



Kenton School

Year 9 to Year 10 Options Guide 2026

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A message from our Principal

Dear Parents and Carers,

The subjects your child has studied in Year 7, 8 and 9 have been very similar for all students. However, moving into Year 10, students have a degree of choice and can select the option subjects they wish to study. As a parent/carer, you have a key role in this process, as well as supporting your child as they enter the next phase of their education at Kenton School.



All students will follow examination courses in English, Mathematics and Science. In addition, all students will participate in Physical Education and Personal, Social & Health Education. These subjects are compulsory. Students will then select from a range of courses which are shown on page fourteen of this guide. A brief outline of the courses offered is also included in this brochure.

The combined Year 9 Parents' Evening & Options Evening will give parents/carers and students the opportunity to hear about the process and talk to staff and discuss the content of the individual courses on offer.

Yours faithfully,

Sinead Green
Principal

The options process timeline

Wednesday 11th March 2026

Key Stage 4 Options assembly
Options guide emailed home

Thursday 12th March 2026

Students and parents issued with Options Guide
Year 9 Parents' and options information evening
Selection process goes live on SIMS Parent App

Thursday 26th March 2026

Deadline for completing options process

PLEASE NOTE: IF YOUR OPTIONS DECISION FORM IS COMPLETED LATE, YOU ARE LESS LIKELY TO GET YOUR PREFERRED OPTIONS.

Options requests will be checked to ensure that you have chosen a broad and balanced range of subjects allowing you access to as wide a range of careers as possible in the future.

July 2026

Final options for 2026 will be confirmed with students.

We will do our very best to accommodate your choices, but it will be necessary for reserve choices to be made. Therefore, you must choose your reserve choices carefully. We are offering a wide range of courses but may not be able to run them all if class sizes are not viable.

If there is a problem with any of your choices, we will discuss this with you. Otherwise, you will start your chosen courses in September 2026.

Compulsory curriculum at Key Stage 4

The choice you have is not entirely free. We believe it is very important that you have a balanced curriculum in Years 10 and 11, i.e. a broad range of subjects which will offer a wide choice of Post 16 courses, training or employment.

All students must study the following subjects:

English Language

One GCSE

English Literature

One GCSE

Mathematics

One GCSE

Science

Two GCSEs by following the Combined Science Trilogy Award or three GCSEs (Biology, Chemistry, Physics) if you elect to study the Triple Science pathway as one of your options

Personal, Social and Health Education

This includes Economic Wellbeing and Financial Capability and Information, Advice and Guidance which includes careers education.

No qualification awarded

Core Physical Education

No qualification awarded

If looking at the online version of this document, the Awarding Body links take you to the specification page for that course where you can find more information.

GCSE English Language

[Awarding Body link - AQA](#)

How is the course structured?

English Language consists of 2 examinations. There are no coursework elements.

Paper 1

Explorations in Creative Reading and Writing

1 hour 45 minutes – 50% of GCSE.

Section A

Reading – one literature fiction text – 4 structured questions.

Section B

Writing – one extended writing question – creating fiction – narrative/descriptive.

Paper 2

Writers' Viewpoints and Perspectives

1 hour 45 minutes – 50% of GCSE.

Section A

Reading – one non-fiction text and one literary non-fiction text (one 19th century, and one from either the 20th or 21st century.) – 4 structured questions.

Section B – Writing – one extended writing question – writing to present a viewpoint – transactional.

Non-examination Assessment: Spoken Language

One presentation/speech, including responses to questions and feedback

Achievement in Spoken Language will be reported as part of the qualification, but it will not form part of the final GCSE mark and grade.

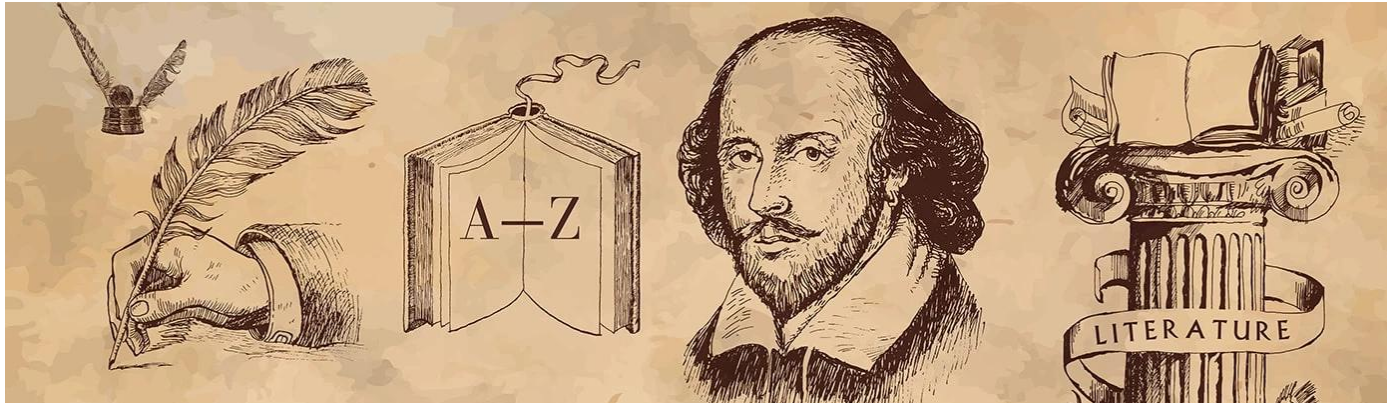
Progression and career opportunities

All jobs, apprenticeships and further education courses would have a minimum requirement of a Grade 4 in GCSE English Language or English Literature. If English is a passion or strength then as well as further studies in the subject, some careers to consider include journalism, teaching, reporting and law.



GCSE English Literature

[Awarding Body link – AQA](#)



How is the course structured?

English Literature consists of 2 examinations. There are no coursework elements.

Paper 1

Shakespeare and the 19th century novel

1 hour 45 minutes – 40% of GCSE

Section A

Shakespeare – students will answer ONE question on the studied play. 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 the studied novel. They will be required to write in detail about an extract from the novel and then to write about the novel as a whole.

Paper 2

Modern texts and Poetry

2 hours 15 minutes – 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 (Power & Conflict cluster) – students will answer ONE comparative question on one named poem printed on the paper and one other poem from the Power & Conflict 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.

Progression and career opportunities

All jobs, apprenticeships and further education courses would have a minimum requirement of a Grade 4 in GCSE English Language or English Literature.

Subjects like English literature and English language can open many different, varied careers and many of those will give you the opportunity to be creative in the work that you do. The outcomes of creative work may be wildly different among individuals or the work place they choose but many agree that creative work can be fulfilling, exciting and varied.

GCSE Mathematics

[Awarding Body link – AQA](#)

How is the course structured?

Students will sit three exams, each worth one third of the final marks. In one of the exams students will not be permitted to use a calculator. Calculator use is allowed in two of the exams.

All three papers cover the entire GCSE syllabus of:

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

The balance of these topics varies between foundation and higher tiers, with higher being more algebra heavy, and foundation focussing mostly on number, and ratio, proportion and change.

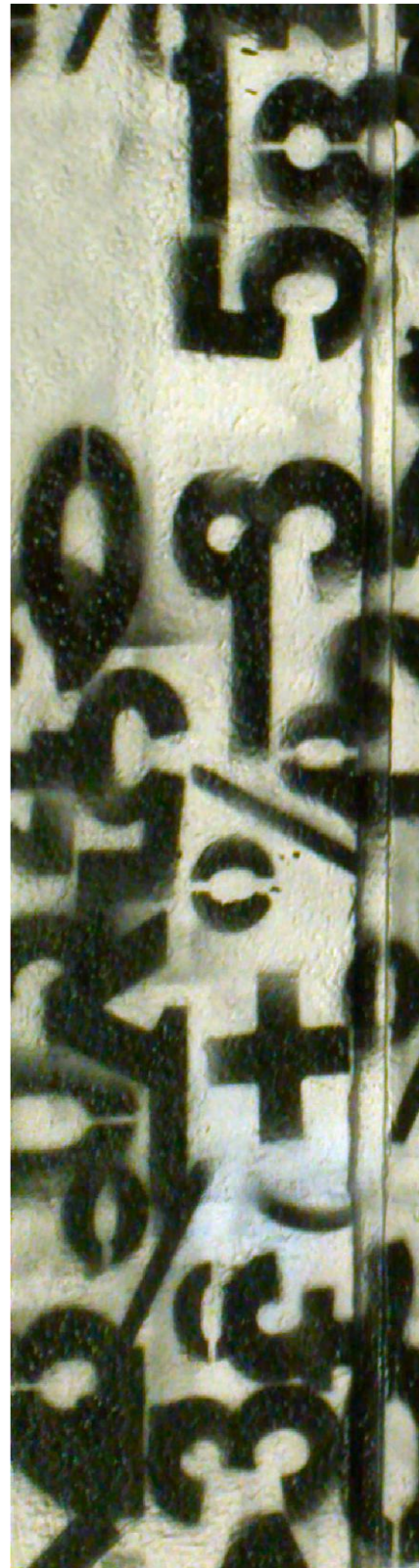
Some questions are designed to assess problem solving and analysis skills, and others assess process and understanding skills.

Progression and career opportunities

Mathematics is an essential qualification for many careers. To study at University a grade 5 or above in GCSE mathematics is essential. Many professional and technical vocations also specify a minimum of grade 5 at GCSE.

The study of Mathematics is valuable and, in many cases, necessary for engineering, science and many branches of business. Mathematics plays a vital role in any financial career, including banking, accountancy and actuarial work.

Mathematics at Kenton is a well-respected and valued qualification. For students wishing to study A Level Maths a grade 7 is normally required at GCSE.



GCSE Combined Science: Trilogy

[Awarding Body link – AQA](#)

How is the course structured?

Students will sit a total of six exams at the end of Year 11. These are two exams for each of the subject areas (Biology, Chemistry and Physics).

Each exam is 1 hour and 15 minutes long, and calculators are allowed.

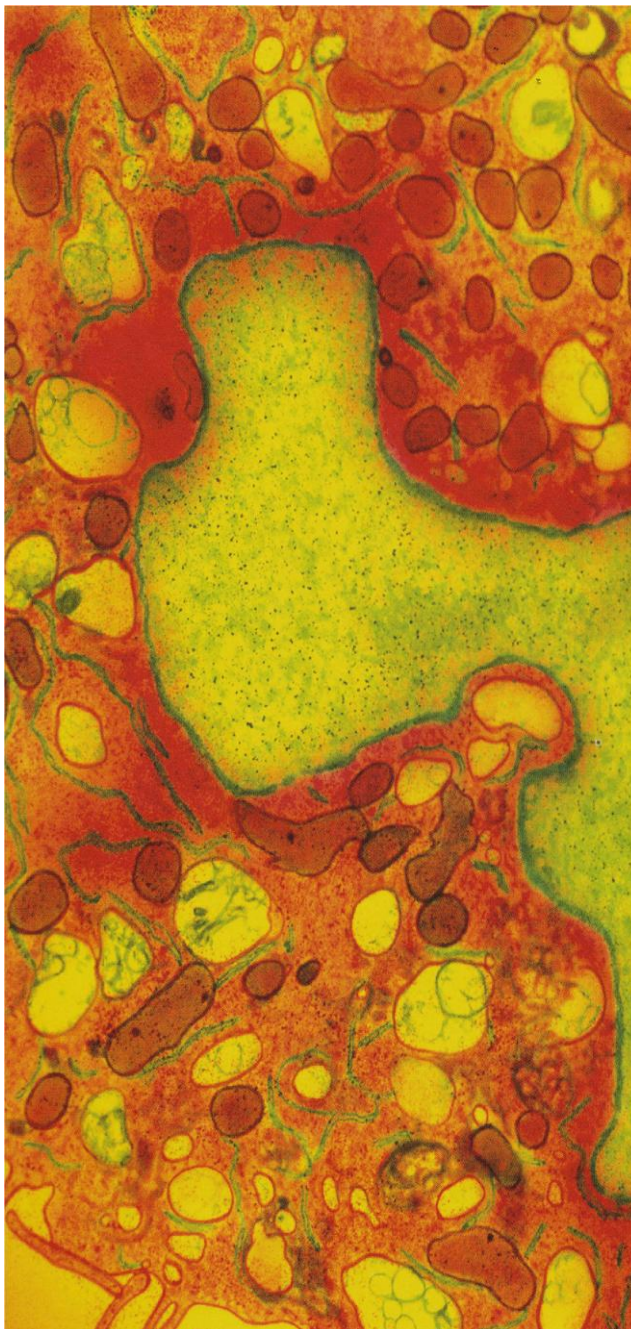
Progression and career opportunities

Science develops analytical skills which are valuable for an array of careers from health care to engineering.

It is sometimes stated that only Triple Science can lead to further study in science but that is not true and students can progress onto A level courses in a range of subjects including science or psychology and then onto University study or further training.

For students wishing to study A Level Biology, Chemistry or Physics, grade 6s are required at GCSE.

Students wanting to study separate sciences can opt to do so through the options. Both science routes can be followed to A-Level and higher studies.



Core Physical Education



All students will undertake Physical Education as a core subject for 2 hours per fortnight.

Students will follow a broad and balanced curriculum to develop competence to excel in physical activities. During KS4, our aim is to ensure our students are physically active for sustained periods of time, and engaged in competitive sports and activities, which develop personal fitness and promote an active, healthy lifestyle.

Our high-quality physical education curriculum inspires students to succeed and excel in competitive sport and other physically demanding activities. We provide opportunities for students to become physically confident in a way which supports their health and fitness. Opportunities to compete in sport and other activities build character and help to embed values such as fairness and respect.

We listen to our students, and tailor our curriculum around their needs and likes. There is more opportunity to try new activities such as circuits, kettlebells and yoga, and develop personal fitness programmes in our fantastic fitness suite. Traditional favourites will also always be an option.

The curriculum offer is backed up by the vast array of enrichment and extra-curricular opportunities offered by the PE department.

PSHE and Personal Development

How is the course structured?

Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) is designed to provide students with the knowledge, skills and understanding they need to lead confident, healthy and independent lives.

The curriculum is designed using statutory requirements from DFE and approved guidance of good practice by the PSHE Association. The programme of study consists of 3 strands, Relationships and sex education, Health and Wellbeing and Living in the wider world. The Programme of Study provides a spiral curriculum, using current experiences and preparation for the future to develop knowledge, skills and attributes, where prior learning is revisited, reinforced and extended year on year. This is grounded in the established evidence base for effective practice in PSHE education. The programme also incorporates advice and guidance, with each session signposting resources for further support, from staff in school to charities and support lines.



Our PSHE curriculum ensures that students develop a strong understanding of British Values. At Key Stage 4 we build on our understanding of religions to understand and respect the views that people of different faiths would take on topics.

Topics covered include:

- personal and social skills
- relationships and sex education.
- drugs and alcohol education
- emotional health and well-being, covering all statutory elements
- financial capability
- careers education, including input from industry
- enterprise
- community and society
- current affairs

PSHE helps students understand how they are developing personally and socially through tackling many of the moral, social and cultural issues that are part of growing up. It contributes to personal development by helping children and young people to build their personal identities, confidence and self-esteem, make career choices and understand what influences their decisions including financial ones. It enables them to recognise, accept and shape their identities, to understand and accommodate difference and change, to manage emotions and to communicate constructively in a variety of settings.

Developing an understanding of themselves, empathy and the ability to work with others will help students to form and maintain good relationships, better enjoy and manage their lives, and develop an understanding and appreciation of British Values. Our programme ensures that you will continue to develop an understanding and tolerance of people of different faiths and backgrounds

PSHE supports a wide range of government initiatives and wider research has shown that knowledge, skills, and attributes that PSHE education develops are beneficial in the development of confident, resilient, responsible world citizens. It plays a part of our wider personal development offer for students which also comprises annual Curriculum Experiences, the Elective Curriculum, and our after school Enrichment programme.

Careers education

Work-related learning is an important part of young people's education across the curriculum and key to preparing them for their future careers, enabling them to develop the skills they need to become a valuable member of society.



Careers education benefits our learners by

- enriching their education and giving them a greater understanding of the 'world of work' which lies ahead of them and the world around them;
- helping them to develop the employability skills that employers want such as teamwork, problem-solving and communication skills, together with numeracy, literacy and ICT skills;
- helping them to think through their learning options and career choices;
- enabling them to challenge stereotyping and make full use of the choice and diversity of the industry sectors;
- increasing the possibility that they might be recruited in the future by employers they come into contact with – there have been numerous cases of young people accepting job offers from employers they met through work-related learning.

At present all students in Year 10 participate in a one-week Futures Week so they can learn more about the world of work. Activities include trips to placement providers, colleges and universities, workshops with employers and virtual work experience opportunities. The week also includes access to an in-house careers fair where all students can chat with employers about job roles and pathways into employment. Drop-in sessions are available every week for students to seek advice on all career related topics.

The underlying aims of careers education are

- develop the employability skills of young people
- provide young people with the opportunity to 'learn by doing' and to learn from experts
- raise standards of achievement of students
- increase the commitment to learning, motivation and self-confidence of students
- encourage young people to stay in education
- enable young people to develop career awareness and the ability to benefit from impartial and informed information, advice and guidance
- support young people's ability to apply knowledge, understanding and skills
- improve young people's understanding of the economy, enterprise, finance and the structure of business organisations, and how they work;
- encourage positive attitudes to lifelong learning
- inform young people of the changes within the labour market and the current industry trends

Your options explained

The option blocks

Block 1 – Humanities and Languages

You must choose **one** of the following courses. Students wanting to study more than one can select others in Block 3.

- GCSE French
- GCSE Geography
- GCSE History

Block 2 – Active and Arts

You must choose **one** of the following courses.

You must also select **one** reserve.

- GCSE Art & Design (Art, Craft & Design)
- GCSE Art & Design (Graphic Communication)
- GCSE Art & Design (Textiles)
- GCSE Art & Design (Photography)
- GCSE Drama
- GCSE Music
- Technical Award in Health and Fitness

Block 3 – Other options

You must choose **two** of the following courses.

You must also select **two** reserves.

Do not choose courses you have chosen in other blocks.

To qualify for the EBacc you must study GCSE French and at least one of Geography and History.

- GCSE Art & Design (Art, Craft & Design)
- GCSE Art & Design (Graphic Communication)
- GCSE Art & Design (Textiles)
- GCSE Art & Design (Photography)
- GCSE Business
- GCSE Citizenship Studies
- GCSE Computer Science
- GCSE Design & Technology
- GCSE Drama
- GCSE French
- GCSE Geography
- GCSE History
- GCSE Media Studies
- GCSE Music
- GCSE Religious Studies
- GCSE Statistics
- GCSE Statistics and Level 2 Further Maths
- GCSE Triple Science (Biology, Chemistry, Physics)
- Technical Award in Engineering Manufacture
- Technical Award in Health and Fitness
- Technical Award in Health and Social Care
- Technical Award in Hospitality and Catering
- Technical Award in ICT

You will not be able to study more than one Art & Design course.

The different grading systems

GCSEs are graded on a 9 to 1 scale. Grade 7 is equivalent to an old A grade. Grade 4 is equivalent to an old C grade.

Vocational qualifications are rated as Pass, Merit or Distinction at Level 1 or Level 2. There is also a Distinction Star grade at Level 2. The following table shows the equivalency of the two grading systems.

Vocational grade GCSE equivalent grade	Level 2 Distinction *	Level 2 Distinction	Level 2 Merit	Level 2 Pass	Level 1 Distinction	Level 1 Merit	Level 1 Pass
	8.5	7	5.5	4	3	1.5	1

Should I complete the EBacc?

The English Baccalaureate (EBacc) is a set of subjects at GCSE that helps keep your options open for further study and future careers.

The EBacc is made up of

- English language and literature
- mathematics
- the sciences
- geography or history
- a language GCSE

A study by the UCL Institute of Education shows that studying subjects included in the EBacc provides students with greater opportunities in further education and increases the likelihood that a pupil will stay on in full-time education. Sutton Trust research reveals that studying the EBacc can also help improve a young person's performance in English and maths.

We would encourage students aiming for the highest grades to complete the EBacc set of qualifications by electing to study GCSE French.

Making your choices

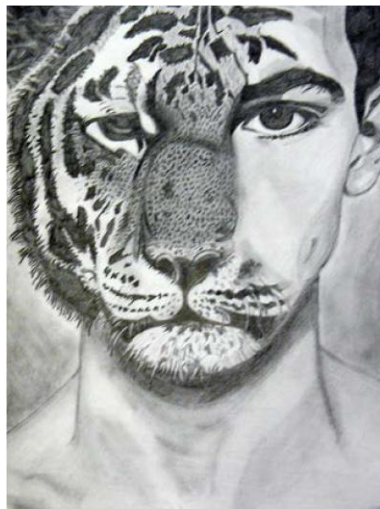
You choose your options at www.sims-options.co.uk. The form will be open on Thursday 12th March until Thursday 26th March 2026.

To do this you must have a SIMS Parent App account set up. If your parent/carers does not have this set up already, please email Connor.Tweedy@northernleaderstrust.org

The option subjects

GCSE Art & Design (Art, Craft & Design)

[Awarding Body link – AQA](#)



How is the course structured?

Component 1: Portfolio (60%)

The Portfolio consists of a sustained project developed in response to a subject, theme, task or brief. The Portfolio will evidence the journey from initial engagement with an idea(s) to the realisation of intentions. This will give students the opportunity to demonstrate, through an extended creative response, their ability to draw together different areas of knowledge, skills and/or understanding from across their course of study.

It will also be supplemented by a selection of further work resulting from activities such as trials and experiments; responses to gallery, museum or site visits; work placements; independent study and evidence of the student's specific role in any group work undertaken.

Component 2: Externally set assignment (40%)

AQA will provide a separate externally set assignment with seven different starting points. Students must select and respond to one starting point from their chosen title. The externally set assignment will provide students with the opportunity to demonstrate, through an extended creative response, their ability to draw together different areas of knowledge, skills and/or understanding in response to their selected starting point to their realisation of intentions in the 10 hours of supervised time.

What will I study?

Art and Design provides students with a wide range of creative, exciting and stimulating opportunities to explore their interests in ways that are both personally relevant and developmental in nature.

This course enables students to develop their ability to actively engage in the processes of Art and Design - to build creative skills through learning and doing, to develop imaginative and intuitive ways of working and develop knowledge and understanding of media, materials and technologies in historical and contemporary contexts, societies and cultures.

Progression and career opportunities

GCSE Art & Design can lead directly into our A Level course at Kenton and later to a range of degrees in the creative industries. These could include fine art, graphic design, illustration, architecture, fashion, interior design, media, film & television, game design and many others.

Careers can include artist, illustrator, graphic designer, art critic, game designer, arts educator, arts events roles and many others.

GCSE Art & Design (Graphic Communication)

[Awarding Body link – AQA](#)



How is the course structured?

Component 1- Portfolio of Work 60%

The Portfolio consists of a sustained project developed in response to a subject, theme, task or brief. The Portfolio will evidence the journey from initial engagement with an idea(s) to the realisation of intentions. This will give students the opportunity to demonstrate, through an extended creative response, their ability to draw together different areas of knowledge, skills and/or understanding from across their course of study. It will also be supplemented by work resulting from activities such as trials and experiments; skills-based workshops; mini and/or foundation projects; responses to gallery, museum or site visits; work placements; independent study and evidence of the student's specific role in any group work undertaken.

Component 2 - Externally Set Assignment 40%

Students must select and respond to one starting point from their chosen title. The externally set assignment will provide students with the opportunity to demonstrate, through an extended creative response, their ability to draw together different knowledge, skills and/ or understanding in response to their selected starting point to their realisation of intentions in the 10 hours of supervised time.

What will I study?

You will produce practical outcomes informed by critical and contextual sources in response to project briefs that are specifically design orientated in nature with content reflecting work-related and client-orientated contexts. Students can work in two and/or three-dimensions using appropriate graphic art media, techniques and processes, including both traditional and new technologies to convey information, ideas, meaning and emotions. This course involves applying your artwork to a brief which serves a particular purpose e.g.

- Communication graphics
- Design for print
- Advertising and branding
- Illustration
- Package design
- Typography
- Exhibition graphics

Progression and career opportunities

Graphic Communications is a subject that can be taken in to courses at Universities, Colleges and apprenticeships as a variety of levels. Career opportunities include Freelance Graphic Designers, Advertising, Marketing, Communications Designer, Design Agency, Web Designer, Games Designer, Graphics Novelist and Concept Artist.

GCSE Art & Design (Textile design)

[Awarding Body link – AQA](#)

How is the course structured?

Component 1: Portfolio (60%)

The Portfolio consists of a sustained project developed in response to a subject, theme, task or brief. The Portfolio will evidence the journey from initial engagement with an idea(s) to the realisation of intentions. This will give students the opportunity to demonstrate, through an extended creative response, their ability to draw together different areas of knowledge, skills and/or understanding from across their course of study.

It will also be supplemented by a selection of further work resulting from activities such as trials and experiments; skills-based workshops; mini and/or foundation projects; responses to gallery, museum or site visits; work placements; independent study and evidence of the student's specific role in any group work undertaken

Component 2: Externally set assignment (40%)

AQA will provide a separate externally set assignment with seven different starting points.

Students must select and respond to one starting point from their chosen title. The externally set assignment will provide students with the opportunity to demonstrate, through an extended creative response, their ability to draw together different areas of knowledge, skills and/ or understanding.

What will I study?

In this course you will produce practical / sketchbook work and you will create a range of contemporary textile items in one or more area(s) including

- Fashion and/or costume
- Printed and/or dyed materials
- Domestic textiles
- Constructed and/or applied textiles
- Constructed and/or stitched and/or embellished textiles.

You will demonstrate practical skills in your chosen areas of study within Fashion and Textiles.

You will gain knowledge and understanding of how ideas, feelings and meanings are conveyed in images, artefacts and products in your chosen area(s) of study in Fashion and Textile Design; a range of art, craft and design processes including two and/or three dimensions and traditional and new media technologies; a variety of approaches, methods and intentions of contemporary and historical artists, designers from different cultures and their contribution to continuity and change in society in their chosen area(s) of study within Fashion and Textile Design

Progression and career opportunities

GCSE Textiles could lead you to many careers in the creative industries. There are increasingly more opportunities for employment within Art and Design, with the industry in the UK being worth £108 billion. Some potential job pathways include costume design, fashion journalism, styling, interior design, art therapy, buying/retail, colourist, textile technologist, conservator, curation, embroidery, and artist/maker.



GCSE Art & Design (Photography)

[Awarding Body link – AQA](#)

How is the course structured?

Component 1: Portfolio (60%)

The Portfolio consists of a sustained project developed in response to a subject, theme, task or brief. The Portfolio will evidence the journey from initial engagement with an idea(s) to the realisation of intentions. This will give students the opportunity to demonstrate, through an extended creative response, their ability to draw together different areas of knowledge, skills and/or understanding from across their course of study.

It will also be supplemented by a selection of further work resulting from activities such as trials and experiments; skills-based workshops; mini and/or foundation projects; responses to gallery, museum or site visits; work placements; independent study and evidence of the student's specific role in any group work undertaken.

Component 2: Externally set assignment (40%)

AQA will provide a separate externally set assignment with seven different starting points.

Students must select and respond to one starting point from their chosen title. The externally set assignment will provide students with the opportunity to demonstrate, through an extended creative response, their ability to draw together different areas of knowledge, skills and/ or understanding in response to their selected starting point to their realisation of intentions in the 10 hours of supervised time.

What will I study?

Photography will provide students with creative, exciting and stimulating opportunities to produce images using light-sensitive materials such as photographic film, or digital methods of development and production to create static or moving images. Students will have the opportunity to produce work in one or more of these areas:

Portraiture, location photography, studio photography, experimental imagery, installation, documentary photography, photo-journalism, moving image: film, video and animation, fashion photography.

Photography is a practical course with elements of written work and will involve drawing – an exam board requirement. Students will study the work of a range of Photographers and Artists and learn how to analyse and describe their work. Students will also learn how to use digital and 35mm cameras and explore a range of traditional and experimental techniques and learn to use shutter speed and aperture effectively. Students' written and practical work is assessed and marks are awarded based on the clarity of written work and the creativity and technical competence of practical work.

Progression and career opportunities

GCSE Photography prepares students for further study including our own A Level course at Kenton. Following this, there are a range of degrees across the UK specialising in photography, video and other lens-based media.

Careers can include photographer (in roles such as fine art, fashion, events, portrait, family, wildlife), photojournalist, animator, director of photography in film and television to name just a few.



Awarding Body link – OCR



Influences of operations and HRM on business activity

Written exam: 1 hour 45 minutes; 90 marks / 50% Subject content

Influences of marketing and finance on business activity.

Written exam: 1 hour 45 minutes; 90 marks / 50% Subject content

The course gives students the opportunity to explore real business issues and how businesses work.

Students will consider the practical application of business concepts. The units provide opportunities to explore theories and concepts in the most relevant way, through the context of events in the business and economic world. The knowledge and skills gained from this specification will provide your students with a firm foundation for further study.

The GCSE Business studies course is a good foundation and provides the knowledge, understanding, skills for Level 2 learners to progress to: A Levels, level 3 vocational qualifications, apprenticeships and traineeships.

GCSE Citizenship Studies

[Awarding Body link – AQA](#)



How is the course structured?

Paper 1

Section A: Active citizenship

Section B: Politics and participation

One hour and forty five minutes. 50% of the GCSE.

Paper 2

Section A: Life in modern Britain

Section B: Rights and responsibilities

One hour and forty five minutes. 50% of the GCSE.

What will I study?

GCSE Citizenship Studies has the power to motivate and enable young people to become thoughtful, active citizens. You will gain a deeper knowledge of democracy, government and law, and develop skills to create sustained and reasoned arguments, present various viewpoints and plan practical actions to benefit society.

You will also gain the ability to recognise bias, critically evaluate argument, weigh evidence and look for alternative interpretations and sources of evidence, all of which are essential skills valued by higher education and employers

Progression and career opportunities

You may choose to pursue A-levels in Citizenship, Law, Politics and related subjects. This course will however be welcomed by any further education option and the knowledge, understanding and skills developed throughout Citizenship will be fundamental in your future progression in education.

A good GCSE grade in Citizenship provides the backbone and skills necessary for any career in life. It will allow you to choose A Levels and a degree that can lead to careers in law, journalism and teaching. A good qualification in Citizenship also speaks volumes about your character as a responsible, aware and active citizen in society.

GCSE Computer Science

[Awarding Body link – OCR](#)



How is the course structured?

The course is examined through two written exams, each worth 50% of the final grade

Paper 1 – Computer systems

- Systems Architecture
- Memory & storage
- Wired and wireless networks
- Network topologies, protocols and layers
- System security
- Systems software
- Ethical, legal, cultural and environmental concerns
- Data representation

Paper 2 - Computational thinking, algorithms and programming

- Algorithms
- Programming techniques
- Producing robust programs
- Computational logic
- Translators and programming tools

What will I study?

GCSE Computer Science gives students a real, in-depth understanding of the complex nature of computing technology. Using mathematical and logical processes, the subject offers an insight into what goes on 'behind the scenes' including writing computer programs and exploring what happens with those programs inside a digital device. The course focuses on the development of students' problem solving skills.

You will:

- Develop your understanding of current and emerging technologies
- Look at the use of algorithms in computer programs
- Develop computer programs to solve problems
- Evaluate the effectiveness of computer programs/solutions and the impact of computer technology in society

Progression and career opportunities

GCSE Computing Science provides the skills and techniques for students to pursue a career in Computer Science or undertake any Level 3 ICT/Computing course.

GCSE Design & Technology

[Awarding Body link – AQA](#)

GCSE Design & Technology will prepare students to participate confidently and successfully in an increasingly technological world. Students will gain awareness and learn from wider influences on Design and Technology including historical, social, cultural, environmental, and economic factors. Students will get the opportunity to work creatively when designing and making and apply technical and practical expertise.

How is the course structured?

Exam – 2 hours – 50% of GCSE

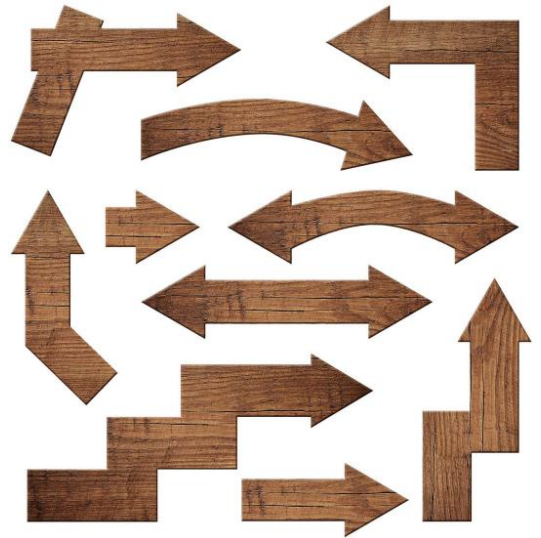
- Core technical principles
- Specialist technical principles
- Designing and making principles

The exam contains a mixture of multi-choice and short response answers as well as some extended answers

Coursework - 50% of GCSE

Marks are awarded for

- Identifying and investigating design possibilities
- Producing a design brief and specification
- Generating design ideas
- Developing design ideas
- Realising design ideas
- Analysing & evaluating



What will I study?

Core technical principles

- new and emerging technologies
- energy generation and storage
- developments in new materials
- systems approach to designing
- mechanical devices
- materials and their working properties

Specialist technical principles

- selection of materials or components
- forces and stresses
- ecological and social footprint
- sources and origins
- using and working with materials
- stock forms, types and sizes
- scales of production
- specialist techniques and processes
- surface treatments and finishes

Designing and making principles

- investigation, primary and secondary data
- environmental, social and economic challenge
- the work of others
- design strategies
- communication of design ideas
- prototype development
- selection of materials and components
- tolerances
- material management
- specialist tools and equipment
- specialist techniques and processes

Progression and career opportunities

Our Engineering course is a popular choice at Sixth Form and this GCSE would prepare students for that. That course leads into a wide range of popular Higher Education courses aimed towards the Design and Manufacturing industries. Equally, this GCSE would equip students with skills and knowledge needed for employment of apprenticeships in a range of industries.

GCSE Drama

[Awarding Body link – AQA](#)

How is the course structured?

The subject content for GCSE Drama is divided into three components:

Component 1 - Understanding drama

- Knowledge and understanding of drama and theatre
- Study of one set play
- Analysis and evaluation of the work of live theatre makers

1:45 exam, 40% of GCSE

Component 2 - Devising drama (practical)

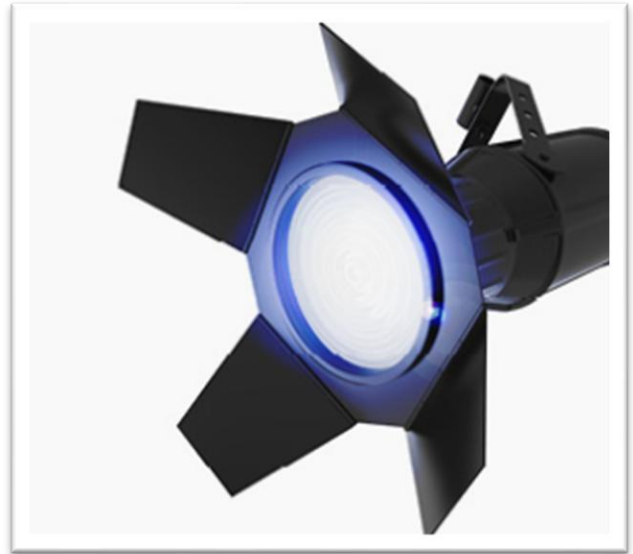
- Process of creating devised drama
- Performance of devised drama
- Analysis and evaluation of own work

A log (60 marks) and your performance (20 marks) make up 40% of the GCSE

Component 3 - Texts in practice

- Performance of two extracts from one play

20% of the GCSE



What will I study?

GCSE Drama offers students the opportunity to explore drama as a practical art form in which ideas and meaning are communicated to an audience through choices of form, style and convention.

You will create, perform and respond to drama informed by their theoretical knowledge of drama and theatre.

Progression and career opportunities

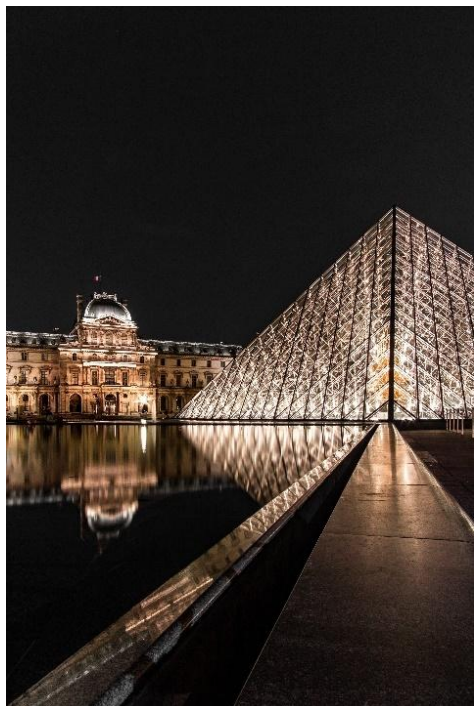
This specification ensures continuity for students progressing from GCSE Drama to AS and A-level or other courses in Drama and Theatre.

You will already be familiar with studying a whole set text and will have built solid foundations in reviewing a live theatre production and in interpreting key extracts.

GCSE French

[Awarding Body link – AQA](#)

Studying GCSE French alongside our core curriculum means you will qualify for the English Baccalaureate Certificate (EBacc).



How is the course structured?

The course continues the work begun in Key Stage 3 on the acquisition of the four skills:

- Listening – 25% of GCSE
- Speaking – 25% of GCSE
- Reading – 25% of GCSE
- Writing – 35% of GCSE

By covering a wider range of topic areas in greater depth, students are taught to expand their vocabulary and understanding of grammatical structures with the aim of using the language effectively and creatively for the purposes of practical communication

What will I learn?

In class, you get to study a wide range of topics all about different people and cultures, not just how to speak. You will, watch films and listen to songs in their native language - and understand them too. Learning languages really improves your communication skills too; it's impressive to be able to speak a foreign language.



You will study the topics of

- People and lifestyle
- Popular culture
- Communication and the world around us

Progression and career opportunities

A language will always be useful no matter what you do.

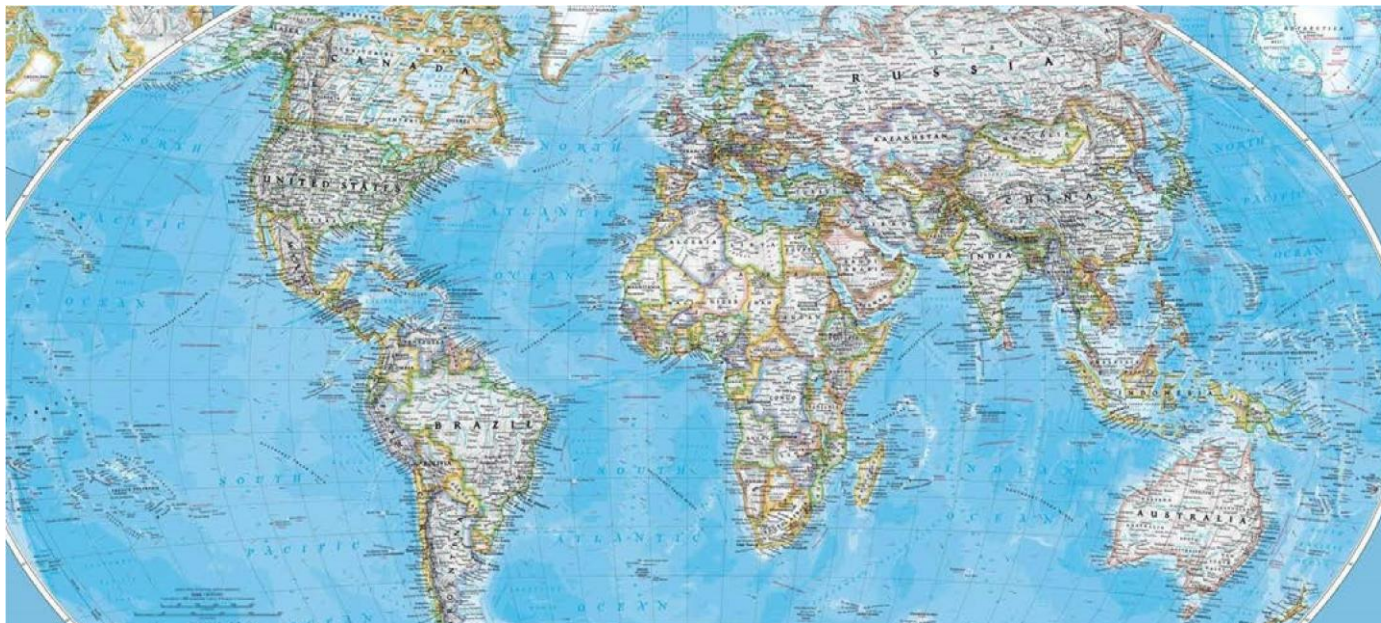
You may go on to study A Level French at Sixth Form. The study of a language at higher level is a valuable qualification for university entry.

There will be a range of opportunities open to you, where you can continue to use and further develop your language skills and knowledge of contemporary society.

Some students choose to do degree courses in languages; others choose to pursue a higher education course in another subject but choose a language option alongside it. Having a language at A Level will improve your employability, in particular with companies which have international branches.

GCSE Geography

[Awarding Body link – AQA](#)



How is the course structured?

This course contains the following topics:

- Coasts
- Rivers
- Urban Challenges
- Eco Systems
- Economic World
- Natural Hazards
- Fieldwork
- Resource Management

Students will investigate a geographical topic in the field and produce an investigation under examination conditions at the end of the course.

There are three examinations:

- Paper 1 - Physical Geography
- Paper 2 - Human Geography
- Paper 3 - Skills and Fieldwork

What will I learn?

Geography stimulates an interest and a sense of wonder about people, places and the environment. It is a valuable subject that will help students to make more sense of a complex and dynamically changing world – changes that could one day affect you as well as others.

Geography is a very practical subject, with the opportunities to learn new skills such as modern computer-based mapping (called GIS), map skills,

interpreting photographs, fieldwork skills, presenting, enquiry, role play and debating techniques. Fieldwork, and work which takes place outside of the classroom, is an important part to the subject of geography. Fieldwork opportunities allow students to enhance and develop understanding of the topics that they have learnt about in class. This will allow them to see things from a new perspective and of course have fun.

Progression and career opportunities

A qualification in geography is well respected by universities and employers alike. Geography provides the opportunity to pursue a broad range of careers, including Environmental and Scientific Research, Planning, Leisure and Tourism, Landscape Architecture and Management, International Charities, Teaching and many more areas.

Geography allows you to find a career that is right for you and develop important life skills that can adapt to all walks of life.

GCSE History

[Awarding Body link – AQA](#)

How is the course structured?

The course has 4 units covering a wide range of topics:

- AD America, 1920-1973: Opportunity and Inequality
- Conflict and tension, 1894–1918 (The First World War)
- Britain: Health and the people: c1000 to the present day
- Norman England, c1066–c1100

There are two exams at the end of Year 11.

What will I learn?

Students will begin Year 10 studying with AD America, 1920-1973: Opportunity and Inequality. This period study focuses on the development of America during a turbulent half century of change. It was a period of expansion and consolidation – the expansion to the west and consolidation of the United States. Students will study the political, economic, social and cultural aspects of these two developments and the role of key individuals and groups that shaped change.

In Year 10 students will also develop a greater overview of History by studying Britain: The Health of the people c1000AD to the present day. Students will get a fantastic opportunity to see how Britain has changed in the last millennium by studying changes in health care. Students will study how, the treatment of illness, public health, and surgical procedures have changed. They will learn this by exploring the reasons for change and assessing which factors were the most important; individual genius, war, science and technology or just luck that resulted in better health care in the 21st Century?

Moving to year 11, students will study Conflict and tension, 1894–1918 (The First World War). This wider world depth study enables students to understand the complex and diverse interests of the Great Powers and other states. It focuses on the causes, nature and conclusion of the First World War and seeks to show how and why conflict occurred, and why it proved difficult to bring the war to a conclusion.

In Year 11 students will also study the Norman world in depth. They will learn about a time when England was invaded, and William the Conqueror and his heirs looked to control and change the country. As part of this you will complete a study of Norman architecture and will visit a historical site to gain a better understanding of the key features of this period.

Progression and career opportunities

History is accepted as a great academic qualification by a wide range of employers as it shows research and communication skills, as well as an ability to consider a problem from more than one point of view. The study of history develops the ability to use evidence and to construct powerful arguments. As a result, it is unsurprising that many lawyers, accountants, and journalists studied history. This course will have links to regional development, tourism and heritage, but is also a good general qualification that enables you to keep your options open for further study at the next key stage.



GCSE Media Studies

[Awarding Body link – Eduqas](#)

How is the course structured and what will I study?

This course is designed to enable students to develop a critical understanding of the role of television, film, radio, pop music, newspapers and magazines in society and allow students to create their own media products. An important feature of the course is the relationship between theory and practical work.

Component 1 - Exploring the Media

Written examination: 1 hour 30 minutes / 40% of qualification

Section A: Exploring Media Language and Representation

This section assesses media language and representation.

Media language is the set of techniques a product uses to pack meaning into a product in a way that attracts, informs and excites us. Representation is the coding of meanings about people, places and beliefs. It can be fair and unfair, accurate and inaccurate. We will consider why!

Section B: Exploring Media Industries and Audiences

This section assesses two of the following media forms: film, newspapers, radio, video games. It includes one stepped question on media industries and one-stepped question on audiences. Media Industries are the organisations that generate and regulate media products. Do they do a good job? We will question that! Audiences are fundamental to media products. If there were no audiences, there would be no media products. How can we tell the likely age range, gender, social class, interests and cultural experiences of audiences from their media consumption? We will investigate that!

Component 2 - Understanding Media Forms and Products

Written examination: 1 hour 30 minutes / 30% of qualification

Section A: Television (Crime Drama or Sitcom)

Section B: Music (music videos and online media)

This component assesses all areas of the theoretical framework and contexts of the media in relation to television and music. Theories and contexts are really important to our understanding of the media. The more we consider why audiences behave in certain ways and what they are getting from media products, the more we understand them. That is Audience Theory. How that is changed by where they come from, who they are and what they experience is Context.

Component 3: Creating Media Products

Non-exam assessment / 30% of qualification.

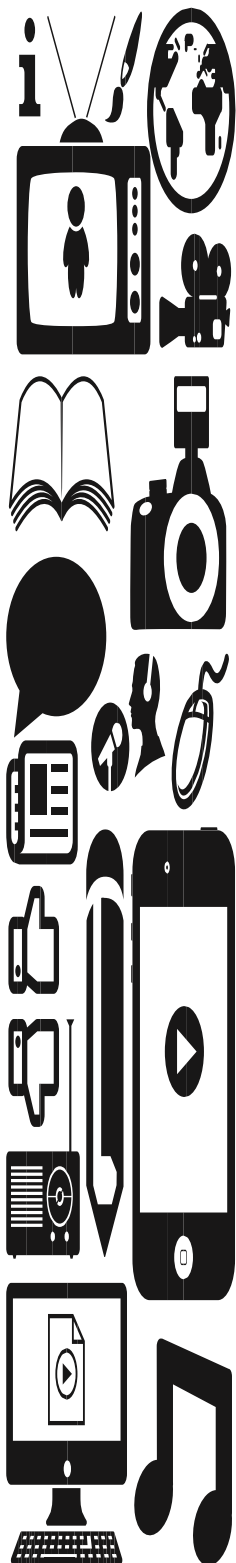
An individual media production for an intended audience in response to a choice of briefs set by the examination board, applying knowledge and understanding of media language and representation.

Examples of these include creating a new magazine or website, a music video, a sequence from a TV show or print-based marketing for a new film.

Students really enjoy the creative work involved in Creating Media Products. You can create something at school that contributes 30% of your final grade.

Progression and career opportunities

Having completed a GCSE Media course there could be an opportunity to develop skills and knowledge further by taking A Level Media Studies. Many of our students have gone on to University to specialise in TV Production, Film Making and Media-related courses in recent years.



GCSE Music

[Awarding Body link - Eduqas](#)

Students wishing to study Music should be active participants in music, either in school or at home.

What will I study and how is the course structured?

GCSE music is based on developing and applying the musical knowledge, understanding and skills to ensure students form a personal and meaningful relationship with music. You will be encouraged to engage critically and creatively with a wide range of music and musical contexts, and reflect on how music is used in the expression of personal and collective identities.

Component 1 - Performing Music

At least two pieces of performance lasting 4-6 minutes in total. One of the pieces will be ensemble, the other either(s) solo or ensemble. 30% of grade.

Component 2 - Composing Music

Two compositions, one to a brief set by WJEC and one free composition. 30% of grade.

Component 3 – Appraising

This is assessed through a 75 minute listening made up of 8 questions. There will be two questions on each of the areas of study.

The four areas of study are:

- **Musical forms and devices** - Forms and devices are of fundamental importance in musical composition, and many of the common musical forms and devices used by composers today have their origin in the Western Classical Tradition. You will engage with a variety of music from the prescribed eras, through a range of performing, composing and appraising activities, making links between them as you do so
- **Music for ensemble** - Music for ensemble forms the basis for a study of texture and sonority. Through a study of diverse musical styles composed for ensemble, such as jazz and blues, musical theatre and chamber music, you will consider how music is composed for small groups of instruments and voices
- **Film music** – you will have the opportunity to compose and perform film music and are encouraged to use musical technology to create mood and atmosphere through engaging with the story of the film
- **Popular music** – you will explore the musical styles associated with a variety of popular music, and they will have the opportunity to perform popular music as well as compose music associated with a popular music genre

Progression and career opportunities

The course will prepare a give a solid foundation for students studying any further music-based courses at College or Sixth Forms whether they be performance, Technology or academic based courses. Many students also continue into other Arts based courses such as Drama, Musical Theatre or Media. The course is a solid foundation for career opportunities as performers, teachers, composers, writers, Theatre, TV, Radio and Media as well as the Digital Music world and Gaming. Music qualifications are also highly desirable by employers of all kinds and also reflect favourably on any University application.



GCSE Religious Studies

[Awarding Body link – AQA](#)

We live in a diverse society: understanding religious ideas, beliefs, and outlooks, means we can have a better understanding of the world we live in. This is a subject that asks the big questions in life. Through studying the subject you will develop critical thinking, evaluation, and empathy.

How is the course structured and what will I study?

You will sit two examinations, each lasting one hour and forty five minutes and each worth 50% of the grade.

Paper 1

Study of Religious (Christianity and Islam) beliefs, teachings, and practice

Paper 2

Thematic Studies - Religion and Life issues, Crime and punishment, Peace and conflict, Relationships and family

Progression and career opportunities

The subject is highly regarded by universities/employers, proving your ability to think critically, discuss and evaluate. It can be useful in many different jobs including broadcasting, film, media, medicine, education, finance, civil service, law, politics, publishing, social care, and journalism.

“It shows that someone has some understanding of the beliefs and values of others” - Metropolitan Police recruitment officer

“RE is a way of broadening your understanding of the world and of people. In this job, you must meet people from all walks of life, and a huge range of cultural backgrounds.” - Journalist

“When you work in a hospital, you come across quite a lot of people from different cultural backgrounds.

Studying RE prepared me for this” - NHS Cardiologist



GCSE Statistics

[Awarding Body link – AQA](#)

How is the course structured?

Statistics is about making decisions when there is uncertainty. Perhaps one of the most versatile areas of maths, it gives you the skills to collect, analyse, interpret and present data.

GCSE Statistics expands on your knowledge of statistics in GCSE mathematics and puts this more into the real world. You will look at distributions seen in real life as well as problem solving and higher level statistical analysis.

Your understanding of the content will be assessed in two exams at the end of the course. Students on this course will aim to complete the Higher GCSE Statistics exam aiming for grades 9-4.



Progression and career opportunities

It complements subjects such as GCSE Biology, Geography and Business, and opens the door to a variety of careers – from weather forecasting to the biological sciences.

Whilst it is by no means essential to take this course if you want to do A-Level Maths, it would help prepare you for the statistics element of the A-Level.

Understanding statistics will help you if you want to study a wide range of subjects after school, anything from psychology to economics to marketing and sciences all require you to collect and interpret data.

GCSE Statistics and Level 2 Further Maths

[Awarding Body link – AQA](#)

By selecting this pathway you will be choosing an option in which you take GCSE Statistics and also a Level 2 Certificate in Further Maths. This pathway is aimed at students targeting the highest grades in maths (7+) and who are considering studying A-Levels in maths or related subjects in Year 12.

Information on GCSE Statistics is on the previous page. This page gives details of the Further Maths course.

How is the course structured?

This qualification fills the gap for high achieving students by assessing your higher order mathematical skills, particularly in algebraic reasoning, in greater depth.

It offers the opportunity for stretch and challenge that builds on the Key Stage 4 curriculum and is intended as an additional qualification to the GCSE Mathematics, rather than as a replacement. The content covers the areas of algebra and geometry, which are crucial to further study in the subject, in greater depth and breadth. This qualification places an emphasis on higher order technical proficiency, rigorous argument and problem solving skills.

It also gives an introduction to calculus and matrices and develops further skills in trigonometry, functions and graphs.

Progression and career opportunities

Whilst it is by no means essential to take this course if you want to do A-Level Maths, it would help you fully maximise your potential in those further studies. Developing your understanding of some of the more complex elements of the GCSE Maths course will also support your achievement on that course.



GCSE Triple Science – Biology, Chemistry & Physics

Awarding Body link – [AQA Biology](#) – [AQA Chemistry](#) – [AQA Physics](#)

How is the course structured?

By electing to choose Triple Science, students will gain separate qualifications in each of Biology, Chemistry and Physics rather than the Combined Science qualification worth two GCSEs.

Students will have thirteen rather than eight lessons of science a fortnight so they must enjoy science to select this option!

Examination is through two exams for each subject at the end of Year 11. Each exam is one hour and forty five minutes long.

What will I study?

You study the same content as Trilogy Science but with added depth and range of topics. In addition to the content listed below, you will also need to experience and understand required practical investigations as part of this course and apply scientific skills to exam questions.

Biology

You will study a variety of human, animal and plant biology over the two years of the course. Areas covered include: Cells and organs, health and disease, nerves and hormones, life processes, ecology, and evolution.

Chemistry

You will study aspects of physical, inorganic, and organic chemistry. Areas covered include: Atoms and the periodic table, bonding and structure of compounds, rates of reaction, chemical synthesis, the Earth and its atmosphere, crude oil and its uses.

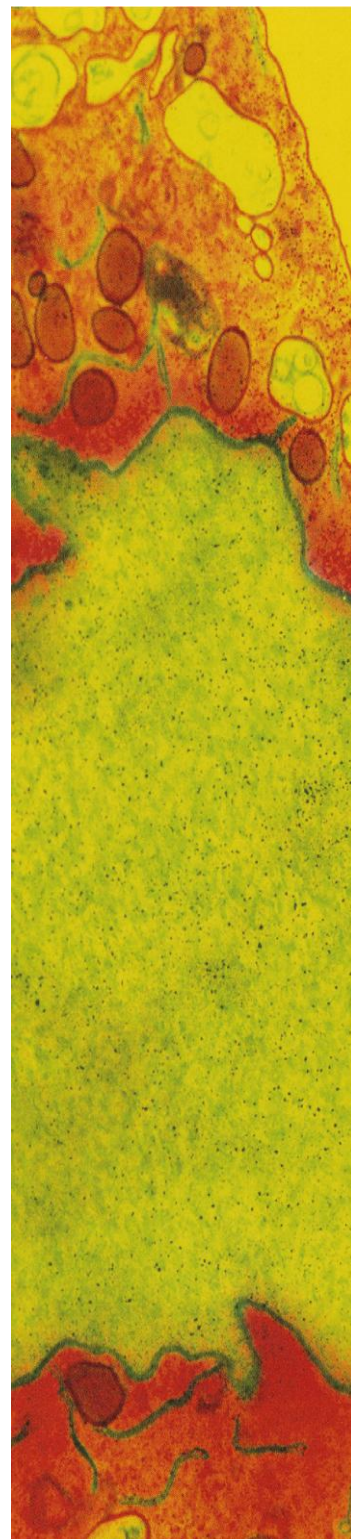
Physics

You will study topics on all branches of physics. Areas covered include: Waves and radiation, forces and motion, energy transfers and generation, circuits and electricity and space.

Progression and career opportunities

This course is intended for students who have a keen interest in scientific study. You will therefore have an excellent basis from which to study Biology, Chemistry and Physics at A Level as well as other popular courses such as Psychology. From there the sky is the limit!

Past pupils have gone into the armed forces, onto apprentices or university all over the world. Science university courses include areas such as medicine, dentistry, veterinary science, engineering, and environmental science, to name a few.



Cambridge Nationals in Engineering Manufacturing

[Awarding Body link – OCR](#)

How is the course structured?

There are three units of assessment. Students must complete all three units of assessment to achieve the qualification.

Unit R014 Principles of engineering manufacture - OCR-set written examination (40%) 1 hour 15min

In this unit you will learn about the different types of manufacturing processes, the materials that can be used to manufacture products using these processes, and the factors to be considered when determining the manufacturing requirements of an engineered product.

Unit R015 Manufacturing a one-off product - NEA centre-assessed, OCR moderated (30%)

In this unit you will learn to identify the information required to safely produce a one-off product, plan the production of a product and carry out risk assessments for the processes, tools and equipment needed to produce a product in small quantities.

Unit R016 Manufacturing in quantity - NEA centre-assessed, OCR moderated (30%)

In this unit you will learn how to manufacture and use simple jigs and templates to support manufacturing in volume. By using CAD software, you will learn about the information needed to facilitate manufacture and apply this in order to program Computer Numerical Control (CNC) equipment.

What will I study?

Unit R014 Principles of engineering manufacture

- Manufacturing processes
- Engineering materials
- Manufacturing requirements
- Developments in engineering manufacture.

Unit R015 Manufacturing a one-off product

- Planning the production of a one-off product
- Measuring and marking out
- Safely use processes, tools and equipment to make a product.

Unit R016 Manufacturing in quantity

- Preparing for manufacture
- Develop programmes to operate CNC equipment.
- Safely use processes and equipment to make products in quantity.

Progression and career opportunities

This qualification will enable you to learn about the process of engineering manufacture and understand the different materials that can be used to manufacture products. You will develop the ability to plan the production of a one-off product using a range of hand-held pieces of equipment and machining methods. You will also learn how to program CNC equipment to manufacture.

These skills will help you progress onto further study in the engineering, manufacturing, process and control sector. This may be Level 3 vocational qualifications, such as the Cambridge Technical in Engineering, A-Levels, such as A-Level Design and Technology, or one of the number of Fabrication and Welding Operative/Technician or Manufacturing and Process Operative Apprenticeships. It is anticipated that these qualifications will also enable you to progress onto a T Level such as Manufacturing, Processing and Control.



Technical Award in Health & Fitness

[Awarding Body link – NCFE](#)

How is the course structured?

Unit 1 - 40%

Introduction to Body Systems and
Principles of Training in Health and Fitness
90 minute exam

Unit 2 - 60%

Preparing and Planning for Health and Fitness
Scenario based coursework

What will I study?

This qualification is designed for students with an interest in any of the health and fitness contexts such as exercise, lifestyles and diet. It is for those who are looking to develop a significant core of knowledge and understanding, and want to apply that knowledge in preparing, planning and developing a health and fitness programme.

The objectives of this qualification are to:

- develop a broad understanding of the structure and function of body systems
- identify the effects of health and fitness activities on the body
- understand health and fitness and the components of fitness
- apply the principles of training
- understand the impact of lifestyle on health and fitness
- test and develop components of fitness
- apply health and fitness analysis and set goals
- plan, develop and take part in a health and fitness programme and understand how to prepare safely

Progression and career opportunities

This qualification will prepare students for Level 3 qualifications in Fitness and Physical Education in Sixth Form or College as well as for employment in fitness industries.



Technical Award in Health & Social Care

[Awarding Body link – NCFE](#)



This course offers an introductory qualification that focuses on aspects of employment in the Health, Social Care and Early Years sectors. Throughout this course, students are immersed in the work roles and responsibilities of a variety of health and social care staff to ensure they gain a detailed understanding of the diverse nature of the sector. It provides a good basis to move on to a more advanced work-related qualification, such as our level 3 course at sixth form, and gives the knowledge, understanding and practical skills needed in preparation for work.

How is the course structured?

Students will be assessed in class and will complete one internally assessed assignment, this will assess the learner's ability to effectively draw together their knowledge, understanding and skills from all 8 topic areas. Students will also take an external examination which is based on all 8 topic areas. The written examination is a mixture of multiple choice, short answer and extended-response questions.

What will I study?

The course is comprised of eight content areas:

- Health and social care provision and services
- Job roles in health and social care and the care values that underpin professional practice
- Legislation, policies and procedures in health and social care
- Human development across the life span
- The care needs of the individual
- How health and social care services are accessed
- Partnership working in health and social care
- The care planning cycle

Progression and career opportunities

NCFE qualifications are nationally recognised which benefits students in progressing onto further advanced courses or gaining an apprenticeship in the health and social care sector. Many of our students choose to stay with us through sixth form to complete their level 3 qualification and then move on to work, apprenticeships or university. In the past 5 years we have had students move on to study nursing, psychology, social work, public services and many more.

If you are aspiring to be a nurse, midwife, social worker, police officer, nursery worker or have a desire to undertake any other career within the sector this is the course for you.

Technical Award in Hospitality and Catering

[Awarding Body link – WJEC](#)

How is the course structured?

The course has been designed to help you learn about this vocational sector and the potential it can offer you for your career or further study.

Unit 1- The Hospitality and Catering Industry

Externally assessed by way of a written examination and counts for 40% of the final grade.

Unit 2 - Hospitality and Catering in Action

Internally assessed and externally moderated: A 9-hour piece of work which is made up of written tasks and planning with the addition of a 3-hour practical exam carried out in school.

This accounts for 60% of the final grade.



What will I study?

The objectives of this vocational course are:

- Acquire knowledge of all aspects of the Hospitality and Catering industry and be able to propose new types of provision for specific locations.
- Apply your learning in relation to front-of-house and kitchen operations to determine how the proposed hospitality and catering provision will operate efficiently legally and financially viable whilst meeting the needs of your potential market.
- To learn to safely prepare, cook and present nutritional dishes.
- Draw upon on your learning of different types of provision, kitchen and front of house operations in Unit 1, as well as personal safety in your preparations.

Progression and career opportunities

This course is a starting point for employment in hospitality and catering, ranging from waiting staff, receptionists and catering assistants to chefs, hotel and bar managers and food technologists in food manufacturing. All of these roles require further education and training either through apprenticeships or further and higher education.

Technical Award in ICT (Information and Communications Technology)

[Awarding Body link – WJEC](#)



How is the course structured and what will I study?

ICT in Society

In this unit, you will explore the wide range of uses of hardware, application and specialist software in society. You will investigate how information technology is used in a range of contexts, including in business, education and at home. This unit is worth 40% of the marks and is assessed by an online exam lasting one hour and twenty minutes.

ICT in Context

This unit introduces you to a broad working knowledge of databases, spreadsheets, automated documents and images and will enable you to apply your knowledge and understanding to solve problems in vocational settings. You will complete a piece of controlled assessment in lessons to be assessed in this unit. That controlled assessment will take 40 hours and is worth 60% of the overall grade.

Progression and career opportunities

The course will develop your knowledge and understanding of the ICT sector and provide you with opportunities to develop associated practical skills. It covers ICT in Society allowing you to explore the wide range of uses of hardware, application and specialist software. It also covers ICT in context introducing you to a broad working knowledge of databases, spreadsheets, automated documents and images.

The Vocational Award in ICT has been designed to support students who want to learn about this sector of employment and the potential it can offer you in your careers or further study. You will have the opportunity to develop a range of specialist and general skills that would support your progression to employment or further training.

Notes

