period

Try to ensure that:

- Your child gets a good night's sleep before exams.
- They have all the equipment for the day.
- They know the start times of each exam for the day and plan to arrive at least 15 minutes before.
- You wish them well and tell them that they have worked hard and that they can only do their best.

School Contacts

Keeping in touch with school can be extremely important when seeking advice in preparation for exams.

Listed are the names of staff who will help should any issues occur during the exam period.

Heads of Houses

| | |
|-----------|------------------|
| Foley: | Mrs Noble |
| Graveney: | Mrs Winterbottom |
| Ottewell: | Mr Amor |
| Selvey: | Miss Niblett |

Examinations Officer

exams@balcarras.gloucs.sch.uk

Head of Individual Learning

Mrs Corinaldi

And when it's all over...

Tell your child to relax and forget about study for a while.

Enjoy the summer break!

Art

Syllabus: AQA **40% exam / 60% coursework**

(Coursework runs through Year 10 and Year 11)

Advice on revision guides: The Art department feel that the best kind of support we can offer the GCSE students is that from September the Art department will be running workshops and catch up sessions for those students who would like to take advantage of extra studio time. All art students are welcome. The sessions will run on Tuesday afternoons until 5pm. (Check with your teacher.)

Please feel free to take advantage of this extra tuition.

Business Studies

Syllabus: Eduqas **100% exam**

62.5% Theory Exam (no tiers) / 37.5% Data Response Exam (no tiers)

Advice on revision guides: Students will be issued with a revision guide at the start of Year 11 which is very useful and presents key information in a student friendly way. Students will also be issued with a past paper booklet with the relevant mark scheme to help build key exam skills.

Computer Science

Syllabus: OCR

Exam Paper 1 - Computer Systems - 1.5 hrs -50% of total

Exam Paper 2 - Computational Thinking, Algorithms & Programming - 1.5 hrs - 50% of total

Advice on revision guides: The primary focus of Year 10 is to learn the theory knowledge for exam paper 1. This covers a wide range of topics, including systems architecture, networking, and representing data using binary. Alongside this we try to build upon the programming skills that students started to learn during KS3. This is in preparation for Year 11 when our focus shifts to the second paper, which relies upon a solid understanding of programming. Early in the course students are loaned a revision guide, which covers both exam papers. In addition to this, students are given revision booklets containing past paper examples. Full resources for the course can also be found via our VLE. If students wish to develop their programming skills further, they can do so by using the Next Steps into Python Programming section on our VLE.

French

Syllabus: AQA **100% exam**

Advice on revision guides: An AQA Grammar and Translation workbook and a Vocabulary book will be available for students to purchase. Letters will be sent home with further details during the course of the year. We highly recommend that all pupils buy at least the Grammar and Translation workbook from the MFL department.

Students should also log onto the VLE and complete the activities in the GCSE French section. Here students can access core vocabulary list, grammar notes and practice exercises. Further activities can also be found on the www.pearsonactivelearn.com website. All students have been told their login and password details in class.

Students will also find the following websites helpful:

www.languagesonline.co.uk - grammar section

www.linguascope.co.uk - intermediate vocabulary section.

Geography

Syllabus: AQA Geography **100% exam (3 papers)**

Human and physical geography is taught across the course alongside contrasting fieldwork experiences. Pupils will conduct a field study on regeneration in Bristol in Year 10, and a river study to Blackpool Brook in Year 11. In the spring of Year 11 there will also be a session to study a topical geographical issue chosen by the exam board.

Advice on revision guides: There will be a range of textbooks used throughout the course as well as resources to supplement the teaching of the content. Pupils will also be given a specification sheet for each topic to act as a 'tick sheet' for what needs to be known for the exam. Pupils will be given a past paper question booklet for each topic to practice exam skills throughout the course. We recommend that pupils make flash cards of all key content as they progress through the course. At the start of each academic year there will be an opportunity to purchase a range of resources to supplement pupils' notes and help with revision.

Health & Social Care

Syllabus: OCR Cambridge National in Health & Social Care (2022)
Level 2 **40% exam / 60% NEA**

Advice on revision guides: In Year 10 the main focus is on completion of the first NEA Unit (RO33) plus beginning the second (RO35). As a result no revision materials will be necessary until Year 11. There will however be a range of textbooks and teaching resources used throughout the year to supplement the teaching of the content. Students will also have regular access to example exam questions and feedback relating to the mark schemes.

Drama

Syllabus: Edexcel. 30% practical/ 70% written (one written exam worth 40% and a NEA portfolio worth 30%).

Advice on revision guides: Year 10 will begin with building the core skills required for GCSE Drama and a mock scripted performance. After Christmas students will take part in a devising project and complete the accompanying NEA; this unit is worth 40% in total and will be submitted to Edexcel for moderation. At the end of the year, we will begin preparation for the written exam as we develop our understanding of *An Inspector Calls*. Students will be provided with a workbook for this unit although it will not be officially assessed until Year 11.

English Language

Syllabus: AQA **100% exam**

Advice on revision guides: The GCSE English Language course culminates in two 1 hour 45 minute exams. The first of these tests students on their ability to analyse unseen literary fiction and will also require them to produce a short piece of creative writing; the second tests students on their ability to analyse unseen non-fiction and will also require them to produce a short piece of functional writing. Students will be taught English Language and English Literature separately and two lessons a fortnight in Y10 will be devoted to preparing for the English Language exam. Lessons in Y10 will be focused primarily on the writing elements of the exam through the study of a variety of thematic units. In the first half of the summer term, students will also be prepared for the speaking element of their GCSE and this will be assessed in the second half of the summer term. The CPG GCSE English Language AQA Revision Guide for the 9-1 course is a good, overall practical guide to what is required: <https://www.cgpbooks.co.uk/secondary-books/gcse/english/english-lang/enar41-gcse-english-language-aqa-revision>

English Literature

Syllabus: AQA **100% exam**

Advice on revision guides: The GCSE English Literature course culminates in two exams: the first of these lasts for 1 hour and 45 minutes and will require students to answer questions on a Shakespeare play (*Macbeth*) and on a nineteenth century novel (*A Christmas Carol*); the second exam lasts for 2 hours and 15 minutes and will require students to answer questions on the play *An Inspector Calls* and on a range of 19th, 20th and 21st century poetry both seen and unseen. There are CPG revision guides available for all the texts that we study as well as a huge range of internet-based resources which can be accessed simply by searching the name of the text. In Y10, students will study *A Christmas Carol*, *An Inspector Calls* and the Power & Conflict poetry anthology.

Creative iMedia

Syllabus: OCR **40% exam / 60% coursework**

Advice on revision guides: The primary focus of Year 10 is the completion of the first piece of coursework. This is a graphic design project entitled Visual Identity and Digital Graphics and accounts for 25% of the overall grade. Pupils will be using the CorelDraw suite of software to complete this project and there is no expectation they need to have this at home. The deadline for this project is March, after which our attention turns to the next major project: Animation with Audio. This is a technically challenging piece of work and as such we spend the final parts of the year learning the skills required to complete this.

Design technology: Food Preparation and Nutrition

Syllabus: Eduqas

50% exam / 50% non exam assessment (two pieces completed in Year 11)

Advice on revision guides: All pupils have a GCSE food textbook, they also have access to a digital textbook available to all students through the school's VLE. In addition, a revision guide and workbook can be purchased through school in Year 11. Students will be given many revision aids and help sheets and our VLE pages will provide numerous support materials, example questions and other useful resources.

Design Technology: Product Design Route

Syllabus: AQA **50% exam / 50% coursework**

Advice on revision guides: Specific D&T revision guides and workbooks are available from the design and technology department at a cost of £6.00. Students should see their D&T teacher if they wish to purchase one. Past papers are available from their D&T teacher on request. There are a number of revision resources available on the VLE, GCSE page.

Design Technology: Textiles Route

Syllabus: Eduqas **50% exam/50% coursework**

Advice on revision guides: Exam board specific revision books will be available to purchase from the design and technology department at the beginning of Year 10. In addition, students will be given a revision pack with past papers and worksheets in Year 11. The D&T Textiles page on the VLE is full of lots of support materials for the NEA and the exam.

| GCSE Exam and Coursework / Controlled Assessment | September | October | November | December | January |
|--|---|---|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|---------|
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| | Physical Education Practical assessment continual moderation (external moderation April/May Year 11) | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| | | | Drama Mock Scripted Performance | Drama Devised Performance Unit. | |
| | | | | | |
| | Art Coursework begins (ends April Year 11) | Art Coursework workshops (ending in May) | | | |

| February | March | April | May | June | Year 10 Timetable September 2023 - June 2024 |
|---|---|---|---|---|--|
| | | All subjects Trial exams | | GCSE units | |
| | | | English Literature Paper 2 (Trial exam) | Controlled assessments to be completed | |
| | Music Non exam assessment: Composition (as part of trial exams) | | | DT: Product Design and Textiles Non-examined assessment (completion Feb Year 11) | |
| | Creative iMedia Unit R094 Graphic Design coursework completed | Music Non exam assessment: Performing (as part of trial exams) | | | |
| | | | Health & Social Care Submission deadline for NEA unit RO33 | Health & Social Care Begin NEA unit RO35 | |
| Drama Devised Performance Unit. | | | | | |
| | | | Drama NEA Portfolio Deadline | | |
| Art Coursework workshops (ending in May) | | | Art Preparation for Year 11 mock exam begins - booklet distributed | | |