

# Introduction from the Executive Headteacher

## Making the most of KS4

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Well done Year 9, you have now reached the exciting point of your Key Stage 3 of exploring and making decisions about GCSE subjects to study during Key Stage 4! Whilst this is exciting, it might also feel a little daunting. The Options Process we have in place in School, will help support you, as will your parents/carers.

Our Core Curriculum ensures breadth and balance of facilitating subjects that you will continue to study during Years 10 and 11. Most of these core subjects, such as Maths, English and the Sciences will end with GCSE results in August 2028, but you will also study non-examined subjects that are just as important such as PaCE. You will also select optional subjects to study.

Choose your option subjects for the **right** reasons. Base your decisions on your strengths; what you enjoy most and what you are good at – this will set you up for the greatest success. You will be studying your options for two years and it is especially important that you pick subjects you are interested in and enthusiastic about.

You may or may not have an idea of what your future looks like. If you do, that might suggest subjects to take; if you do not, that does not matter as it will be your GCSE grades that will have the biggest influence on your future options, not your subject choices. Also remember that people change their minds about future careers, and what you think now, may not be the same in years to come. The Core Curriculum is broad and balanced enough to cater for you changing your mind, so do not fret about this. Do not base your option choices on subjects your friends are going to take; there is no guarantee that you will be in the same class. Nor should you opt for a subject because you like/dislike a teacher as that person may not be your teacher next year.



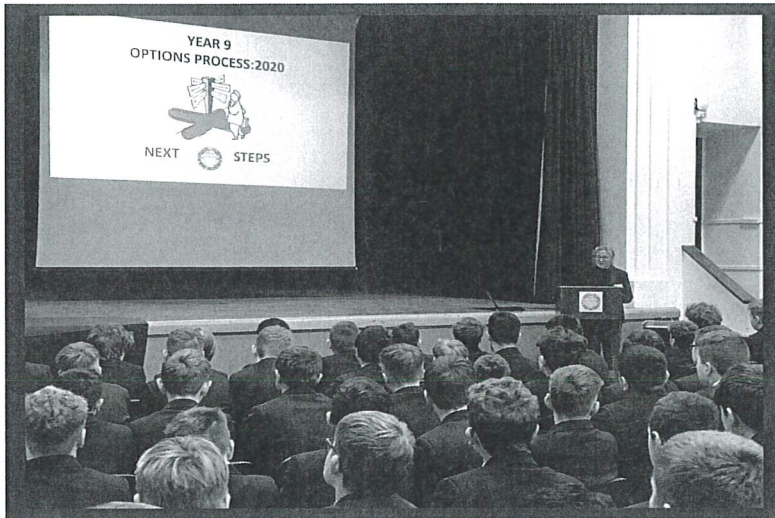
You already know a lot about many of the option subjects as you have studied them in Years 7 – 9. All subjects are different at GCSE! Learning becomes deeper and more challenging (which is a good thing as it means we are gaining a deeper understanding) so even if you think you know about those subjects, explore them through the option process to make sure they really are a good fit for you. There are also subjects that are new to you and these should be explored thoroughly too, even if you think you do not want to do them (you never know – you might find something surprising) and especially if you think you absolutely do want to study them (you never know – they might not be what you are expecting!) In short, keep an open mind, explore everything, and then make your option choices!

You will have two years of learning these subjects and the intense pressure, at the end of Year 11 of sitting your examinations within just a few short weeks. You must become adept at (regularly) retrieving the knowledge and skills you have been taught and answering examination questions appropriately if you are going to do yourself justice. You will need systems in place to support that, and that will be much easier to do when the subject is something you are good at, and you enjoy.

I am confident that with the support of the School's Option Process, your family, teachers, and friends that you will make the right option choices for you and have a successful Key Stage 4.

Good luck!

M K Anderson



# GCSE Options Choices 2026

One of the first big decisions that you have to make in your school life is choosing your options subjects for Years 10 and 11. For some of you this is relatively easy, either because you already know which subjects you enjoy and succeed at, or because you already have a particular career in mind. For most students, however, the options choices are challenging because this is your first move into the adult world. You will need to give this matter some careful thought before choosing.

It is important to keep these options choices in perspective. You will still study a wide range of subjects in Years 10 and 11, so we are not asking you to decide exactly what you want to do for the rest of your life. Most people carry on studying and learning throughout their working lives. This is the start of a very long process of lifelong learning.

## Aims of the process

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By the end of the process you will:

1. Find out more about yourself, your strengths and weaknesses.
2. Understand where you can receive support throughout this process.
3. Find out about the courses available.
4. Match your interests, skills and abilities with subjects you should (or should not) study.
5. Make an informed decision about your final options choices.



## An informed decision

Throughout the options process you will receive many sources of information and it is important that you consider as many of these as possible in order to make an **informed decision**. Rushing this process and disregarding advice is not a good idea as changing options once they have started can prove difficult or impossible.

However, do not worry - you are not on your own in making your options choices. You have been, and will continue to be, given advice in school from your Form Tutor and subject teachers. There are many useful sources of information on courses and careers, including the School Library, Unifrog and the internet. You should take the chance to talk through your choices and dilemmas with as many interested and informed adults as possible, or consult students who are currently taking the subjects, some of whom may be in your vertical forms. Above all, your parents will give you support through this important process.

If you would like an appointment with our Careers Guidance Advisor, please email Mrs Hoyles. You will need to prepare for any such appointment beforehand.

## Options Timeline

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The options process is carefully designed to ensure that you get the best possible support at the most important times of the year. Below is an outline of the key dates of the process:

| Date                         | Event                   | Details                                                                                   |
|------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Thursday 15<br>January 2026  | GCSE Options<br>Evening | An opportunity for you and your son to receive information about the options process      |
| Thursday 12<br>February 2026 | Progress Evening        | An opportunity to discuss and to finalise options plans with your son's subject teachers. |
| Thursday<br>5 March 2026     | Options Deadline        | Students to submit their final Options Choices.                                           |

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## Options Choices

Throughout Years 10 and 11, you must study the following compulsory curriculum in the top table.

You will also study four of the GCSE options from the bottom table.

| <b>Key Stage 4 Curriculum: 60 periods over 2 weeks</b>       |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |                                                                                  |
|--------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Compulsory Curriculum</b>                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |                                                                                  |
| <b>Mathematics</b>                                           | The top set are accelerated to also take Further Maths, as determined by the Maths Department.                                                                                                                                                      | <b>= 36 PERIODS</b><br><br><b>OUT OF 60</b><br><b>PER 2 WEEK</b><br><b>CYCLE</b> |
| <b>English Language</b>                                      | Both qualifications are covered by the same English teacher.                                                                                                                                                                                        |                                                                                  |
| <b>English Literature</b>                                    |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |                                                                                  |
| <b>Biology</b>                                               | All students are taught by specialist teachers in each subject, which are combined as a double GCSE award. Some students, as determined by the Science Department, are accelerated to sit examinations to be awarded three separate qualifications. |                                                                                  |
| <b>Chemistry</b>                                             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |                                                                                  |
| <b>Physics</b>                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |                                                                                  |
| <b>Core PE</b>                                               | This is not examined.                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |                                                                                  |
| <b>Personal Development, PaCE and EPR</b>                    | This is not examined..                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |                                                                                  |
| <b>Optional Curriculum: Select 4 (plus 2 reserves) from:</b> |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |                                                                                  |
| <b>Art</b>                                                   | *MFL should be the current Modern Foreign Language that you are studying. It is our strong recommendation that students opt for a language at GCSE given the dimension, breadth and skill set it develops.                                          | <b>= 24 PERIODS</b><br><br><b>OUT OF 60</b><br><b>PER 2 WEEK</b><br><b>CYCLE</b> |
| <b>Business Studies</b>                                      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |                                                                                  |
| <b>Computer Science</b>                                      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |                                                                                  |
| <b>DT Product Design</b>                                     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |                                                                                  |
| <b>Geography</b>                                             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |                                                                                  |
| <b>History</b>                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |                                                                                  |
| <b>Latin</b>                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |                                                                                  |
| <b>MFL (German or Spanish)*</b>                              |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |                                                                                  |
| <b>Music</b>                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |                                                                                  |
| <b>Physical Education</b>                                    |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |                                                                                  |
| <b>Religious Studies</b>                                     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |                                                                                  |



## What will the work be like at GCSE?

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There is a strong emphasis on independent learning at GCSE. This means that you will have to work outside the classroom with less input from the teacher. You will be set approximately one hour of homework for each subject every week.

All subjects will have high expectations, with regular assessments and important deadlines to be met along the way. It is important, therefore, that you have developed good work habits, can meet deadlines and do not leave work to the last minute. You will continue to build upon the study skills that you have acquired over the first three years in school to enable you to achieve your full potential.

We expect you to:

- Enjoy positive working relationships with parents, peers and staff
- Attend school and all lessons regularly and be active in catching up on work missed when absent
- Meet homework deadlines and prepare thoroughly for all assessments, enabling staff to assess your progress accurately
- Begin to use your personal time for researching topics more widely
- Take advantage of support lessons where offered
- Organise your time and resources effectively

You are starting your GCSE courses after a time of significant change. Your courses are linear. This means that you will take all the external examinations at the end of the course. This will require consistent commitment to your courses throughout the two years of study.

## How important are GCSE grades?

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There is a minimum entry requirement for the Sixth Form at this school and many other educational establishments. You will need at least six GCSEs, at Grade 4 or above, including English and Mathematics.

Although decisions on Sixth Form entry, in the context of the 9-1 grading system, have not yet been finalised, it is likely that you will need at least a GCSE grade 6 in any subject that you wish to take at A Level; for some subjects, a grade 7 will be required. GCSE grades are very important because they form part of your CV, which is with you for life! University admissions tutors and employers examine the grades and qualifications very closely before making any offers of courses or employment.

## FAQs



### What Option Subjects should I choose?

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This is up to you. The best advice is to choose subjects which you enjoy, succeed at, and are interested in. This advice will give you the best chance of success. It is important to choose the subject for its content and skills, and not because you like your subject teacher this year or because your friends are doing it. You may not get the same teacher in Year 10, and being amongst your friends whilst trying to study can actually be detrimental to your progress. Current teaching groups are also mixed next year, so you will be working alongside new people too.

There are several new GCSE subjects on offer in Year 10 that you will not have studied in Key Stage 3. You may wish to start one or more. In making this decision you should ask yourself:

- Am I keeping a broad range of subjects?
- Can I opt into this subject later in my school or university career?
- Am I “giving up” a subject in which I already have reached a high level of skill? You should understand that your Key Stage 3 subject teachers are already preparing you for the demands of GCSE.

You should not think that any subject is an easy option - you will have to work hard for any course that you choose.

### How many qualifications will I end up with?

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Students will cover the compulsory curriculum plus four option subjects equating to 9 GCSEs. Students in the top sets for Maths & Science can take additional GCSEs during their course.

### Are there any other courses available?

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No, at this school we pride ourselves on offering GCSE courses that prepare our students for future study.

## Will I be able to take all of my first-choice options when I submit the Options Choice Form?

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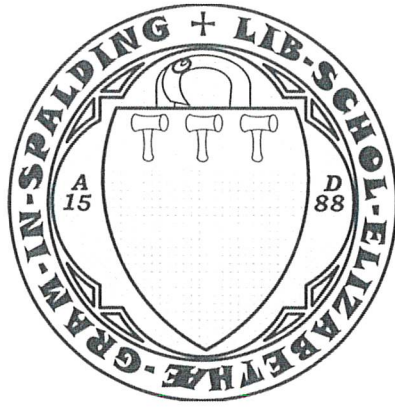
We will make every effort to offer you your preferred choices, but we cannot guarantee them. The level of demand and timetable constraints may mean that your choices are not possible, but we will do our best to help you study the courses that are best for you. This is why we ask you to select two reserve choices.

Typically, less than 5% of students do not receive their first four choices, so we are confident that the majority of you will be able to study what you intend to.

Once you have decided on your GCSE subject choices, please scan this QR code to complete the form. A link to the form will also be sent Monday 19 January. Deadline for completion is Thursday 5 March.

### Year 9 GCSE Options 2026





# Compulsory Curriculum

Subjects that you must study at GCSE

(36 teaching periods per fortnightly cycle)

# English Language

## Core Subject

8 x 50 minute lessons per fortnight.

These lessons are divided between English Language and Literature.



## Overview

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The GCSE English Language course will offer a wide range of reading and writing activities, developing your skills of reading comprehension and interpretation, and extended formal writing. Various speaking and listening tasks will also be undertaken as part of your study, and will be endorsed separately. The focus of the course is the study of both fiction and non-fiction texts. You are asked to both analyse fiction and non-fiction texts and produce your own in the exams.

## Structure and Assessment

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The course is linear and you will be assessed in two end-of-course exams:

### Paper 1 (40% of GCSE)

**External exam (Total marks 64, 1 hour 45 minutes). "Fiction and Imaginative Writing."**

In Section A you answer questions on an extract from a nineteenth-century novel. There will be four reading comprehension tasks of varying length, assessing your ability to explain, analyse and evaluate.

In Section B you will do a piece of descriptive or narrative writing on a topic linked to the extract in Section A.

### Paper 2 (60% of GCSE)

**External exam (Total marks 96, 2 hours 5 minutes). "Non-fiction and Transactional Writing".**

In Section A you will respond to two pieces of non-fiction on a specific topic. There will be eight comprehension tasks of varying length, assessing your ability to explain, analyse, evaluate and compare.

In Section B you will do a piece of non-fiction writing, such as a newspaper article, speech or letter, on a topic linked to the passages in Section A.

## Progression

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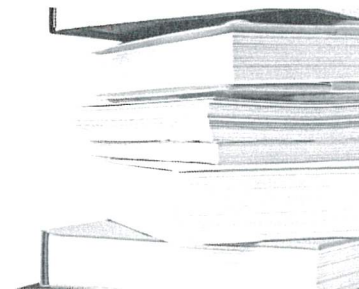
Success in English is essential for entry to virtually all careers. Specific careers that employ English skills include media, journalism, librarianship and teaching. Students are offered the opportunity to sit A Level English Language and A Level English Literature courses in the Sixth Form.

# English Literature

## Core Subject

8 x 50 minute lessons per fortnight.

These lessons are divided between English Literature and Language.



## Overview

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You will study poetry from the AQA Anthology, a 19<sup>th</sup> century novel, a modern prose or drama text, and a Shakespeare play. Skills assessed are as follows:

- Ability to respond critically to texts and to communicate a response using evidence from the text
- Ability to explore language, structure, meaning and alternative ideas and interpretations
- Ability to compare texts
- Ability to relate texts to their social, historical and literary backgrounds

## Structure and Assessment

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The course is linear and you will be assessed by two end-of-course exams:

### Paper 1 (40% of GCSE)

**External exam (Total marks 64, 1 hour 45 minutes). Shakespeare and the 19<sup>th</sup> Century Novel**

In Section A you will answer one question on a chosen play. You will be required to write in detail about an extract from the play and then to write about the play as a whole.

In Section B you will answer one question on a chosen novel. You will be required to write in detail about an extract from the novel and then to write about the novel as a whole.

Texts are selected from a list set by AQA.

### Paper 2 (60% of GCSE)

**External exam (Total marks 96, 2 hours 15 minutes). Modern texts and poetry**

In Section A you will answer one essay question from a choice of two on a studied modern prose or drama text.

In Section B you will answer one comparative question on one named printed poem and one other poem from your chosen poetry anthology cluster.

In Section C you will answer one question on one unseen poem and one question comparing this poem with a second unseen poem.

## Progression

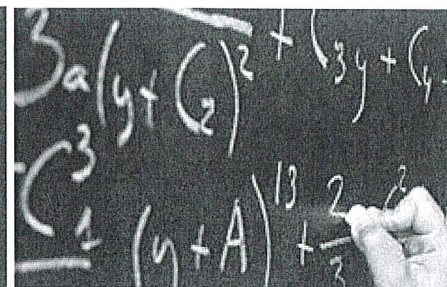
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The study of English Literature can lead to the study of A Level English Literature. Given its analytical nature, English Literature is a subject valued by many universities.

# Mathematics

## Core Subject

7 x 50 minute lessons per fortnight.



## Overview

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All GCSE courses include the study of number, algebra, ratio, geometry, probability and statistics. Most lessons will be of a structured, whole-class interactive style. You will be expected to participate fully in class discussions by offering your ideas and listening to the ideas of others. You will also be expected to complete all tasks to the best of your ability within a rigid timescale. ICT may be used to deliver certain topics. You will continue to be taught in sets for Mathematics in Year 10 and Year 11; sets will be subject to regular review depending on student performance.

## Structure and Assessment

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Students entering Year 10 have already started their GCSE course and are following the Mathematics syllabus of the AQA examination board. All qualifications are assessed by means of written examination; there is no coursework requirement in any GCSE Mathematics syllabus. The final examinations, at the end of Year 11, will consist of three equally weighted papers, one of which will be non-calculator. All areas of the specification may be tested on any of the three papers. All students will take these examinations at the end of Year 11.

Some students will study Level 2 Further Mathematics alongside their GCSE Mathematics course. This will be integrated into their programme of study and is currently the AQA Level 2 Certificate in Further Mathematics. This qualification will also be examined at the end of Year 11.

## Progression

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Mathematics GCSE is an essential requirement for many areas of future employment or study. To progress to A-level, at least a grade 7 at GCSE and a passion for the subject are needed.

# Science – Combined or Triple Award

## Core Subject

Per 2 week cycle:

Yr9 - 3 x 50 minute lessons each of Biology, Chemistry and Physics

Yr10 - 14 x 50 minute lessons consisting of Biology, Chemistry and Physics

Yr11 - 13 x 50 minute lessons consisting of Biology, Chemistry and Physics



## Overview

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Students are currently being taught the Edexcel GCSE Combined Science course (2 GCSE grades incorporating the three Sciences), having started in September this year. At the end of Year 9 students either continue with Combined Science or are selected for the Triple Science route, where they will gain separate qualifications in Physics, Chemistry and Biology.

## Structure and Assessment

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You will study the following elements during the course:

### Biology

- Cells and control
- Genetics
- Natural selection and genetic modification
- Health, disease and the development of medicines
- Plant structures and their functions
- Animal coordination, control and homeostasis
- Exchange and transport in animals
- Ecosystems and material cycles

### Chemistry

- Key concepts in chemistry
- States of matter and mixtures
- Chemical changes
- Extracting metals and equilibria
- Groups in the periodic table
- Rates of reaction and energy changes
- Fuels and Earth science

### Physics

- Motion and forces
- Conservation of energy
- Waves
- Light and the electromagnetic spectrum
- Radioactivity
- Astronomy
- Energy
- Forces doing work
- Forces and their effects
- Electricity and circuits
- Static electricity
- Magnetism and the motor effect
- Electromagnetic induction
- Particle
- Forces and matter

In each of Chemistry, Biology and Physics the course is assessed in a linear format by two examinations. There is no coursework aspect to these courses. Combined Science is also assessed by written terminal examinations.

During the course each student is required to complete a number of core practical activities.

## Progression

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A pass at grade 6 or above (77 for Combined Science) will help to give you access to an A level course in each of the three sciences. There are certain careers where science features more strongly than other disciplines, for example medicine and engineering. A sound scientific education will help to equip you for future challenges.

# Personal and Careers Education (PaCE)

## Ethics, Philosophy and Religion (EPR)



### Core Subjects

PACE: 2 x 50 minute lessons per fortnight.

EPR: 1x 50 minute lesson per fortnight

## Overview

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**The followings subjects are aspects of personal development: -**

**PaCE** provides information and develops skills to equip you for life outside of academia and builds on the areas that have been covered during KS3. The course is taught in a variety of ways including; lots of discussion and debate fuelled by different genres such as films, educational DVDs and news articles. There are also a number of guest speakers to help with careers choices. For example, we invite members of the local business community, NHS, police, armed forces and others in to school to give an overview of the careers available in their profession and from providers to help with choices at Post-16.

**EPR** forming part of the core curriculum, these lessons will enrich students' appreciation of matters relating to cultural, religious, spiritual, moral and social identity, to prepare students for the diversity of life in Modern Britain. Supporting the development of each student in their communication skills with discussion, written and verbal debates on issues surrounding contemporary moral issues and reflection on these key concepts through film.

## Structure and Assessment

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**PaCE:** The Course will be divided into three areas;

- Moral and Cultural Education – which will cover themes involving morality and spirituality.
- Personal Education – which will include information and discussions on topics such as personal health, sex education, risky behaviours and managing difficult relationships.
- Careers and Study Skills – this will provide information and education on the world of work and career choices as well equipping you with skills needed to achieve your goals.

This section of the curriculum will not be examined but will have informal assessments.

**EPR:** The lessons will include a range of the following elements: -

- a) Thematic studies
- b) Discussion and debate
- c) Film and reflection
- d) Presentations

Although there will not be a formal examination, students will receive feedback for debate and presentations and peer assess each other, to deepen their reflection and evaluation skills within these contexts.

# Physical Education (Core PE)

## Core Subject

2 x 1 hour 40-minute practical lessons per fortnight.



## Overview

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Core Physical Education (PE) at Key Stage 4 builds upon the knowledge, skills and understanding developed across Years 7, 8 and 9. The Core PE curriculum enables students to participate in a range of sporting activities, including additional sports which they may not have participated in within Key Stage 3. The emphasis on these lessons is to promote enjoyment and long-term participation in sport through a greater pedagogical approach towards teaching games for understanding.

In Core PE, students remain in sets similarly to Key Stage 3, alongside students of similar ability. There is the opportunity for Core PE students to join the GCSE PE group if they excel within a particular sport.

## Structure and Assessment

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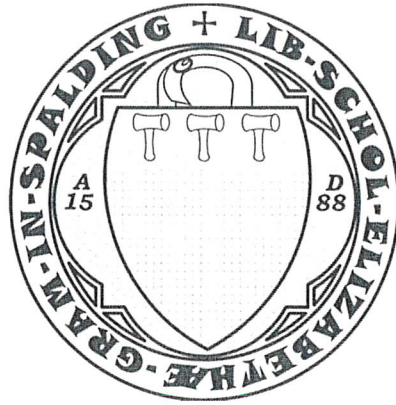
There is no formal assessment or exam in Core PE, but effort grades are awarded.

## Progression

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As a PE department, one of our fundamental aims is to ensure that all students enjoy and continue with physical activity into adulthood. Key Stage 4 is an important step in this journey, during which you begin to select and understand which activities you enjoy more.

If you continue into Sixth Form at the School, you will continue with Core PE through our Senior Games programme. This offers more choice, specialism and independence. Therefore, we believe that Core PE at Key Stage 4 is an excellent foundation for Senior Games and the enjoyment of physical activity in later life.



# Optional Curriculum

You must select **four** subjects to study at GCSE

(24 teaching periods per fortnightly cycle)

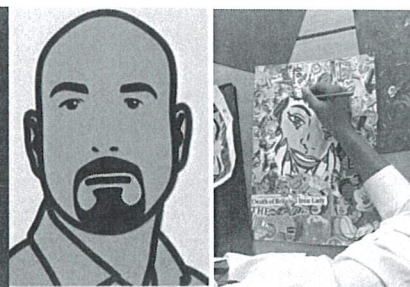
# Art & Design

## Option Subject

6 x 50 minute lessons per fortnight.

## Entry

A reasonable amount of natural ability, a lot of focused enthusiasm and the ability to regularly meet deadlines.



## Overview

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The course is a natural extension of Key Stage 3:

- Improving existing practical skills, particularly observational drawing, and learning new ones
- Exploring your creative abilities and ideas; being a hardworking, independent learner
- Increasing your Art History/artists' knowledge and appreciation, and how to have it make a positive impact on your work
- Refining your ability to tell when something looks right – aesthetics – to make sound judgements about composition and design

## Structure and Assessment

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The course consists of two components:

### **Component 1: Portfolio (60% of GCSE)**

One or two projects and any other quality study sheets/record of excellent one-off art-based activities.

### **Component 2: Externally Set Assignment (40% of GCSE)**

A project set by the exam board, started in early January of Year 11, where the Finished Piece(s) is/are produced in a terminal ten-hour (two consecutive school days) period in May.

## Progression

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Those students gaining a minimum of a grade 5 at GCSE are eligible to go on to study A Level Art & Design here.

In turn, those who do well at A Level can go on to become a graphic designer, fine artist, interior/theatre designer, product/industrial/furniture designer, architect, jewellery designer, ceramicist, textile/fashion designer, museums and exhibitions curator, teacher, worker within the burgeoning creative and media sectors, and many other professions/career opportunities.

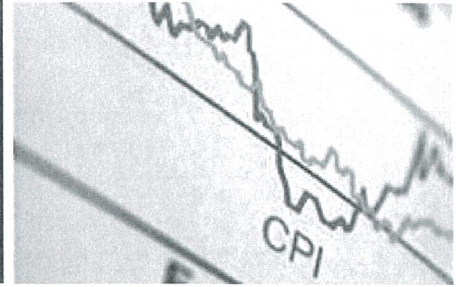
# Business

## Option Subject

6 x 50 minute lessons per fortnight.

## Entry

Open to all students with an interest in business operations.



## Overview

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Edexcel GCSE Business offers an excellent introduction to key business and economic concepts across a range of different types of organisations. The course helps students understand how businesses operate, make decisions and respond to changing environments, providing a strong foundation for further study and real-world application.

As a successful GCSE Business student, you will develop lifelong skills and a strong understanding of key business concepts, including:

- The different types of business organisations and how they operate
- The external environments in which businesses function
- How economic circumstances affect business performance
- The role and importance of the key business functions: marketing, operations, human resources and finance

## Structure and Assessment

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The course is divided into two themes, each assessed by a written exam at the end of Year 11. Each paper is worth 50%.

### **Theme 1 – Investigating Small Business**

**1.1- Enterprise and Entrepreneurs – Introduction to the dynamic nature of business.**

**1.2 - Spotting a business opportunity – Understanding customer needs and conducting market research.**

**1.3 - Putting a business idea into practice – Making a business idea happen through identifying aims and concentrating on the financial aspects of running a business. Learning how to calculate cash flow and break even.**

**1.4 - Making the business effective – The importance of location, the marketing mix elements and creating business plans.**

**1.5 - Understanding external influences in business – Factors which are outside of the immediate control of the business, such as stakeholder influences, changes in technology, legislation and the economy.**

### **Theme 2 – Building a Business**

**2.1 - Growing a business – The impacts of globalisation and the ethical environment.**

**2.2 - Making marketing decisions – Looking at elements of marketing and how they inform business decisions.**

**2.3 - Making operational decisions – Focuses on meeting customer needs through supply and quantity issues.**

**2.4 - Making financial decisions – Ratio analysis, the uses and limitation of financial information on business performance.**

**2.5 - Making human resource decisions – Growing a business, recruitment, training and motivation of the workforce.**

## Progression

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GCSE Business provides a strong foundation for further study, including A Levels in Business, Economics, Psychology and Law. It is ideal for students interested in entrepreneurship, business careers, or apprenticeships, offering multiple pathways into work or higher education.

# Computer Science

## Option Subject

6 x 50 minute lessons per fortnight.

## Entry

Open to all students interested in developing a working knowledge and understanding of the fundamental principles and concepts of Computer Science



## Overview

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Computing is of enormous importance, and the role of Computer Science as a discipline both in itself and as an 'underpinning' subject across science and engineering is growing rapidly. Computer technology continues to advance rapidly and it's consumption has become ubiquitous. The growth in mobile device uses and web-related technologies has exploded, resulting in new challenges for employers and employees. For example, businesses today require an ever-increasing number of technologically-aware individuals. This is even more so in the gaming, mobile and web-related industries.

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Studying Computer Science at GCSE will enable students to:

- develop and apply computational thinking skills to analyse problems and design solutions across a range of contexts
- gain practical experience of designing, writing and testing computer programmes that accomplish specific goals
- develop the ability to reason, explain and evaluate computing solutions
- develop awareness of current and emerging trends in computing technologies
- develop awareness of the impact of computing on individuals, society and the environment, including ethical, legal and ownership issues
- communicate computer science concepts and explain computational solutions clearly and concisely using appropriate terminology

Lessons will take place in the ICT suites and you will be expected to participate fully in class discussion by offering ideas and listening to the ideas of others. Work may be done in small groups and you may be asked to deliver presentations to the class. A variety of business software is involved, and a key aim of two years is to introduce an ability to adapt to a multitude of software in completing your work, providing an element of work ready skills to help you in your study and future career.

## Structure and Assessment

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The course will consist of two sections:

### **Section 1: Computational Thinking and Programming Skills**

Written examination: 2 hours - 50% of the qualification

### **Section 2: Computing Concepts**

Written examination: 1 hour 45 minutes - 50% of the qualification

## Progression

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Students can progress from this qualification to a GCE A Level in Computer Science

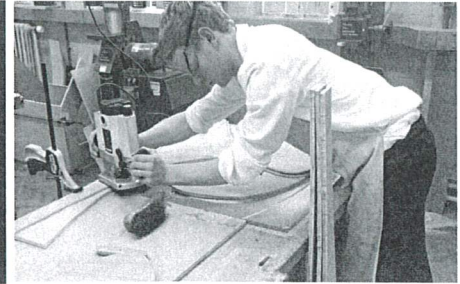
# D&T – GCSE Design and Technology

## Option Subject

6 x 50 minute lessons per fortnight.

## Entry

Open to all students with an interest in Product Design, engineering, graphic design, furniture design, interior design, transport design etc.



## Overview

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The course encourages you to design and make products with creativity and originality through a variety of practical activities, using a range of materials and processes. The philosophy behind Design & Technology is to prepare young people to manage in a rapidly evolving world, to think and intervene creatively to improve lives, develop technological awareness and to help students to produce cutting edge products. You will work on several projects during the course to develop and enhance your subject knowledge, technical abilities and understanding that the role design plays in society.

The Design and Technology department is housed in a suite of specialist rooms. The department benefits from a design studio and three workshops equipped with a range of industrial-standard equipment. There is a suite of computers with 2D and 3D CAD software along with computer-controlled miller, lathe, laser cutter and 4 x 3D printers. The department is staffed by teachers with diverse industrial experience.

## Structure and Assessment

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The course consists of two units.

### **Non-examined Assessment (50% of GCSE)**

You will undertake a non-examined assessment project. You will design, manufacture and evaluate a product, using materials of your choice. The coursework will demonstrate the knowledge, skills and understanding developed during year 10. It is a significant undertaking requiring commitment and, to achieve the highest grades, a willingness to “go the extra mile”. The NEA is assessed and marked in school by your classroom teacher.

### **Examination (50% of GCSE)**

The exam is a 2 hour externally set paper. The paper has a mixture of multiple, short and extended answered questions. The question paper covers all aspects of the course specification, testing your breadth and depth of knowledge to design, materials and processes. 10-15% of the exam will also involve DT science and maths-based questions.

## Progression

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The course can lead to the study of our Design and Technology A Level. This qualification demonstrates that you have an excellent knowledge base and the ability to apply theoretical and technological concepts, as well as the ability to work on your own initiative. It also gives you some employability traits of problem solving, team working and spatial awareness for any other career pathway.

# Geography

## Option Subject

6 x 50 minute lessons per fortnight.

## Entry

Open to all students with an interest in Geography.



## Overview

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With the growing importance of issues such as climate change, migration, environmental degradation, epidemiology, and inequality in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, Geography is one of the most relevant courses you could choose to study. The OCR B GCSE Geography course builds on the strong foundations laid down in Key Stage 3, taking Geography's core concepts to the next level. Tectonic and weather hazards, ecosystems (including the tundra and tropical rainforests), river and coastal landscapes, urban futures, development, and resource management are investigated with the aim of tackling questions fundamental to life on Earth and the sustainability of its future.

Geographers learn through enquiry and as such develop significant analytical and evaluative skills that complement several other subjects. Coupled with graphical, writing, and statistical skills, GCSE geographers are well-prepared for A-Levels or other routes. Two fieldwork investigations are also carried out, taking students to the Lincolnshire Wolds to study river geomorphology, and Lincoln to investigate urban change. As a result, Geography is a rich, broad, academic subject that prepares students well for the next stage of their education and provides lasting experiences on the way.

## Structure and Assessment

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The assessment for the OCR Geography GCSE course consists of three written exams taken at the end of Year 11.

### **Paper 1 Our Natural World (90 minutes, 70 marks, 35% of GCSE)**

There are 4 sections to this exam; Global Hazards, Changing Climate, Distinctive Landscapes, and Sustaining Ecosystems.

### **Paper 2 People and Society (90 minutes, 70 marks, 35% of GCSE)**

There are 4 sections to this exam; Urban Futures, Dynamic Development, UK in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, and Resource Reliance.

### **Paper 3 Geographical Exploration (90 minutes, 60 marks, 30% of GCSE)**

This paper is based on geographical skills and a decision-making exercise.

## Progression

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Many students continue with the subject at A-Level, where study builds on the material and skills covered at GCSE. The subject is highly regarded at both a general level for employment, but also at a very specific level in areas such as human development studies, oceanography and environmental management. Skills developed in Geography are highly transferable in the context of a range of types of employment.

# History

## Option Subject

6 x 50 minute lessons per fortnight.

## Entry

Open to all students with an interest in British and World History.



## Overview

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In order to ensure that students have plenty of time to cover the content, build skills and time for revision, we commence the GCSE course in November of Year 9, with a study of the development of the Cold War between 1945 and 1991, a topic of huge interest and relevance in the modern world. This builds naturally into Year 9 as it follows a study of World War II. In Year 10, we begin with a depth study of Early Elizabethan England incorporating the monarch's government and religious settlement after the turmoil of much of the sixteenth century and the challenges to the Queen both at home and abroad, including the threat posed by the Spanish Armada in 1588 as well as the nature of Elizabethan society during the age of Exploration. We then complete a thematic study of the impact of Warfare on British society between c. 1250 and the present day, which involves the study of the changing nature and experience of war over nearly 800 years and includes a study of London during the Second World War. Next, the course moves into the Twentieth Century as we begin Year 11 with a depth study of Germany between 1919 and 1939, looking at both the failure of the Weimar Republic and the rise of the Nazi Party as well as a study of life in Nazi Germany.

## Structure and Assessment

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The course - **Pearson Edexcel GCSE (9 - 1) in History (1HI0)** - consists of 3 papers all of which take place at the end of Year 11:

**Paper 1: Option 12: This comprises a thematic study (Warfare and British society, c1250–present) and study of a historic environment (London and the Second World War, 1939–45).**

- Written examination: 1 hour and 15 minutes amounting to 30% of the qualification.
- Students answer a compulsory 3-part question based on historical sources for the environment study. (16 marks)
- For the thematic study students answer three questions that assess their knowledge and understanding. The first two questions are compulsory. For the third question, students answer one from a choice of two. (36 marks).

**Paper 2: Option B4 – a period study of Elizabethan England (1588-1588), with a Depth study on Superpower relations and the Cold War 1941-1991 (26/27).**

- Written examination: 1 hour and 45 minutes amounting to 40% of the qualification.
- Students answer three questions that assess their knowledge and understanding of the period study. The first two questions are compulsory. For the third question, students select two out of three parts. (32 marks)
- For the depth study students answer a single three-part question that assesses their knowledge and understanding. The first two parts are compulsory. For the third part, students select one from a choice of two. (32 marks)

**Paper 3: A Modern Depth Study on Weimar and Nazi Germany (1918-1939) (31).**

- Written examination: 1 hour and 15 minutes amounting to 30% of the qualification.
- Section A: Students answer two compulsory questions that assess their knowledge and understanding, whilst in Section B: Students answer a single four-part question, based on two provided sources and two provided interpretations. (52 marks).

## Progression

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To further study at A Level and university. History is a very good subject for a wide range of careers, particularly in law, politics and local government, the civil service, the heritage and leisure industry, and, of course, education. The communication, presentation and analytical skills acquired are much valued in journalism, advertising, new media and the world of business. As an EBacc subject, it is highly regarded by universities and colleges.

# Latin

## Option Subject

6 x 50 minute lessons per fortnight.

## Entry

Latin is open to all students who are enthusiastic about the language, literature and culture of the Romans.



## Overview

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Latin gives students the opportunity to study the language, literature and culture of the Romans. In Latin you will develop a greater understanding of the Roman world, develop your linguistic, analytical and evaluative skills, develop personal responses to literature written 2000 years ago, and understand the influence of Classics on the modern world.

## Structure and Assessment

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Over the two years of the course, study will be divided as follows:

### Latin Language (50%)

In this unit you will develop skills in translation which will improve your knowledge and understanding of both English and Latin grammar. Through learning Latin vocabulary, you will also understand the significant influence that Latin has had on the English language. The paper will be in two sections. Section A will consist of a range of short comprehension questions and translation from Latin into English. Section B will require you to **either** translate short sentences into Latin **or** to answer grammar and language questions. In the course of the two years you will complete the study of the Cambridge Latin Course Books 3 and 4, and use a variety of methods to learn vocabulary and grammar.

### Latin Literature and Sources (Themes) (30%)

In this unit you will have the opportunity to read original sources about a specific theme. This year's theme is 'Love and Marriage', a broad and fascinating survey of Roman attitudes to relationships. You will develop a greater understanding of Roman writing styles, both prose and verse, and how different authors would have appealed to their audiences. In addition, you will also look at other source materials such as relevant images, and by relating these to the texts you will gain an in-depth knowledge of the topic. This is an open book assessment where all vocabulary is provided in the examination.

### Roman Civilisation (20%)

In this unit you will study a range of sources, as well as literature in translation, to learn about a specific topic. The topic will be either 'The City of Rome' or 'Roman family life'.

## Progression

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Latin is a highly regarded GCSE which combines the rigor of translation and linguistic analysis, the evaluation of literature and of literary style, and the appreciation of ancient Roman culture and society.

Latin A level is available to students who achieve a 6 at GCSE.

Classical Civilisation AS level is available to students as an enrichment subject in the sixth form.

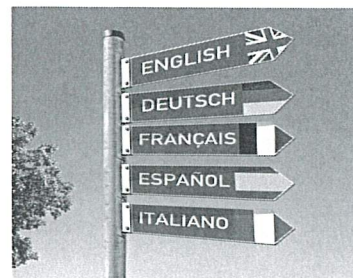
As well as being superb preparation for further study in Classics, a study of Latin complements many other A-Levels including: Modern Foreign Languages, Biology, English Literature, Politics, and History. In addition, the analytical skills that it develops make it a good choice for those considering Russell Group universities. Students of Latin have gone on to pursue a wide range of careers and professions, including journalism, law, politics, the civil service and education.

# Modern Foreign Languages

**Option: German or Spanish**  
6 x 50-minute lessons per fortnight

## Entry:

The language you study will be that which you have studied from Year 7 through to Year 9



## Overview

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You have already studied German or Spanish, and you can choose to continue to study this language into Year 10 as part of the options process. The AQA GCSE syllabus is the one followed.

By the end of Year 9, you will have already covered a good deal of the grammar and vocabulary required for GCSE; GCSE simply extends your knowledge of these to a more sophisticated level. The GCSE course covers the following themes and topics:

- People and Lifestyle
- Popular Culture
- Communication and the World around us

## Structure and Assessment

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The course consists of four units:

### Unit 1 (25% of GCSE)

Listening – this is tested in an exam in June of Year 11. You will need to respond to an audio stimulus in German/Spanish. Most answers are non-verbal and multiple choice, and all the questions are in English. This tests your recognition and understanding of German/Spanish. The final part of the listening test is a dictation task of short, spoken extracts and we prepare through regular listening practice in lessons, alongside regular vocabulary practice.

### Unit 2 (25% of GCSE)

Speaking – this is tested in an exam in May of Year 11. Each test will include a role-play, a read aloud task in German/Spanish followed by 4 short questions and responding to a photo card which develops into a short conversation in German/Spanish. The format is the same for Foundation and Higher Tier, but the Higher exam will be around three minutes longer. This tests your ability to manipulate the language and recall vocabulary and grammar structures accurately.

### Unit 3 (25% of GCSE)

Reading – almost identical to Listening; there is no dictation task in this element of the test and the stimulus texts are written and not spoken and that it includes a short translation from German/Spanish into English.

### Unit 4 (25% of GCSE)

Writing – this will also be tested at the end of Year 11. The Foundation paper will include a short translation from English into German/Spanish and a structured writing task. The Higher paper will include a longer translation from English into German/Spanish, as well as a structured and open-ended writing task.

## Progression

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We believe that language learning is a necessary and exciting requirement of the modern world. A GCSE in a Modern Foreign Language will set you apart from the crowd in the competitive employment market. You will of course be able to carry on your studies to A level and beyond, where students often study a Modern Foreign Language as a single subject or as an additional skill to offer. Many universities now offer courses in Law, Business, Marketing and Sciences with a language as an integral part of the degree. In the world of work, language skills are a great advantage in the job market and once you have shown that you can learn one language, you have the skills to learn others.

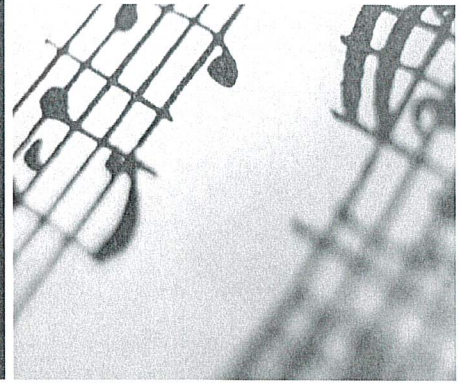
# Music

## Option Subject

6 x 50 minute lessons per fortnight.

## Entry

Extension of Key Stage 3 work including performing, composing and listening units. Competence in voice or an instrument is required, with an enthusiasm to develop performance skills further. Involvement in extra-curricular music groups and events is also desired.



## Overview

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If you enjoy creating music through performing, composing and listening to a variety of different styles and genres, then GCSE Music is an ideal subject for you to take. The course gives you the opportunity to make music, both individually and in groups, and develop a life-long love of the subject. The course recognises that we live in an age of cultural diversity and the Areas of Study cover a wide range of music to suit all tastes. The flexible nature of the course allows students to capitalise on their different musical interests, especially in the composition component (see below). There is an expectation for candidates to develop their performing skills in their own time beyond lessons, and having individual instrumental or vocal lessons either in or out of school will help support the performance element of the course too. Students also taking GCSE Music will be encouraged to join the extra-curricular music clubs and to perform in the department concerts and music events that take place throughout the school year.

## Structure and Assessment

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Board: **Eduqas**

The course consists of three components:

**Component 1: Performing (30% of qualification).**

This requires you to perform a minimum of two pieces, one of which must be a group performance of at least 1 minute in length. The other pieces may be either a solo and/or an ensemble.

One of the pieces must also link to an area of study (see below). The total duration of the performances combined must be 4 to 6 minutes. The pieces are recorded within the music department (there is no requirement for an audience to be present) and the performances are internally marked and externally moderated.

**Component 2: Composing (30% of qualification).**

This component requires you to compose two compositions, one of which must be in response to a brief set by Eduqas. You will be able to choose one brief from a choice of four, each one linked to a different area of study (see below). The second composition is a free composition and can be done in any style that is suited to your own musical tastes. You will set your own brief for this. Compositions will be completed on the music software programme *Sibelius*. The total duration of both compositions will need to be 3 to 6 minutes and they are internally marked and externally moderated.

**Component 3: Appraising (40% of qualification). Written examination: 1 hour 15 minutes.**

This assessment is assessed via a listening examination. There are 8 questions in total in the exam, two on each of the four areas of study. Area of study 1 and 4 also contain a set work which must be studied. The four areas of study are:

**Area of Study 1: Musical Forms and Devices** (Set work: *Badinerie* by J.S.Bach for Flute and String Orchestra with Harpsichord (Final movement, Orchestral Suite No.2 in B minor, BWV 1067)

**Area of Study 2: Music for Ensemble**

**Area of Study 3: Film Music**

**Area of Study 4: Popular Music** (Set work: *Africa* Toto, 1982)

## Progression

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GCSE Music is a good preparation for further musical study and a solid foundation for A Level Music. Alternatively, you may wish to go into a job where it is useful to have had experience of music or where you will need to use some of the skills developed during the course, such as communication, teamwork, creativity, independence etc. These might include careers in the music industry, publishing, entertainment, music journalism and teaching or indeed any job which involves communication and expressive skills or working with people.

# Physical Education (GCSE PE)

## Option Subject

6 x 50-minute theory lessons per fortnight  
2 x 1 hour 40-minute practical lessons per fortnight

## Entry

Open to students with a genuine passion and aptitude for PE.  
Strong practical ability in two sports is beneficial.



## Overview

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GCSE Physical Education (PE) allows students to develop their knowledge and understanding of performance and participation in sport through both theory and practical lessons. In theory lessons, students will cover a wide range of topics within sport including applied anatomy and physiology, health and fitness, socio-cultural influences on participation, physical training, movement analysis and sports psychology. In practical lessons, students will be grouped together and will rotate through several team and individual sports whilst having their skills and effectiveness assessed within competitive situations.

## Structure and Assessment

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### 2x Theory examinations (60% of GCSE PE grade)

Students will be assessed through CATs in each topic across the course, with the results used for internal tracking and intervention. At the end of the course, students will sit two exams (30% of the final GCSE PE grade, each) which assess their knowledge of the course theory. Each exam contains 78 marks and is 75 minutes in duration, containing short-answer and extended answer questions that enable students to apply their understanding.

### Practical sporting ability in three sports (30% of GCSE PE grade)

Students are assessed in practical lessons within several sports on their individual skills (10 marks per activity) and their competitive performance (15 marks per activity). Within the students' three sports, there must be both an individual and team activity. Students are also offered the opportunity to be assessed in cycling or rock climbing on a residential trip (there is payment involved). If you specialise in a sport not taught within PE lessons (e.g. swimming, skiing, golf etc.) you are able to be assessed in these sports, if they are detailed on the AQA specification. This is done through collecting and submitting video evidence.

### Written coursework (10% of GCSE PE grade)

Students must produce a piece of written coursework analysing (15 marks) and evaluating (10 marks) their own performance, applying the theory content. They will receive guidance and feedback on this from teachers.

All practical and coursework marks are assessed by teachers and moderated by AQA.

## Progression

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A secure GCSE PE grade sets students up to progress into A-Level PE or alternative sports courses. Previous students have progressed onto university to study a sports course and/or have gone into the sports industry, including: careers within professional sport, teaching and coaching, physiotherapy, sports psychology, personal training, sports analysis and media, amongst others.

# Religious Studies (Christianity & Islam)

## Option Subject

6 x 50 minute lessons per fortnight.



## Overview

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This course introduces you to two great world religions: Christianity and Islam. There are several different teaching and learning styles that include: reading, essay writing, discussion, role play, exploring philosophical questions, presentations, debates, documentaries and use of ICT. Students are encouraged to reflect upon the different topics at home, as well as researching some subjects through newspapers, the news and film. Students quickly realise how important it is to listen to and recognise the views of others, as well as to learn how to express their own views and to think philosophically in their presentation of them.

## Structure and Assessment

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**The course consists of 2 main components:**

**Component One: The Study of Religions: Beliefs, teachings and practices**

Beliefs, teachings and practices of: Christianity and Islam.

How is it assessed? Written exam: 1 hour 45 minutes = 50% of GCSE.

**Component Two: Thematic Studies: Four of the following religious, philosophical and ethical themes:**

Theme A: Relationships and families.

Theme B: Religion and life.

Theme C: The existence of God and revelation.

Theme D: Religion, peace and conflict.

Theme E: Religion, crime and punishment.

Theme F: Religion, human rights and social justice.

How is it assessed? Written exam: 1 hour 45 minutes = 50% of GCSE.

## Progression

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The skills that you acquire from this course are a brilliant stepping stone to courses with an academic and cultural nature, i.e. the Humanities. The course encourages critical and empathic thinking. Those who continue with Religious Studies in higher education are often drawn to different types of careers in Law, management, nursing, social work, Ministry, teaching and charity work. The course also extends your understanding of religion and culture, belief systems and values, which are valuable for any management position and an understanding of others.

