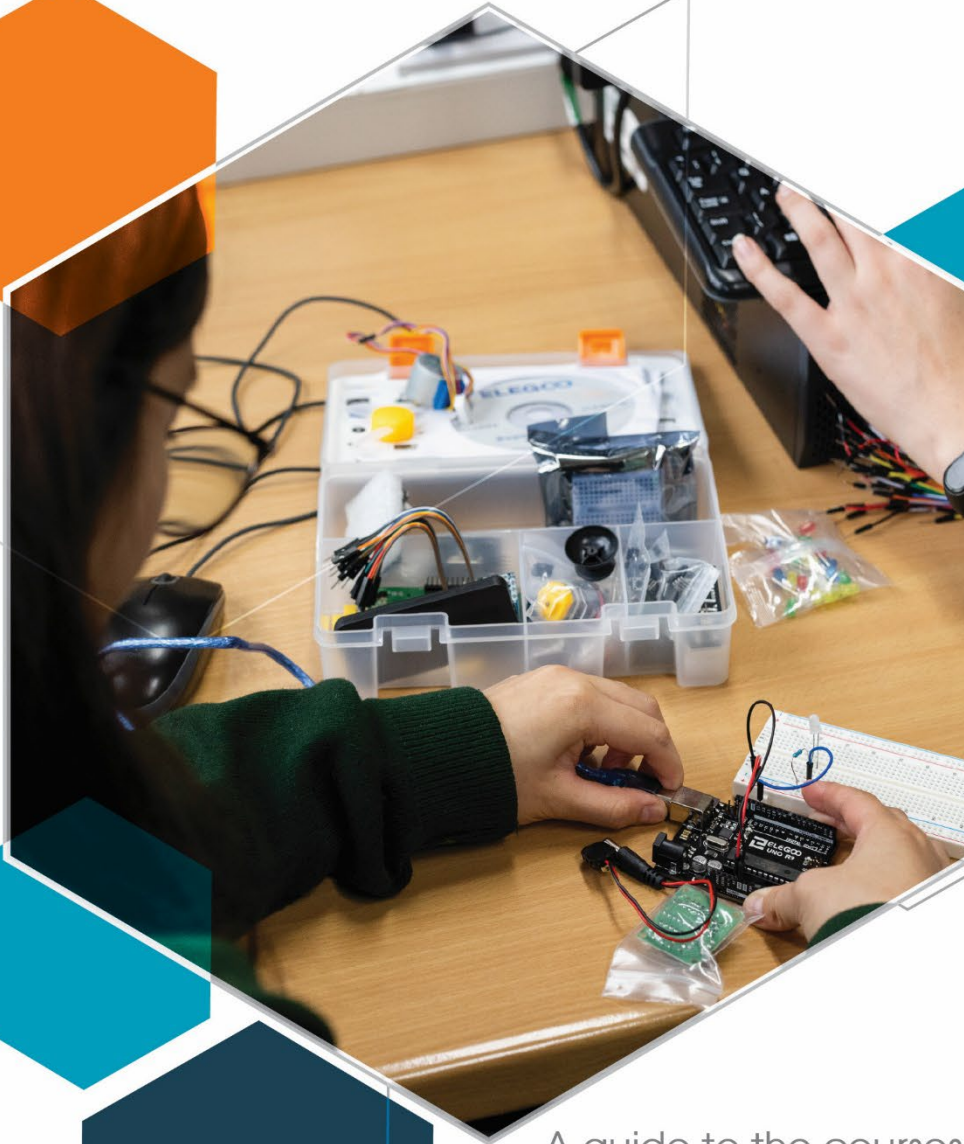


YEAR 9

Options Booklet



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

2025



John Mason School

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Welcome to Year 9 Options

Dear Year 9 Student,

Options time is an important point in your education. For the first time in your education, when you start Key Stage 4 a significant amount of your time will be spent studying subjects that you have chosen, rather than those decided by the National Curriculum.

We know that you will have a lot of questions about the options process: Which subject is right for me? What if I don't know what I want to do at all? How do I narrow down my subject choices? Do not worry, we will help you to make choices that are right for you.

This booklet and the options process are designed to give you and your parents/carers as much information as possible to support you in choosing subjects that suit your future plans, current skills and individual needs.

You need to use all the information available to you to make the right decisions. This booklet gives details about each of the courses we offer. You can get further information about the courses on offer at the Options Evening (Thursday 11th December 5.30 pm to 7:30pm). You should also discuss your choices with your tutor in tutor time, with your subject teachers at the Parents' Evening on Thursday 5th February and with your family. Each of those people know you in different ways and may be able to suggest whether they think a subject would suit you as a learner.

You will be sent an 'Initial preferences form' on 12th December when you will need to select four courses, as well as three reserves in case we are not able to timetable your first choices. From these initial choices we will decide which courses are likely to run and plan our "blocks" of which options are taught at different times. These are pre-determined by the school and can look very different each year depending upon what **you** choose. In this way we work to ensure that as many students as possible get to study a suite of options that matches their preferences. Once we have reviewed the initial choices, the deadline for submitting your final choices will be Friday 13th February 2025. You will need to complete a Google form using your school email address to submit your choices.

Using all this information will allow you to make the best choices. The choices that you will enjoy and the choices that will give you your best chance of success over the next two years and into your future beyond.

Robin Conway
Deputy Headteacher

What is Key Stage 4?

The curriculum at Key Stage 4 is a combination of Essential Learning, one Directed Option and the Personalised Curriculum. Essential Learning is decided by the government and the school and is compulsory for all students. The Directed Option is chosen from a limited range of subjects that the government has called the “English Baccalaureate Qualifications”. You must select one qualification from this list. The Personalised Curriculum is chosen by students according to their strengths and interests.

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 strongly encourage you to 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, you must consider outcomes that will demonstrate a range of skills and give you the best grades possible so that post 16 options, such as apprenticeships, college or A level courses are available to you.

Essential Curriculum: What does everyone do?

At John Mason, all students are taught a core programme which we refer to in this booklet as Essential Learning. Essential learning consists of some examined subjects which lead to GCSEs and enrichment studies. The enrichment studies are statutory for all 14-16 year olds and are essential for your wellbeing and the development of vital skills which will support you in later life. However, they do not lead to specific qualifications and so do not involve any exams.

Examined Curriculum Courses	Enrichment Curriculum Studies
English Language	Core PE
English Literature	Personal Development
Mathematics	Religious Studies
Combined Science (Physics, Chemistry and Biology) (2 GCSEs).	

Directed Curriculum Option: What can you choose?

The government divides qualifications into “buckets” and the grades you get are combined to form an average score. This score will be important when applying to college, A-levels and, beyond school, apprenticeships and universities. To “fill” your buckets, you must study 3 qualifications which the government have called the “English Baccalaureate” qualifications. The Combined Science course in our Essential Learning programme counts for 2 of these. In addition, **you must choose one** of:

- Triple Science (turning your Combined Science GCSEs into 3 individual GCSEs in Chemistry, Physics and Biology).
- Computer Science
- History
- Geography
- Modern Foreign Languages

Please note that

- all of these subjects can also be chosen in your “Personalised Curriculum” (see below) so you are **not** limited to studying **only** one of these subjects.
- this is **not** the same as the English Baccalaureate Qualification (see below) which is optional.
- news reports of planned changes to the curriculum from the government do **not** relate to students starting their GCSEs in September 2026. These changes are in consultation phase at the moment and, if implemented, will come into effect from September 2027.

Personalised Curriculum Options: What can you choose?

You can choose three additional courses, each of which are studied for 5 hours a fortnight to make your Personalised Curriculum.

It is ultimately up to you what you choose to study in your personalised curriculum. However, there are some considerations that you may wish to think about in reaching your decision. Please consider the following and be sure to ask if you need further advice on any of these:

The English Baccalaureate (EBacc)

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

- Maths
- English language
- Two sciences
- A modern foreign language (e.g. Spanish, French, German or Mandarin) and
- Either geography or history

The English Baccalaureate is not an Essential Qualification but it does show future universities and employers that you have completed a challenging and academic package of GCSE studies. Like high quality work experience or the Duke of Edinburgh Award this can be a positive factor in support of future applications especially for **high level apprenticeships** and **Russell Group universities**.

We strongly encourage students to consider a suite of options that achieves the English Baccalaureate if they are academically capable of performing well in these subjects.

Because of the Essential Curriculum and Directed Option subjects you can achieve the English Baccalaureate by selecting:

- Geography/history or
- A Modern Foreign Language

As your Directed Option and then the other as one of your three options. This still leaves you two free choices for creative subjects (such as art, drama or music); new subjects (such as psychology or Business Studies) or additional academic subjects.

Aiming High

It is highly likely that you do not know with any certainty what your future holds yet. You do not need to have a planned career path to make your options choices. The best way to approach your options is therefore to aim high in order to ensure that the qualifications you end up with allow you to pursue whatever path you become passionate about in the future. In order to do this consider the following:

- Ensuring you achieve the EBacc qualification (see above).
- Converting Combined Sciences to Triple Science with one of your options. Oxfordshire is an area of high employment in the fields of medicine and medical and scientific research. Triple Science is a qualification which will open doors to a wide range of future jobs.
- A Modern Foreign Language. The challenges of studying a language are not to be taken lightly, but language qualifications can boost your future in a lot of different pathways. In our globalised economy, with high levels of employment in travel, tourism, finance and academia the benefits of knowing one or more foreign language are extensive and employers will value these qualifications.

Open Doors: Breadth

Another strategy for successful options choices is ensure that you keep as many doors to your future open as possible. The government introduced the EBacc in recognition of the fact that Universities and Employers are looking for **breadth of study** at Key Stage 4 (it is not until A Level and University that students should start to 'specialise' in particular subject disciplines). However, even if these subjects don't inspire you, it is important that you keep breadth and balance in your curriculum as long as possible before you specialise. This will help you to develop key skills for learning and for life, such as evaluation, analysis and communication: skills that are highly valued by employers and further educators.

To achieve this, you might consider:

- Selecting options from a range of different subject bases e.g. one language, one humanities, one creative subject and one vocational subject.
- Ensuring you achieve the EBacc qualification (see above).
- Plan for a wide range of possible future careers including science/medicine (select Triple Science); global opportunities (a Modern Foreign Language); creative and arts industries (a Visual or Performing Art) and vocational (e.g. Business Studies).

Important Notice: Reserve Choices

We will make every effort to ensure that you can study the courses you opt for, but we are constrained by constructing a timetable, staffing and group sizes. This is why we ask that you also make reserve choices at both your initial options and your final decision point. You will be asked to put these in order of preference. If you do not select reserve choices you will be allocated to a course with available spaces if your first choices cannot be met.

Types of Course

It is useful to note that there are different types of qualification at GCSE. On each course page the type of qualification you will be entered for is stated. The main types 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). The majority of courses we offer are GCSEs. GCSEs might contain a small element of coursework but are primarily assessed through examinations which you will sit in the summer of Year 11.

Vocational Courses (BTECs, Awards and Cambridge Nationals)

There are various different kinds of vocational qualification but all 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. They are generally designed to be less “academic” in their approach to learning and so may include more development of practical skills such as research, presentation and activities than GCSEs. Although most have some form of final exam, a significant part of the qualification, often a majority, is earned from ongoing assessment of work produced throughout the course.

All of the courses we offer are at levels 1-2 on the National Qualifications Framework. However, some vocational courses (such as BTECs) have different levels to GCSEs when marked. For future applications and to calculate an average point score an equivalent number of points is allocated for the qualification. It should be noted that there is no direct equivalent to a Grade 9 in BTEC courses. The grades used and GCSE equivalents is outlined below:

GCSE Grade	BTEC Grade	GCSE Points Equivalent
9	Level 2: Distinction*	8.5
8		
7	Level 2: Distinction	7
6	Level 2: Merit	5.5
5		
4	Level 2: Pass	4
3	Level 1: Distinction	3
2	Level 1: Merit	2
1	Level 1: Pass	1.25

For more information please see Appendix 1: What Do Qualifications Mean?

Summary Table

Examined Curriculum	Enriched Curriculum
English Language: 1 GCSE English Literature: 1 GCSE Mathematics: 1 GCSE Combined Science: 2 GCSEs	Core PE Personal Development Religious Studies

Directed Curriculum Option
1 GCSE from: Triple Science Computer Science History Geography Modern Foreign Languages

Personalised Curriculum Options		
Additional GCSEs from:	GCSEs:	Vocational Courses:
Triple Science Computer Science History Geography Modern Foreign Languages	Art and Design Business Graphic Design Music Drama Physical Education Psychology Fashion and Textile Design 3D Design	Hospitality and Catering Health and Social Care IT Enterprise and Marketing Sport Creative Media Travel and Tourism

Some Advice for Students

Who decides what I study?

YOU do!

We want you to choose the subjects that you want to do. Everyone is happier that way. But you need to think carefully and take all the advice offered.

- 1) Consult people who can advise you:
 - Your family
 - Your subject teachers
 - Directors of Faculty (at options evening)
 - Your form tutor

If you would like further advice, then please let your form tutor know and we will be happy to arrange career guidance appointments with a careers advisor or member of the leadership team.

- 2) Check the descriptions of each course and what is required carefully. This is especially important for new subjects that are offered in KS4, but you have not yet studied. You should also check any particular requirements for the course such as coursework or performance and make sure you are comfortable with that.
- 3) Consider whether the option subjects you are choosing NOW will support any further education career choices in the future.

To help you to choose:

You will get support and guidance in school from your form tutor, your teachers, the Learning Support team and the Senior Leadership team. They will be able to discuss with you your future aspirations and help guide you towards subjects that will help you reach those goals.

The school has a careers advisor who is able to support students in options. During options evening Miss Gibson and the careers advisor will be available for careers discussions.

We subscribe to Unifrog which is a website containing a wealth of information about careers and the various pathways on offer. There is also a section to help with GCSE options choices. Your tutor will share your login details with you, and you will have some tutor time to explore Unifrog in the new year. There are a number of online events that students and parents can attend [GCSE and post-16 choices : Unifrog Event Series](#)

Dos and Don'ts when choosing subjects

Do

- choose subjects which you like.
- choose subjects at which you are successful.
- choose subjects which you may need for a career or further education.
- find out everything that you can about the subject before you choose it. Once you have started a subject you will need to stick with it for two years.
- talk to the people who know you and listen to their advice.

Don't

- choose a subject just because your friend has chosen it.
- choose a subject just because of a particular teacher, they may not end up teaching you.

Your Future: Your Choice

Example Selections

The case studies in this section show some examples of options students in the past have chosen and some of the reasons for their choices. They are written to help you think about your choices.

Although based on real examples, these are not actual students and no students' names or personal details have been used here.

Student 1: The Medic



This student knew that they wanted to be a doctor in the future. They had always wanted to work in health care but knew medicine was a challenge to achieve. They decided to:

- 1) Speak to their teachers about the grades needed. Their form tutor explained that medicine requires extremely high grades and they would need to be looking at grades 7-9 in English, Maths and sciences plus several other subjects.
- 2) They looked at their progress checks with their parents. They were getting “Advancing” and “Extended” grades for 5-9. In science and maths they had “Extended” grades: 7-9.
- 3) At parents’ evening they asked their teachers about their potential grades. Their teachers confirmed that they had the potential to do very well and, with hard work, would be able to achieve the grades necessary for medicine.
- 4) Then they had to choose what subjects. They spoke to their Progress Leader who arranged an appointment with Mr Conway who support university applications at Sixth Form. Mr Conway talked through subjects they would do well in and which would support them in applications to medical schools later. Triple Science was essential and getting the EBacc was recommended. They decided to go for it and added a humanities and a language.
- 5) For their final subject they chose psychology because it sounded interesting and they thought it might link with medicine in the future.

Directed Curriculum Option	Personalised Curriculum Options		
	Additional GCSEs from:	GCSEs:	Vocational Courses:
Triple Science Computer Science History Geography Modern Foreign Languages	Triple Science Computer Science History Geography Modern Foreign Languages	Art and Design Business Graphic Design Music Drama Physical Education Psychology Fashion and Textile Design 3D Design	Hospitality and Catering Health and Social Care IT Enterprise and Marketing Sport Creative Media Travel and Tourism

Choices
Reserves

Student 2: University



This student did not know what they wanted to do in the future. They liked a lot (but not all) of their subjects but had no idea about a career. However they did know that they wanted to do A-levels and then to go to university after school. But they had no idea what they wanted to study.

1. Asked their tutor about university. Their tutor showed them a university website with a list of all the courses they might do. There were nearly 200 different courses they could pick! They had no idea what they wanted to do. But their tutor told them it didn't matter. The most important thing was to pick a good range of courses that they enjoyed so that they got the best grades they could.
2. They looked at possible future pathways and careers in the options booklet and narrowed down their choices to those that best suited going to university. They wanted to keep all their doors open so picked a mixture of different types of subject.
3. At parents' evening they met with their teacher for each subject that they were thinking about. Their teachers confirmed that they had the potential to do well and advised them on what university courses they might be able to do if they had that GCSE.
4. It sounded like a huge range of options were left open to them, which is exactly what they wanted.

Directed Curriculum Option	Personalised Curriculum Options		
	Additional GCSEs from:	GCSEs:	Vocational Courses:
Triple Science Computer Science History Geography Modern Foreign Languages	Triple Science Computer Science History Geography Modern Foreign Languages	Art and Design Business Graphic Design Music Drama Physical Education Psychology Fashion and Textile Design 3D Design	Hospitality and Catering Health and Social Care IT Enterprise and Marketing Sport Creative Media Travel and Tourism

Choices
Reserves

Student 3: Sport



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This student was not sure what they wanted to do in the future. In school they enjoyed subjects where they got to move around and PE was their favourite subject. Outside of school they were involved in football at a high level and also played cricket and basketball. They thought they might like to do something involving PE in the future, or something practical that involved working with their hands. They definitely didn't want to be sat down all day! To help make their choices they:

1. Spoke to their PE teacher about whether to do Sport BTEC or PE GCSE. Their PE teacher explained that the GCSE was a more academic course, with more science and theory and good preparation for A-level PE. The Sport BTEC was more practical and involved more hours actually doing sport.
2. They spoke to subject teachers to find out which courses involved more activity and which involved more sitting down and learning. Which had exams and which had coursework or practical parts? Using this information they narrowed down their choices and found subjects that sounded exciting to them.

Directed Curriculum Option	Personalised Curriculum Options		
	Additional GCSEs from:	GCSEs:	Vocational Courses:
Triple Science Computer Science History Geography Modern Foreign Languages	Triple Science Computer Science History Geography Modern Foreign Languages	Art and Design Business Graphic Design Music Drama Physical Education Psychology Fashion and Textile Design 3D Design	Hospitality and Catering Health and Social Care IT Enterprise and Marketing Sport Creative Media Travel and Tourism

Choices
Reserves

Student 4: Nursery Worker



This student wanted to work with children in the future and thought about a possible career in childcare or nursery work. They knew that after GCSEs they wanted to go to college to do 'Early Years and Childcare' but did not know what other options to do. They spoke to their tutor who wasn't sure and so arranged an appointment with the Careers Advisor, Mr Bingham.

- 1) With Mr Bingham's help they spoke to Abingdon and Witney College and found out that a psychology GCSE went well with childcare. They also said to think about things that might be useful skills: sciences, art, music and catering.
- 2) Mr Bingham also spoke to them about working abroad. They did think that it might be good to work in different countries in the future and so decided to take a language as their directed option.
- 3) At parents' evening they checked with their teachers that they were likely to get the grades College required. Their teachers confirmed that they were on track to achieve this.

Directed Curriculum Option	Personalised Curriculum Options		
	Additional GCSEs from:	GCSEs:	Vocational Courses:
Triple Science Computer Science History Geography Modern Foreign Languages	Triple Science Computer Science History Geography Modern Foreign Languages	Art and Design Business Graphic Design Music Drama Physical Education Psychology Fashion and Textile Design 3D Design	Hospitality and Catering Health and Social Care IT Enterprise and Marketing Sport Creative Media Travel and Tourism

Choices
Reserves

Student 5: The Traveller



This student had no idea what they wanted to do in the future. They thought they would probably want to go to university but weren't sure what they wanted to do. But they did know they didn't want to stay in Abingdon, or even England forever. They wanted to travel all over the world; maybe as a job or perhaps to adventure before settling down to a job later.

- 1) When they spoke to their tutor their tutor pointed out that there were all sorts of jobs that involved travelling. They pointed them to Unifrog to find out more.
- 2) On Unifrog they found out more about careers in travel and tourism, as well as the kind of jobs they might do whilst travelling around the world. Again and again the importance of learning languages was referred to.
- 3) For each option they considered, they asked their teachers whether it might help them to get a job abroad in the future. From their advice they chose the courses that were most directly helpful to them.
- 4) Their languages teacher showed them a map of the world and showed in which countries English was mostly spoken, in which countries Spanish was mostly spoken and in which countries French was common. They decided to keep on with both their languages, as that covered such a huge amount of the world.

Directed Curriculum Option	Personalised Curriculum Options		
	Additional GCSEs from:	GCSEs:	Vocational Courses:
Triple Science Computer Science History Geography Modern Foreign Languages: Spanish	Triple Science Computer Science History Geography Modern Foreign Languages: French	Art and Design Business Graphic Design Music Drama Physical Education Psychology Fashion and Textile Design 3D Design	Hospitality and Catering Health and Social Care IT Enterprise and Marketing Sport Creative Media Travel and Tourism

Choices
Reserves

Student 6: Construction



This student was already thinking about a possible future in the construction industry, perhaps in building, or scaffolding. They knew they wanted to work with their hands and knew someone that had got an apprenticeship in this area and was really enjoying it.

- 1) They asked their tutor to arrange an appointment with Mr Bingham, the Careers Advisor. He helped them to look at college courses and apprenticeships and then the options available at school that would most closely fit this pathway.
- 2) 3D Design was an obvious first choice, and the student already knew they wanted to do this from Key Stage 3. But they weren't sure about what else to do.
- 3) Mr Bingham advised them to look at business or enterprise courses – they might want to run their own business in this area one day and that helped them to think of other choices.
- 4) Beyond this they chose the subjects they enjoyed most at KS3. They knew that if they enjoyed the subject they would work harder and that with better grades they'd get onto an apprenticeship at a higher level and earn more money, sooner.

Directed Curriculum Option	Personalised Curriculum Options		
	Additional GCSEs from:	GCSEs:	Vocational Courses:
Triple Science Computer Science History Geography Modern Foreign Languages: Spanish	Triple Science Computer Science History Geography Modern Foreign Languages: French	Art and Design Business Graphic Design Music Drama Physical Education Psychology Fashion and Textile Design 3D Design	Hospitality and Catering Health and Social Care IT Enterprise and Marketing Sport Creative Media Travel and Tourism

Choices
Reserves

Student 7: The Artist



This student wasn't sure what their future held, but they knew that they were passionate about art, and loved their art lessons. They knew that a lot of students from John Mason go on to do art in Sixth Form and that many go into Foundation Art courses from there. They had been round the Summer Exhibition last year and knew they wanted to learn to make art like the Sixth Form students whose work they had admired.

- 1) They spoke to their art teacher about doing a lot of art options: adding textiles, graphics and maybe 3D design to their choices. Their art teacher loved their enthusiasm but pointed out that there is a heavy workload with each art course. They advised them to perhaps do 2 VA subjects and one other.
- 2) The student looked at other subjects including those they had never studied before. They put together a selection of options that interested them, with their art choices at the heart of what they planned to do.

Directed Curriculum Option	Personalised Curriculum Options		
	Additional GCSEs from:	GCSEs:	Vocational Courses:
Triple Science Computer Science History Geography Modern Foreign Languages: Spanish	Triple Science Computer Science History Geography Modern Foreign Languages: French	Art and Design Business Graphic Design Music Drama Physical Education Psychology Fashion and Textile Design 3D Design	Hospitality and Catering Health and Social Care IT Enterprise and Marketing Sport Creative Media Travel and Tourism

Choices
Reserves

Student 8: The Lawyer



This student knew exactly what they wanted to do when they left school; they wanted to be a lawyer. They planned to do work experience in a legal office and go on to do a law degree. They knew that to achieve this they'd have to work hard and get really good GCSEs. Like a lot of professions (jobs that need a university degree) such as journalism, teaching and accountancy, the specific subjects aren't as important as good grades and developing a broad range of relevant skills. The student therefore focused on achieving a really impressive set of GCSEs.

1. They spoke to their tutor who arranged for them to speak to one of the Sixth Form tutors, who help people with university applications. They confirmed that universities are looking for high grades in good GCSEs. They encouraged the student to consider completing the EBacc to really impress top universities.
2. With this selection the student had one other option available. They chose a subject that they thought would be interesting and different, to round out their choices. They knew that if they did well in their GCSEs they'd be able to apply to really good universities in the future.

Directed Curriculum Option	Personalised Curriculum Options		
	Additional GCSEs from:	GCSEs:	Vocational Courses:
Triple Science Computer Science History Geography Modern Foreign Languages	Triple Science Computer Science History Geography Modern Foreign Languages	Art and Design Business Graphic Design Music Drama Physical Education Psychology Fashion and Textile Design 3D Design	Hospitality and Catering Health and Social Care IT Enterprise and Marketing Sport Creative Media Travel and Tourism

Choices
Reserves

Student 9: The Cook



This student was passionate about cooking and had always enjoyed food and nutrition lessons, especially the practical part. They thought it was likely that, in the future they might want to work in a cooking; perhaps even own a restaurant. This meant that their first two options were clear!

- 1) They spoke to their tutor about other options as they weren't sure what to do for their other choices. Their tutor advised them to focus on subjects they enjoyed at KS3 or new subjects that sounded interesting so they visited as many subjects as possible on options evening.
- 2) They were also very worried; what if they didn't get their first option (Hospitality and Catering). Their tutor pointed out that so long as the course was running they could almost guarantee their first choice as they'd pick it regardless of what it clashed with and make other compromises elsewhere, but that it was important to be open to a wide range of other subjects as their back-ups if this was the case.
- 3) They also knew that their second choice (Business Studies, for when they opened their own restaurant) could have Enterprise as a reserve and this would also help ensure that they got their most important subjects in the final choices.

Directed Curriculum Option	Personalised Curriculum Options		
	Additional GCSEs from:	GCSEs:	Vocational Courses:
Triple Science Computer Science History Geography Modern Foreign Languages	Triple Science Computer Science History Geography Modern Foreign Languages	Art and Design Business Graphic Design Music Drama Physical Education Psychology Fashion and Textile Design 3D Design	Hospitality and Catering Health and Social Care IT Enterprise and Marketing Sport Creative Media Travel and Tourism

Choices
Reserves

Student 10: The Gamer



This student wanted to be a games designer in the future. They were good at programming and enjoyed the challenges in Geek Club. They knew that Abingdon and Witney College offered apprenticeships in Games Development and thought that might be a good course for them after GCSEs. Until then they wanted to do courses that would build the skills they might need for a future in Games Design. Games Design is an exciting field in which to work.

1. They spoke to their Computing teacher who was enthusiastic about their plans. However, their teacher also pointed out that there were a lot of university courses with good links to employers across the country that would also allow them to become a Games Designer in the future. They encouraged them to select a good set of GCSEs that would keep all pathways open: AWC but also A-levels and University beyond.
2. They arranged for the student to speak to an A-level student who was going to university to study Animation and Game Design. They explained about the application process they had been and what they had talked about on their personal statement. They suggested Graphic Design as a good course and the student spoke to the teacher to find out more about it.

Directed Curriculum Option	Personalised Curriculum Options		
	Additional GCSEs from:	GCSEs:	Vocational Courses:
Triple Science Computer Science History Geography Modern Foreign Languages	Triple Science Computer Science History Geography Modern Foreign Languages	Art and Design Business Graphic Design Music Drama Physical Education Psychology Fashion and Textile Design 3D Design	Hospitality and Catering Health and Social Care IT Enterprise and Marketing Sport Creative Media Travel and Tourism

Choices
Reserves

The Essential Curriculum

The subjects on these pages are part of the Essential Curriculum and so all students must study them. However, the subject leads have provided an overview to help you understand what you will be learning as you embark upon your GCSEs

English Language

Director of Faculty: Ms S Butler

Specification: AQA

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

What will I study?

Paper 1: Shakespeare and the 19th Century novel

- Macbeth by William – Shakespeare
- A Christmas Carol – Charles Dickens

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

Director of Faculty: Ms S Atkey

Specification: Edexcel Mathematics A 1MA1

All students study Mathematics at GCSE. It is one of the fundamental subjects underpinning all sciences and technology. At John Mason we firmly believe a solid foundation in Mathematics is key to a happy, and successful future. As well as learning key mathematical concepts and techniques, students are given the opportunity within lessons to develop their mathematical problem-solving skills, communication, logical thinking and the ability to apply their knowledge to their other GCSE subjects and the real world. Our aim is to help build students' confidence in maths so that they can enjoy their maths education and reach their full potential.

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
- Apply the functional elements of mathematics in everyday and real-life situations

How will I be assessed?

Students will either sit the Higher (Grades 4-9) or the Foundation (Grades 1-5) tier; and sit three written papers at the end of the course

Each paper lasts (both Higher and Foundation) 1 hour 30 minutes

Each paper contains 80 marks

Papers 1F and 1H: Non-calculator,

Papers 2F, 3F and 2H, 3H Calculator allowed

Each paper assesses the functional elements of mathematics:

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

Mathematics papers contain all three 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 contexts (Percentage of final mark: 25% Foundation, 30% Higher)

Anything else that I need to know?

In Maths you will learn and develop problem solving and analytical skills that will help you to manage your finances, decorate your house and help you succeed in a wide range of careers from video game designer to forensic scientist.

Combined Science

Director of Faculty: Dr R Marsh

Specification: AQA Combined Science: Trilogy

Combined science allows you to gain two GCSEs in science and you will study each discipline (biology, chemistry and physics) but fewer topics than if you opt for Triple Science.

What will I be studying?

You will study biology, chemistry and physics to gain 2 science GCSE grades. The qualification will have a 9-point grading scale, from 9 (equivalent to A*) through to 1. You will be awarded 2 combined science grades.

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 and 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 15 minutes with foundation and higher tiers. Each paper has 70 marks. The marks are then combined and 2 grades awarded. 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.

Directed Curriculum Subjects

In order to achieve a full suite of qualifications you **must** select one of these subjects as part of your curriculum. Either:

- Triple Science
- History
- Geography
- Computer Science
- A Modern Foreign Language

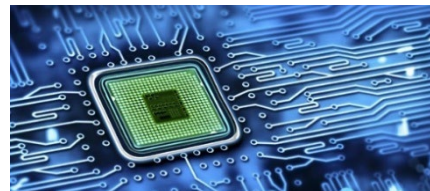
Remember that you can also choose these subjects as part of your Personalised Curriculum so if you want to do two or more of these subjects that is entirely possible.

Computer Science

Director of Faculty: Dr R Marsh

Subject Lead Teacher: Mr P Murcutt

Specification: OCR 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.

What careers can this lead to?

Studying GCSE Computer Science can open the door to many exciting careers. With these skills, you could become a game developer who designs and builds video games, a software engineer who creates apps and programs, or a cybersecurity analyst who protects people and organisations from online threats. You might also explore roles like data analyst, robotics technician, or web developer. Even if you do not pursue a technical job right away, the problem-solving and logical thinking you gain from computer science will be valuable in almost any future path.

Geography

Head of Geography: Mr A Conroy

Specification: AQA



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 to explore and make decisions about. Students will do 2 fieldworks at separate sites 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 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.

What careers can this lead to?

If you study Geography it can lead to a diverse range of careers in sectors including environmental management, urban planning, education, business, and data analysis, among many others. Some examples of careers in the field of geography include:

- Environmental Consultant/Scientist
- Urban/Town Planner
- Geographical Information Systems (GIS) Analyst
- Conservation Officer
- Transport Planner
- Surveyor
- Climatologist/Meteorologist
- Hydrologist

History

Head of History: Mr S Payne

Specification: Pearson Edexcel GCSE History

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 Britain today focusing on migration to the British Isles from the Vikings through to migration after World War 2. Also, students will look at **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?

- Migrants in Britain (800-Present)
- Weimar and Nazi Germany (1918-1939)
- Early Elizabethan England (1558-1588)
- The American West (1835-1895)

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 vast 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

What careers can this lead to?

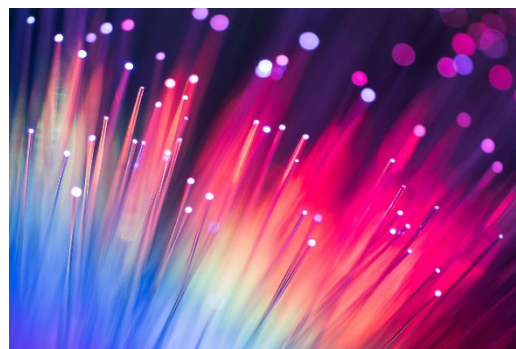
Studying History at GCSE can open the door to lots of interesting careers because it helps you understand people, events, and how the world works. With history, you could go on to become a lawyer, journalist, teacher, archivist, museum curator, or even work in politics or international relations. It also builds useful skills like researching, explaining ideas clearly, and thinking critically — abilities that are valued in almost any job. Even if you don’t want a history-focused career, the subject helps you become more aware of the world and better at making informed decisions.

Triple Science

Director of Faculty: Dr R Marsh

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 and atomic structure.

How will I be assessed?

Six exam papers altogether, two for each qualification: two biology, two chemistry and two physics.

All 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.

What careers can this lead to?

Studying Triple Science gives you a strong understanding of Biology, Chemistry, and Physics, which can open the door to lots of exciting careers. You could become a doctor, nurse, or dentist, working to help people stay healthy. If you enjoy experiments and research, you might explore becoming a scientist, chemist, or lab technician. Physics knowledge could lead you to engineering, astronomy, or working with new technologies. Even careers in environmental science, veterinary work, or pharmacy are possible. Basically, Triple Science keeps lots of options open for the future!



Modern Foreign Languages

French, German, Spanish

Director of Faculty: Mrs E Rowe

Specification: AQA Mandarin 8673, French 8652, German 8662, Spanish 8692

If you enjoy communicating with other people, finding out how language works and learning about different countries and cultures, studying GCSE 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: People and lifestyle.
- Theme 2: Popular culture.
- Theme 3: Communication and the world around us.

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	25% Oral exam conducted by teacher in April / May	25% Exam in June	25% Exam in June

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 10 - 15 minutes every night.
- You will be encouraged to take part in trips.

What careers can this lead to?

Choosing a language for GCSE offers a wide range of advantages. It develops valuable communication, problem-solving, and cultural awareness skills that are highly respected by employers and universities. Studying a language also enhances memory, creativity, and confidence. In terms of career pathways, it can open doors to roles in international business, tourism, translation, diplomacy, education, media, and many more professions that value global communication and cultural understanding.

For more information scan the QR below:



Personalised Curriculum Options Subjects:

GCSEs

Please remember that the following subjects can **also** be chosen for your personalised curriculum:

Triple Science
Modern Foreign Languages
Computer Science
History
Geography

So if you want to do more than one of these you can! In **addition** to these subjects, you may also choose from the GCSEs and Vocational courses listed in the next two sections

Art and Design

Director of Faculty: Ms C Pennington

Specification: Edexcel, 2FAO1 (Fine Art endorsed)

Art and Design will help you to acquire a broad set of transferable skills that can be applied to many areas of life and work. You will learn to communicate ideas visually and express yourself through a range of topics. It encourages creativity, imagination, and original thinking while strengthening problem-solving and critical analysis skills. Art and design subjects also promote perseverance, attention to detail, and adaptability through experimentation and feedback. The course will also enable you to continue to develop your practical skills learnt at KS3 and explore new approaches to thinking, creating and recording. These skills are valuable not only in creative industries but also in careers such as education, marketing, technology, and business.



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?

Equipment

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.

What careers can this lead to?

There are many careers in the field of Art and Design such as advertising, marketing, textile and interior design, product design, architecture, animation/film/CGI, fashion & makeup artistry, photography, illustration, publishing and media, museum, antiques and gallery curation. The careers inspiration display in the art block signposts extra inspiration.

Business Studies

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.

What careers can this lead to?

GCSE Business can lead to a variety of careers, including roles in marketing, finance, and human resources, or as a business analyst, a retail manager, or even setting up your own business. It provides foundational skills like problem-solving and financial awareness that are valuable in almost any industry. For further study, it can lead to Economics, or Finance, or apprenticeships in business administration and accounting.

Graphic Design

Director of Faculty: Ms C Pennington

Lead Teacher: Mr B Harrison

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



Why study Graphic Design?

Studying graphic design helps students develop a wide range of transferable skills that are valuable in many careers. It fosters creativity and innovation by encouraging original thinking and visual problem-solving. Students learn to communicate ideas clearly, collaborate effectively with others, and manage their time to meet deadlines. The discipline also builds attention to detail, adaptability to feedback, and technical proficiency with digital tools and software. 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, poster design, magazine layouts and book covers.

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 such as the Adobe suite** as well as **practical visual arts skills** in disciplines such as drawing, printing, collage 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?

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.

What careers can this lead to?

Studying Graphic Design helps you learn how to create images, layouts, and designs that communicate ideas in a clear and creative way. This can lead to careers like a graphic designer for websites, advertisements, or magazines, or a digital illustrator making art for books and games. You could also work in animation, branding, or marketing, helping companies look professional and eye-catching. The skills you learn in Graphic Design, like using design software and thinking creatively, are useful for lots of creative jobs in the arts and media.

Music

Head of Music: Mr S Spacksman

Specification: GCSE 9-1 Music (Eduqas)



Have you ever wondered what makes certain songs catchy, or quirky? Would you like to be able to analyse and study different music? Write and/or perform music to a high standard?

You will want to study this subject if you have a love of music in all its forms and want to broaden your horizons. You will have learnt much from your lessons in Key Stage 3 and want to take that on further. You **must** play an instrument or be learning an instrument as you start the GCSE (and preferably from when you select it as a GCSE).

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 have just taken up, 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 (Classical music) and music for ensemble (group performances).

How will I be assessed?

60% of your grade is coursework; Components 1 and 2, 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 – you can even beatbox or DJ! 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.

What careers can this lead to?

GCSE Music opens pathways into direct music careers (performer, composer, producer, teacher, conductor, music therapist, community musician), industry roles (artist management, A&R, promotion, live-event operations, publishing, radio/broadcast) and media-related jobs (music journalism, licensing, soundtrack work). It develops practical and technical musical skills (performance, composition, DAW and recording basics) alongside cognitive and workplace strengths such as creativity, teamwork, communication, organisation and resilience. Typical next steps include A level or BTEC Music, conservatoire or college courses, apprenticeships in music business or live events, graded exams and targeted work experience or internships to build a portfolio and professional contacts.

Drama

Director of Faculty: Mrs L Finnie

Specification: WJEC Eduqas - GCSE Drama

If you are choosing to study Drama, then you should be enthusiastic about performing in front of an audience and the design elements involved in creating a production. You can be entered as either an acting or design candidate (there must be enough actors in the class to allow for designers) for both Component 1 and 2. Experience of performing or being involved backstage in productions outside the classroom are beneficial but not essential. Drama is very collaborative, high attendance is crucial as you will be working in groups almost every lesson – whether it is learning new skills, developing performances or rehearsing and performing.



What will I be studying?

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

How will I be assessed?

You are assessed throughout both years of the course. By the end of Year 10 you will have completed Component 1 which is the devised performance, written coursework and evaluation. In Year 11, you will rehearse and perform your scripted pieces to a visiting examiner and then complete the written exam at the end of the year.

Component 1: Devising (40%)	Creating own performance using a variety of stimulus material. Stimulus is chosen by the exam board, this component is assessed by the teacher.
Component 2: Performance from Text (20%)	Performing two extracts in front of a visiting examiner from the exam board.
Component 3: Interpreting Theatre (40%) Section A: Set text Section B: Live Theatre	A written exam focused on extracts from a set text (Section A), this will be studied before the exam in lessons. A written review of a theatre show (Section B) seen by the students. Both completed in exam conditions. 1 hour 30 minutes.

Anything else I need to know?

The course requires a lot of commitment but is highly rewarding. You will get the chance to engage in a variety of practical styles and study a range of characters. Attendance is an important factor to the course as other students will be relying on you to be present in order to complete performance rehearsals, mainly due to the collaborative nature of the course content.

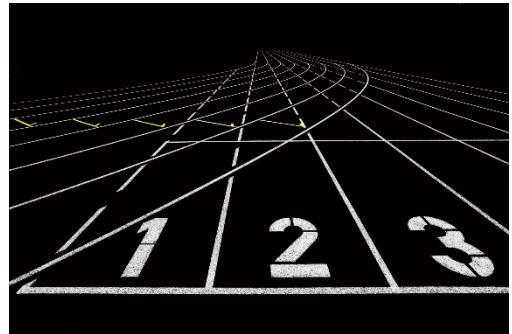
What careers can this lead to?

This would be an ideal course for anyone considering Drama A Level and maybe studying Drama beyond school. Studying GCSE Drama helps you build confidence, creativity, and teamwork—skills that are useful in almost any job, from teaching and law to healthcare and business. You'll learn how to communicate clearly, solve problems, and manage your time, all while having fun performing and working with others. Drama can also lead to exciting careers in acting, film, TV, education, therapy, and event planning. Plus, it looks great on your CV and helps you stand out when applying for college or future jobs, especially when combined with subjects like English or Media Studies.

Physical Education

Director of Faculty: Mr M Davies

Specification: AQA 8582



A course for sports enthusiasts which combines practical performance in 3 sports with theoretical aspects of sport, physical activity and exercise.

What will I be studying?

Theory 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 written exams 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. Students are assessed in three sporting activities which must be on the AQA specification. Alongside this, students complete a written coursework in a chosen sport.

Pathways After GCSE PE

A Level Physical Education – for those who want to explore sport, health, and fitness at a deeper level.

- BTEC Sport or Cambridge National in Sport – ideal for students who prefer practical and applied learning.
- Health and Social Care, Biology, Psychology, or Sociology – subjects that link closely with PE topics like the body, mind, and wellbeing.

Anything else I need to know?

You will be expected to always bring full school PE kit which consists of the following: black GCSE polo-shirt, black shorts, orange/ white socks and a change of footwear appropriate for the activity.

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

You can submit video evidence of sporting performance (from the specification) for moderation if you participate in an activity outside of school.

What careers can this lead to?

- Sports Coaching and Development
- Physiotherapy or Sports Rehabilitation
- PE Teaching or Sports Education
- Sports Science or Nutrition
- Fitness Training and Personal Training
- Sports Journalism or Media
- Event Management and Sports Business
- Armed Forces, Police, or Fire Service – where fitness and discipline are key

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.

What careers can this lead to?

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

Director of Faculty: Ms C Pennington

Lead Teacher: Ms T Herringshaw

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

Design subjects will help you to acquire a broad set of transferable skills that can be applied to many areas of life and work. You will learn to communicate ideas visually and work to briefs to meet objectives. It encourages creativity, imagination, and original thinking while strengthening problem-solving and critical analysis skills. Art and design subjects also promote perseverance, attention to detail, and adaptability through experimentation and feedback. The course will also enable you to continue to develop your practical skills learnt at KS3 and explore new approaches to thinking, creating and recording. These skills are valuable not only in creative industries but also in careers such as education, marketing, technology, and business.



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, upholstery, fashion illustration & design, fashion retail and marketing, style & trend analysis/blogs, fashion photography, historical textiles conservation, surface pattern and print design careers.

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 (stencilling, computer aided design)
- Fine Art Textiles (experimental effects)
- Dyed Textiles (batik, silk painting, dyeing processes)
- Fashion Textiles (basic pattern cutting, accessory design, costume design, fashion 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; a basic set of paints/brushes for designing will

be valuable to have at home too. All other key materials are provided, but occasionally students may be required to contribute to some material costs depending on their design.

What careers can this lead to?

Studying Fashion and Textile Design helps you learn how to create clothing, accessories, and textile products while developing your creativity and design skills. This can lead to careers like fashion designer, costume designer, or textile artist. You could also work in fashion buying, styling, or trend forecasting, helping decide what clothes and fabrics people will wear. The course also teaches practical skills like sewing, drawing, and using design software, which are useful for lots of creative jobs in the fashion and design industry.

3D Design

Director of Faculty: Ms C Pennington

Lead Teacher: Mrs J Pritchard

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



Design subjects will help you to acquire a broad set of transferable skills that can be applied to many areas of life and work. You will learn to communicate ideas visually and work to briefs to meet objectives. They encourage creativity, imagination, and original thinking while strengthening problem-solving and critical analysis skills. Art and design subjects also promote perseverance, attention to detail, and adaptability through experimentation and feedback. The course will also enable you to continue to develop your practical skills learnt at KS3 and explore new approaches to thinking, creating and recording. These skills are valuable not only in creative industries but also in careers such as education, marketing, technology, and business.

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. 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, furniture & interior design, jewellery design, theatre set & prop 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, laser cutting)
- Product Design (Drawing, Digital drawing, functionality - working with card, metal, wood, electronics, plastics)

Project respond to specific briefs whilst learning about different processes and techniques. Designers' work will be studied to influence variety and exposure to design styles. 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.

What careers can this lead to?

Studying 3D Design teaches you how to create models, products, and structures in three dimensions, using materials, tools, and digital design software. This can lead to careers like product designer, industrial designer, or architect, where you design objects, furniture, or buildings. You could also work in set design, jewellery design, or even animation and game design, turning ideas into real or virtual creations. The skills you learn, like problem-solving, creativity, and technical drawing, are useful in lots of jobs that combine art, engineering, and innovation.

Personalised Curriculum Options Subjects: Vocational Courses

Please note that the following combinations are not permitted because of overlap between the courses:

Business Studies GCSE **and** Enterprise and Marketing Level 2

Computer Science **and** IT

PE GCSE **and** BTEC in Sport

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 vocational style course. This 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.

Studying hospitality and catering helps students develop a variety of transferable skills that are valuable in many careers. It builds communication and teamwork abilities through learning to manage time effectively, stay organised, and work efficiently under pressure. The course also develops problem-solving skills, attention to detail, and teaches understanding of customer service. These skills are useful not only in the hospitality industry but also in areas such as event management, retail, healthcare, and business.

What will I be studying?

You will learn about the hospitality and catering industry, the types of hospitality and catering providers and about working in the industry. You will learn about health and safety, and food safety in hospitality and catering, as well as food related causes of ill health.

You will learn about the importance of nutrition and how cooking methods can impact on nutritional value. You will learn how to plan nutritious menus as well as factors that affect menu planning. You will learn the skills and techniques needed to prepare, cook and present dishes as well as learning how to review your work effectively.

How will I be assessed?

Unit 1—40% of grade = Written paper (80 marks), taken in June of Year 11

An externally set 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

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 3-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.

What skills will I develop?

Communication
Confidence
Learning independently
Organisation
Problem solving

Research
Self-discipline
Stamina
Taking on responsibility
Time management

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 to adequately 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.

What careers can this lead to?

Studying Hospitality and Catering Level 2 teaches you how to prepare, cook, and serve food, as well as how restaurants, hotels, and other hospitality businesses operate. This can lead to careers like chef, pastry chef, catering manager, or restaurant supervisor. You could also work in event planning, hotel management, or food service roles in schools, hospitals, or hotels. The course gives you practical cooking skills, teamwork experience, and knowledge of health and safety, which are useful for many jobs in the food and hospitality industry.

Progression opportunities

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

Health and Social Care

Lead teacher: Mrs 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.

What will I be studying?

Mandatory units

R032: Principles of care in health and social care

In this unit, students will learn about the importance of the rights of service users, person-centred values and how to apply them.

Students will also learn about the importance of effective communication skills when providing care and support for individuals using care settings and the procedures and measures used to protect service users and service providers such as safeguarding, hygiene and security.

R033: Supporting individuals through life events

In this unit, students will learn about life stages and the factors that affect them. They will understand expected and unexpected life events and the impact they will have on physical, social/emotional and socio-economic aspects in an individual's life.

Students will research the service providers and practitioners that can support individuals, recommend support and justify how this will meet the needs of a specific individual.

Optional unit- 1 of the following selected by staff

R034: Creative and therapeutic activities

In this unit, students will learn about a range of creative activities and therapies that are available in health or social care and understand the physical, intellectual, emotional and social benefits of these.

Students will learn how to plan and deliver a creative activity with an individual or group and evaluate their planning and delivery

R035: Health promotion campaigns

In this unit, students will have the opportunity to explore the various public health challenges the country faces, the approaches used to encourage health and wellbeing and the importance of this to society. They will understand the factors affecting a healthy lifestyle so that campaigns can be designed to target different groups of people.

Students will also learn how to plan and deliver their own small-scale health promotion campaign and how to evaluate their planning and delivery.

How will I be assessed?

R032- assessed via an exam

R033- assessed via a set assignment

R034/R035- assessed via a set assignment

Anything else I need to know?

All results are awarded on the following scale:

- Distinction* at Level 2 (*2)
- Distinction at Level 2 (D2)
- Merit at Level 2 (M2)
- Pass at Level 2 (P2)
- Distinction at Level 1 (D1)
- Merit at Level 1 (M1)
- Pass at Level 1 (P1).

What careers can this lead to?

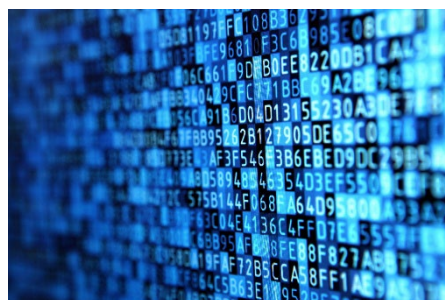
Studying Health and Social Care gives you knowledge about how to support people's health, wellbeing, and daily lives. This can lead to careers like nursing, care work, or working with children or older people in care homes. You could also work in social work, helping families and communities, or in roles like healthcare administration and support services in hospitals or clinics. The course teaches you important skills like communication, teamwork, and understanding people's needs, which are useful in many jobs that make a real difference to others' lives.

IT

Director of Faculty: Dr R Marsh

Subject Lead Teacher: Mr P Murcutt

Specification: WJEC Level 1/2 Vocational Award ICT
(Technical Award)



The Vocational Award (Technical Award) 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 working knowledge of databases, spreadsheets, automated documents, and images. Students investigate how IT is used in a range of contexts, including business and organisations, education, and homes. Students will also explore the wide range of hardware, applications, and specialist software in society.

- **Unit 1: ICT in Society**

48 learning hours, followed by an assessment task (1 hour 20 minutes) which will be sent away for external marking.

- **Unit 2: ICT in Context**

36 learning hours, followed by a project, which will be assessed in school by your teacher.

How will I be assessed?

Assessment for the four units is as follows:

1. Unit 1: ICT in Society – externally assessed exam (40% of the course)
2. Unit 2: ICT in Context – internally assessed coursework (60% 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 the use of IT, an area currently experiencing a major skills shortage.

What careers can this lead to?

Studying the IT Technical Award gives you practical skills in technology and computing, which can lead to lots of interesting careers. You could become a software developer, creating apps or games, or a network technician, keeping computer systems running smoothly. Cybersecurity is another option, protecting data and systems from hackers. You might also work in IT support, helping people solve tech problems, or go into web design, making websites look great and work well. This course gives you hands-on experience that is useful for lots of jobs in the growing world of technology.

Enterprise and Marketing

Subject lead teacher: Mr G Rodwell

Planned Specification: OCR J837

This subject cannot be taken alongside Business Studies GCSE.



The Cambridge National in Enterprise and Marketing is a Level 2 qualification which focuses on helping students develop skills around business management. It focuses on C21st business skills including managing small businesses; e-marketing; creative enterprises and design pitches. The course focuses on developing the practical skills required to run a business, in contrast to the more academic analysis of the Business Studies course. Key skills developed during the course include:

- Communication and presentation (including digital presentations)
- Research
- Problem solving
- Planning and delivery
- Creative thinking

What will I be studying?

The course is designed for students who wish to develop their practical skills in enterprise and marketing. Perhaps in the future you want to be your own boss running a business and keeping the profits for yourself. What field would interest you? health and beauty? plumbing or electrical? online services or sales? Whatever your business, there are certain skills you will need and in this course, you will study these. Topics include:

- Designing a business proposal: identifying risk and reward; pitching a business proposal; financial planning.
- Marketing: market research; develop a promotional campaign; e-marketing.
- Building a brand: brand identity; building a customer profile; targeted marketing.

How will I be assessed?

Practical assessment tasks (60%): Over the two years you will complete a series of tasks which will add up to 60% of your final mark. These include:

- Developing a brand identity to target a specific customer profile.
- Create a promotional campaign
- Plan and pitch a proposal
- Review a proposal

Exam (40%): At the end of the course you will be examined on key concepts and ideas. This exam is worth 40% of the course.

Anything else I need to know?

This course is designed for those who want to acquire practical experience of preparing to run a business. It will involve presenting your ideas to a group at various times and to different audiences. Your teacher will support you with developing your skills and confidence to do this. Like any Level 2 course there is an exam and core content and concepts you have to learn throughout the course. Learning will focus on practical and real-world application of skills relevant to running a business including: research, creative thinking, group work, planning and organisation and digital presentation.

What careers can this lead to?

Studying Enterprise and Marketing teaches you how businesses work, how to promote products, and how to develop ideas into real projects. This can lead to careers like marketing assistant, social media manager, sales executive, or business entrepreneur. You could also work in advertising, public relations, or event management, helping companies reach customers and grow their brand. The course gives you skills in teamwork, communication, and problem-solving, which are useful in lots of business and creative jobs.

BTEC Tech Award in Sport

Subject lead teacher: Mr G Borja

Title: Pearson BTEC Level 1/ Level 2 Tech Award in Sport

Qualification number: 603/7068/3

NOTE: This subject **cannot** be taken alongside PE GCSE



The BTEC Tech Award in Sport qualification is a vocational course designed to prepare people to work in the sports industry. Although content overlaps with the GCSE PE it has a focus on practical and real-world applications of knowledge with a career-focused approach. As with GCSE PE there will be a mixture of classroom and practical lessons.

Potential future career opportunities include:

Professional Sport: Performer/player, fitness coach, sports coach, exercise & sport scientists, dietitian, sport development officer, catering manager, assistant coach and youth team coach.

Health: Sports therapist, sports massage.

Fitness: Gym manager, personal trainer, yoga instructor, fitness instructor, professional fitness coach.

Teaching & Public Services: Primary school teacher, secondary school PE teacher, sports coach.

Leisure: Swimming teacher, lifeguarding, leisure centre management, outdoor activities instructor.

What will I be studying?

This qualification aims to:

- Focus on developing sport sector specific knowledge
- Explore different types of sport providers as well as the equipment and technology available
- Understand individuals differing needs, how to increase participation, whilst gaining a basic understanding anatomy and physiology

The objectives of this qualification are to:

- Get a taste of what the sporting sector is like
- Gain transferable skills and confidence to help in the modern world
- Receive an introduction to vocational study
- Build applied knowledge and skills that show an aptitude for further learning, both in sector and more widely

How will I be assessed?

The course assessment will be based on 3 major components

Component 1: Preparing participants to take part in sport and physical activity	Component 2: Taking part and improving other participants' sporting performance	Component 3: Developing fitness to improve other participants' performance in sport and physical
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 30%• internal controlled assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 30%• internal controlled assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 40%• External synoptic exam

What careers can this lead to?

Studying Sport BTEC helps you learn about fitness, training, sports performance, and how the body works during exercise. This can lead to careers like sports coach, fitness instructor, PE teacher, or personal trainer. You could also work in sports therapy, physiotherapy, sports psychology, or even sports management, helping organise events and clubs. The course teaches teamwork, communication, and leadership skills, which are valuable in many sports-related jobs and other careers too.

Creative Media

Subject lead teacher 2025-27: Mrs T Herringshaw

Planned Specification: Pearson BTEC Level 1/2



What will I be studying?

Students taking the Pearson BTEC in Creative Media explore how media products are planned, created, and distributed across areas like film, television, radio, digital design, animation, games, and online content. They learn practical production skills—such as scripting, storyboarding, filming, editing, sound design, and graphic design—while also developing an understanding of audiences, media industries, and communication techniques. The course blends hands-on project work with theoretical knowledge, helping students build a professional portfolio and prepare for further study or careers in the creative media sector.

How will I be assessed?

Internal assessment tasks (60%): Over the 2 years of the GCSE students will complete two extended projects which will form the majority of the assessment.

1: Exploring Media Products (30%) – in this project you will investigate how media products are created for specific audiences and purposes and look at different types of media (still, moving image, interactive) to see how they are adapted for different goals.

2: Developing Media Skills (30%) - this component focuses on practical production skills and techniques and you will develop a specific product such as an advert, app or film. You will develop production skills that range across media during this unit, but you will specialise in a specific medium such as print media.

Externally set assessment task (40%): At the end of the course students will complete an external assessment in which they are required to create a media product in response to a client's brief. For example, you may be asked to create a media campaign for a charity to promote volunteering among young people (sample assessment 2022).

Anything else I need to know?

Studying a Creative Media Production BTEC gives students hands-on experience creating some of the following media products: films, podcasts, websites, games, and other media. The course helps them to develop practical, industry-relevant skills like editing, design, project management, and teamwork. It builds a strong portfolio of work, supports different learning styles, and emphasizes real-world, workplace-style projects, making it ideal for students who thrive in practical, creative environments. With mostly coursework-based assessment, it fosters transferable skills—creativity, communication, organisation, and digital literacy—while opening clear pathways to university, apprenticeships, or entry-level roles in the creative industries.

What careers can this lead to?

Creative and media industries are a major UK employment sector with a diverse range of future job opportunities. Studying Creative Media Production teaches you how to create videos, audio, graphics, and digital content, as well as how media projects are planned and produced. This can lead to careers like video editor, content creator, photographer, or media production assistant. You could also work in TV, film, advertising, social media, or gaming, helping to make creative ideas come to life. The course gives you practical skills in technology, teamwork, and project management, which are useful in many creative industries. If you are interested in a future in the media speak to Mrs Gibson early on in your course for support finding work experience in a relevant setting.

BTEC Travel and Tourism

Subject lead teacher 2025-27: Mr MacEntee-Creighton

Planned Specification: Pearson, BTEC Travel and Tourism, 603/7048/8



The travel and tourism sector is the UK's third-largest employer, accounting for 9.5% of total employment. Tourism is one of the fastest-growing sectors in the UK in employment terms, employing nearly 3 million people, and the value of tourism to the UK economy is approximately £121 billion (7.1 per cent) of UK GDP. In 2016, travel and tourism contributed 10.2 per cent of the world GDP, and the sector now supports 292 million people in employment – that's one in ten jobs worldwide. Jobs in this sector are varied and can involve travel all over the world. It is an exciting field of employment and of study and this course is designed to prepare you for a possible future in the travel and tourism industry.

What will I be studying?

The course focuses on the knowledge and skills that allow students to excel when working in this sector. It includes units on:

- processes and attitudes in the sector such as the appeal of different tourist destinations to different types of customer
- factors that influence travel and tourism
- skills such as researching different travel and tourism organisations, the features of tourist destinations, and the products and services available to meet the needs of different customers
- attitudes that are considered to be very important in the travel and tourism sector, including how to develop tourism while respecting the environment and local communities; complete market research for a new tourist venue;

How will I be assessed?

Practical assessment tasks (60%): Over the two years you will complete a series of tasks which will add up to 60% of your final mark. New tasks are set each year but they will focus on practical application of the skills and knowledge acquired during the course. For example, students have been asked to research and produce a report on a tour operator; plan a suitable tour for their chosen operator to offer and present on this; explore how technology is being used to improve the passenger experience in airports; prepare a visitor profile for a particular destination; prepare a travel route suitable to a particular customer profile; prepare a travel plan for a particular customer profile e.g. a family of four. Each task is designed to give and assess practical skills that would be of use working in this field.

Exam (40%): At the end of the course you will be examined on key concepts and ideas. This exam is worth 40% of the course.

Anything else I need to know?

This course complements the learning in our GCSE Geography and GCSE Business courses by broadening your experience and skills participation in different contexts, with the opportunity to practically apply your knowledge and skills through project work such as investigating different travel and tourism organisations, how they identify trends and customer needs to provide products and services, the factors influencing tourism, and the impact of tourism on destinations.

What careers can this lead to?

Studying BTEC Travel and Tourism teaches you about how the travel industry works, including planning trips, customer service, and different types of tourism. This can lead to careers like travel agent, tour guide, airline or cruise ship staff, or event and hospitality manager. You could also work in hotel management, tourism marketing, or in visitor attractions, helping people plan and enjoy their holidays. The course gives you practical skills in communication, organisation, and teamwork, which are useful in many jobs in the travel and tourism industry. If you are interested in a future in travel and tourism you may also want to look carefully at language courses, as a basic grasp of a modern language can significantly boost your pay in this field.

Your Notes

This section is for you to make notes only. To make your choices, you MUST complete the Google form with your initial preferences and the 'Final choices' form in February.

Examined Curriculum	Enriched Curriculum
English Language: 1 GCSE English Literature: 1 GCSE Mathematics: 1 GCSE Combined Science: 2 GCSEs	Core PE Personal Development Religious Studies

Directed Curriculum Option
1 GCSE from: Triple Science Computer Science History Geography Modern Foreign Languages

Personalised Curriculum Options		
Additional GCSEs from:	GCSEs:	Vocational Courses:
Triple Science Computer Science History Geography Modern Foreign Languages	Art and Design Business Graphic Design Music Drama Physical Education Psychology Fashion and Textile Design 3D Design	Hospitality and Catering Health and Social Care IT Enterprise and Marketing Sport Creative Media Travel and Tourism

Your Choices		
Directed Curriculum Option	Personalised Curriculum Preferences	Personalised Curriculum Reserves
	1	1
	2	2
	3	3

Appendix 1: What do the Qualifications mean?

A qualification is intended as a measure to show employers, teachers and learners what someone has learnt and can do. There are many qualifications available, and it can be difficult to compare them so the **QCF** (Qualifications and Credit Framework) has set out 9 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 for future courses or jobs and helps employers and further education providers assess the level of qualifications a candidate has.

Qualifications are best understood by their level of difficulty, size and their content. Each accredited qualification has a level matched to the qualification's framework. The QCF levels provide 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.

QCF 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) • AQA Unit awards • 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 • 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 • 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.