

Year 8 into 9 Options Brochure 2022 - 2023



Pathways to your future.

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Introduction

Dear Parent(s)/Carer(s),

Year 9 Courses and Options 2022-2023 (Level 2 qualifications)

Throughout the first two years of their secondary education your son/daughter has received a broad and balanced curriculum. It is now time to start thinking about **Level 2 qualifications** and public examinations in GCSE and equivalent courses, whilst continuing with the development of this foundation knowledge.

In Year 9, students follow a broad curriculum of 8 core and 3 option subjects, which supports the development of domain knowledge and transferable skills and lays the foundations for further GCSE studies in Years 10 and 11. The compulsory core subjects in Y9 are as follows: **English, Mathematics, Science, Geography, History, a Modern Foreign Language, PE and RE / Ethics**. Students can then select 3 further subjects from a range of option subjects available.

This booklet provides details of the subjects available to our students in Years 9, 10 and 11 together with the options process and timescale for choices to be made. We want each student to choose wisely, having considered his or her own aptitudes and abilities, and hope that you will be able to support them in making these important educational decisions

We recommend that families consider what lies beyond KS4 when making choices. All students will progress to Post-16 education. Most will follow A Level or equivalent courses whilst others will wish to move to work-based learning at 16 so it is important to plan ahead when making choices for Year 9. We strongly recommend that all students continue to study an Arts / practical subject such as Art, Photography, Drama, Performing Arts, Music, or Design and Technology in order to continue to develop a breadth of skills and experiences. Towards the end of Year 9 we will guide students along one of three broad pathways according to their current performance at school to ensure they are stretched and challenged but also able to cope with the demands of their Level 2 courses.

This booklet provides details of the options process, timeline, frequently asked questions and subject pages. If you have any subject specific questions after you have read through this brochure then please email the appropriate class teacher or subject leader. ([link to emails](#))

Mr Davey, Assistant Headteacher, will oversee the overall process and help students arrive at the final option choices. Please remember that whilst we will do our utmost to provide all the subjects offered and to accommodate all reasonable choices, financial, staffing or timetable constraints can occasionally make this impossible. We will engage you throughout the process and enter into a dialogue should we need to revisit option choices.

This is a crucial period for your child and I cannot stress too strongly the importance of the decisions being made. In response to parental feedback, the final Option Choices form will now be available on our website, within the Student Zone: Options. The process must be **completed online no later than Friday 25th March 2022** and confirmation of choices will be issued as soon as possible after this date.

Yours faithfully,



G R Mullings Headteacher

General Information

Students in Year 9 at Vyners School undertake a Transition Year between Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4. This brochure will act as the curriculum guide for Year 9. When students have made their option choices, please make sure that your parents/carers keep the brochure.

Curriculum Structure

The Year 9 Transition Year offers a range of courses that lead to Level 2 qualifications. It consists of compulsory Core Subjects and Option Subjects. Students choose three Option subjects at this stage.

Non Examination Courses

You will continue to follow a Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) programme, consisting of themes that form a natural progression from Year 8. These include, but are not limited to, personal development focusing on social and moral responsibility, Relationship and Sex Education, Mental Health Education and First Aid.

Careers/Work-Related Learning aims to ensure that you are fully prepared for the next stage of your educational journey as well as the world of work, while **Personal Progress** involves Action Planning and planning for your future. This revolves around the School's policy of building your social, moral, spiritual and cultural understanding (SMSC).

All students do Physical Education and Religious Education/Ethics. If you have a particular interest in these subjects you may also study either as an option at Level 2. GCSE PE or Sport Cambridge Nationals can be taken as an option in Y9 and GCSE Religious Education can be taken as a GCSE option in years 10 and 11.

Examination courses

Most examination courses lead to the General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) and some courses lead to other Level 2 awards.

GCSE Information

Options subjects leading to full GCSE or other qualifications will be covered in a single option block.

Some GCSE courses are examined at two levels – Higher or Foundation. The highest grade you can get at Foundation level is a 5. Your teachers will guide you towards the correct final level of entry.

Some courses involve controlled assessment which will count towards your qualification.

Grading

All GCSE qualifications are graded 9 to 1.

It is possible to fail a GCSE by getting a U (Ungraded) result.

Vocational subjects results are generally graded Distinction*, Distinction, Merit, Pass or Fail. A Distinction is equivalent to a GCSE grade 7 and a pass equivalent to a GCSE grade 4.

The English Baccalaureate

What is the English Baccalaureate?

The English Baccalaureate (EBacc) was introduced as a performance measure in the 2010 school performance tables. It is not a qualification in itself. The measure recognises where students have secured a grade 4 (standard pass) or a grade 5 (strong pass) or better across a core of academic subjects - English Language, Mathematics, History or Geography, at least two Sciences and a Modern Foreign Language. From 2014 Computer Science GCSE was included in the Science element of the English Baccalaureate. In 2015 the Government announced that there will be an expectation that most students should naturally be studying this suite of subjects at GCSE level.

Why have these subjects been chosen for the English Baccalaureate?

The subjects included are designed to ensure that all students have the opportunity to study a broad core of subjects, ensuring that doors are not closed off to them in terms of their future progression. For example, for students hoping to go to university, **The Russell Group of 24 top universities guide on making informed choices for Post-16 education** gives advice on which subjects can be most beneficial for students to choose depending on their aspirations. The English Baccalaureate is intended to give students greater opportunity to study in and beyond the vital core of English, Mathematics and the Sciences.

The introduction of the English Baccalaureate has led to significant increase in the study of these subjects at GCSE level. However, it is not intended to restrict options to just this academic core or to force these qualifications on students for whom they are not suitable. The core has deliberately been kept small to allow the opportunity for additional study - whether that is in other GCSEs or vocational qualifications.

To obtain the English Baccalaureate, current criteria wholly and exclusively comprise **six** GCSEs of grade 4, (grade 5 for strong pass) or higher, i.e. in **each** of the following:

- English Language
- Mathematics
- At least 2 GCSEs in Science (which can include Computer Science)
- **plus**
- **One Humanity** (this currently means either Geography or History; no other subjects are counted)
- **plus**
- **One Modern Foreign Language** (i.e. **either** French **or** German **or** Spanish at Vyners).

Year 8 into 9 and 9 into 10 - Options

Year 8 into 9 Option Choices

As part of our commitment that all students be given the most effective guidance throughout the options process we have introduced a three-year transitional curriculum.

Each student will be guided toward three initial option choices. Guidance will be given to students regarding their suitability for different courses based upon a range of information including their academic progress throughout Key Stage 3, their learning style and their flair for specific subjects.

Year 9 into 10 Option Choices

(Full details of this options process will be provided next year.)

During Year 9, once they have had ample opportunity to experience their initial options subjects, students will be required to refine their choices further for Years 10 and 11.

Students will be guided on to three broad pathways:

Pathway 1

Students studying on this pathway will study GCSEs in Mathematics, English Language and English Literature, and the separate Sciences - Biology, Chemistry and Physics (Triple Science). In addition, they will choose **three** further subjects, **at least one** of which must be from the English Baccalaureate group of subjects (either Geography, History, French, German or Spanish). This will result in nine GCSE qualifications. This pathway has been designed to adequately prepare students for A Level study and progression to university or degree apprenticeship.

Pathway 2

Students on pathway 2 will also study the core subjects (Mathematics, English Language, English Literature and Science). However, students on this pathway will study Trilogy (Double) Science rather than the three separate Sciences studied by students on Pathway 1. Students will then have the opportunity to select **four** further options, with at least one being from the English Baccalaureate group of subjects (Geography, History, French, German and Spanish). This pathway will prepare students for A Levels or Level 3 vocational qualifications in order to progress to university or other Post-16 routes such as alternative vocational qualifications or apprenticeships.

Pathway 3

Students on Pathway 3 will study the core subjects (Mathematics, English Language, English Literature and Trilogy (Double) Science). In addition, students studying on this pathway will receive an additional time allocation in English and Mathematics to ensure that they can successfully access their Level 2 courses and be adequately prepared for opportunities that are available Post-16. Students will then have the opportunity to select **three** further options, at least one of which is recommended to be a vocational subject.

The Structure of Courses Taken at Key Stage 4

For Year 9 all students study the compulsory core subjects: as well as choosing three option subjects.

Year 9 Course Structure	
Core Subjects studied by all students	English, Mathematics, Science, Geography, History, Religious Education Modern Foreign Language (French, German or Spanish) PE
Option subjects - choose 3 from	Art & Design, Photography Drama / Performing Arts Music IT Computer Science Design & Technology Food Preparation and Nutrition Media Studies Physical Education / Sports Studies Cambridge Nationals

For Years 10 and 11 the table below shows the structure of the core and option subjects—more detail on this will be provided in Year 9 as part of the Year 9 into 10 options process.

Year 10 & 11 course structure		
Core Subjects	Number of GCSEs	Comments
English	2	All students will study English Language and English Literature
Mathematics	1	Some students, top set, will study GCSE Further Maths and gain an additional GCSE
Science	2 or 3	Students following Pathway 1 in Years 10 & 11 will study 3 separate GCSE Sciences (Biology, Chemistry and Physics) The decision on taking three separate science GCSE's or the Science Trilogy (Double Award) will be made towards the end of Year 9. It is not part of this option process with guidance from the Science department
		All other students will study the Science Trilogy (Double Award) GCSE
Total potential core qualifications	Minimum	5 GCSEs

	Maximum	6 GCSEs (including 3 separate Sciences)
Option Subjects	4	3 for the separate sciences and 4 for those taking the double award
Total potential qualifications	9	

Important dates in the Options Process

Monday 24 January 2022	Year 8 Options Information Evening
Tuesday 25 January 2022	Options Brochure available in the Student Zone on the school website
Thursday 10 March 2022	Year 8 Parents' Evening (video calls)
Friday 25th March 2022	Deadline for completion of online options choices
Before May Half Term	Once the initial allocation of students to courses has been processed and timetabling constraints have been identified, When the options choices have been processed, individual conversations may take place with students where it is not possible to accommodate all of their chosen subjects due to timetabling or staffing constraints, to discuss alternatives. Where appropriate, options choices will also be reviewed by the Inclusion Manager, who will also conduct options interviews with students placed on the register of Special Educational Needs.
Summer Term	Option choices confirmed. Please bear in mind that, before choices can be confirmed, final timetabling viability checks must have been completed; the options process forms only part of structuring the timetable for the next academic year.

Processing Students' Options Preferences

Please refer to the practice options form at the end of this brochure. It is essential that option choices are entered clearly with a reserve choice in case your first choices are not available. Transfer the choices to the online form when you are ready, but no later than **25 March**

Constraints

We aim to build the timetable as best we can to reflect all students' choices. Inevitably a minority of students will be allocated reserve courses where the optimum timetabling solution will not allow a particular combination.

Health and Safety dictates that in certain practical subjects a maximum group size be observed. These restrictions make subscription to such courses more competitive.

Significant under-subscription to a course may render it financially unviable, in which case the school reserves the right not to run the course.

What to do now

Read about all the core courses and the options courses available. A practice options form is provided at the end of this brochure. Once course preferences have been arrived at, students should enter their choices. Once absolutely sure that the choice of courses is correct, the entries can be **completed on our website, Student Zone, Options**.

You **must** complete your practice options form at the end of this brochure **prior** to making your final choices.

You **must** complete the online options form **by 25 March 2022**, please see our website, Student Zone, Options.

Option choices completed late will be processed after those received on time and may result in a restricted choice, so please ensure you complete the online form on time.

Frequently Asked Questions

- **Does my son/daughter need to state a reserve for every option chosen?**
 - No - one reserve subject is required. Courses may be oversubscribed or may not run due to insufficient demand.
 - Giving a reserve subject allows the Timetabler to best meet your child's requests.

- **Some people mistakenly see vocational subjects as an easier option, but what are the main differences between these and GCSEs and are they easier?**
 - At Vyners we offer three vocational courses, IT (BTEC), Performing Arts (BTEC) and Sport (Cambridge Nationals) these are robust qualifications that have developed over time. They are made up of a number of units. To complete each unit students' work is assessed along the way, pulling together skills, knowledge and understanding. This ongoing assessment allows students to analyse and improve their own performance through their course in much the same way as they would in the workplace.
 - All teacher assessment is complemented by external assessment to give a clear and robust view of the student's real abilities and performance.
 - These subjects offer a vocational pathway with more emphasis being placed on practical skills and may be suited to those with particular career routes in mind or who prefer a mix of academic and practical subjects.
 - Vocational subjects are not easier than GCSEs - they offer alternative content and assessment practices that are designed for students with an interest in vocational subjects.

- **How will I know whether my son/daughter is best suited to taking only GCSEs or to combining them with one or more vocational subjects? Where can I get more advice?**
 - Advice is available from subject teachers, the Year Leader, Mr Lavington, and our Careers Advisor is also available for individual meetings by appointment.

- **I've read that certain vocational subjects are equivalent to one or more GCSE(s). What does this mean for my son/daughter?**
 - Level 2 vocational subjects are equivalent to 1 or 2 GCSEs dependent upon the number of hours required to complete the qualification. Studying a larger vocational subject may help students who have a particular career in mind to progress along their vocational pathway. Smaller vocational subject qualifications are suited to those who wish to keep their future options open. Currently Vyners only offer the vocational subjects that result in 1 GCSE equivalent grade.

- **What effect will one or more optional vocational subject qualifications have on my son/daughter's applications for Post-16 education, including university?**
 - A vocational subject course is just one of the options subject available and on its own will not adversely affect applications to Post-16 education. Students who achieve well at KS4 may study A Levels or may continue along the vocational pathway by studying Level 3 vocational subjects (or a combination of both)
 - Over 25% of Level 3 vocational subject holders (A Level equivalent) go on to undergraduate degree courses at university.

- **To what extent will the school tell my son/daughter which optional subjects he/she should or should not take?**
 - Subject teachers will provide guidance to students on the appropriateness of their choice of an individual subject.
 - Senior staff will talk with students about their option choices, their future education, career goals and advise them of the appropriateness of their choices for achieving those goals, taking into account their academic profile.

- **Broadly, what factors have dictated the subject groupings?**
 - The subject choices of History or Geography; French or German or Spanish are EBacc subjects which support future progression.
 - For the other options there is an initial free choice from the option subjects available. Students' choices are then collated and various combinations of option blocks are tested against staffing and timetabling constraints to achieve a best fit on first choices for the majority of students. This process produces the option blocks which are then used for the follow-on discussions with students.

- **Who should parents contact if they have questions or concerns prior to the options form submission regarding (a) specific subjects or (b) choices generally?**
 - Questions relating to a specific subject should be addressed to the subject teacher or Subject Leader.
 - Questions regarding the options process should be addressed to Mr J Davey the Assistant Headteacher overseeing the options process.

- **What is the next step if my son/daughter does not get one or more of his/her first option choices?**
 - If it is not possible to allocate all of their first choices, then in most cases a reserve choice will be allocated. The situation will be explained to them and they will be given an opportunity to change their choices if necessary.
 - A revised form giving the option blocks will be issued so that they can discuss the available choices with you before returning the completed form so that their allocation can be finalised.
 - At this point it will not be possible to change the subjects in the option block.

- **Who should parents contact in the first instance if they have questions or concerns following the options outcome?**
 - If parents have any concerns following the options allocation they should contact Mr J Davey, the Assistant Headteacher overseeing the options process, who will work with them as far as possible to achieve a satisfactory outcome.
 - The options process is not undertaken lightly and timetabling and staffing constraints have an impact on what we can offer. Inevitably, some students will not get exactly what they would like but we will work with parents and students to achieve the best possible outcome.

· **Can parents request an interview (outside of parents' evening) at any of the above stages?**

- We would like to assist you in the Options process as much as possible. Please contact the school to make an appointment to speak to the subject teacher or Subject Leader if you have questions about a particular course; the Year Leader, or your child's form tutor or other support staff for general questions; or Mr Davey on specific aspects of the options process.

Year 9 Core Subjects

These subjects are studied by all students in Year 9.

English

Mathematics

Science

History

Geography

Modern Foreign Language

Religious Education

Physical Education

English Literature



English - [Loom Video](#) for both Literature and Language

All students are required to study **GCSE English Language** and **GCSE English Literature**.

EXAMINING BODY AQA

EXAMINATION REQUIREMENTS

Examination 100%

This subject has a single tier entry with two examination papers. All examinations are closed book which means that you will not take anything into the examination; any stimulus materials required will be provided as part of the assessment. All assessments are compulsory.

Paper 1: Shakespeare and the 19th-century novel (40%) 1 hour 45 minutes

There will be two sections.

Section A – Shakespeare - here you will answer one question on the Shakespeare play that you have studied. You will be required to write in detail about an extract from the play and then to write about the play as a whole.

Section B – The 19th century novel: you will answer one question on the novel that you have studied. You will be required to write in detail about an extract from the novel and then to write about the novel as a whole.

Paper 2: Modern texts and poetry (60%) 2 hours 15 minutes

There will be three sections.

Section A – Modern texts: you will answer one essay question from a choice of two on your studied modern prose or drama text.

Section B – Poetry: you will answer one comparative question on one named poem printed on the paper and one other poem from your chosen anthology cluster.

Section C – Unseen Poetry: you will answer one question on one unseen poem and one question comparing this poem with a second unseen poem.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The skills you develop in your English Language course will naturally complement the work that you do for this subject. You will develop literal and inferential comprehension; critical reading skills and evaluation of a writer's choice of vocabulary, grammatical and structural features analysing and evaluating how they impact readers. You will also learn to consider writers' social, historical and cultural contexts in your interpretation of texts. You will need to produce clear and coherent texts writing effectively for a range of purposes such as description, explanation, summary, argument, analysis and evaluation. To do this successfully you will need to write in accurate Standard English using accurate spelling, punctuation and grammar. You will also use relevant quotations and detailed textual references to support this writing.

PROGRESSION

Although a Grade 4 is a 'standard pass', a qualification at GCSE level at a minimum of Grade 5 is essential in most areas of employment and further education. To progress to A Level English Literature, **at least a grade 6** is required at GCSE in English Language and English Literature (with a strong recommendation that you attain a grade 7 in both subjects).

English Language



All students are required to study **GCSE English Language** and **GCSE English Literature**.

EXAMINING BODY: AQA

GCSE English Language

EXAMINATION REQUIREMENTS

Examination 100%

This subject has a single tier entry with two examination papers. Each examination will be 1 hour 45 minutes

Paper 1 – Explorations in Creative Reading and Writing (50%) 80 marks

This paper will have two sections. The first section is **READING**. This requires you to read a previously unseen literature fiction text and answer questions on it. The questions will progressively become more difficult.

The second section is **WRITING**. This task will comprise of an extended descriptive or narrative writing task that will be marked for both content and technical accuracy.

Paper 2 – Writers' Viewpoints and Perspectives (50%) 80 marks

This paper will have two sections. The first section is **READING** and will be based on two previously unseen linked texts that you will have to read and answer questions about that will progressively become more difficult. One of these texts will be 20th/21st century non-fiction and the other will be 19th century literary non-fiction.

The second section is **WRITING**. This task will comprise of an extended writing question that will require you to write presenting a point of view that will be marked for content and technical accuracy.

SPOKEN LANGUAGE

This is a separate element of English Language and the marks do not count towards the final grade in GCSE English Language. Instead, a grade will be recorded separately on certificates as an endorsement to the GCSE qualification. This endorsement will be graded as either Pass, Merit or Distinction.

You will be assessed by your teacher throughout the course and you will be marked on your ability to present, to respond to questions and feedback. You will be judged throughout on your use of Standard English.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

You will be given opportunities to read a range of texts in order to develop higher-order reading and critical thinking skills that encourage the development of fluency as well as critical and comparative evaluation of texts. You will need to read challenging material from the 19th, 20th and 21st centuries. You will need to be able to read and comprehend what you have read in single texts and in pairs of texts. You will need to develop an ability to synthesise what you have read. You must demonstrate that you can write effectively using Standard English and use grammar correctly and punctuate and spell accurately. You will need to acquire and apply a wide vocabulary, grammatical terminology and linguistic conventions for reading, writing and spoken language use.

PROGRESSION

Although a Grade 4 is a 'standard pass', a qualification at GCSE level at a minimum of Grade 5 is essential in most areas of employment and further education. To progress to A Level English Literature, **at least a grade 6** is required at GCSE in English Language and English Literature (with a strong recommendation that you attain a grade 7 in both subjects).

Mathematics



Mathematics - [loom video](#)

GCSE Mathematics is taken by all students at one of two tiers of entry: Foundation or Higher.

EXAMINING BODY AQA

EXAMINATION REQUIREMENTS AND COURSE DESCRIPTION

The course covers the following areas of Mathematics:

- Number
- Algebra
- Ratio, proportion and rates of change
- Geometry and Measures
- Statistics
- Probability

GCSE Mathematics has a Foundation tier (grades 1 – 5) and a Higher tier (grades 4 – 9). Students must take three question papers at the same tier. All question papers must be taken in the same series.

The information in the table below is the same for both Foundation and Higher tiers.

Paper 1: non-calculator	+	Paper 2: calculator	+	Paper 3: calculator
What's assessed		What's assessed		What's assessed
Content from any part of the specification may be assessed		Content from any part of the specification may be assessed		Content from any part of the specification may be assessed
How it's assessed		How it's assessed		How it's assessed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • written exam: 1 hour 30 minutes • 80 marks • non-calculator • 33⅓% of the GCSE Mathematics assessment 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • written exam: 1 hour 30 minutes • 80 marks • calculator allowed • 33⅓% of the GCSE Mathematics assessment 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • written exam: 1 hour 30 minutes • 80 marks • calculator allowed • 33⅓% of the GCSE Mathematics assessment
Questions		Questions		Questions
A mix of question styles, from short, single-mark questions to multi-step problems. The mathematical demand increases as a student progresses through the paper.		A mix of question styles, from short, single-mark questions to multi-step problems. The mathematical demand increases as a student progresses through the paper.		A mix of question styles, from short, single-mark questions to multi-step problems. The mathematical demand increases as a student progresses through the paper.

CONTROLLED ASSESSMENT

None.

PROGRESSION

Mathematics offers many progression routes. Studying this subject at AS/A Level is good preparation for several degree courses, including Mathematics or Science.

GCSE Mathematics supports various other further education qualifications and is essential for numerous career choices. The Functional Mathematics element of the course is designed to develop the skills necessary to apply the Mathematics learned to other areas.

If you have any questions about GCSE mathematics, please contact Mrs Cox; ncox@vynersschool.org.uk.

Science



Science - Watch Video

EXAMINING BODY AQA - GCSE Sciences

All students will take Science courses equivalent to at least 2 GCSEs

Either

Combined Trilogy (Double Award)

Or

Separate Sciences where students will achieve 3 GCSEs - Biology, Chemistry & Physics

Combined Trilogy (Double Award)

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course covers all three subject areas (Biology, Chemistry and Physics) and can be taken at either Foundation (grades 1-5) or Higher Level (grades 4-9).

In the Key Stage 4 Science courses you will learn about the way science and scientists work within society, with a common theme throughout the course of How Science Works. You will consider the relationships between data, evidence, theories & explanations. Practical, problem solving and enquiry skills will be developed while working individually and in groups. During the course you will evaluate methods of enquiry and conclusions and learn how to communicate your ideas effectively.

In developing your understanding and skills you will relate your scientific understanding to your own and others decisions about lifestyles and scientific and technological developments in society. You will consider social, economic, environmental and ethical issues. Opportunities for ICT are incorporated into the course.

Throughout the course you will study Biology, Chemistry, Physics and their practical skills. There is particular emphasis on the applications of science and the implications of scientific discoveries and the use of maths to analyse evidence collected. You will carry out 21 practical's over the course and these will be

written up in full. You will be assessed on your practical skills in your exams with at least 15% of the marks coming from questions relating to these practical's.

Examples of course content include Infection, Bioenergetics, Genetics, Quantitative Chemistry, Bonding and properties of matter, Forces, Energy and Electromagnetism.

EXAMINATION REQUIREMENTS

Assessment for the course is by written exam papers. You may be entered for either Foundation or Higher tier.

Biology 1 (covering topics 1-4) 1 hour 15 minutes 16.7%

Biology 2 (covering Topics 5-7) 1 hour 15 minutes 16.7%

Chemistry 1 (covering Topics 8-12) 1 hour 15 minutes 16.7%

Chemistry 2 (covering Topics 13-17) 1 hour 15 minutes 16.7%

Physics 1 (covering Topics 19, 21, 23, 24) 1 hour 15 minutes 16.7%

Physics 2 (covering Topics 18, 20, 22) 1 hour 15 minutes 16.7%

PROGRESSION

To progress to A Levels in Biology, Chemistry or Physics Grade 7-6 or higher is required at GCSE . This course can also lead to a wide variety of degree and career choices.

Separate Sciences

This section is for information only at this stage, the separate sciences will be part of the Year 9 into 10 options process next year.

EXAMINING BODY AQA

This course covers **GCSE Biology + GCSE Chemistry + GCSE Physics (3 Science GCSEs)** and it is expected that students will be preparing for the **Higher Tier examinations**.

Students wishing to be considered for the Separate Science GCSEs must be supported by a recommendation from their Science teachers.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

In this Key Stage 4 Science course, you will learn about the way science and scientists work within society, with a common theme throughout the course of How Science Works. You will consider the relationships between data, evidence, theories & explanations. Practical, problem solving and enquiry skills will be developed while completing the core practicals for each of the three sciences. You will be assessed on your practical skills in your exams with at least 15% of the marks coming from questions relating to these practicals.

In developing your understanding and skills, you will relate your scientific understanding to your own and others decisions about lifestyles and scientific and technological developments in society. You will consider social, economic, environmental and ethical issues. Opportunities for ICT are incorporated into the course.

By taking the three Sciences as separate GCSEs, more content will be covered than in the Combined Trilogy course, but the structure of the Separate Science course will be very similar.

EXAMINATIONS

GCSE Biology

Paper 1 (Topics 1-4) 1 hour 45 mins written examination 16.7%
Paper 2 (Topics 5-7) 1 hour 45 mins written examination 16.7%

GCSE Chemistry

Paper 1 (Topics 1-5) 1 hour 45 mins written examination 16.7%
Paper 2 (Topics 6-10) 1 hour 45 mins written examination 16.7%

GCSE Physics

Paper 1 (Topics 2, 4, 6 and 7) 1 hour 45 mins written examination 16.7%
Paper 2 (Topics 1, 3, 5 and 8) 1 hour 45 mins written examination 16.7%

PROGRESSION

To progress to A Levels in Biology, Chemistry or Physics at least two science GCSEs at grade 7 are required, one of which must be in the subject you wish to study. This course can lead to a wide variety of degree and career choices.



Geography



Geography - [Watch Video](#)

EXAMINING BODY: OCR Geography Syllabus B

COURSE DESCRIPTION

“Geography is the subject which holds the key to our future” – Michael Palin

Geography is the study of where places are and what they are like. It looks at how people live in different parts of the world and how and why places change. You will learn about global and local issues that are relevant to your life and the future of this planet. This qualification is important in teaching ‘life skills’ that everyone will use in the future and can lead to further study of Geography. It is useful in a variety of careers linked with tourism, advertising, agriculture, cartography, nature conservancy and surveying.

The course is enquiry-based, which means you will investigate the answers to questions such as:

- * How do rivers and coasts affect the people and industry that live and work by them?
- * How do natural hazards affect people in parts of the world?
- * Why do some places experience population growth while others decline?
- * How and why do cities change and differ?
- * How can the use of resources, industry and environments best be developed and managed sustainably for our future?

You will gain the following skills:

Practical skills, for example using:

- * Different kinds of maps, satellite navigation, graphs and statistical analysis techniques;
- * Computers and Information and Communication Technology (ICT) (including GIS);

Working with others and on your own:

- * Discussing, explaining and presenting your ideas;
- * Fieldwork, collecting and recording information for an investigation;
- * Problem-solving and decision making.

EXAMINATION REQUIREMENTS:

There are three exams in this course, all of which are sat at the end of Year 11.

Exam 1: Our Natural World 35%

This examination covers physical topics: Global Hazards, Climate Change, Distinctive Landscapes and Sustaining Ecosystems. This exam also includes questions which assess your knowledge and understanding of the physical fieldwork undertaken during the course.

Exam 2: People and Society 35%

This examination covers human topics: Urban Futures, Dynamic Development, the UK in the 21st Century and Resource Reliance. This exam also includes questions which assess your knowledge and understanding of the human fieldwork undertaken during the course.

Exam 3: Geographic Exploration 30%

This examination focuses on synoptic assessment from both Our Natural World and People and Society. This exam requires the use of geographic skills including cartographic, graphical and statistical skills. This exam will also require you to formulate enquiry and arguments based upon your wider knowledge and understanding of geographical issues and a range of provided resources.

PROGRESSION:

To progress to A Level Geography, it is recommended at least a grade 6 is achieved at GCSE in Geography. Geography is a diverse subject which has links to a wide variety of degrees and careers, whether these be Geographical in nature, business, economic, or science related (just to name a few), this course opens a wide range of options

History



History Loom Video

EXAMINING BODY: AQA

FINAL EXAMINATION (100% examination)

Two written papers, each of 2 hours duration.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The key focus of the first paper is understanding the modern world. As industry and technology rapidly modernised in the 19th Century this paper aims to consider how nations coped with this change and how they were affected by the two world wars which took place in the 20th Century. There are two topics within this paper, firstly we will focus on Germany and how it developed from a newly unified state into a democracy, how it coped after the defeat of WW1 and how it came to be ruled by the Nazi dictator; Adolf Hitler. Secondly, we will focus on international relations in the years 1919-1939; how the world re-built after the First World War, how peace was attempted to be kept and why this was ultimately unsuccessful.

The key focus of the second paper is shaping the British nation. We will carry out a thematic study of 'power and the people' from 1170 up to the present day. This will consider how factors such as war, religion, the economy and technology have shifted power within the nation and will explore the development of Britain as a democratic nation. We will then focus in on the Restoration Period (1660-1685) and explore why Britain wanted to restore the monarchy after the execution of Charles I and evaluate the reign of Charles II, considering his economic, religious, social and political standpoints.

We aim to stimulate an interest in, and enthusiasm for, the past, and allow you to understand the past events that have formed the background of the world we live in today. You will learn about the nature of cause and consequence, continuity and change, and how individuals adopt different interpretations on key events. A further aim of the course is to develop essential study skills that will give you the ability to use various sources of information such as books, discussions, documents and films.

The best historians, though, will immerse themselves in the periods studied, having sympathy for the historical background but also recognising that history itself is made by humans who were no different from us. They were biased, vulnerable and they exaggerated. The study of history seeks to sift through their opinions to find the facts. As such, skills in reading, writing, speaking and research are essential to the academic historian.

To summarise:

Paper One : Understanding the modern world (50% of GCSE)

Consists of 10 questions totalling 84 marks.

Topics: Germany 1890-1945 Democracy and Dictatorship
 International Relations 1919-1939: Peace and conflict

Paper Two : Shaping the nation (50% of GCSE)

Consists of 8 questions totalling 84 marks.

Topics: Britain: Power and the People 1170-Present day
 Restoration England 1660-1685

Student Support

- Varied lessons with active learning throughout
- A revision scheme of work from January up to the exam in Year 11
- Online resources for home learning
- Example answers and online tutorials for every exam question

PROGRESSION

To progress to A Level History at least a grade 6 is required at GCSE in History. History provides an excellent basis for those wishing to study Law at university, as well as those considering a career in journalism. Regardless of career choice History is the only GCSE option that teaches you the skills of critical analysis and argument that can help to make sense of the world and give you the tools to spot Fake News.

Spanish



You may only take GCSE Spanish if you have studied Spanish in Year 8

Languages [Loom Video](#)

EXAMINING BODY: AQA

EXAMINATION

Students are entered for a single tier across all papers.

		Foundation	Higher	
Listening	External exam	35 mins ⁺	45 mins ⁺	25%
Reading	External exam	45 mins	1 hour	25%
Speaking	External exam	7-9 mins*	10-12 mins*	25%
Writing	External exam	1 hr	1 hr 15 mins	25%

⁺ *plus 5 minutes reading time*

^{*} *plus preparation time*

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The skills already acquired – listening, speaking, reading and writing – are consolidated and used as a basis for further development of the language.

The emphasis throughout the GCSE course is on training you to communicate in Spanish. Foreign languages are a vital asset for modern Industry and Commerce. According to leading representatives in British Industry, foreign language skills are required to meet the demands imposed by Commercial ties between the United Kingdom and the rest of Europe.

In the GCSE course you will develop a vocabulary which covers a variety of situations such as identity and culture, local area, holiday, travel, school, future aspirations, study and work, international and global dimensions. Many different types of listening and reading material are used to enable you to understand the language you might encounter abroad. This covers up-to-date articles from magazines of interest to young people, ads and signs. You will have the opportunity to work with the Spanish assistant, individually and within a group.

You will also learn to write and give your opinions on different topics.

Key Aims:

1. transferable language skills
2. the ability to communicate in Spanish (spoken and written)
3. a knowledge of grammar and structures in language learning (translation)
4. cultural awareness and understanding of communities where Spanish is spoken.

PROGRESSION

To progress to A Level Spanish at least a grade 6 is required at GCSE in Spanish.

A qualification in languages leads to careers in a variety of different professions, such as journalism, law, medical research, science related industries, pharmacy, banking, media and communication.

German



You may only take GCSE German if you have studied German in Year 8

Languages [Loom Video](#)

EXAMINING BODY: AQA

FINAL EXAMINATION

Students are entered for a single tier across all papers.

		Foundation	Higher	
Listening	External exam	35 mins ⁺	45 mins ⁺	25%
Reading	External exam	45 mins	1 hour	25%
Speaking	External exam	7-9 mins [*]	10-12 mins [*]	25%
Writing	External exam	1 hr	1 hr 15 mins	25%

⁺ *plus 5 minutes reading time.*

^{*} *plus preparation time.*

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The skills already acquired – listening, speaking, reading and writing – are consolidated and used as a basis for further development of the language.

The emphasis throughout is on training you to communicate in German. Foreign languages are a vital asset for modern Industry and Commerce. According to leading representatives in British Industry, foreign language skills are required to meet the demands imposed by commercial ties between the United Kingdom and the rest of Europe.

In the GCSE course you will develop a vocabulary which covers a variety of situations such as identity and culture, local area, holidays, travel, school, future aspirations, study and work and internal and global dimensions.

Many different types of listening and reading material are used to enable you to understand the language you might encounter abroad. This covers up-to-date articles from magazines of interest to young people, ads and signs. You will have the opportunity to work with the German assistant, individually and within a group.

You will also learn to write and give your opinions on different topics.

Key aims:

1. transferable language learning skills
2. the ability to communicate in German (spoken and written)
3. knowledge of grammar and structure in language learning (translation)
4. cultural awareness and understanding of countries and communities where German is spoken.

PROGRESSION

To progress to A Level German at least a grade 6 is required at GCSE in German.

A qualification in languages leads to careers in a variety of different professions, such as journalism, law, medical research, science related industries, pharmacy, banking, media and communication.

French



You may only take GCSE French if you have studied French in Year 8

Languages [Loom Video](#)

EXAMINING BODY: AQA

EXAMINATION: Students are entered for a single tier across all papers.

		Foundation	Higher	
Listening	External exam	35 mins ⁺	45 mins ⁺	25%
Reading	External exam	45 mins	1 hour	25%
Speaking	External exam	7-9 mins*	10-12 mins*	25%
Writing	External exam	1 hr	1 hr 15 mins	25%

⁺ *plus 5 minutes reading time.*

^{*} *plus preparation time.*

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The skills already acquired - listening, speaking, reading and writing – are consolidated and used as a basis for further development of the language.

The emphasis throughout is on training you to communicate in French. Foreign languages are a vital asset for modern Industry and Commerce. According to leading representatives in British Industry, foreign language skills are required to meet the demands imposed by Commercial ties between the United Kingdom and the rest of Europe.

In the GCSE course you will develop a vocabulary which covers a variety of situations such as identity and culture, local area, holiday, travel, school, future aspirations, study and work, international and global dimensions. Many different types of listening and reading material are used to enable you to understand the language you might encounter abroad. This covers up-to-date articles from magazines of interest to young people, ads and signs. You will have the opportunity to work with the French assistant, individually and within a group.

You will also learn to write and give your opinions on different topics.

Key aims:

1. transferable language skills
2. the ability to communicate in French (spoken and written)
3. a knowledge of grammar and structures in language learning (translation)
4. cultural awareness and understanding of communities where French is spoken.

PROGRESSION

To progress to A Level French at least a grade 6 is required at GCSE in French.

A qualification in languages leads to careers in a variety of different professions, such as journalism, law, medical research, science related industries, pharmacy, banking, media and communication.

Religious Education



RE Option - [Watch Video](#)

EXAMINING BODY: AQA

EXAMINATION REQUIREMENTS

Two examinations: each of one hour and a forty five minutes duration.

CONTROLLED ASSESSMENT

None

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The units studied for the full course in Religious Studies are **Study of religions** and **Thematic Studies** and are based on a study of Christianity and Islam. We also consider the topics from a non-religious point of view and aim to develop students' understanding and opinions on the issues raised. Each unit is divided into four sections which are briefly outlined below.

The study of religions: beliefs, teachings and practices (Christianity and Islam)		Thematic Studies (Christianity and Islam)	
Section	Key topics/issues studied	Section	Key topics/issues studied
Beliefs and Teachings (Christianity)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">· The nature of God· The Trinity· Christian Beliefs about Creation· Afterlife and Judgement· Sin and Salvation· The incarnation and Jesus	Relationships and families	<ul style="list-style-type: none">· Human Sexuality· Contraception and family planning· Divorce and Marriage· Nature of families· Gender equality

Practices (Christianity)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Worship · Sacraments: Baptism · Sacraments: Holy Communion · Pilgrimage · Christian Persecution 	Religion and life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Origins of the universe · Use and abuse of the environment · Pollution · Abortion · Euthanasia
Beliefs and Teachings (Islam)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Oneness of God · Sunni and Shi'a Islam · Angels · Predestination · Prophethood 	Crime and Punishment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Reasons for crime · Lawbreakers and types of crime · Suffering · Aims of punishment · Forgiveness
Practices (Islam)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Five Pillars · Salah · Sawm · Zakah · Hajj · Jihad 	Peace and Conflict	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Violence and terrorism · Reasons for war · Nuclear war · Just war · Pacifism

Progression

A GCSE in Religious Education is a stepping stone for a wide range of future opportunities. The knowledge, skills and understanding developed will support you in future studies and employment.

Core Physical Education



COURSE DESCRIPTION

Physical Education will equip you with the knowledge, understanding, skills and values you need to be able to develop and maintain your performance in physical activities. You will also gain an understanding of how physical activities benefit health, fitness and well-being.

Core PE is an important part of the curriculum to help you develop physically and mentally as an individual. Physically you will learn how the body responds to different forms of exercise, how you can train the body to deal with these demands and learn skills which can be applied to a variety of sports. Mentally there are just as many benefits as you will learn the importance of PE to maintaining good mental health. Socially you will learn to communicate, cooperate, problem solve and become resilient.

Sports included in the curriculum:

Netball	Football
Rugby	Fitness
Basketball	Handball
Hockey	Cricket
Softball	Athletics
X-Country	OAA
Cycling	Gymnastics
Dance	Lacrosse

Across Years 9 - 11 you will cover a wide variety of sports learning the skills, techniques and tactics required to be successful at each. Every year you will develop the knowledge and skills learnt in previous years gaining a better understanding of each activity.

Co-curricular Sport

There will be opportunities to represent the school in inter school competitions and teams/individuals will be selected based on their attainment in Core PE and attendance to co-curricular clubs. There is a full co-curricular timetable which changes each term and we encourage as many students to attend as possible.

Option Subjects

Arts

Art & Design

Drama

Music

Performing Arts BTEC

Photography

Technology

IT BTEC

Computer Science

Design & Technology

Food Preparation and Nutrition

Additional Subjects

Media Studies

Psychology

Physical Education

Sports Studies Cambridge Nationals

Art & Design

Art - Watch Video

EXAMINING BODY EDEXCEL (Fine Art)

COURSEWORK (60%)

In Year 10 you will develop your art skills and ideas in preparation for producing a body of work for the end of year assessment. This will comprise of a notional 45 hours of work to be conducted after May half term in Year 10, lasting through to the end of the Autumn term in Year 11. You will be required to submit one unit of coursework which will comprise of a number of pieces of work based around one theme. This will give you the opportunity to show examiners the full range of your work and abilities. You will be assessed on your coursework, the timed test and, importantly, preparation work for the timed test. Coursework is worth 60% of your final grade and the Exam is 40%.



FINAL EXAMINATION (40%)

A 10-hour timed test. For this timed test you are given a theme (8 school weeks in advance) which is set by the exam board in January of Year 11. You are expected to develop a body of work exploring different media and techniques in consultation with the teacher. The preparation work which you use to produce the final outcome will count for the majority of your total marks.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The aims of the Art Department courses are to increase visual awareness, to develop technical ability in a variety of media and to encourage creative and imaginative responses to the environment.

There are four basic areas to the course:

(a) Painting

The course involves painting and drawing in a variety of media and encourages investigation and experimentation of work both from observation and imagination.

(b) Drawing

Drawing from both primary and second hand sources, which involves a variety of different media and materials to be explored.

(c) Print

Methods such as mono-printing, lino-printing, batik and collage will be investigated.

(d) Digital Media

The use of photography and software such as Photoshop will be used to develop and explore ideas and source material.

You will be assessed on your ability to:

Generate and develop ideas

Refine ideas through experimentation

Research and record

Produce and present work

Visits to galleries form an important part of the course and you will also get the opportunity to attend residential workshops, and cultural visits abroad to New York and Paris.

PROGRESSION

To progress to A Level Art and Design at least a grade 5 is required at GCSE in Art and Design.

Drama



Drama - Presentation

EXAMINING BODY: AQA

COURSE DESCRIPTION & EXAMINATION REQUIREMENTS

The subject content for GCSE Drama is divided into three components outlined below:
N.B. In the practical components you may specialise in performing, lighting, sound, set or costume.

Component 1: Understanding drama (40%) marked by external examiners

What is assessed?

- Your knowledge and understanding of drama and theatre
- You will study one set play *Blood Brothers* practically in class and write about that in the exam
- You will analyse and evaluate a live theatre performance.

How it is assessed

- Written exam: 1 hour 45 minutes

Component 2: Devising drama (40%) marked by teachers, moderated by AQA

What is assessed?

- The drama performance you create and your input of characters and ideas
- Your performance of devised drama piece (as a performer or designer)
- You will write a report of the process, analysing and evaluating your work.

How it is assessed

- Devising log/report (60 marks)
- Devised performance (20 marks)

Component 3: Texts in practice (practical) (20%) marked by AQA

What is assessed?

- You will perform two extracts from one play (as a performer or designer)
- You have a free choice of play (it must contrast with Blood Brothers)

How it is assessed

- A performance of the pieces: Extract 1 (25 marks) and Extract 2 (25 marks)
- 50 marks

Will I enjoy the course?

- You will enjoy this course if you want to study a subject that is both **practical** and **creative**.
- GCSE Drama follows on from drama skills that you will have practised in Drama in Years 7-8. You will develop your **improvisation** and **acting skills** to a higher level.
- You will look at plays in more detail and look at different ways of bringing a **script** alive on stage.
- You get to explore different **themes and issues** through empathising with different opinions and viewpoints.
- You may have always wanted to have a go at making a play and performing, making **costumes**, creating a **set** or using the **lights** but never had the chance. You can with GCSE Drama.
- You will get the opportunity to go on **theatre trips** to extend your learning.

PROGRESSION

You may wish to study Drama and Theatre Arts in more depth at A Level. The skills you learn through GCSE Drama are transferable to **any** industry as communication, team work, empathy, negotiation, critical analysis are vital skills to develop for success in life.

To progress to A Level Drama & Theatre Studies at least a grade 6 is required at GCSE in Drama.

Performing Arts BTEC Level 2

Technical Award in Performing Arts (Musical Theatre)



Performing Arts - Presentation

EXAMINING BODY: EDEXCEL (equivalent to 1 GCSE Level 2)

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Performing Arts is a practical course which enables you to gain a widely acceptable qualification in Performing Arts. It is a two year course where successful students will gain the equivalent of either 1/2 GCSE pass (level 1) or one GCSE pass (Level 2). You will complete 3 units covering all aspects of Performing Arts. These include:

Core Units

Component 1 : Explore the sector by examining professional practitioners' work, then by exploring the relationships between features of existing performance material

Component 2: Develop knowledge, skills and best practice by developing your physical, vocal and interpretative skills in workshop, rehearsal and applying them in performance. You will review your own development and performance.

Component 3: Apply knowledge, skills and best practice by developing ideas in response to a brief, through discussion and practical exploration activities. You will demonstrate how to select and develop performance skills and techniques that are needed to fulfil the brief, taking part in a workshop performance and evaluate the development process and performance outcome.

Will I enjoy the course?

- If you regularly perform outside of school.
- You will enjoy this course if you want to study a subject that is both practical and creative.
- The BTEC requires you to perform in acting, singing and dancing, although you can choose to specialise in one of those skill areas for assessment.
- You will get the opportunity to attend theatre trips to extend your learning.

ASSESSMENT

Assessment takes place through internally marked assignment briefs which will require you to generate various forms of evidence. These forms of evidence include:

- Rehearsal/production notes
- Video or audio recordings
- Research projects
- Presentations
- Photographs
- Performances—marked on skills, teamwork and communication of ideas
- Complete a written exam—externally assessed

Your final BTEC qualification will be awarded as either:

- Level 1 – Pass, Merit, Distinction
- Level 2 – Pass, Merit, Distinction, Distinction*

PROGRESSION

To progress to A Level Drama and Theatre Studies at least a Merit is required at BTEC in Performing Arts.

The skills you learn on this course are transferable to any industry. These might include careers in such fields as theatre management, event organisation, sales and marketing or any career that involves meeting people face to face.

Photography



Photography GCSE - [Watch Video](#)

EXAMINING BODY: AQA (Photography)

COURSEWORK (60%)

In Year 10 you will develop basic and fundamental photographic skills, developing a body of work for the end of year assessment. This will comprise of a notional 45 hours of work to be conducted after May half term in Year 10, lasting through to the end of the Autumn term in Year 11. You will be required to submit one unit of coursework which will comprise of a number of pieces of work based around one theme. This will give you the opportunity to show examiners the full range of your work and abilities. You will be assessed on your coursework, the timed test and, importantly, preparation work for the timed test. Coursework is worth 60% of your final grade and the Exam is 40%.

FINAL EXAMINATION (40%)

A 10-hour timed test. For this timed test you are given 7 themes set by the exam board in January of Year 11, of which you will select one (8 school weeks in advance). You are expected to develop a body of work exploring different techniques and ideas in consultation with the teacher. The preparation work which you use to produce the final outcome will count for the majority of your total marks.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The aims of the Photography course are to increase visual awareness, to develop technical ability in a variety of settings and locations, and to encourage creative and imaginative responses to the environment.

There are two basic areas to the course:

(a) Digital Photography

You will have the opportunity to learn about:

- The use of light as the most important element in photography

- The basis of digital photography including the use of a DSLR camera

- Viewpoint, composition, focus, shutter speed and exposure

- The use of editing software such as Adobe, Photoshop, Lightroom

(b) Photography Genres

You will be expected to develop knowledge of:

A range of photographic genres such as documentary, street, fashion and portrait.

Qualities of lighting in both studio and location based work

Contextual connections between your own photography and the work of other photographers

How to analyse and deconstruct photographic images from a range of genres

You will be assessed on your ability to:

Generate and develop ideas

Refine ideas through experimentation

Research and record

Produce and present work

Visits to exhibitions and participation in practical workshops form an important part of the course. You will also get the opportunity to attend residential and cultural visits organised by the Art Department.

PROGRESSION

To progress to A Level Photography at least a grade 5 is preferable at GCSE in Photography, Art & Design, or Design & Technology.

IT BTEC

Level 1/Level 2 Technical Award in Digital Information Technology



Year8 into 9 options -CS & IT - Watch Video

EXAMINING BODY: Pearson

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND AIMS

The BTEC is a vocational qualification that takes an engaging, practical and inspiring approach to learning and assessment. The everyday use of IT, from PCs to smartphones, now impacts all our lives. This new qualification in digital IT reflects this and provides students with a solid understanding of the subject which they can use in their working lives. Computer technology continues to advance rapidly and the way that technology is consumed has also been changing at a fast pace over recent years. The growth in the use of mobile devices and web-related technologies has exploded, resulting in new challenges for employers and employees. Businesses today require an ever-increasing number of technologically-aware individuals and this qualification is intended to help students develop the skills they will need in the future across a wide range of job roles.

What will I be studying?

This award allows students to develop useful key-skills for working in the information technology sector, through a mixture of investigation and project-work. These include project planning, designing and creating user-interfaces, and creating dashboards to present and interpret data. Students learn about the processes that underpin effective ways of working, including common planning techniques, iterative design processes, team-work and cyber-security, as well as legal and ethical codes of conduct. Students will also consider how user-interfaces meet user needs, how organisations collect and use data to make decisions, and virtual ways of working.

Component number	Component title	GLH	Assessment
1	Exploring User Interface Design Principles and Project Planning Technique	36	Internally assessed coursework (30% of the course)
2	Collecting, Presenting and Interpreting Data	36	Internally assessed coursework (30% of the course)
3	Effective Digital Working Practices	48	Externally assessed exam (40% of the course)

PROGRESSION

This qualification supports progression to further study, including BTECs in Computing, IT and related subjects. The course will develop students' skills and knowledge to enable progression to further IT qualifications. It provides a firm base for many careers or general further study and is a worthwhile course for students who are thinking about a career in the IT industry or in careers which involve use of IT, an area currently experiencing a major skills shortage.

Computer Science



Year8 into 9 options -CS & IT - Watch Video

EXAMINING BODY: OCR

EXAMINATION REQUIREMENTS

Examination 100% of total qualification

Paper 1:	Computer systems	50%
Paper 2:	Computational thinking, algorithms and programming	50%

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND AIMS

Content of Computer systems (J277/01)

This component will introduce you to the fundamental aspects of Computer Science - how the central processing unit (CPU), memory and storage work together to form a functioning computer. The internet and how it works through wired and wireless networks and the protocols associated with it. The unit also covers system security and system software along with the ethical, legal, cultural and environmental concerns associated with digital devices.

Content of Computational thinking, algorithms and programming (J277/02)

In this component you will be introduced to *computational thinking* - a form of logical problem approach and problem solving which is key to solving problems through programming.

In algorithms you will learn some of the standard sorting and searching algorithms (such as bubble sort and binary search) at a conceptual level and be taught how to create flow-charts and pseudocode in order to create your own algorithms.

You will be taught about how all data on a computer is stored as binary digits (1's and 0's) and how from this we can create images, sound, motion and everything else that digital devices are able to represent.

You will also be introduced to the fundamental programming techniques (sequence, selection, iteration) and procedural programming and be given programming tasks to complete throughout the course.

The topics covered will be:

- Algorithms
- Programming fundamentals
- Producing robust programs
- Boolean logic
- Programming languages and Integrated Development Environments

PROGRESSION

This qualification supports progress to further study, including A Levels, BTECs and Diplomas in Computing, Computer Science, IT and related subjects, and on to degree level in the areas of computing, engineering and science.

To progress to A Level Computer Science, you will be required to obtain at least a grade 6 at GCSE in Computer Science. (with evidence of confident programming in Python) and a grade 6 in Maths.

Design & Technology



Design & Technology - [Watch Video](#)

EXAMINING BODY: AQA

EXAMINATION REQUIREMENTS

Written Examination **50%**

Controlled Assessment **50%**

The written examination is not tiered and will test students on their subject knowledge as well as design skills.

NEA - CONTROLLED ASSESSMENT

The controlled assessment consists of one project selected from a range of set tasks. The coursework takes approximately 30-35 hours to complete and consist of a working prototype and a concise

e-portfolio of approximately 20 pages of A3 paper, equivalent A4 paper or the digital equivalent.

This will be completed during lessons and will consist of a **design portfolio** and a **made 3D product**.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This new GCSE replaces both Resistant Materials and Graphical Products and combines the two endorsements into one qualification.

This is a design and make course that focuses on the ability to problem solve, develop and communicate with creativity, feasible ideas into 3D products. The knowledge, understanding and skills that all students must develop have been separated into technical principles and designing and making principles.

The short projects in Year 9 built on the skills developed at KS3, developing your knowledge and understanding of the use of Computer Aided Design (CAD); of communicating by sketching in both 2D and 3D and designing and making in a range of materials including paper and board, woods, metals and plastics. In Year 10, longer projects will build on the work done in Year 9 and will enable you to extend your knowledge and skills to meet the requirements of the GCSE coursework.

In addition to designing and making projects, the theoretical content will be taught in units or alongside the practical elements.

PROGRESSION

Design & Technology develops and strengthens a variety of skills needed to support any practical applications related to everyday life and is a stepping stone to a variety of creative careers and courses from A Level through to university. These may include **apprenticeships**, courses in **Product Design**, **Architecture**, **Engineering** and other **vocational qualifications** and **design jobs**.

To progress to A Level Product Design at least a grade 6 will be required in Design and Technology.

Media Studies



Media Studies - Watch Video

EXAMINING BODY: EDUQAS (FORMALLY WJEC)

EXAMINATION REQUIREMENTS

Examination (70%)

Controlled Assessment (30%)

COURSE DESCRIPTION

GCSE Media Studies gives you the chance to develop a critical understanding of the role of the media in daily life. It encourages an understanding of how to use key media concepts to analyse media products and the opportunity for hands-on practical work. This subject is assessed in three ways:

Component 1: Exploring the Media

Section A: Exploring Media Language and Representation

This section assesses media language and representation in relation to two of the following print media forms: magazines, marketing (film posters), newspapers, or print advertisements.

Section B: Exploring Media Industries and Audiences

This section assesses two of the following media forms: film, newspapers, radio, video games.

Component 2: Understanding Media Forms and Products

This component assesses all areas of the theoretical framework and contexts of the media in relation to television and music.

Section A: Television

Section B: Music (music videos and online media)

Component 3: Creating Media Products

Non-exam assessment: 30% of qualification

An individual media production for an intended audience in response to a choice of briefs set by WJEC, applying knowledge and understanding of media language and representation.

PROGRESSION

Media Studies GCSE promotes critical enquiry, knowledge of the key topical issues concerning the role of the media and how it works. This GCSE can lead to further study in an advanced course or to further studies in journalism, marketing and commerce.

To progress to A Level Media Studies at least a grade 6 is required at GCSE in Media Studies.

Psychology

[Loom Video](#)

EXAMINING BODY: AQA

EXAMINATION: Linear: two exams at the end of year 11

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Psychologists study everything about people - what could be more interesting than people? During the course students will be introduced to the fundamentals of psychology. They will develop critical analysis, independent thinking and research skills.

Psychologists have researched the following questions about human behaviour:

- Why do you think you remember some things and not others?
- How did you learn what you know?
- Why do we conform to peer pressure?
- Why do we follow orders from 'authority'?
- How do visual illusions trick our brains?

Students are expected to show:

Analytical and Evaluation skills

Mathematical skills

Scientific skills

Application

Design, conduct research and analyse and interpret data.

EXAM CONTENT

Paper 1: Cognition and Behaviour. 1hr45, 100 Marks (50% of GCSE)

- **Memory** - multiple choice, short answer and extended writing (25 marks)
- **Perception** - multiple choice, short answer and extended writing (25 marks)
- **Development** - multiple choice, short answer and extended writing (25 marks)
- **Research Methods** - multiple choice, short answer and extended writing (25 marks)

Paper 2: Social Context and Behaviour. 1hr45, 100 Marks (50% of GCSE)

- **Social Influence** - multiple choice, short answer and extended writing (25 marks)
- **Language, Thought and Communication** - multiple choice, short answer and extended writing (25 marks)
- **Brain and Neuropsychology** - multiple choice, short answer and extended writing (25 marks)

- **Psychological Problems** - multiple choice, short answer and extended writing (25 marks)

PROGRESSION

To study and do well in Psychology you need a good level and understanding of maths science and english essay writing skills (debating). It can be continued and studied at A Level. You do not need GCSE Psychology to study it at A Level but it is advisable to have good GCSE grades in English, Maths and Science.

Studying Psychology opens up multiple opportunities for further study at University. Many go on to study degrees such as but not limited to; Developmental Psychology, Sport Psychology, Psychology and Criminology or straight Psychology. Which can open up many career options and pathways that involve Psychology such as but not limited to; educational, forensic or clinical Psychologists.

Physical Education



PE - Loom Video

EXAMINING BODY: EDEXCEL

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This GCSE in Physical Education will equip you with the knowledge, understanding, skills and values you need to be able to develop and maintain your performance in physical activities. You will also gain an understanding of how physical activities benefit health, fitness and well-being.

CONTENT AND ASSESSMENT OVERVIEW

This qualification consists of four components:

Component 1: Fitness and Body Systems a written exam of 1 hour 45 minutes **(36%)**

Topic 1: Applied anatomy and physiology

Topic 2: Movement analysis

Topic 3: Physical training

Topic 4: Use of data

Component 2: Health and Performance a written exam of 1 hour 15 minutes **(24%)**

Topic 1: Health, fitness and well-being

Topic 2: Sport psychology

Topic 3: Socio-cultural influences

Topic 4: Use of data

Component 3: Practical Performance a practical external moderation **(30%)**

The assessment consists of you completing **three** physical activities from a set list.

One must be a **team** activity.

One must be an **individual** activity.

The final activity can be a **free** choice.

Component 4 – Personal Exercise Programme marked in school, externally moderated (10%)

The assessment consists of you producing a Personal Exercise Programme and requires you to analyse and evaluate your performance.

PROGRESSION

Students can progress from this qualification to:

- further study of Physical Education at A Level
- vocational courses such as the OCR Technical in Sport
- apprenticeships and other training
- employment in a related sector.

Sports Studies

Cambridge Nationals



Sports Studies - [Loom Video](#)

EXAMINING BODY: OCR (equivalent to 1 GCSE)

This course has been designed primarily for young people who may wish to explore a vocational sports route throughout Key Stage 4; it presents and assesses knowledge in a work-related context.

It has been developed to:

- encourage personal development through practical participation and performance in a range of sports and exercise activities
- give you a wider understanding and appreciation of health-related fitness, sports and exercise
- encourage you to develop your people, communication, planning and team-working skills, which are essential in working life
- give you the opportunity to progress to other vocational qualifications

Units studied:

- Contemporary issues in Sport
- Sports Leadership
- Practical sports performance
- Developing skills and knowledge in outdoor activities

ASSESSMENT

One unit is externally assessed through a one-hour exam. The other units are assessed internally in a variety of ways, including:

- Powerpoint presentations
- Posters
- Research projects
- Video making
- Ongoing written logs

- Lesson plans
- Teaching lessons

You get your final qualification at Pass, Merit, Distinction or Distinction* level.

PROGRESSION

Careers within the leisure industry include employment at all levels from junior trainees to senior management. For those whose interest derives initially from a love of physical activity, there are opportunities in teaching, coaching and administration.

Careers related to education include teaching Physical Education in schools, lecturing in colleges of further education or in higher education. Many local education authorities also employ advisers or inspectors with specialist knowledge, and OFSTED also has specialists in Physical Education and Dance.

Careers in Sports Coaching extend from coaching in sports centres to employment as a National Coach for one of the Governing Bodies of Sport.

Careers in Administration include the management of sports centres, sports clubs, parks, aqua centres and work in Local Authority Recreation and Leisure Departments.

Careers in Health and Fitness include employment in private Health and Fitness Clubs, Rehabilitation Clinics, Fitness Testing Centres and as physiotherapists.

Music



Music - [Video](#)

EXAMINING BODY: EDEXCEL

EXAMINATION REQUIREMENTS

Performance 30%

Composition 30%

Examinations (Listening and Appraising) 40%

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Unit 1 Performing Music

You will need to play or sing one solo and one ensemble piece. Both pieces must add up to 4 minutes and standard marks will be awarded to Grade 4 pieces, higher marks will be awarded for Grade 5+.

Unit 2 Composing

You will need to create two compositions. One composition will be completely free choice and the other will be set to a brief given by Edexcel.

Unit 3 Listening and Appraising

You will sit a 105 minute written paper with questions on 8 prescribed set works. Questions such as these are asked:

‘name the instrument playing the solo’

‘give two musical reasons why you like or dislike this piece of music’

PROGRESSION

To progress to A Level Music at least a grade 6 is required at GCSE in Music and at least Grade 5 or equivalent will be needed on an instrument/singing.

If you have any questions please see a member of the Music Department and we will be happy to help.

YEAR 8 OPTIONS - Practice Form

Choose any three subjects from the group below

Art	IT	PE
Drama	Computer Science	Sport Studies
Performing Arts	Food Preparation	Media Studies
Photography	Design & Technology	Psychology
Music		

Choices	
Subject 1	
Subject 2	
Subject 3	
Reserve Subject	

If you wish to, write some notes to explain **why** you have chosen the above courses and then include that information on the Online Options Form.

For example, you might be thinking of a particular future course or career. **You are strongly advised to check out what subjects you will need for any future course or career you might have in mind.**

Please note that the school **cannot** guarantee that you will get your choices.