

Subject Handbook 2026



Year 9

Information

Our junior programme is designed to provide opportunities to build and develop individual strengths while instilling high expectations and the strong grounding essential for success in NCEA and beyond. We encourage the selection of a broad range of subjects to ensure a wide range of opportunities remains open to our ākonga (students) as they enter their senior years.

We have caring and dedicated pastoral and careers teams who will support both ākonga and whānau to ensure the best choices are made for future success.

The Year 9 Curriculum:

In Year 9, ākonga programmes are focussed on a range of compulsory subjects: English, Hauora (Health and Physical Education), Mathematics, Science, Social Science and Technology. There is also a course called Te Raukura in which ākonga are immersed in Māori customs and cultural practices.

Within the other subject areas, The Arts and Languages, we offer a series of specialist choices where individual talents and interests are nurtured and encouraged.

Additional Support:

We are committed to the success of every ākonga and offer both extension opportunities and focused learning support for individual learning concerns. We offer additional assistance in literacy and numeracy for those ākonga who come to high school with extra needs.

As a school we strive to create learning environments where ākonga actively participate in the learning process alongside their teachers. We value positive learning relationships between ākonga and teachers. We encourage diversity and cultural awareness and expect our ākonga to take every opportunity that is on offer both academically and in the vast range of extracurricular activities that Gisborne Girls' High School supports. This begins with the clear expectation that attendance every day is the key to success.

COMPULSORY SUBJECTS

Careers Education

This course will occur during Āko Time.

Ākonga identify their values, personal qualities, interests, and achievements and explore career ideas through interactive tools. They begin building their career portfolio using the Career Central website. Activities also include ākonga gaining a greater understanding of how subjects pathway from Year 9 to 13 so they can plan their courses.

Course:	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12	Year 13	University Entrance
CAREER ED	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
PATHWAYS			✓	✓	✓	
EARLY CHILDHOOD ED				✓	✓	
GATEWAY			✓	✓	✓	
TRADES				✓	✓	

English

9ENG English

This subject is about developing and improving all English-based skills. The focus will be on reading and writing as well as speaking skills including Speech and Debate, and analysing visual texts. Extension includes: Speech competition, Inter-class Debating and Writing Competitions.

Course:	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12	Year 13	University Entrance
ENGLISH	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
ACHIEVEMENT ENGLISH			✓	✓	✓	✓
ENGLISH FOR LITERACY			✓	✓	✓	
MEDIA STUDIES				✓	✓	✓

Hauora (Health and Physical Education)

9HAU Hauora

Year 9 Hauora focuses on the well-being of ākonga and their peers through learning in health-related and movement contexts. Ākonga will have the opportunities to develop their understanding of Hauora, personal growth and assertiveness through a range of contexts including physical activity, mental health and friendships/relationships and sexuality.

Course:	Year 9	YEAR 10	Year 11	Year 12	Year 13	University Entrance
HAUORA	✓	✓	✓			
HEALTH STUDIES			✓	✓	✓	✓
PE STUDIES			✓	✓	✓	✓
OUTDOOR ED		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Mathematics

9MAT Mathematics

In this course, ākonga will develop fundamental numeracy skills, problem-solving strategies, measurement knowledge and geometry. Ākonga will be working at Curriculum Levels 3,4,5, and 6. Work in this course will involve a wide variety of learning activities reinforced by regular homework. Special attention is paid to problem-solving strategies.

Course:	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12	Year 13	University Entrance
MATHEMATICAL STUDIES			✓	✓	✓	✓
MATHEMATICS	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
STATISTICS				✓	✓	✓

Science

9SCI Science

Science is about understanding the world around us. When studying Science, ākonga learn to carry out investigations, research ideas and use their knowledge to solve problems. Topics include atoms, animals, space, energy, plants, life and the taiao and waves.

Course:	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12	Year 13	University Entrance
SCIENCE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
AG/HORT				✓		
BIOLOGY				✓	✓	✓
CHEMISTRY				✓	✓	✓
PHYSICS				✓	✓	✓
PSYCHOLOGY				✓	✓	✓

Social Science

9SOS Social Science

This course provides the foundational knowledge and skills for success as a citizen in New Zealand society. Learning includes locational knowledge, graph interpretation, Government, Migration, World Wars, and NZ History.

Course:	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12	Year 13	University Entrance
SOCIAL SCIENCE	✓	✓				
CLASSICS			✓	✓	✓	✓
BUSINESS & FINANCIAL		✓	✓	✓	✓	
GEOGRAPHY			✓	✓	✓	✓
HISTORY			✓	✓	✓	✓
TOURISM				✓	✓	

Technology

9TEC Technology

This is a three term course which gives an introduction to the technology design process in the areas of Food, Textiles and Product Design. Ākonga will create a range of outcomes to solve real-world problems.

Course:	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12	Year 13	University Entrance
TECHNOLOGY	✓					
FOOD AND NUTRITION		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
TEXTILES		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
PRODUCT DESIGN		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
DIGITAL		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
COOKERY			✓	✓	✓	
YES					✓	✓

Te Raukura

9TRK Te Raukura

This is a one term course (4 periods per week). In this course, ākonga will be immersed in Māori tikanga (customs and cultural practices). The insights and experiences that ākonga gain as they are exposed to basic Te Reo will enrich and broaden their understanding of the uniqueness and complexity of te ao Māori. As ākonga compare tikanga Māori with other cultures within New Zealand and overseas, they develop an understanding of the central roles that language, culture, place and heritage play in shaping identity and giving direction and meaning to life. They come to understand that culture shapes the ways people think and behave, and begin to appreciate the value of cultural diversity. They learn about the important role that indigenous languages and cultures play in New Zealand and throughout the world.

SPECIALIST SUBJECTS

Ākonga will select 8 terms of specialist subjects. Each of these courses are two terms long except for Te Reo Māori which is for four terms.

THE ARTS - ākonga are encouraged to choose **at least one** of these subjects

Drama (2 terms)

9EXP Expressive Arts

Year 9 expressive arts is a combination course combining dance and drama into a course focused on movement and body language. Students will look at a range of performance styles including physical theatre, lyrical movement, intro to Shakespeare and Māori pūrākau through dance. Ākonga will be learning skills that are essential for any public speaking role, or can lead to performance in theatre and performing arts.

9DRP Drama Production

This course is focused on all things backstage but are essential for a show to happen. The course focuses on developing understanding of scripts and design concepts for costume design, prop making, lighting design and rigging and team work and crucial communication skills needed to develop and present a creative concept. Ākonga will be learning skills that can lead to a professional career in backstage operations in theatre and event management.

Music (2 terms)

9MUS Music Discovery

This course is for ākonga who have very little or no previous musical experience. Ākonga will gain skills in an instrument and will participate in a range of group and class activities.

9MUP Performance Music

This course is for ākonga who already have some skills on an instrument or who are confident vocalists. This course focuses on building song writing / composition skills and performing in groups and as a soloist. Ākonga will receive group tuition in either drums, bass, guitar or keyboard.

Visual Arts (2 terms)

9ART Visual Arts

This course provides an introduction to the Visual Arts through a range of Aotearoa / NZ cultural contexts. Ākonga will explore their own creativity by studying various ideas, methods and techniques across drawing, painting, woodcut printmaking, weaving and clay sculpture. Ākonga will create final individual works to be displayed in our school gallery and also collaborate for school installations.

9DES Design

This course provides an introduction to digital art and media design using drawing and photography. Ākonga will explore themes relating to their own world as well as the international environment, gaining confidence in digital drawing using Procreate on iPads, and computer design using Adobe Illustrator and Photoshop.

Course:	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12	Year 13	University Entrance
DRAMA	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
MUSIC	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
VISUAL ART	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
DESIGN	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

LANGUAGES - ākonga are encouraged to choose **at least one** of these subjects

Te Reo Māori (4 terms)

9MAO Te Reo Māori

This course includes learning basic greetings, customs, protocols, karakia and waiata. Work in this course will involve a wide variety of communicative learning activities reinforced by regular grammatical/vocabulary homework.

Course:	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12	Year 13	University Entrance
MAORI	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
TE REO RANGATIRA			✓	✓	✓	✓
TIKANGA			✓	✓	✓	
TE AO HAKA		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Spanish (2 terms)

9SPA Spanish

This is an exciting, introductory language course. It explores the Hispanic World, through **language** and **culture**, of music, dance, food, art, customs and sayings. Ākonga will learn, and be empowered by listening, speaking, reading, writing and, of course, doing. They will be able to greet people appropriately and hold a basic conversation in Spanish. *¡Vamos! Let's go!*

Course:	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12	Year 13	University Entrance
SPANISH	✓	✓				

