



Dare to be Great

GCSE Options Evening

12th March 2024



GCSE Options Evening: Session 1 Order of Events

5:00 - 6:00 pm

Welcome to Attenborough/Seacole Parents & Carers

Mrs. MacLeod, Deputy Headteacher

Overview of the Options Process

Ms. de Groot, Assistant Headteacher i/c KS4

Mr. Foxall, Assistant Headteacher i/c KS3

Ms. Leane, KS3 Science Coordinator

Tour of Subjects

Franklin/Turing parents will arrive at 6:00pm



GCSE Options Evening: Session 2 Order of Events

6:00 – 7:00 pm

Welcome to Franklin/Turing Parents & Carers
Mrs. MacLeod, Deputy Headteacher

Overview of the Options process
Ms. de Groot Assistant Headteacher i/c KS4
Mr. Foxall, Assistant Headteacher i/c KS3
Ms. Leane, KS3 Science Coordinator

Tour of Subjects



Moving from **Key Stage 3** to **Key Stage 4**

- **Independence and Interest:**

- *daily timetable
- *structured choices
- *greater depth
- *more independent learning
- *gaining meaningful qualifications

- **Maturity and Responsibility:**

- *evaluating long-term outcomes and impacts
- *time management
- *more complex and challenging content
- *more and longer assessments
- *new level of accountability



Learning transition from **Key Stage 3** to **Key Stage 4**:

Core subjects:

In English, Mathematics & Science, this takes place between now and May:

- In English lessons, students are now studying An Inspector Calls for **GCSE English Literature**
- In Maths lessons, work on enlargement, ratio, proportion, rates, probability and algebra from April will build in content, challenge and problems from **GCSE Mathematics**
- In Science lessons, students will begin the study of adaptation, interdependence, ecosystems (**GCSE Biology**) Atmosphere (**GCSE Chemistry**) and Energy Resources (**GCSE Physics**)



Learning transition from Key Stage 3 to Key Stage 4:

Option subjects:

In other lesson times, students will be given 6 weeks of GCSE foundation and transition content after the May half term:

- In some subjects, students will be put into GCSE classes if they have chosen that subject;
- In some subjects, the final module of Key Stage 3 has been adapted to include content, challenge and references which will serve as a GCSE introduction;
- In 'new' subjects, students will be given two extended sessions off-timetable to serve as a GCSE introduction.



Learning transition from **Key Stage 3** to **Key Stage 4**:

- **Attendance:** what you learn in lessons from now on **will matter** in 2 years. Even a student with 90% attendance would still miss 7 days of GCSE induction/transition.
- **Organisation:** materials, notes, time
- **Commitment:** sustained effort over time, home learning, revision



Year 9 Options Timeline

January 2024	Introductory presentation to Year 9: What to start thinking about
February 2024	Year 9 Options Booklet published Year 9 Options Guidance Forms distributed Year 9 Assemblies
12th March 2024	Year 9 Options Evening
18th March 2024	Year 9 Options Online opened
21st March 2024	Year 9 Options Online closed
April/May 2024	School processes options and timetabling begins
June 2024	Students will have their options confirmed by this date



GCSE Options Booklet 2024

Includes detailed guidance on:

- The GCSE Curriculum at Queens' School
- The Academic Pathway system and Case Studies
- How to decide and make your options choices



QUEENS' SCHOOL
Dare to be Great



A guide to GCSE courses at Queens' School

1



GCSE Options Booklet 2024

- Your guide to the GCSE Options process at Queens' in 2024
- Includes information about each subject, including:

Compulsory GCSE subjects: Mathematics, English Language, English Literature, Science (Combined and Triple)

Structured Choices: History and Geography; French and Spanish

Open Choices: 18 to choose from

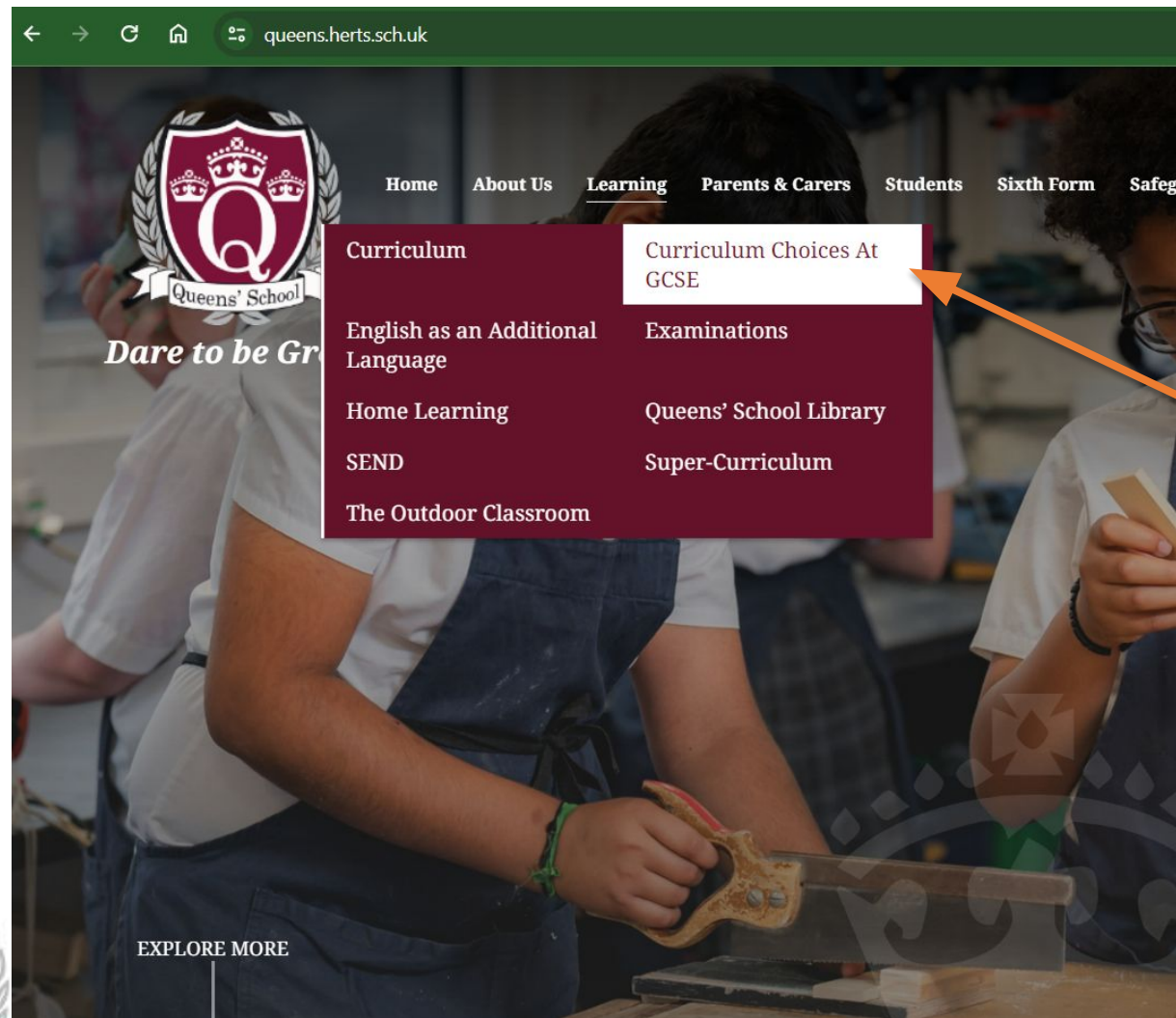
The Base Curriculum: Core PE & Lifelong Learning

Prohibited combinations: no more than one Tech, not Business and Sociology

SPECIALIST SPORTS AND SCIENCE COLLEGE

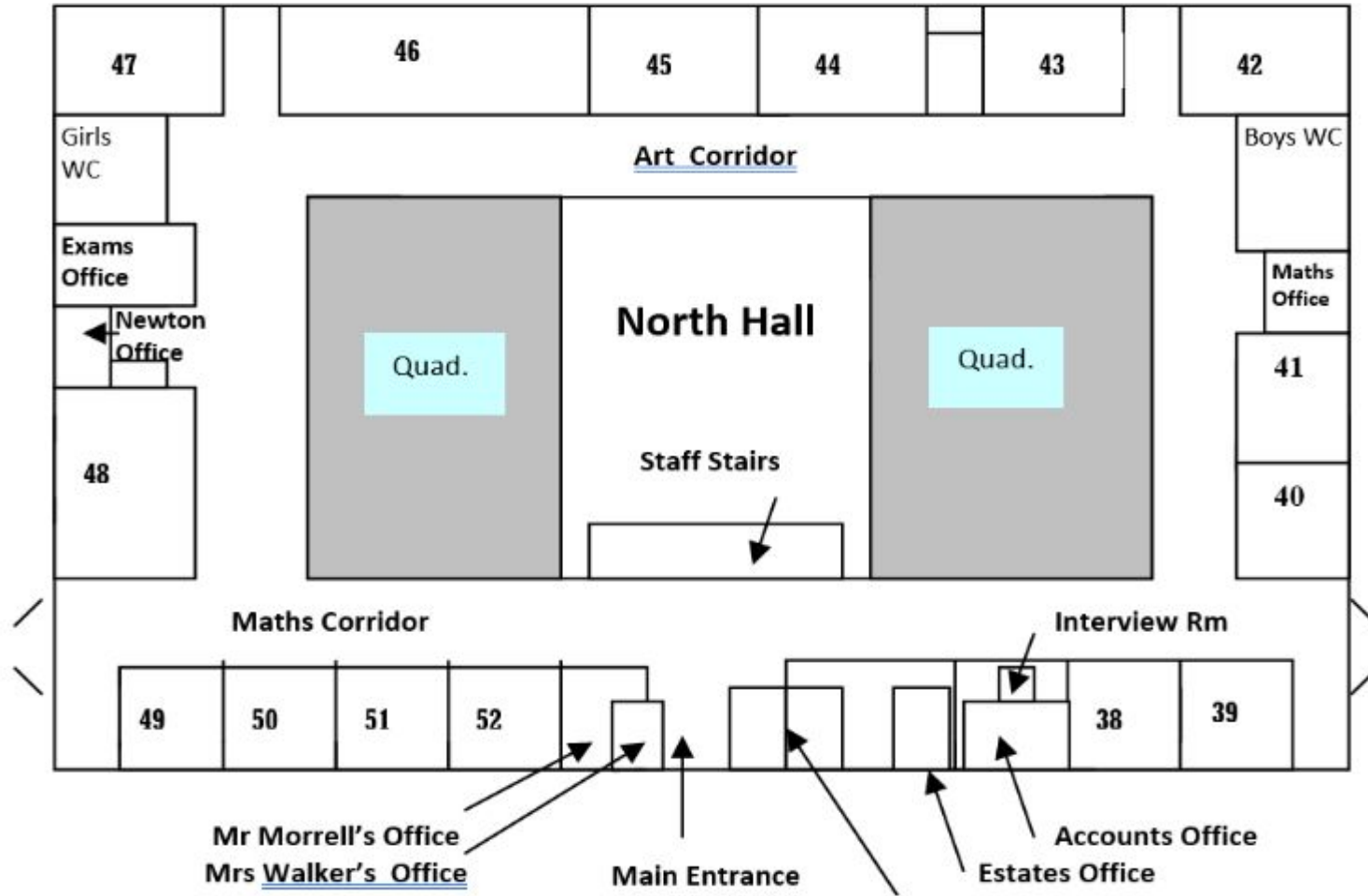


Where can I find the Options Booklet?



Plan and list of rooms:

Map of North Side ground floor



List of departments

PE: 39
 Classical Civilisation: 38
 QPA Refreshments: 52
 Modern Foreign Languages: 51
 Psychology: 50
 Sociology: 50
 Business Studies: 48
 D&T and Food: 47
 Art: 46
 Drama: 46
 Music: 46
 Geography: 44
 History: 43
 Religious Studies: 43
 Computer Science: 41

Departmental representatives
 (Heads of department,
 teachers and current students)
 will be available in the rooms
 above to discuss GCSE
 courses until 7:15pm.



Making the most out of the evening

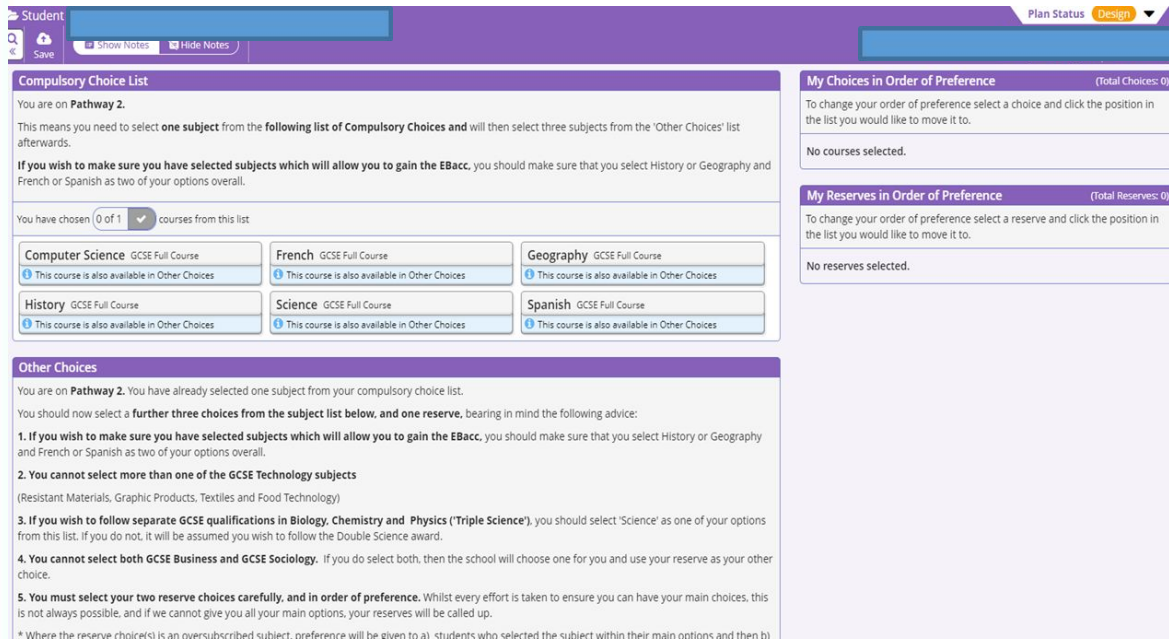
An opportunity to:

- Meet Heads of Departments and senior teachers *in those subjects your child is currently undecided about*
- Ask questions about the information you have not understood in the Options Booklet

All departments can be found on the North side and are identified on your map



Options Online



The screenshot shows the 'Options Online' system interface for a student. The top navigation bar includes 'Student', 'Save', 'Show Notes', 'Hide Notes', and 'Plan Status Design'. The main content area is divided into two columns. The left column, titled 'Compulsory Choice List', explains that the student is on 'Pathway 2' and must select one subject from a list of compulsory choices (Computer Science, French, Geography, History, Science, Spanish) and then select three subjects from the 'Other Choices' list. The right column, titled 'My Choices in Order of Preference' and 'My Reserves in Order of Preference', shows that no choices or reserves have been selected yet. The 'Other Choices' section provides detailed instructions for selecting subjects, including advice on the EBacc, GCSE Technology subjects, Triple Science, and Business/Sociology, as well as instructions for selecting reserve choices.

Compulsory Choice List

You are on **Pathway 2**.

This means you need to select **one subject** from the following list of **Compulsory Choices** and will then select three subjects from the 'Other Choices' list afterwards.

If you wish to make sure you have selected subjects which will allow you to gain the EBacc, you should make sure that you select History or Geography and French or Spanish as two of your options overall.

You have chosen **0 of 1** courses from this list

Computer Science GCSE Full Course <small>This course is also available in Other Choices</small>	French GCSE Full Course <small>This course is also available in Other Choices</small>	Geography GCSE Full Course <small>This course is also available in Other Choices</small>
History GCSE Full Course <small>This course is also available in Other Choices</small>	Science GCSE Full Course <small>This course is also available in Other Choices</small>	Spanish GCSE Full Course <small>This course is also available in Other Choices</small>

Other Choices

You are on **Pathway 2**. You have already selected one subject from your compulsory choice list.

You should now select a **further three choices** from the subject list below, and **one reserve**, bearing in mind the following advice:

- If you wish to make sure you have selected subjects which will allow you to gain the EBacc**, you should make sure that you select History or Geography and French or Spanish as two of your options overall.
- You cannot select more than one of the GCSE Technology subjects** (Resistant Materials, Graphic Products, Textiles and Food Technology)
- If you wish to follow separate GCSE qualifications in Biology, Chemistry and Physics ('Triple Science')**, you should select 'Science' as one of your options from this list. If you do not, it will be assumed you wish to follow the Double Science award.
- You cannot select both GCSE Business and GCSE Sociology**. If you do select both, then the school will choose one for you and use your reserve as your other choice.
- You must select your two reserve choices carefully, and in order of preference**. Whilst every effort is taken to ensure you can have your main choices, this is not always possible, and if we cannot give you all your main options, your reserves will be called up.

* Where the reserve choice(s) is an oversubscribed subject, preference will be given to a) students who selected the subject within their main options and then b)

- Options Online is the only way for your child to make your GCSE options choices
- ✓ Is personalised
- ✓ Identify the pathway your child should follow (E or C)
- ✓ Include clear instructions
- ✓ **Allow your child to pick your options and make two reserve choices**
- ✓ Students will be given an assembly on how to use the system and instructions will be sent home
- ✓ System will be opened on **Monday 18th March** and closed on **Thursday 21st March**.



GCSE Pathways at a glance

PATHWAY E

(9-11 GCSEs)

- **Compulsory GCSEs:**
English Language, English Literature, Maths, Sciences
- **Structured Choice GCSEs**
History/Geography & French/Spanish
- **Open Choice GCSEs**
A wide range of subjects
- **Base Curriculum**
Core PE & LLL

PATHWAY C

(8-9 GCSEs)

- **Compulsory GCSEs**
English Language, English Literature, Maths, Sciences
- **Structured Choice GCSEs**
History/Geography/French/Spanish
- **Core Skills foundation support in English/Maths**
- **Open Choice GCSEs**
A wide range of subjects
- **Base Curriculum**
Core PE & LLL



Pathway E

- > This is the pathway most students are placed on.
- > It represents a broad academic curriculum combination with the core and applied literacy, numeracy and language skills and knowledge which the school knows to be of educational importance;
- > It facilitates entry to competitive university and college courses and careers.
- > It means that students are entered for the **Ebacc**, a government-approved suite of qualifications which it is expected that the majority of students are entered for.

Ebacc consists of: GCSE English Language, GCSE Mathematics

GCSE Combined Science or Triple Science

GCSE Modern Foreign Language

GCSE History or Geography



KS4 Curriculum: Pathway E

Subject (s)	Number of GCSEs	Number of lessons
GCSE English Language & GCSE English Literature	2	8 lessons/fortnight
GCSE Mathematics	1	7 lessons/fortnight
GCSE Combined Science OR GCSE Triple Science	2 or 3	12 lessons/fortnight
Choice 1: French or Spanish (MFL)	1	5 lessons/fortnight
Choice 2: History or Geography (Humanity)	1	5 lessons/fortnight
Choice 3: open choice	1	5 lessons/fortnight
Choice 4: open choice	1	5 lessons/fortnight
	9 or 10	



Pathway C:

- > Where a student is identified as needing particular additional support in order to ensure the best possible chance of a standard or strong pass in either/both English Language and Maths, they will follow this pathway which replaces one option with a programme of Core Skills, including a combination of extra foundation English and/or Maths.
- > Students can still take Triple Science if the Science faculty recommends them.



KS4 Curriculum: Core Skills pathway

Subject (s)	Number of GCSEs	Number of lessons
GCSE English Language & GCSE English Literature	2	8 lessons/fortnight
GCSE Mathematics	1	7 lessons/fortnight
GCSE Combined Science OR GCSE Triple Science	2 or 3	12 lessons/fortnight
Core Skills: further foundation support in English/Maths	Functional Skills*	5 lessons/fortnight
Choice 2: History, Geography, French or Spanish	1	5 lessons/fortnight
Choice 3: open choice	1	5 lessons/fortnight
Choice 4: open choice	1	5 lessons/fortnight
	8 or 9	



A note on some choices and combinations....

- Your child **cannot choose more than one Technology subject** (Food / Resistant Materials / Graphic Products / Textiles).
- You child **cannot pick more than one 'new' subject**: students may not pick more than one from Classical Civilisation, Business, Sociology, Psychology.
- We encourage all Pathway E students to **pick one of their open choices** from the practical/performative subjects, which have NEA components:
Art, Music, Drama, PE, Technologies.
- Where there are size limits on classes or we find we can only run a limited number of classes, **a first-come, first-served basis** will be used.



A note about GCSE Sciences

- Everyone has to do **Science at GCSE**
 - including biology, chemistry and physics
- There are two ways of doing Science GCSEs: **Triple Science** (3 separate GCSEs in Biology, Chemistry, Physics) **or Combined Science** (2 GCSEs representing study from all 3 sciences)
- Everyone will do either **Combined or Triple** science
- The Science faculty will predominantly look at the **end of KS3 assessment score** alongside previous assessments to invite students to pick Triple Science
 - Your child does not have to pick triple if you receive the letter
 - Not all students will get the opportunity to pick triple, depending on their assessment score
- Picking combined or triple science is an **independent process** to your GCSE options
- You **can do A levels** in biology, chemistry or physics with combined or triple science
 - (depending on your GCSE grade!)
 - Triple is recommended for a smoother transition



How to Pick Combined or Triple Science

- A letter will be sent to you on **Friday 10th May** outlining whether we think your child is capable to do Combined or Triple Science
- A Google Form link will be sent via ClassCharts for you to place your option if your child has the option to pick triple science
- You must complete the Google Form by **Friday 24th May**

Dear Year 9 Parent/Carer,

GCSE Science in Y10 and Y11

We are writing to inform and advise you about your child's GCSE Science courses. As you know, students in Year 10 and 11 will study for at least the **two qualifications** represented by **GCSE Combined Science**, but if they choose the '**Triple Science**' option, they will gain **three separate GCSE qualifications in Biology, Chemistry and Physics**.

Choosing between Triple and Combined Science is not only about interest but also aptitude in the subject and commitment to workload. According to your child's most recent scores (including the recent, holistic End of KS3 Assessment), and the professional judgement of class teachers, **we feel that your child would be a strong candidate for Triple Science, should they wish to select it.**

As there is more content to complete in a Triple Science course, it will require your child to complete regular independent work and home learning to supplement classroom learning. This requires a further commitment from your child and it is something that should be considered in the decision.

Triple Science means:

- 12 lessons per fortnight split across Biology, Chemistry and Physics (The same number of lessons as Combined Science)
- 3 GCSE grades (one per subject).
- 2 x 1hr 45min exam papers per subject
- More content covered than Combined Science, a number of extra topics and some topics being delved into in more depth.
- Greater pace of topic coverage.
- Three specialised science teachers for each class.

Year 9 Application for Combined or Triple Science

leaneel@queens.herts.sch.uk [Switch accounts](#)



* Indicates required question

Email *

☐ Record leaneel@queens.herts.sch.uk as the email to be included with my response

First name *

Your answer

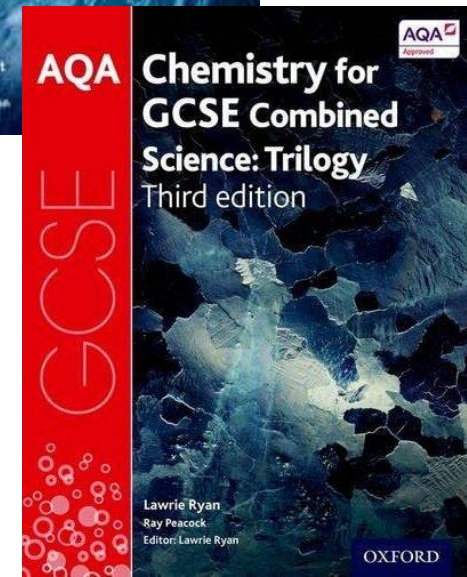
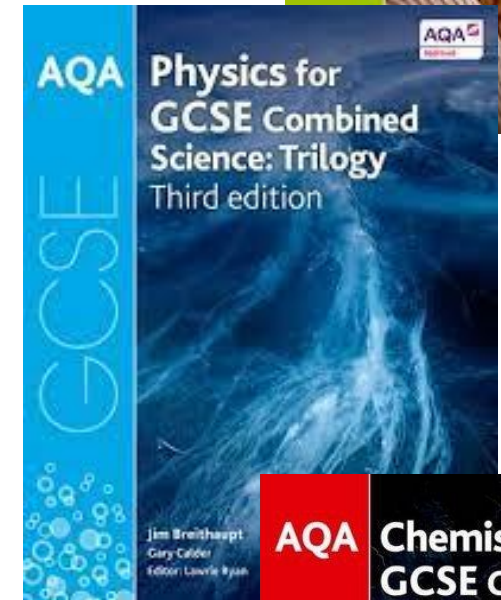
Last name *

Your answer

Form *

Combined Science

- You will have biology, chemistry and physics lessons taught by specialists in that subject area
- **Each subject will have two exam papers** to sit in June of year 11
- Each paper will be **1 hour 15 mins**
- You will get **2 GCSEs**
 - **An average grade** if worked out from biology, chemistry and physics



Triple Science

- You will have biology, chemistry and physics lessons taught by specialists in that subject area
- **Each subject will have two exam papers** to sit in June of year 11
- Each paper will be **1 hour 45 mins**
- You will get **3 GCSEs**
 - One in each subject area
- There is **more content** to cover in triple
 - It's not harder but there's more of it in the same amount of time
- You will be expected to **complete independent work**
- The **extra topics** you will cover, to name a few...
 - Biology – the brain and the eye
 - Chemistry – reactions of alkenes and alcohols, and titrations
 - Physics – space and radioactivity

AQA

Biology
Third edition

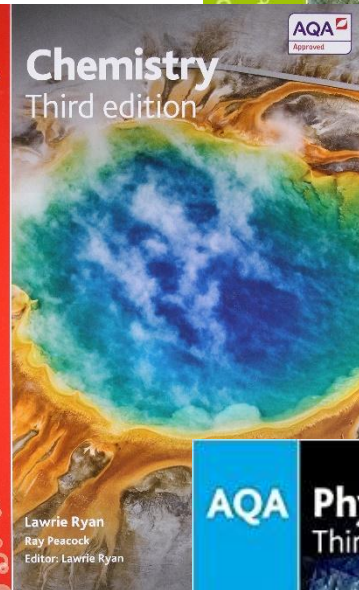
GCSE



AQA

Chemistry
Third edition

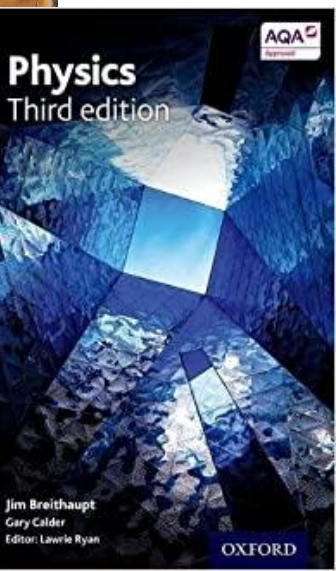
GCSE



AQA

Physics
Third edition

GCSE



Overview

	Combined	Triple
Number of lessons over 2 weeks	12	12
Number of papers	2 x biology 2 x chemistry 2 x physics	2 x biology 2 x chemistry 2 x physics
Length of exam	1 hour 15 mins	1 hour 45 mins
Number of GCSEs	2 Biology, chemistry and physics mark is averaged across two Science GCSEs	3 GCSE in biology, chemistry and physics
Types of papers available	Foundation or higher	Foundation or higher

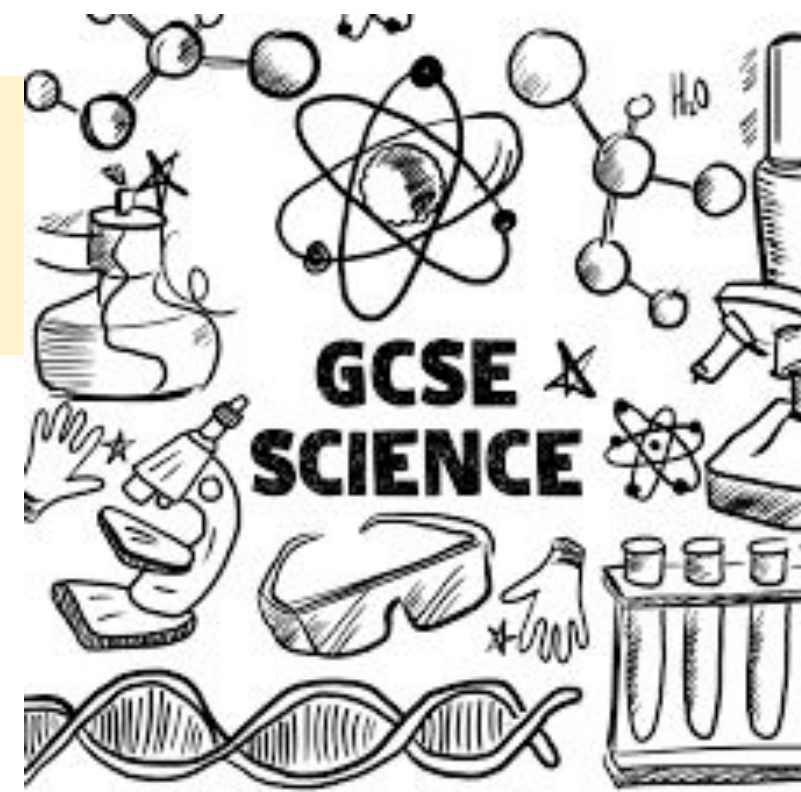
Foundation or Higher paper

- Higher paper
 - Maximum grade is a 9
 - All content is covered
- Foundation paper
 - Maximum grade is a 5
 - Some content is not covered and questions are more focussed
- You do not have to switch between combined or triple, there are both types of papers on each



Starting GCSE in Year 9

- Your child will currently be studying the '**Foundations to GCSE**' modules
- They will move on to start modules that will form part of their **Science GCSEs**
- These modules are for **both combined and triple** students
 - it won't matter what option you pick
- They will still be taught in your form groups
- They will be assessed on this content in your GCSEs at the end of year 11



Any further questions

Drop me an email

- leaneel@queens.herts.sch.uk

I'll be around after the talk to answer questions

Online resources

- AQA website
 - <https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/science/gcse>

Don't make assumptions....do your research

- Writing-heavy?
- NEA components?
- Pre-existing skills set?
- A-levels?
- Don't discount yourself on the basis of assumptions



Student Profiles: some examples

Sarah

Sarah is on Pathway E. She is interested in training to be a doctor. She researches and definitely needs A-level Chemistry. She will also need to show she is a good communicator (for dealing with patients, understanding medical terminology and writing medical reports) and good manual dexterity and co-ordination. She selects:

1. **History** (will help her develop writing and note-taking skills and Geography)
2. **Spanish** (will allow her to communicate with a wider range of patients and doctor in other countries; she also prefers Spanish to French)
3. **Psychology** (will allow her to fully develop her understanding of the human mind)
4. **Resistant Materials** (will allow her to develop precise manual and design skills into medical engineering if she decides to go down that path)

Jayden

Jayden is on Pathway E. He likes most subjects, especially English, where he enjoys reading literature. He thinks he wants to go to college or university but he's not sure whether Sport or Politics. He selects:

1. **History** (he is good at writing essays and it will allow him to learn more about the world)
2. **French** (will allow him to develop communication skills which may be useful in his career)
3. **Drama** (another subject where he will be able to discuss and develop his ideas)
4. **P.E.** (he really enjoys sport and is interested in learning more about sports science)

Yasmin

Yasmin is on Pathway E. She is an extremely talented artist. She has known for the last two years that she wants to take Art at both GCSE and A-level and would like to go to Art college and have a career in Art. If she's not an artist herself, she might get involved in publishing art books or running her own gallery or art supply company. She selects:

1. **Geography** (she enjoys the subject and is interested in the links between human geography and the impact on Art).
2. **Spanish** (she hopes to be able to promote her Art around the world and speak to people from the artist community across the globe).
3. **Art** (she is really good at it and it's her favourite subject)
4. **Business Studies** (it may help if she is thinking of running her own company)

Cam

Cam is on Pathway C. Cam likes lessons where he can discuss ideas and express opinions. He has thought about doing psychology after school but doesn't have a clear idea. He selects:

1. **Geography** (he enjoys it and is interested in the Human aspect, plus he is required to select one of Languages, History or Geography).
2. **Psychology** (lots of opportunities for discussing people's ideas and beliefs).
3. **Music** (he just really enjoys it and is a really skilled guitarist).

Thinking long term.....

- ***What subjects is my child good at?*** – This is the key indicator for likely success in a subject.
- ***What subjects does my child need for my future?***
- ***What subjects does my child enjoy most?*** - This is important as enjoyment and examination success often go hand in hand. Remember this is not the same as liking a current teacher!
- ***What are my child's skills and interests?*** – Often these can help support students' subjects within school.



What should you do now?

- Read the GCSE Options Booklet carefully with your child and information which comes home about Options Online
- Research the required GCSE subjects for future University degrees and careers.
- Students should complete Options Online between 18th and 21st March.

