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Welcome

The selection of courses at Key Stage 4 is one of the key moments in your secondary education. Since September 2010, all Toot Hill pupils have followed a three year Key Stage 4 programme, starting in Year 9. This provides the best opportunity for you to achieve your full potential and secure success by the end of Year 11.

The ever-changing political landscape continues to impact on our curriculum provision and we must respond to such changes in a way that gives you the greatest advantage in higher education or employment. Major GCSE reforms have recently been implemented, but please be reassured that we have taken all the necessary steps to ensure you are well prepared for these changes.

Selecting the right courses is not always a straightforward decision. Making choices at this earlier stage becomes more difficult because of limited experience of different subjects. However, we aim to ensure that the information and guidance provided will alleviate some of these issues. It is important that you understand your own strengths and weaknesses so that you can optimise your chances of success. Equally, we trust that you will select courses in which you have a real interest.

It is important that you listen to the advice of teachers, parents and friends, but ultimately you must arrive at your own decision and accept the responsibility of giving your best efforts to achieve success. You should avoid making a decision based upon poor information. Responding to pressures from others or doing the same as a friend is not recommended (even if your friend has picked the same courses, you may well be in different teaching groups).

Please read the information in this brochure, together with the Year 8 Progress Check data and teacher comments before making these choices.

The Options Information Evening (Tuesday 2 February) will aim to provide further guidance. There will also be the opportunity at the Year 8 Parent's Evening (Tuesday 23 February and Wednesday 2 March) to ask questions of subject teachers as to the appropriateness of option choices.

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact the school.



What will I study next year?

You will follow a curriculum comprising of four key elements:

- The core curriculum
- A Humanities choice
- A Modern Foreign Language choice
- Optional subjects

The curriculum at Toot Hill School has been designed to enable you to realise your potential in every subject. The changing landscape in education means that the quantity of GCSEs taken is no longer the priority; grade 9–1 GCSEs are very challenging and benefit from extra classroom learning time if you are to be able to access the highest grades.

The core curriculum

When you enter Year 9 in September, you will be studying the following core subjects:

- English and English Literature (two GCSE courses)
- Mathematics
- Science (Separate Sciences or Combined Science – Trilogy or Synergy)
- Physical Education
- Religious Studies
- Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship Education (now being delivered as themed days)

Humanities choice

Geography or History.

Languages choice

You must choose one of the following languages to study at GCSE level:

- French
- Spanish
- German

The majority of pupils will study a foreign language in Years 9 – 11. A minority will not because of course suitability but these admission decisions will be made later in the year.

Optional subjects

The subjects below will all be offered in the option blocks and you will be asked to choose **any three** different subjects and two reserve choices from the following list:

GCSE	BTEC	Cambridge National
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Art and Design• Art: Textiles and Fashion• Business Studies• Child Development• Citizenship Studies• Computing• Dance• Design and Technology• Drama• Economics• Food Preparation and Nutrition• French• Geography• German• History• Media Studies• Music• Physical Education• Religion, Philosophy and Ethics• Spanish	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Acting or Production*• Dance*• Engineering• ICT• Sport	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• ICT

*You cannot study both BTEC Dance and BTEC Acting or Production

Please note that it is possible to choose two modern foreign language subjects. Any language chosen, however, must have been studied in both Years 7 and 8. In addition, you are expected to follow Geography or History as a core subject but can then choose further Humanities courses to study as optional subjects.

Please also note that if you study Separate Sciences (three Science GCSEs), **two** optional subjects will be studied rather than three.

For some, the demands of three option subjects in addition to core subjects may be inappropriate. The Learning Support Department offer a Level 1 Diploma in skills to enable progression (AIM), which has the scope to be tailored to meet your interests and needs and which can prepare you for more vocational life pathways. Mrs Murphy will speak to you if this course may be appropriate for you.



The new grade 9-1 GCSEs

GCSE reform

All GCSE courses are currently undergoing major reforms that include more challenging content, the removal of controlled assessments and a completely new grading system.

In the new GCSEs, assessments in most subjects will be by examination only – there will be no controlled assessments. All examinations will normally be taken in May / June of your final year, Year 11. There will be no modular examinations along the way, so the terminal examinations at the end of Year 11 will count as your full grade.

A new grading system of 9-1 is being introduced for all GCSE courses that will be taken in 2018 onwards. This new grading system replaces the current A* – G system.

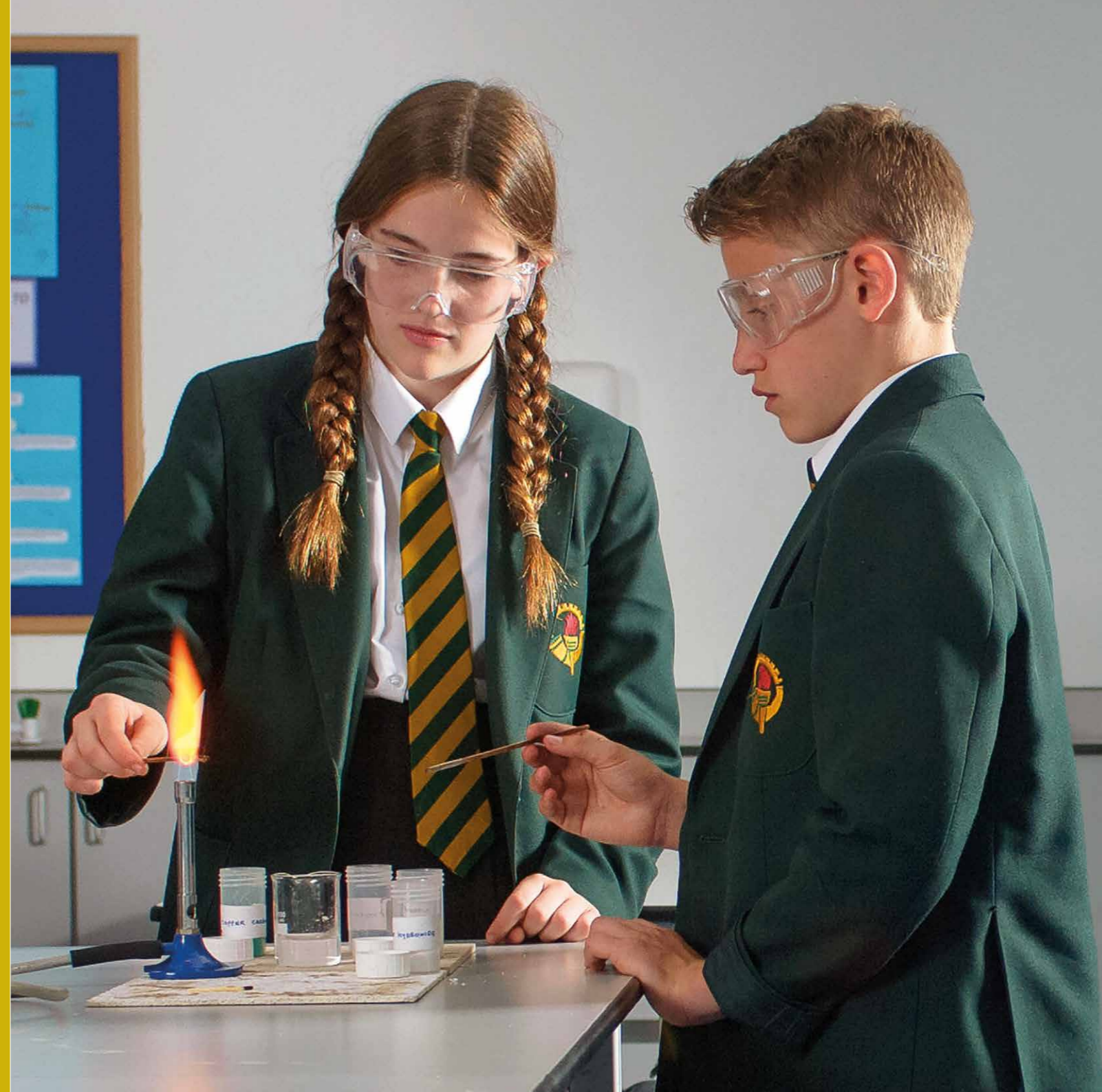
A grade 8 on the new system will be roughly equivalent in standard to the current A* grade, and a grade 4 will be roughly equivalent in standard to the current C grade. Grade 5 will become the standard considered nationally to be a good pass. It is expected that grade 9 will be achieved by the top 30% of current A* grade students.

Raising of Participation Age (RPA)

In 2013, the Government changed the age that young people can leave education or training. You now need to remain in education or training until you are 18 years old. However, this does not mean you will be required to stay in school.

There will be three ways in which you can participate post-16:

- Full time education in a school or college;
- An apprenticeship;
- Part-time accredited learning if you are in full-time employment or volunteering.





Questions and answers

How will I know if I have to study a language?

At this point we ask you to choose a language to study at GCSE, but this will be optional for 30% of you. As a rough guide, most pupils currently in base tiers H to M will not have to study a language as one of their options. The tiered groupings will be reviewed at the end of this academic year. Your final tier placement, at the end of this year, will determine whether a language is mandatory for you.

What language subjects can I choose?

You can choose to follow a GCSE course in French, Spanish or German. In addition to this, a second language can be chosen as one of your other three options. Any language chosen must have been studied in both Years 7 and 8.

How will I know if I have to study Separate Sciences?

If you are in base tiers A – D you will be expected to study Separate Sciences. The tiered groupings will be reviewed at the end of this academic year. Your final tier placement, at the end of this academic year, will determine whether Separate Sciences is a suitable GCSE pathway for you.

What are BTEC courses?

These are vocational qualifications designed to provide a broad-based education from which you can progress to further education, further training or directly into employment.

At Key Stage 4, BTEC First Awards are being offered in Acting or Production, Dance, Engineering, ICT and Sport. These are equivalent to one GCSE.

What grades can I get in a BTEC First Award?

You can gain a Level 1 Pass (equivalent to grades 1–3 at GCSE) or a Level 2 Pass, Merit or Distinction at the end of the course. A Level 2 Pass is equivalent to GCSE grade 4. A Level 2 Merit is equivalent to GCSE grade 6 and a Level 2 Distinction is equivalent to GCSE grade 7.

How are BTEC First Diplomas viewed in Higher Education?

Universities accept all courses with an equivalence to GCSE when considering UCAS applications from students at Toot Hill College.

Is there the opportunity to gain qualifications before the end of Year 11?

Due to the implementation of new and more challenging specifications, the loss of controlled assessments, the introduction of terminal, linear examinations and a new grading system that differentiates more at the top end, it is unlikely that you will be ready to sit examinations early.

Completion of the courses in Year 11 will enable the highest ability learners to achieve the new grade 9, a grade only achieved by the top 3 % of students nationally.

If I want to go on to study at Toot Hill College after Year 11, which subjects would be best?

There are no ‘best’ options to prepare you for further study. Keep your options broad and balanced. If you wish to study AS and A Level subjects at Toot Hill College, you will need to gain a minimum of five GCSE passes graded 4–9, with a grade 6 in the subjects you wish to study further at A Level in the College.

The College also provides a range of BTEC National courses, which are equivalent to A Levels and build on the BTEC qualifications at Level 2.

If I can't decide between two subjects, who should I talk to?

Talk to your teachers, parents, tutor or Head of Year. Remember to consider your own strengths, interests, needs and career plans in making your final choice.



Key dates

Friday 29 January 2016

Receive Options Brochure

Tuesday 2 February 2016

Year 8 Option Information Evening

6.00pm and 7.30pm

Monday 8 February 2016

Year 8 Options Taster Day

Wednesday 10 February 2016

Reports issued

Tuesday 23 February 2016

Year 8 Parents' Evening

Wednesday 2 March 2016

Year 8 Parents' Evening

Friday 11 March 2016

Deadline to hand in completed Options Form



Core curriculum



GCSE English Language

Exam Board: **AQA** (www.aqa.org.uk)

Course outline

Paper 1: **Explorations in Creative Reading and Writing** 50% (1 hour 45 minutes)

Paper 2: **Writers' Viewpoints and Perspectives** 50% (1 hour 45 minutes)

Reading: You will analyse a range of unseen modern and pre 20th century non-fiction and literary extracts for the reading sections of the exams.

Writing: You will be required to write one non-fiction text such as an article, letter, website entry or a speech for a specified audience and purpose. In addition, you will write one creative text, either a description or narrative, prompted by an image.

Assessment details

100% examination. Throughout the course you will complete assessments linked to exam questions and criteria.

Additional information

There are no set texts for this part of the course though you should read a variety of non-fiction and literary texts to prepare you for the demands of the exam.

English qualifications open doors to college courses and are highly regarded by UCAS and employers. Some careers involving English skills include journalism, publishing, law and marketing.



GCSE English Literature

Exam Board: **AQA** (www.aqa.org.uk)

Course outline

Paper 1: Shakespeare and Nineteenth Century Novel 40% (1 hour, 45 minutes)

Section A: **Shakespeare**

You will answer one question on the play 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 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 60% (2 hours, 15 minutes)

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.

Assessment details

100% examination – two exams at the end of Year 11. Throughout the course you will complete practice exam-style questions.

Additional information

You will be required to buy set texts to be annotated in class – letters will be sent out with further information on these.

English qualifications open doors to college courses and are highly regarded by UCAS and employers. Some careers involving English skills include journalism, publishing, law and marketing.



GCSE Mathematics

Exam Board: **OCR** (www.ocr.org.uk)

Course outline

The GCSE Maths course continues to develop the skills and understanding you have already been working on during Key Stage 3. Topics are based on the core areas of number, algebra, proportional reasoning, geometry, probability and statistics.

Assessment details

100% examination. There are two tiers of entry for the final exam: Foundation, which covers grades 1–5 and Higher, which covers grades 4–9. At each level, you will sit three exam papers at the end of the course.

At the beginning of Year 9, you will be allocated to a group based primarily on your achievement in the June examination in Year 8.

The path that you take through the content will be based on your previous achievement. At various times throughout the course you will sit an internally-assessed exam in order to show your current progress and what you need to do to improve further.

Final decisions about tiers of entry are not made until the later stage of the course.

Additional information

For Maths lessons you will need to bring your equipment to every lesson. You should have a pen, a pencil, a ruler, a protractor, compasses and a scientific calculator.



Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship Education

Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship Education covers the recommended elements for PSHE and elements of Citizenship that are not covered elsewhere in the curriculum.

There will not be timetabled lessons of PSHCE. Instead the programme is delivered through three themed days per year group per year – in Years 9, 10 and 11.

The themes covered are:

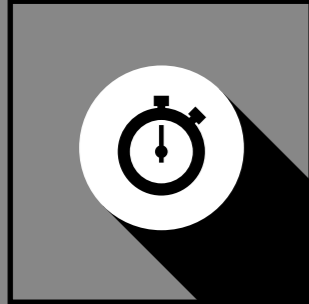
Health and well-being: You will have workshops on healthy eating, first aid, body image, drugs and alcohol and sexual health.

Financial capability: You will have workshops on money management, bank accounts, etc.

Citizenship: You will have a day on enterprise, creating a small business and raising money. On Politics Day you will create a political party along with policies, vote collecting, hustings and a mock election.

Careers: There is an intensive programme for careers helping you to make the important decisions for post-16 options. There is a mock interview day along with CV and personal statement writing and detailed advice on career pathways.

Along with tutors and PSHCE teachers, a number of outside providers are used, charities and theatre groups to make the presentation of PSHCE and careers as exciting and current as possible. The school responds where appropriate to topical issues or concerns we have in school.



GCSE Physical Education

Exam Board: **Sports Leaders UK** (www.sportsleaders.org)

All pupils will take part in three lessons of Physical Education per week, known as 'Core PE'. Following on from the work covered in Key Stage 3, the activities included in the Key Stage 4 curriculum will be Games, Athletics, Dance, Gymnastics, Swimming and Fitness (aerobics, circuit training, jogging, and Fitzys – Year 11 only). You are required to follow at least two activities in depth to comply with the National Curriculum.

Maximum participation by pupils is expected throughout Key Stage 4 so that the following objectives can be achieved:

- Improve personal health and fitness and enhance awareness of issues surrounding this
- Develop more advanced skills and tactical knowledge in the activities undertaken
- Further develop awareness of safety
- Critically assess and evaluate performances
- Develop key skills which will enable the roles of coach, official, umpire, referee, choreographer and leader to be undertaken successfully

Sports Leaders Level 1 Award

Within the Core PE curriculum time, you may undertake the Sports Leaders Level 1 Award (SL1), which is a nationally recognised award that helps develop

leadership qualities through sport. Although practically based, it does not focus on performance but the ability to organise and manage sporting activities safely and effectively.

Course outline

The Sports Leader Level 1 Award is ideal if you have an interest in coaching or teaching younger children. During theory work, you will have opportunity to:

- Appreciate personal, social and mental factors that affect participation, lifestyle and performance
- Understand the detailed physiological and psychological knowledge of how the body systems work together and respond to training
- Look at the organisation of sport within this country
- Carry out risk assessment and basic first aid in physical activity

Assessment details

1 hour demonstration of leadership. You will be assessed in the planning and delivery of sports sessions.



GCSE Religious Studies

Exam Board: **AQA** (www.aqa.org.uk)

Course outline

Religious Studies is a compulsory part of secondary education. At Toot Hill School you will study a Religious Studies course that will result in a qualification worth half a GCSE. You will study:

- Christian and Muslim beliefs and teachings
- Peace and Conflict: Christian teachings about war, peace, terrorism, forgiveness and reconciliation.
- Relationships and Families: Christian teachings about marriage, divorce, sexual relationships, contraception, the role of men and women and same-sex marriage.

Assessment details

100% examination – 1 hour 45 minutes (96 marks). A combination of short answer and extended answer type questions.

Additional information

Possible career paths include a teacher, a social worker, a lawyer, a police officer and many more.

You will gain many transferable skills such as constructing arguments, communication, debating, and evaluation skills as well as having a firm grip on current worldwide events.



GCSE Biology

Exam Board: **AQA** (www.aqa.org.uk)

Course outline

Biology is a complex and broad science. You will enjoy this course if you are interested in all aspects of living organisms, how they work and how they interact with their environment. The GCSE course looks at the following topics:

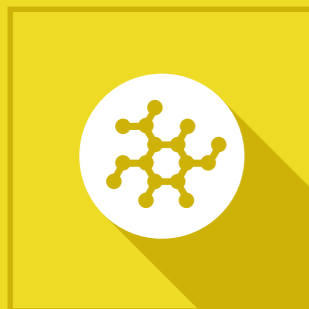
- Cell biology
- Organisation
- Infection and response
- Bioenergetics
- Homeostasis and response
- Inheritance, variation and evolution
- Ecology

Assessment details

100% examination – two 1 hour 45 minute papers, each worth 50%. Papers will include multiple choice, long and short answer questions.

Additional information

You will be expected to bring a calculator to all lessons along with standard equipment such as a ruler, a pen and a pencil.



GCSE Chemistry

Exam Board: **AQA** (www.aqa.org.uk)

Course outline

Throughout GCSE Chemistry you will develop and enhance your knowledge on a range of topics. The themes that you will cover include:

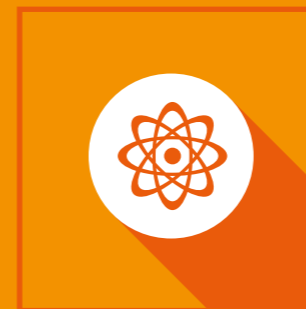
- Atomic structure and the periodic table
- Bonding, structure and the properties of matter
- Quantitative chemistry
- Chemical changes
- Energy changes
- The rate and extent of chemical change
- Organic chemistry
- Chemical analysis
- Chemistry of the atmosphere

Assessment details

100% examination – two 1 hour 45 minute papers, each worth 50%. Papers will include multiple choice, long and short answer questions.

Additional information

Chemistry is an essential subject for areas of study such as Medicine and Veterinary Science, but will also open the door to exciting careers at the cutting edge of disciplines such as Materials Science, Engineering, Pharmaceuticals and the Petrochemical industry.



GCSE Physics

Exam Board: **AQA** (www.aqa.org.uk)

Course outline

Physics plays a big part in science, technology, engineering and mathematics. The main topics you will cover are:

- Forces
- Energy
- Waves
- Electricity
- Magnetism and electromagnetism
- Particle model of matter
- Atomic structure
- Space physics

Assessment details

100% examination – two 1 hour 45 minute papers, each worth 50%. Papers will include multiple choice, long and short answer questions.

Additional information

Physics is a highly valued subject that provides a strong grounding in knowledge and skills applicable to a wide variety of careers, as well as giving you a good grounding in the subject, preparing you for study at Key Stage 5.

The course will equip you for possible careers in Mathematical Sciences, Engineering, Medicine and Veterinary Science, Finance, Design and Technology, Architecture, Defence, Computing and Education.



GCSE Combined Science: Trilogy

Exam Board: **AQA** (www.aqa.org.uk)

Course outline

This is a combined course – you will be taught the three science disciplines as separate subjects, however, you will receive two GCSEs in Science as a combined award.

Biology

- Cell biology
- Organisation
- Infection and response
- Bioenergetics
- Homeostasis and response
- Inheritance, variation and evolution
- Ecology

Chemistry

- 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

Physics

- Forces
- Energy
- Waves
- Electricity
- Magnetism and electromagnetism
- Particle model of matter
- Atomic structure

Assessment details

100% examination – six 1 hour 15 minute papers, each worth 16.7%. Papers will include multiple choice, long and short answer questions.

Additional information

You will be expected to bring a scientific calculator to all lessons (e.g. Casio FX-GT83) along with normal equipment such as a ruler, a pen and a pencil.



GCSE Combined Science: Synergy

Exam Board: **AQA** (www.aqa.org.uk)

Course outline

This is a combined course – you will cover all three sciences in your lessons, however, you will receive two GCSEs in Science. The same content is covered as in Trilogy Science, however, it is taught in two main themes: Life Sciences and Physical Sciences.

- Building blocks
- Transport over larger distances
- Interactions with the environment
- Explaining change
- Building blocks for understanding
- Interactions over small and large distances
- Movement and interactions
- Guiding Spaceship Earth towards a sustainable future

Assessment details

100% examination – four 1 hour 45 minute papers, each worth 25%. Papers will include multiple choice, long and short answer questions.

Additional information

You will be expected to bring a scientific calculator to all lessons (e.g. Casio FX-GT83) along with normal equipment such as a ruler, a pen and a pencil.

Humanities
choice



GCSE Geography

Exam Board: **AQA** (www.aqa.org.uk)

Course outline

In Geography you will look at two main themes:

Physical Geography: You will explore threats to human survival: extreme weather, tectonic hazards (earthquakes and volcanoes) and climate change; look at what is special about the UK landscapes: roaring rivers and dramatic coasts; investigate what is destroying our planet: how humans exploit the rainforest; and the stage for World War Three: Antarctica.

Human Geography: Poor world cities and rich world cities – challenges and opportunities for people living there; 'Is it OK for some people to be poor?' (tackling the poverty crisis); and 'Will we run out of puff?' (resource issues focusing on food, energy and water).

Assessment details

100% examination – two exams each worth 50% of overall grade (subject to confirmation). Question types include multiple choice, short response, data analysis and case study questions.

Additional information

A GCSE in Geography will develop a range of transferable skills including communication and strong presentation skills, competent IT skills, independent research, the ability to work effectively in a team in a variety of roles, effective time management, and combining information from a variety of sources with excellent writing skills.

These could be useful in the following areas: an expedition leader, a travel writer, a TV researcher, a conservation worker, an architect, an urban planner, an environmental consultant, a financial risk assessor, a banker, an accountant, a lawyer, a transport/logistics manager, a diplomat, Voluntary Service Oversea (VSO), a human rights officer, the armed forces, a surveyor, a town planner, an environmental engineer (all fields of engineering), marketing, a social worker, a hydrologist, hazard prediction and management and a weather presenter.



GCSE History

Exam Board: **AQA** (www.aqa.org.uk)

Course outline

Over the course of your History GCSE you will cover four exciting and varied topics. For your first paper you will study great change in Germany, looking at the rise of Hitler and how he took power, focusing on World War II. You will then go on to look at a period where the world came to brink of nuclear war and Armageddon but was brought back again.

The second paper will focus on the history of Britain, exploring surgery and treatment, and becoming aid workers, disease hunters and experts on medicine throughout time. You will then explore the battles of 1066 and the invasion and rule of a foreign king.

Assessment details

100% examination – two 1 hour and 45 minute papers based on knowledge and source questions.

Additional information

History is full of transferable skills, such as the ability to conduct research using different types of tools, the capacity to be a problem solver, the inspiration to be a creative thinker, an understanding of different people and societies, the skills to argue a case and to express your ideas clearly, essential debating, communication and ICT skills, and additional communication skills, such as negotiating, questioning and summarising.

History has been voted one of the top transferable subjects by Oxbridge universities. Careers include an advertising executive, an accountant, an analyst, an archivist, an archaeologist, a broadcaster, a business professional, an explorer, a diplomat, a campaign worker, a consultant, an editor, a foreign service officer, an intelligence agent, a journalist, a lawyer, a lecturer, a legal assistant, a manager, a politician, a public relations officer, a researcher, a social worker and many more.



Languages choice



GCSE

French, Spanish or German

Exam Board: **TBC**

Course outline

Questions across all four language skills are set in common contexts, addressing a range of relevant contemporary and cultural themes. They are organised into five themes, each broken down into topics and sub-topics. The five themes are:

- Identity and culture
- Local area, holiday and travel
- School
- Future aspirations, study and work
- International and global dimension

Assessment details

100% examination – 25% reading, 25% speaking, 25% listening and 25% writing.

Additional information

There are many reasons for studying languages at GCSE. You will be able to share your interests, ideas and opinions with other people who speak French, Spanish or German. You will learn about the countries where the language is spoken and get a lot more out of a trip there.

You will add an international dimension to your choice of GCSE subjects and learn many skills which are useful in a wide range of future careers.

You will create greater opportunities for yourself to work abroad. Those who can offer a language in addition to other skills are likely to be paid 10–20% more and are highly sought after in the job market both in the UK and abroad.

At university, you can combine a language with practically any other subject. There are over 450 available combinations.

The ability to speak two foreign languages is a qualification which few people can offer, and is a skill which puts you ahead of the competition.

As the numbers of pupils in school who are studying a language continue to decrease, so are the numbers of students applying to study for a degree in languages at university. If you decide to apply to study languages, you are in with a very good chance of securing a place. In 2015, 42% of students applying to the University of Cambridge to study languages were successful in securing a place.



Optional GCSE courses



GCSE Art and Design

Exam Board: **Edexcel** ([qualifications.pearson.com](https://www.pearson.com/qualifications/edexcel))

Course outline

In Year 9 you will research specialist techniques to explore and understand a range of practices such as 2D drawing and painting skills; use of presentation within a sketchbook; researching and responding to an artist; photography skills and mixed media techniques.

In Year 10 and 11 you will explore a range of projects focusing on different themes around the areas of drawing, artist research, responses and developmental studies. In order to gain examination experience you will complete a 10 hour mock exam and produce preparatory studies around a set theme. This will count towards 60% of your final controlled assessment grade.

The exam, which is worth 40%, is directed by the examination board but will be similar to the controlled assessment sketchbook. At the end of this, you will produce a final piece in examination conditions.

Assessment details

60% controlled assessment, 40% examination. Both controlled assessment and exam work will be assessed through the Edexcel board's assessment criteria over four key assessment objectives: recording, experimenting, developing and producing an outcome.

Additional information

A GCSE in Art and Design can lead to studying A Level Art as well as developing a breadth of creative skills which compliment a wide range of subjects and career paths.



GCSE Art: Fashion and Textiles

Exam Board: **Edexcel** ([qualifications.pearson.com](https://www.pearson.com/qualifications/edexcel))

Course outline

GCSE Art: Fashion and Textiles is a new creative course that will inspire all budding designers. It is a fast and furious intense three years, full of new techniques and ideas inspired by interior and fashion designers.

Textile design involves an arrangement of different disciplines embracing both contemporary and traditional technologies. These involve the specialisms of Constructed Textiles, Dyed Textiles, Printed Textiles, Fine Art Textiles and Fashion Textiles. This allows you to explore and understand all types of techniques in Year 9. You are then able to produce individual projects in the form of sketchbook work as well as understanding the importance of presentation and researching and responding to artists/designers in Years 10 and 11. Imaginative designs will be produced and developed into appropriate outcomes.

Assessment details

60% controlled assessment, 40% examination. Both controlled assessment and exam work will be assessed through the Edexcel board's assessment criteria over four key assessment objectives: recording, experimenting, developing and producing an outcome.

Additional information

A GCSE in Textile Design can lead to studying A Level Textiles Design as well as developing a breadth of creative skills which compliment a wide range of subjects and career paths.



GCSE Business Studies

Exam Board: **AQA** (www.aqa.org.uk)

Course outline

You will learn to apply business knowledge to a range of case studies from both small and large businesses: local, national and international.

The course will be divided into a number of topics including business start ups, external influences, finance, marketing, human resources and operations.

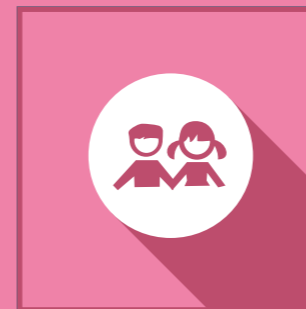
You will gain skills including application to real life companies, quantitative skills linking to revenue and profit amongst others and the interpretation of financial accounts and market research.

Assessment details

100% examination – two 60 minute papers (proposed).

Additional information

There are many paths you can take using a Business Studies GCSE, from setting up your own business to working in various departments of an international corporation. Business Studies is useful for both everyday working life and specialist disciplines in successful companies.



GCSE Child Development

Exam Board: **TBC**

Course outline

This course is still pending confirmation from Ofqual about the specific details of the course.

This course is designed to equip you with an understanding of the development and needs of a child from conception to the age of five. You should be interested in working with children and be prepared to visit and record information on a child of your own choosing.

This GCSE course involves 60% controlled assessment which constitutes:

- Three short tasks – one investigative task and two practical tasks on topics such as weaning and contraception
- One individual study – the study of a child between 0–5 years
- There is a terminal examination of 1½ hours

The syllabus covers the following topics:

- **Family and parenting**
- **Preparation for pregnancy and birth**
- **Physical development**
- **Nutrition and health**
- **Intellectual, social and emotional development**
- **Community support**

This course gives you the opportunity to:

- Prepare for a career in nursing or teaching in a school, day care or pre-school
- Lead into the CACHE course and other courses such as DCE which are acceptable as qualifications for employment in nurseries and schools (DCE is equivalent to three A Levels which could lead to university education in nursing or social work).

Assessment details

The assessment details are yet to be confirmed. Further information will be available in due course.

Additional information

The course layout is still to be confirmed but there is usually a piece of controlled assessment work named the 'Child Study Task'. This piece of work means that you need to have access to a child between 0–5 to do a series of different observations on them.



GCSE Citizenship Studies

Exam Board: **OCR** (www.ocr.org.uk)

Course outline

If you are interested in law, politics and enjoy debating, discussing worldwide issues and people listening to your viewpoints then this is the subject for you.

In Citizenship Studies, you will study:

- **Rights, the law and the legal system in England and Wales**
Including human rights, different types of law, how laws are made in England and Wales, roles of the police, the courts, types of punishment and crime rates.
- **Democracy and the Government**
Including the UK Government, politics, party manifestos, media releases, voting and how you could become an MP!
- **The economy, finance and money**
Including public taxes and expenditure (on welfare, health, education or the needs of the elderly), pressure groups, charities and faith groups.
- **The role of the media and free press**
Including moral responsibility to reporting accurate reports that are respectful to peoples' privacy and dignity, media regulation and also how media is used by people in power to influence citizens.

- **UK and the wider world**

Including migration and seeking asylum, identity and diversity, control of the immigration to the UK, the European Union and United Nations and decisions during times of war and conflict.

Assessment details

100% examination – the assessment will comprise of multiple choice questions, short written answers and extended writing.

Additional information

A GCSE in Citizenship Studies can lead to a career as a lawyer, an MP, a social worker, a police officer, a judge, a journalist / news reporter and many more.



GCSE Computer Science

Exam Board: **OCR** (www.ocr.org.uk)

Course outline

In GCSE Computer Science you will cover the following topics:

Computer systems

- Systems architecture
- Memory
- Storage
- Wired and wireless networks
- Network topologies, protocols and layers
- Network security
- System software
- Moral, social, legal, cultural and environmental concerns

Computational thinking, algorithms and programming

- Translators and facilities of languages
- Algorithms
- High and low level programming
- Computational logic
- Data representation

Programming project

- Programming techniques
- Design
- Development
- Effectiveness and efficiency
- Technical understanding
- Testing, evaluation and conclusions

Assessment details

80% examination, 20% programming project.

Additional information

A GCSE in Computer Science can lead to careers in computer and electronics design, many varieties of programming as well as computer games development.



GCSE Dance

Exam Board: **AQA** (www.aqa.org.uk)

Course outline

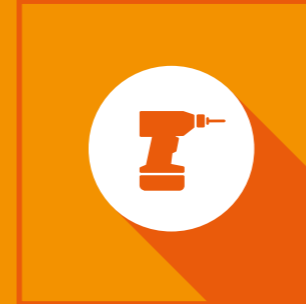
Dance GCSE focuses on the aesthetic and artistic qualities of contemporary dance and the use of movement to express and communicate ideas and concepts through the interrelated processors or performance, choreography and critical appreciation.

Assessment details

40% examination, 20% solo performance, 20% performance in a duo/group dance, 20% choreography.

Additional information

GCSE dance is suitable for pupils who are experienced in contemporary dance and wish to pursue education in performing arts.



GCSE Design and Technology

Exam Board: **AQA** (www.aqa.org.uk)

Course outline

GCSE Design and Technology enables you to design and make products with creativity and originality, using a range of materials and techniques.

Packaging, labelling and instructions are encouraged as part of the complete design proposal, and advertising and points of sale can be used to supplement the making experience to help create products which can be evaluated for their commercial viability.

To do a GCSE in Design and Technology you will need to be resilient, understand your first idea won't always be the one you develop, accept constructive criticism and input from others around you and be open to all suggestions.

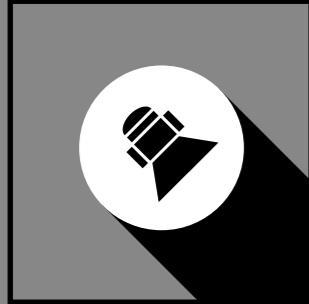
If you have a natural inquisitive mind into how products work, where they have come from and why they have been designed in that way, then this course is the right one for you.

Assessment details

50% examination, 50% controlled assessment. The controlled assessment will include a portfolio of design and investigation work as well as practical pieces made using workshop tools and equipment.

Additional information

A GCSE in Design and Technology can lead to a career as a product designer, a typographer, a graphic designer, an engineer, sales and marketing, media and advertising, a carpenter, an architect, a book designer, a landscape designer, an interior designer, a set designer, a teacher and many more. If it is creative, it more than likely will have stemmed from Product Design!



GCSE Drama

Exam Board: **AQA** (www.aqa.org.uk)

Course outline

This exciting new course offers you an amazing opportunity to learn about all aspects of theatre in a practical setting. You will be given the opportunity to hone and develop your acting skills focusing on voice, movement and characterisation, as you study how scripts can be brought to life and performed to an audience.

You will explore the work of theatre practitioners like Stanislavski and modern physical theatre companies such as Frantic Assembly, applying these new techniques to the performances you create yourself. You will have opportunities to see live theatre and develop your understanding and knowledge of various genres, styles and forms of drama.

This is a fantastic new GCSE which gives you the chance to show off your talents in performance exams, demonstrate your understanding of theatre in the written exam and rewards dedication and creativity in the devised performance and a controlled assessment log book.

Assessment details

40% open book examination, 40% controlled assessment, 20% scripted performance examination. You will be assessed on your acting/technical skills in performances, how you have creatively developed a piece of work from a stimulus and your understanding of specific play texts and practitioners.

Additional information

Drama combines a lot of different transferable skills which can not only support further study of drama and a career in acting or directing, but also a range of other subjects and careers. Public speaking, presentation and confidence are also abilities which always support you, whether you choose to become a solicitor debating issues of law, a business person delivering marketing pitches or an army captain leading troops into difficult situations.



GCSE Economics

Exam Board: **AQA** (www.aqa.org.uk)

Course outline

The course is split into two units; personal economics and macro economy.

In personal economics, you will learn about how rational households make decisions with their limited money income, the demand and supply of labour, and international trade.

In macro economy, you will investigate the goals of governments, such as economic growth, low unemployment, stable price inflation and balancing export and import trade. You will also investigate some international economics, such as the economics of globalisation.

Assessment details

100% examination – two 75 minute papers.

Additional information

Economics is great if you can state an argument and back up your point with reasons. You will enjoy this subject if you are interested in politics and current affairs.

You may gain a strong interest at GCSE, and wish to take Economics at A Level. Economics is a very popular degree at many leading universities, and would allow you to gain employment in many industries.



GCSE

Food Preparation and Nutrition

Exam Board: **OCR** (www.ocr.org.uk)

Course outline

This qualification aims to equip you with the knowledge, understanding and skills required to cook and apply the principles of food science, nutrition and healthy eating.

It will encourage you to cook and also develop life skills that will enable you to feed yourself and others affordably, now and in later life.

This GCSE will help you develop strong practical cookery skills and techniques as well as a good understanding of nutrition and healthy eating. You will also discover the science behind cooking and the huge challenges that we face globally to supply the world with nutritious and safe food.

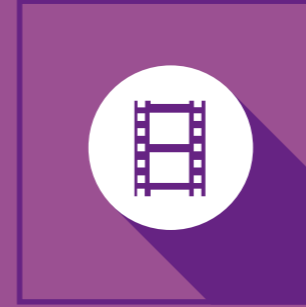
Assessment details

50% examination, 15% food investigation task, 35% food preparation task.

Additional information

If you enjoy cooking, have a natural curiosity about food, what it contains and want to learn skills for life, then this is a course you should consider. You will be expected to bring ingredients for practical lessons most weeks.

Careers in nutrition, dietetics, the food industry and hospitality all stem from an interest and qualification in Food Preparation and Nutrition. This GCSE can also lead onto catering qualifications or food-related A Levels.



GCSE

Media Studies

Exam Board: **TBC**

Course outline

You will study texts in relation to the four key areas below:

- **Media language**
How the media through their forms, codes and conventions communicate meanings.
- **Representation**
How the media portray events, issues, individuals and social group.
- **Media industries**
How the media industries' processes of production, distribution and circulation affect media forms and platform.
- **Audiences**
How media forms target, reach and address audiences, how audiences interpret and respond to them and how audiences become producers themselves.

Assessment details

You will study at least one audio/visual text, one print and one online media form in depth, through contrasting media products.

Additional information

A qualification in Media Studies can open a variety of career doors for you. Work experience is vital to ensure that you have a better chance of succeeding in occupations such as a programme researcher, a public relations officer, a television/film/video producer, a video editor, a graphics animator, a production assistant, a marketing manager, a broadcast journalist, an editorial assistant, an event organiser, a journalist, a writer and many more.



GCSE Music

Exam Board: **Edexcel** ([qualifications.pearson.com](https://www.qualifications.pearson.com))

Course outline

Eight set works are studied over three years. They are examined in a paper which tests aural skills as well as knowledge of the set works. You are required to write short comparative essays as part of the paper.

You will be required to create three compositions – one in Year 9, one in Year 10 and one in Year 11.

You will also be required to perform a minimum of two pieces each year – one solo piece and one ensemble piece.

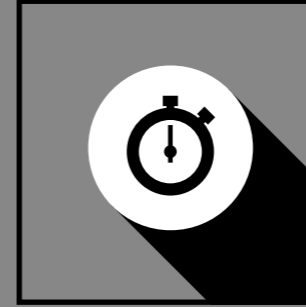
Assessment details

60% controlled assessment, 40% examination. The controlled assessment is in two sections: composing and performing. Two compositions are submitted at the end of the course and count as 30% (15% each) of the final mark. Two performances, a solo and ensemble performance, are submitted at the end of the course and count as 30% (15% each) of the final mark.

Additional information

You must be prepared to perform on your chosen instrument or sing, as this counts as 30% of the final GCSE mark.

Possible career paths include performing, the military, teaching, a sound technician, composing, research, a historian, a librarian, advertising and many more.



GCSE Physical Education

Exam Board: **OCR** (www.ocr.org.uk)

Course outline

The GCSE Physical Education course may be followed in addition to the core PE programme outlined earlier in this publication, that all pupils must follow.

During theoretical work you will study:

- Anatomy and physiology
- Movement analysis
- Physical training
- Use of data
- Sports psychology
- Social and cultural influences

Assessment details

70% examination, 20% practical performance, 10% controlled assessment.

Additional information

If you decide to take this course then you must be prepared to perform a variety of sports and activities and attend extra-curricular PE clubs. The GCSE PE course leads directly onto AS and A2 courses in Physical Education and should be undertaken if you are interested in acquiring detailed sporting knowledge and developing your own performance towards a high level.



GCSE Religion, Philosophy and Ethics

Exam Board: **AQA** (www.aqa.org.uk)

Course outline

If you enjoy discussing current issues and are interested in solving moral dilemmas, investigating different belief systems and developing your own opinion, then Philosophy and Ethics is perfect for you.

You will study:

- **Christian and Muslim beliefs, teaching and practices**
- **Peace and conflict**
Is war ever just? What is terrorism? Are some actions unforgivable? How can we reconcile with enemies?
- **Religion and life**
Are religion and science compatible? How should we treat the planet? Should we test on animals? What do religions think about abortion and euthanasia?
- **Crime and punishment**
Why is there evil? Why do people commit crime? What is the best way to deal with criminals?
- **Relationships and families**
What do religious believers think about marriage, divorce, contraception and same-sex marriage? Are men and women equal? What role do parents play?

- **Human rights and social justice**
Do the wealthy have a responsibility to take care of the poor? What are our human rights?
- **The existence of God**
Does complexity in the universe infer an intelligent designer? Do miracles happen? Why is suffering a problem for God?

Assessment details:

100% examination – two exam papers (each worth 101 marks). There is a variety of short answer and essay type questions.

Additional information

There is an enrichment trip in Year 10 – currently an overnight trip to York, but this may change due to the changes in the GCSE specification. Possible career paths include a teacher, a social worker, a lawyer, a police officer and many more. You will gain many transferable skills such as constructing arguments, communication, debating and evaluation skills, as well as having a firm grip on current, worldwide events.



Optional
BTEC courses



BTEC Level 1 / Level 2 First Award Engineering

Exam Board: **Edexcel** ([qualifications.pearson.com](https://www.pearson.com/qualifications/edexcel))

Course outline

This course gives you the opportunity to gain a broad understanding and knowledge of the engineering sector. It provides underpinning knowledge, understanding and practical skills that reflect the needs of employers and higher / further education professionals. The course is balanced between theory and practical activities. It gives you the opportunity to enter potential employment within a wide range of engineering sectors such as mechanical, automotive and electrical.

Assessment details

75% controlled assessment, 25% examination. You will be assessed via an externally moderated computerised exam and through controlled assessment tasks. You will be expected to sit a 1 hour computerised exam on the Engineered World and complete two units of work. These units are split into Pass, Merit and Distinction tasks. It is vitally important that you have strong literacy skills as this course involves a lot of written work.

Additional information

BTEC Engineering encourages you to develop essential skills and attributes prized by employers, further education colleges and higher education institutions.



BTEC Level 2 First Award Information and Creative Technology

Exam Board: **Edexcel** ([qualifications.pearson.com](https://www.pearson.com/qualifications/edexcel))

Course outline

BTEC ICT is a vocational-based qualification that provides you with hands-on skills that can be used to go into industry or lead on to further education.

You will study some of the following units:

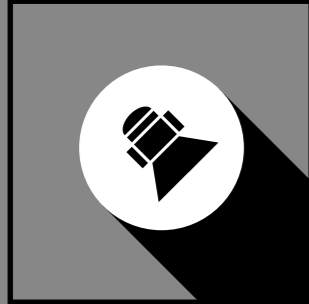
- **The online world**
- **Technology systems**
- **A digital portfolio**
- **Creating digital audio**
- **Creating digital graphics**
- **Creating digital video**

Assessment details

75% controlled assessment, 25% examination. You will be assessed through controlled assessment completed in lessons and an online examination.

Additional information

A BTEC ICT qualification can lead to further study in games, multimedia design and BTEC Nationals qualifications.



BTEC Level 2 First Award Performing Arts (Acting or Production)

Exam Board: **Edexcel** ([qualifications.pearson.com](https://www.pearson.com/qualifications/edexcel))

Course outline

BTEC Performing Arts is a very practical and developmental GCSE-equivalent qualification. You will give an audition-style acting performance or a technical presentation which is marked by the exam board. You will then write a letter of application for a fictitious arts job under controlled conditions. The remainder of the qualification is controlled assessment based and will enable you to explore a wide range of acting skills, techniques and styles from comic physical performances to serious scripted work and everything in between.

The flexibility of this award means that if you are studying acting you can work side-by-side with pupils who are working on technical skills such as lighting, create fantastic performances and experiment with your own creative style and abilities. Written controlled assessment work will be based on the practical work you undertake in class, making this a qualification which is based in learning by doing.

Assessment details

75% controlled assessment, 25% external assessment. You will be awarded a Pass, Merit, Distinction or Distinction* grade.

Additional information

You will go to see live theatre on school trips and will be expected to attend rehearsals outside lesson times (lunch/after school) when preparing for the performance exams.



BTEC International Level 2 Diploma Performing Arts (Dance)

Exam Board: **Edexcel** ([qualifications.pearson.com](https://www.pearson.com/qualifications/edexcel))

Course outline

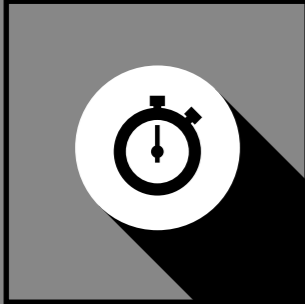
This course teaches you to rehearse, perform and choreograph dances. You will experience a variety of dance styles including urban dance featured in the West End, pop videos, pop acts' live performances, stage shows, movies and television programmes. You will also develop your knowledge of the social and historical features of dance.

Assessment details

75% internal practical and theory assessment, 25% external practical assessment. You are expected to perform independently and in a group in a performance that will be externally assessed by an examiner.

Additional information

BTEC Dance is suitable if you wish to explore a variety of dance styles.



BTEC Level 1 / Level 2 First Award Sport

Exam Board: **Edexcel** ([qualifications.pearson.com](https://www.pearson.com/qualifications/edexcel))

Course outline

The BTEC Sport course gives you a sound understanding of fitness principles, training methods and testing in Unit 1 as part of an externally-assessed exam. Unit 5 builds on this through controlled assessment enabling you to plan and complete a six-week training programme. Unit 4 builds on the first two units, helping you gain an understanding of the short and long term effects of exercise. Lastly, you will study Unit 2, a practically-assessed unit that teaches you how to develop skills and performance in two sports.

Assessment details

75% controlled assessment, 25% examination. The controlled assessment comprises of three controlled assessment based units, two starting in Year 9 and one in Year 10.

Additional information

BTEC Sport offers a practical, interactive and interesting approach to study. There is less exam pressure as three quarters of the qualification is controlled assessment based.

You will develop key skills that colleges and universities look for such as communication, leadership, self-organisation, teamwork and self-confidence.

A BTEC Sport qualification can lead to possible careers in the leisure industry, fitness instructing, sports massage and PE teaching.



Optional
Cambridge
National courses



Cambridge National Level 1 / Level 2 Certificate ICT

Exam Board: **OCR** (www.ocr.org.uk)

Course outline

The everyday use of ICT, from PCs to smartphones, now impacts all of our lives. The new Cambridge Nationals qualification in ICT reflects this and provides you with a solid understanding of the subject which you can use in your working lives. The three themes which will be covered are business information systems, creative and technical.

You will study the following units:

- **Understanding computer systems**
- **Using ICT to create business solutions**
- **Creating digital images**
- **Creating an interactive product using multimedia components**
- **Creating dynamic products using sound and vision**
- **Handling data using spreadsheets and databases**

Assessment details

75% controlled assessment, 25% examination. You will be assessed through controlled assessment completed in lessons and a written examination.

Additional information

The Cambridge Nationals Certificate in ICT is an alternative to GCSE ICT. This qualification can lead to further study in games and multimedia design.



Key Stage 4 Options 2016



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