



GCSE OPTIONS

2024-2025

Year 9 GCSE Options Introduction

Dear Year 9 Student,

This booklet contains Key Stage 4 subject curriculum information for both compulsory and optional subjects. Please read it carefully to help you prepare for your GCSEs and make suitable choices.

Below is a summary of the subject choices that you have to make.

KS4 Compulsory Subjects for all students

- English Language and Literature
- Mathematics
- 3 separate Science GCSEs (Biology, Chemistry and Physics)
- A Humanities Subject - **You must choose either Geography or History.**
- Either French, German or Spanish (**You may only choose a language that you have studied in Year 9 unless you are a native speaker. If this is the case, please contact us**)
- Core PE
- PSHE

KS4 Open Subjects (You must choose two open subjects to study)

- Fine Art
- Business
- Computer Science
- Design and Technology
- Drama
- Food Preparation and Nutrition
- Music
- PE (GCSE)
- Religious Studies
- or another Languages Subject (French, German or Spanish)*
- or another Humanities Subject (Geography or History)*

***NOTE: If you choose to study a second language or second humanity subject this will count as one of your 2 open subject choices.**

Timetables are constructed around student choices. We always try to ensure students get their choices but we cannot guarantee this, as this will depend on staffing and subject numbers. In the event that student choices are not possible, we will contact parents and students to discuss alternative options.

Your final options must be completed on your online options form by **Thursday 13th February 2025**. You will receive further information about how to submit your choices online in due course.

FINE ART

Examination Board: Edexcel

Aims and Outline of the Course:

Students will be expected to develop the following:

- Problem solving skills
- Imagination
- Practical skills in various media and disciplines
- The ability to communicate ideas and feelings visually
- The ability to make visual enquiry, through studies, collected reference and various forms of visual recording
- The ability to assess their own work and that of others, making constructive criticism and clear judgments
- Understanding of art, craft and design across time and place.

Course Outline:

Students will be expected to explore practical work in a range of different artistic disciplines. This may include the following:

- Painting
- Sculpture
- Photography
- Printing
- Textiles
- Mixed Media

Subject Specific Skills Taught:

There are many skills, techniques, materials, processes and concepts that are essential to all areas of study in Fine Art. In addition to any specialist requirements listed under the chosen area(s) of study, students should develop a practical knowledge and understanding of:

- The use of formal elements and visual communication through a variety of approaches
- The use of observational skills to record from sources and communicate ideas
- Characteristics of media and materials such as wet and dry, malleable, resistant and digital
- Properties of colour and light such as hue, tint, saturation and tone
- The effects and creative potential of combining and manipulating different two-dimensional and three-dimensional materials and media
- The use of digital and/or non-digital applications.

Drawing can be applied in all its forms across traditions and technologies, and it can be critical and accurate as well as explorative and experimental. Drawing takes many forms from two-dimensional mark-making, to lines made using materials to define three-dimensional space. Drawing is essential to recording from life, describing a mood or emotion, as well as capturing an expression, atmosphere or tension.

Assessment

Coursework	5 terms	60% of marks
Examination	10 hours	40% of marks

Career Opportunities:

Develop transferable skills – students will learn to:

- Apply a creative approach to problem solving
- Consider and develop original ideas from initiation to realisation
- Analyse critically their own work and the work of others
- Express individual thoughts and choices confidently
- Take risks, experiment and learn from mistakes.
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There are many career opportunities for students with GCSE and A Level Art. Most employers require creative thinking and all careers with 'design' in the title will need Art or Design Technology A Level, e.g. Fashion Design, Furniture Design, Illustrator, Animator, Architecture, Photographer or Theatre Design.

Students must have Art GCSE to progress to Art A Level.

Many of the careers listed above require students to study an Art and Design Foundation course prior to studying on a degree course. Students will need an Art portfolio for interviews at Art College. The A Level Art courses running at Weald of Kent will provide students with the necessary portfolio. GCSE Art and Design is a prerequisite of the A Level Art and Design course.

BUSINESS

Examination Board: Pearson Edexcel

Aims and outline of the Course:

Studying Business helps students learn more about the world around them, how businesses are set up and what makes them successful. Using case studies, Business ensures that students have knowledge, understanding and experience of the real world of business organisation. The subject content attempts to match the way the world of business operates and includes the ownership and control of business, the aims and objectives of business, the marketing mix, the management of people and resources within a business and the external environment.

In Year 10, we use a project-based approach for part of the course, which enables students to share and develop their business ideas, applying their knowledge to a business of their creation. Students will learn about the dynamic environment in which businesses operate and appreciate the many varied factors that impact upon business activity and behaviour in the twenty-first century. They will develop an understanding of the role of the wider economic environment and financial concepts such as shares, loans and risk.

Subject Specific Skills Taught:

- Problem solving e.g. researching business problems
- Decision making within a business context
- Evaluating qualitative and quantitative data
- Creativity and imagination within a business context e.g. simulation exercises based on Apprentice and Dragons' Den-style tasks
- Business communication.

Outline of Assessment Procedure:

Theme 1: Investigating Small Businesses (50% of total GCSE)

Topics included under this theme are:

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

Theme 2: Building a Business (50% of total GCSE)

Topics included under this theme are:

- Growing the business
- Making marketing decisions
- Making operational decisions
- Making financial decisions
- Making Human Resources decisions.

Business is assessed through two 1 hour 45 minutes external examinations at the end of the course.

Career Opportunities:

Business is useful and relevant for any type of organisation or career choice. All students are likely to work for, or run, a business and so will find it helpful to understand more about how businesses start-up, operate and grow. There are particular links to careers in marketing, finance, production and human resource management.

The following link will take you to the examination board specification:

<http://qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/edexcel-gcses/business-2017.html>

Tutor2u offer a short online course introducing Edexcel GCSE Business, which can be accessed here:

<https://ondemand.tutor2u.net/students/getting-started-edexcel-gcse-business>

COMPUTER SCIENCE

Examination Board: OCR

Aims and Outline of the Course:

We live in a digitised, computerised, programmable world, and to make sense of it, we need Computer Science. Technology is constantly changing and individuals will increasingly need to develop their knowledge in the fields of IT, computing and digital literacy.

Computer Science prepares young people for a world that does not yet exist, involving technologies that have not yet been invented, and that present technical and ethical challenges which we are not yet aware of.

Computer Science will help you to develop the skills that colleges, universities and employers are looking for – and they will prove valuable for the rest of your life.

Computing students learn logical reasoning, algorithmic thinking and problem solving. These are all concepts and skills that are invaluable well beyond the computing classroom. Computer science is such an exciting subject and can provide you with huge opportunities across lots of industries. Almost any career or further education course requires good computer skills.

Some examples of possible career choices are: Cyber Security Analyst, Games Developer, Graphic Design, Engineering, Science, Mathematics, Medicine, Software Engineering, Teaching, Web development and lots more.

GCSE Computer Science - OCR (J277)

Students will be familiar with the use of computers and some programming from their Computing lessons at Key Stage 3. The GCSE course builds on this, developing critical thinking, analysis and problem-solving skills through the study of computer programming.

For many learners, it will be a fun and interesting way to develop these skills, which can be transferred to other subjects and even applied in day-to-day life. The course consists of two units and is equivalent to one GCSE. The chosen programming language used throughout this course is Python.

Assessment:

Please see the table below to see how you will be assessed in this course.

Content Overview	Assessment Overview	
Computer Systems <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Systems Architecture• Memory and Storage• Computer networks, connections and protocols• Network Security• System Software	1 hour 30 minutes written paper (no calculators allowed) 80 marks	50% of the total GCSE

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ethical, legal, cultural and environmental impacts of digital technology 		
<p>Computational thinking, algorithms and programming</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Algorithms Programming fundamentals Producing robust programs Boolean logic Programming languages and Integrated Development Environments 	<p>1 hour 30 minutes written paper (no calculators allowed)</p> <p>80 marks</p>	<p>50% of the total GCSE</p>

A-levels, Courses and Careers

The core skill-set of Computer Science is independent of new technologies and programming techniques. Therefore, studying a GCSE in Computer Science will develop your knowledge and skills and provide the progression to A-Level Computer Science, IT related apprenticeships and degree level courses in mathematics, engineering, computing and science.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

Examination Board: AQA

Aims and Outline of the Course:

GCSE Design and Technology is an exciting, robust and engaging course.

This fresh, stimulating approach will prepare you to participate confidently and successfully in an increasingly technological world. You will gain awareness and learn from wider influences on Design and Technology including historical, social, cultural, environmental and economic factors. You will also get the opportunity to work creatively when designing and making and apply technical and practical expertise. You will study core technical and designing and making principles, including a broad range of design processes, materials techniques and equipment. You will also have the opportunity to study specialist technical principles in greater depth.

What's assessed?

- Core technical principles
- Specialist technical principles
- Designing and making principles

Content and Skills for the NEA

Paper 1	Non-exam assessment (NEA)
50% of Course	50% of Course
• Written exam: 2 hours	• 30–35 hours approx.
• 100 marks	• 100 marks

You need to produce a substantial design and make task.

Investigating	10 marks
Brief and Specification	10 marks
Designing	20 marks
Developing	20 marks
Making	20 marks
Analysing and evaluating.	20 marks

30 - 35 hours

20 pages

50% of GCSE

Contextual areas to be explored will be issued by the exam board on 1st June each year. You will need to:

- Take ownership of how you approach the task and make this clear in your portfolio of evidence.
- Produce a working prototype.
- Write your own brief based on the context.
- Focus on Woods, Metals and Plastics but all areas of DT are covered in the core theory element

Written Examination in Design and Technology

This comprises of Section A, multiple choice questions; Section B, an extended writing section; and Section C, questions around designing and wider design consideration such as ethical, social, moral and cultural implications. Scientific principles will be tested in a general context if properties of materials and conversion of raw material. 15% of the paper will be Maths applied to Design and Technology tasks such as costing materials, area, volume, Pythagoras, SOHCAHTOA, percentages and ratios.

Career Opportunities

There are many career opportunities for students with GCSE Design and Technology. An A Level in Design Technology enables you to apply for degree courses in Product Design; Industrial Design; Design Engineering: Engineering; Architecture; Interior Design; Interior Architecture; Theatre Design; Packaging Design; Graphic Design; Exhibition Design and Media promotions. Alternatively, you may wish to take an Apprenticeship in an engineering field. Design and Technology is often desirable if you wish to follow medicine due to the hand skills acquired. It is also a good companion to business as we study the manufacturing side of this and how market forces are affected by fashions and trends.

S.T.E.M - 10 Employability skills you gain from Design and Technology

Numeracy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Use numbers and data to support your projects.• Apply valuable It skills using a range of data representation• Apply budgeting skills to a project• Work on sizes, cutting list, material quantity's
Taking initiative and being self-motivated	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Follow instructions independently• Use creative problem-solving skills• Be resilient and not give up when problems arise• Work to deadlines and manage workload
Problem solving	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identify issues and quickly resolve them• Use Knowledge and experience when tackling problems• Develop and test possible solutions in a range of materials
Organisational skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Plan your work and rest schedule to meet deadline• Coordinate with clients and ensure all parts of the team are involved• Monitor and adjust progress to stay on track
Working under pressure to deadlines	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Meet deadlines and targets• Handle pressure that is a result of deadlines and targets• Ensure you are reliable and can be seen as a trusted person• Plan and prioritise importance of task to be completed
Valuing Diversity and difference	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Respect all members of a team• Value the skills and experience of all different people• Design in an inclusive way to ensure no disability, ethnicity or gender is discriminated against.
Ability to learn and adapt	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Engender a love of learning all new things• Learn from success and failure• Adapt to all problems you are faced with
Negotiation skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Think about what you and others want and need• Be fair in all situations
Communication and interpersonal skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Explain and present what you mean clearly written, verbal and diagrammatically• Presentation skills showing your ideas, through process, testing and conclusions• Talk to clients and interpret their needs to create a working final solution that still meets a market need.
Teamwork	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Understanding how to work and communicate effectively• Get things done quickly and work well with all parties involved in a project

DRAMA

Examination Board: EDUQAS

Aims and Outline of the Course:

Following a course in GCSE Drama will enable students to:

- Actively engage in the process of dramatic study in order to develop as effective and independent learners and as critical and reflective thinkers with enquiring minds;
- Work imaginatively and creatively in collaborative contexts, generating, developing and communicating ideas;
- Reflect on and evaluate their own work and the work of others;
- Develop and demonstrate competence in a range of practical, creative and performance skills;
- Develop a basis for their future role as active citizens in employment and society in general as well as for the possible further study of drama;
- Consider and explore the impact of social, historical and cultural influences on drama texts and activities.

Please note that it will be a compulsory factor of the course for students to attend performances, rehearsals and their own work showcases after normal school hours.

Course Structure:

Unit	Task Breakdown	Content
Component 1: Devising Theatre (internally assessed, non-examination assessment, 40% of qualification)	Task one: Devised Performance	Learners participate in the creation, development and performance of a piece of devised theatre using either the techniques of an influential theatre practitioner or a genre, in response to a stimulus set by EDUQAS/WJEC. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Internally assessed and externally moderated with task two.
	Task two: Supporting written evidence	Candidates will complete a written report on the practical work they completed in Task One, part of this is under formal supervision. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The report should include details on decision making; the inclusion of technical elements and the content of the piece and an evaluation of their own work and that of the group;• Internally assessed and externally moderated with task one.

<p>Component 2: Performing from a Text (externally assessed by a visiting examiner, 20% of qualification)</p>		<p>Candidates will be assessed on their acting skills focusing on 2 scenes from a published play.</p> <p>Learners participate in one performance using sections of text from both extracts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Externally assessed by a visiting examiner in April/May.
<p>Component 3: Interpreting Theatre (written examination, 40% of qualification)</p>	<p>SECTION A Set Text</p>	<p>Candidates will be assessed on their ability to analyse one set text as an actor, designer and director.</p>
	<p>SECTION B Live Theatre Review</p>	<p>Candidates will be assessed on their ability to answer one question requiring analysis and evaluation of a given aspect of a live theatre production seen during the course.</p>

Career Opportunities:

Performing; any career in Theatre or Television including production and design; the legal or education sectors. The course will also provide opportunities to develop skills for careers in any industry that relies on interaction with people and problem solving.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND ENGLISH LITERATURE

Examination Board: AQA

Aims and Outline of the Course:

The study of a wide range of literature, together with the acquisition of a variety of language skills, fosters your development as an articulate and sensitive member of society.

You will study literature including a play by Shakespeare, a selection of poetry, novels and plays. You will also have the opportunity to discuss and write about topical issues and aspects of the media. It is important to read widely and to develop your powers of expression both orally and in a written form.

The course provides a good foundation for A Level courses in English Literature, English Language, Media Studies and Theatre Studies, which are popular choices in the Sixth Form.

Subject Specific Skills Taught:

- Textual analysis
- Critical analysis
- Comparative analysis
- Personal response
- Writing for specific purposes
- Examination skills

Outline of Assessment Procedures:

English Language

External Assessment-100%

Paper 1: Explorations in Creative Reading and Writing

Paper 2: Writers' Viewpoints and Perspectives

What's assessed?

Paper One

Section A: Reading: one literature fiction text

Section B: Writing: descriptive or narrative writing

Assessed: written exam 1 hour 45 minutes, 50% of GCSE

Paper Two

Section A: Reading: one non-fiction and one literary non-fiction text

Section B: Writing: writing to present a viewpoint.

Assessed: written exam 1 hour 45 minutes, 50% of GCSE

Non-examination Assessment – Spoken Language (separate endorsement - 0% weighting of GCSE)

What's assessed?

- Presenting

- Responding to questions and feedback
- Use of Standard English

English Literature

External Assessment- 100%

Paper 1: Shakespeare and the 19th century novel

Paper 2: Modern Texts and Poetry

What's assessed?

Paper One

Section A: One question on Shakespeare play referring to an extract and the whole text.

Section B: One question on 19th Century novel referring to an extract and the whole text.

Assessed: written exam 1 hour 45 minutes, 40% of GCSE

Paper Two

Section A: One essay question on the Modern Text

Section B: One comparative question on poetry from an anthology studied.

Section C: Questions on unseen poetry.

Assessed: written exam 2 hour 15 minutes, 60% of GCSE

Career Opportunities:

A command of English is essential in all careers. English Language is a core subject and one that employers look for.

Further study in English would support a range of careers including journalism, marketing, teaching, broadcasting, publishing, advertising and legal professions

FOOD PREPARATION AND NUTRITION

Examination Board: EDUQAS

Aims and Outline of the Course:

Food Preparation and Nutrition will equip you with the knowledge, understanding and skills required to cook and apply the principles of food science, nutrition and healthy eating. It encourages you to cook, enables you to make informed decisions about food and nutrition and allows you to acquire knowledge in order to be able to feed yourself and others affordably and nutritiously, now and later in life. This course has been designed to enable you to experience a balance between practical and theoretical knowledge and understanding.

What will I study and how will I be assessed?

Year 10:

You will focus on Component 1 Principles of Food and Nutrition. Each unit will be studied using a variety of methods including fortnightly practical cooking lessons, regular science experiments and the completion of written evidence to accompany and reinforce the learning. You will explore each of the following areas through six different commodities.

- Principles of nutrition
- Diet and good health
- The science of food
- Where food comes from
- Cooking and food preparation

Year 11

You will focus on the Non-Exam Assessments: Component 2 Food Preparation and Nutrition in Action.

Assessment 1: The Food Investigation (September to November)

Approximately 8 hours' work equalling 15% of your final GCSE grade.

This task will show your understanding of the working characteristics of ingredients including the functional and chemical properties of the ingredients investigated.

Assessment 2: Food preparation assessment (December to February)

20 hours' work including a 3-hour practical session equalling 35% of your final GCSE grade.

You will plan, prepare, cook and present a selection of dishes, to meet particular requirements such as a dietary need, lifestyle choice or specific context.

Written Examination on food preparation and nutrition (June)

This component will consist of two sections of questions equalling 50% of the GCSE grade.

Section A: questions based on stimulus material.

Section B: structured, short and extended response questions to assess content related to Food

Preparation and Nutrition.

Career Opportunities:

This course will enable you to make an informed decision about a wide range of further learning opportunities and career pathways. There are many university courses that you could progress to including Food Science, Food Technology, Nutrition, Dietician or another Food related degree. You can take up an apprenticeship within the food industry and get sponsorship to university via this route. The food industry is vast and contains many multinational companies leading to opportunities to travel and work abroad. There is also a huge drive for doctors to study food and nutrition and cooking as part of their training so that they can support their patients in leading healthier lifestyles and having better health outcomes.

GEOGRAPHY

Examination Board: AQA

<p>Paper 1:</p> <p>Living with the physical environment</p>	<p>Paper 2:</p> <p>Challenges in the Human Environment</p>	<p>Paper 3:</p> <p>Geographical applications</p>
<p>Content –</p> <p>Section A: The challenge of natural hazards</p> <p>Section B: Physical landscapes in the UK</p> <p>Section C: The living world</p> <p>Geographical skills – Description, interpretation and analysis of resources.</p>	<p>Content –</p> <p>Section A: Urban issues and challenges</p> <p>Section B: The changing economic world</p> <p>Section C: The challenge of resource management</p> <p>Geographical skills – Description, interpretation and analysis of resources</p>	<p>Content –</p> <p>Section A: Issue evaluation</p> <p>Section B: Fieldwork</p> <p>Geographical skills – Description, interpretation and evaluation of methods and resources</p>
<p>Assessment –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1hour 30mins written exam • 88 marks (3 of which are SPaG) • 35% of GCSE 	<p>Assessment –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1hour 30mins written exam • 88 marks (3 of which are SPaG) • 35% of GCSE 	<p>Assessment –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1hour 30mins written exam • 76 marks (6 of which are SPaG) • 30% of GCSE • Pre-release resources booklet made available before Paper 3 exam.
<p>Questions –</p> <p>Section A: Answer all questions (33 marks)</p> <p>Section B: Answer all questions (25 marks)</p> <p>Section C: Answer any two questions from questions 3, 4 and 5 (30 marks)</p> <p>Questions range from 1 mark to 9 marks</p>	<p>Questions –</p> <p>Section A: Answer all questions (33 marks)</p> <p>Section B: Answer all questions (30 marks)</p> <p>Section C: Answer question 3 and one question from 4, 5 or 6 (25 marks)</p> <p>Questions range from 1 mark to 9 marks</p>	<p>Questions –</p> <p>Section A: Answer all questions (37 marks)</p> <p>Section B: Answer all questions (39 marks)</p> <p>Questions range from 1 mark to 9 marks</p>

Question types: Multiple-choice, short answer, levels of response and extended prose	Question types: Multiple-choice, short answer, levels of response and extended prose	Question types: Multiple-choice, short answer, levels of response and extended prose
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Career Opportunities:					
Energy and utilities	Agriculture	Education	Science and research	Public sector	Consultancy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Petroleum engineer - Alternative energy engineer - Hydro-energy engineer - Renewable energy analyst - Geochemist - Geophysicist 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Farmer - Tree surgeon - Farm worker - Ecologist - Food security officer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Teacher - Private tutor - University lecturer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Research scientist - Renewable energy scientist - City planner <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Urban regeneration - Geologist - Statistician - Climate change researcher 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Member of Parliament - Civil servant - Environmental health officer - Security services - Police force 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Management consultant - Data analyst - IT consultant <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Finance - Security - Think tanks

HISTORY

Examination Board: AQA

Aims and Outline of the course:

AQA GCSE History enables students to study different aspects of the past, so that they can engage with key issues such as conflict, understand what drives change and how the past influences the present.

The GCSE History content comprises the following elements: one period study, one thematic study, one wider world depth study and one British depth study including the historic environment.

Course Content and Assessment:

GCSE History students will take assessments in both of the following papers:

Paper 1: Understanding the modern world

Paper 2: Shaping the nation

Paper 1: Understanding the modern world

Section A: Period studies

1D: America, 1920-1973: Opportunity and inequality

Part one: American People and 'The Boom'.

Part two: Bust – Americans' experiences of the Depression and the New Deal.

Part three: Post-war America.

Section B: Section B: Wider world depth studies

Conflict and tension between East and West, 1945–1972

Part one: The origins of the Cold War

Part two: The development of the Cold War

Part three: Transformation of the Cold War

Paper 2: Shaping the nation

Section A: Thematic Studies

2A Britain: Health and the people: c1000 to the present day

Part one: Medicine stands still

Part two: The beginnings of change

Part three: A revolution in medicine

Part four: Modern medicine

Section B: British depth studies including the historic environment

Elizabethan England, c1568–1603

Part one: Elizabeth's court and Parliament

Part two: Life in Elizabethan times.

Part three: Troubles at home and abroad

Part four: The historic environment of Elizabethan England

Assessment

Two written exams: 2 hours each

84 marks (including 4 marks for spelling, punctuation and grammar)

50% of GCSE Questions

Section A – four compulsory questions (40 marks)

Section B – four compulsory questions (40 marks)

Career Opportunities:

History is valued highly by employers as it gives students valuable transferable skills such as analytical and critical reasoning, oral and written communication and research skills - a history degree is a good launch pad for a wide range of careers, including law, the public sector, business management and finance.

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES (French, German and Spanish)

Examination Board: AQA

At Weald of Kent, we offer Modern Foreign Languages at GCSE level in French, German and Spanish.

Aims and Outline of the Course

The Languages department at Weald of Kent Grammar School aims to foster a love of language in our students and provide them with practical communicative skills for use in the future. We seek to develop students' curiosity about the world around them and the richness of the cultures of the people who live in it. Our students study grammar and linguistic structures that enhance their knowledge of their own language, and practise a variety of skills within our curriculum that can be applied to a wide range of future pathways. Languages provide a Unique Selling Point (USP) for students, to the extent that the best universities can be reluctant to accept students onto degree courses if they do not have a language at GCSE. We aim to equip students with excellent communicative abilities and give them opportunities to practise these in a variety of contexts. In doing so, and by implementing enjoyable and engaging teaching methods such as games, songs and interactive activities, students gain a thorough grounding in the language they will need, both to enable them to achieve their potential at GCSE, and to move forward to A Level.

What are the benefits of GCSE Modern Foreign Languages?

The new GCSE specifications for Languages allow students to:

- develop their ability to communicate confidently and coherently in speech and writing, conveying what they want to say with increasing accuracy;
- express and develop thoughts and ideas spontaneously and fluently;
- understand and infer information from a range of written and spoken passages;
- deepen their knowledge about how language works;
- develop language-learning skills both for immediate use and to prepare them for further language study and use in school, higher education or employment;
- develop awareness and understanding of the culture and identity of the countries and communities where the language is spoken.

The French, German and Spanish GCSE courses cover topics based around the three areas of experience prescribed by the exam board, namely:

Theme 1: People and lifestyle

- Topic 1: Identity and relationships with others
- Topic 2: Healthy living and lifestyle
- Topic 3: Education and work

Theme 2: Popular culture

- Topic 1: Free-time activities
- Topic 2: Customs, festivals and celebrations
- Topic 3: Celebrity culture

Theme 3: Communication and the world around us

- Topic 1: Travel and tourism, including places of interest
- Topic 2: Media and technology
- Topic 3: The environment and where people live

Exams consist of four equally weighted externally examined papers based on the following skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing.

Career Opportunities

More and more businesses and companies are looking to employ staff with skills in languages other than English, in addition to any other skills they may be able to offer the company, so knowledge of languages will certainly help enhance your CV – it is an invaluable USP which sets employees apart from their competitors.

Languages are useful in such career areas as: Engineering; Translating and Interpreting; Journalism; Teaching; Commerce and Trade; International Law and Diplomacy; International Banking and Financial Services; Broadcasting; Librarianship; Marketing; as well as providing an additional skill in any career in industry. Additionally, national data from the Higher Education Statistics Agency indicate that Modern Languages graduates have one of the highest rates of employment across all subject areas.

MATHEMATICS

Examination Board: Pearson EDEXCEL

Pearson Edexcel level1/2 GCSE (9-1) in Mathematics (1MA1)

Aims and Outline of the course:

Assessment: The Examination consists of *three* written papers, two calculator papers and one non-calculator paper. Each paper is 1 hour and 30 minutes long. ***There is no coursework.***

It is anticipated that all students will be entered for the Higher Tier (grades 9-4, where 9 is the highest grade available.)

The specification followed is consistent with the requirements of the English National Curriculum for Key stage 4. The course aims to enable students to:

- develop fluent knowledge, skills and understanding of mathematical methods and concepts;
- acquire, select and apply mathematical techniques to solve problems;
- reason mathematically, make deductions and inferences, and draw conclusions;
- comprehend, interpret and communicate mathematical information in a variety of forms appropriate to the information and context.

Three overarching strands of the course

AO1 Use and apply standard techniques

AO2 Reason, interpret and communicate mathematically (including mathematical proof)

AO3 Solve problems within mathematics and in other contexts

The marks for each paper will be will be distributed across the strands as follows:

AO1 40% AO2 30% and AO3 30%

The knowledge and understanding is broken down into the following areas of mathematics

- Number
- Algebra
- Ratio, Proportion and rates of Change
- Geometry and Measures
- Data Handling
- Probability

A more detailed explanation of each of the areas above is available in the specification. This is available on line from Pearson Edexcel at www.edexcel.com

Career Opportunities:

Mathematics opens up various employment opportunities and career paths. Such as:

Accountancy, Aerospace and Defence Industry, Automobile Design and Industry, Bioscience, Business Support Services, Chemical Industry, Consultancies, Education, Engineering, Environment Agencies, Exploration Geophysics, Fashion and Design, Financial Services, Food and Drink Industry, Government,

Healthcare, Insurance, Investment Banking, IT and Computing, Manufacturing Industries, Media, Metals and Mineral Industries and Extraction, Operational Research, Pharmaceuticals, Recruitment, Academic Research, Telecommunications, Transport and Travel Industry and Utilities (gas, electric and water).

For more information visit the Maths Careers website at <http://www.mathscareers.org.uk/article/who-employs-mathematicians/>

Level 2 Extended Mathematics Certificate

Examination Board: Pearson EDEXCEL

At the start of Year 10, a number of the top performing classes will be given the opportunity to study the Extended Mathematics Certificate. This is a two-year course which runs in parallel to the standard GCSE and is taught within their regular Mathematics lessons.

Assessment: The examination will be taken in year 11 and consists of two 75-minute written papers, one non-calculator and one calculator paper. There is no coursework.

At the end of the course students will be awarded a grade of Distinction *, Distinction, Merit or Pass. This grade will not count towards their average GCSE score but is classed at the same level as a GCSE.

The different strands of Mathematics and the distribution of marks are exactly the same as the GCSE qualification above.

Aims of the Course

Challenge students to dive deeper into key concepts.

Encourage stretch and enjoyment and help students to achieve their full potential.

Provide relevant, foundational knowledge that builds upon what students already know.

Ease the transition to Key Stage 5 qualifications.

The knowledge and understanding is broken down into the following areas of Mathematics

- Number
- Algebra
- Ratio, Proportion and rates of Change
- Geometry and Measures
- Probability

Over 50% of the assessment will be based on Algebra.

MUSIC

Examination Board: Eduqas

Aims and Outline of the Course:

The Eduqas Music GCSE course encourages an integrated approach to the three distinct disciplines of **performing, composing** and **appraising** through four interrelated areas of study. The four areas of study are designed to develop knowledge and understanding of music through the study of a variety of genres and styles in a wider context. The Western Classical Tradition forms the basis of Musical Forms and Devices (area of study 1), and learners should take the opportunity to explore these forms and devices further in the other three areas of study. Music for Ensemble (area of study 2) allows learners to look more closely at texture and sonority. Film Music (area of study 3) and Popular Music (area of study 4) provide an opportunity to look at contrasting styles and genres of music.

There are no previous learning requirements for this specification. Any requirements set for entry to a course based on this specification are at the school/college's discretion. This specification builds on subject content which is typically taught at key stage 3 and provides a suitable foundation for the study A level music.

Subject Specific Skills Taught:

The Eduqas GCSE in Music offers a broad and coherent course of study which encourages learners to:

- Engage actively in the process of music study
- Develop performing skills individually and in groups to communicate musically with fluency and control of the resources used
- Develop composing skills to organise musical ideas and make use of appropriate resources
- Recognise links between the integrated activities of performing, composing and appraising and how this informs the development of music
- Broaden musical experience and interests, develop imagination and foster creativity
- Develop knowledge, understanding and skills needed to communicate effectively as musicians
- Develop awareness of a variety of instruments, styles and approaches to performing and composing
- Develop awareness of music technologies and their use in the creation and presentation of music
- Recognise contrasting genres, styles and traditions of music, and develop some awareness of musical chronology
- Develop as effective and independent learners with enquiring minds
- Reflect upon and evaluate their own and others' music
- Engage with and appreciate the diverse heritage of music, in order to promote personal, social, intellectual and cultural development.

Opportunities – What we can offer you:

- Exciting performance opportunities which can be led by you, including regular participation in concerts, as well as masterclasses and workshops with world class musicians.
- Composition workshops with professional composers to enable you to develop the way you express yourself through music.
- An opportunity to extend your knowledge and understanding by exploring a variety of different music from many cultures and time periods.
- Extra-curricular trips and visits – we attend concerts and masterclasses and plan developmental trips to places of musical interest.

Transferrable Skills

- To be successful in any area of life you will need independent learning skills and music can teach you this through expert guidance and regular practice on your chosen instrument or voice. Music will help develop your self-discipline and initiative, a key skill which every individual needs.
- We can help you develop your ability to express yourself articulately, to make coherent and compelling arguments through debate, analysis and essay writing skills. This will give you confidence as an individual in other disciplines.
- We will also look to help you develop your leadership skills through performance management

What we are looking for

- Your skill level will be significant (you will need to be approximately Grade 3 standard on your chosen instrument by the end of year 11), but the attitude, enthusiasm and curiosity you demonstrate is key.

Outline of Assessment Procedures:

Overall Breakdown: Coursework 60%, Exam Paper 40%

Unit 1: Performing (30%)

- This involves the **solo performance of one piece** and **one group performance piece** on **any instrument or voice**.
- There is no official examination for this, and you have **free choice** for both pieces of work.
- All performing is done at school or may include out of school performances with your music teacher present if students wish.

Unit 2: Composing (30%)

- This involves **two compositions**.
- There is no official examination for this, and you have to complete a **free composition** and a composition **set to a brief by the exam board**.
- All composing must be done in school.

Unit 3: Listening and Appraising, 40%

- Candidates answer **8 questions** in a **1 hour and 15 minutes exam** based on the knowledge and study music from the **Areas of Study**.
- Questions will come from the exploration of a variety of styles from the Areas of Study listed:
 - Area of Study 1 – Musical Forms and Devices
 - Area of Study 2 – Music for Ensemble
 - Area of Study 3 - Film music
 - Area of Study 4 – Popular Music

Career Opportunities

- Careers in music vary from anything to do with performance, composition, teaching or production to management, advertising and
- The skills inherent in the musical discipline are looked on favourably within higher education (particularly Oxbridge candidates) and employers in highly respected fields including law, medicine and business.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION (GCSE)

Examination board: AQA

Aims and Outline of the Course:

The AQA GCSE PE qualification requires students to develop their knowledge and understanding of physical education and physical activity in relation to balanced, healthy lifestyles.

It includes,

1. Anatomy and Physiology.
2. Biomechanics.
3. How and why people take part in physical activity.
4. Principles of exercise and fitness.
5. Personal health and well-being, healthy active lifestyle.
6. Sport psychology.
7. Sport and Society.

The course is a sound base for anyone looking to study A-Level Physical Education during Years 12 and 13.

Outline of Assessment Procedure:

THEORY Written paper 1 – 78 marks <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Applied anatomy and physiology• Movement analysis• Physical training• Use of data Written paper 2 – 78 marks <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sports psychology• Socio-cultural influences• Health, fitness and well-being• Use of data	 Paper 1 - 1 hour 15 minutes Paper 2 - 1 hour 15 minutes	 60%
PRACTICAL - 75 marks <ul style="list-style-type: none">- 1 team sport- 1 individual- 1 free choice	We advise that students are training and competing regularly in at least one sport outside of school. In lesson time, we will cover Netball and Trampolining. Students will have the opportunity to attend a Rock-Climbing trip.	30%

COURSEWORK – 25 marks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Analysis and evaluation of performance to bring about improvement in one activity. 	Focussing on your main sport.	10%

Career Opportunities:

Outdoor Pursuits; Leisure and Recreation Management; Sports Science; Physiotherapy and Sports Therapy; Teaching and Performing; Sports Psychology.

RELIGIOUS STUDIES

Examination Board: Edexcel

Syllabus: 1RB0: Religious Studies B: Beliefs in Action

Area of study 1: Religion and Ethics (Christianity focus)

Area of study 2: Religion, Peace and Conflict (Islam focus)

Aims and Outline of the Course

- To stimulate interest in and enthusiasm for a study of religion
- To identify and explore questions about the meaning of life
- To reflect on religious and other responses to moral issues

Components

The course comprises eight units. The units studied are:

Religion and Ethics (Christianity)

- Christian beliefs
- Marriage and the Family
- Living the Christian Life
- Matters of Life and Death

Religion, Peace and Conflict (Islam)

- Muslim beliefs
- Crime and Punishment
- Living the Muslim Life
- Peace and Conflict

Subject specific skills taught

- Religious language, terms and concepts
- Evaluation of different points of view
- Analysis of sources of authority and beliefs
- Sensitivity, tolerance and discernment

Outline of Assessment Procedures

Written examination, 100%. Two papers of 1 hour 45 minutes each

Career Opportunities:

Teaching & Education; Journalism; Law; Human Resources; Social Work; Therapy; Business – in fact, any career path which involves working with people.

SCIENCE

Examination board: AQA

Aims and Outline of the Course

Students are taught the separate sciences of Biology, Chemistry and Physics from Year 9 through to Year 11.

The majority of students will follow the Triple Science programme which leads to separate GCSE grades in each of the three sciences. This gives a solid foundation for those students wanting to go on to take A Level Sciences as well as developing critical thinking skills and learning more complex ideas. The Triple Science programme goes into more depth than other science courses and covers more content. For some students, it is more appropriate for them to move to the Trilogy Combined Science pathway in Year 11 where they will still continue to study all three Sciences, but the content is reduced and the exams lead to two combined GCSE grades.

Practical work is at the heart of science, and questions in the written exams will draw upon the knowledge and understanding that students have gained when carrying out specified practical activities. These questions will count for at least 15% of the overall marks for both qualifications. Many of the examination questions will also focus on investigative skills and how well students can apply what they know to practical situations, often in novel contexts.

Assessment. This will be in the form of written papers at the end of Year 11. Questions might include multiple choice, structured, closed short answer and open response.

Triple

Biology	Paper 1 (50% of GCSE): Written exam: 1 hour 45 minutes Topics 1–4: Cell Biology; Organisation; Infection and Response and Bioenergetics.
	Paper 2 (50% of GCSE): Written exam: 1 hour 45 minutes Topics 5–7: Homeostasis and Response; Inheritance, Variation and Evolution and Ecology.
Chemistry	Paper 1 (50% of GCSE): Written exam: 1 hour 45 minutes Topics 1–5: Atomic Structure and the Periodic Table; Bonding, Structure, and the Properties of Matter; Quantitative Chemistry, Chemical Changes and Energy Changes.
	Paper 2 (50% of GCSE): Written exam: 1 hour 45 minutes Topics 6–10: The Rate and Extent of Chemical Change; Organic Chemistry; Chemical Analysis, Chemistry of the Atmosphere and Using Resources.

Physics	Paper 1 (50% of GCSE): Written exam: 1 hour 45 minutes Topics 1-4: Energy, Electricity, Particle Model of Matter, Atomic Structure
	Paper 2 (50% of GCSE): Written exam: 1 hour 45 minutes Topics 5-8: Forces, Waves, Magnetism and Electromagnetism, Space Physics.

Further information

<https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/science/gcse>

Career Opportunities:

Taking science at GCSE will keep open a variety of career options for the future, providing students with a wide range of transferable skills highly regarded by employers (such as **an ability to approach problems in an analytical and logical way**), whether in a science related career or not. All science A-Levels are viewed as “facilitating” subjects for any degree level course by Russell Group Universities.

After studying A-Level sciences, students could go on to pursue a variety of worthwhile, rewarding and challenging careers. These include: Engineering; Veterinary; Biomedical Science; Medicine; Pharmacology; Analytical Chemistry; Food Science; Optometry; Sports and Exercise Science; Medical Physics; **Nutrition**; Marine Biology; Materials Science and Forensic Science to name but a few.