



The Charter School East Dulwich

Guide to choosing GCSE subjects 2019-2020

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Introduction

Dear Parents/Carers and Students,

Welcome to The Charter School East Dulwich guide to making the right choice of GCSE subjects. This guide should help you to work with the School in order to choose the subjects that offer you, or your child, the best chance of success in the next stage of schooling and beyond.

Students should ask themselves three questions when making choices about which subjects to study for the next two years. These questions are:

- Does this range of subjects stimulate and inspire me?
- Does this range of qualifications offer me a good chance of success over the long as well as the short term?
- Does this course of study represent a reasonable balance between my ambitions for the future and my wellbeing over the next two years?

Students must be able to answer ‘yes’ to all of the above questions when considering their GCSE choices *in the round*. Individual subject choices may score more or less highly in relation to any of these questions, but, overall, students need to feel that their schooling is enjoyable and worthwhile if they are to succeed. Crucially, students should recognise that other considerations—such as peer pressure or their favourite teacher—should play *no* part in their choice of GCSE subjects.

Students should also recognise that the range of choices available to them has been limited in their own best interest. No developed country in the world allows students a choice over whether they study their native language, mathematics or the natural sciences. In the UK, we also require students, with very few exceptions, to study either history or geography and a modern foreign language. This suite of qualifications is what we call the ‘English Baccalaureate’ or ‘EBacc’.

At TCSED we try to offer as much choice as possible within these constraints, but we are not able to remove them. We are also obliged to focus students’ attention on those areas in which they have the highest prospects of success. For this reason, subjects like Triple Science and Further Maths have their own application process which will depend very heavily on a student’s attainment in those subjects by the end of Autumn Term in Year 9.

Parents and carers can provide vital support and guidance for students in making these decisions, but they cannot make these choices for them. Parental ambitions for their children are very unlikely to outweigh the importance of a student being able to answer ‘yes’, honestly and independently, to the questions above.

Yours faithfully,

Mr. A. Crossman

Headteacher

Ms. J. Kempster

Assistant Headteacher, Key Stage 4

What choices do we need to make?

All students in secondary schools nationally must study the following:

- English Language and Literature
- Mathematics
- Science (at least the double award)

All students can choose between:

- History OR Geography
- French OR Spanish

All students at TCSED are expected to choose a Creative Arts subject, for example:

- Art & Design
- Design & Technology
- Drama
- Music

Students will also be free to choose a final course of study from the overall course list. This final choice may be a subject that appears elsewhere in the curriculum—for example, if a student were to choose to study two languages or two Arts subjects—or it may be an entirely new subject, such as Economics, that they have not studied before.

All subjects are offered on the proviso that the minimum class size is met and that the students are a suitable fit for that subject. We will inform students and parents if a subject is unable to run due to lack of demand. For this reason we will expect students to select reserve options (on the options form) and to be aware that there could be a possibility that they study their reserve option.

(v) = vocational qualification rather than GCSE

Required	Option 1: Humanities	Option 2: MFL	Option 3: Arts	Option 4: Free choice
English Language English Literature Mathematics Science (double) *Science (triple)	Geography OR History	French OR Spanish	Art: Digital Media and Photography Art: Fine Art Design Technology: Product Design Drama Engineering and Design (v) Music	Free choice from option block 1-3 plus new subjects: Computer Science Economics Enterprise & Marketing (v) Physical Education Religious Studies Sport (v)

Timeline of key events

4/11/19	20/11/19	22/1/20	29/1/20	3/2/20	2/3/20
Options booklet published One-to-one careers interviews begin	GCSE options parent presentation 6-7pm	SEND parent support coffee morning	Year 9 parents evening	One-to-one student interview with senior teachers	Deadline for options choices



The Student Interview

Students will be supported to understand the process and the courses available. Every student will be given an interview with a teacher in February to help them to make their choices. This is to ensure that students make the right decisions for them, based on their interests and future plans, as well as on their previous assessment and specific subject requirements. During the interview, students will submit their choices via a google form, which can be edited until the deadline.

After these interviews, parents will be emailed with an outline of the options students wish to select. The deadline for making any changes to GCSE option choices is Monday 02 March 2020.

How should students think about their options?

Do ...

- Make sure that you understand the options available to you, especially any new courses that haven't been available in Years 7, 8 or 9.
- Think about what you enjoy; these courses are for two years.
- Think about your future aspirations; don't close doors by picking the wrong course. Teachers will help you to consider this in your Options Interview.
- Keep a balance in your curriculum – very few people like doing the same thing every day.
- Think about your chances of success. College courses need you to have good grades.

But don't ...

- Just choose what your peers are doing, *you* are making *your* choices.
- Make choices based on the teachers you like – you may not be taught by the same teachers next year.
- Choose what you ought to do rather than what you want to do - make sure you choose a subject you find motivational and enjoyable.
- Follow family traditions; choose the course because it is right for you.

How the subject information section works

This booklet contains subject information for each subject we offer. We have provided a link to the exam board specifications if you wish to see further information, but we have looked to summarise the key points below.

Exam board	Who runs the exam (usually AQA, OCR or Pearson Edexcel)
Qualification title	Actual title of course
Specification link	Link to exam board content
Course content	Summary of what will be covered in the course (specification has more detail)
Assessment objectives	How the course is assessed in terms of knowledge and skills
Controlled assessment or coursework	Are there any non examined assessments and what percentage of the final grade
Number of written exams	The number of exams and what percentage of the final grade
Timing of examination or assessment	When are the exams taken
Grade set	Usually 9-1 or Distinction * - Pass
Progression to post 16	Information on how the course links to post 16 study
Other useful information	Any other relevant information
Subject leader comment	Comments from the subject leader

Subject information

The School will offer the courses listed below for study in 2019-20. Over the following pages you will find key information on each course.

Required subjects

English Language and Literature	GCSE
Mathematics	GCSE
Science (Double)	GCSE
Science (Triple) * an option for selected students	GCSE

Option subjects

Art: Digital Media and Photography	GCSE
Art: Fine Art	GCSE
Computer Science	GCSE
Design Technology: Product Design	GCSE
Drama	GCSE
Economics	GCSE
Engineering and Design	Cambridge National
Enterprise and Marketing	Cambridge National
French	GCSE
Geography	GCSE
History	GCSE
Music	GCSE
Physical Education	GCSE
Religious Studies	GCSE
Spanish	GCSE
Sport	BTEC

GCSE English Language & Literature (2 GCSEs)

Exam Board: AQA

[Specification Link \(Lang.\)](#)

[Specification Link \(Lit.\)](#)

COURSE CONTENT

The two courses will be taught as a combined subject, and students will study an anthology of poetry, a modern novel or play, a 19th Century novel and a Shakespeare play. Alongside this, students will develop their fiction and non-fiction writing skills, and will also complete a speaking and listening component.

ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVES

ENGLISH LANGUAGE	ENGLISH LITERATURE
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify and interpret implicit and explicit information from texts. 2. Analyse how writers use language and structure for effect. 3. Compare the ideas and perspectives of different texts. 4. Evaluate texts critically. 5. Communicate clearly, effectively and imaginatively. 6. Use a range of vocabulary and sentence structures for effect with accurate spelling and punctuation. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Read, understand and respond to texts. 2. Analyse language, form and structure. 3. Show an understanding of the relationships between texts and the contexts in which they were written. 4. Use a range of vocabulary and sentence structures for effect with accurate spelling and punctuation.

Both courses are 100% examination. The speaking and listening component is teacher assessed, but does not count towards any overall grade.

SUBJECT	Paper	Time
English Language Paper 1	Fiction: 50%	1hr, 45 mins
English Language Paper 2	Non-fiction: 50%	1hr, 45 mins
English Literature Paper 1	Shakespeare and the 19th Century Novel: 40%	1hr, 45 mins
English Literature Paper 2	Modern Texts and Poetry: 60%	2hrs, 15 mins

Progression to Post 16

Students must achieve a grade 6 in both English Language and Literature in order to study English Literature at A Level.

Other Useful Information

Most employers and further/higher education institutions require a standard (grade 4) or strong (grade 5) pass in English.

Subject Leader Comments

Subject leader comment: The GCSE course will aim to build on the strong foundations laid through our Key Stage Three curriculum, and we hope to continue to inspire a love of reading and writing in our students, while also equipping them with the skills and resilience to excel in the challenging English Language and Literature examinations.

GCSE Mathematics

Exam Board: Edexcel
[Specification Link](#)

COURSE CONTENT

Number, Algebra, Ratio proportion and rates of change, Geometry and Measure, Statistics, Probability

ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVES

AO1 Use and apply standard techniques

Students should be able to:

- accurately recall facts, terminology and definitions
- use and interpret notation correctly
- accurately carry out routine procedures or set tasks requiring multi-step solutions.

AO2 Reason, interpret and communicate mathematically

Students should be able to:

- make deductions, inferences and draw conclusions from mathematical information
- construct chains of reasoning to achieve a given result
- interpret and communicate information accurately
- present arguments and proofs
- assess the validity of an argument and critically evaluate a given way of presenting information.

AO3 Solve problems within mathematics and other contexts

Students should be able to:

- translate problems in mathematical or nonmathematical contexts into a process or a series of mathematical processes
- make and use connections between different parts of mathematics
- interpret results in the context of the given problem
- evaluate methods used and results obtained
- evaluate solutions to identify how they may have been affected by assumptions made.

Controlled assessment / coursework	N/A
Number of written exams (and % of grade)	3: 1hr, 30 mins each, 100%
Grade set	Higher Tier: 9 - 4 (grade 3 allowed) Foundation Tier: 5 - 1

3 papers: 1 non-calculator paper and 2 calculator papers, all contributing equally to a final mark

Progression to Post 16	Other Useful Information
<i>A-Level Mathematics (for students with grade 7 and above) and A-Level Further Mathematics (for students with grade 8/9)</i>	<i>A further mathematics GCSE will be offered to students working at Mastery level who have shown sufficient mathematical fluency, commitment to learning and desire for challenge at KS3. This will not be offered as an additional option but will be timetabled along with Mathematics lessons.</i>

GCSE Science (double)

(Two GCSEs)

Exam Board: AQA
[Specification Link](#)

COURSE CONTENT

The course covers key ideas in Biology, Chemistry and Physics. Pupils will dig deeper into topics such as Cell Biology, Immunity, Atoms, Chemical reactions, Energy and Forces. Pupils will learn new topics, only covered in GCSE such as Bioenergetics, Organic Chemistry, and Waves. Pupils will also consolidate and extend their understanding and application of investigative science by carrying out practical science throughout the course.

ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVES

AO1: Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of: scientific ideas; scientific techniques and procedures.

AO2: Apply knowledge and understanding of: scientific ideas; scientific enquiry, techniques and procedures.

AO3: Analyse information and ideas to: interpret and evaluate; make judgments and draw conclusions; develop and improve experimental procedures.

Controlled assessment / coursework (and % of grade)	N/A
Number of written exams (and % of grade)	*6 for Combined and Triple: 1hr, 15 mins each, 100%
Grade set	Combined: 1 - 1 to 9 - 9

*Practical science is assessed within the exams and not as controlled assessments

Progression to Post 16	Other Useful Information
<i>Both Combined Science and Triple Science cover the foundation topics that if Mastered will lead on very well to studying Chemistry, Biology and/or Physics at A Level.</i>	<i>Students may choose to study triple science if they have averaged Mastery throughout year 9.</i>

Subject Leader Comment

Albert Einstein: "Most people say that it is the intellect which makes a great scientist. They are wrong: it is character."

GCSE Science (triple)

(Three GCSEs)

Exam Board: AQA

Specification link

[Biology](#)
[Chemistry](#)
[Physics](#)

COURSE CONTENT

The course covers key ideas in Biology, Chemistry and Physics. Pupils will dig deeper into topics such as Cell Biology, Immunity, Atoms, Chemical reactions, Energy and Forces. Pupils will learn new topics, only covered in GCSE such as Bioenergetics, Organic Chemistry, and Waves. Pupils studying Triple Science will cover additional topics not covered in Combined Science that equate to an extra GCSE. Pupils will also consolidate and extend their understanding and application of investigative science by carrying out practical science throughout the course.

ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVES

AO1: Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of: scientific ideas; scientific techniques and procedures.

AO2: Apply knowledge and understanding of: scientific ideas; scientific enquiry, techniques and procedures.

AO3: Analyse information and ideas to: interpret and evaluate; make judgments and draw conclusions; develop and improve experimental procedures.

Controlled assessment / coursework (and % of grade)	N/A
Number of written exams (and % of grade)	6 X 1hr, 45 mins each, 100%
Grade set	Biology: 9-1 Chemistry: 9-1 Physics: 9-1

*Practical science is assessed within the exams and not as controlled assessments

Progression to Post 16

Triple Science covers the foundation topics that if Mastered will lead on very well to studying Chemistry, Biology and/or Physics at A Level.

Other Useful Information

Students may choose to study triple science if they have averaged a grade 6 (Mastery) throughout year 9. Triple Science runs in place of core PE and PSHE. Students will study PSHE during tutor time and must commit to one hour of sport or physical activity per week (this can be a school based sports enrichment).

Subject Leader Comment

Triple Science will benefit those who have a firm grasp of key stage three Science and who have a well established study ethic.

GCSE Art

Exam Board: AQA
[Specification Link](#)

OPTION 1: Fine Arts focus

OPTION 2: Photography and Digital Media focus

COURSE CONTENT

YEAR 10

Both courses will begin by experimenting with a range of 2 and 3-dimensional techniques and processes.

After a common starting point, the courses will become more focused on their chosen media enabling students to work to their strengths in either photography, print and digital media, or fine art skills, such as painting, drawing, printmaking, textiles.

Both courses will critically and visually analyse the work of Art, Craft & Design Practitioners. Students respond to themes set by the Art Department and produce practical outcomes based on research.

YEAR 11 (starts Spring Term 2, Year 10)

Students research and develop work in response to their chosen starting point which is set by the examination board, and produce a practical outcome during a 10-hour exam.

Controlled assessment / coursework (and % of grade)	60%
Externally set assignment (and % of grade)	40%, April, Year 11
Grade set	9 - 1

Post 16 Information	Other Useful Information
<p><i>Art is a well-respected GCSE with academic rigour for a wide range of potential courses at post-16. In the creative arts themselves, you could go on to do A Level Fine Art, Media Studies, Fashion and Textiles, Photography, Digital Media courses, apprenticeships, BTEC courses and even start your own business.</i></p>	<p>https://www.tate.org.uk/art/video/tateshots/why-study-art</p> <p>https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gmz-IVSI92E</p>

Subject Leader Comment

Studying Art is not just for those people who want to be artists, designers, or work in the creative industries, although this is obviously very important; art is important in fostering creative problem-solving skills, independent thinking and demonstrating that you can scope a project for yourself and see it through to fruition. Many jobs in science, technology and business now actively seek out people who have the ability to think creatively about solutions to problems. Art is also a way of ensuring that students take care of their mental health and well-being whilst studying for other subjects which may have lots of written examinations.

GCSE Computer Science

Exam Board: OCR
[Specification Link](#)

COURSE CONTENT

Computer systems

- Study how processors work.
- Investigate computer memory and storage.
- Explore modern network layouts and how they function.
- Build skills in the ever important realm of cyber security.
- Investigate how types of software are used within computer systems.
- Stretch wider comprehension of how computers and computing affect ethical, legal, cultural and environmental issues.

Computational thinking, algorithms and programming

- Study fundamental algorithms in computer science.
- Build a firm foundation in programming techniques.
- Produce programs through diagrams.
- Thoroughly test programs and make them resistant to misuse.
- Explore Boolean algebra (AND, OR, NOT).
- Understand how we store data within computers in binary form.

A programming project

- Use new-found programming skills in an independent coding project by solving a real-world problem.
- Students will spend 20 classroom hours engaging with the Programming Project.

Number of written exams (and % of grade)	2: 1hr, 30 mins each 100% of grade
Grade set	9 - 1

Post 16 Information

GCSE Computer Science enables candidates to progress either directly to employment, or to proceed to further qualifications, such as A-Level Computer Science.

Other Useful Information

Computer Science gives candidates the opportunity to many career paths, including, game designer, software architect, data analyst and network manager.

Subject Leader Comment

The Computer Science course provides candidates with a lot of problem-solving, computational thinking and programming challenges. Ideal for anyone who enjoys solving problems, mathematics and computing.

GCSE Design Technology

Exam Board: AQA
[Specification Link](#)

COURSE CONTENT

Core technical principles
 Specialist technical principles
 Designing and making principles

ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVES

The exams and non-exam assessment will measure how students have achieved the following assessment objectives:

AO1: Identify, investigate and outline design possibilities to address needs and wants.

AO2: Design and make prototypes that are fit for purpose.

AO3: Analyse and evaluate:

- design decisions and outcomes, including for prototypes made by themselves and others
- wider issues in design and technology.

AO4: Demonstrate and apply knowledge and understanding of:

- technical principles
- designing and making principles.

Controlled assessment / coursework (and % of grade)	Approx. 40 hours, worth 50% of the final mark
Number of written exams (and % of grade)	1 exam worth 50% of final mark (25% of the exam is science and maths)
Grade set	9 - 1

Post 16 Information

GCSE Design and Technology can progress on to A-Level Design and Technology, Engineering and other design based courses

Other Useful Information

This is an excellent course for students to design and create with originality and creativity and the work produced as part of their controlled assessment is excellent evidence of their designing skills, to add to a portfolio for degree interviews

GCSE Drama

Exam Board: Edexcel
[Specification Link](#)

COURSE CONTENT

Component 1: Devising 40%

Non-exam assessment: Internally assessed, externally moderated

Learners participate in the creation, development and performing of a piece of devised theatre. They must produce:

- A performance of their devised piece
- A portfolio of supporting evidence including an evaluation of their final performance.

Component 2: Performing from Text 20%

Non-exam assessment: externally assessed by a visiting examiner

- Learners study two extracts from a set text
- Learners must participate in one performance using sections of text from both extracts

Component 3: Theatre Makers in Practice 40%

Written examination: 1 hour 30 minutes

- **Section A:** Set text answering a series of questions
- **Section B:** Live Theatre Review, students answer one question requiring analysis and evaluation of a given aspect of a live theatre production seen during the course

ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVES

AO1: Create and develop ideas to communicate meaning for theatrical performance

AO2: Apply theatrical skills to realise artistic intentions in live performance

AO3: Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of how drama and theatre is developed and performed

AO4: Analyse and evaluate their own work and the work of others

One written exam, 90 minutes accounting for 40% One external practical exam accounting for 20%.
 Spring and Summer 2019

Progression to Post 16

Pupils can progress to Drama and Theatre Studies AS or A level.

Subject Leader Comment

Students must have excellent attendance and be confident to perform for an audience. They must have good writing skills in order to cope with the demands of the written components.

GCSE Economics

Exam Board: OCR
[Specification Link](#)

This engaging and relevant specification enables students to appreciate that we're all part of the economy and how economic choices and issues impact on our lives. Students will study both macro and micro economic principles and learn how to use these to explain and evaluate real-life issues and events, as well as make policy recommendations.

Content Overview	Assessment Overview	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction to Economics • The role of markets and money 	<p>Introduction to Economics (J205/01)* 80 marks 1 hour, 30 min written paper</p>	<p>50% of total GCSE</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic objectives and the role of government • International trade and the global economy 	<p>National and International Economics (J205/05)* 80 marks 1 hour, 30 min written paper</p>	<p>50% of total GCSE</p>

100% examination 2 exams (Summer Year 11) 9-1 grade set.

ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVES

AO1 Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of economic concepts and issues

AO2 Apply knowledge and understanding of economic concepts and issues to a variety of contexts

AO3 Analyse and evaluate economic evidence and issues to demonstrate an understanding of economic behaviour, make judgements and draw conclusions

Progression to Post 16

Grade 6 or above is required to progress to A Level Economics.

Other Useful Information

There will be a number of speakers and trips to key economic institutions organised throughout the course.

Subject Leader Comment

Ideal for pupils who have an interest in current affairs and want to know more about the world around them. Students should have an interest in debating/analysis of key data and be able to use an enquiring, critical approach to distinguish between fact and opinion, build arguments and make informed judgements.

Engineering Design

OCR Cambridge National

Exam Board: OCR
(Cambridge Nationals)
[Specification Link](#)

This qualification is aimed at learners who wish to study the processes involved in designing new engineered products. Learners will use **practical skills** such as drawing, computer modelling and model making to communicate design ideas and apply those skills to produce a model.

This practical approach to teaching and learning will provide learners with knowledge in engineering technology and develop their critical thinking, creativity and dextrous skills through engaging practical experiences.

ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVES

- **R105: Design briefs, design specifications and user requirements**
1 Hour written paper (60 marks)
- **R106: Product analysis and research**
School assessed tasks (60 marks)
- **R107: Developing and presenting engineering designs**
School assessed tasks (60 marks)
- **R108: 3D design realisation**
School assessed tasks (60 marks)

Controlled assessment / coursework (and % of grade)	3 Units of centre assessed tasks, worth 25% each
Number of written exams (and % of grade)	1 exam worth 25%
Grade set	Level 2 Pass, Merit or Distinction, or Level 1 Pass Merit or Distinction

Post 16 Information

Level 2 is a GCSE equivalent and can be used to apply for an Engineering or Design Level 3 course or A-Level.

Level 1 can be used to apply for Engineering or Design Level 2 courses at further education colleges.

Other Useful Information

Students are able to improve their centre-assessed units and have them remarked multiple times.

Enterprise and Marketing

OCR Cambridge National

Exam Board: OCR
[Specification Link](#)

This qualification is for learners who wish to develop applied knowledge and practical skills in enterprise and marketing and includes a hands-on element to business studies. The qualification will appeal to learners who wish to either set up their own business, move into employment, or progress onto further study.

Unit number and Title	Mandatory/Optional	Assessment
Unit R064 Enterprise & Marketing Concepts	Mandatory	Examination worth 50% of the grade
Unit R065 Design a Business Proposal	Mandatory	Internally assessed portfolio of evidence worth 25%
Unit R066 Market & Pitch a Business Proposal	Mandatory	Internally assessed portfolio of evidence worth 25%

Controlled assessment / coursework (and % of grade)	2 x 25% Internally assessed coursework units,
Externally set assignment (and % of grade)	1 x 50% Examination, January of Year 11
Grade set	Level 2 Distinction (D*D*) to Level 1 Pass (P)

Post 16 Information

A merit or above allows pupils to take A level Business, Apprenticeships in Business Administration or Cambridge Technicals.

Other Useful Information

This qualification gives students who may not want to do 100% exams a solid introduction to Business and Enterprise.

Subject Leader Comment

Pupils will attend trips to various organisations, get a chance to design, market and sell their own products and meet a number of entrepreneurs and business people. A good level of attendance is required for this course due to the continuous assessment. Learners will develop skills that are essential for the modern workplace, such as team working, presentation skills, independent working, working to deadlines and efficient use of resources.

GCSE French

Exam Board: AQA
[Specification Link](#)

COURSE CONTENT

Theme 1: Identity and culture

Theme 2: Local, national, international and global areas of interest

Theme 3: Current and future study and employment

ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVES

Assessment objectives (AOs) are set by Ofqual and are the same across all GCSE Spanish/French specifications and all exam boards. The exams will measure how students have achieved the following assessment objectives:

AO1: Listening – understand and respond to different types of spoken language

AO2: Speaking – communicate and interact effectively in speech

AO3: Reading – understand and respond to different types of written language

AO4: Writing – communicate in writing

Controlled assessment / coursework (and % of grade)	N/A
Exams (and % of grade)	Divided into 4 equal skills, 100%
Grade set	Foundation: 1 - 5 Higher: 4 - 9

Post 16 Information

Pupils can progress onto A Level French Year 1. Subject requirement for A Level French Year 1 is a grade 6 at GCSE

Subject Leader Comment

As all skills are weighted equally, it is vital that students are keen to develop all 4, particularly developing spontaneity in speaking and grammar accuracy in writing.

GCSE Geography

Exam Board: Edexcel
[Specification Link](#)

COURSE CONTENT

Component 1: Global Geographical Issues

Component 2: UK Geographical Issues

Component 3: People and Environment Issues – Making Geographical Decisions

ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVES

AO1: Demonstrate knowledge of locations, places, processes, environments and different scales

AO2: Demonstrate geographic understanding of

- Concepts and how they are used in relation to places, environments and processes
- The inter-relationships between places, environments and processes

AO3: Apply knowledge and understanding to interpret, analyse and evaluate geographic information and issues, and to make judgements

AO4: Select, adapt and use a variety of skills and techniques to investigate questions and issues and communicate findings

Physical and human geography fieldwork is undertaken in component 2 and assessed in a written exam

Controlled assessment / coursework (and % of grade)	Physical & human geography fieldwork (assessed in written exam)
Number of written exams (and % of grade)	3: 1hr, 30 mins, 100%
Grade set	9 - 1

Progression to Post 16

It is recommended that students study Geography GCSE, before they study Geography A-Level, although it is not an absolute prerequisite. Geography A-Level is a facilitating A-Level recommended by Oxbridge and the Russell Group universities: [Russell Group Informed Choices](#)

Other Useful Information

A compulsory field trip in year 10 could be in the UK or potentially somewhere more exotic.

Subject Leader Comments

Geography is about using critical thinking to make decisions about the future of the planet we live on. Careers in geography include working in environmental consultancy, sustainability, multidisciplinary and transnational corporations. If you decide to do geography as a degree you could end up travelling the world as a global problem solver or working on small scale local sustainability projects.

GCSE History

Exam Board: AQA
[Specification Link](#)

COURSE CONTENT

The course will be made up of four main topics of study which will be tested across two papers:

Paper 1 (Studied in year 10)

- Germany, 1890–1945: Democracy and dictatorship
This course investigates the collapse of democracy in Germany and the development of the Nazi state.
- Conflict and tension, 1894–1918: The First World War
This module covers the story of one of the most catastrophic conflicts in human history.

Paper 2 (Studied in Year 11)

- Britain: Migration, empires and the people: c790 to the present
- The fascinating story of the migration of people to Britain across the centuries- effectively the story of our nation.
- Restoration England, 1660–1685: A really interesting period in British History which is rarely studied- covers topics such as the Great Fire of London and slavery. This unit also includes the study of a historical site.

AO1: demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the key features and characteristics of the period studied

AO2: explain and analyse historical events using historical concepts.

AO3: analyse, evaluate and use sources

AO4: analyse, evaluate interpretations

2 exams in Summer of Year 11, 9-1 Grade set

Progression to Post 16	Other Useful Information
<p><i>It is recommended that students study History GCSE, before they study History A-Level, although it is not an absolute prerequisite. History A-Level is a facilitating A-Level recommended by Oxbridge and the Russell Group universities.</i></p>	<p><i>If pupils choose History GCSE, they will have the opportunity to go on a residential trip in Year 10 or 11. This is always a popular trip and a highlight of the school diary. Accredited as part of the English Baccalaureate.</i></p>

Subject Leader Comments

It is important that pupils choose History because they enjoy the subject, but it is nonetheless important that they also like reading and writing extended essays. We expect pupils to try their hardest, be resilient and participate in classroom discussions. Revision skills will be crucial for success on this course as there is a huge amount of content that needs to be learnt.

GCSE Music

Exam Board: Eduqas
[Specification Link](#)

COURSE CONTENT

COMPONENT 1	COMPONENT 2	COMPONENT 3
Performing: 30%	Composing: 30% (One free composition, one set to a brief)	Appraising written exam: 40%
Total duration of performances: 4-6 mins	Total duration of compositions: 3-6 mins	Knowledge and study of set 2 works in 4 areas of study
Non-exam assessment: internally assessed, externally moderated	Non-exam assessment: internally assessed, externally moderated	

Area of study 1: Musical Forms and Devices

Area of study 2: Music for Ensemble

Area of study 3: Film Music

Area of study 4: Popular Music

Controlled assessment / coursework (and % of grade)	60% controlled assessment (Units 1 & 2)
Number of written exams (and % of grade)	1: 1hr, 15 mins, 40%
Grade set	9 - 1

Post 16 Information

Pupils are able to progress onto A Level Music. Subject requirement Grade 6

Other Useful Information

All students must be having instrumental or vocal tuition (either in school or externally). Some students are offered a subsidy for tuition in school to support Component 1: Performing. The GCSE music performing standard is broadly equivalent to grade 3 in the graded music examinations.

Subject Leader Comment

*This is a great course if you enjoy listening to and learning about a broad range of musical styles. You need to be able to work independently and perform within an ensemble. You must play an instrument **or sing** and be willing and able to perform a piece to **grade 3 standard**. This will take a lot of independent practice if you are a beginner musician but is achievable if you are committed and have lessons either in or outside of school.*

GCSE Physical Education

Exam Board: AQA
[Specification Link](#)

COURSE CONTENT

<u>3.1 The human body and movement in physical activity and sport</u>	<u>3.2 Socio-cultural influences and wellbeing in physical activity and sport</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applied anatomy and physiology • Movement analysis • Physical training • Use of data 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sports psychology • Socio-cultural influences • Health, fitness and well-being • Use of data

ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVES

AO1 Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of factors that underpin performance and involvement in physical activity and sport (25%)

AO2 Apply knowledge and understanding of factors that underpin performance and involvement in physical activity and sport (20%)

AO3 Analyse and evaluate factors that underpin performance and involvement in physical activity and sport (15%)

AO4 Demonstrate and apply relevant skills and techniques in physical activity and sport (30%) Analyse and evaluate performance (10%)

Controlled assessment / coursework	60% theory, 40% practical (10% controlled assessment)
Number of written exams (and % of grade)	2: 1hr, 15 mins each
Grade set	9 - 1

Post 16 Information	Other Useful Information
<p>Access any sports course A Level or BTEC</p>	<p><i>GCSE PE should encourage students to be inspired, motivated and challenged, and enable them to make informed decisions about further learning opportunities and career pathways. To develop knowledge, understanding, skills and values to develop and maintain their performance in physical activities and understand the benefits to health, fitness and well-being. Develop theoretical knowledge and understanding of the factors that underpin physical activity and sport and use this knowledge to improve performance. To understand how the physiological and psychological state affects performance in physical activity and sport and understand key socio-cultural influences which can affect people's involvement in physical activity and sport. Pupils must play a sport outside of school or represent the school if they are considering GCSE PE.</i></p>
<p>Subject Leader Comment</p>	
<p><i>If you are practically able and like science topics like the human body then this is the course for you. Pupils will have the opportunity to strengthen their skill level and knowledge in a range of sports.</i></p>	

GCSE Religious Studies

Exam Board: AQA
[Specification Link](#)

COURSE CONTENT

Christian Beliefs and teachings
 Christian Practices
 Islam Beliefs and teachings
 Islam practises

Theme A: Relationships and families
Theme B: Religion and life
Theme C: The existence of God and revelation
Theme D: Religion, peace and conflict

ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVES

AO1: Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of religion and beliefs including:

- Beliefs, practices and sources of authority
- Influence on individuals, communities and societies
- Similarities and differences within and/or between religions and beliefs

AO2: Analyse and evaluate aspects of religion and belief, including their significance and influence

Controlled assessment / coursework (and % of grade)	N/A
Number of written exams (and % of grade)	2: 1hr, 45 mins, 100%
Grade set	9 - 1

Progression to Post 16

My future, my career, my RE: <http://casestudies.reonline.org.uk/>

Subject Leader Comment

Religious Studies engages you with the skills you need to succeed in the 21st century by debating key issues and learning from beliefs and ideas different to your own. The knowledge and skills we explore in Religious Studies are necessary for you to work harmoniously with others and contribute positively to our global communities.

GCSE Spanish

Exam Board: AQA
[Specification Link](#)

COURSE CONTENT

Theme 1: Identity and culture

Theme 2: Local, national, international and global areas of interest

Theme 3: Current and future study and employment

ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVES

Assessment objectives (AOs) are set by Ofqual and are the same across all GCSE Spanish/French specifications and all exam boards. The exams will measure how students have achieved the following assessment objectives:

AO1: Listening – understand and respond to different types of spoken language

AO2: Speaking – communicate and interact effectively in speech

AO3: Reading – understand and respond to different types of written language

AO4: Writing – communicate in writing

Controlled assessment / coursework (and % of grade)	N/A
Exams (and % of grade)	Divided into 4 equal skills, 100%
Grade set	Foundation: 1 - 5 Higher: 4 - 9

Post 16 Information

Pupils can progress onto A Level Spanish Year 1. Subject requirement for A Level Spanish Year 1 is a grade 6 at GCSE.

Subject Leader Comment

As all skills are weighted equally, it is vital that students are keen to develop all 4, particularly developing spontaneity in speaking and grammar accuracy in writing.

BTEC Sport

Exam Board:
Edexcel/Pearson

[Specification Link](#)

COURSE CONTENT

- Unit 1: Fitness for Sport and Exercise (External Exam)
- Unit 2: Practical Performance in Sport (Internal Coursework)
- Unit 3: Applying the Principles of Personal Training (Internal Synoptic)
- Unit 6: Leading Sports Activities Internal (Internal Coursework)

ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVES

- Pass – The ability to describe aspects of the course
- Merit – the ability to explain aspects of the course
- Distinction – the ability to evaluate/analyse aspects of the course

Controlled assessment / coursework	75% internally assessed coursework, units 2, 3 & 6
Number of written exams (and % of grade)	1: 1hr, 15 mins, 25%
Grade set	Level 1 Pass - Level 2 Distinction*

Progression to Post 16	Other Useful Information
<p><i>Post 16 study Other information The Edexcel BTEC Level 1/Level 2 First Award in Sport provides a good foundation for learners in post-16 education, or to entry level job roles within the sector. Achievement at level 2 provides a suitable foundation for further study within the sector through progression on to other vocational qualifications, such as Edexcel BTEC Level 3 qualifications in Sport or Sport and Exercise Sciences.</i></p>	<p><i>This course supports pupils who may wish to explore a vocational route throughout Key Stage 4. It has been developed to:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>Encourage personal development through practical participation and performance in a range of sports and exercise activities</i> ● <i>Give learners a wider understanding and appreciation of health-related fitness, sports and exercise through a selection of optional specialist units</i> ● <i>Encourage learners to develop their people, communication, planning and team-working skills by having the opportunity to select from optional units available in the qualification structure</i> ● <i>Provide education and training for sport, leisure and recreation interested students</i>

Subject Leader Comment

This is a fantastic course, which covers a wide range of skills, knowledge and understanding in a range of sporting topics. This course is an excellent foundation for those who wish to study sport at Post 16 or for a career path. Pupils need to be organised and have a passion for sport.

FAQs

Can you select ANY subject at all? Students will be guided in their option choices. We will have frank and open discussions with all students as to whether a subject is right for them. Some students do not appreciate the level of difficulty or time that is required in certain subjects, particularly subjects that they have not studied before. We will ensure that students pick subjects they will be successful in, in order for them to progress to KS5 and beyond.

Can the option choices be changed in Year 10? No. Choices need to be made after careful thought and consideration. We cannot change whole timetables once the students have started on their courses.

What is the difference between combined or Double Science (compulsory) and Triple Science (optional)? All students will study the combined science GCSE which means they can achieve two GCSEs in science. Students can choose to study Triple Science for two lessons per week in place of core PE and PSHE. Triple Science students will achieve three GCSEs in Science. Both qualifications require students to study Biology, Chemistry *and* Physics.

The main difference between the qualifications is that there is substantially more content involved in studying for Triple Science. Students *can* progress to study sciences at A level and beyond based on Double Science GCSE but would be better prepared if they had studied Triple Science. Both Double and Triple Science involve six exams at the end of Year 11, but the Triple Science exams are longer, reflecting the additional content learned.

Can anyone select Triple Science? It is important that students' workload is set at a reasonable level and their wellbeing is not put at risk. Therefore, the Science Department will have final say on which students can select this course. Students need to be attaining a grade 6 on average by the end of Year 9 to be accepted on to the course.

Can you choose to take Further Mathematics? The highest attaining (Mastering) students will be selected to study Further Mathematics. This is in order that students have the best possible chance of success. Mathematics GCSE is already a demanding qualification. Further Maths will be delivered in the same curriculum time as Mathematics and give them two Mathematics GCSE qualifications.

Do you have to take Geography or History? All students will be expected to take Geography or History. Students may also be offered guidance as to which of these subjects they take, depending on prior attainment. If a student wishes to study both Geography and History they can choose one in option 1 and the other in option 4.

Do you have to take a foreign language? The overwhelming majority of students WILL be expected to take a modern foreign language and it is a requirement of the EBACC. Some students may be guided away from taking a language, if their current overall progress suggests they may not be successful. These students will be enrolled for our 'accelerated learner' course which provides additional support in English and Maths GCSE.

Do you have to take an Arts subject? All students will be expected to choose an arts subject. The School's definition of Arts subjects is quite broad and includes all of Design Technology. This is to ensure a broad and balanced curriculum and widen the choices available to students after year 11.

What is the difference between GCSEs and other qualifications? We offer three 'vocational' qualifications - the Cambridge National in Engineering Design and Enterprise and Marketing, and BTEC Sport. These courses have a higher percentage of coursework based assessment and a lower exam based assessment percentage. These courses are suitable for students who struggle with memory and attainment in exam situations. All can be graded at Level 2, which is the equivalent of a GCSE, or Level 1 which is below GCSE level, but still enables progression to many further education colleges. The Level 2 qualification is accepted by sixth form colleges as a GCSE equivalent and thus enables progression to A level.

Will all courses run? We try to ensure that we accommodate the option choices of all students but we cannot always do this. We do have minimum class sizes and offer these courses on the proviso that they are met. We do ask you to think seriously about reserve choices as there is a possibility that these could be studied.

Common Subject Myths

MFL	<i>“You have to be ‘fluent’ to gain a good grade at GCSE in French or Spanish”.</i>	You can get a good grade in this course without becoming fluent in the language. You will be expected to continue with the language you have been studying in Year 9.
PE	<i>“PE is an easy option”.</i>	Students are expected to complete 3 sports (which may be sports completed outside of school) to a high standard. There are written and examined elements to the PE GCSE course.
Economics	<i>“Economics is about money, it involves loads of maths and you need to be great at writing essays”.</i>	These are some common misconceptions about studying Economics for GCSE. If you are interested in current affairs, Economics will challenge you to think in different ways about the world around you. The Economics GCSE is designed to help you understand how economic issues will affect us all in our daily lives and in the future.
Enterprise & Marketing	<i>“Enterprise is two years sat at computers typing reports”.</i>	Enterprise & Marketing is a vocational subject and we will make it as practical as possible, you will be required to complete four units, one of which is completed under timed conditions and is externally assessed. You will get the opportunity to use your entrepreneurial skills. It should be seen as a good subject choice for students who are thinking about setting up a business or going into a business-related career.
Religious Studies	<i>“You need to be religious to pick RE!”</i>	This is not the case... the course content covers a wide range of religious, philosophical, moral, social and political issues (such as euthanasia, the death penalty and human rights) and these are examined from both religious AND non- religious viewpoints. Students are encouraged to debate the strengths and weaknesses of all viewpoints and develop the ability to argue an opinion that is supported by the evidence as well as understanding the views of others.