

GCSE

advancing learning, changing lives

GCSE Astronomy



GCSE Astronomy - Learning for everyone.

Edexcel is the only awarding body to offer GCSE Astronomy. This is a complement to our science GCSE qualification portfolio designed to broaden the appeal and increase the understanding of science and its impact.

Astronomy is one of the oldest sciences and yet astronomers are continually visiting new worlds, discovering new elements to the solar system and exploring phenomena such as black holes, the Big Bang and life on Mars. It is dynamics such as these, that make the study of astronomy a stimulating experience for students.

Although key students for GCSE Astronomy are 14 – 16 year olds, it is, however equally enjoyed by both GCE and mature students across the country. Being a flexible course, it can be offered as an after-school club activity or a part-time evening course.

GCSE Astronomy

With astronomy at the forefront of scientific discovery, the excitement and interest generated by this is also reflected in our GCSE Astronomy qualification.

Students gain an understanding of several astronomy theories and practices. The history of astronomy and its cultural impacts are also explored. At the same time, students will improve their research and analytical skills, and develop an understanding of recent advances made within astronomy.

Structure

GCSE Astronomy offers a range of opportunities for students to develop their skills, particularly problem solving, application of numbers and ICT. It complements other science qualifications, especially Physics and can also be used to enrich opportunities for students, at key stage 4 or post-16.



Course Content

The course consists of five units, which are split into smaller topics. They cover the following areas:

1. **Planet Earth** – the Earth, Days and seasons
2. **The Moon and the Sun** – the Moon, the Sun, Eclipses
3. **The Solar System** – planets and asteroids, meteors and comets
4. **Stars and galaxies** – constellations, stars, galaxies
5. **Observing techniques and space exploration** – observing the Universe, exploring the Universe



Delivery made easy

GCSE Astronomy is a straightforward qualification to deliver. Students sit one external exam and submit two pieces of coursework. They are also given the opportunity to carry out practical coursework on a variety of different themes such as designing and making a simple telescope, creating a spreadsheet to plot an H-R diagram or observing three celestial objects using binoculars or a telescope.

What to do next

For more information on GCSE Astronomy, please visit www.edexcel.org.uk or order specification UG008952 from Edexcel Publications (details on reverse).

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Contact us

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About Edexcel

Edexcel is one of the UK's largest providers of qualifications, with the widest portfolio of academic and vocational qualifications. Regulated by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) to offer qualifications, Edexcel works with over 5,500 education partners in over 110 countries.

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