The
Ongar
Academy

OPTIONS BOOKLET 2025

Resilience, Respect, Integrity, Community.

Bridge Academy Trust

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Section A – Introduction

Welcome to the 2024 Options Booklet

Now that you are coming to the end of your first three years at The Ongar Academy, you will be starting to look ahead and think about the GCSE courses you will follow in years 10 and 11.

Having the opportunity to choose the subjects that will make up your studies at KS4 is an exciting one, as you pursue interests that will help take you one step closer to your future career aspirations. We also recognise that it can be a daunting one, and that is why we are providing you with many opportunities to become fully informed. Whether it's through reading about the subjects on offer within this Options Booklet, attending the Options Evening, or speaking to individual teachers at Parents' Evening, we will be with you every step of the way.

Options Process

At The Ongar Academy, we offer an exciting range of option subjects to suit all abilities and talents, and this booklet is designed to inform you of the subjects that are open to you. It is important that you read the course requirements and assessment criteria for each subject before deciding upon your choices, as this will ensure that you are selecting the most appropriate subjects to support your future endeavours.

Parents' Evening 2025

In addition to the Options Roadshow, our Year 9 Parents' Evening is taking place on Thursday 20th March. Here you will be able to discuss your progress within each subject and ask questions about your suitability in selecting specific options. Please ensure that you have booked appointments via EduLink for this event. If you have any questions regarding this, please do not hesitate to speak to a member of staff.

Options Form

The Options Form will be emailed to all students' school email accounts. This allows us to track who the responses have come from. The deadline for the submission of these forms is Thursday 27th March 2025.

I hope that you will enjoy making these choices and coming to decisions about your future curriculum.

Yours sincerely,

Mr. W Ritchie

Assistant Headteacher

Section B - Compulsory Examinable Courses

ENGLISH

Two separate English GCSE grades are awarded – English Language and English Literature

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

What is GCSE English Language?

English teaches the critical awareness of how language creates meaning through the study of English literature and media texts. Speaking and listening skills are also taught and refined.

Why Study English Language?

The aim of this compulsory subject is to improve reading, writing and listening skills. Students are also taught to understand more fully the structure of language, and to develop and encourage an appreciation and understanding of English through literature and non-fiction/media texts.

Assessment

Paper	Sections	Assessment	Question Style
Explorations in Creative Reading and Writing	**Section A** Reading one literature fiction text **Section B** Writing descriptive or narrative writing	**Written exam** 1 hour 45 minutes 80 marks 50% of GCSE	**Reading** - 40 marks - 25% – one single text • 1 short form question (1 x 4 marks) • 2 longer form questions (2 x 8 marks) • 1 extended question (1 x 20 marks) **Writing** - 40 marks - 25% 1 extended writing question 24 marks for content, 16 marks for technical accuracy
Writers Viewpoints and Perspectives	**Section A** Reading one non-fiction text and one literary non-fiction text **Section B** Writing to present a viewpoint	**Written exam** 1 hour 45 minutes 80 marks 50% of GCSE	**Reading -** 40 marks - 25% – two linked texts • 1 short form question (1 x 4 marks) • 2 longer form questions (1 x 8, 1 x 12 marks) • 1 extended question (1 x 16 marks) **Writing** - 40 marks - 25% 1 extended writing question (24 marks for content, 16 marks for technical accuracy)
Non-Examination Assessment: Spoken Language	-	Presenting Responding to questions and feedback Use of standard English	• Teacher set throughout course. • Marked by teacher. • Separate endorsement (0% weighting of GCSE)

Exam Board and Syllabus Number Details: AQA English Language (8700)

ENGLISH LITERATURE

What is GCSE English Literature?

English Literature involves the study of plays, poetry and prose by major authors both pre- and post-nineteenth century.

Why Study English Literature?

English Literature is studied alongside English and leads to a separate GCSE grade. It teaches the appreciation of a range of texts and the evaluation of how authors achieve effects through the use of linguistic, structural and presentational devices.

Assessment

Paper	Texts	Assessment	Question Style
Shakespeare and the 19th Century Novel	William Shakespeare's 'Macbeth' **and** Charles Dickens' 'A Christmas Carol' (19th Century text)	**Written exam** 1 hour 45 64 marks 40% of GCSE	**Section A – Shakespeare** Students will answer one question on their play of choice. They will be required to write in detail about an extract from the play and then to write about the play as a whole. **Section B - The 19th Century Novel:** Students will answer one question on their novel of choice. They will be required to write in detail about an extract from the novel and then to write about the novel as a whole.
Modern Text and Poetry	An Inspector Calls (Modern play) **and** Poetry Cluster: Power and Conflict (poetry)	**Written exam** 2 hours 15 96 marks 60% of GCSE	**Section A - Modern Texts:** Students will answer one essay question from a choice of two on their studied modern prose or drama text. **Section B Poetry**: Students will answer one comparative question on one named poem, printed on the paper, and one other poem from their chosen anthology cluster. **Section C - Unseen Poetry**: Students will answer one question on one unseen poem and one question comparing this poem with a second unseen poem.

Post-16 and Career Opportunities

- A Level studies in English Language, English Literature and Theatre Studies.
- Careers in journalism, media, speech therapy, linguistics, teaching and librarianship.
- All employers and Further Education establishments require English at GCSE.

Course Equipment and Requirements

The annotation of texts is no longer permitted by any examination board. Texts may not be taken into the examinations. A good dictionary and thesaurus are very useful but are not permitted in examinations.

Exam Board and Syllabus Number Details: AQA English Literature 8702

MATHEMATICS

What is GCSE Mathematics?

GCSE Mathematics covers a wide range of basic mathematical knowledge and skills, grouped into four areas: number and algebra, shape, space and measure, data handling and using and applying mathematics. In Mathematics students will:

- Use logic and reasoning to solve problems.
- Break down problems into small steps to solve them.
- Solve real-life situations.
- Use a calculator to solve problems quickly and effectively.

Why Study Mathematics?

GCSE Mathematics is a compulsory subject and is part of the new English Baccalaureate. It is vital to all areas of employment and is a required qualification for further education courses. Students are taught in five ability sets. The majority will study for a linear examination at the Higher Tier, and a small number of students may take the Foundation Tier if it is felt by the teacher to be of benefit to them. All GCSE Mathematics courses incorporate Functional Mathematics, now an essential part of the course.

Assessment

Students entered for the Foundation Tier are examined at grades 5 – 1, whereas Higher Tier papers cover grades 9 – 4. The course is examined by three equally weighted papers, one to be completed without the aid of a calculator and two in which a calculator is allowed. Each paper lasts for 1 hour 30 minutes and contains 80 marks. All examinations will be sat at the end of Year 11.

Students who do not achieve at least a grade 4 at the end of Year 11 are currently required to continue studying mathematics and re-sit their GCSE examination whether at school, college or via an apprenticeship for a period of at least two years.

Post-16 and Career Opportunities

Mathematics is an important tool for other courses such as Sociology, Biology and Geography, both at A-Level and beyond, and some courses have Post 16 study as a requirement of their courses. Mathematics is an important foundation for employment or further education and is a requirement for many university courses.

Nearly all jobs and careers require GCSE Mathematics, but the following careers make extensive use of mathematics: economics, medicine, architecture, engineering, accountancy, teaching, psychology, environmental studies, computing, information and communication technology, banking, insurance, marketing, business management, pharmacy and science.

Course Equipment and Requirements

Students are expected to have their own **scientific calculator (Casio FX-83GTX or Casio FX-991EX)**, rulers, angle measurers or protractors, and compasses in all lessons and for the examination.

Exam Board and Specification Number Details: Edexcel Level 2 GCSE (9-1) in Mathematics (1MA1)

SCIENCE

What is GCSE Science?

The compulsory Science GCSE course is started in Year 9, with all students studying the same science topics. All students will begin studies for separate Sciences (leading to three GCSEs in Biology, Chemistry and Physics). Going into Y10, a decision will be made based on assessment data whether students continue to focus on separate sciences, or whether a change is made to study Combined Trilogy (Double) Science (leading to two GCSEs in Science, to include content covering biology, chemistry and physics topics).

Why Study Science?

All students must study Science, however, depending on their pathway, some students will study Separate Sciences whilst others will study Combined Science. Details about both pathways are outlined below.

Science highlights the ability to think critically, apply logic and learning to new and unfamiliar situations, and analyse evidence and data to come to reasonable conclusions. All of these skills are highly valued by employers.

Both science routes allow students to study any of the sciences at A-level. Post-16 study of Sciences can lead to careers in Medicine, Engineering, Marine Biology, Pharmacology or Cancer research to name just 5 of the countless career pathways.

SCIENCE COMBINED COURSE (Trilogy)

The Key Stage 4 GCSE Combined Science (Trilogy) course is based on the AQA 2016 syllabus. It is a linear course (not modular) consisting of six exam papers taken at the end of Year 11. There is no coursework element. The syllabus can be accessed on the website: www.aqa.org.uk.

During the Combined course the students will study the following topics:

Biology	Chemistry	Physics
1. Cell biology 2. Organisation 3. Infection and response 4. Bioenergetics 5. Homeostasis and response 6. Inheritance, variation & evolution 7. Ecology	8. Atomic structure and the periodic table 9. Bonding, structure, and the properties of matter 10. Quantitative chemistry 11. Chemical changes 12. Energy changes 13. The rate and extent of chemical change 14. Organic chemistry 15. Chemical analysis 16. Chemistry of the atmosphere 17. Using resources	18. Energy 19. Electricity 20. Particle model of matter 21. Atomic structure 22. Forces 23. Waves 24. Magnetism and electromagnetism

SCIENCE

Assessment

Students will sit the following exams at the end of Year 11:

Biology	Chemistry	Physics
Paper 1: Topics 1–4 Paper 2: Topics 5–7	Paper 1: Topics 8–12 Paper 2: Topics 13–17	Paper 1: Topics 18–21 Paper 2: Topics 22–24
Exam Paper Duration: 1 hour 15 minutes		

Students can only sit one tier for all papers: Foundation tier (students can obtain grades 5-5 - 1-1) and Higher tier (students can obtain grades 9-9 - 4-4). Each paper is worth 70 marks, and each exam is worth 16.7% of the Combined Science Trilogy GCSE (Double Award GCSE).

There will be seven required practical experiments for each of the three sciences (Biology, Chemistry and Physics) and therefore twenty-one in total. The practical experiments will not be examined directly but details of the practical experiments will be examined in the six exam papers listed above.

GCSE Combined Science (Trilogy) is a double award GCSE and will be awarded a double grade e.g. 7-7, 5-4 etc. The double GCSE grade will be based on the overall average mark of all of the six exam papers.

The Mathematical skills requirements will be 10% in Biology, 20% in Chemistry and 30% in Physics.

Course Equipment and Requirements

Students are issued with appropriate exercise books. Essential equipment includes a calculator, a ruler and glue. All students will have access to online digital textbooks (Biology, Chemistry and Physics) for use at school and at home. The textbooks are AQA approved and are published by Oxford University Press. Details on how to access the online digital textbooks at www.kerboodle.com will be given to each individual student.

Ways in which parents/carers can help

- Encourage an interest in Science, watch documentaries, take trips to museums, reading scientific books, discuss items of scientific interest in the news etc;
- Check that home learning is being completed to the best of the students' ability.
- Ensure that students are regularly learning/revising independently and promote the use of various resources such as Educake, Past Papers and Revision guides.
- Discuss with students their learning, progress and home learning tasks.

Exam Board and Specification Number Details: AQA Syllabus: Combined Science 8464

SEPARATE SCIENCES PATHWAY (TRIPLE)

The Key Stage 4 GCSE Separate Science Pathway (Triple) course is based on the AQA 2016 syllabus. Students will be allocated Separate Sciences as part of their pathway. No final decision on this will be made immediately in Y9, and all students begin learning content to contribute to this pathway. It is a linear course (not modular) consisting of six exam papers taken at the end of Year 11. There is no coursework element. The syllabus can be accessed on the website: www.aqa.org.uk.

BIOLOGY

What is GCSE Biology?

During the biology course the students will be studying the following topics: -

1. Cell biology
2. Organisation
3. Infection and response
4. Bioenergetics
5. Homeostasis and response
6. Inheritance, variation and evolution
7. Ecology

Assessment

Students will sit the following exams at the end of Year 11: -

- Biology Paper 1: Topics 1–4.
- Biology Paper 2: Topics 5–7.

Each exam paper is 1h 45. In foundation tier students can obtain grades 5-1, and in higher tier students can obtain grades 9-4. Students can only sit one tier for both papers.

- Each paper is worth 100 marks.
- Each exam is worth 50% of the Biology GCSE.
- There will be ten required practical experiments. The practical experiments will not be examined directly but details of the practical experiments will be examined in the two exam papers.

Course Equipment and Requirements

The Mathematical skills requirement will be 10%. Students are issued with appropriate exercise books. Essential equipment includes a calculator, a ruler and glue. All students will have access to an online digital biology textbook for use at school and at home. The textbooks are AQA approved and are published by Oxford University Press.
Details on how to access the online digital textbooks at www.kerboodle.com will be given to each individual student.

Exam Board and Syllabus Number Details: AQA Biology 8461

SEPARATE SCIENCES PATHWAY (TRIPLE) CONT.

CHEMISTRY

What is GCSE Chemistry?

During the Chemistry course the students will be studying the following topics: -

1. Atomic structure and the periodic table
2. Bonding, structure, and the properties of matter
3. Quantitative chemistry
4. Chemical changes
5. Energy changes
6. The rate and extent of chemical change
7. Organic chemistry
8. Chemical analysis
9. Chemistry of the atmosphere
10. Using resources

Assessment

Students will sit the following exams at the end of Year 11: -

- Chemistry Paper 1: Topics 1–5.
- Chemistry Paper 2: Topics 6–10.

Each exam paper is 1h 45. In foundation tier students can obtain grades 5-1, and in higher tier students can obtain grades 9-4. Students can only sit one tier for both papers.

- Each paper is worth 100 marks.
- Each exam is worth 50% of the Chemistry GCSE.
- There will be eight required practical experiments. The practical experiments will not be examined directly but details of the practical experiments will be examined in the two exam papers.

Course Equipment and Requirements

The Mathematical skills requirement will be 20%. Students are issued with appropriate exercise books. Essential equipment includes a calculator, a ruler, a protractor and glue. All students will have access to an online digital chemistry textbook for use at school and at home. The textbooks are AQA approved and are published by Oxford University Press.

Details on how to access the online digital textbooks at www.kerboodle.com will be given to each individual student.

Exam Board and Syllabus Number Details: AQA Chemistry 8462

SEPARATE SCIENCES PATHWAY (TRIPLE) CONT'D

PHYSICS

What is GCSE Physics?

During the physics course the students will study the following:

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

Assessment

Students will sit the following exams at the end of Year 11: -

- Physics Paper 1: Topics 1–4.
- Physics Paper 2: Topics 5–8.

Each exam paper is 1h 45. In foundation tier students can obtain grades 5-1, and in higher tier students can obtain grades 9-4. Students can only sit one tier for both papers.

- Each paper is worth 100 marks.
- Each exam is worth 50% of the Physics GCSE.
- There will be ten required practical experiments. The practical experiments will not be examined directly but details of the practical experiments will be examined in the two exam papers.

Course Equipment and Requirements

The Mathematical skills requirement will be 30%. Students are issued with appropriate textbooks. Essential equipment includes a calculator, a ruler, a compass, a protractor and glue. All students will have access to an online digital physics textbook for use at school and at home. The textbooks are AQA approved and are published by Oxford University Press.

Details on how to access the online digital textbooks at www.kerboodle.com will be given to each individual student.

Exam Board and Syllabus Number Details: AQA Physics 8463

Section C – GCSE Option Courses

ART & DESIGN

What is GCSE Art & Design?

In both coursework and the exam unit, students will develop project work based around set themes, which enable them to experiment with a variety of media. Students will experience a range of different disciplines including painting and drawing, photography, three-dimensional work, printmaking, and mixed media. At the beginning of the GCSE, students undertake a series of workshops allowing them to investigate these techniques to further develop their skills.

Why Study Art & Design?

As part of the practical project work, students are expected to investigate the work of other artists which then can act as inspiration for their own artwork. This critical studies element includes researching the subject matter and techniques of different artists, designers and cultures, producing a written, in-depth analysis of their styles and recreating their ways of working. Students are encouraged to create their own personal responses to the work of other artists and to visit galleries and exhibitions independently.

Assessment

The exam unit is the final project, and the paper has 7 options for pupils to choose from. The intention of this project is to allow pupils to refine their skills and show their strengths in Art and Design, demonstrating these skills in a meaningful and personal presentation of work. Students are encouraged to gravitate towards creative disciplines and artistic styles of their choice providing that at this point, they have prior experience and confidence in the practice chosen. The exam unit will cover all of the 4 assessment objectives:

Assessment Objectives					
Unit Number	**AO1** Develop ideas & Artists Analysis, Responses	**AO2** Experiment with materials and refine ideas	**AO3** Record ideas and observations	**AO4** Present a final piece relative to your study	Overall weighting for GCSE
Unit 1: Coursework	15%	15%	15%	15%	60%
Unit 2: Exam project (incl. a 10 hour exam over 2 days)	10%	10%	10%	10%	40%

Course Equipment and Requirements

This course is for you if are interested in Art, Design and photography because it's made up of practical work and includes a lot of creative freedom. We want to encourage risk taking and exploration of ideas and imagination. Students are recommended to purchase basic equipment to support their practical work within lessons and as part of their independent learning. There will be a revised equipment list sent out to students and parents when the choices are confirmed. Extra work in your own time shows a real commitment and is vital in producing a high-quality body of work. We expect at least 3 independent hours of study a week.

Exam Board and Specification Number Details: AQA Specification Number 8202

BUSINESS

What is GCSE Business?

GCSE Business examines all major areas of business activity and provides students with skills and knowledge that will assist them in their future careers. Topics covered include enterprise, business structures, marketing, human resources, finance, accounts, and production.

Why Choose Business Studies?

One day all of our students will work for a business/organisation or run one of their own. This engaging course is designed to build "Enterprising Young Minds" ready to take on the challenges of modern life in the UK and beyond. Divided into two themes, this course takes students through the process of setting up and running new businesses during year 10 in Theme 1. In Theme 2, during year 11, students go onto to learn how to nurture and grow businesses into successful global companies. Through real life examples and the exploration of their own interests, students are engaged from the start of the course and begin to think like young entrepreneurs.

Assessment

Year 10 (Theme 1)
End of topic tests & End of year examination.

Year 11 (Theme 2)
End of topic tests & two formal Summer examinations (50% per paper).

Both papers will consist of calculations, multiple-choice, short-answer and extended-writing questions:

- Paper 1: Theme 1 - Investigating small business - 1h 45 - 90 marks - 50% of overall grade
- Paper 2: Theme 2- Building a business - 1h 45 - 90 marks - 50% of overall grade

Post-16 and Career Opportunities

GCSE Business provides a launch pad for further studies in Business, Economics, Commerce and Accounts. This is a qualification that is truly engaging and inspiring, which reflects the demands of a truly modern and evolving business environment that exists within the UK and beyond today. It is a real-life qualification that enables students to develop as commercially minded and enterprising individuals and helps them to succeed on their chosen pathway into College, University, Apprenticeships, the world of work or their own business start-up.

Course Equipment and Requirements

A good level of mathematical understanding would be advantageous.

Exam Board and Specification Number Details: Edexcel Level 2 GCSE (9-1) in Business (1BS0)

COMPUTER SCIENCE

What is GCSE Computer Science?

GCSE Computer Science helps students to become more aware of how digital technology operates behind the scenes. The course assists in developing an understanding of current and emerging technologies, how they work and how to apply this knowledge and understanding in a range of contexts. It gives students the technical skills and understanding of the use of algorithms in computer programs to solve problems using programming.

Why Choose Computer Science?

As the world becomes more reliant on digital technologies, and with the ever-increasing development of hardware and software, there is a need for qualified programmers to develop new programs and support/adapt existing ones. New opportunities are being created every day for programmers, with approximately 60% - 65% of jobs in a decade's time not having yet even been invented. The course gives students a real-world, in-depth understanding of how computer technology works, providing excellent preparation for higher study and employment in Computer Science, while developing critical thinking and analytical and problem-solving skills.

Assessment

- Computer Systems - Written exam - 1 h 30;
- Computational Thinking, Algorithms and Programming - Written exam - 1 h 30

Post-16 and Career Opportunities

It provides a good foundation for studying A-Level Computer Science at Sixth Form and Computer Science/Programming at university

Career opportunities include database administration, games development, information systems management, IT consultancy, multimedia programming, network engineering, systems analysis and systems development.

Course Equipment and Requirements

Students will need:

- A GCSE coursework folder;
- Access to PC at home;
- A memory stick (recommended but not mandatory) to back up work;
- Access to Python at home and school.

Exam Board and Syllabus Number Details: OCR: Computer Science at GCSE - J277

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY: CONSTRUCTION (TECH AWARD)

The Ongar Academy

Vocational Award in Construction and the Built Environment (Technical Award)

TOA is pleased to be able to offer a new Design & Construction Technical Award designed to allow TOA learners to develop the understanding and skills related to a range of job roles in design and construction. **The 2 units of study** provide an overview of technical roles such as bricklayers, carpenters and electricians as well as professional roles such as site inspectors, project managers, architects and design engineers showing how they work together to completion design and construction projects. The two units have been designed so that knowledge, skills and understanding are developed through tasks that have many of the characteristics of real work in design and construction. Each unit has an applied purpose, which acts as a focus for the learning in the unit. This approach is called applied learning and enables learners to learn in such a way that they develop:

- **SKILLS REQUIRED FOR INDEPENDENT LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT**
- **A RANGE OF GENERIC AND TRANSFERABLE SKILLS**
- **THE ABILITY TO SOLVE PROBLEMS**
- **THE SKILLS OF PROJECT-BASED RESEARCH, DEVELOPMENT AND PRESENTATION**
- **THE FUNDAMENTAL ABILITY TO WORK ALONGSIDE OTHER PROFESSIONALS.**

Course Assessment (INCLUDING DETAILS OF PRACTICAL WORK / CONTROLLED ASSESSMENT)

UNIT 3 focuses on 3 Practical skill, based assessments. This includes NEA coursework (Folder work) supported with a large practical element (60%)

- **CARPENTRY & JOINERY SKILLS**
- **ELECTRICAL INSTALLATION SKILLS**
- **DECORATING & DESIGN SKILLS**
- **ARCHITECTURE & DESIGN SKILLS**

UNIT 1 will focus on safety & security in Construction / Planning Construction projects, and this will lead to a 1.5-hour online assessment which will complete at the end of Year 11.

Why should I study this subject?

This subject will allow you to develop your understanding and skills related to a range of job roles in construction. It has large parts of practical work to complete and is a fun and exciting subject.

This subject is also a very good route for progression onto any Level 3 Design / Construction course offered at local colleges and sixth forms. This subject also links closely to the world of work and can be a good starting place to get you into a future career within an exciting industry.

Please see Mr Gregory for more information

(Or use the QR code for the specification link)

DRAMA

What is GCSE Drama?

GCSE Drama is a multi-faceted subject which requires pupils to create, perform, explain, analyse and evaluate Drama. The course gives pupils the opportunity to create their own pieces of performance & perform scripts whilst developing their own performance skills. Pupils are also required to take on a considerable theoretical element within the course focusing on: their own performance practices; the performance of a published play & performances of professional actors.

Why Choose Drama?

Drama helps to build self-confidence and communication skills. It enables candidates to develop group-work skills and self-awareness. Drama is a practical subject, well suited to those students who have a desire to participate and perform, and who value a variety of approaches to study on their timetable. Drama at GCSE encourages you to be creative and practical, and to develop skills that will support you in any role that you choose after education.

You will be given the opportunity to gain excellent transferable skills that will be useful throughout life, such as communication skills, group and leadership skills, problem solving, independence and initiative. You will learn to work alongside your peers to support each other, as well as working individually.

Assessment

Assessment Topic	Awarding Marks
Understanding Drama: This topic is assessed through a written exam at the end of year 11. Students are required to study a set text, we look at Blood Brothers by Willy Russell, and to review a live piece of theatre.	40% of GCSE 80 Marks
Devising Drama: Pupils are required to devise their own piece of Drama from a range of given stimuli. Pupils are assessed through their performance (20 marks) and a devising log (60 marks)	40% of GCSE 80 Marks
Texts in Practice: This is the scripted performance element of the course. Students perform two sections from the same play to a visiting examiner.	20% of GCSE 40 marks

Post-16 and Career Opportunities

GCSE Drama is a useful preparation for A-Levels in Drama and Theatre Studies, Film Studies, Media Studies, Communications, and Performing Arts. At post-16 level Drama is often paired with A-Levels in English due to the overlapping elements. Drama provides a good foundation for careers in journalism, media, speech therapy, theatre (acting), theatre (technical), public relations and HR. Drama is highly respected by many companies.

Course Equipment and Requirements

Above all, we want students with enthusiasm and a dramatic and theatrical passion! Students will have had experience of Drama during KS3 in Drama. Students must be prepared to act, as this is a practical subject. Visits to the theatre are a vital part of the course. Students are expected to rehearse during lunch breaks and after school prior to practical exams, as it is not always possible to complete rehearsals in lesson time. Students should enjoy expressing themselves in active and exciting ways, working in a group, contributing their own ideas and respecting those of others, exploring their ideas by experimenting with different roles, playing many parts in different, imaginary situations, creating their own drama work and looking at plays written by others.

Exam Board and Syllabus Number Details: AQA Drama 8261

FOOD PREPARATION AND NUTRITION

What is GCSE Food Technology?

Food Preparation and Nutrition is a practical subject area which requires the application of knowledge and understanding when planning, preparing, making and evaluating products. The aim of the course is to enable students to work with a wide variety of foods and cooking methods.

Why Choose Food Preparation and Nutrition?

This new GCSE, Food Preparation and Nutrition, is an exciting and creative course which focuses on practical cooking skills to ensure students develop a thorough understanding of nutrition, food provenance and the working characteristics of food materials. At its heart, this qualification focuses on nurturing students' practical cookery skills to give them a strong understanding of nutrition.

This qualification goes hand in hand with GCSE Science and GCSE PE. You need to have excellent organisational skills and good time management, as well as being able to multi-task. This opportunity will open your eyes to scientific ways of looking at food, all the way to mastering creative cooking and presentation skills.

Food Preparation and Nutrition skills includes preparation and storage of ingredients, knife skills, use of equipment, cooking methods, sauce making, marinades and tenderising and so much more.

Assessment

Theoretical knowledge leading to a 1 h 30 written exam based on 5 topics. These are Nutrition, Food Choice and Provenance, Cooking and Preparation, and Skill Requirements. This will account for 50% of the GCSE.

There will also be two practical assessments during year 11 which will account for 50% of the GCSE: -

- **Task 1:** Food investigation Students will be assessed on their understanding of the working characteristics, functional and chemical properties of ingredients;
- **Task 2:** Food preparation assessment.

Students will be assessed on their knowledge, skills and understanding in relation to the planning, preparation, cooking and presentation of food and application of nutrition related to the chosen task. Students will prepare, cook and present a final menu of three dishes.

Post-16 and Career Opportunities

GCSE Food provides the foundation for further studies in Food Technology, Catering, or Hospitality & Catering. It can also lead to a wide range of careers within the catering industry: chef, hotel manager, event's organiser, restaurant owner, food critic or food writer/blogger.

Course Equipment and Requirements

Ingredients and a named container, needed on a weekly basis to take home food. Some ingredients are supplied by the school. Students must also have an A4 ring binder, and an A3 carrying folder.

Exam Board and Syllabus Number Details: OCR J309

FRENCH

What is GCSE French?

"One language sets you in a corridor for life. Two languages open every door along the way" (Frank Smith) The aim is to improve skills in Speaking, Listening, Reading and Writing in French. Students are given every encouragement to communicate in French as well as develop a thorough grounding in the grammar of the language. Students will study three key themes throughout GCSE French which are: People and Lifestyle, Popular Culture and Communication and the world around us.

Why Choose French?

With 300 million speakers around the world, French is a vibrant international language and one of the most widely spoken languages worldwide. French is spoken on every continent and some studies even estimate that it will become the language most spoken worldwide by 2050. French is the international language of cooking, fashion, theatre, the visual arts, dance and architecture. A knowledge of French can also offer access to great works of literature, as well as films and songs. French opens travel options all around the world, particularly in Africa.

The study of a Modern Foreign Language can open every door along a student's academic path, increasing the range of opportunities available on both a professional and personal level. There is also currently a language shortage in the UK meaning that holding a language GCSE can be incredibly advantageous when applying to Sixth Form, university or increasing chances of achieving a successful position in your career. All universities view languages positively and consider it a highly academic subject.

Assessment

Students follow the AQA GCSE course in French and are assessed in four areas which are: Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing. Each skill is weighted at 25%. Students may either enter the Foundation Tier (grades 1-5) or Higher Tier (grades 4-9) however they cannot mix and match.

Post-16 and Career Opportunities

- The GCSE course prepares students for AS/A2 Level studies in French.
- MFL can be studied alongside almost any other subject at university.
- The ability to communicate in more than one language is a valuable asset and practically any profession or career can involve languages in some way.
- Careers using French include international law, interpreting, translating, business, finance, medicine, education, amongst many others.
- Proficiency in languages is highly valued by employers and could be the skill that gives a candidate the edge in a job interview.

Course Equipment and Requirements

A good French dictionary is useful; recommended editions are Collins and Oxford University Press. The AQA GCSE French Grammar & Translation workbook is also highly recommended.

Exam Board and Syllabus Number Details: AQA French 8652

GEOGRAPHY

What is GCSE Geography?

Studying GCSE Geography with AQA is an exciting and relevant course that looks at Geography in a balanced framework of physical and human themes and investigates the link between them. Students will travel the world from their classroom, exploring case studies in the United Kingdom (UK), higher income countries (HICs), newly emerging economies (NEEs) and lower income countries (LICs). Topics of study include climate change, poverty, deprivation, global shifts in economic power and the challenge of sustainable resource use.

Students are also encouraged to understand their role in society, by considering different viewpoints, values and attitudes.

Why Choose Geography?

Do you enjoy learning about people and their societies, economies, cultures and the environment Are you interested in current world issues? If so, you are already well on the way to being a GCSE Geographer. Geography provides a vital link between disciplines, notably the humanities and sciences, and is a recognised English Baccalaureate subject. It also enables you to develop a wide range of transferable skills that can be applicable across many fields of study and work.

Assessment

Paper	What's Assessed?	How is it Assessed?
Paper 1 Living with the Physical Environment	3.1.1 The challenge of natural hazards 3.1.2 The living world 3.1.3 Physical landscapes in the UK 3.4 Geographical Skills	Written Paper - 1 h 30 - 88 marks (Incl. 3 for SPAG) - 35% of GCSE
Paper 2 Challenges in the Human Environment	3.2.1 Urban issues and challenges 3.2.2 The changing economic world 3.2.3 The challenge of resource management 3.4 Geographical skills	Written Paper - 1 h 30 - 88 marks (Incl. 3 for SPAG) - 35% of GCSE
Paper 3 Geographical Applications	3.3.1 Issue evaluation 3.3.2 Fieldwork 3.4 Geographical skills	Written Paper - 1 h 30 - 76 marks (incl. 6 for SPAG) - 30% of GCSE *Pre-release resources booklet made available 12 weeks before Paper 3 exam.*

Post-16 and Career Opportunities

Geography encompasses the Humanities, the Sciences and Maths; as a result, it opens the door to a variety of opportunities for your future.

As a subject with a large number of transferable skills, Geography is well regarded as a basis for a range of higher education or vocational courses.

Geography graduates go on to pursue careers in the sciences, army, police force, the civil service, geographical information systems and environmental protection and consultancy.

Exam Board and Syllabus Number Details: AQA GCSE Geography 8035

GERMAN

What is GCSE German?

"One language sets you in a corridor for life. Two languages open every door along the way" (Frank Smith) The aim is to improve skills in Speaking, Listening, Reading and Writing in German. Students are given every encouragement to communicate in German as well as develop a thorough grounding in the grammar of the language. Students will study three key themes throughout GCSE German which are: People and Lifestyle, Popular Culture and Communication and the world around us.

Why Choose German?

German is the most widely spoken language in Europe in terms of native speakers and it shares the same linguistic DNA as English, in fact 26% of English words derive from German. Germany is an economic powerhouse, being the largest economic power in Europe and 4th in the world. It is home to numerous international corporations and is on the front line of new technologies. One of the reasons why German has such a high standing in the science community is the fact that Germany's universities have an excellent international reputation. What's more, the German system for higher education boasts several universities with very low or non-existent tuition fees.

The study of a Modern Foreign Language can open every door along a student's academic path, increasing the range of opportunities available on both a professional and personal level. There is also currently a language shortage in the UK meaning that holding a language GCSE can be incredibly advantageous when applying to Sixth Form, university or increasing chances of achieving a successful position in your career. All universities view languages positively and consider it a highly academic subject.

Assessment

Students follow the AQA GCSE course in German and are assessed in four areas which are: Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing. Each skill is weighted at 25%. Students may either enter the Foundation Tier (grades 1-5) or Higher Tier (grades 4-9) however they cannot mix and match. All exams are conducted at the end of the course.

Post-16 and Career Opportunities

- The GCSE course prepares students for AS/A2 Level studies in German.
- German can be studied alongside almost any other subject at university.
- The ability to communicate in more than one language is an asset and practically any profession or career can involve a language in some way.
- Areas where a knowledge of German are advantageous include Computer science, engineering, account management, banking, business analytics, Civil engineering, and architecture.
- Proficiency in languages is highly valued by employers and could be the skill that gives a candidate the edge in a job interview.

Course Equipment and Requirements

A good German dictionary is useful; recommended editions are Collins and Oxford University Press. The AQA GCSE German Grammar & Translation workbook is also highly recommended.

Exam Board and Syllabus Number Details: AQA German 8662

HISTORY

What is GCSE History?

The aim of GCSE History is for students to develop an understanding of the key events of the past that have shaped the world today. At the end of the course, students should be able to discuss and argue in order to reach their own conclusions and not accept everything that they see, hear or read.

Why Choose History?

History is a universally recognised academic qualification, which shows a disciplined mind at work. History encourages students not to accept simply what they are told but always to question the evidence and probe further. Knowing about the world in the past brings a better awareness of issues in the present and makes for a more rounded person. The skills that are attained through a History course can be applied to any job in the world and a History GCSE is an excellent qualification to put on a CV for future employment.

Assessment

Paper 1: Conflicts in European History - 50%

- Germany 1890-1945: democracy and dictatorship – This topic will explore how Germany gradually fell under the control of Hitler and the Nazi Party and its eventual downfall at the end of the Second World War;
- The Cold War: 1945-1972 - This topic will expand from the previous topic and look at the aftermath of the Second World War and into the Cold War where the world's two greatest superpowers, USA and the USSR, threatened nuclear annihilation.

Paper 2: How the British Nation Developed over Time - 50%

- Power and the People: 1170 - Present Day – This topic will explore how control over the country changed and developed over time and how monarchical rule gradually reduced to the democratic system that exists now;
- Elizabethan England: 1586-1603 – This topic explores the last 35 years of Elizabeth's reign, focusing on the major events and developments from economic, religious, political, social and cultural standpoints.

Post-16 and Career Opportunities

A-Level courses in History are a natural progression from GCSE. There are some careers that use historical knowledge directly, though these are very specialised. For most universities and employers, History is a highly regarded discipline, and any candidate who has a good History qualification is well regarded in any career area.

Exam Board and Syllabus Number Details: GCSE History AQA

MEDIA

What is GCSE Media?

Studying GCSE Media with AQA is an exciting and creative course that equips students with the skills needed to navigate an increasingly media focused world. GCSE Media aims to broaden students' minds. All aspects of media including language, representations, industries and audiences, are covered in our Media GCSE giving students both an overall and in-depth understanding of how media represents the world and influences opinions.

Why Choose Media?

Not only is Media Studies interesting and relevant, but it also gives you valuable skills to help understand the world around you. You can apply many of these skills to GCSE English too – students often do better in English when they take Media Studies as well.

Hoping for a career in the exciting, innovative and competitive entertainment and media industries or hoping to convey ideas and influence people? GCSE Media Studies will give you a great head start. Covering movie promotion, advertising, music videos, and video games amongst others this course has been proven to support your studies across English, History, and Art.

Media also has the advantage of a 30% coursework component allowing students to develop their work and make improvements as they would be expected to in a workplace environment.

Assessment

Paper	What's Assessed?	How is it Assessed?
Paper 1 Exploring the Media	**Section A**: Will focus on media language and media representations; **Section B**: Will focus on media industries and media audiences.	**Written exam** 1 hour 30 minutes 84 marks 35% of GCSE
Paper 2 Responding to Media	**Section A:** Will be based on a screening from an extract of one close study product already researched across KS4; **Section B**: Will focus on online, social and participatory media and video games.	**Written exam** 1 hour 30 minutes 84 marks 35% of GCSE
Non-Exam Assessment Creating a Media Product	Students produce: • A statement of intent; • A media product for an intended audience.	A choice of one of five annually changing briefs, set by AQA; 60 marks - 30% of GCSE; Assessed by teachers; Moderated by AQA.

Post-16 and Career Opportunities

Media Studies graduates typically enter careers in the media, cultural and creative industries but as media skills are highly transferable, media graduates can be found across all industries. Areas of work include television and radio, film and video, digital media, computer games, journalism, writing and publishing, PR and education. Employers include communications agencies, the Civil Service, further and higher education institutions such as colleges and universities, local government, marketing organisations, media companies, the newspaper industry, publishing companies, TV and radio companies as well as working for political parties.

Exam Board and Syllabus Number Details: AQA GCSE Media Studies (8572)

MUSIC

What is GCSE Music?

GCSE Music is an opportunity for students to experience a range of musical styles and cultures through listening and appreciating music, performing, and composing. GCSE Music will inspire the next generation of students in forming personal and meaningful relationships with music through the development of musical knowledge, understanding and skills.

We cover 4 areas of study, The Concerto Through Time, World Music, Pop Music and Film & Game Music. Students continue to have the opportunity to perform in groups and use IT to record, edit and upload their music.

Why Choose Music?

If you enjoy making music, performing, and are interested in how music works, then this course is for you. It gives you the opportunity and time to study different genres of music in depth and to become involved in a range of activities, from getting your own band together, playing in an ensemble, to singing or performing in a show. You can continue to take advantage of technology to share your music with your friends, to record, produce and even publish your own music. Even if you have very little experience in music, the course allows you to be fully involved and learn new skills for life.

Assessment

Examinations – 40%	Coursework – 60%
Listening Exam • You will hear 7 different tracks and answer questions on them. • Written paper looking at The Concerto Through Time, World Music, Pop Music, and Film & Game Music.	**Performance** Two performances including a solo (15%) and ensemble (15%) piece during the course - *30% of final grade;* **Composition** One 'free' composition (15%) and one composition based on a brief given by OCR (15%).

Post-16 and Career Opportunities

GCSE Music is excellent preparation for further musical studies, such as A/AS Level Music, Music Technology or courses in the Performing Arts. Careers are many and wide-ranging: teaching, performing, working in the music industry itself as a song writer, producer, sound engineer, working in the media as a DJ, studio manager, presenter, music journalist, arts- related jobs, such as arts administration, arts director or concert organiser.

Course Equipment and Requirements

Students do not have to play a musical instrument and can use singing as the instrument of their choice. They have the opportunity to take lessons in an instrument with a member of our peripatetic team, or to learn an instrument informally, such as electric, acoustic or bass guitar. Attendance at music clubs within the school is expected, as it improves students' general musicianship. This does not have to be confined to the ensembles already provided but could include rehearsing with their own band as part of our informal learning programme.

Exam Board and Syllabus Number Details: OCR: GCSE Music

PHYSICAL EDUCATION (TECH AWARD)

Course Equipment and Requirements

For both PE courses, it is important that candidates regularly participate in PE lessons and attend one or more extra-curricular Physical Education clubs consistently throughout Years 9, 10 and 11. Candidates should be participating in physical activity out of school and should be prepared to complete **more theory** than practical lessons.

How will Physical Education look?

Students wishing to study Physical Education at Key Stage 4, will select PE as an option. Upon selecting PE as an option, **staff will then allocate** which course each student will study; either BTEC or GCSE. This decision will be based on looking to maximise students' chances of fulfilling their potential based on a range of factors, including their different learning styles, sporting ability, and where we feel they will get the best grade possible based on the course content. This course offers a wider insight into the world of sport and will form a strong base of knowledge, both theoretical and practical, for those that are thinking about a career in the sports industry in the future.

BTEC TECH AWARD LEVEL 1/2 IN SPORT

Year on year, the sport industry shows continued growth in employment and forecasts suggest this trend will continue. This comes from increased knowledge and understanding of the benefits of regular participation in sport and physical activity. Sport contributes significantly to the quality of a person's life and, as such, there is a need to ensure there are sufficient people working in the industry to meet this demand and encourage regular participation in sport and physical activity. There has never been a better time to study sport.

The BTEC Tech Award in sport gives learners the opportunity to develop sector-specific applied knowledge and skills through realistic vocational contexts. The course consists of a mixture of internal and external assessments. Internal assessment components are task-based and largely practical. External assessment components are exam based. The qualification has seven grades, Level 1 Pass, Level 1 Merit, Level 1 Distinction, Level 2 Pass, Level 2 Merit, Level 2 Distinction and Level 2 Distinction*. Students will complete a mixture of written coursework (on the computer), practical assessment (including leadership), and a written exam paper.

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

- Explore types and provision of sport and physical activity for different types of participant.
- Examine equipment and technology required for participants to use when taking part in sport and physical activity.
- Be able to prepare participants to take part in sport and physical activity.

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

- Understand how different components of fitness are used in different physical activity.
- Be able to participate in sport and understand the roles and responsibilities of officials.
- Demonstrate ways to improve participants sporting techniques.

Component 3 – Developing Fitness to Improve Other Participants Performance in Sport and Physical Activity - 40% (External Assessment)

- Demonstrate knowledge of facts, components of fitness, fitness tests, training methods/processes/principles in relation to improving fitness in sport and exercise.
- Demonstrate an understanding of facts, components of fitness, fitness tests, training methods/processes/principles in relation to improving fitness in sport and exercise.
- Apply an understanding of facts, components of fitness, fitness tests, training methods/processes/principles in relation to improving fitness in sport and exercise.
- Make connections with concepts, facts, components of fitness, fitness tests, training methods/processes/principles in relation to improving fitness in sport and exercise.

Exam Board and Syllabus Number Details: Pearson BTEC Tech Award Level 1/2 in Sport Specification 603/7068/3.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION (GCSE)

How will Physical Education look?

Students wishing to study Physical Education at Key Stage 4, will select PE as an option. Upon selecting PE as an option, **staff will then allocate** which course each student will study; either BTEC or GCSE. This decision will be based on looking to maximise students' chances of fulfilling their potential based on a range of factors, including their different learning styles, sporting ability, and where we feel they will get the best grade possible based on the course content. This course offers a wider insight into the world of sport and will form a strong base of knowledge, both theoretical and practical, for those that are thinking about a career in the sports industry in the future.

GCSE PHYSICAL EDUCATION

What is GCSE Physical Education?

The aim of the course is to explore the human body and movement, alongside socio-cultural influences and well- being in physical activity and sport.

Why study GCSE Physical Education?

The subject requires that candidates should already enjoy and have a very keen interest in physical activities.

Subject content

1. Applied anatomy and physiology
2. Movement analysis
3. Physical training
4. Use of data
5. Sports psychology
6. Socio-cultural influences
7. Health, fitness and well-being

Assessment

Students will sit 2 exam papers and be assessed in 3 practical areas, with 1 analysis & evaluation of performance.

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	**Non-Exam Assessment** Practical Performance in Physical Activity and Sport
What's assessed? • Applied anatomy and physiology • Movement analysis • Physical training • Use of data **How it's assessed?** • Written exam • 1 h 15 • 78 marks • 30% of GCSE	**What's assessed?** • Sports psychology • Socio-cultural influences • Health, fitness and well- being • Use of data **How it's assessed?** • Written exam • 1 h 15 • 78 marks • 30% of GCSE	**What's assessed?** • Practical performance in three different physical activities in the role of player/performer (one in a team activity, one in an individual activity and a third in either a team or in an individual activity) - 75 marks. • Analysis and evaluation of performance to bring about improvement in one activity - 25 marks. **How it's assessed?** • Assessed by teachers • Moderated by AQA • 100 marks • 40% of GCSE

RELIGIOUS STUDIES: PHILOSOPHY AND ETHICS

What is GCSE Religious Studies?

Religious Studies is not about making you 'religious', it is about enabling you to think for yourself about religious and moral issues. It is about you, your life and the issues you will face when you leave school and go into the multi-ethnic, multi-faith society which is the UK.

Why Study Religious Studies?

Philosophy and Ethics modules allow you to spend time reflecting on life's big questions, for example: Why am I here? Is there life after death? How can I tell right from wrong? or How should I act in this situation? Students who study these modules learn to think clearly for themselves, express their own opinions and respect the ideas of others. You will get the most out of this course if you are willing to participate in group activities and work to the best of your ability.

Assessment

Component 1: Religious, Philosophical and Ethical Studies in the Modern World **Written examination: 2 hours** **50% of qualification** Candidates will study the following four themes. All questions are compulsory. Theme 1: Issues of Relationships Theme 2: Issues of Life and Death Theme 3: Issues of Good and Evil Theme 4: Issues of Human Rights This component will be assessed by compulsory questions focusing on knowledge, understanding and evaluation of the identified themes.	**Component 2: Study of Christianity** **Written examination: 1 hour** **25% of qualification** Candidates will study the beliefs, teachings, and practices of Christianity. This component will be assessed by compulsory questions focusing on knowledge, understanding and evaluation of the subject content.	**Component 3: Study of a World Faith** **Written examination: 1 hour** **25% of qualification** Candidates will study the beliefs, teachings, and practices of one world faith from the following list: either Option 1: Buddhism Option 2: Hinduism Option 3: Islam Option 4: Judaism Option 5: Sikhism This component will be assessed by compulsory questions focusing on knowledge, understanding and evaluation of the subject content.

Post 16 and Careers Opportunities

In the world of work, employers look for someone with an enquiring mind, an appreciation of different viewpoints and an ability to come to clear, balanced decisions. If you want to work with people, in caring work, teaching, journalism, publishing, policing, in the armed forces, with children in health, leisure and tourism or to work abroad, Religious Studies will give you valuable expertise that is recognised by recruitment professionals in all of these areas.

Exam Board Specification Number Details: Eduqas Religious Studies C120QS Route A

Please use the QR code below to access form to select 4 options and 2 reserve subjects to study at GCSE.

Guidance:

Students will need to be logged into their school account.

You can only select each subject once.

The deadline to complete the form is **Friday 28th March 2025**. If you miss this deadline then it will be less likely that you are able to study your preferred subjects.

If you have any questions, please speak contact the relevant member of staff from the list below.

Support:

9 Kite – Mr Davies
9 Raven – Mr Ingall & Ms Muncey
9 Falcon – Ms Smith
9 Osprey – Mrs Auld-Josephs
Pastoral Support – Mrs Chandler
Head of Houses - Mr Talbot & Mr Hudgell
SLT Support – Mr Ritchie