

# The Magna Carta School



## KS4 Options Information Booklet 2025



# The beginning of Key Stage 4

Our core belief that 'learning shapes lives' is at the heart of everything we do. We are unwavering in our commitment to deliver academic excellence and rich experiences so that students can flourish, be happy and make a positive difference in the world.

**"Educating the mind without educating the heart is no education at all." (Aristotle)**



As such the choices made in Year 9 as children move forward in to Years 10 and 11 (Key Stage 4) are the basis from which we know our students will make excellent progress and be successful beyond their time at Magna.

Our rigorous, knowledge-rich curriculum has been expertly designed and inspires curiosity in students as soon as they start the next part of their learning journey. We instil a passion for learning and never stop encouraging our students to believe in their ability and strive to be the best version of themselves. This, of course, in this phase of school life leads to results in the summer of 2027 that will allow your child to take the next steps beyond life at Magna.

Making options choices is an exciting but sometimes overwhelming experience and here at Magna we want to support children and their families to make the best possible decisions. The good news is whatever children choose at this stage will keep lots of future routes open to them. I always recommend that children choose subjects they are excited by and love doing. These invariably become the subjects that children perform best in. As you read through the options booklet think about what you enjoy, what you are interested in, and where you can see yourself being successful.

I hope you find this booklet and our options evening useful. I look forward to watching the Year 9 students grow into young adults in the next phase of their school life, and I wish them lots of success for their KS4 courses in the future.



Craig Adams  
Principal

# KS4 Options Key Dates

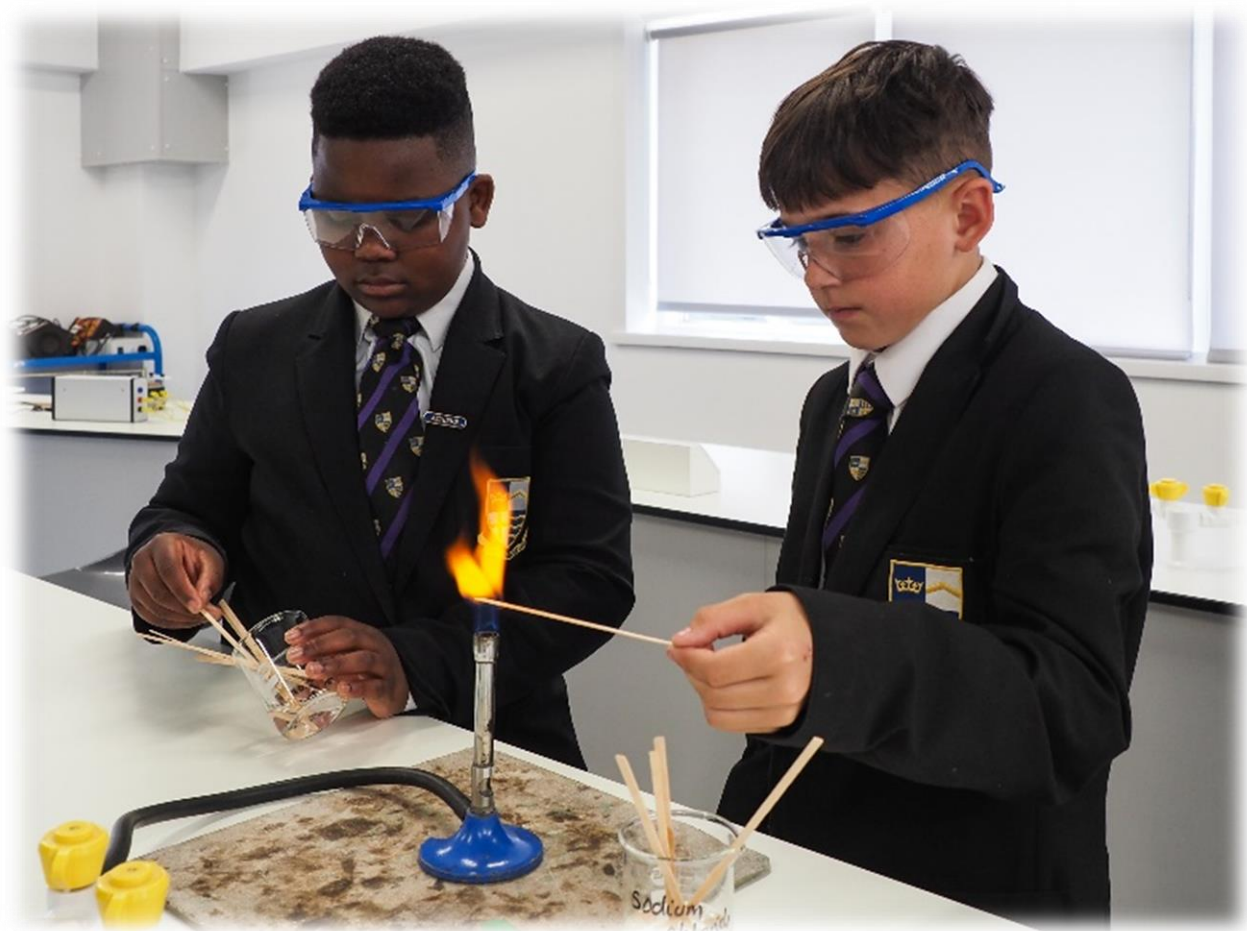
**Options Assembly for students 22/1/2025**

**Options Evening (in person) 22/1/2025 4.00-6.00pm**

**Parents' evening (online) 28/1/2025 4.00-7.00pm**

**Options form to be emailed to parents 29/1/2025**

**Options form to submitted to school 7/2/2025**



# KS4 Curriculum:

Beginning Key Stage 4 courses is significant moment in school life for our students. After two years of studying these courses students will leave the school to go to a sixth form, a college, apprenticeships or even the world of work. We want students to get the best possible outcomes at KS4 to ensure they are able to move on to the next steps of their choosing.

We believe that everyone at our school can succeed and develop. We will all strive to ensure that all pupils, regardless of background and prior attainment and performance, have the opportunity to progress. We will do this through the excellent planning and organisation of our curriculum both in and beyond the classroom. We will sequence learning effectively and provide clear moments to provide meaningful feedback and allow students time and opportunity to act on our feedback in order to maximise its impact. In order to prepare our students for the next stage of their education beyond Magna and to support the best possible outcomes at KS4 we offer a broad and balanced curriculum that offers provides all students a foundation for the next stage as well as offering students chance to specialise and choose some subjects.

Our core curriculum at the Magna Carta School is as follows. All students will study:

- **English** -split into 2 separate GCSEs- English Literature and English Language
- **Maths**- 1 GCSE
- **Science** -students will either study biology chemistry and physics. Depending on prior attainment they will either be entered for either separate sciences (3 GCSEs) or combined science (2 GCSEs)
- **Physical Education** -non-examined
- **Personal Social and Health Education** -non-examined
- **Religious Studies**- non examined

In addition to the core curriculum students can choose **3 other subjects** to study along side these. This means most students will achieve either 8 or 9 qualifications at the end of Year 11.

We strongly encourage students to select history or geography **and** a modern foreign language. We expect all students to do at least these subjects. Students who do both a humanities subject (geography or history) and a language (French or Spanish) complete the English Baccalaureate (Ebacc). This route provides students the breadth and depth to continue study a range of subjects beyond KS4 and KS5. The Ebacc is recognised by universities as a measure of academic ability and will become increasingly important in a competitive market for university places. Having studied both a language and a humanities subject at GCSE will demonstrate that you have the academic ability, skills and resilience needed for the best university places and professional careers.

As part of this open curriculum students can choose from the following subjects-

GCSE Art	BTEC Hospitality and Catering
GCSE Business Studies	GCSE Music
GCSE Computer Science	GCSE Physical Education (PE)
BTEC Construction	GCSE Psychology
GCSE Design Technology	GCSE Religious Studies (separate to core RS)
GCSE Drama	GCSE Sociology
GCSE French (if studied at KS3)	GCSE Spanish (if studied at KS3)
GCSE Geography	BTEC Sport
GCSE History	

# Making your choices:

**When selecting your options you must also choose alternatives. These should be other subjects you would be happy to study as it may not be possible to get your first 3 choices.**

As much as the choices are for the student, it is essential that they discuss their decisions with their family and teachers and as many other people as possible. It is important that students take subjects which they enjoy and will be successful in. Whilst it is good to consider choices in relation to future careers, it shouldn't dictate every decision at this stage. If students have a very firm idea of what they would like to do, it is worth them researching careers and university courses - sometimes what they think they need is not essential - for example, Business Studies will teach you a lot about the world and how businesses operate, but you don't necessarily need the subject to run your own business or even study the subject at university.

**All our options subjects are offered in good faith, however, all subjects require a minimum take up for them to be viable and if not enough students select a particular subject we may not be able to run it**

If we need to change your options we will discuss this with you first and you will have a chance to make changes if you need to.

Some students will be offered a reduced number of courses where we feel time may be better spent supporting progress in the core curriculum. This will be discussed with individual students and families on a one to one basis.

Students at the start of Year 10 will have a 2 week period where changes may be considered. These requests will be reviewed by Year Team Lead and Vice Principal for Quality of Education will be discussed with the family.

If a child like to complete a heritage language GCSE, for example in Arabic or Polish, the school will support them being entered as a candidate. This will not form part of their options but should this be of interest please speak to the Curriculum Team Leader of MFL at the start of Year 10.

# The Core Curriculum:

In addition to the GCSE English, Maths and Science all students will take part in Physical Education (PE) Lessons, Personal Social and Health Education (PSHE) and Religious Studies (RS). At Magna Carta we believe that “Educating the mind without educating the heart is no education at all.” We will ensure appropriate breadth to our school curriculum and a wide range of opportunities beyond the classroom, including school productions, sports fixtures, music lessons, clubs, and duke of Edinburgh make significant contributions to childrens’ overall education.

## PE

We aim to broaden our students’ experience and continue to develop their knowledge and skills they have gained during Key Stage 3 to refine their techniques and choose a sport or activity they can pursue beyond secondary school. Leadership and independence are two of the important skills that students will use as they study a range of traditional, alternative and health-based activities intended to develop personal fitness and promote an active, healthy lifestyle. Students will further develop their resilience, build their self-esteem, further progress their teamwork and practical skills. They will have a greater understanding and knowledge on the key elements of health and well-being and we will enable students to continue to experience competitive situations to improve and build on their tactical knowledge and techniques in a sporting environment. The aims of further participation in sports beyond school, leadership and raising levels of fitness will be promoted throughout the key stage.

## PSHE

PSHE plays a crucial role in the development of students in Years 10 and 11, as they are transitioning into young adulthood and preparing for life beyond school. By fostering personal growth, responsibility, and resilience, PSHE ensures students are equipped not only to succeed academically but also to thrive personally and socially as they step into adulthood.

Some of the topics studied include the following:

- Financial Literacy –budgeting, saving, managing debt, and understanding taxes, equipping students with the knowledge to navigate financial responsibilities.
- Healthy Relationships –consent, respect, and managing relationships.
- Awareness of Social Issues – Students learn about cultural awareness and the understanding of diversity and inclusivity, preparing students to live in a diverse world.
- Career Planning and Aspirations - exploring career options, understanding pathways, and setting realistic goals for their future. They also learn about workplace skills which introduces students to the importance of teamwork, adaptability and time management in professional settings.

## RS

We believe that learning about religions s in UK schools is crucial in fostering understanding and harmony within the country’s vibrant, multi-faith society. The UK is home to people from diverse religious and cultural backgrounds, and religious studies provide students with the knowledge to appreciate and respect this diversity. By exploring the beliefs, practices, and traditions of various faiths, our students can develop empathy and challenge stereotypes. As well as learning about the ideas of others Religious Studies encourage students to think critically about their own values and beliefs. This exploration helps them form a deeper understanding of their identity and worldview while nurturing open-mindedness toward others. We aim to develop respectful dialogue and equip students with the skills to engage constructively in diverse society. Our lessons help prepare students to navigate a globalised world where cultural sensitivity and mutual respect are vital.



# The Core Curriculum: English Literature and English Language

## Course Info:

Exam Board: AQA

Qualification: 2 GCSEs (English Language and English Literature)

Specification: [AQA | Subjects | English](#)

## Assessment

Language Papers	Literature Papers	Speaking and Listening
Language Paper 1: 8700/1 Explorations in Creative reading and writing Written exam: 1 hour 45 minutes	Literature Paper 1: 8702/1 Shakespeare and the Nineteenth Century Novel Written exam: 1 hour 45 minutes	Non-examined component
Language Paper 2: 8700/2 Writer's viewpoints and perspectives Written exam: 1 hour 45 minutes	Literature Paper 2: 8702/2 Modern Text and Poetry Written exam: 2 hours 15 minutes	

## Course Content

- Language Paper 1: Explorations in Creative reading and writing  
In Section A, you will be reading an insert on fiction to answer questions on language, structure and evaluation. In Section B, you will be writing a descriptive or narrative response.
- Language Paper 2: Writer's viewpoints and perspectives  
In Section A, you will be given two inserts on non-fiction to make inferences, comparisons and language analysis. These inserts would be any sort of non-fiction text e.g. (auto)biography, letter, or diary entry. In Section B, you will be expected to write a non-fiction piece of creative writing such as an article, letter or a speech.
- Literature Paper 1: Shakespeare and the Nineteenth Century Novel  
In this paper, you are expected to write an essay style response on each: Macbeth, A Christmas Carol.
- Literature Paper 2: Modern Text and Poetry  
This paper contains the following: An Inspector Call (play); Power and Conflict anthology – 15 poems; Unseen poetry.
- Speaking and Listening  
This endorsement is rewarded as a separate grade (Pass, Merit, Distinction) and will not contribute to the result of the GCSE English Language qualification.

## GCSE English:

English is a core subject that plays a crucial role in students' overall education and future opportunities. Passing GCSE English is not just a requirement for many college courses, apprenticeships, and jobs, but it also develops essential skills like communication, critical thinking, and analysis, which are valuable across all subjects. The ability to write clearly, structure arguments, and interpret information benefits subjects like History, Geography, and Science, where these skills are key. Beyond GCSEs, a strong foundation in English is important for degrees in fields such as Law, Journalism, Education, and Business, as well in any career that requires effective communication and problem-solving.

Reading is at the heart of English, as it builds vocabulary, enhances critical thinking, and deepens understanding of the world. In our department, we give students the opportunity to read a wide range of challenging texts from classic literature to modern works, and make effective use of library to foster a love of reading.



# The Core Curriculum: Maths

## Course Info

Exam Board: Edexcel

Qualification: GCSE

Specifications: [Specification: Level 1/2 GCSE \(9-1\) in Mathematics](#)

## Assessment

Paper 1 Non-calculator	Paper 2 Calculator	Paper 3 Calculator
Written Exam at the end of year 11 - 1 hour and 30minutes 80 marks 33% of GCSE	Written Exam at the end of year 11 - 1 hour and 30minutes 80 marks 33% of GCSE	Written Exam at the end of year 11 - 1 hour and 30minutes 80 marks 33% of GCSE

## Course Content

- **Number** - Calculations, Rounding, Indices, Roots, Standard Form and Surds, Fractions, Multiplicative Reasoning, Percentages, Ratio and Proportions, Direct and Inverse Proportion.
- **Algebra** – Expressions, Solving Equations, Sequences, Solving quadratic and Simultaneous Equations, Inequalities, Linear, Quadratic, Cubic and Other Graphs.
- **Shapes** – Polygons, Angles and Parallel Lines, Pythagoras Theorem and Trigonometry, Perimeter, Area and Circles, 3D Forms and Volumes, Cylinders, Cones and Spheres, Accuracy and Bonds, Transformations, Constructions, Loci and Bearings, Similarity and Congruency in 2D and 3D, Graphs of Trigonometric Functions, Further Trigonometry, Circle Theorems, Vectors and Geometric Proofs.
- **Statistics and Probability** – Averages and Range, Representing and Interpreting Data, Scatter Graphs, Probability, Cumulative Frequency, Box Plots and Histograms

## GCSE Maths:

Mathematics teaches students how to think critically and solve problems. Whether working through equations or real-life situations, students learn to approach challenges methodically and logically, skills that are transferable to virtually every other field. Mathematics is the foundation for many other disciplines, including physics, engineering, computer science, economics, and even social sciences. A strong understanding of math opens the door to success in these fields, which often rely on mathematical principles. Many high-paying and in-demand careers require a solid grasp of mathematics. Professions such as engineering, data science, finance, software development, actuarial science, and more all need individuals who are skilled in mathematics. The demand for STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) professionals is continually growing.

Although mathematics is often associated with logic and structure, it also requires creativity. Solving complex problems may require creative thinking, discovering patterns, or applying mathematical principles in new ways. This combination of creativity and logic can be intellectually rewarding.

From budgeting and managing finances to calculating distances and time, mathematical concepts are used every day. Students who understand math are more likely to make better financial decisions, interpret data correctly, and navigate the world effectively.



# The Core Curriculum: Science

## Course Info

Exam Board: AQA

Qualification: Combined Science: 2 GCSE Triple science 3 GCSE's

**Specification:** [Combined Science](#) Triple Science: [Biology](#), [Chemistry](#) and [Physics](#)

## Assessment

**All students will undertake six exams in total. (2 X Biology, 2 X chemistry and 2 X Physics)**

Combined science	Biology (Paper 1 and Paper 2)	Chemistry (Paper 1 and Paper 2)	Physics (Paper 1 and Paper 2)
2 papers per subject	Written exam: 1 hour 15 minutes	Written exam: 1 hour 15 minutes	Written exam: 1 hour 15 minutes
2 GCSEs awarded	Foundation and Higher Tier 70 marks 16.7% of GCSE	Foundation and Higher Tier 70 marks 16.7% of GCSE	Foundation and Higher Tier 70 marks 16.7% of GCSE

Triple science	Biology (Paper 1 and Paper 2)	Chemistry (Paper 1 and Paper 2)	Physics (Paper 1 and Paper 2)
2 papers per subject	Written exam: 1 hour 45 minutes	Written exam: 1 hour 45 minutes	Written exam: 1 hour 45 minutes
3 GCSEs awarded	Higher Tier 100 marks 50% of GCSE	Higher Tier 100 marks 50% of GCSE	Higher Tier 100 marks 50% of GCSE

## Course Content

- Biology Paper 1: Cell Biology; Organisation; Infection and response; and Bioenergetics
- Biology Paper 2: Homeostasis and response; Inheritance, variation and evolution; and Ecology
- Chemistry Paper 1: Atomic structure and the periodic table; Bonding, structure, and the properties of matter; Quantitative chemistry; Chemical changes; and Energy changes.
- Chemistry Paper 2: The rate and extent of chemical change; Organic chemistry; Chemical analysis; Chemistry of the atmosphere; and Using resources. Questions in Paper 2 may draw on fundamental concepts and principles from Sections 5.1 to 5.3.
- Physics Paper 1: Energy; Electricity; Particle model of matter; and Atomic structure
- Physics Paper 2: Forces; Waves; and Magnetism and electromagnetism

## GCSE Science:

Pursuing GCSE Science offers numerous benefits from fostering curiosity and a deeper understanding of the natural world, encouraging students to think critically and solve problems. This foundation is crucial for post-16 qualifications, such as A-levels or vocational courses, where a solid grasp of scientific principles is often required. Additionally, the skills developed during GCSE Science, such as analytical thinking, data interpretation, and practical experimentation, are highly valued in further education and beyond. These competencies not only enhance academic performance but also prepare students for diverse career paths in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) fields.

By engaging with GCSE Science, students are well-equipped to meet future challenges and contribute meaningfully to society.



# Option: Art and Design: Fine Art

## Course Info

Exam Board: AQA

Qualification: GCSE

Specification: Art [specification](#)

## Assessment

Component 1 Practical Assessment	Component 2 Externally Set Assignment
A Portfolio compiled throughout the course covering all the assessment objectives including a sustained project	You will select a starting point based on a brief set by the exam board. You will have time to prepare your work then 10 hours of supervised time to complete your assignment.
60% of GCSE	40% of GCSE

## Course Content

- Students will be introduced to a variety of learning experiences, which encourage the development of skills through the use of appropriate media, processes, techniques and technologies relevant to their chosen title(s) and related area(s) of study.
- Students will demonstrate knowledge, understanding and skills in the development of their personal work informed by first-hand experiences and appropriate secondary sources.
- Students will be encouraged to progressively develop their own strengths and interests in the subject and, increasingly, follow their own lines of enquiry.
- Students will develop the knowledge and understanding as specified below through sustained practical application of skills to realise personal intentions.
- Students will learn how sources inspire the development of ideas. For example, drawing on:

## Why choose this course?

Art lets you share your perspective of the world with others and lets people admire your work. Art changes the way you see things. You will start to see things from a whole new perspective such as light, shapes, colours, textures, people, buildings, trees, flowers, etc. Everything around you will start to look different, and you will start taking into consideration every detail. You will begin to see the beauty of the world around you, which will change your everyday experience for the better.

Students who study Art develop greater problem-solving abilities, dexterity, spatial acuity, focus and finesse. Art is a practical subject, providing balance in your week and an opportunity to work creatively and express your feelings and emotions. It works well alongside other arts subjects, especially for those hoping to pursue the arts post-16.



# Option: Business Studies

## Course Info

Exam Board: Edexcel

Qualification: GCSE

Specification: Business [Specification](#)

## Assessment

The GCSE is assessed by two exam papers sat at the end of the course. The exams are the same in both length and structure and include case studies of real businesses. The questions in the both exams papers will consist of Calculations, Multiple-choice questions, Short answer questions and Extended writing questions.

Theme 1 – Investigating small business	Theme 2 – Building a business
Written examination 1 hour and 45 minutes in length (50%) Paper code: 1BS0/01	Written examination 1 hour and 45 minutes in length (50%) Paper code: 1BS0/02

## Course Content

### Theme 1

- Topic 1.1 Enterprise and entrepreneurship
- Topic 1.2 Spotting a business opportunity
- Topic 1.3 Putting a business idea into practice
- Topic 1.4 Making the business effective
- Topic 1.5 Understanding external influences on business

### Theme 2

- Topic 2.1 Growing the business
- Topic 2.2 Making marketing decisions
- Topic 2.3 Making operational decisions
- Topic 2.4 Making financial decisions
- Topic 2.5 Making human resource decisions

## Why choose this course?

Business Studies gives great foundational knowledge of what it's like to work in a business and the factors that go into making a business successful or not. It is engaging and inspiring, and which reflects the demands of a truly modern and evolving business environment. This subject enables students to develop as commercially minded and enterprising individuals and helps them to succeed in their chosen pathway.

GCSE Business provides a strong foundation for employment, with students progressing, with further training, to a wide range of careers training such as banking, sales, product management and general management. Students will learn the foundations of business, key business concepts, terminology and objectives, whilst further developing the skills to apply their understanding to different types and sizes of business in local, national and global contexts.

Having gained an understanding of spotting a business opportunity and putting the idea into practice. Students explore the options of growing a business either internally through franchising and developing new products or externally through a merger or a takeovers.

# Option: Computer Science

## Course Info

Exam Board: Edexcel

Qualification: GCSE

Link to latest exam board [specification](#)

## Assessment

Paper 1 Principles of Computer Science	Paper 2 Application of Computational Thinking
Written exam: 1 hour 30 minutes 75 marks <b>(50%)</b>	On screen exam: 2 hours 75 marks <b>(50%)</b>

## Course Content

This course is divided into two sections:

- Practical work which requires you to design, write, test and refine programs written the Python Language, in order to solve problems
- Theory work which consists of analysing problems in computational terms, solving problems creatively, innovatively, analytically, logically and critically and working in teams

## Why choose this course?

Students should study Computer Science because it equips them with the skills to become independent and discerning users of IT. By exploring the use of algorithms in computer programs, they learn how to develop efficient solutions to complex problems. This subject helps students acquire and apply both creative and technical skills, enhancing their understanding of technology across various contexts. From coding to analysing data, Computer Science empowers students to solve real-world challenges through the development of innovative computer programs. These skills are crucial in a wide range of careers, including software development, data analysis, cybersecurity, artificial intelligence, game design, and IT consultancy, preparing students for success in an increasingly digital world.



# Option: Construction and the Built Environment

## Course Info

Qualification: BTEC Level 1/Level 2 Tech Award.

Exam Board: Pearson

Link to latest exam board [specification](#)

## Assessment

Year 10 Component 3: Construction in Design	Year 11: Component 2 Construction in Practice	Year 11 Component 1 40%
Assignment submitted in school 30% 60 marks	Practical assignment submitted in school 30% 60 marks	Written exam 1 ½ Hours 40% 60 marks.

## Course Content

### Component 1 – Construction Technology

This component will develop knowledge and understanding of processes, terminology and technology used in the construction of the built environment.

### Component 2 – Construction in Practice

#### Carpentry practical assignment.

This component will introduce learners to commonly used hand tools, equipment and craft skills needed in the creation of the built environment and how to select and use materials in order to safely produce quality outcomes.

### Component 3 – Construction Design

Learners will gain an understanding of clients' needs and develop skills in responding to building design briefs and sketches that consider construction constraints.

## Why choose this course?

This course is a great gateway for those who have aspirations of going on to study construction at college, become an apprentice and then work as a builder, carpenter, electrician, plumber, architect and any other trade related job. After completing this course, you can then study a Level 3 Construction Tech award course at college and move onto the higher course straight away, instead of starting on a foundation course.

# Option: Drama

## Course Info

Exam Board AQA

Qualification GCSE

Link to latest exam board [specification](#)

## Assessment

Component 1 – Understanding Drama	Component 3 – Devising Drama	Component 3 – Texts in Practice
Written exam: 1 hour and 45 minutes 80 marks 40% of GCSE	Devising log (60 marks) Devised performance (20 marks) 40% of GCSE	Performance of Extract 1 (20 marks) and Extract 2 (20 marks) 20% of GCSE

## Course Content

- Knowledge and understanding of drama and theatre
- Study of one set play – Blood Brothers
- Analysis and evaluation of the work of live theatre makers
- Process of creating devised drama
- Performance of devised drama (students may contribute as performer or designer)
- Analysis and evaluation of own work
- Performance of two extracts from one play (students may contribute as performer or designer)

## Why choose this course?

GCSE Drama is great fun, interesting, and a challenge! It will help you to develop your confidence, your social skills, your problem-solving abilities, and your creative thinking. Drama is a combination of practical and written work. You should opt for Drama if you have enjoyed your drama lessons in years 7- 9 and you really enjoy performance. You will be exploring the world through drama and should be keen to learn different styles of performance, as you will study and perform scripts as well as devise your own work. You will enjoy watching theatre and will be excited to go on theatre trips as part of the GCSE Drama course. You may also be interested in design and the opportunity to find out more about lighting, sound, costume, set design and lighting.

You will learn how to devise original drama from a stimulus; shaping your drama with a variety of theatrical skills to achieve your dramatic intention. You will also work with scripts and perform extracts from published texts as well as exploring a set text in detail, practically and in your writing. You will learn to describe, analyse and evaluate your own work, the work of others and the work of professional theatre makers. You will also discover more about the professional theatre, learning about job roles and responsibilities, different types of theatres and stages, and theatrical design. You will also learn about the world we live in, and a lot about yourself in the process!

# Option: Design Technology Product Design

## Course Info

Exam Board : AQA

Qualification: GCSE

Link to latest exam board [specification](#)

## Assessment

EXAM	Non-Examined Assessment
Written Exam 2hours 50 %	Assessment submitted in school at end of Year 11 50%

## Course Content

- The specification enables learners to work creatively when designing and making and apply technical and practical expertise, in order to:
- Demonstrate their understanding that all design and technological activity takes place within contexts that influence the outcomes of design practice.
- Develop realistic design proposals as a result of the exploration of design opportunities and users' needs, wants and values.
- Use imagination, experimentation and combine ideas when designing.
- Develop the skills to critique and refine their own ideas whilst designing and making.
- Communicate their design ideas and decisions using different media and techniques, as appropriate for different audiences at key points in their designing.
- Develop decision making skills, including the planning and organisation of time and resources when managing their own project work. Develop a broad knowledge of materials, components and technologies and practical skills to develop high quality, imaginative and functional prototypes.
- Be ambitious and open to explore and take design risks in order to stretch the development of design proposals, avoiding clichéd or stereotypical responses.
- Consider the costs, commercial viability and marketing of products.
- Demonstrate safe working practices in design and technology.
- Use key design and technology terminology including those related to designing, innovation and communication; materials and technologies; making; manufacture and production; critiquing, values and ethics.

## Why choose this course?

### Career and other important information:

The UK is regarded as a world leader in design, engineering and construction, which covers a wide range of exciting and rapidly developing areas, such as renewable energy, aerospace, automotive and the creative industries. People with design, engineering and construction skills are always in demand. There are currently millions of job openings related to the fields of design, engineering and construction.

### Further Study:

When you have completed the qualification, you will have developed a practical understanding of design, engineering and construction. You will gain an understanding of whether each of these sectors is for you and which part of it you might want to study further. After you have finished the course, you may want to go on to further study such as A Levels, BTECs or a mixture of both. Alternatively, you might want to find work in the design, engineering and construction sectors as an apprentice or a trainee.



# Option: French

## Course Info

Course Name: GCSE French

Exam Board: Edexcel

Qualification: GCSE

Specification: [French \(9-1\) Specification 2024](#)

## Assessment

Speaking	Listening	Reading	Writing
Controlled Assessment at the end of year 11 25%	Written Exam at the end of year 11 25%	Written Exam at the end of year 11 25%	Written Exam at the end of year 11 25%

## Course Content

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

## Why choose this course?

Being able to speak another language is a valuable skill that is highly sought after by many employers, particularly in the digital age when businesses are working with increasingly global markets. Furthermore, a GCSE in a language demonstrates to universities that you have a strong academic background. In a competitive world, having a language qualification sets you apart from other candidates for jobs and higher education courses. A language qualification will also keep your options open if you want to go to a university from the Russell Group or Oxbridge. On a personal level, being able to speak another language enables you to travel much more easily within Europe and beyond either on holiday, business trips or longer excursions; not everyone speaks English! Finally, research shows that studying a language increases your brain capacity and improves your memory, an essential skill for all subjects!





# Option: Geography

## Course Info

Exam Board: AQA

Qualification: GCSE

Link to latest exam board [specification](#)

## Assessment

Paper 1: Living with the Physical Environment	Paper 2: Challenges in the Human Environment	Paper 3: Geographical Applications
Written Exam 1 hour 30 minutes 88 marks (35%)	Written Exam 1 hour 30 minutes 88 marks (35%)	Written Exam 1 hour 30 minutes 76 marks (30%)

## Course Content

- **Living with the Physical Environment** – includes studying ecosystems, natural hazards, rivers and coasts
- **Challenges in the Human Environment** – includes studying urban issues, development and resource management
- **Fieldwork** – Includes coursework fieldtrips to places like London

## Why choose this course?

Studying GCSE Geography offers students a comprehensive understanding of the world and the complex relationships between the environment, people, and economies. It equips learners with critical thinking skills, an appreciation for global challenges, and practical problem-solving abilities.

In the "Living with the Physical Environment" section, students delve into topics such as ecosystems, natural hazards, rivers, and coasts, gaining insights into the processes shaping our planet and strategies for mitigating natural disasters. The "Challenges in the Human Environment" component explores urban issues, development, and resource management, highlighting the interconnectedness of cities, resources, and global inequalities. This knowledge is invaluable in addressing real-world issues like climate change, urbanisation, and sustainable development. Field trips to places like London enable students to analyse data, observe geographical processes in action, and apply theoretical knowledge to practical situations.

Geography opens doors to diverse career opportunities, including urban planning, environmental consultancy, disaster management, and roles in sustainability. Students interested in research can pursue fields like climatology or hydrology, while those inclined towards people-oriented jobs might explore tourism or education. The skills developed in GCSE Geography—research, data analysis, teamwork, and communication—are transferable to almost any career, making it an excellent choice for students passionate about understanding and shaping the world around them.

# Option: History

## Course Info

Exam Board: Edexcel

Qualification: GCSE

Specification: [GCSE \(9-1\) History Specification Issue 6](#)

## Assessment

Paper 1: Crime and Punishment through time with Whitechapel	Paper 2: The Reigns of Richard and John and the American West.	Paper 3: Weimar and Nazi Germany
Written Exam 1 hour and 20 Minutes 30% of GCSE 52 Marks	Written Exam 1 hour and 50 Minutes 40% of GCSE 64 marks	Written Exam 1 hour and 30 Minutes 30% of GCSE 52 Marks

## Course Content

- **Crime and Punishment 1000-Present** – you will study how and why the law has changed through time.
- **Whitechapel 1870-1900** – you will study this area of East London as a case study within Crime and Punishment and look specifically at the Jack the Ripper murders.
- **The Reigns of Richard and John** – two of England's Medieval Kings who had very eventful reigns, from crusading to rebellions.
- **The American West** – the reasons for conflict and tension between American Settlers and the Native American Indians.
- **Weimar and Nazi Germany** – how Hitler gained power and controlled Germany

## Why choose this course?

Studying GCSE History offers students a unique opportunity to explore fascinating topics like the American West, the reign of Richard and John, Nazi Germany, and the evolution of crime and punishment. These topics not only deepen understanding of key historical events and their impact on society but also develop valuable skills such as critical thinking, analysis, and effective communication.

GCSE History encourages students to question evidence, evaluate different perspectives, and construct well-supported arguments, all of which are highly sought-after in the job market. Careers in law, journalism, teaching, politics, archaeology, and heritage management often value the analytical skills gained through studying history. Additionally, employers in fields such as business, research, and public relations appreciate the ability to understand complex situations and communicate ideas clearly. By studying GCSE History, students gain insight into the events that have shaped our world and the skills to shape their future.

History also nurtures research, communication, and problem-solving abilities, preparing students for roles in teaching, heritage management, museum curation, or even media and writing. Beyond career prospects, history fosters curiosity, empathy, and the ability to make informed decisions, empowering students to become engaged, well-rounded individuals.

# Option: Hospitality and Catering

## Course Info

Exam Board : WJEC

Qualification: BTEC Level 1/2 Vocational Award

Link to latest exam board [specification](#)

## Assessment

Unit 1 EXAM 40%	Unit 2: Non-Examined Assessment
Written examination: 1 hour 20 minutes 80 Marks 40% Can be taken in January or May Year 11	Controlled assessment: approximately 12 hours 60% 120 marks

## Course Content

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

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

## Why choose this course?

- It provides students with an awareness of the **catering/ hospitality** industry.
- Develop organisational skills.
- Encourages the identification of customer needs and eating trends in a multicultural society.
- Develops a knowledge of nutrition and the relationship between diet and health.
- The UK is currently perceived to offer the friendliest hospitality service in Europe. For the majority behind this vibrant industry, hospitality is more than just a job; it is a passion, an opportunity to express creativity - a form of 'art.' The greatest challenge facing the hospitality and catering industry today is the shortage of skilled staff at all levels; the industry offers fantastic careers to all.

## Further Study:

When you have completed the qualification, you will have developed a practical understanding of the hospitality and catering industry. They may choose to go on to study Level 3 at college or enrol in an apprenticeship and work and earn at the same time while building on further skills.

# Option: Music

## Course Info

Exam Board EdExcel

Qualification: GCSE

Link to latest exam board [specification](#)

## Assessment

Component 1— Performance	Component 2—Composition	Component 3—Appraising
Non-examined unit- submitted in school  You will be required to perform as a soloist and as part of an ensemble  60 marks 30%	Non-examined unit- submitted in school  You will be required to submit two compositions—one will be a free choice; one will be in response to a set brief  60 marks 30%	Written exam 1 hour 45 minutes  80 marks 40%

## Course Content

- **Instrumental Music 1700—1820** (specifically JS Bach & Beethoven),
- **Vocal Music** (specifically Purcell and Queen),
- **Music for Stage and Screen** (Specifically the stage musical Wicked and Composer John Williams),
- **Fusion Music** (specifically Afro Celt and Samba)

## Why choose this course?

GCSE Music provides students with an opportunity to develop a broad range of music skills in performing, composing and analysing musical elements and contexts which will not only support further musical study but also develop skills useful in a wide range of courses and careers.

The qualification is regarded as an academic course and well respected by colleges and universities. Achieving this qualification not only demonstrates creativity but also analytical skills, team working, attention to detail and commitment which are all sought after by employers. Studying music will also develop your performance confidence which is hugely beneficial in many walks of life!

The Music Industry is one of the UK's most valuable exports. It is a vibrant, exciting and highly competitive industry that contributes over £7 billion to the U.K. economy. Live music alone creates £3.7 billion in direct and indirect income for our country. The Music Industry is constantly evolving and offers many new and exciting different work opportunities.

GCSE Music not only provides you with the opportunity to pursue your love of music but also gain valuable workplace skills that give you the edge when applying for competitive university places or careers.



# Option: Physical Education (PE)

## Course Info

Exam Board: AQA

Qualification: GCSE

Link to latest exam board [specification](#)

## Assessment

Paper 1: The human body and movement in physical activity and sport	Paper 2: Socio-cultural influences and well-being in physical activity and sport	Practical performance in physical activity and sport
Written Exam at the end of year 11 (1hr15mins)	Written Exam at the end of year 11 (1hr15mins)	Internal assessment with external moderation at the end of year 11.
Total 78 marks 30% of GCSE	Total 78 marks 30% of GCSE	Total: 100 marks 40% of GCSE

## Course Content

- Applied anatomy & physiology (The human body, how it works and how it responds to exercise)
- Movement analysis (How the human body creates movement for sporting actions)
- Physical training (How you train to improve sporting performance, including components of fitness, fitness testing, methods of training and principles of training)
- Sport psychology (How you can help prepare the brain to perform better during sport)
- Socio-cultural influences (What are the sociological and cultural factors that affect sports participation and how barriers can be removed)
- Health, fitness and well-being (How to maintain a healthy body and mind relating this to how it affects sporting performance)
- Data analysis

## Why choose this course?

The aim of this course is to develop a comprehensive understanding of the science behind physical activity, fitness and performance through a balanced mix of theoretical study and practical activity. Students who choose to study GCSE Physical Education will not only develop a deeper understanding of the body and how it relates to sporting performance, but also the requirements of a healthy active lifestyle and its application to everyday life. The practical component is assessed, so it's an excellent way for students to showcase their athletic talents.

Beyond physical skills, the course fosters teamwork, leadership, communication, and resilience, which are transferable skills valuable in all areas of life. It also promotes critical thinking through performance analysis and evaluation. GCSE PE provides an engaging blend of academic study and physical activity, laying a solid foundation for further studies such as A-Level PE, Sports Science, or BTECs, as well as careers in physiotherapy, coaching, teaching, sports science, fitness training, nutrition and sports management.

To be successful, students should be passionate about sport and the subject. Students should have a basic understanding of a range of sports as this will enable them to apply and discuss theory content. They should also be prepared to actively work outside of lessons to further their knowledge and understanding.

# Option: Psychology

## Course Info

Course Name: Psychology

Exam Board: AQA

Qualification: GCSE

Link to latest exam board [specification](#)

## Assessment

Paper 1: Cognition and Behaviour	Paper 2: Social Context and behaviour
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Written Exam at the end of year 11</li><li>• 1 hour 45 minutes</li><li>• 50% of qualification</li><li>• 100 marks</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Written Exam at the end of year 11</li><li>• 1 hour 45 minutes</li><li>• 50% of qualification</li><li>• 100 marks</li></ul>

## Course Content

In Psychology you will learn fascinating things about your mind and the minds of others. You will find out about the topics of:

- Memory
- Perception
- Development
- Research methods
- Social influence
- Psychological problems

## Why choose this course?

Choosing to study GCSE Psychology offers students an opportunity to explore the fascinating world of human behaviour and mental processes. This subject provides insight into why people think, feel, and act the way they do. Students learn about topics like memory, perception, social influence, and mental health, which are directly applicable to everyday life. For example, understanding how memory works can enhance study techniques, while exploring mental health can promote empathy and awareness of others' experiences.

The AQA specification is designed to develop critical thinking, analytical, and evaluative skills. Through studying psychological research methods, students learn how to collect and interpret data, fostering a scientific mindset that is valuable across various disciplines. Moreover, the subject nurtures curiosity about human diversity, encouraging students to appreciate different perspectives and cultural influences on behaviour.

Psychology is also an excellent foundation for further study, offering pathways into careers in mental health, education, business, and law. Students gain not only academic knowledge but also transferable skills like communication, problem-solving, and ethical reasoning, making it a rewarding and versatile choice at KS4.

# Option: Religious Studies

## Course Info

Exam Board: Edexcel

Qualification: GCSE (Religious Studies B)

Link to latest exam board [specification](#)

## Assessment

Paper 1C Religion and Ethics: Islam Paper code: 1RB0/1C	Paper 2B Religion, Peace and Conflict: Christianity Paper code: 1RB0/ 2B
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Written Exam at the end of year 11</li><li>• 1 hour 45 minutes</li><li>• 50% of qualification</li><li>• 102 marks</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Written Exam at the end of year 11</li><li>• 1 hour 45 minutes</li><li>• 50% of qualification</li><li>• 102 marks</li></ul>

## Course Content

### Islam:

Students will study a wide range of beliefs and practices and engage with substantial ethical questions around relationships and issues around abortion and euthanasia. The four areas of study are:

- Beliefs
- Marriage and the Family
- Living the Religious Life
- Matters of Life and Death

Please see this [link](#) for a past paper from this part of course.

### Christianity

Students will study a wide range of beliefs and practices and engage with substantial ethical questions around crime and the treatment of criminals and issues around war and conflict. The four areas of study are:

- Beliefs
- Crime and Punishment
- Living the Religious Life
- Peace and Conflict

Please see this [link](#) for a past paper from this part of course.

## Why choose this course?

Religious Studies is an interesting and exciting subject. The RS department is passionate about delivering this course and securing excellent grades and outcomes for the children in our classes. Whilst we may study religions and traditions that are hundreds and thousands of years old, the big questions and the ethical dilemmas are relevant to living in the multi-faith, multicultural and diverse community and world. Students will develop knowledge and understanding of two religions, enabling them to understand and articulate their own and others' beliefs, values and commitments. We have chosen to study Christianity and Islam as these are not only the 2 biggest faiths in the world accounting for nearly 5 billion people but they are also the faiths that are most represented in our community. Students will develop an appreciation of religious thought and its contribution to individuals, communities and societies and through this develop their own ideas around important issues in the world today.

The course has two excellent text books which will support students learning and whilst there is a heavy focus on reading and writing as with all lengthy written exams there is a substantial opportunity throughout the course to engage in discussion and debate in class. It's a subject that students who have taken it in the past have really enjoyed and been very successful at. By choosing RS students will be developing analytical and critical thinking skills to enable them to present a wide range of well-informed and reasonable arguments, aiding in progression A level study and beyond.



# Option: Spanish

## Course Info

Exam Board: Edexcel

Qualification: GCSE

Specification: [Spanish \(9-1\) Specification 2024](#)

## Assessment

Speaking	Listening	Reading	Writing
Controlled Assessment at the end of year 11 25%	Written Exam at the end of year 11 25%	Written Exam at the end of year 11 25%	Written Exam at the end of year 11 25%

## Course Content

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

## Why choose this course?

Being able to speak another language is a valuable skill that is highly sought after by many employers, particularly in the digital age when businesses are working with increasingly global markets, furthermore, a GCSE in a language demonstrates to universities that you have a strong academic background. In a competitive world, having a language qualification sets you apart from other candidates for jobs and higher education courses. A language qualification will also keep your options open if you want to go to a university from the Russell Group or Oxbridge. On a personal level, being able to speak another language enables you to travel much more easily within Europe and beyond either on holiday, business trips or longer excursions —not everyone speaks English! Finally - research shows that studying a language increases your brain capacity and improves your memory, an essential skill for all GCSE subjects!





# Option: Sport (BTEC)

## Course Info

Exam Board: Pearson

Qualification: BTEC Tech Award Level 1/2

Link to latest exam board [specification](#)

## Assessment

Component 1: Preparing participants to take part in sport and physical activity	Component 2: Taking part and improving other participant sporting performance	Component 3: Developing fitness to improve other participant's performance in sport and physical activity
Non-exam internal assessment set by Pearson, marked by the centre and moderated by Pearson.	Non-exam internal assessment set by Pearson, marked by the centre and moderated by Pearson.	Written Exam taken at the end of year 11 1hr 30 minutes.
60 marks (30%)	60 marks (30%)	60 marks (40%)

## Course Content

- The different types of physical activity and providers.
- The needs of participants, barriers to participation and ways to overcome these barriers.
- Equipment and technology required to take part in sport.
- Learners will develop an applied understanding of physiology and anatomy as they learn how to plan and deliver a warm-up to prepare participants to take part in sport and physical activity.
- Components of fitness and how they are used in different types of sport.
- Physical training.
- Practical participation, rules and regulations in sport.
- Ways to improve other participants' sporting performance through planning and delivery of sports drills and conditioned practices.

## Why choose this course?

This course is for learners who want to develop sport sector-specific applied knowledge and skills. They will explore the different types of participant and their needs to gain an understanding of how to increase participation for others in sport and physical activity and further develop their knowledge and understanding of anatomy and physiology. Learners will also undertake practical sessions to develop skills in planning and delivering sports activity sessions to participants. The qualification enables learners to develop their skills, such as sport analysis and sports leadership, using realistic vocational contexts, and personal skills, such as communication, planning, time management and teamwork through a practical and skills-based approach to learning and assessment. This course provides them with a foundation for further study within the sports sector through progression on to qualifications such as the Level 3 BTEC National in Sport or a Level 3 BTEC National in Sport and Exercise Science, as well as careers in coaching, teaching, sports science, fitness training and sports management.