



QUEEN MARY'S
GRAMMAR SCHOOL

MERCIAN

GCSE Options 2026



Year 9 Options Evening

Thursday 15th January

Timings

- 5.00-5.10: Mr Langton (Headmaster) Welcome and opening remarks
- 5.10-5.25: Mr Lax (Deputy Head) GCSE Options and curriculum model
- 5.25-5.40: Mr Hudson (Assistant Head) Careers & PSHE
- 5.45-5.55: Mr Diskin (Head of Year) Super-curricular and cross-curricular
- 5:55-6:00: Mr Langton (Headmaster) Close
- 6:00-6:30: Break out time:
 - Students available for informal discussions on their preparations for GCSEs, post-16 choices and beyond
 - Mrs Youngman and Mrs Swain from the SEND team in the Welfare Hub available for informal discussions with students/parents

Welcome

Mr. R. Langton

Headmaster



ATOMIC HABITS

The small seemingly insignificant things which when done on a consistent basis lead to our outcomes

GIVE


to teacher and task

BE ON TIME


all the time

ALWAYS


BE
EQUIPPED
and ready to learn
DO YOUR BEST

SHOW RESPECT


Tidy up after yourself and care for your surroundings



★ Be a **CREDIT** to QMGS ★

Core Values

QMGS

Courage.

facing new challenges with determination & resilience

Respect

for yourself & tolerance of others

Equality

opportunities for all, whilst recognising & celebrating diversity

Discipline



developing personal responsibility

Integrity

to be honest, sincere, reliable & selfless

Teamwork

stronger together

High Challenge, High Support pastoral approach



Parents / carers and students must complete an online [Microsoft Form](#) by 07.10.2022 to indicate that this Home-School Agreement and the consents shown on Appendix 1 have been read, understood and agreed to. Please note we deliver the statutory Sex and Relationships Education and expect all students to follow this. All School policies that are referenced in this Home School Agreement are available on the School [website](#)

The Ethos of the School is set out in our motto and the “Four Pillars” of the House System:

We will encourage our pupils to be:

- Academic in purpose
- International in outlook
- Enterprising in spirit
- Generous in approach

All these are brought together by the sense of *community* that marks us out. We enjoy our social, cultural and ethnic diversity and recognise our many privileges. We are keen to share what we have – experience, expertise, enthusiasm – both with those who live on our doorstep and those from further afield.

Also central to the School's ethos are our Core Values:



A. Parents/Carers: I/we will

1. Ensure that my/our child attends school, is properly equipped and is punctual. Registration is in the form room at 8.45am and the beginning of period 5 at 2pm every day (except for sixth-form students that may have been given prior permission to sign-in later due to school-sanctioned activities elsewhere). Please see our Attendance Policy [here](#).
2. Inform the school on the first day of absence before 8.45am and each day thereafter. I/we will provide an absence letter stating the dates and reason on the first day of my/our child's return to school.
3. Provide a formal request for leave of absence. If my child needs to miss school for something unavoidable (such as a music exam or a dental appointment that cannot be scheduled after school). It should be addressed to the Headmaster giving as much notice as possible, or preferably three working days in advance. Please also see the 'Religious Observance' form related to published religious festivals which is available [here](#):
4. Not take holidays in school time. Permission for absence will only be granted when there are clearly exceptional circumstances. I understand that permission is at the sole discretion of the Headmaster. Please see current Government guidance on Holidays during Term-Time [here](#).
5. Not arrange collection for my child during the school day via their mobile phone. All contact with parents regarding students leaving the site must be through reception. Students in Y7 – Y11 will not be allowed out of School unless their parents sign them out in Reception.
6. Accept that sixth-form students' timetables may, on occasion, contain a study period at the end of the school day. On those days, my child in the sixth form may sign out once the last timetabled lesson has finished after afternoon registration. Sixth-form students are allowed the privilege of leaving the school site during lunch-time (1.00p.m.-2.00p.m.) They must follow the e-registration procedures for signing out and back in once they return to school using the biometric scanners. No student is permitted to sign-out at break-time or in between lessons during the school day.
7. Be aware that students are only allowed to enter the school after 8.00am. They should remain in the dining room or outside until 8.30am, after which they may go to their form room. Students remaining after school must either be in an organised activity or be under supervision in the HW club until 4.40p.m. (by pre-booked arrangement using parent pay). No student may remain unsupervised in school after 4.00p.m. and all students must be offsite by 5.30pm. I understand that any unacceptable behaviour will not be tolerated, and the option to remain in the building may be reviewed



Queen Mary's Grammar School

Headmaster: R J Langton, MA

Beginning of term notices, September 2025

28th August 2025

Dear Parent/Guardian,

I hope that this letter finds you well and that you have had a good summer. We have been delighted to celebrate the successes of our GCSE and A-level students, the headlines of which can be seen on our [website](#) and X account. We have had a team of students in Malawi, as part of a month-long expedition (see right). They had a magnificent experience and were a real credit to the school. The army cadets also took part in their annual summer camp and I have heard some really positive feedback back from the staff involved.

We are also please to announce that the Future Sport project is underway, with the field fenced off ready for the development to start in the next couple of weeks. There will be some changes to student routines, which will be communicated at the start of term.

Beginning of term arrangements.

- Mon 1 Sep – staff training day (no students in school)
- Tue 2 Sep – Year 7 and 12 induction day (see separate instructions for those year groups)
- Wed 3 Sep – return to school for all students (school starts at 8.45am); students register in form rooms and normal lessons start from p3 onwards. Details of form rooms are below and will be on display in the canteen.

Form room arrangements

- Year 7 – Q1-3, M1, M2, M7 (mainly English corridor)
- Year 8 – H5-10 (humanities block)
- Year 9 – H1-4, M9, S16 (mainly humanities block)
- Year 10 – M4, M5, Q4-6, S14 (mainly maths corridor)
- Year 11 – Q7-11, L3 (mainly MFL corridor)
- Year 12/13 – S1–18, IT2, M3, C1 (mainly science block)



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Attendance requirements

School attendance is a legal requirement. Absence negatively impacts a child's academic potential and performance and denies them the opportunity to interact socially with their peers and build experiences beyond the classroom. All pupils should aim to attend school 100% of the time. Attendance and punctuality continue to be monitored rigorously and as of September, we will maintain the approach introduced last academic year, in line with the [mandatory guidelines](#) published by the Department for Education. This includes:

- The daily sharing of attendance data with the Department for Education.
- Updated fine rates for unauthorised absence.
- Clear thresholds for penalty notices.
- Clear support and challenge to address any punctuality issues

Term-time holidays will not be authorised. We are obliged to consider issuing a penalty notice to parents if a child misses five days of school due to unauthorised absence. Where attendance or punctuality causes concern, appropriate levels of challenge and support will be implemented. If a child's attendance falls below 90%, they are classed as persistently absent. In such cases, the school will liaise with the Local Authority and an Education Welfare Officer, who may initiate legal proceedings if parents/carers are not meeting their legal obligation to ensure their child attends school. Our priority remains to take a 'support-first' approach, working with students and families to overcome any barriers to attendance. Parents can continue to monitor their child's attendance and punctuality via EduLink. If you are unable to access this system, please contact Mrs Johnson at dataenquiries@qmg.merctrust.org.uk

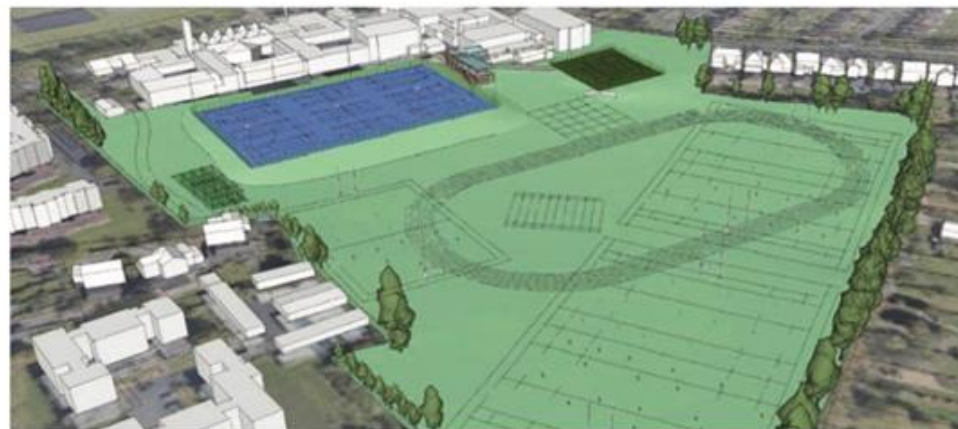
Behaviour expectations

We are proud that Ofsted rated our behaviour and attitudes as Outstanding, and we remain fully committed to maintaining these exceptional standards across all aspects of school life within lessons, during trips and activities, and while travelling to and from school. Our policies are available on the school website, and we ask all students to uphold our CREDIT values and embrace our atomic habits (page 3). Atomic habits are the small, seemingly insignificant things which if done consistently lead to positive outcomes. By setting high expectations for behaviour, we foster an environment that promotes both academic excellence and personal wellbeing. During the last academic year, we introduced several key changes to strengthen our approach to behaviour which we will continue to embed this year:

- A structured response to classroom disruption: following a warning and behaviour point, students can expect to receive Same Day Detention if disruption persists. This reinforces expectations and minimise loss of learning.
- Any unauthorised use of mobile phones result in a Same Day Detention.
- Persistent disruption is addressed with appropriate consequences and targeted support to helps students engage positively with school life.

We continue to take a clear and consistent approach to behaviour, offering support where needed while maintaining high standards that define our school community. Your support is greatly appreciated in this area.

FutureSport@QMGS: A Community Legacy Project



Proposed Lower Ground Floor Plan (NTS)



Proposed Upper Ground Floor Plan (h)

Express & Star



Walsall school looking to transform its sporting facilities – and here's why

A Walsall school is looking to transform its sporting facilities to enable it to compete competitively in hockey through an ambitious plan.



Queen Mary's Grammar School
Headmaster: R J Langton, MA

To Parents of Pupils in Y8-13

September 2025

Dear Parents

The QM Experience Fund

I hope that you have enjoyed a restful summer and that both you and your child is looking forward to the new academic year with a sense of purpose and optimism. It is important to us that by the end of their time at Queen Mary's we have equipped them with the tools to face the future with confidence, including a strong academic portfolio. We have found, though, that it is not just exam results but also life experiences that shape young lives and opens doors. It is this 'QM experience' that sets us apart and makes our school such a rewarding place to work and study.

The School has many fine traditions dating back 470 years, including the embodiment of our School motto, *Quas dederis, solar semper habebis opes* which translates as 'It is what you give that you will keep as eternal riches'. Our hope is that you will again consider giving to the QM Experience Fund to help us to help your child, and others, as he matures. Whether it is through sport, music, drama, language learning or one of the many other extra-curricular activities, we hope that your child will make the absolute most of the QM experience in their time with us.

We try our best to provide these activities through our school budget or at as low a cost as possible. However, our ambitions often go beyond this income and I am hoping that you will consider giving a regular amount to ensure that we can continue to offer a full range of activities. We launched the QM Experience Fund last year and received a tremendous response, raising over £10,000. Added to just under £20,000 raised through the QMA events, this was a terrific boost to the school from the parental/student body and has made a genuine difference to what we can achieve.

As I have written to you about previously, over the past three years, we have been fundraising towards the [Future Sport @ QMGS project](#): an ambitious initiative to revolutionise our facilities for the benefit of our students and the wider community. Any donations to the QM experience fund will initially go towards this, but will support a wide range of other

Future Sport @ QMGS A Community Legacy Project

Work nearly complete
on the AGP; grass
pitches to follow

Still fundraising to do
for the pavilion

QM experience fund

All playing our part



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Key Stage 4 GCSE Curriculum & Options

Mr M. Lax

Deputy Head



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GCSE Options 2026



Key Stage 4 GCSE Curriculum & Options

Sources of information:

- This presentation
- GCSE Options booklet (available in pdf after this information event)
- School website (curriculum section)
- Form Tutors / Head of Year
- Subject teachers / Heads of Department
- Careers Advisors
- BBC Bitesize

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/articles/zrjh92p>



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Key Stage 4 GCSE Curriculum & Options

The Curriculum:

- Broad and balanced
- Develops individual skills & interests
- Complements chosen educational pathways
- Core GCSE curriculum for all students:
 - English Language
 - English Literature
 - Mathematics
 - Biology
 - Chemistry
 - Physics
 - RPE (Religion, Philosophy & Ethics) leading to a GCSE qualification in Religious Studies
 - Form Time Curriculum
 - PSHEE
 - PE and Games



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Key Stage 4 GCSE Curriculum & Options

The Curriculum:

- Key Stage 4 allows for some specialisation in option choices
- You will choose three GCSEs from the following:
 - Art
 - Business
 - Computer Science
 - Design & Technology
 - French
 - Geography
 - History
 - Mandarin
 - Music
 - Physical Education
 - Psychology
 - Sociology
 - Spanish



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Key Stage 4 GCSE Curriculum & Options

- Those students already on the MEP pathway must choose Mandarin as one of their three GCSE options. That group will continue together.
- There will also be a non-MEP GCSE Mandarin group, if required
- Choose the subjects that you most enjoy and are most suited to your future aspirations.
- Government changes are still to be announced. Proposals in November 2025 but no firm decisions until Summer 2026
- We may have to review options if the national picture changes in the Summer



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Key Stage 4 GCSE Curriculum & Options

Religion, Philosophy and Ethics (RPE):

- Students will work towards a GCSE qualification in Religious Studies
- All schools must provide Religious Education in all years
- RPE is much more than that:
 - Encourages questioning minds
 - Intellectual curiosity
 - Critical argument.
- All characteristics of bright and engaging Queen Mary's students
- Also includes some aspects of the School's provision of PSHE and Citizenship, with subjects covered such as:
 - Extremism
 - Fundamental British Values
 - Diversity
 - Democracy



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Key Stage 4 GCSE Curriculum & Options

Additional Maths:

- Not an option choice
- Offered to our most able mathematicians
- A bridge between GCSE work and more challenging A Level study
- Decided by the Maths department



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Key Stage 4 GCSE Curriculum & Options

Reserve Option Subject:

- An option subject may be withdrawn if:
 - the set size is not viable
 - there has been a change in staffing
- We will always try to give the student their first choices or a reserve option, if necessary
- In the case of over-subscription or a timetable clash, it may also be necessary to use a reserve option choice
- We may look at past performance in relevant subjects if there is an over-subscription
- Government decisions may also force a change in the Summer



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GCSE Options 2026



Key Stage 4 GCSE Curriculum & Options

The Wider Curriculum:

- Balance offered by form-time curriculum, PSHE, Physical Education and Games afternoons.
- Extra-curricular activities
 - Sport
 - CCF
 - Creative and Cultural activities
 - Wide range of school clubs and societies.
- Our aim is that Key Stage 4:
 - Develops academic ability
 - Encourages personal qualities of responsibility, independence and integrity
 - Provides a sound basis for entry to the Sixth Form and Further Education before Post-18 pathways



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GCSE Options 2026



Key Stage 4 GCSE Curriculum & Options

The Future:

- Current requirements for entry to QMGS sixth form:
 - 54 points from your best 8 GCSE grades (minimum)
 - Including grade 6 in English and Maths
 - Grade 7 in the subjects you want to study at A Level
- University admissions tutors and employers will look at your performance across a broad range of GCSE subjects. It is important to aim much higher than 54 points!
- Achievement in English Language and Maths is key for future courses and employers
- Best indicator of future success is an average points score of grade 7 and above



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GCSE Options 2026



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 @qmgs1554

Key Stage 4 GCSE Curriculum & Options

Degree courses QM students entered 2025

Medicine	26 (10.9%)
Engineering	15 (6.3%)
Business / Economics	12 (5.0%)
Law	12 (5.0%)
Computer Science	10 (4.2%)
All other courses and post-18 pathways	163 (68.5%)

Year of qualification	Cohort size	Med Dent Vet Applications	% of cohort	Med Dent Vet Entry	% of cohort
2025	238	53	22.3	26	10.9
2024	230	38	16.5	17	7.4
2023	241	38	15.8	15	6.2
2022	209	29	13.9	8	3.8
2021	221	46	20.8	15	6.8
2020	202	36	17.8	14	6.9



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GCSE Options 2026



Key Stage 4 GCSE Curriculum & Options

Next Steps:

- Use all sources of information available to help make decisions
- A Microsoft Form link will be made available for you to digitally submit your options choices. No paper copies can be submitted.
- Please contact the school via the main enquiries email address or telephone during the school day if you have any questions or issues, including technical help with the digital form
- Deadline for completion of the online digital form is Friday 13th February.

Careers Advice and opportunities this term for Y9 pupils

Mr A. Hudson
Assistant Head

Mr. P. Sunley
CEIAG Co-ordinator/Head of Economics

Mrs S Pagett
Careers Advisor (Careers Leader at QMHS)

its ok not
to have

~~“Hurry up and
get your career
figured out!”~~

- YOUR INNER VOICE

right away.

Y9 Careers Advice Drop-in Sessions

Spring term

Throughout **January** and **February**
Mrs Pagett will be available in the
Collier Centre at the times below.

**Thursday & Friday
Lunchtime**

1:30 PM - 1:50 PM

3:40 PM – 4:00 PM

**Thursday & Friday After-
school**



CAREERS NEWSLETTER

This newsletter is a collation of all the opportunities we have heard about from employers and universities. Please use the links included to read more information and apply to anything you are interested in. Links are underlined.

OPPORTUNITIES

We know it's the first week back and February feels AGES away... However, we want to bring your attention to the fact that 10th-14th February is National Apprenticeship Week. This is one of the biggest events in the careers calendar.

We will share more information with you about specific events the week before the event. But, for now, these are some of the things you can do if you're keen to learn more about apprenticeships and make NAW2025 a really impactful event for your career knowledge, growth and future planning.



Here are the events that are already listed for the week, you can already register to as many as you'd like. Some are broad and about apprenticeships in general whereas others are specific to certain industries/employers.

JOB OF THE WEEK



Geneticist

A Geneticist is a scientist or physician who studies the science of genes, heredity, and variation in organisms. They study how genes work in humans, animals, plants, and microbes, and how they are passed on.

Watch the video to learn more about how much



Try a *CAREER* before you APPLY with Virtual Work Experience

- Gain experience
- Develop your skills
- Explore career pathways
- Work with leading employers



Scan Me

Create your student account by scanning the QR code on the left hand side of this poster, add your school or college email address and then verify your account. If you already have a Springpod account, then login as normal.

National Careers Week

2nd – 7th March

- **Form Time Activities**
- **Inspirational Lunchtime Career Talks/Workshops**
- **Our Alumni Careers Fair returns on Friday 6th March** – come and meet former pupils and get some careers advice
- **Lots of online activities** during the week for you to kickstart your future career journey



unifrog

the universal destinations platform

Exploring pathways	Recording what you've done	Searching for opportunities	Drafting application materials	Making applications
Careers library	Activities	UK universities	UK Personal Statement	Post 18 Intentions
Subjects library	Skills	US universities	Classes	Locker
Know-how library	Interactions	European universities	Subject References	Applications list
MOOC		Oxbridge	CV / Resumé	
Webinars		Canadian universities	Writing tool	
Read, Watch, Listen		Asian universities	Common App Essay	
		Australasian universities	US recommenders	
		MidEast and Africa unis	Notes for Reference writers	
		Irish universities		
		Special Opportunities		
		Events		

Architect

Architects design new buildings and the spaces around them, and work on the restoration and conservation of existing buildings.

Careers library

- Over 1000 career profiles
- Presents information from a range of sources, including local and national LMI
- Includes qualifications and skills needed, interviews with industry professionals and labour market information
- Explores progression opportunities and what a working week really looks like



Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHEE) at QMGS



Vision of the PSHEE Department – 'empowered and informed'



The PSHEE curriculum at Queen Mary's Grammar School has a long-term view and aims to thoroughly equip our pupils for life in the modern world. As a department, we wish to create citizens of the world who are *international in outlook*, critical thinkers who are *academic in purpose*, active members of society who contribute meaningfully to its betterment by being *generous in approach* and successful, interesting and interested adults who are *enterprising in spirit*. Our work is underpinned by the school's motto of *quas dederis solas semper habebis opes* – it is what you give you shall keep as eternal riches.

Whether our pupils leave us at the end of Year 11 or Year 13, we hope to have helped produce a confident young person who feels empowered to make their own life decisions from an informed perspective.

PSHEE in Key Stage Four



- PSHEE is not a GCSE option. No exam boards currently offer a qualification in PSHEE.
- Pupils will continue to attend one lesson a fortnight, taught by a specialist PSHEE teacher (Ms Morgan or Mrs McPhee).
- PSHEE is part of the national curriculum, in the same manner as PE/Games – pupils are not able to ‘drop’ the subject.
- The PSHEE curriculum covers a wide range of areas: relationships and sex education, physical health and mental wellbeing and social education which encompasses media literacy, citizenship and politics and careers and finance.

Y10 PSHEE Curriculum



Relationships Education

- o Sex, relationships and the law (revisiting consent)
- o Toxic relationships
- o Contraception (including condom demonstration)
- o Perceptions and expectations in romantic relationships
- o Managing conflict and bullying
- o Developing self-esteem and confidence

Social Education (encompassing media literacy, citizenship and politics, careers and finance)

- o Social media algorithms
- o The impact of pornography
- o Desensitisation and radicalisation: extreme content (to include grooming)
- o Unconscious bias and microaggressions
- o Sexism and misogyny

Physical Health and Mental Wellbeing

- o Taking ownership of a healthy lifestyle (including sleep, sexual health, self-examination)
- o Stress and change management
- o First aid – KS3 re-cap and seizures

Y11 PSHEE Curriculum



Relationships Education

- o Sexual harassment
- o Emotionally safe sex (including pleasure)
- o Parenting
- o Ending relationships respectfully
- o Managing workplace relationships

Social Education (encompassing media literacy, citizenship and politics, careers and finance)

- o Understanding payslips
- o Budgeting for the future
- o Applying for work or training

Physical Health and Mental Wellbeing

- o Accessing health services/help-seeking
- o Fertility and reproductive health
- o Managing stress/balance
- o First aid and emergencies re-cap

The Importance of super-curricular and extra-curricular activities

Mr. J. Diskin

Head of Year 9

Extra-curricular activities are a valuable investment in your future, with research showing that students who participate in activities outside of their studies tend to have higher grades, better exam scores, and more positive educational experiences in general.

- Prospects

Extra-Curricular Activities

- Learning an instrument
- Playing in a sports team
- Learning a new life skill
- Taking up a new hobby
- Enrolling in Scouts, Cadets, or CCF
- Volunteering

...and so many more!

'Super-curricular' activities are educational activities which go above and beyond the school curriculum.

- University of Oxford

To Do



To Read



To Watch



To Listen

