

Sandwell Academy

Year 9 Options 2026



Red Pathway

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Be Brave Be Kind Be Proud

The Options Process and Pathways

The Academy has worked hard to provide a range of level 2 qualifications to suit all needs. This includes both vocational qualifications and the traditional GCSE courses.

English Baccalaureate

In 2010 the Government introduced an English Baccalaureate which you are strongly encouraged to follow. It involves studying five GCSE subject areas: English, Mathematics, Science, a Modern Foreign Language and either Geography or History. It is likely that successful attainment of these subjects at grades 5 -9 will enhance your application should you wish to go to university and it will be recognised by employers. The Academy therefore encourages students, where appropriate, to achieve this qualification via the curriculum that is offered. This pathway is also compulsory for a large number of students.

BTEC – This is a national vocational qualification.

This qualification recognises your competence in a work related area. Assessment is largely through internally assessed units, which are externally moderated, together with an externally assessed exam. These courses are more practical and you will achieve an award equivalent to one GCSE.

GCSE - These are the traditional examinations known as the General Certificate of Secondary Education.

Assessment in all GCSE qualifications is now linear. This means that all examinations and submission of marks happen at the end of the course. Some parts of course are examined as Controlled Assessments. This means that you may prepare and research over a period of time, before completing an extended task under formal examination conditions.

Students who achieve high GCSE or BTEC grades can progress to Level 3 courses: AGCE (Advanced General Certificate of Education) or BTEC National qualifications after age 16. Most jobs, places of training or further education require you to achieve at least five GCSEs at grade 5 – 9 or the vocational equivalent.

By the end of July 2026 you will have completed Key Stage 3 and made progress in a range of subjects. Now you must decide which subjects you wish to continue to study for the next two years leading to GCSE and/or BTEC/ qualifications. There are a range of new courses on offer too.

Your decision is a very important one as it will affect your progress over the next two years and your choice of advanced courses or further education, training or employment.

The policy of the Academy is to 'provide courses that will give students the best opportunities to succeed.' In order to give you the best options and outcomes, bespoke pathways will inform your options process, which are explained on your options form.

All students will study:

GCSE English Language

GCSE English Literature

GCSE Maths

GCSE Science (double award: biology, chemistry and physics)

GCSE Spanish

Students must pick one of the following:

GCSE Geography

GCSE History

Other potential options include:

GCSE Triple science

GCSE Art and Design: Fine Art

GCSE Business or BTEC Enterprise (depending on suitability / availability)

BTEC Performing Arts

BTEC Health and Social Care

BTEC Digital Information Technology (ICT)

GCSE Religious Education

GCSE Statistics

GCSE Computer Science

GCSE Design Technology

GCSE Music

GCSE PE or BTEC Sport (depending on suitability / availability)

BTEC Creative Media Production (Media Studies)

GCSE Citizenship

You will study 9 subjects as well as the wider curriculum.

How to I submit my options?

You can submit your options form in person to student reception **between Monday 13 April and Friday 17 April.**

This is so that you can ensure that you spend time considering and researching your options over half term. Speak to your teachers, your PT and engage with the options programme to make sure that you make the best decisions for yourself and your future. Remember to consider any career plans that you may have.

Will I be able to do what I want?

Most students are able to study their preferred subjects. If this is not possible it may be because: your choice does not match your ability level or career plan, the option group is too large to include everyone or the option group is too small and has to be withdrawn. Although staff will try to make it possible for you to have your preferred choice of subjects, the final decision will rest with the Academy.

Why would a group or subject be withdrawn?

Should a subject not continue to attract a sufficient number of students or an integral curriculum change takes place, it might be withdrawn and the students who have chosen that subject will be offered a different subject based on their other choices, or be guided to choose an alternative subject.

Some subjects are new. How do I know whether to choose them?

As well as information available from this booklet, you can also speak to the teachers responsible for each subject as detailed in this booklet. You are encouraged to look at the specifications to gain an understanding of the course content. You will also have a short presentation in assembly for new subjects.

How do I choose if I am not sure about my career plans?

You will continue to study compulsory subjects in Years 10 and 11. These subjects will give you a broad base for any choices that you will make beyond Year 11 and will give you good options for further study or apprenticeships. It is ok to not be sure about your career plans, so you are encouraged to choose subjects that you enjoy and that are varied, as opposed to choosing a subject because of the teacher or because your friends are doing it. If you are still unsure of how your choice of subjects might affect your future career plans, please speak to the careers team.

Can I change an option if I need to?

Once you have submitted your options form, this will be considered as final. However, if you do have any specific questions about the options process, please contact Mr Smith rsmith@sandwellacademy.com

No changes can be made once Key Stage 4 commences.

Key Dates


Thursday 26 March: Year 9 Options launch



Monday 23 March - Friday 27 March: Year 9 options, careers and consultation programme commences (taking place during PT time)



Monday 13 April: Forms can be handed into student reception (they will not be collected prior to this date to ensure thorough consideration has taken place)



Friday 17 April: Deadline for all options forms to be received



June 2026: Options confirmed*

You will receive one copy of your options form to complete by hand and submit to student reception. Please ensure that you use the half term break to confirm your decisions.

Forms will not be accepted prior to Monday 13 April.

Your form will outline your options blocks and pathway.

* Integral curriculum changes can take place which can result in certain subjects being withdrawn. The Academy will always seek to ensure that students are offered a suitable alternative in this instance.

GCSE English Language

Awarding Body

Edexcel

Further Information available from

Mr Blanche

Description

Students are expected to read and analyse a range of texts, both fiction and non-fiction whereby they will develop skills in close analysis and understanding. They also practice various types of writing, including creative and transactional writing. They will be expected to apply a range of skills including applying a range of vocabulary and punctuation effectively including organising their writing for effective communication.

Spoken language skills are developed through presentations and discussions where students will deliver a presentation on a topic of their choice.

Assessment(s)

Paper 1: Fiction and Imaginative Writing

Section A: Reading (Fiction)

Section B: Creative Writing

Paper 2: Non-fiction and Transactional Writing

Section A: Reading (Non-fiction)

Section B: Transactional Writing (e.g., letters, speeches, articles)

Spoken Language Assessment:

This usually involves students delivering a presentation or responding to questions and is assessed separately from the written exams.

Next steps

A-Level English Language

Future pathways

- Journalism
- Marketing
- Speech and Language therapy
- Law
- Human Resources
- Media and Digital Marketing
- Public Relations
- Publishing
- Writing

GCSE English Literature

Awarding Body

Edexcel

Further Information available from

Mr Blanche

Description

Students are expected to read and study a variety of literary texts, including plays, novels, and poetry. They analyse themes, characters, language, and literary techniques. Developing skills in essay writing, including the ability to express and support critical opinions, is a key aspect of the course.

Students will be expected to cover a range of the English canon including Shakespeare, poetry by a range of writers and literature from both the 19th century and modern ages. At Sandwell Academy, we presently study:

- Shakespeare: Macbeth
- 19th Century Novel: A Christmas Carol or Strange case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde (Teacher Discretion)
- Modern Text: An Inspector Calls or Animal Farm (Teacher Discretion)
- Poetry: Conflict Poetry Anthology and Unseen Poetry

These texts have been chosen as they expand upon students' exploration of the ideas of identity, morality, guilt, family, honour and conflict at Key Stage 3. However, they are subject to change in the interests of providing a rich, diverse curriculum.

Assessment(s)

Paper 1: Shakespeare and Post-1914 Literature

Section A: Shakespeare play (e.g., a tragedy or comedy)

Section B: Post-1914 British play or novel

Paper 2: 19th-century Novel and Poetry since 1789

Section A: 19th-century novel (e.g., a classic novel)

Section B: Poetry anthology (a selection of poems on a particular theme)

Section C: Unseen poetry (analysis of unseen poems)

Next steps

A-Level English Literature

Future pathways

- Education
- Writing and Journalism
- Publishing
- Librarian and Archiving
- Cultural Heritage and Tourism
- Law and Legal Services
- Advertising
- Corporate Communications

Awarding Body

Higher Tier – OCR

Foundation Tier - AQA

Further Information available from

Mr Hughes

Description

To succeed in GCSE Mathematics students will need to secure their knowledge of key stage 3 topics in Number, Algebra, Shape and Data. Students should be confident with their Fluency skills and have some understanding of Reasoning and Problem solving which will be further developed at key stage 4.

Assessment(s)

After each block is taught students will sit a 20 minute test that will give them an understanding of their strengths and weaknesses. These results will be recorded in their trackers. The GCSE assessments will consist of 2 calculator papers and 1 non-calculator paper for both foundation and higher exams where students are expected to know majority of the formulas.

Next steps

A-level Maths

Further Maths

Future pathways

Universities will require a minimum of a grade 5 pass.

Employers regard success in Maths as very important as problem solving, and analytical thinking skills are highly desirable.

GCSE Science (Double award)

Awarding Body

AQA

Further Information available from

Dr Watkins

Description

Most students will study AQA GCSE Combined Science Trilogy, which is equivalent of two GCSE qualifications, with a nurture group studying AQA GCSE Combined Science Synergy which has two less exams. Both qualifications cover the same elements of Biology, Chemistry, Physics and practical skills.

Those students who have demonstrated a talent for Science will have the opportunity to study Physics, Chemistry and Biology in greater depth, resulting in the award of three GCSE Science qualifications. Students who would like to be considered for this option need to choose Triple Science in the option block.

Our curriculum follows a spiral five year plan which builds on prior learning and helps students to make connections. Across all year groups students receive one lesson of Biology, Chemistry and Physics each week lasting a single 1 hour 20 session. In Key Stage 3 students spend time learning key practical skills and the foundations of knowledge across the disciplines. This then allows us to concentrate on more advanced concepts in Key Stage 4. Students are encouraged through the use of practicals to develop their analytical and enquiry skills.

Assessment(s)

In both Year 10 and Year 11 students will be assessed at three assessment points within Science, concentrating on knowledge learnt in the current year as well as synoptic knowledge built in previous years.

Next steps

A-levels in Biology, Chemistry and Physics

BTEC nationals in Applied Science

Future pathways

- Nurse
- Doctor
- Social care worker
- Physiotherapist
- Forensics
- Ecologist
- Zoologist
- Veterinary Nurse
- Science Technician
- Lawyer, Consultant
- Politics
- Teaching
- Research Scientist
- Midwife
- Physiotherapist
- Product Development
- Analyst
- Marine Biologist
- Engineer
- Scientific Journalist
- Speech & Language Therapist

Awarding Body

Pearson

Further Information available from

Ms Estrada

Description

Languages are important, both in our everyday lives and in the world of work and leisure. They also provide transferable skills and enhance your ability to communicate and appreciate the multicultural world that we live in. All students who study GCSE Spanish will be following the Pearson Edexcel specification. Students are assessed in listening, reading, writing, speaking and translation skills. There are six themes which you will study:

- My personal world
- Lifestyle and wellbeing
- My neighbourhood
- Media and technology
- Studying and my future
- Travel and tourism

Lessons are planned to cover all skills, including Spanish speaking and opportunities to read and listen to authentic materials.

Assessment(s)

- Three externally-examined papers assessing separately listening, reading and writing
- One speaking assessment set by Pearson and conducted by a teacher.
- Each exam is worth 25% of the qualification

Next steps

A Level Spanish, or you can pick up a new language or continue with Spanish alongside a degree at university.

Future pathways

Specialist language occupations - Translating, interpreting, language teaching, film subtitling, video game translation. Occupations with languages - Journalist, market researcher, accountant, software developer and engineer. Industry sectors that need languages – Financial & business services, government and the civil service, military, engineering, marketing, media, technology, travel, tourism and the voluntary sector.

GCSE Geography

Awarding Body

AQA (8035)

Further Information available from

Mr Denker

Description

This exciting and relevant course studies geography in a balanced framework of physical and human themes and investigates the link between them. 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 climate change, poverty, deprivation, global shifts in economic power and the challenge of sustainable resource use. Students are also encouraged to understand their role in society, by considering different viewpoints, values and attitudes.

Paper 1:

The challenge of natural hazards, The living world, Physical landscapes in the UK, Geographical skills

Paper 2:

Urban issues and challenges, The changing economic world, The challenge of resource management, Geographical skills

Paper 3:

Issue evaluation, Fieldwork, Geographical skills

Assessment(s)

Paper 1: Living with the physical environment - written exam: 35% of GCSE

Paper 2: Living with the human environment - written exam: 35% of GCSE

Paper 3: Geographical Applications 30% of GCSE

Pre-release resources booklet made available 12 weeks before Paper 3 exam

Next steps

A Level Geography, Environmental Science, Geology.

Compliments the following subjects: The Sciences, Mathematics, Media, English, Technology

Future pathways

- Architectural technologist
- Business analyst
- Cartographer
- Data analyst
- Environmental consultant
- Geographical information systems officer
- Marketing executive
- Secondary school teacher
- Social researcher
- Town Planner
- Construction manager
- Landscape architect
- Market researcher
- Nature conservation officer
- Palaeontologist
- Political risk analyst
- Sustainability consultant
- Transport planner

GCSE History

Awarding Body:

Pearson

Further Information available from :

Mr Denker

Description

To succeed in History, GCSE students need to secure their key skills at KS3. The second order concepts learnt support the exam skills required and examined across all 3 papers in Year 11. Embedding concepts around short and long term causes or consequences, writing narratives, analysing sources of evidence and interpretations enables students to explore time periods confidently, being able to place them in their chronological context and therefore, understand the wider reaching issues by drawing on their KS3 knowledge.

Assessment(s)

All assessments at GCSE are external examinations through three papers

Paper 1: Medicine in Britain, c1250 – present and The British sector of the Western Front, 1914 – 1918: injuries, treatment and the trenches (30%)

This unit covers the transformation of medicine and the treatment of disease across time. It ranges from bizarre ideas about causes of the Black Death to the ground breaking discoveries of germ theory and DNA. Students also explore injuries and treatments in the trenches during the First World war.

Paper 2: Early Elizabethan England, 1558 – 88, Super Power relations and the Cold War 1941-91 (40%). Elizabethan England and explores the rise and death of female monarch who had dear threats from foreign countries like Spain and from the Catholics at home. In the Cold War unit the pupils will study the rise in tension between the USA and the USSR and the impact this had on global politics and political relationships.

Paper 3: Weimar and Nazi Germany, 1918- 1939 (30%)

Perhaps one of the most infamous periods in history is explored in depth to see how a new democratic German state rose out of the ashes of the First World War, only for hope to be destroyed as the brutal Nazi dictatorship came to power.

Next steps

A Level History

A Level Law (Law and Economics)

A Level Government and Politics

Future pathways

History GCSE is highly valued by employers and can lead students towards different careers, such as:

- History teacher
- Barrister
- Solicitor
- Civil Servant
- Journalist
- Librarian
- Political researcher
- Archaeologist
- Activist
- Building conservation
- Heritage, tourism and leisure
- Museum administration
- TV and radio research

GCSE Triple Science

Awarding Body

AQA

Further Information available from

Dr Watkins

Description

Students who have demonstrated a talent for Science will have the opportunity to study Physics, Chemistry and Biology in greater depth, resulting in the award of three GCSE Science qualifications. Students who would like to be considered for this option need to choose Triple Science in the option block.

Our curriculum follows a spiral five year plan which builds on prior learning and helps students to make connections. Across all year groups students receive one lesson of Biology, Chemistry and Physics each week lasting a single 1 hour 20 session. In Key Stage 3 students spend time learning key practical skills and the foundations of knowledge across the disciplines. This then allows us to concentrate on more advanced concepts in Key Stage 4. Students are encouraged through the use of practicals to develop their analytical and enquiry skills.

Assessment(s)

In both Year 10 and Year 11 students will be assessed at three assessment points within Science, concentrating on knowledge learnt in the current year as well as synoptic knowledge built in previous years. Exams for this qualification are 1 hour 45 Minutes compared to 90 Minutes for Combined Science.

Keep in mind

This qualification involves in depth study of Science. You must have a natural curiosity. There is also a large quantity of mathematical content meaning students need to study higher tier maths.

This course is not required for entry onto A Level Science. Acceptance will need teacher approval of suitability.

Next steps

A-levels in Biology, Chemistry and Physics
BTEC nationals in Applied Science

Future pathways

- Nurse
- Doctor
- Social care worker
- Physiotherapist
- Forensics
- Ecologist
- Zoologist
- Veterinary Nurse
- Science Technician
- Lawyer
- Consultant
- Politics
- Teaching
- Research Scientist
- Midwife
- Physiotherapist
- Product Development
- Analyst
- Marine Biologist
- Engineer
- Scientific Journalist

GCSE Art and Design: Fine Art

Awarding Body:

AQA

Further Information available from :

Miss Deakin and Miss Shilton

Description

For KS4 students can study Fine Art and will be able to explore a wide range of art medias and processes including drawing, painting, printmaking and ceramics. Students will explore 2 projects for their Coursework Component- the first project is Urban Architecture, where student will gain a strong understanding of the 4 Assessment Objectives and be supported in developing a project responding to graffiti art. There will be a trip to Digbeth to explore the graffiti and street art around the area. Students will create a ceramic outcome in response to this theme.

For their second project student will complete a mock exam, selecting from 3 starting points from an exam paper, and have the opportunity to develop preferred medias and skills explored during the first project. Students will be supported in researching and selecting their own artists and will create a final outcome in response to their theme.

These 2 projects form the coursework component, which is worth 60% of their GCSE.

In the first term of Year 11, students will refine their portfolio of work and complete a final outcome for their second project. This will be done during a 10 hour mock exam, to give students the experience of sitting under exam conditions.

Then, in January of Year 11, students will begin the final component, the Controlled Assessment, worth 40% of their GCSE grade. Students will use their understanding of how to formulate a project and their preferred style of art, processes and techniques to create a personal, independent body of work in response to one of the 7 starting points on the exam paper.

Assessment(s)

60% coursework (from Sept of Year 10 to Xmas term in Year 11)

40% controlled assessment (from Jan - Easter time of Year 11)

Year 10 will start with a baseline assessment. Students are assessed throughout the year. They will also complete a mock exam at the end of Year 10.

Next steps

Studying Fine Art at A Level at Sandwell Academy. You could also go onto to other artistic courses in either A Level or BTEC.

Future pathways

Architecture; Interior Design; Graphic Design; Advertising; Illustration; Photography; Set Design; Film & Television; Fashion Design; Textile Design; Jewellery Design; Animation; Games Design; Product design; Teaching; Occupational Art Therapy; Gallery or museum curator; Art Historian; Restoration & Conservation; Specialist Art Retail – and many others!

Awarding Body:

Pearson

Further Information available from :

Mrs Binning

Description

This qualification aims to equip students with:

- Comprehensive knowledge of business concepts, terminology, objectives, and the interconnected nature of business activities, considering their impact on individuals and society.
- Application of knowledge to address contemporary business issues across various business types and sizes in local, national, and global contexts.
- Development of entrepreneurial skills, fostering commercial and creative thinking, business acumen, and evidence-based decision-making.
- Cultivation of effective, independent, critical, and reflective thinking skills.
- Ability to employ an enquiring, critical approach for informed judgments, investigate real business opportunities, and construct well-argued, evidence-based arguments.
- Proficiency in quantitative skills relevant to business, including data interpretation.

Assessment(s)

In Year 11, students will take two exams, each lasting 1 hour and 45 minutes, contributing to 50% of the qualification (90 marks). The exams are divided into three sections: A (35 marks), B (30 marks), and C (25 marks). The papers include calculations, multiple-choice, short-answer, and extended-writing questions. Sections B and C focus on business contexts presented in the paper. Calculators are allowed, and guidelines can be found in Appendix 4: Calculators.

Next steps

A-Level Business

A-Level Economics

Future pathways

- Entrepreneurship
- Accountancy
- Finance
- Marketing
- Human Resources
- Hospitality
- Project Management
- Entertainment
- Education
- Supply chain management
- Operation
- Training and development
- Administration

BTEC Enterprise (Business)

Awarding Body:

Pearson

Further Information available from :

Mrs Binning

Description

The qualification recognises the value of learning skills, knowledge and vocational attributes to complement GCSEs. The qualification will broaden learners' experience and understanding of the varied progression options available to them.

The qualification enables learners to develop their transferable skills, such as researching, planning, making decisions and judgements, and financial literacy using realistic vocational contexts, and personal skills, such as creativity and innovation, time management, reviewing, communication and planning through a practical and skills-based approach to learning and assessment. Students will complete three components throughout the duration of the course.

Assessment(s)

In Year 10 two controlled assessments are completed:

Component 1 and 2 are assessed through non-exam internal assessment.

These components have been designed to demonstrate application of the conceptual knowledge underpinning the sector through realistic tasks and activities. This style of assessment promotes deep learning through ensuring the connection between knowledge and practice.

The components focus on:

- The development of core knowledge and understanding, including the range of enterprises and the key features and factors that contribute to an enterprise's success
- The development and application of skills such as analysing research, information, planning and financial forecasting, communicating and problem solving
- Reflective practice through presenting an enterprise idea that allows learners to reflect on their own communication skills.

In Year 11 there is one external assessment, Component 3 which builds directly on Components 1 and 2 and enables learning to be brought together and applied to realistic contexts. The external assessment is based on a written assessment that requires learners to demonstrate that they can identify and use effectively an appropriate selection of skills, techniques, concepts, theories and knowledge from across the whole qualification in an integrated way.

Next steps

BTEC Level 3

Future pathways

- Entrepreneurship
- Accountancy
- Finance
- Marketing
- Human Resources
- Hospitality
- Project Management
- Entertainment
- Education
- Supply chain management
- Operation
- Training and development
- Administration

BTEC Performing Arts

Awarding Body:

Pearson

Further Information available from :

Ms Dickenson

Description

The Pearson BTEC Level 1/Level 2 Tech Award in Performing Arts (603/7054/3) is for learners who want to acquire sector-specific applied knowledge and skills through vocational contexts by studying professionals' work and processes used, the skills and techniques used in different roles, and how to contribute to the creation of a performance in either a performance or non-performance role as part of their Key Stage 4 learning. The qualification enables learners to develop their sector-specific skills, such as refining work and applying skills for a performance using realistic vocational contexts, and personal skills, such as working with others, working to deadlines, and responding to feedback through a practical and skills-based approach to learning and assessment. The qualification recognises the value of learning skills, knowledge and vocational attributes to complement GCSEs. The qualification will broaden learners' experience and understanding of the varied progression options available to them.

Assessment(s)

Controlled assessment and coursework

Next steps

6th Form Performing Arts and Music Courses

Future pathways

Jobs directly related to your course include:

- Actor
- Broadcast presenter
- Community arts worker
- Choreographer
- Dancer
- Drama therapist
- Music producer
- Music therapist
- Theatre director
- Theatre stage manager

BTEC Health and Social Care

Awarding Body:

Pearson

Further Information available from :

Ms Thomas and Ms Dockery

Description

Health and social care is one of the fastest growing sectors in the UK with demand for both health and social care employees continuously rising.

This course is designed for students who have an interest in learning a broad spectrum of topics, including life stage development from infancy to later adulthood, care needs, health and social care conditions and the factors that can influence an individual's current health and wellbeing.

All Students will study three mandatory units:

Component 1 – (30% of overall grade)

Human Lifespan Development (Non-exam Internal Assessment / Pearson-set assignment)

In this Component, you will learn about different aspects of growth and development and the factors that can affect this across the life stages. You will explore the different events that can impact on individuals' physical, intellectual, emotional and social (PIES) development and how individuals cope with and are supported through changes caused by life events.

Component 2 – (30% of overall grade)

Health and Social Care Services and Values (Non-exam Internal Assessment / Pearson-set assignment)

In this Component, you will explore health and social care services and how they meet the needs of service users. You will also study the skills, attributes and values required when giving care.

Component 3 – (40% of overall grade)

Health and Wellbeing (External Assessment)

In this external Component, you will explore the factors that affect health and wellbeing, learning about physiological and lifestyle indicators, and person-centred approaches to make recommendations to improve an individual's health and wellbeing.

Assessment(s)

40% External Written exam (Component 3) and 60% Non-exam Assignment (Component 1 and Component 2). The qualification is graded over seven grades from Level 1 Pass to Level 2 Distinction*

Next steps

BTEC Level 3 Health and Social Care

Future pathways

- Nurse
- Midwife
- Physiotherapist
- Paramedic
- Occupational Therapist
- Speech and Language Therapist
- Dietician
- Dentist
- Healthcare Assistant
- Pharmacist
- Social Worker
- Youth Worker

BTEC Digital Information Technology

Awarding Body:

Pearson

Further Information available from :

Mrs Barnes

Description

This qualification is for students who may want to start a career in Digital Technology. It is an ideal qualification for those intending to progress directly to employment in Digital Technology, IT or to an IT apprenticeship. This vocational qualification will provide students with the knowledge, skills and understanding needed for a career in this sector. You will study project planning, data management, data interpretation, data presentation and data protection as part of their Key Stage 4 learning. The qualification will broaden learners' experience and understanding of the varied progression options available to them

Assessment(s)

Component 1 - Exploring User Interface Design Principles and Project Planning Techniques (internally assessed)

Component 2 - Collecting, Presenting and Interpreting Data (internally assessed)

Component 3 - Effective Digital Working Practices (external examination)

Next steps

BTEC Level 3 extended Certificate in IT

Future pathways

The knowledge and skills they develop will give them a basis for further study in a range of subject areas, including computing, IT, engineering, creative and scientific, or they may go on to an apprenticeship or entry-level employment where their understanding of technology will be relevant.

GCSE Religious Education (RE)

Awarding Body

AQA (A 8062)

Further Information available from

Mr Denker

Description

During the GCSE Religious Studies course, students will be studying the beliefs, teachings and practices of two of the major world religions; in addition to focusing on one of these major world religions to reflect on the religion's perspective on philosophy and ethics in the modern world. Students will have the opportunity to develop their knowledge and understanding of the outside world through exploration of the impact of beliefs, teachings, ways of life and expressing meaning and opinion.

Students will be encouraged to express their own informed views on fundamental questions about identity, belonging, meaning, purpose, truth, value and commitments.

The written and communications skills acquired during this course are highly sort after by all professions.

Topics covered in Year 10 and 11 are:

Christianity: Religious Beliefs and Teachings & Practices

Islam Religious Beliefs and Teachings & Practices

Thematic Studies: Relationship & Families, Religion, Peace & Conflict, Religion, Crime & Punishment, Religion, human rights and Social Justice.

Assessment(s)

Paper 1: The study of Religions

Paper 2: Non-Textual Studies

Next steps

A Level Philosophy and Ethics

A Level Politics

A Level Geography

A Level History

A Level Criminology

A Level Sociology

Future pathways

- Advice worker.
- Archivist.
- Charity officer.
- Civil Service administrator.
- Community development worker.
- Diplomatic service officer.
- Equality, diversity and inclusion officer.
- International aid/development worker.
- Theologist
- Teacher
- Higher Education Lecturer

GCSE Statistics

Awarding Body:

GCSE Statistics – Pearson Edexcel

Further Information available from :

Mr Hughes

Description

GCSE Statistics is an exciting course for students who enjoy working with data, analysing information, and understanding how statistics are used in the real world.

Throughout the course, students will build on their Key Stage 3 knowledge of data handling and probability. They will learn how to collect, process, represent and interpret data, and develop the skills to critically evaluate statistical information presented in the media and everyday life.

Topics include:

- Collecting and sampling data
- Representing data using diagrams and charts
- Averages and measures of spread
- Probability
- Correlation and regression
- Interpreting statistical reports

Students will develop their fluency, reasoning and problem-solving skills, and gain confidence in using statistical methods to draw conclusions and justify decisions.

Assessment(s)

Students will complete regular assessments throughout the course to monitor progress and identify strengths and areas for development.

The GCSE assessment consists of two written examination papers (Paper 1 and Paper 2).

- Both papers require the use of a calculator.
- Students will be expected to apply statistical techniques, interpret results, and explain their reasoning clearly.
- A formula sheet is provided in the examination.

Both Foundation and Higher tiers are available.

Next steps

A-level Mathematics

A-level Further Mathematics

A-level Psychology

A-level Economics

A-level Geography

A-level Business

Future pathways

GCSE Statistics is highly valued in a wide range of careers and university courses. It is particularly useful for students interested in:

- Data Science and Analytics
- Economics and Finance
- Psychology and Social Sciences
- Medicine and Health Sciences
- Business and Marketing
- Government and Research

Employers and universities value the ability to interpret data, think critically, and make evidence-based decisions. A strong pass (Grade 5 or above) demonstrates excellent analytical and problem-solving skills that are highly desirable in many professions.

GCSE Computer Science

Awarding Body

OCR

Further Information available from

Mr Hoque

Description

The OCR GCSE in Computer Science, under the course specification J277, is designed to provide students with a comprehensive understanding of the principles of computer science. This course aims to develop students' computational thinking skills, a fundamental aspect of problem-solving in the modern technological world.

Key components of the course include:

Computer Systems : This unit focuses on the theory of how computers work and covers topics like hardware, software, and the ethical, legal, cultural, and environmental concerns associated with computer science. Students learn about the central processing unit (CPU), computer memory, and storage, wired and wireless networks, network topologies, system security, and system software.

Computational Thinking, Algorithms and Programming: This unit delves into algorithms and programming concepts. Students explore algorithms, programming techniques, producing robust programs, computational logic, and data representation. This part of the course emphasizes the development of students' skills in thinking logically, breaking down problems, and implementing solutions through programming.

Programming Project: Although not a formal part of the GCSE assessment, students are expected to engage in a programming project. This project helps students apply the knowledge and skills they have acquired from the other units. They will analyse a problem, design a solution, develop the solution, and evaluate the effectiveness of their program.

This curriculum is aimed at developing students' understanding and application of the core concepts in computer science. It prepares students for further education in computer science and related fields, as well as providing valuable skills for future employment in an increasingly technology-driven world.

Assessment(s)

- Component 1 - Computer systems
- Written paper: 1 hour and 30 minutes

- Component 2 - Computational thinking, algorithms and programming
- Written paper: 1 hour and 30 minutes

Next steps

A-Level Computer Science

Future pathways

Machine learning engineer, Penetration tester, Software engineer, Systems analyst, UX designer, Web designer, Cyber security analyst, Data analyst, Forensic computer analyst, Games developer and many more!

Keep in mind..

- Students need to be studying higher tier maths

- This course is not needed to progress onto Computer Science A-levels

- Acceptance onto this course will need teacher approval of suitability

GCSE Design Technology

Awarding Body

AQA (Specification no. 8552)

Further Information available from

Mr Hull

Description

In Year 10 you will look at:

- Knowledge and understanding of materials and manufacturing methods.
- Design methods including 2D and 3D CAD
- Traditional making skills
- New making skills; laser cutter, 3D printing
- Hand drawing techniques.
- Design history
- Environmental and sustainable design practices.
- Inclusive and adaptive design.
- Ergonomics and anthropometrics.
- Problem solving.
- Applied maths

In Year 11 you will:

- Apply the skills outlined above to your NEA project.

Assessment(s)

In Year 11 there will be two components to the final grade:

- An NEA project (50% of final mark) - this is a coursework project where you are expected to design and make something in response to a brief set by the examination board.
- A two hour written examination (50% of final mark)

Next steps

A level Design and Technology

Design Technology can be studied alongside Physics and Maths for students who want to go down an engineering route.

Design Technology can be studied alongside Art for those students who want to go into more of a design field. It also works alongside BTECs in Business and ICT.

Future pathways

Any field of engineering such as aerospace, automotive, civil, mechanical etc.

- Architecture
- Product and Industrial Design
- CAD designers
- Manufacturing technologies
- Furniture Design
- Interior Design

GCSE Music

Awarding Body:

Eduqas

Further Information available from :

Ms Dickenson

Description

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

Assessment(s)

Controlled assessment, Exam and coursework

Next Steps

6th Form Performing Arts and Music Courses

Future Pathways

Future pathways In terms of career options, singers and musicians may be the most visible jobs in music, but you could carve out a career in a number of areas including: Performing, song writing, composing, live music entertainment, music education, music production, artist management, marketing and PR, music journalism. While careers in the music industry are undoubtedly competitive, they're by no means out of reach for those with the right qualifications and experience. Here are some of the music jobs you can do

A&R (artists and repertoire) manager - as a form of talent agent, you'll be responsible for finding fresh talent, signing them up to record labels and overseeing the completion of recordings. You'll help new artists develop and grow and to do this you'll need a solid understanding of the music scene and strong business skills. Concert promoter - you'll need a love of live music and excellent communication skills. It's your job to spread the word about live music events and ensure this results in strong ticket sales. You'll liaise with agents/artist managers, recording artists and club/concert venues to book shows, publicise events and set up advertising campaigns. Music magazine journalist - exceptional writing skills and an interest in all things music are a must. You'll report on music industry news, interview artists and musicians, and review albums and concerts - either for a specialist print or online publication or the music section of a general news outlet. Music producer - producers write, arrange, produce and record songs for artists or for their own personal projects. The hours can be long, and you'll spend the majority of your time in a studio setting. You'll collaborate with recording artists, recording/sound engineers, session musicians and singers, as well as A&R managers and record company executives. You could also become a: Background singer, blogger, booking agent, composer, DJ, event manager, instrument technician, live sound technician, musical director, music therapist, radio producer, sound engineer or tour manager

GCSE Physical Education (PE)

Awarding Body

AQA

Further Information available from

Mr Follis

Description

This course enables students to combine theory and practical application. The AQA examination specification enables students to take part in a variety of sports as a performer.

Students need to be competent in three sports, including a combination of team and individual sport/activities. Ideally, students should be playing at school level on a regular basis to be viewed as competent.

Assessment(s)

Paper 1: The human body and movement in physical activity and sport (30%)

- Applied anatomy and physiology
- Movement analysis
- Physical training
- Use of data

Paper 2: Socio-cultural influences and well-being in physical activity and sport (30%)

- Sports psychology
- Socio-cultural influences
- Health, fitness and well-being
- Use of data

Non examination: Practical assessments and coursework (40%)

- Students are assessed in 3 sports that are prescribed by the AQA exam board.
- Students cannot be assessed in alternative sports to ones that are set.
- Each practical sport is worth 10%, as is the coursework element.
- Students must be competent in team sports and individual sports

Next steps

A-Level Physical Education

Level 3 BTEC Sport

Future pathways

- PE Teacher
- Sports Therapy
- Sports Psychology
- Physiotherapist
- Sports Official
- Sports Nutrition
- Sport and Media
- Sports Event Co-Ordinator
- Sports Analysis
- Sports Management
- Sports Development Officer
- Sport and Leisure
- Personal Trainer
- Sports Coach

BTEC Sport (PE)

Awarding Body:

Pearson

Further Information available from :

Miss Scott and Miss Parker

Description

The Pearson BTEC Level 1/Level 2 Tech Award in Sport is for learners who want to acquire sector-specific applied knowledge and skills through vocational contexts by exploring the different types and providers of sport/physical activity and the equipment and technology available for participation.

The Tech Award gives learners the opportunity to develop sector-specific applied knowledge and skills through realistic vocational contexts. Learners will have the opportunity to develop applied knowledge and skills in the following areas:

- Investigating provisions for sport including equipment and facilities to enhance sport
- Planning and delivery of sport drills and sessions
- Fitness for sport including fitness testing and methodology.

Assessment(s)

Component 1: Preparing Participants to Take Part in Sport and Physical Activity
(Internal Assessment 30%)

Component 2: Taking Part and Improving Other Participants Sporting Performance
(Internal Assessment 30%)

Component 3: Developing Fitness to Improve Other Participants Performance in Physical Activity (External Assessment / Exam 40%)

BTEC Tech Awards are awarded at seven grades from Level 1 Pass to Level 2 Distinction*

Next steps

Level 3 BTEC Sport

A-Level Physical Education

Future pathways

- PE Teacher
- Sports Therapy
- Sports Psychology
- Physiotherapist
- Sports Official
- Sports Nutrition
- Sport and Media
- Sports Event Co-Ordinator
- Sports Analysis
- Sports Management
- Sports Development Officer
- Sport and Leisure
- Personal Trainer
- Sports Coach

BTEC Creative Media Production (Media)

Awarding Body:

Pearson

Further Information available from :

Mrs Morris-Ashman

Description

To succeed in BTEC Creative Media Production you will need to have strong analytic skills, competent written expression and a passion for photography and or videography. While some knowledge of editing using a variety of software such as Photopea and Pixlr would be beneficial, these skills will be covered within the course.

Assessment(s)

There are 3 components completed across the duration of the course.

Component 1 requires extensive research and review of a variety of Media Products in keeping with whatever theme has been assigned by the examining board.

Component 2 requires some focused research, the use of photography/videography and evaluative skills to create a Media Product of their choosing to industry standards, in keeping with the theme assigned by the examining body.

Component 3 also requires some focused research, the use of photography/videography and evaluative skills to create a Media Product of their choosing to industry standards, in keeping with the theme assigned by the examining body.

All of these are done under exam conditions. To excel at the production pieces, precision and willingness to adjust are important.

Next steps

Creative Media Production BTEC Tech level 3

A level Media Studies

Future pathways

- Advertising Copywriter
- TV/Film Director
- Graphic Designer
- Animator
- Advertising Art Director
- Architectural Technician
- Art Editor
- Journalism

GCSE Citizenship

Awarding Body:

AQA

Further Information available from :

Miss Southworth

Description

GCSE Citizenship studies has the power to motivate and enable young people to become thoughtful active citizens. Citizenship lessons empower students to become politically literate and partake in our democracy. Students will study Politics, rights, and responsibilities as British and Global citizens, plan an active citizenship campaign, and gain an in depth understanding of what life is like as a citizen in modern Britain. Alongside academic skills of critically evaluating arguments, weighing evidence and ability to recognise and counter bias they also build lifelong skills of respecting others and being a valuable member of their community.

Assessment(s)

All assessments at GCSE are external examinations through two papers

Paper 1: Active Citizenship and Politics and Participation (50%). The active citizenship unit is designed to allow the pupils to develop their citizenship knowledge through the reading of case studies and using these to form their own investigation into a citizenship issues of their own choice, involving research, action and reflection. The Politics and Participation module looks at the nature of political power in the UK and the core concepts relating to democracy and government. Students will study how government operates within the UK, the work of Parliament, the role of political parties and how citizens can bring about political change.

Paper 2: Life in modern Britain, and Rights and Responsibilities (50%). In the Life in modern Britain module the pupils will study the make-up, values and dynamics of British society. The module will consider what it means to be British, how identities are formed and how individuals have multiple identities. Students will also look at the role of the media in the British political system. Within the Right and Responsibilities unit the pupils will study where UK laws come from, how the UK legal system works and how society deals with criminality. Pupils will also discuss how rights are protected, and the UK's role in international treaties and agreements.

Next steps:

A Level Government and Politics
A Level Business
A Level Economics
A Level Law (Law and Economics)
Applied Criminology

Future pathways

Citizenship GCSE is highly valued by employers and can lead students towards different careers, such as:

- Barrister
- Solicitor
- Civil Servant
- Journalist
- Political researcher
- TV and radio research
- Local Councillor
- Member of Parliament
- Charity worker
- International; relations
- Policy planner

Notes



Be Brave Be Kind Be Proud