



Year 9 GCSE Options Booklet 2024-2026

INFORMATION FOR SELECTING GCSE OPTIONS

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Introduction

This document provides information to understand the options available for studying in Years 10 and 11 and what the courses include. Information regarding subject areas and variety is given below.

Which subjects are required?



Mathematics (Pearson IGCSE)



English Language (Pearson IGCSE)

English Literature (Pearson IGCSE)

Which range of subjects should be considered?

When considering options, it is good to have a variety of subjects which will provide a full and enriching curriculum whilst keeping pathways open for the future. A wide range of GCSE options can lead to many different further study areas and career options.

In the initial stage, you are free to select your preferred options, and we then look to see how we can fit these into the timetabling. This allows for a bespoke set of options for our students and we will aim to accommodate everyone's preferences. We then finalise options and discuss any amendments with students in order that final decision can be made with them, and parents.

Choosing a range of Sciences, Humanities, Language and Creative subjects is advised, but we aim to tailor the range of options to suit the individual as far as practicable.

What are the levels of each qualification?

Whilst you may be familiar with GCSEs, there are some other types of qualifications which are comparable. The table below shows how they all compare.

Level	Qualification		
3	AS and A-levels	Level 3 Applied Certificates	BTEC Certificate
2	GCSE Grades 9-4	Cambridge National (Level 2)	BTEC Tech Award (Level 2)
1	GCSE Grades 3-1	Cambridge National (Level 1)	BTEC Tech Award (Level 1)
Entry Level	Entry Level Award in Maths, English and Science		

Sixth Form

When considering GCSE options, it is useful to think about what you may wish to study afterwards. There are both vocational and the more academic A level routes open to students for their progression after Year 11. With the school benefitting from having its own Sixth Form, you can be reassured that focused advice is available to help support your decision making with regards to GCSE options. Post-16 expertise from our Year 12 teachers, together with the experience of Alison Brown, Head of Sixth Form, means that you can have informed conversations.

The Sixth Form's vision is that our students will be equipped with the qualifications and mindset to shape their futures. With an Enrichment Curriculum full of activities to take learning one step further, the school balances academic study with the development of essential life skills sought after by both universities and employers. Through GCSE and Sixth Form, our students grow into future-ready young adults, through developing their skills and confidence.

Year 12 and 13 are crucial years; building on GCSE success to provide a pathway to the future. Therefore, our students are learning more about how to study effectively, whilst enjoying varied activities including workshops led by universities, organisations and guest speakers.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to get in touch: alisonbrown@hollygirt.co.uk.

What to think about when selecting options



Talk to your teachers and family about your options.

Don't take subjects simply because a friend is.

Think about a balanced variety of subjects to keep your options open to different decisions you may have in the future.

Think about the level of the qualification; an equivalent to a GCSE is just as valuable and may provide a better way for you to study.

Choose subjects you are interested in and will enjoy studying.

Maintain high aspirations with a view that you will work hard to achieve your best outcomes.

Consider how your choices might impact your future after your GCSEs.

Choose subjects which match your strengths and be realistic about your skills.

The Key Stage 4 Curriculum

The timetable provides 40 periods a week over a one-week timetable.

Core Curriculum

Subject	Taught Periods per week
Maths	6
English (includes Language & Literature)	6
Physical Education (not assessed)	3
Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHE Education)	1

Optional Subjects

These subjects are all taught over **4 periods per week**.

A full timetable will have **six** optional subjects.

Subject	Qualification
Art and Design: Fine Art	GCSE
Art and Design: Textile Design	GCSE
Biology	GCSE
Business	GCSE
Chemistry	GCSE
Computer Science	GCSE
Information Technology	Cambridge National
Food Preparation and Nutrition	GCSE
French	GCSE
Geography	GCSE
History	GCSE
Music	GCSE
Physical Education	GCSE
Performing Arts	BTEC Tech Award
Physics	GCSE
Religious Studies	GCSE
Spanish	GCSE
Statistics	GCSE
Travel & Tourism	BTEC Tech Award

The following pages give an overview of each subject, with information about course content, assessment and future progression.

English Language

Examining Board: Pearson Edexcel International GCSE

Specification: 4EA1

Aims of the Course

For IGCSE English Language candidates should:

- Read a wide range of texts fluently and with a good understanding;
- Write effectively using correct grammar, punctuation and spelling;
- Acquire and apply a wide vocabulary alongside a knowledge and understanding of linguistic terminology for reading, writing and spoken language;
- Use spoken Standard English effectively.

Assessment Objectives

A01–3 Reading and understanding a wide range of texts to include exploring links and analysis of linguistic and structural features.

A04-5 Writing clearly and imaginatively. Adapting tone and form and using accurate spelling, grammar and punctuation.

Scheme of Assessment

Examination paper worth 60%

2 hours 15mins. Single tier entry.

Non-fiction Texts and Writing

Section A:

Study 10 texts from Part 1 of Anthology.

Answer a mixture of short and long answer questions related to a text from the Anthology and one previously unseen extract.

Section B:

Write for a given audience, form and purpose.

Written Coursework worth 40%

Poetry and Prose texts and Imaginative Writing

Assignment A:

One essay based on a selection of poetry and prose texts from Part 2 of the Anthology.

Assignment B:

Imaginative writing.

Homework

Up to two hours per week.

Post-16

GCSE English Language is an essential entry requirement for most Post-16 courses.

English Literature

Examining Board: Pearson Edexcel International GCSE

Specification: 4ET1

Aims of the Course

The course aims to give candidates opportunities to explore their literary interests and encourages them to develop:

1. The ability to read, understand and respond to a wide range of types of literary texts, to appreciate the ways in which authors achieve their effects and to develop the skills necessary for literary study;
2. Awareness of social, historical and cultural contexts and influences in the study of literature;
3. The ability to construct and convey meaning in speech and writing, matching style to audience and purpose.

Assessment Objectives

- A01 Demonstrate a close knowledge and understanding of texts.
A02 Analyse language structure and form to create meaning and effects.
A03 Explore links and connections between texts.
A04 Show understanding of the context in which the text was written.

Scheme of Assessment

Examination worth 60%

Poetry and Modern Prose. 2 hours. Single tier entry.

Closed book.

Section A

Unseen Poetry.

One essay exploring the meaning of an unseen poem.

Section B

Anthology Poetry.

Comparing two poems from Part 3 of the Anthology. 16 poems to study.

Section C

Modern Prose.

One essay on 'Of Mice and Men' from a choice of two questions.

Coursework worth 40%

Modern Drama and Literary Heritage Texts.

Assignment A

One essay on 'An Inspector Calls'.

Assignment B

One essay on 'Romeo and Juliet'.

Examination Entries

Usually candidates are automatically entered for both English Language and English Literature IGCSE. This leads to the award of two full GCSEs. However, if appropriate for the individual pupil, they will be entered for *English Language only* which is one full GCSE.

Post-16

GCSE English Literature provides a foundation to study English Literature at A Level. The essay writing skills gained are also transferrable to other essay-based subjects.

Mathematics

Examining Board: Pearson Edexcel International GCSE

Specification: 4MA1

Aims of the Course

The course aims to encourage pupils to develop confidence in and a positive attitude towards Mathematics and to recognise the importance of Mathematics in their own lives and to society. Whether you plan to go on to work, AS and A Levels or other further studies, a good understanding of Maths will be useful to you. Number skills are required in all sorts of everyday situations such as trying to work out phone bills. Thinking like a mathematician will help to improve your problem solving and decision-making skills.

Assessment Objectives

Demonstrate knowledge, understanding and skills in the following topics:

Number and algebra:

- Numbers and the numbering system
- Calculations
- Solving numerical problems
- Equations, formulae and identities
- Sequences, functions and graphs

Shape, space and measures:

- Geometry and trigonometry
- Vectors and transformation geometry

Handling data:

- Statistics
- Probability

Scheme of Assessment

There are two different tiers of entry to ensure that the work is targeted to the ability of each pupil. The foundation tier targets grades 5-1, and the higher tier grades 9-4.

The course is assessed by two 2-hour examination papers. Pupils are allowed to use a calculator in both papers. However, pupils will be asked to 'show how' which means they will have to understand how the calculator works out the problem, but they can then use the calculator to check their method. Pupils must take both examinations from the same tier. There is no coursework.

Post-16

As a core subject, Mathematics provides a grounding in numeracy and quantitative skills. A-level courses in Maths, Sciences and Computer Science would be advised for those with a keenness to pursue maths further.

Art and Design: Fine Art

Examining Board: AQA

Specification: 8202

Aims of the Course

Art and Design is concerned with the visual world and how perceptions of it can be interpreted. The course is designed to enable pupils to explore, interpret and present observations, ideas and feelings through the skilled use of a wide range of media. Pupils will build upon knowledge of different kinds of art, both European and more ethnically diverse, to appraise critically the work of a range of significant artists, making constructive use of the approaches used by these artists in their own work.

The course follows the AQA Art and Design Fine Art endorsed certificate which offers the experience of areas of study including Drawing, Painting, Printmaking, Textiles, Relief Photography and Three-Dimensional work and, in relation to the development of any of these areas, an opportunity to make use of the computer graphics facilities in the department.

GCSE Art and Design demands a considerable degree of personal involvement from candidates and should suit pupils with an interest in art and craft skills and those who wish to widen their experience of the possibilities offered in an art and design career. As the briefs are so open to interpretation, if a pupil has a particular interest such as Architecture or Graphic design, then this can be included in order to gain experience and a portfolio for further development in the future. The course widens pupil's perceptual abilities and innovation skills, which are transferrable skills to a multitude of future careers.

Assessment Objectives

- AO1** Develop their ideas through investigations informed by contextual and other sources demonstrating analytical and cultural understanding (theme research, artist research and photography)
- AO2** Refine their ideas through experimenting and selecting appropriate resources, media, materials, techniques and processes (experimentation).
- AO3** Record ideas, observations and insights relevant to their intentions in visual and/or other forms (Produce good quality Art).
- AO4** Present a personal, informed and meaningful response demonstrating analytical and critical understanding, realising intentions and where appropriate, making connections between visual, written, oral and other elements (A piece which encompasses the project).

Scheme of Assessment

Candidate Portfolio (Coursework): 60%

This is started in September of Year 10 and must be completed before the commencement of the externally set task.

Externally Set Task: 40%

Papers will be issued in January of Year 11. Candidates have ten hours of supervised time (examination of two days) to respond to ONE of the questions on the paper preceded by several weeks of preparation and supporting studies.

Homework

Two hours per week consisting of photography, sketch book work, collecting ideas, research and process and producing multi-media samples.

Post-16

Art and Design allows for progression for further study at AS and A-level as well as vocational pathways. To support this progression, the assessment objectives, structure and titles are very similar to those detailed in the AS and A-level Art and Design specification.

Design and Technology: Textile Design

Examining Board: AQA

Specification: 8204

Aims of the Course

Art and Design: Textile Design is a creative design subject explored predominantly through textiles techniques like those experienced in year 9 but with far greater variety and depth. During this course you will progressively learn new skills, including printing, multimedia work, constructed textiles through fabric, yarn, fibre and fabric manipulation and experiment with dye work and surface decoration techniques. These experiments are assembled in sketch books in a creative manner alongside work that investigates textiles artists, other artists and crafts people using either your own or a set theme. This then leads to pupils making connections with the artist/s and theme using the techniques learnt to produce many rigorously trailed ideas before creating a final composition or piece.

Assessment Objectives

There are four assessment objectives in this course. **Each coursework piece and your exam response must each show the coverage of all of these sections.**

- AO1** Develop their ideas through investigations informed by contextual and other sources demonstrating analytical and cultural understanding (theme research, artist research and photography)
- AO2** Refine their ideas through experimenting and selecting appropriate resources, media/textiles, materials, techniques and processes (experimentation).
- AO3** Record ideas, observations and insights relevant to their intentions in visual and/or other forms (Produce good quality Textiles/Art outcomes).
- AO4** Present a personal, informed and meaningful response demonstrating analytical and critical understanding, realising intentions and where appropriate, making connections between visual, written, oral and other elements (A piece which encompasses the project).

Scheme of Assessment

Candidate Portfolio (Coursework): 60% (between 2 or 3 projects). This is started in the September of Year 10 and must be completed before the start of the externally set task.

Externally Set Task (Exam): 40%

Papers are issued in the January of Year 11. Students prepare in class and for homework a personal response to the chosen question. Candidates have ten hours of supervised time (examination of two days). All the previous preparation work is then submitted alongside the exam response for their final controlled assessment marks.

Homework

Up to two hours per week, which may include finishing new techniques and skills, producing sketch book work, collecting ideas, researching themes, artists and crafts people and developing ideas.

Post-16

The obvious progressions could be A level Textiles, and a degree in Textiles Design or Fashion. You could also use it to follow a path in Theatre Design and Interior Design. Alternatively, you could use the skills you learn to create for yourself and others or make money from a creative enterprise producing quantities of textile items to sell to others.

Biology

Examining Board: AQA

Specification: 8461

Aims of the Course

The syllabus aims to give candidates opportunities to:

- Acquire a systematic body of scientific knowledge and develop an understanding of science including its power and limitations;
- Develop experimental and investigative abilities;
- Develop an understanding of the nature of scientific ideas and activity and the basis for scientific claims;
- To make judgement and produce hypotheses on the basis of scientific evidence;
- Develop their understanding of the technological and environmental applications of science and the economic, ethical and social implications of these.

Assessment Objectives

The examination will assess the ability of candidates to:

- Carry out experimental and investigative work in which they plan procedures, use precise and systematic ways of making measurements and observations, analyse and evaluate evidence, and relate this to scientific knowledge and understanding;
- Recall, understand, use and apply the knowledge of science set out in the syllabus;
- Communicate scientific observations, ideas and arguments using a range of scientific and technical vocabulary and appropriate scientific and mathematical conventions;
- Evaluate relevant scientific information and make informed judgements from it.

Over the course pupils will study topics including:

- Cell biology
- Organisation
- Infection and response
- Bioenergetics
- Homeostasis and response
- Inheritance, variation and evolution
- Ecology

Scheme of Assessment

There will be two, 1 hour 45 minute papers of 100 marks, testing knowledge and application of facts. These are available at higher and foundation level. 10% of the questions involve mathematical concepts. During the course pupils will carry out 8 core experiments which assess practical skills and reasoning.

Post-16

GCSE Biology will help you take A Level Biology and can lead on to all types of biological degrees. It also contains a lot of transferable skills so will still help you on your journey to many other fields of study or jobs.

Business

Examining Board: Pearson Edexcel

Specification: 1BS0

Aims of the Course

The aims and objectives of this qualification are to enable students to:

- know and understand business concepts, business terminology, business objectives, the integrated nature of business activity and the impact of business on individuals and wider society
- develop as enterprising individuals with the ability to think commercially and creatively to demonstrate business acumen, and draw on evidence to make informed business decisions and solve business problems
- investigate and analyse real business opportunities and issues to construct well-argued, well-evidenced, balanced and structured arguments, demonstrating their depth and breadth of understanding of business
- develop and apply quantitative skills relevant to business, including using and interpreting data.
- apply knowledge and understanding to different business contexts. These include businesses ranging from small enterprises to large multinationals and businesses operating in local, national and global contexts and the impact of these contexts on business behaviour.

Assessment Objectives

Theme 1: Investigating small business

Content overview:

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

Theme 2: Building a business

Content overview:

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

Scheme of Assessment

The Pearson Edexcel GCSE in Business consists of two externally-examined papers, one for each Theme above. Each paper is 1 hour and 45 minutes and counts for 50% of the overall grades.

Post-16

Studying Business will give you the opportunity to develop transferrable skills such as analysis and problem solving skills and will help you learn how to evaluate a range of qualitative and quantitative data in the context of real-world issues. Although many students use these skills in further studies, including A-level Business and Economics, these skills will be useful for you whatever path you choose to take, from studying other subjects, to setting up your own business to working in industry.

Chemistry

Examining Board: AQA

Specification: 8462

Aims of the Course

Acquire a systematic body of scientific knowledge and develop an understanding of science including its power and limitations;

1. Develop experimental and investigative abilities;
2. Develop an understanding of the nature of scientific ideas and activity and the basis for scientific claims;
3. To make judgement and produce hypotheses on the basis of scientific evidence.
4. Develop their understanding of the technological and environmental applications of science and the economic, ethical and social implications of these.

Assessment Objectives

The examination will assess the ability of candidates to:

- Carry out experimental and investigative work in which they plan procedures, use precise and systematic ways of making measurements and observations, analyse and evaluate evidence, and relate this to scientific knowledge and understanding;
- Recall, understand, use and apply the knowledge of science set out in the syllabus;
- Communicate scientific observations, ideas and arguments using a range of scientific and technical vocabulary and appropriate scientific and mathematical conventions;
- Evaluate relevant scientific information and make informed judgements from it.

Over the course pupils will study topics including:

- Atomic structure and the periodic table
- Bonding, structure and the properties of matter
- Quantitative chemistry
- Chemical Changes
- Energy Changes
- The rate and extent of chemical change
- Organic chemistry
- Chemical analysis
- Chemistry of atmosphere
- Using resources

Scheme of Assessment

There will be two, one hour 45 minute papers of 100 marks, testing knowledge and application of facts. These are available at higher and foundation level. 20% of the questions involve mathematical concepts. During the course the pupils will carry out 8 core experiments which assess practical skills and reasoning.

Post-16

Many of the skills studied are transferable to a wide variety of future applications. This could include careers in Medicine, Dentistry, Chemical Engineering, Veterinary Science, Agriculture, Nursing, Materials Science and Engineering.

Computer Science

Examining Board: OCR

Specification: J277

Aims of the Course

Computer Science is a highly academic subject, and very rewarding. Students will be able to apply the knowledge and skills that they develop in the classroom on real-world problems. Students learn how computers work, how to program them, and how to think computationally.

Computer science will enable students to develop valuable thinking and programming skills that are extremely attractive in the modern workplace. Students will greatly enhance their problem-solving skills and deepen their understanding of how and why computers work.

Assessment Objectives

Computer Science is assessed using two written exams at the end of the course. Each exam lasts 1.5 hours and is worth 50% of the final grade.

Component 1

Computer Systems:

This explores how computers work, looking at the roles of the processor, memory and storage. Students will study networking and how data is transmitted around the world. Students will also learn about cyber security, including the various threats to data and how to protect systems.

Component 2

Computational Thinking,

Algorithms, and Programming:

Students will learn how to use and create algorithms. They will develop their understanding of programming techniques and be able to build robust programs. Students will explore logic and develop their understanding of binary.

Practical Programming

Students have the opportunity to develop their own coding project in order to solve a real-world program.

Student Expectations

If you are passionate about computers and like to challenge yourself, Computer Science could be the course for you. Computer Science is becoming increasingly relevant, as more industries adopt the use of programming and automation in their day-to-day operations. The skills developed throughout the course can be applied to any future career you decide to undertake. You will need to be resilient and have strong maths skills in order to be successful on this course.

Post-16

Computer Science is effective preparation for a range of qualifications including A-Level Computer Science, Level 3 Technical IT, Digital Design, and Game Design.

There are many different careers that Computer Science could help you move towards, including Games Developer, Software Architect, Network Manager and Cyber Security.

Aims of the Course

This course would enable students who may not wish to pursue the Computer Science course, though still have a keen interest in Computing to undertake a Level 1 or 2 qualification; Cambridge National in IT will inspire and equip you with the confidence to use skills that are relevant to the IT sector. It's a vocational qualification, equivalent in value to a GCSE and contains both practical and theoretical elements. The aims of the course are to:

- understand and apply the fundamental principles and concepts of IT, including the use of IT in the digital world, Internet of Everything, data manipulation and Augmented Reality
- understand, apply and use IT appropriately and effectively for the purpose and audience
- develop learning and practical skills that can be applied to real-life contexts and work situations
- think creatively, innovatively, analytically, logically and critically
- develop independence and confidence in using skills that would be relevant to the IT sector and more widely
- plan, design, create, test and evaluate/review IT solutions and products which are fit for purpose and meeting user/client requirements and apply design and Human Computer Interface (HCI) considerations appropriate for a defined audience
- understand the impacts of digital technologies on the individual, organisation and wider society.

You'll develop a range of skills to help you succeed not only in the workplace but in other subjects too. These skills include Analytical skills, Creative thinking, Digital presentation, Problem solving and Research and planning.

Assessment Objectives

There are three units: 2 x non-exam assessment (coursework) of 60% and 1 x Final exam of 40%

R050 IT in the Digital World (1.5hr written exam) - 70 Marks

In this unit you will learn the theoretical knowledge and understanding to apply design tools for applications, principles of human computer interfaces and the use of data and testing in different contexts when creating IT solutions or products. You will understand the uses of Internet of Everything and the application of this in everyday life, cyber-security and legislations related to the use of IT systems, and the different types of digital communications software, devices, and distribution channels.

R060 Data manipulation using spreadsheets (coursework) - 60 Marks

In this unit you will learn the skills to be able to plan and design a spreadsheet solution to meet client requirements. You will use a range of tools and techniques to create a spreadsheet solution based on your design, which you will test. You will be able to evaluate your solution based on the user requirements.

R070 Using augmented reality to present information (coursework) - 60 Marks

In this unit you will learn the basics of Augmented Reality (AR) and the creation of a model prototype product to showcase how it can be used appropriately for a defined target audience to present information. You will learn the purpose, use and types of AR in different contexts and how they are used on different digital devices. You will develop the skills to be able to design and create an AR model prototype, using a range of tools and techniques. You will also be able to test and review your AR model prototype.

Post-16

By developing applied knowledge and practical skills, this course will help give you the opportunity to progress on to:

- A Level: Computer Science
- Cambridge Technical: Information Technology and Digital Media (Level 2 or Level 3)
- Apprenticeship: Digital pathway such as IT, Digital and Technology, Data Analyst (Level 3)
- T Level: Digital Production, Design and Development, Digital Support Services, Digital Business Services (Level 3)

A qualification in IT opens up an incredible world of opportunities for work both in the technology industries and in supporting roles within other industries.

IT personnel not only need technical skills and knowledge but also other characteristics such as an ability to communicate clearly to all levels of business personnel; planning and project management skills; and excellent self-motivation, decision-making and problem-solving abilities.

There are many different careers that IT could help you move towards, including:

- Web Developer
- Network Manager
- Video Games Designer
- Graphic Designer
- IT Project Manager
- Software Engineer

Food Preparation and Nutrition

Examining Board: Eduqas

Specification: C560

The GCSE in Food Preparation and Nutrition is an, exciting, up to date qualification that is relevant to the world of food today. The qualification develops strong practical cookery skills and techniques as well a good understanding of nutrition.

Aims of the Course

- Develop an interest in the creative aspects and enjoyment of food
- Develop confidence in using high level skills necessary in food preparation and cooking
- Making connections between theory and practise
- Motivate students to apply the principles of food science, nutrition and healthy eating.
- Pupils learn about improving lives through better knowledge of food, where it comes from and how it affects our bodies.
- Pupils take inspiration from around the world to explore a range of ingredients and processes from different culinary traditions (traditional British and international) to inspire new ideas or modify existing recipes.

Assessment Objectives

There are four assessment objectives in this course.

- AO1 Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of nutrition, food,cooking and preparation.
- AO2 Apply knowledge and understanding of nutrition, food, cooking and preparation.
- AO3 Plan, prepare,cook and present dishes combining appropriate techniques.
- AO4 Analyse and evaluate different aspects of nutrition, food cooking and preparation, including food made by themselves and others.

Scheme of Assessment

Food Science Investigation Task:	15%
Food- Research, Design and MakeTask:	35%
1 hour 30 minutes Written Paper:	50%

Post-16

Progression includes higher education, either Vocational or Apprenticeships in Hospitality and Catering. Alternatively, students may progress onto A level, Degree level and into a career within the NHS and Dietetics, Product development within the food industry, Environmental Health, Hospitality and or Catering.

French

Examining Board: Pearson Edexcel

Specification: 1FR1

Aims of the Course

The aims of this qualification are to:

- develop confidence in, and a positive attitude towards, French and to recognise the importance of languages.
- provide a strong linguistic and cultural foundation for students who go on to study languages at a higher level.
- develop students' ability and ambition to communicate independently in speech and writing with speakers of the language for authentic purposes.
- develop students' ability to communicate independently about subjects that interesting to them.
- build students' confidence and broaden their horizons, enabling them to step beyond familiar cultural boundaries, develop new ways of seeing the world, and better understand relationships between the foreign language and the English language.
- enable students to become familiar with aspects of the contexts and cultures of the countries and communities where the language is spoken.

Course Content

The vocabulary in this qualification enables students to communicate across a range of engaging and relatable thematic contexts, which are relevant to their current and future needs:

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

Scheme of Assessment

The qualification consists of:

- three externally-examined papers assessing separately listening, reading and writing
- one speaking assessment set by Pearson and conducted by a teacher.

All assessments are externally marked by the exam board.

Each paper is available at Foundation or Higher tier. Students must be entered for a single tier across all papers.

Homework

Up to two hours per week: written work, grammar and translation practice, vocabulary learning, speaking preparation and listening and reading tasks.

Post-16

This qualification offers a suitable progression route to A Level in French language.

In addition, the study of a language at GCSE can facilitate and help promote the learning of other languages. The qualification can also add to an employability profile. Students will be able to apply their knowledge, skills and understanding to authentic, real-life contexts. They will develop transferable skills that support higher education study and the transition to employment, together with an understanding and appreciation of French speaking countries and their cultures.

Geography

Examining Board: OCR

Specification: J384

Aims of the Course

The specification will engage learners through the exploration of a number of geographical topics encapsulating both the geography of the UK and the rest of the world. Learners will be encouraged to make links between topics and challenge their previous ideas developed in geography through an enquiring approach to the content.

Through the study of Our Natural World, learners will gain an appreciation of the natural world around them including tectonic and weather hazards, climate change, the UK's distinctive landscapes and the global ecosystems which support life on the planet.

Learners will explore the complexities of People and Society through studying why more than half of the world's population live in urban areas, the dynamic nature of development, the UK in the 21st century and human reliance on key resources for survival and economic gain.

Geographical skills and fieldwork studies are embedded throughout the content ensuring learners become both adaptable and resilient no matter their future pathway.

Assessment Objectives

Within the question papers for each of the three components there will be a combination of short answer questions which carry a low tariff, medium length questions of 6 marks and higher tariff extended response questions (maximum of 12 marks plus spelling, punctuation and grammar).

Scheme of Assessment

The course comprises of three units and three exams.

Our Natural World	People and Society	Geographical Exploration - Geographical Skills and Decision Making Exercise
Written paper	Written paper	1 hour 30 minutes
1 hour 15 minutes	1 hour 15 minutes	60 marks
70 marks	70 marks	30% of qualification
35% of qualification	35% of qualification	

- 5% of marks across all papers are awarded for SPaG

Post-16

Geography at GCSE level will provide students with a solid grounding, whether they are going on to Further Education, Higher Education or the workplace. The qualification aims to inspire a passion for Geography within learners which encourages an interest in the subject beyond academic achievements, for the rest of their life.

A-level Geography is the natural progression, though the skills acquired may can be applied to a variety of sciences and social sciences courses.

History

Examining Board: Pearson Edexcel

Specification: 1H10

Aims of the Course

- actively engaging you in the process of historical enquiry to develop you as an independent learner, and as a critical and reflective thinker with an enquiring mind.
- developing your knowledge and coherent understanding of selected periods, societies and aspects of History
- developing your awareness of how the past has been represented, interpreted and accorded significance for different reasons and purposes.
- developing your ability to ask relevant questions about the past and to investigate them critically using a range of sources in their historical context.
- enabling you to organise and communicate your historical knowledge and understanding in creative and different ways and reach substantiated judgements.
- recognising that your historical knowledge, understanding and skills help you to understand the present and provide you with a basis for your role as a responsible citizen, as well as allowing further study of History.

Content Summary

There are five units to this course:

1. Breadth Study – Medicine in Britain, c1250-present
2. Thematic Depth Study – Surgery and Healthcare on the Western Front
3. Period Study – The American West in the 19th Century
4. British Depth Study – The court of Henry VIII and the English Reformation, 1509-1540
5. Modern Depth Study – Weimar and Nazi Germany

Assessment Objectives

- Recall, select and communicate knowledge and understanding of History (34%)
- Demonstrate understanding of the past through explanation and analysis of:
 - key concepts: causation, consequence, continuity, change and significance within a historical context
 - key features and characteristics of the periods studied and the relationships between them (35%)
- Understand, analyse and evaluate:
 - a range of source material as part of an historical enquiry
 - how aspects of the past have been interpreted and represented in different ways as part of an historical enquiry (31%)

Scheme of Assessment

All five units will be examined at the end of Year 11. There will be three separate papers.

There is one tier of entry. The full range of grades from 1-9 are available.

Post-16

History gives you the opportunity to enter further academic study. You will develop a range of transferable skills including constructing and supporting an argument, the analysis of evidence and extended writing skills. People who have studied History are highly regarded and sought after by employers in a great many sectors. Examples include journalism, law, teaching, and the civil service.

Music

Examining Board: Eduqas

Specification: C660QS

Aims of the Course

- engage actively in the process of music study and develop performing skills individually and in groups to communicate musically with fluency and control of the resources used;
- develop composing skills to organise musical ideas and make use of appropriate resources;
- recognise links between the integrated activities of performing, composing and appraising and how this informs the development of music;
- broaden musical experience and interests, develop imagination and foster creativity;
- develop knowledge, understanding and skills needed to communicate effectively as musicians;
- develop awareness of a variety of instruments, styles and approaches to performing and composing, music technologies and their use in the creation and presentation of music;
- recognise contrasting genres, styles and traditions of music and develop awareness of musical chronology;
- engage with and appreciate the diverse heritage of music, in order to promote personal, social, intellectual and cultural development.

Assessment Objectives

- Perform with technical control, expression and interpretation.
- Compose and develop musical ideas with technical control and coherence.
- Demonstrate and apply musical knowledge.
- Use appraising skills to make evaluative and critical judgments about music.

Scheme of Assessment

Performing (30%)

Non-examined assessment

Pupils perform a minimum of two pieces, one of which must be an ensemble, with a combined duration of 4-6 minutes.

Composing (30%)

Non-examined assessment

Pupils compose two pieces, one to a set brief and one as a free composition, with a combined duration of 3-6 minutes.

Appraising (40%)

Written examination, 1 hour 15 minutes (approx.)

Eight questions in total, two on each of the four areas of study:

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

Two questions will be based on the following set works:

J.S. Bach: Orchestral Suite No. 2 in B minor, final movt. 'Badinerie',

BWV 1067

Toto: 'Africa' from Toto IV

Post-16

This qualification provides a grounding for progression to A-level music, though provides a coherent, satisfying and worthwhile course of study for learners who do not progress to further study in this subject.

Physical Education

Examining Board: Pearson Edexcel

Specification: 1PE0

Aims of the Course

- Develop theoretical knowledge and understanding of the factors that underpin physical activity and sport and use this knowledge and understanding to improve performance
- Understand how the physiological and psychological state affects performance in physical activity and sport
- Perform effectively in different physical activities by developing skills and techniques and selecting and using tactics, strategies and/or compositional ideas
- Develop their ability to analyse and evaluate to improve performance in physical activity and sport
- Understand the contribution that physical activity and sport make to health, fitness and wellbeing
- Understand the key socio-cultural influences that can affect people's involvement in physical activity and sport.

Assessment Objectives

- Demonstrate and apply knowledge and understanding of the factors that underpin performance and involvement in physical activity and sport
- Analyse and evaluate the factors that underpin performance and involvement in physical activity
- Demonstrate and apply relevant skills and techniques in physical activity and sport
- Analyse and evaluate performance

Examinations worth 60%

Paper 1: Fitness and Body Systems (36% of the qualification)

Including Applied anatomy and physiology, Movement analysis, Physical training, Use of data

Paper 2: Health and Performance (24% of the qualification)

Including Health, fitness and well-being, Sport Psychology, Socio-cultural influences, Use of data

Coursework worth 40%

Practical Performance (30% of the qualification)

- One individual activity
- One team activity
- One activity from either category

Personal Exercise Programme (10% of the qualification)

Post-16

This may lead to A-level Physical Education which can lead to a variety of career pathways including Physiotherapist, Gym Manager, Personal Trainer. Additionally, careers which influence the diet and exercise habits of people, require an insight into the human body and in sports performance may also be a pathway. This qualification can further be used to support learning in sciences and associated careers in these fields.

Performing Arts

Examining Board: Pearson Edexcel (BTEC Level 1/Level 2 Tech Award)

Specification: Performing Arts

Aims of the Course

Pupils will study acting, dance and/or musical theatre in a practical environment, giving you the opportunity to develop knowledge and technical skills in your chosen area.

Content Summary

This specification comprises the following areas of subject content:

Examine the roles and responsibilities of different performance artists and practitioners such as actor, dancer, choreographer, director, writer and designer; as well as the different approaches and styles used, such as comedy, ballet or musical revues.

Develop key skills, such as being able to respond to and interpret different ideas given to you; and you will be experiencing first-hand the ways in which performance artists work through the development of ideas, rehearsal and then performance.

The qualification is the same size and level as a GCSE and is aimed at everyone who wants to find out more about performing arts. It is a practical introduction to life and work in the performing arts industry, which will give you the opportunity to develop performing arts skills and techniques, and to analyse and evaluate your skills both independently and within a group.

Assessment

You will carry out tasks or mini-projects throughout the course. Your teacher will mark these, which will give you an idea of how you are getting on. Towards the end of the course you will do one larger project in acting, dance or musical theatre, where you use the knowledge, skills and techniques you have learned to devise and deliver a workshop performance to a specific audience from a brief that will be given to you. All the work you do through the course prepares you for this larger project, which is sent away to be marked.

How does the course work?

The course is made up of three components: two that are internally assessed and one that's externally assessed. There is a three-block structure,

Explore	Internally assessed, 30% of the total course	Developing Skills and Techniques in the Performing Arts.
Develop	Internally assessed assignments, 30% of the total course	
Apply	Externally assessed task, performing to a Brief, 40% of the total course	

Post-16

This qualification is also available at Level 3 (A-level equivalent), building on the work done during the Level 2 BTEC course.

Physics

Examining Board: AQA

Specification: 8463

Aims of the Course

The syllabus aims to give candidates opportunities to:

- Acquire a systematic body of scientific knowledge and develop an understanding of science including its power and limitations;
- Develop experimental and investigative abilities;
- Develop an understanding of the nature of scientific ideas and activity and the basis for scientific claims;
- To make judgement and produce hypotheses based on scientific evidence.
- Develop their understanding of the technological and environmental applications of science and the economic, ethical, and social implications of these.

Assessment Objectives

The examination will assess the ability of candidates to:

- Carry out experimental and investigative work in which they plan procedures, use precise and systematic ways of making measurements and observations, analyse and evaluate evidence, and relate this to scientific knowledge and understanding;
- Recall, understand, use, and apply the knowledge of science set out in the syllabus;
- Communicate scientific observations, ideas and arguments using a range of scientific and technical vocabulary and appropriate scientific and mathematical conventions;
- Evaluate relevant scientific information and make informed judgements from it.

Over the course pupils will study topics including:

- | | | |
|----------|--------------------------------|--------------------------|
| • Forces | • Electricity | • Atomic structure |
| • Energy | • Magnetism & electromagnetism | • Space physics |
| • Waves | • Particle model of matter | • Working scientifically |

Scheme of Assessment

There will be two, 1 hour 45 minute papers in Physics, of 100 marks, testing knowledge and application of facts. These are available at higher and foundation level. 30% of marks involve mathematical concepts. During the course, pupils experience 10 core experiments to develop practical skills and reasoning useful in about 15% of exam marks. Pupils are required to memorize 23 equations, rearrange them for calculations and know abbreviations for each equation term and its unit. Recall of prefixes (e.g. k in kJ, n in nm) and use of standard form is important.

Post-16

Physics provides skills and grounding for many STEM (Science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) roles and the skills acquired are valued in finance, law, computing, medicine, and pharmacy.

Other Physics related roles include Astronomer; Acoustic Consultant; Civil Engineer; Electrical and Electronic Engineer; Mechanical Engineer; Sound Engineer; Clinical Scientist, Geophysicist; Medical Physicist; Lecturer; Metallurgist; Meteorologist; Nanotechnologist; Nuclear Scientist; Teacher; Technical Author.

Religious Studies

Examining Board: OCR

Specification: J625

Aims of the Course

Religious Studies aims to encourage pupils to be inspired and challenged by following a broad, satisfying, and worthwhile course of study that challenges young people. This GCSE aims to bring the study of religion to life and promote knowledge and understanding of Christianity and Islam.

Content and Assessment of the Course

Pupils must study **two** religions from Component Group 1 and **one** component from Component Group 2 to be awarded the OCR GCSE (9–1) in Religious Studies. There is only **ONE** tier of entry. Pupils will be required to **use** and have **detailed** knowledge of Sources of Wisdom and Authority; these include quotes from the Bible and the Qur'an.

Christianity (J625/01) Beliefs and teachings and Practices.

One hour written paper - 63 marks - 25% of total GCSE

Study of a variety of themes including: Nature and Concept of God, Biblical accounts of Creation, the problem of evil and suffering, Theodicies, Jesus Christ, the concept of redemption and salvation and Eschatological beliefs and teachings. Christian practices including worship, sacraments, prayer, pilgrimage, festivals and celebrations, role of the Church and the community and living practices, Mission, the World Council of Churches, the Ecumenical Movement, and the role of the Church in the wider world.

Islam (J625/03) Beliefs and Teachings and Practices

One hour written paper - 63 marks - 25% of total GCSE

Study of a variety of themes including: Core beliefs, the Six Articles of faith in Sunni Islam, the Five roots of 'Usul ad-Din' in Shi'a Islam, the nature of Allah, Shirk, Prophethood, Kutub, Sahifah, Gospel, Torah, Qur'an. Muslim practices including the Five Pillars of Sunni Islam, Pilgrimage, Zakah and Khums, Sawm and fasting during Ramadan, Sunni and Shi'a Festivals, Salat-ul-Jumu'ah and the concept of Jihad.

Religion, Philosophy and Ethics in the Modern World from a Christian perspective (J625/07)

Two hour written paper - 126 marks - 50% of total GCSE, covering four themes:

- **Relationships and families:** Roles of men and women, Christian understandings of equality, Gender and Christian teachings about equality and discrimination in relation to gender, marriage and divorce.
- **The existence of God and the Ultimate Reality:** Philosophical views on the question of God and the nature of reality and four philosophical arguments for the existence of God, ways in which Christians experience God, God's relationship with the world and humanity.
- **Religion, peace and conflict:** Christian teachings about violence, terrorism, Holy War, Just War, pacifism, peace, forgiveness, reconciliation, social justice and injustice.
- **Dialogue within and between religious and non-religious beliefs and attitudes:** Challenges for Christianity today, the importance of Christian traditions, The Church of England, Faith schools, Secularisation, Humanism, potential clashes between religion and secular law, Medical Ethics, Atheism, Agnosticism, Ecumenicalism, Inter-faith and intra-faith dialogue, Exclusivism, Inclusivism, Pluralism and Proselytisation.

Post-16

Religious Studies provides a suitable foundation for higher level Religious Studies or related courses in further education. Skills gained from the qualification would help to equip learners for further studies in the range of Humanities, Arts or Social Sciences subjects, such as A Level History, English, or Psychology for example.

Spanish

Examining Board: Pearson Edexcel

Specification: 1SP1

Aims of the Course

The aims of this qualification are to:

- develop confidence in, and a positive attitude towards, Spanish and to recognise the importance of languages.
- provide a strong linguistic and cultural foundation for students.
- develop students' ability and ambition to communicate independently in speech and writing with speakers of the language for authentic purposes.
- develop students' ability to communicate independently about subjects that are interesting to them
- build students' confidence and broaden their horizons, enabling them to step beyond familiar cultural boundaries, develop new ways of seeing the world, and better understand relationships between the foreign language and the English language.
- enable students to become familiar with aspects of the contexts and cultures of the countries and communities where the language is spoken.

Course Content

The vocabulary in this qualification enables students to communicate across a range of engaging and relatable thematic contexts, which are relevant to their current and future needs.

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

Scheme of Assessment

The qualification consists of:

- three externally-examined papers assessing separately listening, reading and writing
- one speaking assessment set by Pearson and conducted by a teacher.

All assessments are externally marked by the exam board.

The focus for the content of questions and tasks will be drawn from the listed thematic contexts.

Each paper is available at Foundation or Higher tier. Students must be entered for a single tier across all papers.

Homework

Up to two hours per week: written work, grammar, vocabulary learning and oral preparation.

Post-16

This qualification offers a suitable progression route to A Level in Spanish language.

In addition, the study of a language at GCSE can facilitate and help promote the learning of other languages. The qualification can also add to an employability profile. Students will be able to apply their knowledge, skills and understanding to authentic, real-life contexts. They will develop transferable skills that support higher education study and the transition to employment, together with an understanding and appreciation of Spanish speaking countries and their cultures.

Statistics

Examining Board: AQA

Specification: 8382

Please note this course will run as an **extra-curricular** activity and so pupils will need to be able to confidently self-study and manage their time effectively.

Aims of the Course

GCSE Statistics will provide pupils with a critical appreciation of statistics and its place in everyday life. It encourages pupils to develop enquiring minds and become effective and independent learners. With a focus on handling data and probability, pupils acquire skills in and understanding of statistical concepts and methods. GCSE Statistics helps pupils develop a knowledge and understanding of statistical thinking and practice and how to use statistics in the real world. This can be beneficial in understanding how statistics works in everyday life and to understand the benefits and limitations of such mathematical analyses. Additionally, students will come up with a hypothesis and investigate it, then analyse and present the results whilst acquiring skills that are relevant in a wide variety of other subjects such as the sciences, geography and social sciences.

Content Summary

This specification comprises the following areas of subject content:

- Planning a Strategy: hypothesis, planning an investigation, experiments/surveys, appreciation of constraints;
- Data Collection: types of data, obtaining data, census data, sampling, conducting a survey/experiment;
- Tabulation and Representation;
- Data Analysis: measures of location, measures of spread, other summary statistics, time series, quality assurance, correlation and regression, estimation;
- Probability
- Data Interpretation: limitations analysis, inferential statistics, deductions, conclusions.

Assessment

Two 1 hour, 45 minute papers. Each paper involves the use of a calculator. Please note there is no controlled assessment. GCSE Statistics has a Foundation Tier (grades 1–5) and a Higher Tier (grades 4–9). Pupils must take two question papers at the same tier at the end of the two-year course, worth 50% each - each paper is worth 80 marks - 1hr 45 mins in duration. The questions of each paper have the same format - multiple choice questions, short answer and a Statistical Enquiry Cycle (SEC) question.

Post-16

This subject provides additional support with certain topics on the IGCSE course to explore them in more detail. Statistics is used in a wide variety of contexts, especially in a research and higher-education setting. This can enable greater understanding of evidence-based research across multiple subject areas.

Travel & Tourism

Examining Board: Pearson Edexcel (BTEC Level 1/Level 2 Tech Award)

Specification: Travel and Tourism

Aims of the Course

Travel and Tourism includes skills for customer service skills, destination geography, business awareness and employability or 'soft skills'. This qualification seeks to address these skills gaps and has been structured to encourage the acquisition and development of these skills.

Content Summary

The award gives learners the opportunity to gain specific- sector knowledge and skills in tourist destinations, factors which affect the tourism industry and customer service.

There are three components:

- Travel and Tourism organisations and destinations (Internally assessed)
- Influences on Global Travel and Tourism (Externally assessed)
- Customer needs in Travel and Tourism (Internal Synoptic paper)

Assessment

Internal assessment

Components 1 and 3 are assessed through internal assessment. Internal assessment for these components has been designed to relate to achievement of application of the conceptual underpinning for the sector through realistic tasks and activities. This style of assessment promotes deep learning through ensuring the connection between knowledge and practice. The components focus on:

- the development of core knowledge and understanding of travel and tourism organisations, tourist destinations, and the needs of different travel and tourism customers
- the development and application of skills such as researching types of tourist destination and holiday
- reflective practice through carrying out research on travel and tourism products and services to make recommendations to meet customer needs
- the ability to apply knowledge and understanding of travel and tourism to a variety of contexts, including factors influencing tourism and the impact of tourism on a variety of destinations.

Internal assessment is through assignments that are subject to external standards verification.

External assessment

There is one external assessment. *Component 2: Global Influences on Travel and Tourism* requires learners to apply their knowledge and understanding of the factors influencing tourism, the impact of tourism on destinations and destination management to travel and tourism contexts.

The design of this external assessment ensures that there is sufficient stretch and challenge. It is based on key tasks that require learners to demonstrate that they can identify and use effectively an appropriate selection of skills, techniques, concepts, theories and knowledge.

The external assessment takes the form of a set task/external assessment, taken under supervised conditions, which is then marked and a grade awarded by Pearson. Learners are permitted to resit the external assessment once during their programme by taking a new assessment.

The external assessment comprises 40% of the total GLH of the qualification and is weighted accordingly in the calculation of the overall qualification grade.

Internal synoptic assessment

There is one internal component, *Component 3: Customer Needs in Travel and Tourism*, which provides the main synoptic assessment for the qualification. Component 3 builds directly on Components 1 and 2 and enables learning to be brought together and related to a real-life situation.

Post-16

Possible routes from studying this qualification may include:

- A Levels as preparation for entry to higher education in a range of subjects
- Study of a vocational qualification at Level 3, such as a BTEC National in Travel and Tourism, which prepares learners to enter employment or apprenticeships, or to move on to higher education by studying a degree in the tourism sector.
- Study at Level 2 post-16 in a range of technical routes designed to lead to work, employment, apprenticeships or further study at Level 3. Learners who perform well in this qualification compared to their overall performance, should strongly consider this progression route as it can lead to employment in the travel and tourism sector.

Providing Support and Enrichment

Extra Mathematics and English



As part of supporting students through their core curriculum, we can provide additional teaching in Mathematics and English to support pupils' individual learning needs in the two key subjects.



These lessons will run during timetabled options and in conjunction with the curriculum followed in the timetabled Mathematics and English lessons. This is therefore considered for students who may need a reduced timetable, and should be discussed with Maths and English teachers and the Assistant Head for Academics.

Extra-Curricular Activities



In addition to the curriculum offered in timetabled lessons, we encourage all students to participate in ECA's to provide them with a full and enriching curriculum. There are also support opportunities through subject clinics.

Details of these are advised throughout the year and are also available through the ISAMS Parent Portal in the documents section.