



Year 8 Options Booklet 2021

A guide to the courses and qualifications
available to Year 9, 10 and 11 students

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Welcome to Year 8 Options

Dear Year 8 Student,

Options time is an important point in your education, as it is here that you get to choose some of the subjects that you will study for the next three years. We know that it can be a difficult time and can cause anxiety because there are a lot of questions that you might have: Which subject is right for me? What if I don't know what I want to do at all? Rest assured we will help you to make choices about future learning that is right for you.

This booklet and the options process are designed to make this time less worrying for you and your parents/carers. They will help you to start making decisions about your learning and to choose subjects that suit your aspirations, skills and needs.

Please use all the information available to you: this booklet; advice from teachers; short films explaining each subject on the website, your tutors and your parents. All of these people know you in some way and may be able to suggest whether they think a subject would suit you as a learner.

There will be further opportunities to discuss options choices at the Parents' Evening on Thursday 4th February.

The deadline for submitting your Options Form will be Friday 26th February. The completed form this year will be submitted online.

We hope that the information allows you to make the right choices that will see you succeeding over the next three years and beyond.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Adrian Rees', with a stylized, cursive script.

Adrian Rees
Head of School

What is Key Stage 4?

The curriculum at Key Stage 4 consists of a mixture of Essential Learning and Additional Learning. Students will be able to choose subjects for their Additional Learning according to their strengths and interests. They will be guided through their choices by subject teachers, tutors and other staff to ensure that their choices are appropriate.

The Key Stage 4 (KS4) curriculum reflects the National Curriculum requirements (www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-curriculum-in-england-secondary-curriculum) and the curriculum policy of the school.

We want to offer as much individual choice as we can, so that the students can follow courses they need for interest and their future career paths. However, there are also certain constraints and requirements that govern students' choices: the following pages explain what these are.

We urge that all students opt for a *broad and balanced curriculum*. Whilst all GCSEs have equal status, they do stress different skills and ways of learning. When making choices students must balance their skills and learning styles in order to keep options open for later life, such as choosing college or A level courses.

Essential Learning: What does everyone do?

All students are taught a core programme which we refer to in this booklet as Essential Learning. These are the subjects and skills that are statutory for all children aged 14-16, with the addition of English Literature and Statistics, which we feel is important too, and is studied by everyone.

Essential Learning comprises:

- English Language
- English Literature
- Mathematics and Statistics
- Science (Physics, Chemistry, Biology)
- Character Education
- Religious Studies
- Core PE

Additional Learning: What can you choose?

We want our students to be committed to their subjects and so we allow them to choose the four subjects that make up their Additional Learning.

Whilst we do give as much choice as possible, please note that

- The vast majority of students will be expected to take History, Geography or both.
- Students should aspire to take a Modern Foreign Language as well as either History or Geography.
- Students can only study one language.
- Students can only study one Art/Design subject.

There will be guidance and support on offer to ensure that each student follows a pathway that suits their ability, their interests and their future aspirations.

Reserve Choices:

We make every effort to ensure that students study the course they opt for. We are constrained by constructing a timetable, staffing and group sizes. This is why we ask that you also make reserve options. Any student who does not get their top four choices or their reserve choices will be seen by Ms Rogers and Mr Tinsley to discuss alternatives.

What are GCSEs?

GCSE stands for General Certificate of Secondary Education. GCSEs are at levels 1 and 2 on the National Qualifications Framework, depending on the grade you get (see page 5 for an explanation of levels).

What are BTEC and Cambridge Nationals?

BTEC qualifications (offered in Digital IT) and Cambridge Nationals (Health and Social Care) are particular types of vocational qualifications. Courses have been designed in collaboration with industry, so they can equip students with the skills and knowledge that employers are looking for. The qualifications offer a mix of theory and practice.

What is The English Baccalaureate?

This was introduced by the Government in 2011 as a *standard* that some students can aim for in their KS4 studies. To achieve the English Baccalaureate, students must complete and obtain a Grade 4 or higher in the following subjects:

- Maths
- English Language
- Two Sciences
- a Language (e.g. Spanish, French or German) and
- either Geography or History

Students will be awarded a number from 9 to 1 (9 being the highest), rather than a grade. A Level 4 will be equivalent to a current grade C or a 'standard pass'. A Level 5 is considered a 'good pass'. In order to obtain the English Baccalaureate, students will therefore need at least 4s in the subjects listed above. We will advise students on an individual basis if we feel that this route is appropriate to them and their future aspirations.

Aiming High

Students of middle to high ability should aim to stretch themselves by choosing options that have academic rigour, such as History or a Modern Foreign Language. The **Russell Group** of Universities (a collaboration of 20 leading UK universities) are not only interested in the results that students achieve at GCSE and A Level, they are increasingly expecting them to have *breadth of study* and *rigour* in what they study. This generally means they consider the traditional academic subjects such as those included in the EBacc as more appropriate for entry to their universities. History, Geography and Languages are called 'facilitating subjects' as they allow access to some of the more competitive universities and university courses.

We believe that *most* students at John Mason should aim high and choose EBacc subjects as they not only provide rigour and challenge, but also develop key skills for learning and for life, such as evaluation, analysis and communication: skills that are highly valued by employers and college admissions tutors.

What do the Qualifications mean?

A qualification is intended to show employers, teachers and learners what someone has learnt and can do as a result of that achievement. There are a large number of qualifications and the way they are described and marketed can be confusing.

Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF) sets out the levels against which a qualification can be recognised in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. This framework helps learners to make informed decisions about the qualifications they need, and help employers and providers assess what qualifications a candidate has. The QCF has nine levels, and sets out the basis on which qualifications are approved, so that it is easier to compare one type of qualification with another.

Qualifications are best understood by their level of difficulty, size and, of course, their content. Each accredited qualification has a level according to the qualifications framework it is on. Levels are a standard way of comparing how challenging a qualification is and what learners should be able to do once they have successfully completed it. For example, an OCR National Health and Social Care level 2 qualification is equivalent to a GCSE at grade 9-4.

NQF level	Examples of qualifications	What they give you
Entry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Entry level certificates • English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) • Skills for Life • Functional Skills at entry level (English, Maths and ICT) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • basic knowledge and skills • ability to apply learning in everyday situations • not geared towards specific occupations
Level 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GCSEs grades 1-3 (D-G) • BTEC Level 1 • OCR Nationals • Skills for Life 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • basic knowledge and skills • ability to apply learning with guidance or supervision • may be linked to job competence
Level 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GCSEs grades 4-9 (A*-C) • BTEC Level 2 • OCR Nationals • Skills for Life 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • good knowledge and understanding of a subject • ability to perform variety of tasks with some guidance or supervision • appropriate for many job roles
Level 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AS and A levels • International Baccalaureate • BTEC Level 3 • OCR Level 3 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ability to gain or apply a range of knowledge, skills and understanding, at a detailed level • appropriate if you plan to go to university, work independently, or (in some cases) supervise.

Some Advice for Students

Who decides what I study?

Basically, **YOU** do.

We want you to choose the subjects that you want to do. Everyone is happier that way. But you need to think things out very carefully and remember all these points.

Firstly, you must consult:

- Your parents
- Your teachers
- Your Form Tutor
- Your Head of Year

Secondly, you must check any particular requirement of the *course*. *You will not be allowed to begin any option course if your lower school work indicates that you will not benefit from it.* You will already have looked at a lot of these things during tutor time.

Thirdly, you should think whether the option subjects you are choosing NOW fit in with what you will need for a FURTHER EDUCATION or CAREER choice in the future.

To help you to choose:

To help you with all of these different considerations, your form tutor will recommend you for a particular 'pathway'; in other words, a particular range of subjects and choices, which will fit your aspirations, achievements and potential. Once you have been recommended for a particular pathway then the option choices for this pathway will be shared with you and you can discuss them with your parents, teachers and your form tutor.

Each student in Year 8 will also have a one-to-one 'pathway' discussion with their form tutor, a member of the senior leadership team or Mrs Fox-Orband (SENCO).

You can also arrange to speak to Terry Bianchini, our Careers Advisor.
If your parents/carers would like to speak with him too, please email him at terrybianchini@adviza.org.uk

All of these people will have a very good idea of your abilities and the subjects that will give you a broad set of skills that you will need for future success.

If you already have a particular career in mind, check the suitability of your subject choices. Your teachers or careers adviser will be able to help you, or look for up-to-date information on the e clips website.

e clips is a careers information website that JMS purchases. It provides a wealth of careers information and can be accessed by JMS students at:

<http://www.eclips-online.co.uk/home.php> using the following login: **JMason2017**

For GCSE advice, we recommend that you visit the *e clips* website:

- Select the **Education** tab

This will display detailed GCSE information that you might find useful when making your choices.

Top Tips for Choosing Subjects

You should remember these:

Dos

- DO choose subjects which you like
- DO choose subjects at which you are successful
- DO choose subjects which you may need for a career or further education
- DO find out everything that you can about the subject before you choose it. Once you have started a subject we expect you to stick with it
- DO talk to the people who know you
- DO listen to the advice your subject teachers give you

Don'ts

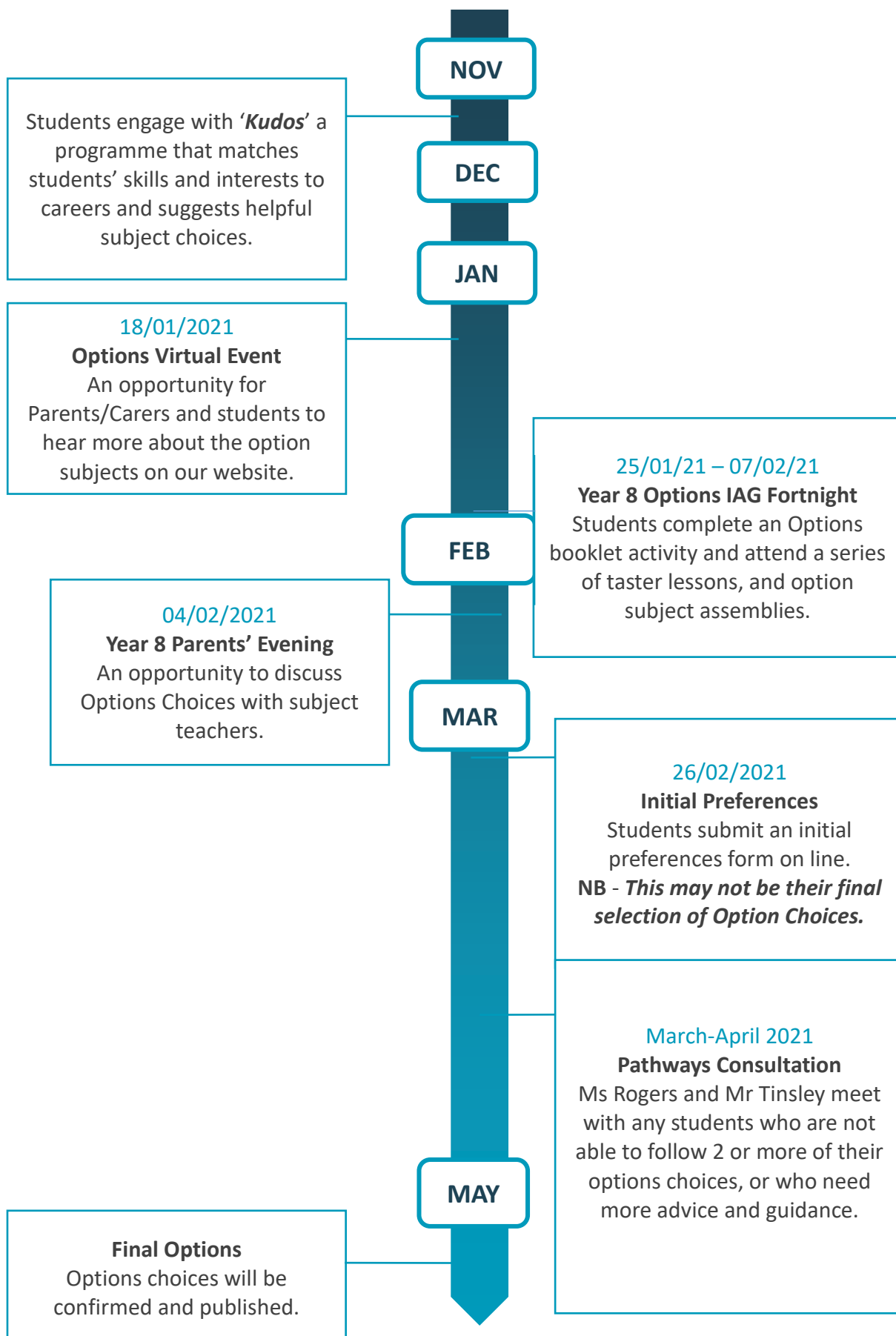
- DON'T choose a subject just because your friend has chosen it
- DON'T choose a subject just because you like - or dislike - a particular teacher, they may not end up teaching you

What happens once options have been chosen?

- All options forms have to be completed online by Friday 26th February 2021.
- You will meet with Ms Rogers if there is a significant problem with your choices.
- In May you will get a letter with your confirmed Options.



Options Timeline and Key Dates



English Language

Director of Faculty: Ms Butler

Specification: AQA

Core Subject

Why is this a core subject?

It is the most commonly-quoted qualification for jobs, courses and promoted posts in the country. That is why it is compulsory.

What will I study?

Paper 1: Explorations in Creative Reading and Writing

Section A: Reading

One literature fiction text

Section B: Writing

Descriptive or narrative writing

Paper 2: Writers' viewpoints and perspectives

Section A: Reading

One non-fiction text and one literary non-fiction text

Section B: Writing

Writing to present a viewpoint

How will I be assessed?

AQA English Language GCSE – 100% Exam

English Literature

Director of Faculty: Ms S Butler

Specification: AQA

Core Subject

What will I study?

Paper 1: Shakespeare and the 19th Century novel

- Macbeth by William Shakespeare
- The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde by Robert Louis Stevenson

Paper 2: Modern texts and poetry

- An Inspector Calls by J. B. Priestley
- Past and Present AQA poetry anthology

How will I be assessed?

AQA English Literature GCSE – 100% Exam

What skills will I need?

You will need to be a fluent and interested reader, keen on finding out about the contexts in which literature is created, and analysing how language and format contribute to this.

Mathematics

Core Subject

Director of Faculty: Mrs A Gibbons

Specification: Edexcel Mathematics A - Linear

All students study Mathematics. It is one of the fundamental subjects underpinning all sciences and technology. We want students to see the learning of Mathematics as a lifelong experience, which will help them to approach situations with confidence. We want them to appreciate that Mathematics will be useful outside the classroom and can also be used to help in other GCSEs.

What will I study?

The Mathematics course enables students to develop knowledge, skills and understanding of mathematical methods and concepts, including:

- Number
- Algebra
- Ratio, proportion, rates of change
- Geometry
- Statistics
- Probability
- Use their knowledge and understanding to make connections between mathematical concepts
- Apply the functional elements of mathematics in everyday and real-life situations



How will I be assessed?

Three (3) written papers

Each paper lasts:

- 1 hour 30 minutes (Foundation)
- 1 hour 30 minutes (Higher)

Each paper contains 80 marks

- Papers 1F and 1H: Non-calculator, Papers 2F, 3F and 2H, 3H Calculator allowed

Tiered papers:

- Foundation Tier grades 1 - 5 available
- Higher Tier grades 4 - 9 available

Each paper assesses the functional elements of mathematics:

- 30-40% on Foundation Tier papers
- 20-30% on Higher Tier papers

Mathematics is assessed in three skill based strands:

- A01 Use and apply standard techniques (Percentage of final mark: 50% Foundation, 40% Higher)
- A02 Reason, interpret and communicate mathematically (Percentage of final mark: 25% Foundation, 30% Higher)
- A03 Solve problems within mathematics and other context (Percentage of final mark: 25% Foundation, 30% Higher)

Triple Science

Core Subject

Director of Faculty: Dr A Stanger

Specification: AQA Biology, Chemistry & Physics

Triple science allows you to gain three GCSEs in science and you will study each discipline (biology, chemistry and physics) in more detail.

What will I be studying?

You will study 3 science GCSEs: **Biology, Chemistry and Physics**. Each qualification will have a 9-point grading scale, from 9 (equivalent to A*) through to 1. The grades are awarded independently of each other.

Biology

Cell biology, Organisation, Infection and response, Bioenergetics, Homeostasis and response, Inheritance, variation and evolution & Ecology

Chemistry

Atomic structure and the periodic table, Bonding, structure, and the properties of matter, Quantitative chemistry, Chemical changes, Energy changes, the rate and extent of chemical change, Organic chemistry, Chemical analysis, Chemistry of the atmosphere & Using resources

Physics

Forces, Energy, Waves, Electricity, Magnetism and electromagnetism, Particle model of matter & Atomic structure

How will I be assessed?

Six exam papers altogether, two for each qualification: two biology, two chemistry and two physics. All of the papers are 1 hour 45 minutes with foundation and higher tiers. Each paper has 100 marks and the papers are equally weighted, so each is worth 50% of the qualification. Exams will contain a mixture of multiple choice, structured, closed, short answer and open response questions. There is no coursework or controlled assessment. However, students will need to complete a number of required practical activities throughout the course, and details of these will be assessed in exams.

Anything else I need to know?

Science requires: Thinking skills, Mathematical skills, problem solving, IT skills, Literacy skills and an enquiring mind. You will also need to own a calculator along with standard equipment.



Additional Learning Subjects

- Students can choose four of the following subjects to make up their Additional Learning.
- Please remember:
 - you cannot study more than one language
 - you cannot study more than one Art/Design subject.

Art and Design

Director of Faculty: Miss C Pennington

Specification: Edexcel, 2FAO1 (Fine Art endorsed)

Art and Design will help you to learn about the visual world, acquire the ability to investigate, observe, analyse, experiment and problem-solve. The course will also enable you to continue to develop your practical skills learnt at KS3 and also to express your ideas visually and help you develop your imaginative powers. There are many careers in the field of Art and Design such as advertising, marketing, textile and interior design, product design, architecture, animation/film, fashion, photography, illustration, publishing and media.



What will I be studying?

The endorsed Fine Art syllabus requires a variety of fine art media to be explored throughout the course, such as:

- Painting and drawing (using a variety of Medium and technique)
- Printmaking (mono printing, lino cutting and etching)
- Sculpture, mixed media
- Photography (composition, lighting, viewpoint, effects and manipulation using ICT)

You will study other Artists' work to influence and increase the variety of your work. There will be problems to solve and opportunities to express creative ideas and experiment with a wide range of materials and techniques. You will be expected to work from direct observation and experience in school and at home and as well as making good use of local resources such as Modern Art Oxford and the Ashmolean Museum. You will keep a visual record of your progress in a sketchbook.



How will I be assessed?

Unit 1- Portfolio/Coursework: The coursework element includes the use of sketchbooks in which you will be required to show your research, investigations and development of ideas from a given starting point to produce a variety of outcomes. Unit 1 accounts for 60% of your grade.

Unit 2 – Externally Set Assignment: You will complete one ten-hour examination that is held over two days in April/May of Year 11. A broad theme (set by the exam board) needs to be personally interpreted and prepared prior to the exam in a timed preparatory period. Unit 2 is worth 40% of the GCSE.

Exhibition: At the end of the course in June, there will be a celebratory exhibition of all students' work. This work will be internally assessed by art teachers and moderated at the exhibition by a visiting assessor.

Anything else I need to know?

A basic set of acrylic paints and brushes to use at home for homework tasks would be very useful. All students have access to the studios at lunchtimes and after school to use the department's resources if necessary. Students are asked to contribute to the cost of a high quality hard-backed sketchbook near the start of the course to present their research and development professionally.

Business

Director of Faculty: Mrs A Thornton

Specification: Edexcel GCSE Business

Business and commerce forms such a large part of our lives that we sometimes take it for granted. This course looks at business in a consumer society, how they are developed and how they work. It focuses on how businesses promote themselves and keep their customers happy, aiming to help students to develop as enterprising individuals with the ability to think commercially and creatively, and to draw on evidence to be able to solve problems and make informed business decisions.

What will I be studying?

The course consists of two themes:

Theme 1: Investigating small business

This concentrates on the key issues and skills involved in starting and running a small business. It explores key issues from the point of view of an entrepreneur setting up a business, such as spotting a business opportunity, understanding external influences on business and how to make a business effective.

Theme 2: Building a business

This theme examines how a business develops beyond the start-up phase. It focuses on the key business concepts, issues and decisions used to grow a business, such as marketing, finance and human resources. Students are introduced to issues affecting national and global business and how they impact on business decision-making.

How will I be assessed?

Assessment is through two written exams at the end of the course, focusing on each of the themes, each making up 50% of the qualification.

Anything else I need to know?

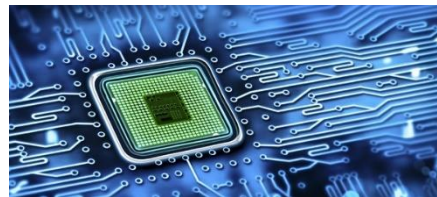
This is a useful and enjoyable course if you enjoy communicating and explaining your ideas, thinking creatively and making decisions. If you are interested in the world of business, you will gain a great deal of insight into how businesses work and how to make effective commercial decisions. A lot of the course involves looking at case studies of existing business. If you are interested in going into the commercial world at any level, this course will provide you with a great deal of background knowledge and skills.



Computer Science

Director of Faculty: Mrs G Green

Specification: AQA GCSE Computer Science



Computer Science has become a very high-profile subject over the last few years. The ability to program computers is a very valuable skill. Computing is of enormous importance to the economy, and the role of Computer Science as a discipline itself and as an 'underpinning' subject across Science and Engineering is growing rapidly.

Computer technology continues to advance rapidly and the way that technology is consumed has also been changing at a fast pace over recent years. The growth in the use of mobile devices and web-related technologies has exploded, resulting in new challenges for employers and employees. For example, businesses today require an ever-increasing number of technologically-aware individuals. This is even more so in the gaming, mobile and web related industries and GCSE Computer Science has been designed with this in mind.

What will I be studying?

The course is made up of six topic areas:

- Problem solving
- Programming
- Data (how do computers store data such as text, images, sound? How is it kept secure?)
- Computers (looking at hardware. How do computers function?)
- Communication and the Internet
- Databases
- The bigger picture (what impact has computing had on the world)

How will I be assessed?

There are three assessments:

- Computing Concepts – a written exam (50%)
- Application of Computational thinking – a written exam (50%)

Anything else I need to know?

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

For many learners, it will be a fun and interesting way to develop these skills, which can be transferred to other subjects and even applied in day-to-day life. In this respect, the course makes excellent preparation for students who wish to study or work in areas that rely on these skills, especially where they are applied to technical problems. These areas include engineering, financial and resource management, science and medicine.

Computer Science is academically challenging, which is why it is part of the English Baccalaureate group of subjects. The course is suited to those who are more technically, scientifically or mathematically inclined and provides excellent preparation both for study in higher education and also for employment in the IT industry, which is currently experiencing a major skills shortage.

Digital IT

Director of Faculty: Mrs G Green

Specification: BTEC Level 1/Level 2 Technical Award in Digital Information Technology

The BTEC is a vocational qualification that takes an engaging, practical and inspiring approach to learning and assessment. The everyday use of IT, from PCs to smartphones, now impacts all our lives. This new qualification in digital IT reflects this and provides students with a solid understanding of the subject which they can use in their working lives.

Computer technology continues to advance rapidly and the way that technology is consumed has also been changing at a fast pace over recent years. The growth in the use of mobile devices and web-related technologies has exploded, resulting in new challenges for employers and employees. Businesses today require an ever-increasing number of technologically-aware individuals and this qualification is intended to help students develop the skills they will need in the future across a wide range of job roles.

What will I be studying?

This award allows students to develop useful key-skills for working in the information technology sector, through a mixture of investigation and project-work. These include project planning, designing and creating user-interfaces, and creating dashboards to present and interpret data. Students learn about the processes that underpin effective ways of working, including common planning techniques, iterative design processes, team-work and cyber-security, as well as legal and ethical codes of conduct. Students will also consider how user-interfaces meet user needs, how organisations collect and use data to make decisions, and virtual ways of working.

- **Component 1: Exploring User Interface Design Principles and Project Planning Technique**
36 learning hours, followed by a project which will be assessed by a teacher.
- **Component 2: Collecting, Presenting and Interpreting Data**
36 learning hours, followed by a project which will be assessed in-school by your teacher.
- **Component 3: Effective Digital Working Practices**
48 learning hours, followed by an assessment task (1.5 hours) which will be sent away for external marking.

How will I be assessed?

Assessment for the four units is as follows:

1. Component 1: Exploring User Interface Design Principles and Project Planning Techniques – internally assessed coursework (30% of the course)
2. Component 2: Collecting, Presenting and Interpreting Data – internally assessed coursework (30% of the course)
3. Component 3: Effective Digital Working Practices – externally assessed exam (40% of the course)

Anything else I need to know?

The course requires a significant amount of independent study and will benefit students in developing logical reasoning and problem-solving skills. The course empowers students to take charge of their own learning and development.

The course will develop students' skills and knowledge to enable progression onto further IT qualifications. It provides a firm base for many careers or general further study and is a worthwhile course for students who are thinking about a career in the IT industry or in careers which involve use of IT, an area currently experiencing a major skills shortage.

Geography

Director of Faculty: Mr A Conroy

Deputy Director of Faculty: Mrs A Scott

Specification: AQA A



Geography is a topical subject. Students who study Geography will gain an understanding of the world around them and learn about the effect the environment has on people and the communities in which they live. Students will develop a variety of skills through practical work including fieldwork and decision-making exercises.

The GCSE course is quite demanding and will require continuous effort over the 3 years.

What will I be studying?

The Geography syllabus covers a wide variety of topics through three units. A brief description follows each topic title:

Unit 1: Living with the physical environment: The physical unit takes an in-depth look at our natural planet and helps us to understand topics including Natural Hazards, Weather Hazards, Climate Change, Ecosystems, Coasts, River Landscapes or Glaciation. Students will study topical case studies of many different places and environments around the world.

Unit 2: Challenges of the Human Environment: This unit focuses upon the Urban World, the Development Gap, Newly Emerging Economies and the British Economy.

Unit 3: Geographical Applications and Skills – This unit is designed to allow students to make some important decisions about the planet. It promotes independent thinking and covers a wide range of local and global topics.

Students will be presented with a topical issue which they will have to explore and make decisions about.

Students will do 2 days of fieldwork at 2 separate sites (offsite) to complete the fieldwork element of the course.

How will I be assessed?

There will be 3 exams all of which now take place at the very end of year 11. Students are required to answer multiple choice questions, short open, open response and extended writing questions. Good literacy skills are essential to achieving the top grades.

Anything else I need to know?

Students are encouraged to use ICT within lessons. The course challenges their enquiry and thinking skills by using decision-making exercises with specific reference to sustainable development and Global interdependence and citizenship.

Our course is brand new and it contains many up to date resources and lessons which students will find both interesting and enlightening.

We will explore careers in Surveying and make links to Geography. We will also ask students to partake in a project to regenerate the Upper Reaches Hotel in Abingdon.

Graphic Design

Lead Teacher: Mrs E Neville; Director of Faculty: Ms C Pennington

Specification: Edexcel, 2GC01 (Art & Design: Graphic Communication endorsement)



Why study Graphic Design?

Art & Design based subjects help you to learn about the visual world: aesthetics, purpose and function.

You will also expand your understanding of past and present designers and artists.

There are many careers in the field of Graphic Design such as: Illustration, Packaging design, Magazine design, Photography, Typography, Web design, product design plus many others related to utilising design process skills.

What will I be studying?

The endorsed Graphic communication syllabus requires a variety of disciplines to be explored throughout the course, such as typography (fonts), illustration, advertising/logos and packaging. You will keep a visual record of your ideas and progress in a sketchbook. You will need to develop skills using **Computer Aided Design packages** as well as **practical visual arts skills** in disciplines such as drawing, printing, making nets and packaging.

How will I be assessed?

Unit 1- Portfolio/Coursework: The coursework element includes the use of sketchbooks in which you will be required to show your research, investigations and development of ideas from a given starting point to produce a variety of outcomes. Unit 1 accounts for 60% of your grade.

Unit 2 – Externally Set Assignment: You will complete one ten-hour examination that is held over two days in April/May of Year 11. A broad theme (set by the exam board) needs to be personally interpreted and prepared prior to the exam in a timed preparatory period. Unit 2 is worth 40% of the GCSE.

Exhibition: At the end of the course in June, there will be a celebratory exhibition of all students' work. This work will be internally assessed by art teachers and moderated at the exhibition by a visiting assessor.

Anything else I need to know?

Students are asked to contribute to the cost of a high quality hard-backed sketchbook at the start of the course to present their research. All other key materials are provided, but occasionally students may be required to contribute to some material costs depending on their design.

The course complements other Art and Design GCSE subjects well as the assessment objectives are identical. Skills can effectively overlap to secure understanding and raise ability levels. Students are asked to contribute to the cost of a high quality hard-backed sketchbook near the start of the course to present their research and development professionally.

Health and Social Care

Lead teacher: Ms A Thornton

Specification: OCR Cambridge National in Health and Social Care

Health and Social Care is a course designed for those students who have an interest in pursuing further education or a career in a health and social setting such as care homes, nurseries and hospitals. It is vital that students have good communication skills and the ability to work independently as the course is predominantly coursework based. This course will help to develop further your understanding of the Health and Social Care Sector - in particular the different types of care settings along with the job roles, and principles and values involved. All students will also receive accredited first aid training from St Johns Ambulance Service.

What will I be studying?

Learners will undertake four modules, two of which are compulsory (RO21 & 22) and two optional.

RO21 – Essential values of care for use with individuals in care settings

RO22 – Communication and working with individuals in health, social care and early years settings

RO – To be confirmed

RO31 – Basic first aid

How will I be assessed?

Three units are Centre Assessed Tasks and externally moderated by an OCR visiting moderator. The unit RO21 is an exam based unit which will take place in the summer of Year 11. The exam is a one hour exam focused on RO21.

Anything else I need to know?

Level 1 and 2 Award with the level 2 is equivalent to GCSE graded on Pass, Merit and Distinction. All learners complete a portfolio of evidence for each assessed unit.



History

Director of Faculty: Mr A Conroy

Specification: Edexcel Schools History Project

Aims of the course:

One of our key aims is to demonstrate the relevance of studying history to understanding the world around you today. The course will look at the historical origins of a number of social and political features of the world today including our justice system, the development of democracy and the welfare state and the **westward spread** of the United States of America. By the end of the course students will have looked at a wide range of topics and will understand that to comprehend the world in which they live they must know about the past.



The history GCSE is valued by employers and universities. Students who do well will have demonstrated the ability not just to master significant quantities of information but to think critically about this information; to analyse both its origins and relevance and to engage with the material critically. This is an increasingly important skill, especially in a “post truth” (!) world.

All examinations are written papers and extended writing is an important part of the assessment. Your current English level will be a key guide to your history prediction.

What will I be studying?

- Crime and Punishment Through the Ages
- Life in Germany (1918-1945)
- The Reign of Elizabeth I
- The American West (1830-1890)

How will I be assessed?

The history course will be examined in 3 exam papers at the end of the GCSE. These will feature a combination of source questions and essay questions; which students will develop the skills to answer throughout the course.

Anything else I need to know?

In the Humanities Faculty we work hard to ensure that we provide interesting and exciting lessons for students of all learning styles. Our lessons include written work, discussion, role play debate, photo-shoots, video, filming, and a huge range of other activities to make the course and the lessons exciting and enjoyable.

However, there are certain skills that will help you to get the most out of your history GCSE. The course is best suited to students who are meeting their targets in English, who are organised, hardworking and believe in meeting deadlines both in school and homework. Have you done well on the history learning projects so far?

Obviously, an interest in the history you have studied so far is a good sign of whether you will enjoy the GCSE. If you are willing to get involved in a range of activities including discussion this is a plus, but we work hard to help you develop these skills during the course if not.

Film Studies

Lead Teacher: Miss C Phippen

Specification: Eduqas GCSE (9-1)

From Hollywood Cinema to Contemporary UK Film there is so much more to Film Studies than simply watching films. As well as gaining an appreciation of film as an art form in terms of its visual storytelling, studying film can enhance your understanding of the world. Not only will it change the way you watch film, but it will challenge you to think in new ways and question or change your perspective on a whole host of issues and developments within history, society and culture. The development of deeper critical and creative thinking gained by studying film is a much sought after transferable skill in both employment and further study.

What will I be studying?

You will study the key elements of film form including cinematography, mise-en-scene, editing and sound. You will also study the contexts of your chosen films and what was happening when your film was made.

Studying Film enables you to develop a wide range of transferable skills:

Creative Thinking

Critical Thinking

Emotional Intelligence

Film Analysis

Communication

Research Skills

Literacy

Technical Competencies

How will I be assessed?

There are two exams at GCSE, each worth 35% of the qualification with the remaining 30% assessed by Production work. Each exam lasts 90 minutes and consists of three different sections:

Component 1: Key Development in US Film

Section A: US Film COMparative Study

Section B: Key Developments in Film and Film Technology

Section C: US Independent Film

Component 2: Global Film – Narrative, Representation and Film Style

Section A: Global English Language film

Section B: Global non-English language film

Section C: Contemporary UK film

Creative Production: The production element allows you to showcase the film-making or screenwriting skills you have developed during the course by producing a:

Film extract (video) or Film extract screenplay with storyboard

Evaluation

Anything else I need to know?

There are no previous learning requirements for this specification. However, an interest in film would be an advantage.

Modern Foreign Languages

Mandarin, French, German, Spanish

Director of Faculty: Mrs E Mannion

Specification: AQA Mandarin 8673, French 8658, German 8668, Spanish 8698



If you enjoy communicating with other people, finding out how language works and learning about different countries and cultures, studying GCSE Mandarin, French, German or Spanish is an excellent choice for you! You will learn about the countries where your language is spoken and get a lot more out of a trip there. You will add an international dimension to your choice of GCSE subjects, preparing you for a world of global markets and multinational companies, which is something many future employers and higher education providers look for.

Being able to communicate in more than one language allows us to become more open to other peoples' cultures and outlook. Learners develop communication skills, self-confidence and independence, together with an underlying understanding of grammatical concepts and language awareness, which could prove invaluable in later life.

What will I be studying?

The GCSE course:

- Theme 1: Identity and culture.
- Theme 2: Local, national, international and global areas of interest.
- Theme 3: Current and future study and employment.

Classroom activities will be based on these themes, with great emphasis on the four skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing as well as learning about the grammatical structures of their chosen language. Students will need to commit to learning and revising vocabulary on a daily basis and also to study the structure and grammar of the language.

How will I be assessed?

Paper 1: Listening and understanding	Paper 2: Speaking	Paper 3: Reading	Paper 4: Writing
25% Exam in June 2019	25% Oral exam conducted by teacher in April / May 2020	25% Exam in June 2020	25% Exam in June 2020

Anything else I need to know?

- It is advantageous for students to have a dictionary in their chosen language at home for reference.
- Students will be expected to revise vocabulary for 5 - 10 minutes every night.
- You will be encouraged to take part in trips/exchanges.

Music

Head of Music: Mr D Chambers

Specification: GCSE 9-1 Music (Eduqas)

You will want to study this subject if you have a love of music in all its forms. You will have learnt much from your lessons in Key Stage 3 and want to take that on further.

You may already have instrumental or vocal skills, but this is not essential. You can still access the course even if you do not currently play an instrument – as long as you are prepared to take one up now and you are willing to perform!



What will I be studying?

Component 1: Performing (30%)

You will build on your performing skills – either on an instrument you already play, something you take up at the start of the course, or your own voice. You must submit 4-6 minutes of recorded performance work, and you must make sure you perform at least two different pieces. One of them must be in a group, and you are free to choose what you like for the rest.

Component 2: Composing (30%)

You will learn the skills of composing, building on your skills from Key Stage 3. You will produce two compositions during the course, and your work on both compositions must last at least 3 minutes.

Component 3: Appraising (40%)

This component is assessed via a listening examination. There will be eight questions in total, two on each of the four areas of study. These areas are similar to work you have been doing in KS3, and include film music, pop music, musical forms and devices (like the ostinato module), music for ensemble (group work).

How will I be assessed?

60% of the mark is coursework, for Component 1 and 2, the Performing and Composing.

The composition is done in school over the course of about 10 hours per piece, so we can be sure it is your own work. Performances are also done in school, and you can choose to record them privately, just with your teacher, if you feel nervous.

At the end of the course there will be a listening/written exam which is worth 40% of the total marks. In the exam, you will answer questions based around the four areas of study and two set works, which we will study in depth during the course.

Anything else I need to know?

You need to be enthusiastic about music, and ready to listen to lots of different styles. If you play an instrument, clearly you should have your own. You can sing for your performance. If you plan to use your voice, you should either have lessons or be part of a choir or singing group, either in or out of school.

Music is a wonderful skill that will broaden your mind, train your ear, improve your thinking and problem solving skills. A MUSIC GCSE will always impress a college or employer, as it is not a common qualification to have and it proves more than just academic ability.

Drama

Director of Faculty: Mr B Harrison

Specification: Edexcel - GCSE Drama

You will want to study this subject if you have an interest in the performing arts. You should be enthusiastic about performing in front of an audience and learning the craft of constructing a performance with purpose. Previous experience in school productions and external groups is beneficial but not necessary in joining the course, but you do have to be prepared to work as a team and contribute towards the development of performance skills and revise theoretical knowledge.



What will I be studying?

You will be developing your acting skills and building on your terminology for the subject, this will be essential towards supporting your coursework and exam responses. You will be creating your own performance material through devising methods, performing within specific styles, demonstrating your knowledge of set texts and analysing the decisions being made by practitioners in professional theatre shows.

How will I be assessed?

Students are assessed throughout the three years of the course. All the work you do will be a mixture of practical and written work providing evidence of your study and final performances. These results of the following components are calculated into the final grade.

Component 1: Devising (40%)	Creating own performance using a variety of stimulus material. Designed and assessed by teacher.
Component 2: Performance from Text (20%)	Performing two extracts in front of a visiting examiner from the exam board.
Component 3: Theatre Makers in Practice (40%) Section 1 – Bringing Texts to Life Section 2 – Live Theatre Evaluation	A written exam focused on extracts from a set text, this will be studied before the exam in lessons. A written review of a theatre show seen by the students. Both completed in exam conditions. 1 hour 30 minutes.

Anything else I need to know?

The course is a tough one, but highly rewarding! You are treated as young adults, venturing into the world of the performing arts, and are expected to rise to the challenge. Attendance is important factor to the course as other students will be relying on you to be present in order to complete performance works, mainly due to the collaborative nature of the course content.

You may be considering a type of performing arts course for A Level and maybe beyond; in which case this course is definitely for you. However, a drama qualification will set you up in so many other ways too. It will increase your confidence, your ability to express yourself and relate to other people. It is a predominantly practical course, but it is a great challenge in terms of your own development.

Physical Education

Director of Faculty: Mr J Dhiman

Specification: AQA 8582

If you want to teach, coach, go into the fitness industry or be a physiotherapist, then this is the choice for you. You may also want to opt for this if you are not sure what you want to do but you enjoy PE and Biology.



What will I be studying?

Subject content:

- Applied anatomy and physiology
- Movement analysis
- Physical training
- Use of data
- Sports psychology
- Socio-cultural influences
- Health, fitness and well-being

How will I be assessed?

There are 2 exams papers with a mixture of multiple choice/objective test questions, short answer questions and extended answer questions.

Paper 1: The human body and movement in physical activity and sport

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

Paper 2: Socio-cultural influences and well-being in physical activity and sport

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

Both papers are 1 hour 15 minutes' written exams, with a total of 78 marks for each paper which is 60% of the GCSE.

There is also a Practical Performance in Physical Activity and Sport assessed by teachers and moderated by AQA, with a total of 100 marks and 40% of the GCSE.

Anything else I need to know?

You will be expected to always bring full school sports kit which consists of the following: black GCSE polo-shirt, black shorts, orange socks, school outdoor shirt, boots, and shin pads.

Students are expected to play for at least one school team and attend training.

Psychology

Director of Faculty: Miss E Tilley

Specification: AQA

Your brain is the most complex device in existence and because of it you are capable of art, music, love, happiness, hatred and charity.

You are the most challenging riddle ever written! To study Psychology you must have an interest in discovering how the human mind works and the ways in which it influences behaviour. Studying Psychology will begin to give you answers to questions such as how we develop our personality, why people suffer from mental disorders and how they can be treated and why we are more likely to obey the orders of a policeman than a milkman!

What will I study?

Cognition and behaviour

1. Memory
2. Perception
3. Development
4. Research methods

Social context and behaviour

1. Social influence
2. Language, thought and communication
3. Brain and neuropsychology
4. Psychological problems



How will I be assessed?

At the end of the two year GCSE course you will sit two psychology exams. These will assess students' understanding with a mixture of multiple choice, short-answer questions and extended writing pieces.

What else do I need to know?

Psychology is a highly challenging yet fascinating course, ideal for enthusiastic and self-motivated students who enjoy reading and researching new information. You need to be able to read and summarise theories and identify their strengths and weaknesses and be confident in sharing your ideas with your peers. You can expect to study a variety of human behaviours and you will gain a very valuable insight into the workings of the human mind. An understanding of simple mathematical calculations is an advantage.

Psychology links into a huge number of career routes: having an understanding of how the human mind works and its impact on behaviour is enormously useful in many different areas.

Studying Psychology can be a very useful starting point for careers in Counselling, Forensics, Occupational Health, Personnel, Sport, Education and Teaching.

Fashion & Textile Design

Lead Teacher: Miss T Herringshaw - Director of Faculty: Ms C Pennington

Specification: Edexcel, 2TE01 (Art & Design: Textiles endorsement)

Why study Textiles?

You will acquire abilities in investigation, analysis, experimentation, refinement and problem-solving. You will also expand your understanding of past and present artists, designers and craftspeople.

There are many careers in the field of Textiles such as interior design, textile manufacture, costume and theatre design, fashion illustration & design, fashion marketing, fashion design in footwear, millinery, knitwear, graphics and fashion photography and publishing/blogging.



What will I be studying?

The endorsed Textiles syllabus requires a variety of textile processes to be explored, such as:

- Constructed Textiles (knit, weave, embroidery, appliqué, felting, fabric manufacture)
- Printed Textiles (Screen printing, stencilling, computer aided design)
- Fine Art Textiles (experimental effects)
- Dyed Textiles (batik, silk painting, dyeing processes)
- Fashion Textiles (Pattern cutting, accessory design, garment design, illustration)

You will keep a visual record of your ideas and progress in a sketchbook. Communication about ideas will be visual and written and you will produce a variety of practical final outcomes.

How will I be assessed?

Unit 1- Portfolio/Coursework: The coursework element includes the use of sketchbooks in which you will be required to show your research, investigations and development of ideas from a given starting point to produce a variety of outcomes. Unit 1 accounts for 60% of your grade.

Unit 2 – Externally Set Assignment: You will complete one ten-hour examination that is held over two days in April/May of Year 11. A broad theme (set by the exam board) needs to be personally interpreted and prepared prior to the exam in a timed preparatory period. Unit 2 is worth 40%.

Exhibition: At the end of the course in June, there will be a celebratory exhibition of all students' work. This work will be internally assessed by Visual Art teachers, and moderated by a visiting assessor.

Anything else I need to know?

Costs: Students are asked to contribute to the cost of a high quality hard-backed sketchbook at the start of the course to present their research. All other key materials are provided, but occasionally students may be required to contribute to some material costs depending on their design.

Trips: There is a fantastic A'Level trip to the 'The Knit & Stitch Show' where students get to see first-hand Textile artists work. This year we were able to offer some places to GCSE Textile students too. Students are asked to contribute to the cost of a high quality hard-backed sketchbook near the start of the course to present their research and development professionally.

3D Design

Lead Teacher: Mrs J Pritchard, Director of Faculty: Ms C Pennington

Specification: Edexcel, 2TD01 (Art & Design: 3D Design endorsement)

Why study 3D Design?

Art & Design based subjects help you to learn about the visual world: aesthetics, purpose and function. You will acquire abilities in investigation, analysis, experimentation, refinement and problem-solving. The course will also enable you to continue to develop your practical skills learnt at KS3 and to express your ideas visually using new materials and techniques and help you develop your powers of imagination. You will also expand your understanding of past and present artists and designers. A GCSE in Design can lead to A level Art and Design courses or to a full-time art/design course at an FE institution. There are many careers in the field of 3D Design such as architecture, engineering, product design, interior design, jewellery design, theatre design, craft manufacture plus many others related to utilising design process skills.

What will I be studying?

The endorsed 3D Design syllabus requires a variety of 3D processes, such as:

- Architecture, Environment and Interior design (perspective drawing, model making)
- Product Design (Drawing, Digital drawing, working with card, metal, wood, electronics, plastics)
- Jewellery (experimenting with metal, glass, plastic using casting, enamelling and soldering techniques)
- Scenography (Set, stage and theatre design, modelling and making)

Project themes are carefully designed to allow as much freedom as possible, whilst learning about different processes and techniques. Designers' work will be studied to influence variety in your work. There will be problems to solve and opportunities to express creative ideas. You will keep a visual record of your ideas and progress in a sketchbook. Communication about ideas will be verbal, visual and written.

How will I be assessed?

Unit 1- Portfolio/Coursework: The coursework element includes the use of sketchbooks in which you will be required to show your research, investigations and development of ideas from a given starting point to produce a variety of outcomes. Unit 1 accounts for 60% of your grade.

Unit 2 – Externally Set Assignment: A ten-hour practical examination held over two days in April/May of Year 11. A broad theme (set by the exam board) needs to be personally interpreted and prepared prior to the exam in a timed preparatory period. Unit 2 is worth 40% of the GCSE.

Anything else I need to know?

Students are asked to contribute to the cost of a high quality hard-backed sketchbook at the start of the course to present their research. All other key materials are provided, but occasionally students may be required to contribute to some material costs depending on their design. Students are asked to contribute to the cost of a high quality hard-backed sketchbook near the start of the course to present their research and development professionally.

Hospitality & Catering

(Vocational) Level 1-2 Award

Director of Faculty: Ms C Pennington **Lead Teacher:** Mrs L Brooks

Specification: WJEC (Eduqas)

Hospitality & Catering is a NEW style vocational course, designed to be launched in Sept 2021 at JMS. It is similar, but not the same, as the FOOD & NUTRITION GCSE. This exciting and wide-ranging course is for students who enjoy working with all aspects of food preparation, catering business/ industry processes and the understanding and application of nutrition/dietary needs. The subject requires students to show evidence of knowledge and understanding of Food preparation and Food industry processes **in written and project form** as well as develop competent practical skills in a range of categories and food groups.

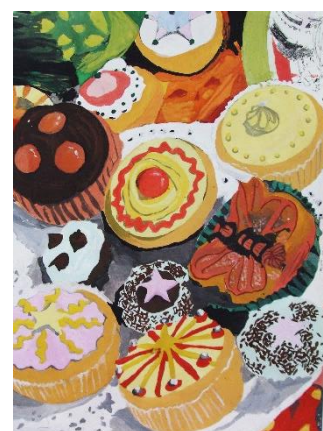
What will I be studying?

Factors that affect the Hospitality & Catering Industry:

- Hospitality & catering providers & working conditions
- Budgeting, profit & economy
- Client base & working to a brief
- Menu planning
- Food Nutrition and Health; Food Choices; Food trends
- Food Safety and Hygiene and legislation

Menu design & creation:

- Responding to & researching a brief
- Time management and sequencing when cooking
- Cooking and food preparation skills
- Food presentation and service
- Safety controls



How will I be assessed?

Unit 1—40% of grade = Written paper (90 marks), taken in June of Year 11

This is a 1 hour 30min written paper. This component consists of short and extended answer questions. Students will be required to use stimulus material presented in different formats to respond to questions. This test assesses learners' ability to recall, select and communicate their knowledge and understanding of factors affecting the Hospitality and Catering Industry and their ability to analyse evidence provided to support their answers. It is externally marked.

Unit 2—60% of grade = Non-exam Assessment (NEA)/Controlled Assessment

Hospitality and Catering 'in Action'. In the Spring of Year 11, Learners are required to safely plan, prepare, cook and present nutritional dishes in response to a final brief (and for a specified client group), across 9 hours of supervised assessment time. A 4-hour practical test will form part of this to create their planned dishes. The test assesses technical skill and appropriateness of choices in response to the brief and client group. This unit is internally marked and externally moderated.

Anything else I need to know?

This is NOT a fully practical, life skills 'cookery' course where students only get to cook dishes they like themselves.

Student behaviour and attitude to others in the kitchen must conform to safe working practises, as in a professional kitchen.

Theory lessons will inevitably outweigh practical lessons in number, in order to cover the learning and knowledge requirements. There will be **ONE practical cooking lesson on average per 2 week cycle**. This may increase as students work to planning their response to a brief in order to refine dishes.

Students will be expected to provide their own ingredients for each recipe. It is essential students are organised and prepared for practical lessons, or they will fail to cover the range of skills and food groups required.

An interest in analysing and applying nutritional understanding and 'cooking for others' in preparation for working in the hospitality and catering industry, is essential.

Progression opportunities

This course prepares students to undertake a Higher Level Diploma in Hospitality and Catering at an FE institution or an Apprenticeship route. We currently do not offer an A level in Food or Catering at John Mason School.

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