



**Oakbank**

**Year 9**

**Options Guide**

# Year 9 Options Guide

## Introduction

Welcome! We are so looking forward to the process of Year 9 students selecting their subjects for next year. This is a huge step in climbing their own personal mountains to the very best universities in the country of careers of their choosing.

‘Options’ is the process of choosing what subjects to study in Years 10 and 11 (also known as Key Stage 4). We have chosen subjects that will enable students to go on to study whatever they want at A Level, college or other post-16 courses.

This means students should see this as an exciting opportunity to tailor their learning to them, and not something that they should worry about - they can’t go wrong with the subjects we have chosen to offer.

Students will need to consider their individual strengths, interests and talents. Students should make choices based on what they enjoy and what they are passionate about. Every combination of subjects that we offer will enable students to access any post-16 course.

In Y10 all students will be required to study:

- ✎ GCSE English Language
- ✎ GCSE English Literature
- ✎ GCSE Mathematics
- ✎ GCSE Combined Sciences (two GCSEs)

**In addition to the compulsory subjects listed above, students must choose four subjects from:**

- ✎ History
- ✎ Geography
- ✎ Religious Education (RE)
- ✎ French
- ✎ Hospitality & Catering
- ✎ Design Technology (DT)
- ✎ Statistics
- ✎ Art & Design
- ✎ Drama
- ✎ Music
- ✎ Physical Education (PE)
- ✎ Business Studies
- ✎ Health & Social Care
- ✎ Computing

All students must study **either** history or geography as one of their options. They may study both these subjects if they want to, as two of their options subjects.

Alongside your compulsory GCSE subjects and your options subjects, **all** students study:

✶ Core PE

✶ PSHE

There are **no exams** in these two subjects. We know that these subjects are important to ensure our students are healthy, happy, well-informed young people, ready to live safely and successfully in the modern world.

### Example student subjects:

Here are some possible subject combinations. These are just examples - there are lots of other possibilities!

	Student 1	Student 2	Student 3
Core Subjects (Compulsory)	Maths	Maths	Maths
	English Language	English Language	English Language
	English Literature	English Literature	English Literature
	Combined Science	Combined Science	Combined Science
	Combined Science	Combined Science	Combined Science
Options Subjects (Your Choice, with History or Geog as Option 1)	History	History	Geography
	French	Geography	Health & Social Care
	Design Technology	PE	Business Studies
	Computing	Statistics	Music
Non-examined subjects (Compulsory)	Core PE	Core PE	Core PE
	PSHE	PSHE	PSHE

### Choosing subjects

Students should choose their subjects based on which subjects they enjoy and are interested in. Students will select **four** options, as well as **two reserve choices**. This means that all students will study a total of nine qualifications. To support students in making the best choices they:

1. Have had an Options Assembly
2. Are attending Options Evening
3. Can talk to their Head of Year, SLT or members of teaching staff during social time

Students then make their choices during tutor time via an online form that they will complete on a school computer. The choices of every individual student will then be checked by senior leaders, to ensure they have been entered correctly and make sense for that student.

In July you will be informed of the subjects allocated to your son/daughter for Key Stage 4. **It is important to note that choices cannot be guaranteed.** We will always do our best to give you your first choices, but we cannot always achieve this. For this reason, we ask students to make two reserve choices.

### Frequently Asked Questions:

#### What's the difference between GCSEs and Vocational Subjects?

Both types of qualification are great! The most significant differences are in the balance of theory/practical work and the style of assessment. As a school, we are in the process of deciding whether to offer GCSEs or BTECs in some subjects including Computing and Health & Social Care. The qualifications are worth the same and both enable students to go onto study A Levels and Level 3 BTEC qualifications in the sixth form. We therefore advise that students are led by their enjoyment of different subjects and how much they are interested in them, when they are making their selections, rather than the qualification type.

The key differences are shown in the table below.

GCSEs	Vocational (e.g. BTEC)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ More theoretical</li><li>➤ More exam based and less practical in many cases (not all)</li><li>➤ More aligned to A Levels</li><li>➤ Graded as a number from 9 to 1 (nine being the highest)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ Usually more practical than GCSEs</li><li>➤ Mainly coursework but still an exam</li><li>➤ Grades are Distinction, Merit and Pass rather than numbers</li></ul>

#### Who will be the teacher for each subject?

This cannot be answered until much later in the year so do not assume it will be the same person who teaches you this year. It is wiser to make an option choice based on the subject content and assessment style rather than on who teaches the subject.

#### Are there boys and girls subjects?

Absolutely not! All subjects are appropriate for all students.

#### Who can help me with my choices?

Your subject teachers, Head of Year, parents and families are the first people to ask for advice. You might also speak to your trusted adult or key worker if you have one.

#### Am I guaranteed to get my choices?

No. We will do all we can to ensure you get your choices but it cannot be guaranteed. Most students do have their first choices. There are a number of reasons for not getting your choices:

- £ Too few people might opt for a subject so no class can be created

- ✗ Too many people opt for a subject so classes fill up. When classes fill up, we generally allocate places based on attendance.
- ✗ It may be impossible to timetable some combinations of choices together. This is unpredictable until after selections have been made by students.

### **Will I be able to change my mind in September?**

No. It is important to make the correct choice in the first instance, based on all of the information available. Putting the timetable together is a huge job, which takes many months, leaving very limited flexibility for changes in September.

### **Do I have to put reserve choices on my options form?**

Yes. All students must do this. If a subject you have opted for is full or impossible to timetable, you will be allocated one of your reserve choices.

### **What happens if I don't get my first choices?**

We aim to give all students their first choices. If this isn't possible, we allocate reserve choices. In a small number of cases, if this is also impossible, we will meet with students and their parents/carers together, to discuss the best alternative subjects.

### **Can I pick any subjects?**

All students must study either geography or history. This is because research consistently shows the benefits for students of studying a humanities subject (Sutton Trust, July 2016).

### **Are some subjects better than others? Will some subjects limit my career choices?**

All the subjects we are offering are good subjects. All combinations of subjects are good combinations. No combinations will limit students or impact their careers. Therefore, we recommend that students are led in their choices by which subjects they enjoy the most. There are some subjects that students may not have studied so they should think about whether they will enjoy the topics covered within the course.

### **What is the English Baccalaureate (EBacc)?**

The EBacc is not a qualification in itself. It is a measure of performance introduced by the Government. This is recognised by some universities, post-16 providers and employers as a reflection of a broad and balanced curriculum which facilitates progression to many other qualifications and jobs. To get the English Baccalaureate, a student must achieve a grade 5 or higher in English, maths, two sciences, a humanities subject (geography or history), and a modern foreign language (French or home language). Research from 300 schools found that statistically students following the English Baccalaureate subjects were:

- ✗ more likely to achieve good GCSEs in English and maths
- ✗ more likely to be taking an A level or other level 3 qualification after the age of 16
- ✗ less likely to have dropped out of education after the age of 16

**I speak another language. Can I take that as a GCSE?**

If it is offered as a GCSE and you can read, write, speak and understand another language to a high level then you can absolutely take it as a GCSE! This would not be a timetabled lesson so can be taken in addition to your 4 choices and the school will pay for the exams, organise your entry, and provide guidance around the mock exams, revision and how to do your very best. Please speak to Miss Reggler about this if you would like to do a home language GCSE. Currently, language GCSEs are offered in the following languages:

- French
- German
- Spanish
- Polish
- Russian
- Italian
- Portuguese
- Bengali
- Urdu
- Gujarati
- Panjabi
- Greek
- Arabic
- Persian
- Turkish
- Japanese
- Chinese (Spoken Mandarin)
- Chinese (Spoken Cantonese)
- Hebrew (Biblical)
- Hebrew (Modern)

**Will my child sit Higher or Foundation?**

There are only Higher or Foundation tiers in Maths, Science and Languages. Your child's teacher will discuss the best option for your child at parents evenings and a decision will be made at the end of Year 10 and confirmed, or any adjustments made, after the PPEs (mock exams) in Year 11.

**My child is stuck! I've got a question! What should I do?**

Phone or email the school and ask for a call back to discuss Year 9 Options. Either the Head of Year 9 or a member of the senior team will be in touch.

## **Compulsory GCSEs Overview:**

### **Maths – Edexcel Higher & OCR Foundation**

Students will sit three papers, two calculator and one non-calculator. Subject content builds on the knowledge and understanding gained throughout Key Stage 3 with many of the same topics reoccurring and developing in difficulty. Students will sit either Higher or Foundation.

### **English Language – AQA**

Students will sit two papers and complete one spoken word assessment. The spoken word assessment does not contribute to their grade but is a Pass/Merit/Distinction/Fail component that some schools and colleges will take into consideration.

- Language Paper 1 – Explorations in Creative Reading & Writing
  - The focus is on fiction, with students analysing an extract of a fiction text in Section A and engaging in creative writing in Section B
  - Section A: Students will be assessed on their ability to understand and analyse the extract, focusing on comprehension, language choices, structure, and personal response. This section tests the ability to identify and explain literary devices, understand the writer's purpose, and develop critical thinking skills.
  - Section B: Students will choose one of two creative writing prompts and demonstrate their ability to write a narrative or descriptive passage. This section assesses their ability to use language effectively and expressively, and to create engaging and imaginative writing, as well as testing students on their spelling, punctuation and grammar.
- Language Paper 2 – Writers' Viewpoints & Perspectives
  - The focus is on non-fiction texts, with students exploring themes through analysing how writers use language and structure to create specific effects on the reader. These themes can include societal issues, personal struggles, and even abstract concepts like love and power.
  - Section A: Students are presented with two non-fiction texts, one from the 19th century and one from the 20th or 21st century. Questions focus on comparing the viewpoints, attitudes, and opinions of the writers, as well as analysing how they use language and structure to achieve their effects. Non-fiction sources may include a variety of formats like articles, reports, essays, travel writing, letters, diaries, or extracts from biographies/ autobiographies.
  - Section B: Students are asked to write a non-fiction piece, often in a specific format (e.g., article, letter, speech), based on a statement related to the theme explored in Section A. The writing task requires students to argue, persuade, or explain their viewpoint to a specified audience. Students need to understand the conventions of the chosen format (e.g., article, letter) and adapt their tone, style, and register accordingly.

### **English Literature – AQA**

Students will sit two papers across multiple texts - a classic novel, Shakespeare, theatre, poetry (seen and unseen) - which they have been prepared on across Year 10/11.

For the current Year 9, these texts are likely to be:

- Literature Paper 1: Macbeth & A Christmas Carol
- Literature Paper 2: An Inspector Calls, Power & Conflict Poetry and Unseen Poetry

### **Combined Science – AQA**

Students will sit six papers, two in Biology, two in Chemistry and two in Physics. Students will either sit Higher or Foundation. An average of the six scores provides them with two GCSE grades e.g. 4-4, 6-5, 9-8. Topics are as follows:

- Biology
  - Cell biology
  - Organisation
  - Infection and response
  - Bioenergetics
  - Homeostasis and response
  - Inheritance, variation and evolution
  - Ecology
- Chemistry
  - Atomic structure and the periodic table
  - Bonding, structure, and the properties of matter
  - Quantitative chemistry
  - Chemical changes
  - Energy changes
  - The rate and extent of chemical change
  - Organic chemistry
  - Chemical analysis
  - Chemistry of the atmosphere
  - Using resources
- Physics
  - Energy
  - Electricity
  - Particle model of matter
  - Atomic structure
  - Forces
  - Waves



- o Magnetism and electromagnetism

## History:

Type of Qualification: GCSE

Exam Board: AQA

Specification: <https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/history/gcse/history-8145/specification/specification-at-a-glance>

How is the course examined:

- 100% written exams

Why study History?:

Courses based on this specification should encourage students to:

- develop and extend their knowledge and understanding of specified key events, periods and societies in local, British, and wider world history; and of the wide diversity of human experience
- engage in historical enquiry to develop as independent learners and as critical and reflective thinkers
- develop the ability to ask relevant questions about the past, to investigate issues critically and to make valid historical claims by using a range of sources in their historical context
- develop an awareness of why people, events and developments have been accorded historical significance and how and why different interpretations have been constructed about them
- organise and communicate their historical knowledge and understanding in different ways and reach substantiated conclusions.

History at Oakbank:

At Oakbank, we study the following 4 units:

- [Germany, 1890–1945: Democracy and dictatorship](#)
- [Conflict and tension: The inter-war years, 1918–1939](#)
- [Migration, empires and the people: c790 to the present day](#)
- [Elizabethan England, c1568–1603](#)

Trips & Additional Opportunities:

The Elizabeth Unit includes the study of a historic environment. In 2027 (the year you sit the exam), the environment will be The Globe Theatre in London. We are planning to take history students to The Globe so they can see the environment in person and better understand the context of what they have been studying.

Future Careers might include Historian, Archaeologist, Museum Designer, Journalist

## **Geography:**

Type of Qualification: GCSE

Exam Board: AQA

How is the course examined:

- 100% written exams

### Why choose Geography?

Students will travel the world from their classroom, exploring case studies in the United Kingdom (UK), higher income countries (HICs), newly emerging economies (NEEs) and lower income countries (LICs). Topics of study include:

- Physical Geography
- Human Geography
- Climate change
- Global shifts in economic power
- Challenge of sustainable resource use

### What skills and knowledge will Geography help me develop?

- Global Awareness - Geography helps students understand the complex interactions between people, places, and environments, fostering global citizenship and a more informed perspective on the world.
- Place Knowledge - Students develop a strong understanding of different regions, cultures, and their geographical contexts.
- Spatial Reasoning: Geography enhances spatial thinking, allowing students to interpret maps, analyse data, and understand how different places are connected.
- Analytical Skills: Geography encourages critical thinking, problem-solving, and the ability to analyse complex issues.
- Data Handling: Students learn to collect, analyse, and present data using a variety of tools, including maps, charts, and statistical methods.
- Communication Skills: Geography requires students to communicate their ideas clearly and effectively through written reports, presentations, and fieldwork.
- Fieldwork Experience: Fieldwork is a key component of GCSE Geography, providing practical experience in collecting and analysing data in real-world settings.

### Trips & Additional Opportunities:

Students will go on a Fieldwork trip to put their understanding into practice. Much to the jealousy of the rest of the year group, this year's Year 11s went to the beach!

Future Careers might include Environmental Engineer, City Manager, Journalist, Scientist

## **Religious Education:**

Type of Qualification: GCSE

Exam Board: AQA

Specification: <https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/religious-studies/gcse/religious-studies-8062/specification/specification-at-a-glance>

How is the course examined:

- 100% written exams

### Why choose RE?

- Students will be challenged with questions about belief, values, meaning, purpose and truth, enabling them to develop their own attitudes towards religious issues.
- Students will also gain an appreciation of how religion, philosophy and ethics form the basis of our culture.
- Students will develop analytical and critical thinking skills, the ability to work with abstract ideas, leadership and research skills. All these skills will help prepare them for further study.

### RE at Oakbank:

In Component 1, we study the beliefs, teachings and practices of two world religions, Christianity and Islam. In Component 2, we study four of the following religious, philosophical and ethical studies 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.

These themes will include discussions of topics like:

- Marriage & Relationships
- Death Penalty & Justice
- Terrorism, Causes of War & Peace-making
- Abortion & Euthanasia
- Animal Testing & Human Rights

Freddie Flintoff (famous cricketer and TV personality) says:

“Religious Studies is probably the one subject I've used most since leaving school.... It's not just about Christianity; It was learning about the way different people live. Going to India and Pakistan and having an understanding of that helped me no end”

Future Careers might include Police Officer, Community or Social Worker, Lawyer

## **French:**

Type of Qualification: GCSE

Exam Board: Edexcel

How is the course examined:

- 25% Writing
- 25% Reading
- 25% Listening
- 25% Speaking

Why choose French?

- Studying GCSE French offers numerous benefits, including enhanced communication skills, increased global awareness, and potential career advantages.
- It also fosters skills like logical thinking and problem-solving, making it a valuable addition.
- Additionally, French is a widely spoken language with significant global relevance, opening doors to international opportunities and cultural understanding. A language GCSE is very highly regarded by both employers and universities.

What skills and knowledge will French help me develop?

- **Communication Skills:** Learning a language improves communication abilities, including speaking, reading, listening, and writing in a new language.
- **Transferable Skills:** French GCSE helps develop problem-solving, logical thinking, and creativity, skills that are valuable in various careers.
- **Confidence Building:** Successfully learning a new language boosts confidence, making students more comfortable speaking in public and engaging with diverse cultures.
- **Language Learning Skills:** GCSE French provides a foundation for future language study, making it easier to pick up other languages later on.
- **Global Awareness:** French GCSE broadens students' horizons and helps them understand different cultures and perspectives, making them more adaptable and globally aware.
- **Cognitive Enhancement:** Learning a language improves brain function, enhancing memory, concentration, and problem-solving skills.
- **Personal Enrichment:** Learning a new language is a rewarding and fun experience, fostering a sense of accomplishment and expanding one's personal interests.

- Creativity and Imagination: Engaging with a new language and culture can stimulate creativity and imagination, fostering a more open and imaginative perspective.

#### Trips & Additional Opportunities:

To give students the opportunity to practice their language skills, we will aim to organise a multi-day trip to France. Previous trips have included activities like cheese tasting, visiting a chocolate factory, exploring the host city, shopping, and much more!

Future Careers might include Translator, Social Worker, Hotels & Cruise Worker, Business

## **Hospitality & Catering:**

Type of Qualification: Vocational Level 1/2

Exam Board: WJEC

Specification: [https://www.wjec.co.uk/media/ukvev1a/wjec\\_l1-2-vocaward-hospitality\\_and\\_catering\\_spec-e\\_11-09-2023-1.pdf](https://www.wjec.co.uk/media/ukvev1a/wjec_l1-2-vocaward-hospitality_and_catering_spec-e_11-09-2023-1.pdf)

How is the course examined:

- 40% written exam
- 60% coursework including practical cooking exam

No prior knowledge of cooking or experience of food technology lessons is required. All skills will be covered during the course, but it is encouraged that students practice at home, particularly in the run-up to their practical exam.

#### What is Hospitality & Catering?:

Hospitality and catering is a dynamic, vibrant and innovative sector delivering vital jobs, growth and investment in the heart of our local communities - important culturally, socially and economically. The sector is a major contributor to the UK economy, employing 2.9 million people and generating £130bn in economic activity, while paying £38bn in taxation to fund important local and national services. Hospitality is the 3rd largest private sector employer in the UK; double the size of financial services and bigger than automotive, pharmaceuticals and aerospace combined.

The UK is currently perceived to offer the friendliest hospitality service in Europe. For the majority behind this vibrant industry, hospitality is more than just a job; it is a passion, an opportunity to express creativity - a form of 'art.' For the public, dining out is not just 'eating,' it is a whole experience, a time to let go and encounter new senses. The greatest challenge facing the hospitality and catering industry today is the shortage of skilled staff at all levels.

#### Why choose Hospitality & Catering?:

Unit 1 enables learners to gain and develop comprehensive knowledge and understanding of the hospitality and catering industry including provision, health and safety, and food safety.

Unit 2 enables learners to develop and apply knowledge and understanding of the importance of nutrition and how to plan nutritious menus. They will learn the skills needed to prepare, cook and present dishes. They will also learn how to review their work effectively

#### Additional Opportunities:

Students will get to cook on a regular basis (although not necessarily every week). The department also often organises competitions and fundraising activities which the students are encouraged to take part in.

Future Careers might include Chef, Restaurant or Business Owner, Catering, Hotel Manager

## **Design and Technology:**

Type of Qualification: GCSE

Exam Board: AQA

How is the course examined:

- 50% written exam
- 50% coursework including creation of a practical product

#### Why choose Design and Technology (DT)?

- GCSE Design and Technology will prepare students to participate confidently and successfully in an increasingly technological world.
- Students will gain awareness and learn from wider influences on Design and Technology including historical, social, cultural, environmental and economic factors.
- Students will get the opportunity to work creatively when designing and making and apply technical and practical expertise.
- Our GCSE allows students to study core technical and designing and making principles, including a broad range of design processes, materials techniques and equipment.

#### What skills and knowledge will DT help me develop?

- Problem-solving: D&T encourages students to identify problems and develop innovative solutions through creative thinking, planning, and design.
- Creativity and Innovation: The subject fosters imagination and the ability to experiment with different materials, tools, and techniques.
- Technical Proficiency: Students gain hands-on experience with various materials, tools, and technologies, building a solid foundation for future learning and careers.
- Critical Thinking: D&T encourages students to analyse design processes, evaluate their own work, and make informed decisions.
- Communication Skills: Students learn to communicate design ideas effectively through drawings, models, and presentations.

- Entrepreneurship: The skills developed in D&T can also be valuable for individuals who want to start their own businesses or create their own products.
- Understanding the World: D&T provides insights into the historical, social, cultural, environmental, and economic factors that influence design and technology.
- Lifelong Learning: The skills and knowledge gained in D&T are transferable and can be applied to various aspects of life, from personal projects to future careers.
- Global Citizenship: D&T can help students develop a global perspective and understand the impact of design and technology on different cultures and environments.

#### Trips & Additional Opportunities:

Current Year 11 went to the Design Museum in London.

Future Careers might include Architect, Engineer, Product Designer, Manufacturer

## **Statistics:**

Type of Qualification: GCSE

Exam Board: AQA

How is the course examined:

- 100% written exams

This course is offered at both Foundation and Higher level. For those students who are particularly concerned about their ability to achieve a Grade 4 (a pass) in Maths, Statistics provides additional practice in key skills that also appear in the Maths curriculum, primarily Data Collection and Representation, Averages and Probability.

#### Why choose Statistics?

- Statistics is for everyone and complements the subject material students are learning about for their Mathematics course. Statistics is about making decisions when there is uncertainty. Perhaps one of the most versatile areas of maths, it gives students the skills to collect, analyse, interpret and present data.
- You will probably find GCSE statistics very rewarding if you enjoy subjects that have clear relevance to the working world. The subject focuses on how statistics are used in real life. You may be surprised how widely used Statistics are. For once, a curriculum that won't leave you wondering "When will I ever use this knowledge again?"!
- Students taking Statistics benefit from the vast cross curricula link opportunities. Students quickly gain an advantage in other subjects that require statistical analysis, such as Science, Geography, Social Sciences, Business Studies and PE.

#### What skills will I develop in Statistics?:

- Selecting and organising information
- Interpersonal and Intrapersonal

- Preparing and presenting arguments
- Analysing and synthesizing information
- Evaluating sources of information and interpretations

### Topics in Statistics:

The Statistics GCSE course is divided into units including:

- Collection of Data
- Processing and Representing Data
- Summarising Data
- Scatter Diagrams and Correlation
- Probability & Probability Distributions

Future Careers might include Data Analyst, Marketer, Researcher, Psychologist, Business

## **Art & Design:**

Type of Qualification: GCSE

Exam Board: AQA

How is the course examined:

- 40% 10-hour practical exam
- 60% coursework

There is no set prior requirement for the Art & Design course but due to the high level of coursework as well as the time that exam preparation will take, it is encouraged that only students who are self-motivated and willing to undertake work on their Art outside of school apply for this course.

### Why choose Art & Design?

- Studying GCSE Art & Design can be beneficial for both personal development and future career paths as well as being really engaging and exciting.
- It fosters creativity, problem-solving skills, and critical thinking, while also providing a foundation for further studies and careers in the creative industries.
- Additionally, it can help students develop communication skills and a deeper understanding of culture and society.

### What skills and knowledge will I develop in Art?

- Enhanced Creativity: Art & Design encourages students to explore their own ideas and develop their creative thinking.
- Problem-Solving Skills: Working on art projects requires students to find solutions to challenges and experiment with different approaches.



- Critical Thinking: Students learn to analyse and evaluate art, both their own and that of others, developing critical thinking skills.
- Improved Communication Skills: Students learn to communicate their ideas and artistic intentions through their work, which also involves understanding and interpreting the work of others.
- Self-Expression: Art & Design provides an outlet for students to express themselves creatively and explore their own identities and perspectives.
- Increased Confidence: Developing artistic skills and creating artwork can boost a student's confidence and sense of self-worth.
- Understanding of Culture and Society: Studying art can help students understand different cultures, historical periods, and societal influences.
- Versatile Skills: Art & Design develops skills that are valuable in many fields, such as visual communication, problem-solving, and creativity, which can be applied to various careers.

Future Careers might include Artist, Product Designer, Marketer, Clothing Manufacturer

## **Drama:**

Type of Qualification: GCSE

Exam Board: AQA

How is the course examined:

- 40% written exam
- 40% devising drama including logbook and practical performance
- 20% performance of two extracts

### Why choose Drama?

- Choosing Drama as a GCSE subject offers a blend of creative expression, skill development, and fun.
- It provides opportunities to enhance confidence, develop teamwork, and cultivate empathy, all while exploring diverse theatrical concepts.
- Students can actively participate in practical work, boosting their presentation skills and refining their abilities to communicate effectively.
- Drama gives you the confidence to perform and present in front of others. When you go for job, college or university interviews, or lead a presentation at work, studying Drama will provide you with the required skills to communicate and deliver confidently in front of others. Meet and develop your initiative.

### Component 1 – Understanding Drama (Written Exam):

- Knowledge and understanding of drama and theatre
- Study of one set play from a choice of nine
- Analysis and evaluation of the work of live theatre makers

### Component 2 – Devising Drama (Practical Performance & Logbook):

- Process of creating devised drama
- Performance of devised drama (students may contribute as performer or designer)
- Analysis and evaluation of own work

### Component 3 – Performing Drama (Practical Performances):

- Performance of two extracts from one play (students may contribute as performer or designer)
- Free choice of play but it must contrast with the set play chosen for Component 1

### Trips & Additional Opportunities:

A trip to watch a theatrical performance to prepare for one of the exam questions.

Future Careers might include Actor, Stage Manager, Script Writer, Director, Presenter

## **Music:**

Type of Qualification: GCSE

Exam Board: Eduqas

How is the course examined:

- 30% performing (one ensemble, one solo piece)
- 30% composing (one free composition, one to a set brief)

While there is no set prior requirement for this course, we would only encourage students to select this course if they have a formal Grade 5 in an instrument or singing or play an instrument to a reasonable level. The ability to read music is also encouraged.

### Why choose Music?

Choosing Music GCSE can be a great option because it enhances transferable skills, provides a creative outlet, and can improve overall academic performance. Music can also be a valuable tool for mental well-being and can be a strong foundation for future studies or careers, particularly in creative fields.

### What skills and knowledge will Music develop?

- Communication and Presentation: Music GCSE involves expressing ideas through performance and composition, which develops strong communication and presentation skills, crucial for any field.
- Teamwork and Leadership: Many music GCSE activities involve collaborative work, fostering teamwork and leadership abilities.

- Creativity and Imagination: Music inherently encourages creativity and imagination, which are highly valued in the modern workforce.
- Refinement and Focus: The process of composing, performing, and analysing music sharpens focus and the ability to refine skills.
- Creative Expression: Music provides a powerful outlet for creative expression and self-discovery, offering a break from more academically rigorous subjects.
- Enjoyment and Fulfilment: For many, music GCSE is a subject they genuinely enjoy, leading to greater engagement and a sense of accomplishment.
- Improved Overall Performance: Some studies have even shown that studying music can positively impact academic performance in other subjects and can help students stand out from the crowd when applying for higher education, showcasing a well-rounded skillset and a passion for learning.

Future Careers might include Musician, Performer, Sound Engineer, Music Producer

## Physical Education (PE):

Type of Qualification: GCSE

Exam Board: AQA

How is the course examined:

- 60% written exams
- 40% coursework (including practical performance of three sports and personal evaluation and analysis)

While there is no set prior requirement for this course, we would only encourage students to select this course if they play at least one sport outside of school to a reasonable level. Students are required to demonstrate their skills and ability in three sports and it is best if students are already engaged in at least one of those sports outside of school.

### Why choose PE?

Choosing GCSE Physical Education (PE) can be a good option if you enjoy sports and physical activity, want to improve your performance, and are interested in the science and sociology behind sports. It can also lead to further studies in related fields and potential careers in sports or health.

### What skills and knowledge will I develop in PE?

- Improving Performance: The course can help you develop your skills in various sports, improve your physical fitness, and enhance your overall performance.

- Theoretical Understanding: You'll learn about the anatomy, physiology, and psychology of sports, as well as the social and cultural influences on participation in sports.
- Transferable Skills: The course develops valuable skills like critical thinking, problem-solving, and teamwork, which are useful in various fields.
- Personal Development: PE can improve your focus, self-discipline, and self-esteem, which can have a positive impact on your overall well-being and academic performance.
- Enjoyment and Social Interaction: You'll have the opportunity to work in teams, interact with peers, and enjoy a variety of physical activities, making the learning process more engaging.

#### Trips & Additional Opportunities:

Students are first choice for fixtures against other schools in sports like football, athletics and netball and additional opportunities and clubs are available throughout the year for sports practice. We are hoping to run the ski trip again next year and have previously offered climbing trips to GCSE PE students.

Future Careers might include Sports Scientist, Athlete, Personal Trainer, Coach, Physio

## **Business Studies**

(Subject to change)

Type of Qualification: GCSE

Exam Board: Edexcel

Specification:

<https://qualifications.pearson.com/content/dam/pdf/GCSE/Business/2017/specification-and-sample-assessments/gcse-business-spec-2017.pdf>

How is the course examined:

- 100% written exams

#### Why choose Business Studies?

Choosing Business Studies at GCSE can be beneficial because it develops a wide range of transferable skills valued in various careers. It provides a foundation for understanding business operations and can lead to further study or direct employment in diverse sectors. Furthermore, it fosters critical thinking, decision-making, and problem-solving abilities, crucial for success in any field.

#### What skills and knowledge will Business Studies develop?

- **Develops Essential Skills:** Business Studies equips students with valuable skills like teamwork, communication, and problem-solving, which are highly sought after by employers.
- **Provides a Business Foundation:** Students gain an understanding of how businesses operate, including topics like marketing, finance, and management, which can be valuable for future career paths.
- **Opens Doors to Various Careers:** The knowledge and skills acquired in Business Studies can lead to a variety of careers in areas like finance, marketing, human resources, and operations.
- **Enhances Employability:** The transferable skills developed in Business Studies can improve a student's chances of being hired and succeeding in the workplace.
- **Fosters Critical Thinking:** Students learn to analyse data, make informed decisions, and solve business-related problems, which are essential for success in any profession.
- **Prepares for Further Study:** Business Studies can be a solid foundation for A-level Business Studies or related degrees.
- **Can Lead to Entrepreneurship:** Some students may develop an interest in starting their own business after learning about the principles and practices of business.

Future Careers might include Business Owner, Entrepreneur, Marketer, Product Designer

## **Health & Social Care:**

(Subject to change)

Type of Qualification: BTEC Level 1/2

Exam Board: Edexcel

How is the course examined:

- 66% controlled assessments (two 6-hour exams)
- 33% written exam (2 hours)

### What is Health & Social Care and why is it important?

About 3 million people work in health and social care. Health care roles include doctors, pharmacists, nurses, midwives and healthcare assistants. Whilst social care roles include care assistants, occupational therapists, counsellors and social workers. Together, they account for nearly one in ten of all paid jobs in the UK. Demand for both health and social care is likely to rise, so they will continue to play a key role in UK society and the demand for people to carry out these vital roles will increase.

### Why choose Health & Social Care?:

- A BTEC in Health and Social Care offers a practical and engaging path into a wide range of healthcare and social support roles, providing essential skills and knowledge for both employment and further study.
- This course is an introduction to life and work in Health and Social Care. Students can develop their understanding of the sector and see whether it is an industry they'd like.
- It's a great choice for those who want to work with people, understand their needs, and make a difference in their lives.
- It develops crucial transferable skills like communication and problem-solving.

#### What will you learn in Health & Social Care?

- Component 1: Human Lifespan Development
  - Life Stages & Life Events
  - Areas of Development and Factors that impact Development
  - Support Available
- Component 2: Health and Social Care Services and Care Values
  - Types of Services & Barriers to Services
  - Care Values
  - Reviewing Practice
- Component 3: Health and Wellbeing
  - Factors that impact Health & Wellbeing
  - Health Indicators
  - Health & Wellbeing Improvement Plans

Future Careers might include Social Worker, Healthcare Assistant, Nurse, Pastoral Support

## **Computing:**

(Subject to change)

Type of Qualification: GCSE

Exam Board: OCR

How is the course examined:

- 100% written exams

#### What knowledge and skills will Computing develop:

- understand and apply the fundamental principles and concepts of Computer Science, including abstraction, decomposition, logic, algorithms, and data representation
- analyse problems in computational terms through practical experience of solving such problems, including designing, writing and debugging programs
- think creatively, innovatively, analytically, logically and critically
- understand the components that make up digital systems, and how they communicate with one another and with other systems
- understand the impacts of digital technology to the individual and to wider society

- apply mathematical skills relevant to Computer Science.

### Component 1: Computer systems

This component will assess:

- Systems architecture
- Memory and storage
- Computer networks, connections and protocols
- Network security
- Systems software
- Ethical, legal, cultural and environmental impacts of digital technology

### Component 2: Computational thinking, algorithms and programming

This component will assess:

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

### Practical Programming

All students will be given the opportunity to undertake a programming task(s), either to a specification or to solve a problem (or problems), during their course of study. Students may draw on some content in the examined components when engaged in programming.

Future Careers might include Computer Engineer, Programmer, Cyber Security