



*We are ambitious.
We are committed.
We are proud.*



KEY STAGE 4 OPTIONS 2026-2028

Be Nothing Short of Remarkable

drama
 pathways
 physics
 design
 care
 art
 food
 mathematics
 aspirations
 music
 history
 preparation
 nutrition
 computing
 aspiration
 language
 social
 biology
 german
 health
 literature
 science
 future
 technology
 enterprise
 sport
 timber
 combined
 chemistry
 geography
 french
 english
 graphics
 career
 careers

ambition

choices



Contents

Examinations and National Qualifications	5
Choosing your Option Subjects	6
Getting help choosing your Option Subjects	6
Year 9 Options Pathways	7
The Options Timeline	8

CORE SUBJECTS:

English Language & Literature	10
Mathematics	11
Physical Education	12
Personal Development	13
Science	14

OPTIONAL SUBJECTS:

Art & Design	16
Business	17
Computer Science	18
Creative iMedia	19
Drama	20
Food Preparation and Nutrition	21
Design and Technology: Graphic Design and Resistant Materials	22
Geography	23
Health & Social Care	24
History	25
Modern Foreign Languages	26
Music	27
PE/Sport	28
Separate Science	30

Introduction

Welcome to the Key Stage 4 Options Process. This is a very exciting time for you, the first time you have most probably had to make a significant decision about your future. Making this big decision can feel overwhelming, however the Options Process is designed to ensure you have all the information you need to make an informed decision with confidence.

This is the Options and Curriculum Handbook which contains information about the exciting courses on offer to you in Years 10 and 11. Make sure you read it carefully. Some subjects are so important for your general education that everyone has to study them up to 16 years of age as part of the National Curriculum – these are called the Core Subjects. We believe you will do your best if you are also studying subjects that are important to you. That is why we have created an options process which gives you the flexibility to choose subjects that meet your needs, abilities and interests – these subjects are your Option Subjects.

It is always best to take advice about which subjects to choose. You should discuss your choices with your parents/carers, your subject teachers and your tutor. Remember that, even if you think you have a clear idea of your future career, your ideas are likely to change (sometimes many times) before you start work. For this reason, you should make sure your option choices cover a good range of subjects. This is called a broad and balanced curriculum.

Follow the step-by-step guide to making your Option subject choices and, as you do, make sure that any subjects you choose are suitable for you. Think about where they may lead after Key Stage 4. Once you have made your choices and submitted them to us, there is a consultation period of time where we may wish to discuss your choices further with you.

Whilst we will endeavour to meet all students' preferences, there will be cases where you may need to accept your reserve choices.

I know you will think very carefully about the subjects you ultimately choose. All the courses require two years of hard work if you are to reach your potential at the end of Year 11. Well thought through choices now will set you up for the future. Remember, we are here to help so you must ask us if you are unsure about anything.

These decisions are important...

*Be **ambitious** in your choices.*

*Be **committed** to your studies.*

*Be **proud** of the achievements this will bring you.*

Mrs T Stockley



Deputy Head Teacher

Examinations and National Qualifications

Everyone in the school has the opportunity to take examinations and gain national qualifications. How many qualifications you gain and how well you do in them depends on **you**. It depends on how hard you are prepared to work and how determined you are to make a success of Years 10 and 11. We cannot promise you an easy time. Success in exams requires hard work but it is all worthwhile as they will be the key which opens many doors to future pathways for you.

Why do exams and qualifications matter?

- Examination results and the gaining of qualifications prove to employers that **you** have worked well, with effort, and that you are likely to be the kind of person whom they would like to employ.
- Examination results and the gaining of qualifications matter because they are required for entry into many careers.
- The examinations and the gaining of qualifications at the end of Year 11 are the keys for many of you into Years 12 and 13 (or to a college of further education) on the way to higher education and/or highly trained professions.

What exams and qualifications are there?

- The General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) and BTEC vocational qualifications.

Choosing your Option subjects

Core Subjects

These subjects matter so much that everyone has to do them. You do not have a choice about these subjects.

Optional Subjects

You have **four** option subjects which you are able to choose to study from September 2026. Consider all of the following points when you choose your optional subjects.

- **Balance** - are your subjects balanced with a good variety of areas for you to study?
- **Personal preference** - have you chosen the subjects you enjoy the most and you will be successful in? Consider that you may have a different subject teacher.
- **Information about subjects** - you should not make a choice without knowing exactly what is required in that subject.
- **Selection for success** - have you chosen the combination of subjects which will enable you to achieve the best grades you can?

Getting help in choosing your Option subjects

This Options Booklet - this will give you a lot of information about the courses offered. **Read it carefully.**

Parents/Carers - they will want what is best for you and they can help you make the right choices. **Make sure they read this booklet too.**

Teachers - talk to your teachers about the courses you could be studying next year. Visit the subject areas on the Options section of the school website.

Tutors and Head of Year - they know you well as an individual and can give you good advice about your choices.

Yourself - you know your aims and ambitions, the subjects you are best at and those subjects which interest you. **Help yourself** to make a **good choice**. **Remember** - you will be following the courses for **two years**. It's worth giving a lot of **thought** to your choice.

We will try hard to give you all of your chosen option subjects but choose your reserves with care as you may be required to study them.

Year 9 Options Pathways

There are two Options pathways: the **Main Option Pathway (the Traditional EBacc Pathway)** and the **Alternative Option Pathway**. There is only a small difference between the two pathways which relates to our advice that students capable of achieving the traditional and aspirational full English Baccalaureate (EBacc) should follow a pathway that ensures they have a modern foreign language to complete the set of subjects required. This does not prevent any student on the alternative pathway from taking a language subject therefore fulfilling the requirements of the traditional English Baccalaureate pathway if they choose to. All students have access to all subjects as part of the options process. Students will be guided to the pathway that the school believes best meets their needs and will have an option form issued to them which reflects the most appropriate pathway for them and the guided choices they should consider making.

Main Option Pathway (Traditional EBacc Pathway)

Over the last few years, an increasing proportion of students nationally have chosen subjects which make up the full English Baccalaureate, this we call the 'Traditional Pathway'. The English Baccalaureate was introduced to encourage students to opt for subjects which aimed to ensure they had a curriculum offer which was broad and balanced, and which led to aspirational choices at post-16 level and beyond.

Students who are at a suitable ability level are guided to take options which would align with this tradition pathway and would include English, Maths, two Science subjects (one of which can be Computer Science), History or Geography and a Modern Foreign Language. Mrs Stockley will be explaining more about this in the assembly Options Launch presentation.

Students with this option form will need to make the following choices:

- Choice 1: Choose between **History** or **Geography**. (You can do both if you wish by selecting the other subject as one of your two further choices)
- Choice 2: Choose your **Language** subject: French, German or Spanish (the one you **currently** study)
- Now choose **two** further subjects from the Options subjects and **two** reserve subjects.

Alternative Option Pathway

Students with this option form will need to make the following choices:

- Choice 1: Choose between **History** or **Geography**. (You can do both if you wish by selecting the other subject as one of your three further choices)
- Now choose **three** further subjects from the Options subjects and **two** reserve subjects.

All students need to give careful thought to their reserve subjects. We always aim to provide every student with all their first four option choices but there will be a small number of instances where the combination will not work given the number of teachers and classes that we are able to put into the options system. In these circumstances we will contact students and parents / carers to discuss the use of the reserve subjects.

The Options Timeline

Options Launch

MONDAY 12 JANUARY 2026

Assembly to all Year 9 students
Options booklet issued to students, Parents/Carers
Letter issued to students, Parents/Carers indicating the wealth of information on the website to help inform choices



Options Information Evening

THURSDAY 15 JANUARY 2026

Presentation from Mrs T Stockley, Deputy Headteacher
Market place held in school for students (5.30-8pm) and for Parents/Carers showcasing the Option subjects offered to students



Year 9 Parent/Carer Evenings

TUESDAY 27 JANUARY 2026 (9JFC) & WEDNESDAY 4 FEBRUARY 2026 (9SAR)

Opportunities to review progress across all subjects across the school



Taster Sessions

w/c 2 FEBRUARY 2026

Taster sessions for Business, Creative iMedia, Health & Social Care and Sport offered



Options Deadline

THURSDAY 12 FEBRUARY 2026

Students complete an online Microsoft Form indicating their Option preferences
Students work hard towards their Mid-year and End of Year examinations across all subjects, to enable them to qualify for entry to their option subjects



Final Options Confirmation

THURSDAY 25 JUNE 2026

Confirmation of the Option choices offered will be issued to all students and Parents/Carers
One-week deadline issued for students to raise any final concerns/issues with Option subjects
Students expected to commit to all Option choices from the start of September 2026

CORE SUBJECTS



We are ***Ambitious.***
We are ***Committed.***
We are ***Proud.***

English Language and Literature

Qualification	AQA GCSE English Language and GCSE English Literature (two GCSEs)
Knowledge and Skills	<p>You will study how to read and assess a variety of texts, both non-fiction and fiction. The texts will span a range of time periods, covering the 19th, 20th and 21st centuries. During the English language course, you will learn how to make comparisons between different texts. For the literature course you will study a 19th Century novel, a Shakespeare play, poetry and a modern text.</p> <p>You will also be trained to improve your writing skills, producing writing to suit different purposes. You will learn how to improve your technical accuracy in writing.</p> <p>You will also improve your speaking and listening skills, with an emphasis on presentation skills and the use of Standard English.</p>
Assessment	<p>Your work will be assessed in a terminal examination at the end of Year 11.</p> <p>English Language <u>Paper 1: 1 hour 45 minutes</u> Reading – one literature fiction text Writing – descriptive or narrative writing <u>Paper 2: 1 hour 45 minutes</u> Reading – one non-fiction text and one literary non-fiction text Writing – non-fiction writing</p> <p>English Literature <u>Paper 1: 1 hour 45 minutes</u> Shakespeare and The 19th Century Novel <u>Paper 2: 2 hours 15 minutes</u> Modern texts, Poetry and Unseen Poetry</p>
Independent study time required	There are several websites which can help you improve your knowledge outside of lesson time. We also recommend you continue reading for pleasure at home – it is the best way to improve your vocabulary.
Post 16 progression	English Literature/Language A Level qualifications.
Possible careers and work-related opportunities	An English GCSE is a benchmark qualification for a whole range of courses and jobs, everything from journalism to engineering. Employers will want you to have good communication skills including accurate writing skills. Some specific careers which use English include: Acting, Computer Games Developer, Crown Prosecutor, Early Years and Secondary Teachers, Librarian, newspaper journalist, sales administrator, screenwriter, speech and language therapist.
More information	Head of English: Mr N Church
Exam Board Website	AQA English GCSE English Language AQA English GCSE English Literature

Mathematics

Qualification	AQA GCSE in Mathematics
Knowledge and Skills	<p>You will be learning and developing many skills and applying these in a variety of activities. These skills follow five key areas which are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ number ➤ algebra ➤ ratio & proportion ➤ geometry & measure ➤ probability & statistics <p>At the start of Year 10 you will be placed in a Maths set based on your achievement in the subject so far and expected progress overall.</p>
Assessment	<p>You will follow either the Foundation (Grades 1 – 5) or the Higher course (Grades 4 – 9) as determined by your performance in termly and Mock assessments.</p> <p>Your GCSE grade will be determined by a final examination at the end of Year 11. This consists of three papers: Paper 1 assesses non-calculator skills, while calculators are permitted in Papers 2 and 3.</p>
Independent study time required	We will support this with weekly set homework using the Sparx maths online learning platform and half-termly assessments in the style of a GCSE exam paper.
Post 16 progression	A qualification in Mathematics is one of the most highly regarded by employers and colleges. Students who achieve GCSE grades 7-9 are well placed for study of A level Mathematics and Further Mathematics.
Possible careers and work-related opportunities	Maths qualifications can help towards a career in Accountancy, Air traffic Controller, Banking, Engineering, Building, Teaching, ICT, Science and many more.
More information	Head of Mathematics: Mr N Krbacevic
Exam Board Website	Further information about the Mathematics course can be found on the AQA website: https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/mathematics/gcse/mathematics-8300

Additional Subject offered at KS4: Further Mathematics

The course begins after the mock assessments at the end of Year 10 and continues into Year 11. It is delivered as a weekly “Twilight” session after school, running from 3:30pm to 5:00pm on Wednesdays.

The AQA Level 2 Certificate in Further Mathematics is a unique qualification designed to stretch and challenge high-achieving mathematicians who are expected:

- to achieve the top grades in GCSE Mathematics
- to progress to A-level study in Mathematics and possibly Further Mathematics

Students interested in Further Mathematics should speak to their teacher or contact Mr Krbacevic.

Further information about the course can be found: [AQA](#) | [Mathematics](#) | [AQA Certificate](#) | [Level 2 Further](#)

Physical Education (non-GCSE)

Knowledge and skills In Years 10 and 11, students will follow Key Stage 4 of the Physical Education National Curriculum. They will concentrate on two main areas of activity: Games and Athletics. Students will have an element of choice within these areas. They will also have the opportunity to experience other 'roles' in sport in addition to a performer, for example coach, referee and organiser, which will allow them to further develop their all-round abilities in physical education.

Students will have the opportunity tackle complex and demanding physical activities. They will be able to get involved in a range of activities that develop personal fitness and promote an active, healthy lifestyle. Activities pupils can experience include badminton, basketball, cricket, dance, dodgeball, football, hockey, netball and rounders.

More information Head of Physical Education: Mr L Porter

Personal Development

Religious Studies

The Religious Studies aspect of Personal Development is taught as two discrete units of work:

Ethics 1 - Relationships, Medical Ethics, Poverty and Wealth

Ethics 2 - Peace and Justice, and Equality.

Throughout the two-year programme students will adopt an enquiring, critical and reflective approach to the study of religion. Students will explore religion and beliefs and reflect on fundamental questions, engaging with them intellectually and responding personally.

PSHE (Personal, Social and Health Education)

This course is about helping young people to:

- become aware of the feelings, attitudes and values of themselves and others
- be aware of their own strengths, weaknesses and aptitudes: acquire confidence in, and an ability to express, their own reasoned opinions
- acquire decision-making skills
- adapt to change in themselves and their environment
- acquire the skills to relate effectively to others, and to be effective members of the group in which they live and work
- develop a sympathetic concern for other people and a responsibility towards them

Careers

This course covers topics such as careers education including decision making, team building, employability skills and career planning. Health issues including teenage pregnancy, drugs in society, personal health and caring for the elderly. Personal finance including personal budgeting and avoiding debt.

In Year 10, students are entitled to one week of work experience.

In Year 11, students will be prepared for the challenges of post-16 progression.

This will include completing application forms, writing CVs and developing interview technique.

Citizenship

Education for Citizenship equips young people with the knowledge, skills and understanding to play an effective role in public life. It considers our values, rights and responsibilities and how we can respond to the challenges which face us all at local, national and international levels. It includes a focus on the enterprise skills, financial understanding, independent learning and thinking skills which make for success within society.

This course covers topics such as: Rights and Responsibilities, Identities and Diversity, Equal Opportunities, Law and Order, Personal Finance, the Economy and the European Union.

More information

Head of Personal Development: Mrs Hellend-Carr

Science

Qualification	AQA GCSE in Combined Science: Trilogy <i>This is a double award course and so is worth 2 GCSEs</i>
Knowledge and Skills	<p>Combined Science: Trilogy will cover the three science disciplines:</p> <p>Biology</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cell biology • Organisation • Infection and response • Bioenergetics • Homeostasis and response • Inheritance, variation and evolution • Ecology <p>Chemistry</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Atomic structure and the periodic table • Bonding, structure, and the properties of matter • Quantitative chemistry • Chemical changes • Energy changes • The rate and extent of chemical change • Organic chemistry • Chemical analysis • Chemistry of the atmosphere • Using resources <p>Physics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forces • Energy • Waves • Electricity • Magnetism and electromagnetism • Particle model of matter • Atomic structure <p>Practical lessons are not only one of the most engaging parts of a science education but are also essential for students' understanding of scientific theory. There are 21 required practicals which students will cover during the two years and will be assessed on in the exams.</p> <p>Students will learn to question and discuss science-based issues that may affect their own lives and gain skills in carrying out investigations.</p>
Assessment	<p>There are 6 exams lasting 1 hour 15 minutes each: two Biology, two Chemistry and two Physics. Each will assess different topics.</p> <p>The papers are equally weighted. Each is worth 16.7% of the grade and has 70 marks.</p> <p>Question types include multiple choice, structured, closed, short answer and open response.</p>
Independent study time required	Homework is based around the online Tassomai platform
Post 16 progression	Students achieving Grades 9-6 would have the necessary experience to progress to AS/A level Science courses. There are also a number of Level 1-3 vocational courses which can be accessed by the successful completion of GCSE Combined Science.
Possible careers and work-related opportunities	Careers are vast and varied e.g. Criminologist, Doctor, Vet, Dentist, Engineer, Pharmacist, Physiotherapy, Meteorologist, Optician, Teacher, Vet, Science Journalist, Science Technician and Environmental Agency Work.
More information	Head of Science: Mr T Neale
Exam Board Website	https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/science/gcse/combined-science-trilogy-8464

OPTIONAL SUBJECTS



We are ***Ambitious.***
We are ***Committed.***
We are ***Proud.***

Art & Design

Qualification	AQA GCSE Fine Art
Knowledge and Skills	The GCSE Art and Design course continues to develop the skills and techniques that have been studied through Years 7, 8 and 9. Students will experience a broad-based course and will explore a selection of Art and Design areas from the following: Drawing and painting, Mixed media, Printing, Sculpture, Land art and Pottery.
Assessment	<p>There is no tiering of papers in Art and Design; students will be awarded a grade from 9 to 1 depending upon the quality and quantity of work produced for the Controlled Assessment and Externally set Assignment.</p> <p>In both the NEA and externally-set assignment, students will be expected to present work towards the following 4 assessment areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drawings from visual research • Developing ideas inspired by the work of others • Explore a range of materials and refine ideas as they progress • A personal response, making clear connections to the work of others <p><i>Non-Examination Assessment (Coursework) 60%</i></p> <p>The course starts as soon as the pupil enters Year 10, and the emphasis is placed on the pupil producing a large portfolio of work that demonstrates a wide range of Art skills and experiences. Pupils will be set a variety of small and extended projects that explore a range of materials and themes; these will include a combination of traditional and modern techniques and processes. As the course progresses students will be able to place more individual interpretation into the topics being covered developing work that expresses their own artistic preferences</p> <p><i>Externally-set Assignment (Examination) 40%</i></p> <p>Students will receive an examination paper in the spring term of Year 11. The paper will contain a selection of open-ended questions, and the pupil will be required to answer in depth one question. The pupils will have a set period of classroom and homework time to pre-plan and test their ideas, with help and advice, before producing a final piece of unaided work over 10 hours of examination time.</p>
Independent study time required	Students should spend at least 2 hours a fortnight completing class work and other related tasks. After school and lunchtimes are available for support and further working time.
Post 16 progression and possible careers or work-related opportunities	GCSE Art and Design is an enjoyable course which will be of interest to anyone who has enjoyed the subject at Key Stage 3. It is an essential course for any student who is considering careers in: interior design, architecture, graphic design, fashion design and theatre design. It is also seen as a valuable course that shows your creative flair for careers in floristry, decorating, hairdressing and retail.
More information	Head of Expressive Arts: Mrs A Castledine
Exam Board Website	AQA Art and Design GCSE Art and Design

Business

Qualification

Edexcel GCSE Business

Knowledge and Skills

GCSE Business gives students the opportunity to develop a wide range of valuable and transferable skills that are useful both in further education and the world of work. Students will learn how businesses operate in the real world and develop skills in decision-making, problem-solving, communication, teamwork, creativity and financial awareness.

Throughout the course, students will explore how businesses make choices about marketing, finance, operations and human resources, and how these decisions affect business success. They will analyse real-life business scenarios, interpret data, evaluate options and justify decisions, often considering questions such as *“What would I do if this were my business?”*.

The course encourages students to apply business knowledge to unfamiliar contexts, developing confidence in analysing information, making judgements and supporting answers with clear reasoning.

Assessment

GCSE Business is assessed through two equally weighted examination papers:

Paper 1: Investigating Small Business (50%)

This paper focuses on how small businesses are set up and operate, including:

- Enterprise and entrepreneurship
- Spotting business opportunities
- Putting a business idea into practice
- Making the business effective
- Understanding external influences on business

Paper 2: Building a Business (50%)

This paper looks at how businesses grow and develop, including:

- Growing the business
- Making marketing decisions
- Making operational decisions
- Making financial decisions
- Making human resource decisions

Both papers require students to apply knowledge to real business contexts, analyse information and evaluate decisions made by businesses.

Post 16 progression and possible careers or work-related opportunities

The knowledge and skills gained in GCSE business provide a firm foundation for further study at A Level, or Level 3 BTEC. Beyond A Levels, a large proportion of students choose to continue their studies at university, with business studies consistently placed in the top 10 employable degrees.

The subject also provides an excellent foundation from which to pursue a Level 3 apprenticeship. The topics and skills learned are valued by employers and enable students to pursue careers in areas such as administration, finance, marketing, project management and recruitment.

Businesses operate in a dynamic environment and require employees with the transferable skills developed on this course to enable them to adapt, innovate and successfully compete in today's global market.

More information

Head of Business: Ms A Waite

Exam Board Website

[Edexcel GCSE Business \(2017\) | Pearson qualifications](#)

Computer Science

Qualification

OCR GCSE in Computer Science

Knowledge and Skills

The Computer Science syllabus will give you an in-depth understanding of how computer technology works in relation to both hardware and software. As part of this, a portion of the course will be spent learning computer programming using the python language as well as SQL. Through this study of computer programming, you will develop skills such as critical thinking, analysis and problem solving. For many, it will be a fun and interesting way to develop these skills, which can be transferred to other subjects, especially mathematics and other sciences.

Assessment

There are two papers which cover the following content:

Computer Systems (50%)

- 1.1 Systems architecture
- 1.2 Memory and storage
- 1.3 Computer networks, connections and protocols
- 1.4 Network security
- 1.5 Systems software
- 1.6 Ethical, legal, cultural and environmental impacts of digital technology

Computational Thinking (50%)

- 2.1 Algorithms
- 2.2 Programming fundamentals
- 2.3 Producing robust programs
- 2.4 Boolean logic
- 2.5 Programming languages and Integrated Development Environments

Practical Programming

All students must be given the opportunity to learn a programming language. At JFCS we learn Python. This content is not externally assessed directly but feeds into 2.1 - 2.3 which is assessed through the second exam.

Post 16 progression and possible careers or work-related opportunities

It is a fact that information technologies are an important part of the modern working landscape, and the importance of these technologies grows at an exponential rate each year. This means there will be an ever-increasing demand for professionals who are qualified in this area. If you want to go on to higher study and employment in the field of Computer Science, you will find that this course provides a superb stepping stone. Students who have taken a Computer Science GCSE and who then progress to study the subject at A level or university will have a sound underpinning knowledge in this area.

More information

Head of Computing: Mrs K Lawrence

Exam Board Website

[GCSE - Computer Science \(9-1\) - J277 \(from 2020\) - OCR](#)

Creative iMedia

Qualification OCR – Creative iMedia
J834

Knowledge and Skills The Level 1/Level 2 Cambridge National in Creative iMedia is aimed at students aged 14-16 years and will develop knowledge, understanding and practical skills that would be used in the media and other digital industries. You may be interested in this if you want an engaging qualification where you will use your learning in practical, real-life situations, such as:

- developing visual identities for clients
- planning and creating original digital graphics
- planning, creating and reviewing original digital media products. This will help you to develop independence and confidence in using skills that would be relevant to the media industry.

Assessment Creative iMedia will be assessed using one externally marked examination and two NEA projects. The examination is mandatory and so is one of the NEA projects. The other NEA project will be selected from five options that are changed each year.

- Unit R093: Creative iMedia in the media industry This is assessed by taking an exam. In this unit you will learn about the media industry, digital media products, how they are planned, and the media codes which are used to convey meaning, create impact and engage audiences. Topics include:
 - o The media industry
 - o Factors influencing product design
 - o Pre-production planning
 - o Distribution considerations
- Unit R094: Visual identity and digital graphics This is assessed by completing a set assignment. In this unit you will learn to how to develop visual identities for clients and use the concepts of graphic design to create original digital graphics to engage target audiences. Topics include:
 - o Develop visual identity
 - o Plan digital graphics for products
 - o Create visual identity and digital graphics

Post 16 progression and possible careers or work-related opportunities Why study Creative iMedia?
The knowledge and skills you develop will help you to progress onto further study in the media industry. This may be other vocational qualifications including the Level 2 or Level 3 OCR Cambridge Technicals in Digital Media and/or Information Technology; the T Level Qualification in Digital Production Design and Development or Media, Broadcast and Production; or the Media and Broadcast Assistant Pathway Apprenticeship. The qualification also helps to develop other transferable skills including creative thinking, digital presentation, planning and problem solving that will be valuable in other life and work situations.

More Information Head of Computer Science: Mrs K Lawrence

Exam Board Website [Cambridge Nationals - Creative iMedia Level 1/Level 2 - J834 - OCR](https://www.ocr.org.uk/qualifications/cambridge-nationals/creative-imedia-level-1-2-j834/)
<https://www.ocr.org.uk/qualifications/cambridge-nationals/creative-imedia-level-1-2-j834/>

Drama

Qualification WJEC Eduqas GCSE in Drama

Knowledge and Skills GCSE Drama provides the opportunity to explore the range of skills involved in creating and performing drama which includes the creation of original work as well as looking at plays written by other people. The course promotes co-operation, problem solving and communication. Drama will help pupils to feel more self-confident and prepare them to deal with a range of different situations and people. Students will also learn how to communicate intention, develop the skill of working with others and develop their critical thinking skills through evaluation, analysis and reflection. There will be opportunities to see examples of live theatre during the course and a chance to view them as a critic!

There are opportunities to visit the theatre, analysing the acting and technical aspects from a production. This forms part of the written components of the course and you will gain an understanding of both stagecraft and the importance of using your analytical skills.

Assessment The course is made up of three components:
 Component 1&2: A practical examination (60%)
 Component 3: A written examination (40%)
 In Year 10 you will undertake practical assessments for both devised and scripted units and write reports that will be assessed against the new GCSE criteria. These are practice pieces to prepare you for the real exams in Year 11.
 In Year 11 you will take 2 practical exams, one for devised & one scripted. For the devised unit you will be tasked with completing an evaluation of the process and final performance.

Post 16 progression and possible careers or work-related opportunities Students who select GCSE Drama may go on to typical further study such as Acting, Stage & Studio Management, Make-Up Artistry, Set & Lighting Design, and Costume Design.
 GCSE Drama can help you develop many vital skills which are useful in all walks of life, for example, confidence in communicating with other people, leadership skills, and teamwork to name but a few. Business leaders are always happy to see students who have GCSE Drama as they know these students will be articulate and confident. A Drama GCSE is an essential choice for anyone who wants to work in the arts. It is also an excellent choice for anyone who wants to work in close contact with people. GCSE Drama promotes the empathy valued by Occupational Therapy and Social Work, the creativity valued by Public Relations and Tourism Advertising and the 'presence' required by Broadcasting, Journalism, Entertainers, Events Managers and the Police.

More Information Head of Drama: Miss M Leask-Walters

Exam Board Website [GCSE Drama | Eduqas](#)

Food Preparation and Nutrition

Qualification

AQA GCSE in Food Preparation & Nutrition

Knowledge and Skills

Food preparation skills are integrated into five core topics; food, nutrition and health; food science; food safety; food choice; food provenance.

This GCSE will allow students to:

- Demonstrate effective and safe cooking skills by planning, preparing and cooking using a variety of food commodities, cooking techniques and equipment.
- Understand the relationship between diet, nutrition and health, including the physiological and psychological effects of poor diet and health choices.
- Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of functional and nutritional properties, sensory qualities and microbiological food safety considerations when preparing, processing, storing, cooking and serving food.
- Understand and explore a range of ingredients and processes from different culinary traditions (traditional British and international), to inspire new ideas or modify existing recipes

Assessment

50% of the GCSE is assessed through 2 major tasks:

Task 1: Food investigation

This will assess the students' understanding of the working characteristics, functional and chemical properties of ingredients. Practical investigations are a compulsory element of this task. Written or electronic report, (1,500– 2,000 words) including photographic evidence of the practical investigation.

Task 2: Food preparation

This will test the students' knowledge, skills and understanding in relation to the planning, preparation, cooking, presentation of food and application of nutrition related to the chosen task. Students will prepare, cook and present a final menu of 3 dishes within a single period of no more than three hours, planning in advance how this will be achieved. Students will produce a written or electronic portfolio including photographic evidence. Photographic evidence of the three final dishes must be included. *Please note: Students are expected to provide their own ingredients throughout the two years.*

50% of the GCSE is assessed through a 1 hour 45min written exam at the end of Year 11 which includes: multiple choice questions (20 marks) and five questions, each with a number of sub questions (80 marks)

Post 16 progression and possible careers or work-related opportunities

Food Preparation and Nutrition offers a wide range of career opportunities including: Catering Industry e.g. Chef, Hotel management, Food Industry e.g. Product Development, food production, Dietician/Nutritionist in the NHS or sports sector, Environmental Health or Trading Standards, Teacher, Cookery Writer, Food Photographer.

More Information

Head of Food Preparation and Nutrition: Mrs E Alton.

Exam Board Website

[AQA | Food | GCSE | Food Preparation and Nutrition](#)

Design and Technology

Qualification AQA GCSE in Design & Technology

Knowledge and Skills The GCSE in Design and Technology focuses on developing a range of technical subject knowledge and practical skills within a particular material area. Students will study a broad range of topics, including materials, commercial manufacturing processes, Computer Aided Design (CAD), Sustainability and Design Communication. Course content will be delivered through a mixture of subject knowledge theory lessons and practical. Students will be given the opportunity to use their creativity and imagination to design and make prototypes that solve real and relevant problems, considering their own and others' needs, wants and values.

Students will be able to choose their preferred material category:

Graphic Design OR

Resistant Materials

Students will develop an in-depth knowledge of specialist technical principles in their chosen material category including: selection of materials and components, forces and stresses, ecological and social footprint, sources and origins, using and working with materials, stock forms, types and sizes, scales of production, specialist techniques and processes, surface treatments and finishes.

Because of the vast and varied subject knowledge students need to study, students must be aware they will not be doing practical every lesson.

Assessment 50% of the GCSE is assessed through NEA (Non-Exam Assessment). Students complete a 20-page A3 portfolio, documenting each step of them addressing the contextual challenge given by the exam board. Completion of NEA will take 30-35 hours (approx.), and will assess the students on their Investigating, Designing, Making, Analyzing and Evaluating skills.

50% of the GCSE is assessed through a 2-hour written exam at the end of Year 11:

- Section A – Core technical principles (20 marks)
- Section B – Specialist technical principles (30 marks)
- Section C – Designing and making principles (50 marks)

Post 16 progression and possible careers or work-related opportunities This GCSE can lead into A Levels and eventually a degree as well as apprenticeships and careers in Product Design, Graphic Design, Engineering, Architecture, Building, Fashion and Textiles, Costume Design, Games Development, Business and Marketing, Prototype Development and much more!

More Information Head of Design and Technology: Mr D Marriott

Exam Board Website [AQA | Design and Technology | GCSE | Design and Technology](#)

Geography

Qualification WJEC Eduqas GCSE in Geography B

Knowledge and Skills Geography is a relevant, hands-on subject that helps you make sense of the world around you. At GCSE level a vast variety of topics are studied across the human, physical and environmental themes that help tackle some of the most pressing challenges facing the world today.

Geography GCSE will deepen your understanding of geographical processes, the impact of complex people-environment interactions, the dynamic links between places and environments, and develop your ability to use a wide range of geographical investigative skills and approaches. Geographers are active 'agents of change' in the 21st century and as such are able to develop a range of skills in statistics, ICT and the use of GIS, Cartographic (maps) and graphical interpretations. Geography enables you to become globally and environmentally informed and thoughtful, enquiring citizens.

Assessment

Component 1 – Investigating Geographical Issues; Written examination: 1 hour 45 minutes (40%)

Three compulsory structured data response questions will assess each of the three geographical themes.

Theme 1: Changing Places - Changing Economies: this theme focuses on urban/rural links in the UK, urbanisation in the economically developing world and development issues.

Theme 2: Changing Environments: this theme focuses on weather and climate, coastal and river processes and landforms and the management of coastal and river environments.

Theme 3: Environmental Challenges: this theme focuses on ecosystems and water resources

Component 2 – Problem Solving Geography; Written examination: 1 hour 30 minutes (30%)

This component will assess content from across the themes in a problem-solving examination paper.

Component 3 – Applied Fieldwork Enquiry; Written Examination: 1 hour 15 minutes (30%)

The opportunity to develop geographical skills through out of school fieldwork on two separate occasions in contrasting environments will help develop students' geographical enquiry. Approaches to methods, representation and analysis are all explored alongside concepts.

Post 16 progression and possible careers or work-related opportunities

Geography is one of the most employable subjects. You could work in a variety of areas including Environmental Work, Conservation Work, Financial Services, Town Planning, Travel and Tourism, Law, Accountancy, the Armed Forces, Meteorology, the Police and Teaching

More information Head of Humanities: Mr A Wood

Exam Board Website [GCSE B Geography | Eduqas](#)

Health and Social Care

Qualification Pearson BTEC L1/L2 Tech Award in Health & Social Care (2022)

Knowledge and Skills The course will encourage students to understand and apply the fundamental principles and concepts of the rights of individuals, person centred values, effective communication and how to protect individuals in health and social care settings. To develop learning and practical skills that can be applied to real-life contexts and work situations. To think creatively, innovatively, analytically, logically and critically. To develop independence and confidence in using skills that would be relevant to the health and social care sector and more widely.

The main focus is on four areas of equal importance, which cover the:

- development of key skills in health and social care such as interpreting data to assess an individual's health
- effective ways of working in health and social care, such as designing a plan to improve health and wellbeing
- attitudes that are considered most important in health and social care, including care values
- knowledge that underpins effective use of skills, process and attitudes in the sector such as human growth and development, health and social care services, and factors affecting people's health and wellbeing.

Assessment Grade equivalency:
 Level 2 Distinction * - Level 2 Pass = 1x GCSE Grades 8.5 - 4
 Level 1 Distinction - Level 1 Pass = 1x GCSE Grades 3 - 1.25

Course content:

There are three components of study, assessed as follows:

COMPONENT 1 (Internal):	Human Lifespan Development
COMPONENT 2 (Internal):	Health and Social Care Services and Values
COMPONENT 3 (Exam):	Health and Wellbeing

Post 16 progression and possible careers or work-related opportunities About 3 million people work in health and social care, nearly one in ten of all jobs in the UK. Roles include doctors, pharmacists, nurses, midwives and healthcare assistants, and care assistants, occupational therapists, counsellors and administrators. Demand for both health and social care is likely to rise, so they will continue to play a key role in UK society and the demand for people to carry out these vital roles will increase.

More Information Head of Health and Social Care: Mr B Redfern

Exam board Website [Health & Social Care \(2022\) | BTEC Tech Award | Pearson qualifications](#)

History

Qualification

AQA GCSE in History

Knowledge and Skills

The pursuit of historical knowledge of people and events is without doubt extremely interesting and, above all, fun! It is like a form of time travel that helps to illuminate characters, chains of events and how they came to be! You will enjoy this course if you want to study a subject that involves learning about and discussing events and people that have helped shape the world we live in today. History at GCSE links to some of the key topics you have studied at KS3 but introduces brand new areas of study in depth too. You will be given the opportunity to develop the skills to look beyond the headlines, ask questions and express your own opinion. As well as learning about history, the course will enable you to improve your skills in communication, working with others, problem solving and research. Studying History encourages you to produce well-reasoned conclusions based on the evaluation of evidence, which is a highly transferable skill. The emphasis at GCSE has moved away from the need to memorise vast amounts of factual material to a more skills-based approach.

The choice of topics is varied and wide ranging, meaning there is something for most historical interests. New topics for September 2026 include a focus on international affairs in the early 20th century and more emphasis on British topics such as Elizabethan England. We will continue to offer the ever-popular Medicine through time course alongside the depth study on Nazi Germany. This is a lively and exciting course, structured to capture your imagination!

Assessment

There are two exam papers, each 2 hours which cover the 4 key topics. Both papers are equally weighted at 50%

Paper 1 Understanding the Modern World

Section A is a period depth study of Germany 1900-45.

Section B is a focus on International Relations 1918-45.

Paper 2 – Shaping the Nation

Section A is the thematic study of Medicine through time c.1000 to the present day.

Section B is a case study of Elizabethan England c.1568-1603 with an element of local history and an opportunity to undertake a fieldwork visit.

Post 16 progression and possible careers or work-related opportunities

Many of you who study History at GCSE may well go on to study it at 'A' level and beyond. Whether you want to be a lawyer, journalist, work in the media or even teach, History will enable you to gain the skills required by your future employers.

More Information

Head of History: Mrs M Davies

Exam Board Website

[AQA | Subjects | History | GCSE](#)

Modern Foreign Languages

Qualification

AQA GCSE (8652) in French
AQA GCSE (8662) in German
AQA GCSE (8692) in Spanish

Knowledge and Skills

This is a dynamic and stimulating programme which will help prepare you for life in modern Britain as well as the international marketplace and the wider world. Learning a foreign language is a fantastic opportunity and leads to all kinds of personal progress and development. You will learn to use the foreign language much more widely, of course, but don't forget that qualities like confidence and interpersonal and communication skills also go hand in hand with language learning

Assessment

Students will be examined in four skills at the end of the course:

Listening (25%)

Multiple choice / short-answer questions: identifying key points, deducing meaning, drawing conclusions, transcribing task

Speaking (25%)

Role-play, read aloud task, discussion about 2 pictures, question and answers from the 3 topics

Reading (25%)

Multiple choice / short-answer questions and translating a text to English.

Writing (25%)

Writing short sentences and a short text, email or blog giving and describing information, understanding and applying grammar as well as translating a text from English.

The content of the GCSE course is divided into three Topic Areas:

Topic Area 1: People and Lifestyle

Topic Area 2: Popular Culture

Topic Area 3: Communication and the world around us

Post 16 progression and possible careers or work-related opportunities

Why study a foreign language?

Some people think that the only jobs available using languages are in translation, interpreting or teaching. In fact, languages can be helpful in lots of different jobs, and many employers reward people with language skills with extra salary because they know they are useful in today's international business world.

Here are just a few jobs where foreign languages are important: International Law, Business, Banking, Travel and Tourism, Politics, Journalism, Teaching. With increased competition for jobs and study places, a GCSE in a foreign language is highly valued by employers, colleges and universities.

Head of MFL: Mrs S Turner

More Information

Exam Board Website

[AQA | French | GCSE | GCSE French](#)
[AQA | German | GCSE | GCSE German](#)
[AQA | Spanish | GCSE | GCSE Spanish](#)

Music

Qualification	OCR GCSE in Music
Knowledge and Skills	<p>The GCSE Music course builds on the work done in Years 7-9 and covers performing, composing, listening and appraising. Students will study Musical Elements, Musical contexts and Musical Language through the five areas of study:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. My Music – focusing on their instrument/voice 2. The Concerto through Time 3. Rhythms of the World 4. Film Music 5. Conventions of Pop <p>The course is suited to pupils who already play or sing, or would like to learn, and we encourage students joining the course to contribute to the musical life of the school. Pupils should be committed to practising and improving their musical skills throughout the two years and should be prepared to work individually.</p>
Assessment	<p>Assessment is divided into three components: Performance (30%), Composition (30%) and Listening and Appraising (40%).</p> <p>Students must be willing to sing or play an instrument and must submit one solo and one ensemble (group) performance for final moderation. Pupils will be expected to perform and maintain practise throughout the course.</p> <p>Two original compositions must be submitted for coursework. One brief is set by the pupil, the other by the exam board. A written version and recording are sent for moderation.</p> <p>The listening and appraising component is assessed by final examination and questions are set on recorded music based on Areas of Study 2 – 5.</p> <p>GCSE Music students acquire many transferable skills – co-operation, organisation, logical thinking, creative thinking, aural skills, self-evaluation and critical appraisal.</p>
Post 16 progression and possible careers or work-related opportunities	<p>As a subject, it puts students in a good position when applying for further education, as providers understand the commitment and dedication musicians have to complete their studies and extra-curricular musical activities. Past students have progressed on to study Music, Music Technology and Performing Arts at A level and BTEC.</p> <p>This course will prepare you for most careers and courses in Music including Performing, Composing, Music Technology and Performing Arts.</p>
More Information	Head of Music: Mrs E Peynado
Exam Board Website	GCSE - Music (9-1) - J536 (from 2016) - OCR

GCSE Physical Education/BTEC Sport

Qualification

AQA GCSE in Physical Education or Pearson BTEC L1/L2 Tech Award in Sport (2022)

There are two pathways of study on offer. The Head of Department will guide students as to the most suitable pathway for the greatest success.

Knowledge and Skills

Both courses offer an engaging and relevant introduction to the world of sport, health and performance. They incorporate important aspects of the industry such as fitness testing and training for sport and exercise. The psychology of sport, practical sports performance and sports leadership. The courses enable students to develop and apply knowledge whilst also developing a range of relevant practical, communication and technical skills. Either pathway opens up a plethora of opportunities in the sporting sector, starting in post-16 education and the courses available to pupils, based on their achievements in these pathways. Ultimately, these two pathways can open up doors to career opportunities, that other courses don't have access to.

Assessment

AQA GCSE in Physical Education

AQA GCSE PE gives students an in-depth understanding of factors that affect PE, sport and performance. The course is assessed through written examinations focusing on the human body and movement as well as socio-cultural influences and well-being. Students will also undertake practical lessons where they will have the opportunity to develop their sporting performance.

Paper 1: The human body and movement in physical activity and sport.

This paper is out of 78 marks and worth 30% of the overall grade.

Paper 2: Socio-cultural influences and well-being in physical activity and sport.

This paper is out of 78 marks and worth 30% of the overall grade.

Non-exam assessment: Practical performance in physical activity and sport.

This component of the course is worth 40% of the overall grade.

Coursework: Analysis and evaluation of performance to bring about improvement in one activity is worth 10%.

Practical performance: Students must complete in three different physical activities in the role of player/performer (one in a team activity, one in an individual activity and a third in either a team or in an individual activity). Each sport is marked out of 25 and worth 10%.

BTEC Level 1/2 Tech Award in Sport (2022)

This course will give you the opportunity to develop knowledge and technical skills in a practical learning environment. You will develop key practical skills for working with other people, which include communication, leadership, organisation and time management. These are essential in the sport industry as this will primarily involve working with customers and supporting their individual needs.

Learners will study three mandatory components, covering the underpinning knowledge and skills required for the sports sector:

Component 1 - Preparing Participants to take part in Sport and Physical activity.

This includes the different types of physical activity and providers, the needs of participants, barriers to participation and ways to overcome these barriers. Equipment and technology required to take part in sport is also included. Learners will also develop an applied understanding of physiology and anatomy as they learn how to plan and deliver a warm-up to prepare participants to take part in sport and physical activity.

Component 2 - Taking part and improving other participants sporting performance.

Taking part and improving other participants sporting performance - this includes the components of fitness and how they are used in different types of sport; practical participation in sport and the rules and regulations in sport and ways to improve other participants sporting performance through planning and delivery of sports drills and conditioned practices.

Component 3 - Developing Fitness to improve other participants performance in sport and physical activity

This covers fitness testing, training and programming for different types of participants to improve their sport and physical activity performance.

Grade equivalency

Level 2 Distinction *	- Level 2 Pass	= 1x GCSE Grade 8.5 - 4
Level 1 Distinction	- Level 1 Pass	= 1x GCSE Grade 3 - 1.25

Post 16 progression and possible careers or work-related opportunities

Both qualifications will be welcomed by colleges and sixth forms, training providers and employers who recognise and value the depth of understanding and broad range of skills that learners will acquire and demonstrate during this course. Students may progress from this qualification to Advanced Level courses in PE and Sports Science, BTEC Level 3, (and on to degree level sports-related degree qualifications), and Level 2 / 3 Apprenticeships in Sport and Coaching, Health and Fitness, Personal Training and Business Administration and Management within the Sport and Leisure industries.

More information

Head of Physical Education: Mr L Porter

Exam Board Websites

[AQA | Physical Education | GCSE | Physical Education Sport \(2022\)](#) | [BTEC Tech Award](#) | [Pearson qualifications](#)

Separate Sciences

Qualification	AQA GCSE in Biology, Chemistry and Physics (three separate GCSEs)
Knowledge and Skills	<p>Studying the separate sciences means students will cover more content than GCSE Combined Science. The GCSE Separate Sciences will provide great preparation for AS and A-level, without overlapping content.</p> <p>Summary of content</p> <p>Biology: 1. Cell biology 2. Organisation 3. Infection and response 4. Bioenergetics 5. Homeostasis and response 6. Inheritance, variation and evolution 7. Ecology</p> <p>Chemistry: 1. Atomic structure and the periodic table 2. Bonding, structure and the properties of matter 3. Quantitative chemistry 4. Chemical changes 5. Energy changes 6. The rate and extent of chemical change 7. Organic chemistry 8. Chemical analysis 9. Chemistry of the atmosphere 10. Using resources.</p> <p>Physics: 1. Forces 2. Energy 3. Waves 4. Electricity 5. Magnetism and electromagnetism 6. Particle model of matter 7. Atomic structure 8. Space physics.</p> <p>Students will learn to question and discuss science-based issues that may affect their own lives and gain skills in carrying out investigations.</p>
Assessment	<p>This qualification is linear. Two papers each for biology, chemistry and physics: each paper will assess knowledge and understanding from different topics.</p> <p>Duration: both papers are 1 hour 45 minutes. Tier: Foundation and Higher. Weighting: the papers are equally weighted. Each is worth 50% of the grade and has 100 marks available. Question types: multiple choice, structured, closed short answer and open response.</p> <p>There is no controlled assessment. Instead, there are eight required practical's for each discipline, which students will be assessed on in the exams.</p>
Post 16 progression and possible careers or work-related opportunities	<p>The Separate Sciences course is aimed at students who have a passion for science. Students achieving Grades 9-6 in either the Combined Science or the Separate Science course will have the necessary experience to progress to AS/A level Science courses</p> <p>Careers are vast and varied e.g. Doctor, Vet, Dentist, Engineer, Physiotherapist, Meteorologist, Optician, Science Journalist, Science Technician and Environmental Agency Work.</p>
More information	Head of Science: Mr T Neale
Exam Board Website	https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/science/gcse