

Altrincham Grammar School for Girls

Bright Futures EDUCATIONAL TRUST

Key Stage 4 Curriculum Information GCSE Courses 2026-2028

KEY STAGE FOUR CURRICULUM



Altrincham Grammar
School for Girls

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YEARS 10 AND 11

This booklet describes the curriculum, based on the National Curriculum (NC) at Key Stage 4 (KS4) as it is followed by our pupils. We hope you will find it helpful in year 9, when choosing options, and useful for reference during KS4 study.

Moving from one stage of the National Curriculum to the next is always an important step in a pupil's school life and this is particularly true for the students in Year 9.

We firmly believe that for a successful transition from Key Stage 3 to Key Stage 4 to be possible, the following points need to be considered:

- The transition presents both challenges and opportunities;
- Students will be expected to show an increased level of maturity and a growing sense of responsibility for their own work and progress;
- Students will find that the pattern and structure of their curriculum has changed and for the first time, they will have a degree of choice in the subjects they study;
- Above all, students will face the challenge of preparing for their GCSE examinations at the end of Year 11.
- We continue to stress the need for the students to study a balanced curriculum that prepares them for life.

NEXT STEPS

Clearly, sound preparation for this significant transition is essential and the students at AGGS are scheduled to receive a great deal of guidance in school.

The information and advice contained in this booklet is an important part of the process.

- The coming weeks are very important for the students and parents/carers and a lot of time will be spent helping students to make informed decisions regarding their options choices. Before having to make the final choices, you will be invited to an online Parents' Evening.
- Once option choices have been discussed with students, they will complete their options using an online platform which is returned directly to Miss O'Hara. Pupils will receive information about how to complete this in assembly and form times.
- Once completed option forms have been received and analysed, some students may be invited to an individual meeting to discuss their choices. At this meeting they may be offered advice and asked to reconsider their initial selections; should this happen, parents/carers will be notified.

We are all keen to ensure the transition from Key Stage 3 to Key Stage 4 is as smooth and successful as possible.

Ms S Gill
Principal

Miss C O'Hara
Assistant Vice Principal



GCSE

General Certificate in Secondary Education (GCSE) courses provide the framework for schemes of work and assessment in years 10 and 11. GCSE expands subject-specific knowledge and understanding and tests whether pupils can apply these to the everyday world. The courses encourage the development of practical, numerical, written and oral skills, including the ability to communicate clearly in speech and writing. Details about specific content are given in each of the GCSE subject summaries later in the booklet.

ASSESSMENT

Our subject examinations are set by external examination boards that include the Assessment and Qualification Alliance (AQA), Pearson Examinations (EDEXCEL) and Oxford, Cambridge and RSA Examinations (OCR). Examination papers are marked by external examiners, whereas non-examined assessments are carried out in school and submitted to the relevant examination board after moderation.

NON-EXAMINED ASSESSMENT

In some subjects, candidates are judged on work completed during the two-year course as well as by final examination. The proportion of non-examined assessment contributing to the final mark varies and is summarised later in the booklet.

EXAMINATIONS

Students take internal examinations in April of Year 10 and mock examinations in December of Year 11. External GCSE examinations are taken in May and June of Year 11. Students are expected to complete all the internal examination papers for their core and optional subjects during the GCSE course. Entry to the final external examination is the decision of the school, following discussions with students and parents/carers as necessary.

GRADES

GCSEs are graded on a 1-9 scale. Grade 9 represents the highest level of attainment.

The minimum national benchmark is five grade 5s including English and Mathematics, but grades higher than these are usually required for entry to many post-16 courses and for many types of employment. Entry to the sixth form at AGGS currently requires a minimum of four 7 grades and two 6 grades (**including a grade 6 in English language and mathematics**). In order to study a particular subject at A level, students are also required to achieve grades 7, 8 or 9 in the required relevant GCSE subject.



CURRICULUM SUMMARY

Core Curriculum				Optional Courses
English language English literature Mathematics	First modern foreign language	EITHER Trilogy Science (2 GCSEs) OR Biology Chemistry + Physics (3 GCSEs)	EITHER Geography OR History	Art Business Citizenship Computer science Dance Design technology* Drama Food preparation & nutrition* French Geography German History Music Physical education studies Religious studies Spanish

*Students **cannot** choose to study both design technology AND food preparation & nutrition

Students will also study an enrichment programme, which is non-examined.

GCSE SUBJECT CHOICES

The subjects offered at KS4 comply with NC requirements and with the school's own policy of providing for each student a course which is broad, balanced and relevant.

Students are normally entered for the equivalent of 9 full subjects at GCSE. For the purposes of university entrance it is much more important to gain high grades in this number of subjects than to take 10, 11 or 12 subjects and consequently earn lower grades on the 9 to 1 scale.

The core of our year 10 and 11 studies includes English language, English literature, mathematics, a modern foreign language, a humanities subject and either trilogy science, leading to 2 GCSE awards, (subjects are studied separately and taught by a specialist teacher), or 3 separate sciences. Students opting for trilogy science can choose 2 further full course options. Separate science students have 1 further full course option. The optional subjects are listed in the curriculum summary above. This core curriculum allows the pupils to achieve the English Baccalaureate if they gain at least a grade 5 in English language, English literature, mathematics, two science GCSEs, a humanity, and an MFL subject.

Please note that it is compulsory to study all 3 sciences to GCSE either separately or as a combined subject. Students can proceed to A level science from either course.

In addition, all students study a non-examined enrichment programme to ensure their experience is broad and balanced. Students study a core PSHE programme to address physical and mental wellbeing, personal safety, relationships and sex education, and financial literacy.

The timetable will be constructed in such a way as to meet the requests of the greatest possible number of pupils. As we cannot guarantee to provide everyone's choices in full, all students are asked to choose reserve subjects.



POINTS TO CONSIDER WHEN CHOOSING OPTIONS

1. A broad range of subjects is advisable to achieve a balance between arts, science, humanities, practical, aesthetic and performance components. Thus, options will be kept open for choices at 16+ and thereafter.
2. The requirements for any possible career or course of further or higher education must be kept in mind. Such requirements can be investigated through research in the careers library and with the Connexions service.
3. Each student should be realistic about matching their combination of subjects to their ability, and should guard against overrating or underrating themselves. They should not be so overstretched that they are unhappy, but they should find sufficient challenge in their work to stimulate and maintain their interest.

ORGANISATION

The students will remain in their current registration groups for administrative purposes. In this way existing friendships and social groups will be maintained. For most subjects however, the students will be allocated to mixed classes. The purpose of mixed classes is to increase pupil choice and to reduce the size of teaching groups where possible.

It will mean that some pupils will not receive the same lesson at the same time as some of their friends who also opted for the subject. A great deal of time is taken to try and maintain effective working partnerships. However, it is inevitable that some separation will occur in some lessons.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION AND SUPPORT

Information in this booklet about our options system is clarified in an options evening for parents/carers and in a year assembly for students. Following this is a period of consultation with subject staff and individual research, so that each pupil can devise their own plan of action with the help of their Form Tutor.

Following these discussions, students then complete a short online application form, outlining their subject choices. The option blocks are then constructed to give as many students as possible their first choice of subjects.

HOMEWORK

Homework is regarded as an integral part of the curriculum. While contributing to the full and appropriate coverage of schemes of work, it provides a framework for the development of sensible individual study skills and it fosters personal qualities such as responsibility, self-motivation and initiative. It also gives a regular opportunity for students to discuss their work with their parents.

Each student's homework timetable, which parents/carers receive at the beginning of each school year, schedules the time allocated to each subject.

Pupils must record their homework in their homework diary, which is monitored by their form tutor and which parents/carers are also asked to check. Longer pieces of homework may be set over extended periods, and the homework timetable is then a guide to pace such homework over the period available. Should the amount of time spent on homework differ significantly from the timetable, the Form Tutor should be contacted.



EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

There are many varied lunchtime and after school opportunities for pupils in KS4 and we encourage pupils to take advantage of these. An outline of these is available on the website.

While the information in this booklet is correct at the time of printing, it is subject to change as schemes of work are revised and updated.

If you require further information about KS4, please contact Miss O'Hara: Assistant Vice Principal responsible for Achievement and Curriculum.

GCSE Options Evening: Thursday 29 January, 2026

Students will be given an introductory presentation about the GCSE options process during assembly on Thursday 15 January.

Options Evening will run between 6.00pm and 8.00pm. Students in 9-4, 9-5, 9-6 and 9-7 along with their parents/carers are invited to hear from Ms Gill and Miss O'Hara at 6.00pm in the dining room. Students in 9-1, 9-2 and 9-3 and their parents/carers should attend at 6.40pm.

There is no requirement to sign in at reception; students should go straight to the venue of their first subject presentation. The timetable is available on the inside cover of this booklet.

KEY DATES

**Options and Information Evening – Thursday 29 January, 2026
(Online form opens on Friday 30 January, details on how to complete will be made available via Teams in advance)**

Year 9 Parents' Evening – Thursday 5 February, 2026

Option Form Deadline – 3:30 Thursday 12 February, 2026

MATHEMATICS

OCR Specification

Currently all students begin studying the Linear GCSE Higher course in Y9, terminating in the June exams when the students will be in Y11.

COURSE CONTENT

1. Number and algebra

Using and applying number and algebra
Numbers and the number system
Calculations
Solving numerical problems
Equations, formulae and identities
Sequences, functions and graphs

2. Shape and space and measures

Using and applying shape, space and measures
Geometrical reasoning
Transformations and coordinates
Measures and construction

3. Handling data

Using and applying handling data
Probability
Specifying the problem and planning
Collecting data
Processing and representing data
Interpreting and discussing results

METHOD OF ASSESSMENT

EXAMINATION – J560

Assessment objectives

Use and apply standard techniques
Reason, interpret and communicate mathematically
Solve problems within mathematics and other contexts

Weighting (higher)

40%
30%
30%

The examination consists of three papers (one of which is non-calculator) at each of two tiers, foundation and higher. All AGGS pupils will be entered at the higher tier which provides access to GCSE grades 4 to 9. There is no coursework component in Mathematics.

For further information refer to the examination board web site:

<http://www.ocr.org.uk/gcsemaths>

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ENGLISH LITERATURE

AQA Specifications

The English Language and Literature GCSE is a demanding and rewarding two-year course of study which allows students to critically respond to, and enjoy, the works of great writers in English across all periods and all parts of the world.

The transferable skills gained through a literary education are various, for instance: critical interpretive reading; skilful writing; articulate speaking; and ethical understanding. These skills are essential for life beyond school. There is a central need for sustained, interpretive reading in many professions; skilful readers capable of critical thinking are always in high demand. Perhaps the greatest transferable skill English can provide, however, is a life-long love of literature and the associated pleasure gained from escaping into a work of fiction.

The Course

English language and literature are assessed by 100% examination. The examinations must be closed book and students must study the following types of texts:

1. One play by Shakespeare.
2. One 19th century novel.
3. A selection of poetry since 1789, including representative Romantic poetry.
4. Fiction or drama from the British Isles from 1914 onwards.

Students are awarded 2 GCSEs: English Language and English literature. Spoken language will be assessed through a formal speech and will continue to be awarded as a separate endorsement, carrying no weighting in terms of GCSE grade.

English Language

As part of the English language course, pupils will study high quality non-fiction texts from the 19th, 20th, and 21st centuries; this may include journalism, travel writing and texts concerned with social commentary. A strong link is also made between the shared skills in language and literature through the inclusion of an extract from a literature text used as a prompt for language investigation. This text often comes from a rich, cultural background. Under the assessment criteria, pupils will be rewarded for careful critical analysis and evaluation of literary features. There is also weighting for technical accuracy, which accounts for 20% of the overall grade achieved.

In English Language, the development of creative writing is a complement to the reading and analysis of the work of the writers of the past and present in both GCSE papers. Students will therefore practise writing in non-fiction forms, producing carefully-crafted letters, journalistic articles and argumentative speeches.

English Literature

The English literature course has a clear focus on Shakespeare and other challenging works from the literary canon. One Shakespeare text will be studied from the following: *Romeo and Juliet*; *Macbeth*; *Much Ado About Nothing*; *Julius Caesar*; *The Merchant of Venice* or *The Tempest*. Pupils will be expected to study the play in fine detail for a closed book examination based upon character and theme.

Pupils will additionally be expected to study a 19th century novel in detail from the following list: *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* by Robert Louis Stevenson; *A Christmas Carol* by Charles Dickens; *Frankenstein* by Mary Shelley; *Pride and Prejudice* by Jane Austen; *Jane Eyre* by Charlotte Bronte; *The Sign of Four* by Arthur Conan Doyle or *Great Expectations* by Charles Dickens. Pupils are well prepared for the demands of such study from their rigorous KS3 experience.

Poetry from 1789 onwards will also be studied, including poets such as: Byron, Heaney, Duffy, Armitage and Rossetti. Studying the stagecraft and language of modern plays, with the introduction of contemporary and diverse texts such as *Leave Taking* by Winsome Pinnock and *Princess and the Hustler* by Chinonyerem Odimba.

SCIENCE

AQA Specification

Overview

All GCSE science courses follow the programme of study which was introduced in the September of 2016.

Coursework has been removed from the specification but 15% of the marks of the overall qualification will be on questions in the examination related to practical aspects of the course. There are also required practical investigations that all students must complete in lessons: 22 in the trilogy course (8 in biology and physics and 6 in chemistry) and 28 in the separate science course (10 in biology and physics and 8 in chemistry).

Scientific discoveries and technological breakthroughs are constantly occurring and it is vital that young people are able to both understand their significance and evaluate evidence to make informed decisions. A deep understanding of the world around us is crucial for the survival of future generations, and the science department aims to generate excitement and inquisition in all of our pupils in all areas of the sciences.

All pupils entering year 10 must follow a programme of study which includes biology, chemistry and physics. Every pupil will study either the AQA GCSE combined science trilogy (which is worth two GCSEs and includes elements of all three sciences) or separate GCSEs in biology, chemistry and physics. Both routes allow the different science disciplines to be taught by subject specialists. Studying separate sciences will take one of your subject option choices.

Assessment

The examinations for all pupils will be at the end of Year 11;

GCSE Combined Science: Trilogy

AQA Specification: 8464

Two GCSEs

Trilogy science is taught across 9 lessons a cycle in year 10, and 10 lessons per cycle in year 11. You may be set one 60 minute homework for each science per cycle.

Exam papers: Trilogy (2 GCSEs)

6 papers: two biology, two chemistry and two physics. Each will assess different topics.

Duration: All papers are 1 hour 15 minutes.

Weighting: The papers are equally weighted. Each is worth 16.7% of the grade and has 70 marks available.

Biology 1 1 Hour 15 minutes 70 Marks Weighting 16.7%	Chemistry 1 1 Hour 15 minutes 70 Marks Weighting 16.7%	Physics 1 1 Hour 15 minutes 70 Marks Weighting 16.7%
Biology 2 1 Hour 15 minutes 70 Marks Weighting 16.7%	Chemistry 2 1 Hour 15 minutes 70 Marks Weighting 16.7%	Physics 2 1 Hour 15 minutes 70 Marks Weighting 16.7%

Grading

Combined science will have a 17 point grading system outlined below; with 1-1 being the lowest and 9-9 being the highest. This is not a mark for each paper but a combined mark.

1-1, 2-1, 2-2, 3-2, 3-3, 4-3, 4-4, 5-4, 5-5, 6-5, 6-6, 7-6, 7-7, 8-7, 8-8, 9-8, 9-9

7. Organic chemistry
8. Chemical analysis
9. Chemistry of the atmosphere
10. Using resources

Physics

1. Energy
2. Particle model of matter
3. Atomic structure
4. Electricity
5. Forces
6. Waves
7. Space physics (separates only)
8. Magnetism and electromagnetism

Suitability for A level

Trilogy students are able to access the A level Biology, Chemistry and Physics courses. When topics covered in the separate sciences are taught at A-level, they are taught in a way that allows combined science students to fully understand. Additionally, catch up resources are provided via student sharepoint that can be completed in the summer between Y11 and Y12.

To have another language is to possess a second soul.

–Charlemagne

The aims of the course are to:

- learn and use the range of vocabulary required.
- learn and use the grammar specified to understand and produce meaning in speaking and writing.
- learn and apply the principles by which spelling represents sounds in standard or widely used forms of the language and use clear and comprehensible pronunciation when speaking the language.
- use the language they are learning both receptively and productively, in spoken and written forms, for a range of audiences and purposes, in different genres and in formal and informal contexts which are relevant to their current and future needs and interests, having regard to the likely experiences of a wide social range.
- be able to recall and use language in different situations and be able to move between French and English.

COURSE CONTENT

The following topics will be covered:

Theme 1: People and lifestyle

1. Identity and relationships with others
2. Healthy living and lifestyle
3. Education and work

Theme 2: Popular culture

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

Theme 3: Communication and the world around us

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

Students will have regular contact with our French Language Assistant and will have some lessons in the computer rooms to increase their independent listening and reading skills.

METHOD OF ASSESSMENT

AO1: understand and respond to spoken language in speaking and in writing

AO2: understand and respond to written language in speaking and in writing

AO3: demonstrate understanding and accurate application of the grammar and vocabulary prescribed in the specification.

The examinations will assess the four skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing, with each skill being worth 25% of the GCSE. All four skills will be tested by examination (one in each skill) in May/June of Year 11.

There is no NEA.

EXTRA-CURRICULAR OPPORTUNITIES

There will be the opportunity to join our team of Language Ambassadors in Year 10. This club develops students' leadership skills as well as their passion and interest in language learning.

GERMAN

AQA Specification

Those who know nothing of foreign languages know nothing of their own.

–Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

The aims of the course are to:

- learn and use the range of vocabulary required.
- learn and use the grammar specified to understand and produce meaning in speaking and writing.
- learn and apply the principles by which spelling represents sounds in standard or widely used forms of the language and use clear and comprehensible pronunciation when speaking the language.
- use the language they are learning both receptively and productively, in spoken and written forms, for a range of audiences and purposes, in different genres and in formal and informal contexts which are relevant to their current and future needs and interests, having regard to the likely experiences of a wide social range.
- be able to recall and use language in different situations and be able to move between German and English.

COURSE CONTENT

The following topics will be covered:

Theme 1: People and lifestyle

1. Identity and relationships with others
2. Healthy living and lifestyle
3. Education and work

Theme 2: Popular culture

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

Theme 3: Communication and the world around us

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

Students will have regular contact with our German Language Assistant and will have some lessons in the computer rooms to increase their independent listening and reading skills.

METHOD OF ASSESSMENT

AO1: understand and respond to spoken language in speaking and in writing

AO2: understand and respond to written language in speaking and in writing

AO3: demonstrate understanding and accurate application of the grammar and vocabulary prescribed in the specification.

The examinations will assess the four skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing, with each skill being worth 25% of the GCSE. All four skills will be tested by examination (one in each skill) in May/June of Year 11.

There is no NEA.

EXTRA-CURRICULAR OPPORTUNITIES

There will be the opportunity to join our team of Language Ambassadors in Year 10. This club develops students' leadership skills as well as their passion and interest in language learning.

SPANISH

AQA Specification

A different language is a different vision of life

–Federico Fellini

The aims of the course are to:

- learn and use the range of vocabulary required.
- learn and use the grammar specified to understand and produce meaning in speaking and writing.
- learn and apply the principles by which spelling represents sounds in standard or widely used forms of the language and use clear and comprehensible pronunciation when speaking the language.
- use the language they are learning both receptively and productively, in spoken and written forms, for a range of audiences and purposes, in different genres and in formal and informal contexts which are relevant to their current and future needs and interests, having regard to the likely experiences of a wide social range.
- be able to recall and use language in different situations and be able to move between Spanish and English.

COURSE CONTENT

The following topics will be covered:

Theme 1: People and lifestyle

1. Identity and relationships with others
2. Healthy living and lifestyle
3. Education and work

Theme 2: Popular culture

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

Theme 3: Communication and the world around us

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

Students will have regular contact with our Spanish Language Assistant and will have some lessons in the computer rooms to increase their independent listening and reading skills.

METHOD OF ASSESSMENT

AO1: understand and respond to spoken language in speaking and in writing

AO2: understand and respond to written language in speaking and in writing

AO3: demonstrate understanding and accurate application of the grammar and vocabulary prescribed in the specification.

The examinations will assess the four skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing, with each skill being worth 25% of the GCSE. All four skills will be tested by examination (one in each skill) in May/June of Year 11.

There is no NEA.

EXTRA-CURRICULAR OPPORTUNITIES

There will be the opportunity to join our team of Language Ambassadors in Year 10. This club develops students' leadership skills as well as their passion and interest in language learning.

HISTORY

AQA Specification

History is recognised as a strong academic subject and as such elicits a high degree of respect from university admissions tutors. The skills gained are extremely transferable, and are acknowledged to be of value in a wide range of studies and professions. The GCSE forms an appropriate basis for those continuing with history at A-Level and beyond; such students often go into business, accountancy, the Law, teaching and academia and a wide range of other careers.

This new specification enables candidates to study history both thematically and in depth. The course contains a significant element of British history together with a wider world depth component. The new GCSE history course is structured as follows:

Paper 1: Understanding the Modern World

Section A: Germany 1890-1945

This period study focuses on the development of Germany during a turbulent half century of change. It was a period of democracy and dictatorship – the development and collapse of democracy and the rise and fall of Nazism.

Section B: Conflict and tension, 1918-1939

This wider world depth study focuses on the causes of the Second World War and seeks to show how and why conflict occurred and why it proved difficult to resolve the issues which caused it. This study also considers the role of key individuals, groups and events in shaping change such as Adolf Hitler, Neville Chamberlain, the Treaty of Versailles and the League of Nations.

Paper 2: Shaping the nation

Section A: Britain: health and people c1000 to the present day

This thematic study will enable students to gain an understanding of how medicine and public health developed in Britain over a long period of time. This component of the course is very helpful for those hoping to study Medicine or Dentistry, or other health professions; interviewees for these courses report that admissions tutors often question them about it, because of the knowledge gained and also the skills it develops.

Section B: Elizabethan England 1568-1603

This option allows students to study in depth a specified period, the last 35 years of Elizabeth I's reign. Candidates will explore issues such as Elizabeth's relationship with Mary Queen of Scots and conflict with Spain; leading to the Spanish Armada of 1588.

Assessment

This qualification is linear, meaning that the students will sit 2 papers at the end of year 11 as follows:

Paper 1: Understanding the Modern World	2 hours	50% of final grade
Paper 2: Shaping the nation	2 hours	50% of final grade



GEOGRAPHY

Edexcel B Specification

The Geography GCSE offers a course that is relevant and exciting. It provides students with an understanding of physical, human and environmental geography, and provides them with the opportunity to investigate some of the most prominent issues facing society today.

“In a world that increasingly values people who can work across the physical and social sciences, geography’s all the rage” The Guardian

“Geography is routinely considered to be one of the most employable subjects available to students.” Association of Graduate Careers Advisory Service

“The study of geography is about... understanding the complexity of our world” Barack Obama

The geography GCSE course

Component	Content	Assessment
Component 1: Global Geographical Issues	<p>Topic 1: Hazardous Earth – including extreme weather events and tectonic hazards</p> <p>Topic 2: Development dynamics – including global inequalities and a focus on an emerging country</p> <p>Topic 3: Challenges of an urbanising world – including causes and challenge of urban change and a focus on one megacity</p>	<p>Written examination</p> <p>1 hour 30 minutes</p> <p>37.5% of qualification</p>
Component 2: UK Geographical Issues	<p>Topic 4: The UK’s evolving physical landscape – including sub-topics 4A: Coastal change and conflict and 4B: River processes and pressures.</p> <p>Topic 5: The UK’s evolving human landscape – including why places and people are changing and a focus on one UK city.</p> <p>Topic 6: Geographical investigations – including one physical fieldwork investigation and one human fieldwork investigation.</p>	<p>Written examination</p> <p>1 hour 30 minutes</p> <p>37.5% of qualification</p>
Component 3: People and Environment Issues – Making Geographical Decisions	<p>Topic 7: People and the biosphere –including the distribution of biomes, the importance of the biosphere and how humans modify it</p> <p>Topic 8: Forests under threat – includes threats and management of coniferous forests and rainforests</p> <p>Topic 9: Consuming energy resources – including the growing demand for energy and environmental impacts of energy use</p>	<p>Written examination</p> <p>1 hour and 30 minutes</p> <p>25% of the qualification</p>

Fieldwork in Geography

Fieldwork is used to support learning in Geography and is a very important aspect of the subject. The department organises two fieldtrips which are a compulsory part of the GCSE course; a two-day residential to the Lake District to investigate river channel characteristics and flood risk, and a one-day fieldtrip to Manchester to investigate variations in quality of life. The Department also organises an optional residential fieldtrip abroad every 3-4 years, usually to Iceland, where students study coastal, glacial and volcanic landscapes.



Further education and careers opportunities for Geography students

Geography provides students with the opportunity to acquire an understanding of important issues and a wide range of transferable skills. Higher education and the world of work both recognise qualifications in Geography as being highly desirable for a wide range of university courses and employment types. Geography can be combined meaningfully with almost any other subject at GCSE and at A Level.

*"Geography meant learning about the complexity of the world. I was able to employ my understanding of society and the skills I had learned in this subject, such as critical appraisal and writing evidence-based essays, in my **medicine** undergraduate studies."*

Dr Tina Bani, **General Practitioner** (former AGGS student)

*"Studying geography has given me the cultural and geopolitical awareness, data analysis and interpersonal skills that I now utilise when **working with NGO and non-profit clients** from the MENAT region and USA to India and Peru, on issues such as global health, immigration and local start-ups."*

Orla Burke, **international aid co-ordinator** (former AGGS student)

*"I really enjoyed geography, which inspired me to study it at university, where my love of the subject only grew. I wanted to use my skills and knowledge in a practical way to shape places and decided to do a master's degree in **urban planning**. I now work as a planner for the Lake District National Park."*

Abigail Holt, **National Park planner** (former AGGS student)

ART, CRAFT AND DESIGN

AQA Specification

Art and Design develop valuable, life- long skills to all students, providing the tools for students to engage creatively and meaningfully with a changing world.

COURSE CONTENT

This is an exciting and GCSE subject, and one where creative, intellectual and intuitive talents will be stretched and nurtured. The Art and Design course provides students with a wide range of creative, exciting and stimulating opportunities to explore practical, critical and theoretical work through a range of two and three dimensional processes, including:

- **Analytical drawing /recording observations /photography**
- **Painting**
- **Printmaking, illustration, Photoshop**
- **Textiles /Fashion /costume**
- **Three- dimensional work /sculpture /ceramics /wire**
- **A variety of mixed media and new media techniques and processes**
- **Appreciation of contemporary and historical aspects of Art**
- **The use of appropriate working vocabulary associated with Art, Craft and Design**

Students will be studying art, craft and design from contemporary and past societies and cultures as this is an important part to the investigating and making process.

Successful practice does require commitment and independent enquiry and will be highly rewarding as they enjoy producing their own work.



All



working processes introduced will be recorded using annotated

sketchbooks and journals that will be supported by Artist reference.

Research and preparation are required for each project and homework is an integral part of this. Students have the opportunity and are encouraged to use the art rooms at lunchtime and after school to further develop, experiment and refine their ideas and techniques.

Many students go on to study Art and Design for A level and further study at university courses include; Foundation studies, Architecture, Fashion, Textiles, Fine Art, Illustration, Graphic Design, Animation etc.

METHOD OF ASSESSMENT

Component One: PORTFOLIO 60% of GCSE

This unit incorporates a **sustained project** developed in response to a theme evidencing a journey from an initial idea and **a selection of further work** which will be in the form of a second project. Each project involves research, through photography, drawings, experimentation with a wide range of materials and processes and there must be evidence of written annotation. The Assessment objectives cover: Recording, developing ideas, experimentation, Artists' references and personal response.

Students will provide a portfolio presentation of their work to effectively reflect and demonstrate the nature of their experiences and personal engagement in their studies.

Component Two: EXTERNALLY SET ASSIGNMENT 40% of GCSE

From a series of set themes set by the exam board, students will select their chosen starting point and produce a personal response following the assessment objectives. The students will have preparation time which is approximately over a period of 3 months followed by a 10-hour period of supervised time.

Suggested equipment list (sketchbooks and portfolios can be purchased in school) and you will be expected to bring appropriate equipment to all your art lessons.

- A selection of pencils, from HB to soft 5B, 6B etc.
- Fine line pens and a white gel pen.
- An A3 sketchbook and smaller sketchbooks such as A4 or A5.
- An A3 folder to transport your artwork and materials safely to and from school.
- An A2 folder to safely store all work in school.
- Coloured pencil crayons.
- A set of gouache, acrylics and watercolour paints.
- A selection of paintbrushes from fine to thicker quality (there are many types of brushes which will produce very different effects from chiselled edged acrylic to finer water colour brushes which always end in a point.

BUSINESS

AQA Specification

This GCSE Business course offers an ever-changing and exciting syllabus. Topics covered are:

- Business in the real world
- Influences on business
- Business operations
- Human resources
- Marketing
- Finance

Students apply their knowledge and understanding to different business contexts ranging from small enterprises to large multinationals and businesses operating in local, national and global contexts. Students develop an understanding of how these contexts impact on business behaviour.

GCSE BUSINESS

<p><u>Business in the real world</u></p> <p>The purpose and nature of businesses Business ownership Setting business aims and objectives Stakeholders Business location Business planning Expanding a business</p>	<p><u>Influences on business</u></p> <p>Technology Ethical and environmental considerations The economic climate on businesses Globalisation Legislation Competitive environment</p>
<p><u>Business operations</u></p> <p>Production processes The role of procurement The concept of quality Good customer services</p>	<p><u>Marketing</u></p> <p>Identifying and understanding customers Segmentation The purpose and methods of market research The elements of the marketing mix: price, product, promotion and place (4Ps)</p>
<p><u>Human resources</u></p> <p>Organisational structures Recruitment and selection of employees Motivating employees Training</p>	<p><u>Finance</u></p> <p>Sources of finance Cash flow Financial terms and calculations Analysing the financial performance of a business</p>

Students will apply their knowledge and understanding to business decision making including:

- the interdependent nature of business activity, influences on business, business operations, finance, marketing and human resources, and how these interdependencies underpin business decision making
- how different business contexts affect business decisions
- the use and limitation of quantitative and qualitative data in making business decisions



Assessment

Paper 1: Influences of operations and HRM on business activity	+	Paper 2: Influences of marketing and finance on business activity
What's assessed <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Business in the real world• Influences on business• Business operations• Human resources		What's assessed <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Business in the real world• Influences on business• Marketing• Finance
How it's assessed <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Written exam: 1 hour 45 minutes• 90 marks• 50 % of GCSE		How it's assessed <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Written exam: 1 hour 45 minutes• 90 marks• 50 % of GCSE
Questions <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Section A has multiple choice questions and short answer questions worth 20 marks.• Section B has one case study/data response stimuli with questions worth approximately 34 marks.• Section C has one case study/data response stimuli with questions worth approximately 36 marks.		Questions <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Section A has multiple choice questions and short answer questions worth 20 marks.• Section B has one case study/data response stimuli with questions worth approximately 34 marks.• Section C has one case study/data response stimuli with questions worth approximately 36 marks.

Our specification requires students to draw on the knowledge and understanding to:

- use business terminology to identify and explain business activity
- apply business concepts to familiar and unfamiliar contexts
- develop problem solving and decision making skills relevant to business
- investigate, analyse and evaluate business opportunities and issues
- make justified decisions using both qualitative and quantitative data including its selection, interpretation, analysis and evaluation, and the application of appropriate quantitative skills.

Business can be supported by, or it can enhance, studies in either Arts or Science subjects.



GCSE CITIZENSHIP STUDIES

AQA Specification

- Should prisoners have the right to vote?*
- How should criminals be sentenced?*
- What role does the UK play in the international organisations?*
- What are the impacts of migration upon a community?*
- How has the government's response to COVID-19 been scrutinised?*
- What is the purpose of the law?*
- How can citizens make change in society?*

Overview

Are you interested in how our country and communities work? Do you question how our country is run? Are you passionate about what happens to our world? Do you enjoy voicing your opinions, discussing your viewpoints, and having your say? Citizenship GCSE is for you!

This GCSE will equip you with skills for life. Helping you to develop knowledge and understanding of politics and the law, as well as transferable skills for university and working life and understanding how you fit into the community on a local, national, and international level. You will have the opportunity to get out and make a difference in your local community, raise awareness about an issue that you are passionate about. If you are looking for a challenge, with a subject that is relevant and will get you out of the classroom to practically make a difference then this subject is for you. **This course is open to all students.**

The Aims of this course are

- To engage with topical citizenship issues and contribute to debates on challenges facing society involving a wide range of political, social, and ethical ideas, issues, and problems in different contexts (local to global).
- To develop and apply understanding of key citizenship concepts (justice, democracy, rights and responsibilities, identities, and diversity) to deepen your understanding of society and how communities change over time.
- To use an enquiring, critical approach to distinguish facts, opinions, and bias, build arguments, and make informed judgements.
- To develop the necessary skills, knowledge and understanding to take practical action with others, to address citizenship issues in their communities.

Course Content & Assessment

2 Exam papers:

Paper 2 – made up of x2 sections 50% of your total marks 1hr 45mins (80marks)

Life in Modern Britain	Rights and Responsibilities
Key questions covered: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- How are UK communities developed?- What is identity?- What is the role of the media and free press?- What principles and values underpin British society?	Key questions covered: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- What laws does a society require?- How does the justice system work?- Can crime be measured accurately?- What are universal human rights?- How are criminals sentenced?

Paper 1 – made up of x2 sections 50% of your total marks 1hr 45mins (80marks)

Politics and Participation

Key Questions covered:

- How does Westminster work?
- What are the powers of local government?
- How do others govern themselves?
- How can I make a change in society?

A key element of Paper 1 is 'Active Citizenship' this is where you will focus on an issue impacting society and attempt to make a change in the world around you!

Extra-Curricular:

- Visit by local politicians – opportunities to ask and debate key issues relating to young people
- Visits to places of interest e.g., Shrewsbury Prison.
- Engage with regular visitors and exciting materials to help develop your knowledge of Politics and wider Citizenship issues.
- Visit to the Houses of Parliament & Royal Courts of Justice for an engaging workshop and mock trial activity
- Join Amnesty Society, Model United Nations and/or Politics Society.

What can you do with Citizenship?

Citizenship can lead you into all sorts of exciting careers. It is an exciting and truly relevant subject, engaging you with current affairs and getting you involved in your community to make long lasting change.

These are just some of the areas of work people have gone into who have taken Citizenship:

- Law
- Journalism
- Civil Service
- Business
- Politics – local, national, and international
- NGOs (Non-Governmental Organisation)
- International organisations

The transferable skills developed within this subject are invaluable and can be used within so many different subjects at A-level and beyond. Some of these skills are listed below.

- Debating
- Critically assessing arguments
- Dissection of a source
- Identifying bias
- Examining and justifying your own opinions
- Engaging in current affairs.

COMPUTER SCIENCE

OCR Specification J277

In computer science, students will learn about how computers work including how they are programmed, how computer networks are used (and secured) in business and in society more widely, and how to use computer systems to produce software to solve problems.



Computer science follows some of the fundamental elements taught in KS3 computing, such as; binary, programming and networking. The course is open to **all students**. It is a great way to develop critical thinking, analysis and problem-solving skills, which can be transferred to further learning in any subject and to everyday life in a wide range of future careers.

Top universities value computer science: the latest Russell Group 'Informed Choices' document lists computer science as a useful A level choice for no less than 22 university course choices.

Course Content

This carefully-planned course gives students a real, in-depth understanding of how computer technology works and how it is applied in business, finance and creative contexts.

It offers an insight into what goes on 'behind the scenes', including computer programming, which develops students' structured thinking. We mainly use the Python programming language following on from Year 8 and 9 studies. Other languages are touched upon where they are relevant to specific tasks in the scheme of work. Programming enables us to deliver the theory parts of the course in a practical, hands-on way using interesting contexts such as cybersecurity and data representation.

Through this qualification students will:

- Develop their understanding of current and emerging technologies, how they work and their impact on the world of business and modern culture.
- Explore how algorithms can be created effectively; using them practically to program an array of software programs whilst also understanding an algorithm use in everyday life.
- Acquire and apply creative and technical skills to produce a range of exciting digital artefacts.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of technology solutions and the impact of computer technology in our work and social lives.

You won't be sat in front of a computer screen every lesson. Lessons are also taught through a lot of varied 'unplugged' activities including, using playing cards to conceptualise key concepts of sorts and searches, creating different forms of media to help as learning aids and revision resources and solving problems from a variety of different puzzles, to name a few.

Last year over 86% of students achieved 9-7.

Enrichment Offer

There are lunchtime clubs for programming, cyber security and media. We enter national competitions including Bebras and CyberFirst. There are also local trips to computer science companies and talks by professional computer scientists.

OCR GCSE Computing J277

We have chosen this course because OCR has led the way in developing qualifications in this subject working closely with the British Computer Society and respected universities. It offers both a GCSE and A Level in computer science which we offer as a sixth form course. This GCSE is therefore an excellent preparation for A level.

The course is split into two halves as shown below. A variety of teaching and learning techniques are used to learn both the theory and the programming side of the course.

Students should find the transition to GCSE straightforward as the course in Years 7-9 has been designed specifically to prepare them for GCSE and most of the topics will therefore be familiar.

<p><u>Unit 1 – Computer systems</u></p> <p>This unit covers the fundamental academic content about computer systems architecture and the legal and ethical issues associated with computer systems. Topics include:- how CPUs work, memory and storage, networks and network security including encryption and methods of breaking security, operating systems.</p>	<p>1h 30m examination</p> <p>80 marks</p> <p>Worth 50% of GCSE</p>
<p><u>Unit 2 – Computational thinking, algorithms and programming</u></p> <p>This unit covers the fundamental academic content about algorithms. Students will gain experience in a range of interesting scenarios such as programming simple games, real-world models, system security, and some robotics. Topics include:- basic programming techniques, logic, standard algorithms such as sorting, testing and planning for misuse, handling files and other data representations.</p>	<p>1h 30m examination</p> <p>80 marks</p> <p>Worth 50% of GCSE</p>
<p><u>Practical programming</u></p> <p>Pupils are given plenty of opportunity to undertake programming tasks over the duration of their GCSE studies. These tasks are a vital part in developing logical thinking which links directly to their assessed exams at the end of Y11 and also for life outside of computer science.</p>	

DANCE

AQA Specification

GCSE dance is an enjoyable course that will develop your choreography and performance skills as well as your ability to analyse and evaluate professional dances. You do not have to go to dance lessons outside of school to study this subject, but you must have a keen interest in dance.

Course content

The course involves both written and practical aspects of dance.

Practical aspects of the course will involve technique and performance sessions as well as choreography workshops. All dance will be in a contemporary style.

Theory elements of the course will involve watching and analysing professional dances and developing an understanding of choreography and performance.

Assessment

Component 1: Performance and choreography

60%

Performance: 30%

1. Perform 2 set phrases choreographed by the exam board (approximately 1 minute in duration)
2. Duet/trio performance choreographed by teachers and students (3-5 minutes in duration)

Choreography:30%

1. Solo or group choreography using a stimulus from the exam paper (solo – 2 to 2 and a half minutes, group dance 3 to 3 and a half minutes in duration)

Component 2: Dance Appreciation

40%

Written exam: 1 hour 30 minutes

The written exam will include questions on:

1. Knowledge and understanding of choreographic processes and performing skills
2. Critical appreciation of own work
3. Critical appreciation of professional works (from the dance anthology)

The practical assessments will take place in the spring term of Y11 and the written examination will be in the summer term of Y11.

Why study dance?

GCSE Dance is a subject that will develop not only your dance skills but also transferable skills that will make you employable:

- ✓ Confidence
- ✓ Creativity
- ✓ Analytical and evaluative skills
- ✓ Communication
- ✓ Ability to work in a team
- ✓ Motivation
- ✓ Leadership skills

This subject gives students the opportunity to achieve a GCSE in a subject they love.

DRAMA

AQA Specification

GCSE Drama is a challenging and enjoyable subject that offers candidates the opportunities to develop their practical skills in drama and to enhance their appreciation and understanding of drama and a range of play texts.

The aims of the course are to develop:

- an understanding and response to a wide range of play texts, an appreciation of the ways in which playwrights achieve their effects and the ability to communicate the authors' intentions to an audience;
- an awareness of social, historical and cultural contexts and influences through an investigation of plays and other styles of dramatic presentation;
- increased self and group awareness and the ability to appreciate and evaluate the work of others;
- skills of creativity, self-confidence, concentration, self discipline and communication.

ASSESSMENT

The Scheme of Assessment comprises of three components: two practical assessments (60%) and a written paper (40%).

Component 1: Understanding drama (written exam) 40% of GCSE

1 hour 45
80 marks in total

The written paper is set and marked by AQA. Candidates are required to answer questions chosen from section A, B and C.

Section A Knowledge and understanding of drama and theatre (4 marks)

Candidates are required to demonstrate a clear understanding of dramatic and theatrical language and processes through a series of multiple choice questions.

Section B Study and performance of a scripted play (46 marks)

Candidates must study and explore practically one set play chosen specified by AQA, demonstrating knowledge and understanding of the characteristics and context of the play. They are expected to answer four questions in this section, exploring ideas for how the play may be interpreted practically.

Section C Study of a live theatre production seen (32 marks)

Candidates are required to demonstrate their understanding and awareness of what makes effective theatre by analyzing and assessing how performance, design and technical aspects were used in a live production seen during the course. Candidates are expected to answer one, two-part question.

Component 2: Devising drama (practical) 40% of GCSE

This is internally assessed and moderated by AQA. Candidates are required to perform a piece of devised drama. They are also expected to analyse and evaluate the process and final performance in the form of a written log. Students may contribute to the practical work as either a performer, or a designer.

Devising log (60 marks)
Devised performance (20 marks)
80 marks in total

Component 3: Texts in practice (practical) 20% of GCSE

This is assessed by a visiting AQA examiner. Candidates are expected to perform two extracts from one play (students may contribute as performer or designer).

Performance of Extract 1 (25 marks) and Extract 2 (25 marks)
50 marks in total

Drama is a practical subject and as such requires time and commitment. Theatre visits will usually take place in the evening and candidates will be expected to meet the cost of tickets and transport.



DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

AQA Specification

Why study design and technology GCSE?

The word **design** can mean many things. Design is a way of doing things; it is a way of thinking; above all, it is about creative expression. Design and technology is about taking ideas and transforming them into a practical reality.

In a crowded school curriculum, design and technology will provide you with an exciting, yet academically rigorous learning environment. You will have opportunities to experiment, innovate and create. You will be preparing yourself for a future working environment in which the ability to problem solve, work as part of a team, and to be open-minded will be highly valued.

GCSE design and technology uniquely offers you the opportunity to take the theoretical knowledge taught in subjects such as mathematics, science and geography and to apply it to varied, real life problems.

Design and technology will prepare you to participate confidently and successfully in an increasingly technological world.

Both the *Royal Academy of Engineering* and the *Design Council* consider design and technology to be a vital subject for growth in their respective industries. The subject provides the opportunity for students to be creative and use their imagination.

Take the opportunity to work creatively through designing, making and applying technical and practical expertise.

Enrichment offer

There are plenty of opportunities for you to continue your learning and broaden your skill outside of lessons:

You can participate in, and even lead, lunchtime clubs such as jewellery club, textiles club, lunchtime projects and more.

We take part in national competitions and invite industry professionals to school to talk about careers, complete workshops and share expertise.

A variety of trips to support and inspire you back in the classroom.

Annual trip to London

In order to see both current, cutting edge design and iconic design classics we will be visiting both the V&A museum and the Science Museum, to inspire designing and making!

Speak to you D&T teacher for more details.

Careers

A wide range of exciting D&T careers include: Architect, engineer, product designer, graphic designer, interior designer, fashion designer, pattern and print designer, product manager, stylist etc.

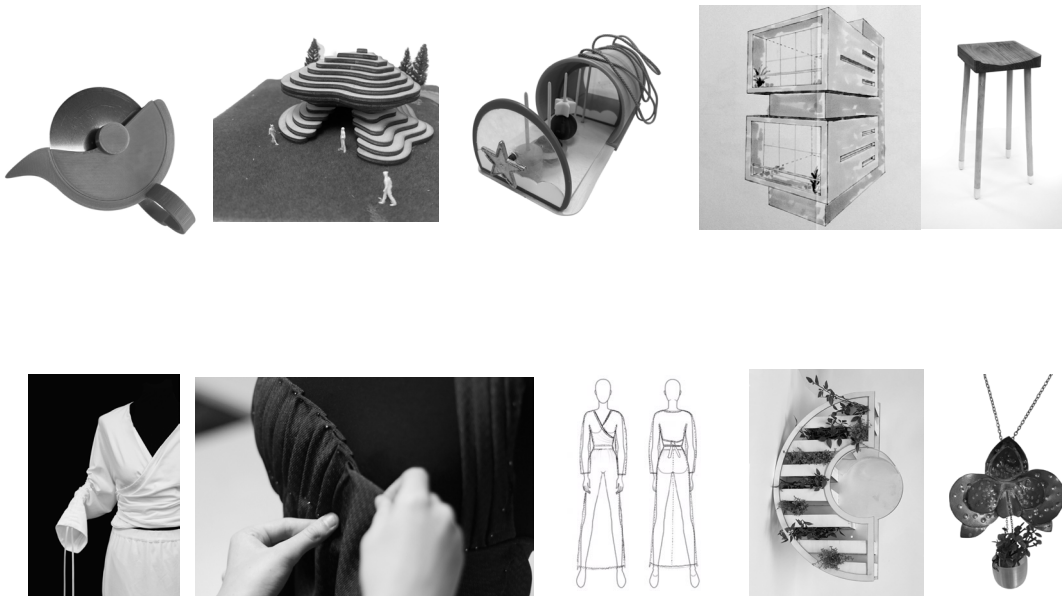
However, D&T also provides you with a host of transferable skills to make you highly employable in an increasingly competitive jobs market.

AQA GCSE - DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

The course allows students to study and develop a range of core designing and making principles, including design processes, materials techniques and equipment usage.

Students will complete a series of varied practical projects throughout Year 10 which will reinforce practical skills and put theory into practice. These projects reflect the needs of a rapidly changing society and encourage students to seek out existing problems and solve them through investigation, design and making. They will learn about a range of different subject matters including new and emerging technologies, modern and smart materials, alternative energy generation and inclusive design.

Students will specialise in wood, plastics and metals techniques and processes. During Year 10, students will complete, design and make projects focusing on architecture, homeware, innovation, graphic design, jewellery and fashion design. Throughout the process, students are taught a wide range of practical skills including wood working, use of the 3D printer and laser cutter, model making, forming plastics, structuring textiles, printmaking and traditional silversmithing. They are constantly encouraged to be experimental, and to merge the lines between material areas in order to approach problems from a new perspective.



METHOD OF ASSESSMENT

Each area follows the same format, with individually assessed, focussed tasks in Year 10, building up to a final non-examined assessment project, which will include a portfolio of work and a prototype product in Year 11. There will also be an examination of a single written paper at the end of Year 11.

NON-EXAM ASSESSMENT (COURSEWORK)
2 HOUR EXAMINATION

50% of the final marks
50% of the final marks

FOOD PREPARATION & NUTRITION

AQA Specification

The new GCSE Food and Nutrition is an exciting and creative course which focuses on practical cooking skills to ensure students develop a thorough understanding of nutrition, food provenance and the working characteristics of food materials.

The aim of the course is to teach the students about food in its widest sense and to enable them to develop a wide range of practical skills. It has been developed to help the students understand:

- what food is composed of, why we need it and how it affects our long term health
- how food can be prepared and cooked skilfully and safely to produce nutritious and delicious meals for different people and situations
- where food comes from and how it is produced and sold
- what happens to the ingredients in food when you prepare and cook them
- which foods different cultures eat throughout the world
- how the food choices people make affect the health and wellbeing of themselves and their families
- how you can become an informed and thoughtful consumer of food

Food preparation skills are integrated in to 5 core topics:

- Food, nutrition and health
- Food science
- Food safety
- Food choice
- Food provenance

Examination

50% 1 hour 45 minutes Section A: 20 marks multiple choice, Section B: 80 marks – 5 longer questions.

Non Examined Tasks (NEA)

Task 1 - The Food Investigation 15%

6 – 8 hours

In September of Year 11 the students will be given a choice of tasks to investigate through practical work.

Task 2 – The Food Preparation Assessment 35%

20 hours including a 3 hour practical assessment

Information regarding this task will be available from 1st November during Year 11. It will give the students the opportunity to demonstrate the skills they have developed over the period of the course.



Overview

This course is an exciting **mixture of practical and creative work** which the students really enjoy. **Classes are often smaller** and as it is a practical subject, requiring much individual supervision, this is helpful in performing and composing activities. **The study of musical set works, from a wide variety of styles, through listening and appraising gives students an excellent foundation for A level music.** **The course is also really enjoyable for any student who really likes listening to and performing music.**

Candidates are offered structured opportunities to develop their knowledge, understanding and skills in

Unit 1	Understanding music (Listening)
Unit 2	Performing music
Unit 3	Composing music

It encourages them to become:

- more **informed performers** through study of their instrument and pieces written for it;
- more **skilled composers** through study of compositional techniques and styles;
- **understanding listeners** through study of a range of different types of music and the backgrounds to them.

The areas of study define a wide background of knowledge and understanding of music and its context in different traditions, and require close, in-depth study of relevant repertoire.

Composing

Students are required to compose two pieces. Composition 1 will be set to a brief and Composition 2 will be a free composition. In Year 10, students undertake short composing/arranging tasks. In Year 11, the composing coursework takes place.

It is essential that students like, or are not afraid of composing! It is an important part of the course. Lots of help will be given with this area though, to students who lack confidence in composition.

Listening and Appraising

The listening course has 4 Areas of Study, each with set works. These pieces are diverse and exciting and covered in some depth. We have chosen to cover AOS 1 (Mozart Clarinet Concerto, 3rd movement) and AOS 2 (Paul Graceland Songs) In addition, students will learn to answer questions on unfamiliar music, based around the AOS themes. Students have their own text book and build up a set of comprehensive notes.

Set Works and unfamiliar listening from the following areas of study

- AOS 1: Western Classical Music 1650 – 1910, studying **Beethoven's 1st symphony, 1st movement** as the set work
- AOS 2: Popular Music
- AOS 3: Traditional Music, studying **3 Queen songs, including Bohemian Rhapsody as the set works**
- AOS 4: Western Classical Tradition since 1910

Performing

One solo piece and one ensemble piece to be chosen and rehearsed. Recordings of performances must be completed in the year of certification and are usually recording in the Autumn Term of Y11.

Performing Standard required

- **Associated Board Grade 4/5 , or equivalent, on your main instrument or voice – please ask Music Department staff if you are unsure about your performance level**
- If your main instrument is *not* piano, then it is essential to be approx **grade 1 standard on piano/keyboard**, or equivalent, or guitar chords **to have the ability to compose with guitar chords instead**, to be able to cope with the composition element of the course.

Please see Ms Mayall if you have any further questions about this.

Extra-curricular Music commitment required:

GCSE Music requires an integrated approach to Listening, Composing and Performing.

It is a requirement that, as part of the GCSE Music course, students attend at least *one* extra-curricular Music ensemble.

This will develop general understanding of repertoire and improve ensemble and aural skills. It is also lots of fun and gives students the opportunity to perform and sometimes direct ensembles – often helping with the composition/performance coursework as a result. This should not be a problem for keen musicians, who may already be involved in several ensembles.

ASSESSMENT

COMPONENTS

Unit	Title	Assessed	Weighting
1	Listening and appraising	Section A: Listening (68 marks) Section B: Contextual understanding (28 marks)	40%
2	Performing	Performance 1: Solo performance (36 marks) Performance 2: Ensemble performance (36 marks)	30%
3	Composing (2 pieces)	Composition 1: Composition to a brief (36 marks) Composition 2: Free composition (36 marks)	30%

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

EDEXCEL Specification

GCSE PE is an exciting syllabus that not only allows students to participate in a range of practical activities, but also gets them to consider their strengths and weakness, and look into how training programmes can improve their sporting ability. It teaches them about the anatomy and physiology of sports performers, the sociocultural aspects of sport and delves into the realms of sports psychology. Pupils who choose GCSE PE will be assessed in 3 practical sporting activities, complete a Personal Exercise Programme and will study the theory of Physical Education. The course is highly demanding in both the theoretical and practical content and it is important that pupils are regular participants in sporting activities.

COURSE CONTENT

The course is divided into four components:

Component 1 and 2: The Theory of Physical Education (60%)

The theory course is split into two components and these are examined separately.

Component 1: Fitness and Body Systems (1 hour 30 minutes examination)

Pupils will study; applied anatomy and physiology, movement analysis, physical training and the use of data.

Component 2: Health and Performance (1 hour 15 minutes examination)

Pupils will study; health, fitness and well-being, sports psychology, socio-cultural influences and the use of data.

Component 3 Practical Performance (30%):

Pupils can be assessed as a player or performer in three activities of the many that are available. The activities can be chosen as follows:

- One must be a team activity
- One must be an individual activity
- The final can be a free choice from the activity list (see below)

Component 4: Performance and Personal Exercise Programme (10%):

Pupils will undertake a six week training programme in which they will focus on one particular activity out of their chosen three. They will perform various fitness tests and plan and monitor a fitness programme applying the theory aspects of the course.

KNOWLEDGE, UNDERSTANDING AND SKILLS GAINED

The course requires pupils to;

- Demonstrate, apply a knowledge and understand of, and analyse and evaluate the factors that underpin performance in physical activity and sport.
- Demonstrate and apply relevant skills and techniques in physical activity and sport and analyse and evaluate performance.

ASSESSMENT

Method of Assessment	Details of Assessment	Weighting	Duration
Component 1: Fitness and Body Systems	Examination paper	36%	1 hour 30 mins
Component 2: Health and Performance	Examination paper	24%	1 hour 15 mins
Component 3: Practical Performance	Practical examination (Non-examined assessment)	30%	
Component 4: Personal Exercise Programme (PEP)	NEA written & practical assessment	10%	

PRACTICAL ACTIVITIES – choose one team, one individual and one other.

TEAM ACTIVITIES	INDIVIDUAL ACTIVITIES
Acrobatic Gymnastics	Amateur boxing
Association football	Athletics: all individual events
Badminton	Badminton
Basketball	Cross Country Running
Cricket	Canoeing
Camogie	Cycling Track, road or BMX cycling
Dance	Dance
Figure Skating	Diving
Futsal	Equestrian
Gaelic football	Figure skating
Handball	Golf
Hockey	Gymnastics
Hurling	Kayaking
Ice Hockey	Rock climbing
In Line Roller Hockey	Sailing
Lacrosse	Sculling
Netball	Skiing
Rowing	Snowboarding
Rugby league	Squash
Rugby union	Swimming
Sailing	Table Tennis
Sculling	Tennis
Squash	
Table Tennis	
Tennis	
Volleyball	
Water Polo	

*Candidates may not be assessed in the same activity as an individual and a team player/performer.

WHY STUDY GCSE PE?

Whilst GCSE PE students have to be talented sports people, it is a misconception that this is all the course entails. Due to the elements of anatomy and physiology, movement analysis, sports psychology and sociocultural influences, GCSE PE is suitable for those wishing for careers in

- Medicine/health care
- Physiotherapy

- Psychology and sports psychology
- Nutrition and Diet
- Armed Forces and policing
- Sports performers and coaches
- Sociology
- Teaching

As well as this GCSE PE allows for the development of transferable skills including: decision making, psychological understanding of people, independent thinking, problem solving and analytical skills as well as thinking, acting and reacting under pressure, all of which are suitable to any chosen career pathway.



RELIGIOUS STUDIES

AQA Specification

Religious studies can be taken by anyone, whether or not they are religious themselves. If you have an interest in cultural, moral theological and philosophical issues religious studies is the right course for you. It is about you, your life and the issues you will face when you leave school and go into the multi-ethnic, multi-faith society that is the UK. It will extend your knowledge of the religions of the world and develop your logical thinking, problem-solving, writing and evaluation skills. Lessons are challenging and stimulating and you will be involved in independent tasks, making presentations, research and decision-making in a range of learning styles. Religious studies is not about making you religious; it is about enabling you to think for yourself about religious and moral issues in a critical and enquiring way. Religious studies is a popular subject and recognised as a highly credible qualification by all universities. Examination results in this subject are outstanding and uptake to A level is excellent.

"It is the mark of an educated [person] to be able to entertain a thought without accepting it"
-Aristotle

"As irrigators lead water where they want, as archers make their arrows straight, as carpenters carve wood, the wise shape their minds."
— The Buddha

GCSE Specification

Component 1: The study of religions: beliefs, teachings and practices

What's assessed

Beliefs, teachings and practices of **two** religions – Christianity and Buddhism (there is a possibility we may change our second religion in the coming years)

Christianity & Buddhism

Students study the beliefs, teachings and practices of Christianity and Buddhism specified below and their basis in Christian and Buddhist sources of wisdom and authority. They will develop the ability refer to scripture and/or sacred text, to justify and develop their points. Students will study the influence of the beliefs, teachings and practices studied on individuals, communities and societies. Common and divergent views within Christianity and Buddhist in the way beliefs and teachings are understood and expressed will be included throughout.

Christianity

Key beliefs

- The nature of God: God as omnipotent, loving and just. The oneness of God and the Trinity: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
- Creation: Christian beliefs about creation including the role of Word and Spirit: (John 1:1-3 and Genesis 1:1-3).
- Beliefs about the afterlife and their importance: resurrection and life after death, judgement, heaven and hell, Jesus Christ and salvation

Beliefs and teachings about:

- The incarnation and Jesus as the Son of God
- The crucifixion, resurrection and ascension
- Sin and the means of salvation, including law, grace and Spirit
- The role of Christ in salvation including the idea of atonement.

Practices

- Worship and festivals
- The role of the church in the local and worldwide community

Buddhism

Key beliefs and teachings

- The Dhamma (Dharma)
- The Buddha and the Four Noble Truths
- The Four Noble Truths

Practices

- Worship and festivals
- Buddhist ethics

How it's assessed

- Written exam: 1 hour 45 minutes
- 96 marks (plus 5 marks for Spelling, punctuation and grammar (SPaG))
- 50% of GCSE

Component 2: Thematic studies

What's assessed

Four 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 E: Crime and Punishment

Theme A: Relationships and families

- Sex, marriage and divorce
- Families and gender equality

Theme B: Religion and life

- The origins and value of the universe
- The origins and value of human life

Theme C: The existence of God and revelation

- Philosophical arguments for and against the existence of God
- The nature of the divine and revelation

Theme E: Religion, crime and punishment

- Religion, crime and the causes of crime

How it's assessed

- Written exam: 1 hour 45 minutes
- 96 marks (plus 5 marks for spelling, punctuation and grammar (SPaG))
- 50% of GCSE

Extra-curricular

The RS Department offers a wide variety of exciting extra-curricular opportunities. Over the last few years we have (to name just a few): welcomed a variety of guest speakers from university academics to local religious leaders, run trips as nearby as local places of worship and far off as India, Vietnam, and Cambodia, Thailand and Japan. We have kept our students informed about religious festivals and talks in the area, hosted a philosophy society run by a philosopher from the Institute of Philosophy. Alongside this, we maintain an Islamic society alongside a Christian Union, and a Hindu Society. We are always looking to set up new societies, and would relish the opportunity to run a Jewish, Sikh, Buddhist or Humanist society. We are a vibrant department and we always are planning something new, including visits to religious places of worship - so do come and chat to us about what we currently have planned!

