



**QUEENS' SCHOOL**  
*Dare to be Great*

# **GCSE Options Booklet**

## **2025-27**

**Scholarship | Tenacity | Altruism | Respect**



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## Welcome to GCSE Options 2025

The move from Key Stage 3 to Key Stage 4 is an exciting time. For the first time, you are asked to make choices which will have an impact on your future study and career paths. We hope that you feel excited by this prospect. It is an opportunity for you to pursue your passions further and develop a deeper understanding of the subjects you enjoy.

At Queens' School the Key Stage 4 curriculum is crafted to inspire and challenge you to achieve your best. It is ambitious and offers a variety of exciting opportunities for you to explore. The option choices provided by the school allow you considerable scope to deepen and broaden your understanding in different specialisms, while maintaining a suitably broad and balanced programme of study to prepare for the courses available at Key Stage 5 in our Sixth Form.



While the options available offer some flexibility, they are limited in number yet important, as they may open doors to future study opportunities. Making informed choices is essential, and this includes reviewing the information provided in this booklet and to seek other sources of guidance from your teachers, family members, and friends. It is also worthwhile researching various career paths and higher education options you may potentially want to pursue later on as this will ensure that you are well informed. In short, the more knowledge you have, the better your decisions will be.

Other considerations when choosing your option subjects are:

- Enjoyment and interest in the subject
- Skills the subject will enable you to develop
- Your ability in the subject
- The course structure - number of exams, types of questions, does it have any Non-Examined Assessments (Coursework) or is there pre-release material before the exam?

In addition to the information provided to you on Options Evening, you will be given support with selecting your option choices through a variety of activities and are outlined in the important dates section.

We wish all of Year 9 the very best as they embark on this important and exciting phase of their academic studies. If you have any questions about your subject choices, please speak to your teachers and/or your Director of Learning.

Mr R Titley  
Deputy Headteacher

## The Key Stage 4 Curriculum at Queens'

### The Full Curriculum

At Queens', we believe it is important for students to retain a broad range of subjects through to GCSE. To achieve this ambition, our Key Stage 4 curriculum consists of a mix of **compulsory core subjects, structured options subjects** and **open option subjects**.

By requiring students to maintain a broad curriculum through to GCSE, we believe this provides the best opportunity for them to become accomplished learners, equipped with a wider range of skills and knowledge. Our curriculum supports government expectations regarding the English Baccalaureate (EBacc). The Department for Education describes the EBacc as "a set of subjects at GCSE that keeps young people's options open for further study and future careers." The government has stated an aim for 90% of students to study EBacc subjects by 2025.<sup>1</sup> Although the EBacc is not a qualification, research by UCL has shown that these subjects, when studied together, are considered "facilitating" and are preferred by some universities, as they provide foundational support for certain degree programmes and career opportunities.<sup>2</sup> As part of this full curriculum offer students may be recommended by the science department to study separate sciences. While not essential, this option provides strong preparation for the various scientific disciplines at A Level. We strongly believe that the 'Full Curriculum' is the right curriculum offer and its demands are within the capacity of the majority of Queens' students. However, some students do benefit from studying a more bespoke curriculum; we call this alternative the Focused Curriculum.

### The Focused Curriculum

We recognise that a small percentage of students may benefit from studying one less GCSE, allowing for additional support in core subjects, mastery of learning, and time to focus on independent study. In our Focused Curriculum, students study eight GCSEs, enabling them to receive tailored assistance to enhance their success at this level. The time freed up is dedicated to bespoke lessons, which will include additional English, mathematics, and/or study support, and may also involve the Learning Support Team, depending on individual needs. The smaller study groups within this curriculum allow for increased one-to-one staff attention and a more informal environment for discussing topics with teachers and peers. The Focused Curriculum is not intended for students who are able to succeed on the full curriculum as a means to reduce workload or limit options; rather, it is designed to ensure that all students can achieve success during their Key Stage 4 years.

Parents of pupils who are guided towards a Focused Curriculum will hear from the school before February Half term.

At Queens', as in any other school, all pupils must study a number of Compulsory Core Subjects at GCSE and non- GCSE in Year 10 and 11. These are:

- GCSE English Language (1 GCSE)
- GCSE English Literature (1 GCSE)
- GCSE Mathematics (1 GCSE)
- GCSEs in Science Combined science (worth 2 GCSE's)
- MFL - Students will study 1 language (1 GCSE) [with very few exceptions]
- Games and Lifelong Learning: Students will also have lessons in Games (PE) and Lifelong Learning (a combination of PSHE, Learning to Learn, Careers and Life Skills). These subjects are not formally examined.

In addition to **compulsory core subjects**, students are able to elect further subjects for GCSE study from a list of **structured option subjects** and **open option subjects**. All option subjects are studied for 5 hours/ fortnight. The number of subjects depends on whether the student is on the **Full Curriculum** (the vast majority of students) or The **Focused Curriculum**. This is, in turn, determined by information the school has about each student's prior and current academic results and learning profile. The majority of students will study for 9 GCSEs and a few will study for 8 GCSEs.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/english-baccalaureate-ebacc/english-baccalaureate-ebacc>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.informedchoices.ac.uk/>



## Open Option Subjects

We strongly encourage that students consider making a practical/performance/creative subject one of their open choices (Art, Drama, Music, Physical Education, and a Technology) as these give breadth, provide a different way of environment for learning and also contain Non-Examined Assessment (coursework) which can be completed across the two years rather than by terminal examination.

Where students have an element of choice over which subject they wish to study they may choose from the following:

- Art and Design
- Business\*
- Classical Civilisation\*
- Computer Science
- Design and Technology - Graphic Product \*\*
- Design and Technology - Resistant Materials \*\*
- Design and Technology - Textiles\*\*
- Drama
- Food and Nutrition \*\*
- French
- Geography
- History
- Music
- Physical Education
- Psychology\*
- Religious Studies
- Sociology\*
- Spanish

\* Business, Classical Civilisation, Psychology and Sociology are all subjects new to students at GCSE. For this reason, students are only allowed to select **ONE** of these.

\*\* Students are only allowed to select **ONE** Technology subject



## The Full Curriculum - Subject Choices

Students on the full curriculum will in most cases have structured options. As well as being an appropriately rigorous academic and broad programme of study, this combination enables pupils to meet the requirements for the EBacc, the government recommended set of subjects recognised as a significant benchmark of academic ambition, knowledge, competencies and transferable skill.

Students are welcome to take a second humanity course (History and Geography) or a second language (French and Spanish) in their open choices if they would like.

<b>Row A</b>			Structured Option 3: Separate Science
<b>Row B</b>	Structured Option 1: History or Geography	Structured Option 2: French or Spanish	In the instance a student is not recommended to pursue the separate sciences option, this could 'free up' an option choice.

The Full Curriculum model below shows how many hours are allocated in each subject per fortnight cycle.

<b>ROW A</b>	<b>Subject</b>	English	Science	Maths	Structured Option 1: History or Geography	Structured Option 2: MFL	Structured Option 3: Separate Science	Open Option 4	Games	Lifelong Learning
<b>ROW B</b>							Open Option 3			
	<b>Time (Hours/fortnight)</b>	9	10	7	5	5	5	5	4	2

### Note: Separate Science

- Students who are **recommended** to study the separate sciences are advised to do so if they are considering pursuing an A Level in Science.
- Students who are **recommended** combined science still have the option to select Separate Science if they wish. The reason for being recommended combined science is based on a professional judgement regarding whether we believe your child is more likely to succeed in completing combined science rather than separate sciences.
- Due to the additional content, separate science may not be an appropriate option for some students based on our professional judgment, and in such cases, students will only be able to select Combined Science.



## The Focused Curriculum - Subject Choices

Students on the Focused Curriculum will have 3 choices and a study support session for 5 hours/fortnight. This could be extra support in English, mathematics as relevant to the student's needs. Students may also be entered for foundational qualifications such as Level 1 or 2 Functional Skills to support achievement at GCSE.

Students who are on a focused curriculum may also choose to study the EBacc suite of subjects, should they choose. This would mean Option 1 being History or Geography and Option 2 being French or Spanish, and Option 3 would be an open choice.

Students on the focused curriculum **must** choose one of the following structured subjects as part of their programme of study; Geography, History, French or Spanish.

The Focused Curriculum model below shows how many hours are allocated in each subject per fortnight cycle in Year 10.

Subject	English	Science	Maths	Structured Option 1 [Geography, History, French or Spanish]	Open Option 2	Open Option 3	Study Support	Games	Lifelong Learning
Time (Hours/fortnight)	9	10	7	5	5	5	5	4	2

A letter will be sent around February Half term indicating our professional judgement suggests that they would benefit from studying the focused curriculum having additional English and Mathematics to aid their success during Key Stage 4.

## Submitting Options & Reserve Options

The process of selecting subjects is entirely paperless, and runs through a system called SIMS Options Online. Students will receive email invitations in mid March which will direct them to the website into which they can input their options.

### The importance of reserve subjects:

On the Options Online website, students will be prompted to select their main preferred options in accordance with their curriculum (full or focused), **and also two reserve subjects- a first reserve and a second reserve**. It is vital that students think very carefully about reserve subjects and place them in order of importance.

Whilst the school strives to allocate students their preferred options, in some cases it may be necessary to use a reserve choice. This could occur if a particular combination of subjects cannot be timetabled, if a popular subject is oversubscribed, or if there are constraints due to staff availability. Reserve choices are understood to reflect the subjects students would most like to study after their primary preferences and will be automatically allocated, starting with the first reserve, should we be unable to accommodate main choices.

### Oversubscription & Popular Subjects

We always try very hard to put on the number of classes required by the number of students choosing the subject, but this may be limited by staffing and facilities availability. If a subject becomes oversubscribed, then priority will be given to students who have:

1. picked the subject as a preferred option (as opposed to nominating it as a reserve)

Where a subject continues to be oversubscribed, we will use random allocation. This ensures fairness for all students who wish to choose this subject, rather than relying on a first-come, first-served basis.

### How Do I Decide What Options I Should Choose?

There is no such thing as an "easy" GCSE. Courses that align with your natural strengths and interests may feel more manageable, and you are likely to be more successful in these. However, there are also subjects that are compulsory, reflecting the reality that, as in life, you may sometimes need to undertake tasks you may not enjoy simply because they are required.

To make any choice, it is essential to make an informed decision. Below is a list of "top tips" to guide you in making informed choices:

1. Research all your options before you make a decision. Read this booklet, look at the [Star Curriculum Guide for KS4](#) on the school website. If you have a firm career idea, choose the options you need to meet the entry requirements for the post-16 opportunities that interest you - whether that's for [our sixth form](#), apprenticeship, college, or a job with training.
2. If you don't have a firm career idea, choose options that will give you plenty of choice post-16.
3. Do something that you enjoy and have an interest in - you are more likely to want to learn about it.
4. If you have a natural aptitude for a particular subject you are more likely to be successful in it.
5. Ask for help and advice - Parents, friends, teachers, sixth form students, and current GCSE students are all here to help you make an informed decision

**Reminder:** Reserve choices are understood to reflect the subjects students would most like to study after their primary preferences and will be automatically allocated, starting with the first reserve, should we be unable to accommodate main choices. In some instances we may have a review meeting with a student to discuss their option choices.



## GCSE Grading

GCSE grading changed nearly a decade ago. The key thing to remember is that a Grade 4 is seen as a 'standard pass' and 5 is seen as a 'strong pass'. Most courses beyond GCSE require at least a Grade 4 in English and mathematics. Indeed entry to Queens' sixth form is based on this basic requirement. [See our Sixth Form entry requirements here.](#)

Below is a useful comparison between the old grading system and the numerical grading system.

Old grades	Numerical grades
A*	9
A	8
B	7
C	6
	5 Strong Pass
	4 Standard Pass
D	3
E	2
F	1
G	1
U	U

Source: Ofqual



## Important Dates

The table below shows the different events between now and confirmation of your subject choices.

Event	Description	Date
Assembly	Science Assessment and other Options related information	7 Feb
Assembly/ Careers	Assembly - Career options	14 Feb
Science Assessment	Information from this is used to consider if students should complete a GCSE Separate or Combined Science Option	25 Feb (Period 3) 1hr
Options Evening - Parents and Students	North Hall (17:00-19:00) 17:00: Attenborough and Seacole 18:00: Franklin and Turing Further details to be sent in advance of the event.	11 March 2025
Assembly for students	Information about Options Online and Next Steps.	14 March 2025
'Options Online' Opens	Options Online Opens for students to make their subject choices via SIMS.	14 March 2025 16:00 Opens
'Options Online' Closes	Deadline for completing and submitting the option choices in SIMS.	21 March 2025 18:00 Closes
Subject Choices Confirmation	An Email will be sent to students confirming their choices	Towards the end of the Summer Term



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# Compulsory Core Subjects

English Language  
English Literature  
Mathematics  
Combined Science  
Games and LifeLong Learning



## English Language

Specification: [Eduqas GCSE \(9-1\) In English Language](#)

### Overview - Why Study English Language?

The GCSE English Language course covers a wide range of skills including creative and persuasive writing, close analysis of texts and an appreciation of literary genres. Year 10 focuses on studying non-fiction reading and writing skills; we then study fiction reading and writing skills in Year 11. At the end of Year 10, you will undertake a compulsory assessment of Speaking and Listening. English Language is the cornerstone of all other essay-based subjects enabling students to express themselves clearly and appropriately.

### How Will I Be Assessed?

Paper 1	Paper 2	Speaking and Listening
1 Hour 45 minutes Worth 40% of total examination <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A comprehension task on an unseen passage of 20th Century Literature</li> <li>• A creative writing task</li> </ul>	2 Hours Worth 60% of total examination <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A comprehension task on two unseen non-fiction passages.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ One from the 19 th Century</li> <li>○ One from the 21 st Century</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Two non-fiction writing tasks</li> </ul>	A Non-Examined Assessment which is graded (pass, merit or distinction). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students must deliver a speech to an audience and respond to questions</li> </ul>

100% assessed by final exams. There is an NEA but is not included in the calculation of the final grade.

### Further Information and Opportunities

What are the post-16 opportunities?	All Level 2 and 3 courses require at least a grade 4 in English. Queens' sixth form currently requires a minimum of a grade 4 as an entry requirement but many courses require a grade 5 or 6. Studying English Language provides an opportunity to explore its vocabulary, phonetics, grammar, and origins. You may also engage in research projects examining language variation and change across different regions of the UK. Additionally, English can be combined with subjects such as history, biology, classical civilisation, psychology, or a modern foreign language, with some courses offering the option of a year abroad. You could end up working in a variety of sectors, including teaching, journalism, web content editing and management, copywriting, public relations, and publishing. Employers will be attracted by your skills in communication, writing, or undertaking research.
Trips and Visits	The English Department actively seeks to enrich students by offering a variety of trips and visits throughout the course, for example seeing performances of the texts they study.
Costs	£28 (language and literature covering 3 set texts - 'Macbeth', 'A Christmas Carol' and 'An Inspector Calls' and 7 revision packs on every element of the exams)



## English Literature

Specification: [Eduqas GCSE \(9-1\) In English Literature](#)

### Overview - Why Study English Literature?

The GCSE English Literature course encourages students to develop knowledge and skills in reading, writing and critical thinking whilst also providing opportunities to read widely for pleasure across a range of high quality texts in the genres of prose, poetry and drama and to develop an understanding of how literature is both rich and influential. The skills that students will gain will allow them to make connections across their reading and develop a clear understanding of literary works and also prepare them for the study of literature at a higher level. Reading is the key to success in this subject so it is best to get started early by reading a wide range of fiction and non-fiction in preparation.

### How Will I Be Assessed?

Paper 1	Paper 2
2 Hours Worth 40% of total examination <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 'Macbeth': one extract question and one whole text question</li> <li>• Poetry anthology: two questions, one of which is comparative, based on the Eduqas poetry anthology</li> </ul>	2 Hours 30 minutes Worth 60% of total examination <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 'An Inspector Calls', by J.B. Priestley:</li> <li>• 'A Christmas Carol', by Charles Dickens</li> <li>• Poetry from the 20th/21st Centuries</li> </ul>

100% assessed by final exams, there is no NEA element

### Further Information and Opportunities

What are the post-16 opportunities?	All Level 2 and 3 courses require at least a grade 4 in English. Queens' sixth form currently requires a minimum of a grade 4 as an entry requirement but many courses require a grade 5 or 6. Studying English literature provides graduates with many transferable skills including communication, the ability to work analytically and complete research, and the skills to work independently. Although teaching is one of the most popular career routes with an English degree, there are actually many possibilities for work. You could end up working in a variety of sectors, including teaching, journalism, web content editing and management, copywriting, public relations, and publishing. Employers will be attracted by your skills in communication, writing, or undertaking research.
Trips and Visits	The English Department actively seeks to enrich students by offering a variety of trips and visits throughout the course, for example seeing performances of the texts they study.
Costs	£28 (language and literature covering 3 set texts - 'Macbeth', 'A Christmas Carol' and 'An Inspector Calls' and 7 revision packs on every element of the exams)

## Mathematics

Specification: [Edexcel GCSE \(9-1\) In Mathematics](#)

### Overview - Why Study Mathematics?

The course builds on work done at KS3 with some topics revisited in greater depth, or in different contexts. A good foundation in Maths gives us the ability to think logically and creatively. The course builds on topics that you have studied at Key Stage 3 with an increased focus on applying mathematics in context, problem solving, reasoning and the functional element of the subject. This subject will provide you with a set of transferable skills that will prove invaluable for the rest of your life.

Students who excel at mathematics have an additional opportunity to take a further qualification in GCSE Further Mathematics. This is an optional qualification and is discussed in year 11.

### How Will I Be Assessed?

Paper 1	Paper 2	Paper 3
1 Hour 30 minutes Worth 33.33% of total examination  Non-Calculator Assessment	1 Hour 30 minutes Worth 33.33% of total examination  Calculator Assessment	1 Hour 30 minutes Worth 33.33% of total examination  Calculator Assessment
Any of the following 6 areas can be assessed in all three papers. <i>Number, Algebra, Ratio - proportion and rates of change, Geometry and measure, Probability and statistics.</i>		

100% assessed by final exams, there is no NEA element. Papers have a Higher and Foundation Tier depending on level of expertise.

### Further Information and Opportunities

What are the post-16 opportunities?	All Level 2 and 3 courses require at least a grade 4 in mathematics. Queens' sixth form currently requires a minimum of a grade 4 as an entry requirement but many courses require a grade 5, 6 or 7. Students achieving a good grade at higher level GCSE can continue their studies through A levels which can lead to study of a degree in a wide range of professions. GCSE Maths is a requirement for all degree courses and many jobs. Mathematics is a valuable qualification. It provides the necessary support for many university courses, including the Sciences, Geography, Art, Engineering, Economics, Psychology, Sociology and Computer Science just to name a few.
Trips and Visits	The mathematics department is very ambitious for students and whilst there are no compulsory trips the department does take students to maths competitions.
Costs	Recommended revision guide and workbook - approx. £20



## Combined Science

### [AQA GCSE \(9-1\) Combined Science Trilogy](#)

#### Overview - Why Study Combined Science?

At GCSE, all students must study all three science disciplines: biology, chemistry and physics. Some students will follow the Combined Science: Trilogy course that leads to two GCSE grades. Although the two grades awarded are for 'science', our students are still taught biology, chemistry and physics discretely. Students who demonstrate a particular aptitude for science will be recommended to take the Separate Science option, which leads to three individual GCSE qualifications—one in each science discipline (See Separate Science overview).

#### How Will I Be Assessed?

Biology	Chemistry	Physics
2 exams-1 hour 15 minutes each Topics covered include: Cell Biology; Organisation; Infection and Response; and Bioenergetics. Homeostasis and Response; Inheritance, Variation and Evolution; and Ecology.	2 exams- 1 hour 15 minutes each Topics covered include: Atomic Structure and the Periodic Table; Bonding, Structure, and the Properties of Matter; Quantitative Chemistry; Chemical Changes; and Energy Changes. The Rate and Extent of Chemical Change; Organic Chemistry; Chemical Analysis; Chemistry of the Atmosphere; and Using Resources.	2 exams- 1 hour 15 minutes each Topics covered include: Energy; Electricity; Particle Model of Matter; and Atomic Structure. Forces; Waves; and Magnetism and Electromagnetism.

Science is 100% assessed by final exams [6 Exams in total], there is no NEA element, although students are required to complete a number of core practicals throughout the course. Papers have a Higher and Foundation Tier depending on level of expertise.

#### Further Information and Opportunities

What are the post-16 opportunities?	<p>Combined Science is normally awarded as two grades for example 7-8. You will see this in course requirements for sixth form.</p> <p>Students may choose to apply for apprenticeships in a variety of areas such as electricians, engineering and social care or choose to study A Level courses.</p> <p>There are a huge variety of science based degrees available, such as engineering, medical based degrees, astronomy, natural sciences, biology, chemistry and physics to identify some of the more well known qualifications. There are also a huge range of science based degrees available such as animal science, sport and exercise science, paramedic science...etc</p> <p>Science teaches and develops essential transferable skills such as following instructions, analysing information, presentation and scientific communication. Science encompasses content and skills that are explored in other areas of the curriculum, such as mathematics, English, geography, history, PE and RE and having a solid understanding of science will complement learning across the full range of subjects.</p>
Trips and Visits	
Costs	Recommended revision guide and workbook - approx. £15

## Games and LifeLong Learning

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### *Non-Examined Subjects*

#### Overview - Games (Core PE)

Physical activity is proven to enhance physical health, boost mental wellbeing, build resilience and create active habits for life. All students follow Core PE and will tackle complex and demanding physical activities. They will get involved in a range of activities that develop personal fitness and promote an active, healthy lifestyle. Students will use and develop a variety of tactics to overcome opponents in team and individual games. Students will also take part in further outdoor and adventurous activities in a range of environments which present intellectual and physical challenges and which encourage students to work effectively as part of a team.

This is not an examined course.

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#### Overview - Lifelong learning

Personal Social Health and Economic Education (PSHE) is an important aspect of KS4.

KS4 students will have 1 hour every week of Lifelong Learning taught by the form tutor or specialist teacher which rotates through different periods each week. At KS4 students will learn about our Queens' 5 Lifelong Learning themes (Life in Modern Britain, Ethics and Empathy, Relationships and Sex Education, Health and Wellbeing, CEAIG) and their associated topics.

Lifelong Learning students will have knowledge and understanding of empathy, ethics and British values; of opportunities facilitated by higher education, careers and study skills; of acting responsibly and humanely in relationships with others and regarding their own physical and mental well-being; and of navigating and contributing to twenty-first century Britain.



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# **Structured** **Option Subjects**

Separate Science

Modern Foreign Language (Spanish or French)

Geography

History



## Separate Sciences (Biology, Chemistry and Physics)

AQA GCSE (9-1) [Biology](#), [Chemistry](#) and [Physics](#)

### Overview - Why Study Separate Sciences?

Most students at Queens' choose to study separate sciences as a structured option. Separate sciences provides a more indepth coverage of content, with some additional content in the same topic areas compared to combined science, helping you develop a deeper understanding of the world around you. Separate science awards 1 grade per subject area. This means you receive a grade for Physics, Biology and Chemistry (3 grades in total).

### How Will I Be Assessed?

Biology	Chemistry	Physics
2 exams worth 50% each of the total biology grade 1 hour 45 minutes each	2 exams worth 50% each of the total chemistry grade 1 hour 45 minutes each	2 exams worth 50% each of the total physics grade 1 hour 45 minutes each
Topics covered include: Cell Biology; Organisation; Infection and Response; and Bioenergetics. Homeostasis and Response; Inheritance, Variation and Evolution; and Ecology.	Topics covered include: Atomic Structure and the Periodic Table; Bonding, Structure, and the Properties of Matter; Quantitative Chemistry; Chemical Changes; and Energy Changes. The Rate and Extent of Chemical Change; Organic Chemistry; Chemical Analysis; Chemistry of the Atmosphere; and Using Resources.	Topics covered include: Energy; Electricity; Particle Model of Matter; and Atomic Structure. Forces; Waves; and Magnetism and Electromagnetism.

Science is 100% assessed by final exams [6 Exams in total, 2 per science], there is no NEA element, although students are required to complete a number of core practicals throughout the course. Papers have a Higher and Foundation Tier depending on level of expertise.

### Further Information and Opportunities

What are the post-16 opportunities?	Separate Science provides a more solid foundation at which to continue scientific studies at A Level. It provides a strong basis for many other subjects beyond science at A Level including, geography, and psychology. There are a huge variety of science based degrees available, such as engineering, medical based degrees, astronomy, natural sciences, biology, chemistry and physics to identify some of the more well known qualifications. There are also a huge range of science based degrees available such as animal science, sport and exercise science, paramedic science...etc Science teaches and develops essential transferable skills such as following instructions, analysing information, presentation and scientific communication. Science encompasses content and skills that are explored in other areas of the curriculum, such as mathematics, English, geography, history, PE and RE and having a solid understanding of science will complement learning across the full range of subjects.
Trips and Visits	
Costs	Recommended revision guide and workbook - approx. £20

#### Note:

- Students who are recommended to study the separate sciences are advised to do so if they are considering pursuing an A Level in Science.
- Students who are recommended combined science still have the option to select Separate Science if they wish. The reason for being recommended combined science is based on a professional judgement regarding whether we believe your child is more likely to succeed in completing combined science rather than separate sciences.
- Due to the additional content, separate science may not be an appropriate option for some students based on our professional judgment, and in such cases, students will only be able to select Combined Science.

*Please speak to your science teacher if you have any questions.*



## Modern Foreign Languages - (Spanish or French)

[Edexcel GCSE \(9-1\) French](#)

[Edexcel GCSE \(9-1\) Spanish](#)

### Overview - Why Study A Modern Foreign Language?

In today's modern economy Languages have become even more important. Spanish and French are EBacc subjects and are considered highly desirable and consequently open new opportunities. Indeed, the EBacc serves as a benchmark for universities to check that applicants have a solid academic foundation on which to build. A good pass in GCSE French or Spanish, is looked upon very favourably by the top Russell Group universities. By learning a language, you will open up exciting possibilities and new horizons for both leisure and work purposes.

### How Will I Be Assessed?

Paper 1 - Speaking	Paper 2 - Listening	Paper 3 - Reading	Paper 4 - Writing
25% of Overall GCSE	25% of Overall GCSE	25% of Overall GCSE	25% of Overall GCSE
Task 1: Read aloud and 2 short unprepared questions Task 2: Role play in a transactional setting Task 3: Picture description, 2 short unprepared questions and follow-on conversation	Section A: Listening - multiple-choice, multiple-response and short-answer open response questions. All questions set in English. Section B: Dictation	Section A: Reading - multiple-choice, multiple-response and short-answer open response questions. All questions set in English. Section B: Translation into English	Picture task (Foundation tier only) Two writing responses (both tiers, with a choice of two options for each question) Translation into French/Spanish (both tiers)

100% assessed by final exams, there is no NEA element. Papers have a Higher and Foundation Tier depending on level of expertise.

### Further Information and Opportunities

What are the post-16 opportunities?	Students are able to continue learning French and Spanish at Queens' sixth form and further education also offers this. Many universities offer language modules, with an option to study abroad, through a variety of faculties, as well as a language degree. They also offer combined courses such as Business with a language. In addition, those students wanting to study other languages post-16 will find them more accessible, as the skills acquired at GCSE are easily transferable to other languages. At the present time, many employers are unable to find enough linguists to fill vacancies in an extremely wide range of jobs in business, industry, advertising, banking, finance, public relations, marketing, engineering and law.
Trips and Visits	Residential trips to Spain (either Madrid or Barcelona) and France (either Normandy, Lille, or Paris) Careers day focusing on the importance of languages)with guest speakers.
Costs	Optional trip costs range from £200 to £700, for residential trips between 2 and 5 days.

# Geography

## Edexcel GCSE (9-1) Geography

### Overview - Why Study Geography?

Geography is one of the most exciting, adventurous and valuable subjects to study at GCSE level, widely viewed as one of the most useful optional GCSE subjects, as it provides skills which colleges, universities and employers look for in applicants. The subject highlights issues that are happening in the world right now, to ensure you can grow in character and become active global citizens, striving to hold past and present generations to account for the challenges we face, locally and globally. Studying Geography will allow you to become knowledgeable, independent learners, encouraging you to reach new frontiers, enrich your geographical experiences and make exemplary progress through the curriculum.

### How Will I Be Assessed?

Paper 1 - Physical Environment	Paper 2 -The Human Environment	Paper 3 - Fieldwork and Uk Challenges
37.5% of overall GCSE 1 hour and 30 minutes	37.5% of overall GCSE 1 hour and 30 minutes	25% of overall GCSE 1 hour 30 minutes
Topic 1: The changing landscapes of the UK: Coastal landscapes and processes and River landscapes and processes. Topic 2: Weather hazards and climate change Topic 3: Ecosystems, biodiversity and management	Topic 4: Changing cities Topic 5: Global development Topic 6: Resource management and Water resource management	Topic 7: Geographical investigations – fieldwork Topic 8: Geographical investigations – UK challenges

100% Examination no NEA.

### Further Information and Opportunities

What are the post-16 opportunities?	Many of the geographers go on to study A Level Geography. Students realise that geography links to so many areas and provides learners with a wide variety of skills. These skills are highly sought after by sixth form Colleges, universities and employers. Geography can be thought of as a social science as well as a humanity. Students who have studied Geography have gone on to work in the following sectors: Environmental Engineering, Law, Science, Meteorology, Business, Information Technology, Management, Finance, Banking, Marketing, Research, Manufacturing, Teaching, Childcare, Arts, Design and Media, Town Planning, working abroad and many more.
Trips and Visits	Compulsory Fieldwork (Human and Physical) to St Albans and River Chess
Costs	Compulsory Fieldwork trips - 2024-25 voluntary contribution is approx. £30 Recommended revision guide and workbook - approx. £15

# History

## [Edexcel GCSE \(9-1\) History](#)

### Overview - Why Study History?

History is a very diverse subject and you will develop a range of skills that will help you in further study, employment and real-life situations. Studying History provides students with skills which are not confined to the study of the past. Skills of analysis are invaluable in many jobs, and the ability to analyse and then prioritise information is vital to decision making. This not only provides a skill set for a student but it also keeps career options open. Learning about past events and the people who have influenced history will allow you to understand how the world got to the point it is at now and how it will continue to develop in the future.

### How Will I Be Assessed?

Paper 1 - Thematic Study	Paper 2 - Period & British Depth Study	Paper 3 - Modern Depth Study
1 hour and 20 minutes 30% of overall GCSE	1 Hour 50 Minutes 40% of overall GCSE	1 Hour 30 Minutes 30% of overall GCSE
Medicine in Britain (c1250-present) and The British sector of the Western Front:	Early Elizabethan England 1558-88 Superpower relations- The Cold War 1941-1991	Weimar and Nazi Germany 1918-39

100% assessed by final exams, there is no NEA element.

### Further Information and Opportunities

What are the post-16 opportunities?	The knowledge and transferable skills which you will develop over the two year course are valuable and very well respected by universities and a range of disciplines. History is also useful for a wide range of future careers. Many students study History and then go on to work in the Legal Field, Accountancy, Journalism, Teaching, Research & Politics.
Trips and Visits	We offer a trip to Berlin
Costs	Recommended Revision Guides £15



## Open

# Option Subjects

Art and Design

Business\*

Classical Civilisation\*

Computer Science

Design and Technology - Graphic Product \*\*

Design and Technology - Resistant Materials \*\*

Design and Technology - Textiles\*\*

Drama

Food and Nutrition \*\*

French

Geography

History

Music

Physical Education

Psychology\*

Religious Studies (Philosophy, Religion and Ethics)

Sociology\*

Spanish

Please remember that there are some combinations that cannot be facilitated and they are:

- I. \*Business, Classical Civilisation, Psychology and Sociology - students are only allowed to select **ONE** of these.
- II. \*\*Students are only allowed to select **ONE** Technology subject

Where students have a structured option choice between history or geography - this does not stop a student from choosing the other as an option choice as well.

## Art and Design

### Edexcel GCSE (9-1) Art and Design

#### Overview - Why Study Art and Design?

If you are creative, imaginative, keen, simply enjoy the subject of Art or want to be able to express your ideas using a variety of materials, then a GCSE in Art and Design is an excellent choice. Art and Design is a great way to open the door to careers in the creative industries. This is a vibrant and dynamic subject with plenty of opportunity for you to undertake assignments in areas that interest you. This subject will provide you with a set of transferable skills that will prove invaluable for the rest of your life. Alongside the practical expertise that you will develop, you'll also learn key skills valued in both higher education and employment. Art enhances fine motor skills, hand-eye coordination, problem solving skills, lateral thinking and complex analysis and critical thinking skills. No matter what career you choose, those who can arrange, present and display material in a way that is aesthetically pleasing will always have an advantage.

#### How Will I Be Assessed?

Component 1	Component 2
<p>Personal Portfolio (60%)</p> <p>For this coursework unit, students produce 10-12 A2 size sheets that meet the four Assessment Objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop; Refine; Record; Present</li> </ul> <p>In Year 10 students complete two projects with internally set themes.</p> <p>In Year 11 students complete a mock exam project. This familiarises them with the format for Component 2, the Externally Set Assignment. The work produced for the mock exam project is part of their personal portfolio.</p>	<p>Externally Set Assignment (40%)</p> <p>A visual project with an externally set theme.</p> <p>Students receive the exam paper in mid-January so that they can begin their preparatory work for the 10-hour exam. They will produce 4-5 A2 sheets that meet the four Assessment Objectives. A final outcome for this project is produced during a 10-hour exam, over two days.</p>

60% Portfolio and 40% Examination (Unit 2)

#### Further Information and Opportunities

What are the post-16 opportunities?	Students achieving a good grade at GCSE can continue on to A Level followed by a foundation course in Art and/or a degree in various areas of Art and Design, for example; Architecture, Animation, Illustration, Product Design, Fashion, Textiles, Ceramics, Jewellery, Visual Media, Graphic Design, Sculptor, Painter, Game Design. New technologies are creating a whole new range of courses where Art is being used in innovative ways. Studying Art is superb preparation for future careers within the UK's Creative Industries, now worth an estimated £101.5 billion, and beyond. The skills of visual literacy and communication, research, independent thinking and developing a concept are extremely important across a range of career sectors. These skills will help you to become a well-rounded learner who is able to see, appreciate and comment on the diverse cultural world in which we live.
Trips and Visits	A day trip to the Henry Moore Foundation. Historically we have taken GCSE Art students to Paris and we are looking to set this trip up again for 2025/26. Trip information will be available for prospective Year 9 GCSE Art students in the summer term.
Costs	There is a one off payment of £38 that will contribute to some of the material costs for the duration of the course. This includes a range of items that students will take home and keep; a set of 10 acrylic paints – 75ml tubes, 1 HB pencil, 1 2B pencil, a size 6 paintbrush and an A2 folder.

# Business

## Edexcel GCSE (9-1) Business

### Overview - Why Study Business?

GCSE Business provides students with a valuable foundation in understanding the world of business, preparing them for both future academic pursuits and real-world challenges. This course equips students with essential knowledge of key business concepts such as entrepreneurship, marketing, finance, human resources. By engaging with real-world case studies and scenarios, students develop critical thinking, problem-solving, and decision-making skills, which are highly sought after by employers. Additionally, GCSE Business encourages teamwork, effective communication, and analytical skills, as students learn to evaluate data, interpret financial information, and explore the ethical implications of business decisions. These skills are transferable to many careers and help students become informed consumers, employees, and potential entrepreneurs. A good level of mathematics is required in this subject and a good level of english comprehension/ analytical writing skills.

### How Will I Be Assessed?

Paper 1 - Investigating small business	Paper 2 - Building a business
1 hour and 45 minutes 50% of overall GCSE  Students will be examined on 5 topic areas. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Enterprise and entrepreneurship</li> <li>● Spotting a business opportunity</li> <li>● Putting a business idea into practice</li> <li>● Making the business effective</li> <li>● Understanding external influences on business</li> </ul> The paper will consist of calculations, multiple-choice, short-answer and extended-writing questions. Questions in Sections B and C will be based on business contexts given in the paper.	1 hour and 45 minutes 50% of overall GCSE  Students will be examined on 5 topic areas. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Growing the business</li> <li>● Making marketing decisions</li> <li>● Making operational decisions</li> <li>● Making financial decisions</li> <li>● Making human resource decisions</li> </ul> The paper will consist of calculations, multiple-choice, short-answer and extended-writing questions. Questions in Sections B and C will be based on business contexts given in the paper.

100% assessed by final exams, there is no NEA element.

### Further Information and Opportunities

What are the post-16 opportunities?	After completing GCSE Business, students have various post-16 opportunities to continue their education and develop their skills further. They can choose to study A-Level Business or Economics, which provide a deeper understanding of business management, strategy, and economic principles. Vocational qualifications, such as BTECs in Business, offer practical learning experiences with a focus on real-world applications. Alternatively, students may opt for apprenticeships in fields like business administration, finance, or marketing, gaining hands-on experience while working towards a qualification. For those with entrepreneurial ambitions, GCSE Business can inspire students to start their own ventures, applying the knowledge and skills they've gained. Many of these routes can also lead to higher education, with a variety of business-related degrees available at university, further preparing students for successful careers in the business world.
Trips and Visits	Trip to Cadbury world - Birmingham
Costs	Recommended GCSE Business textbook and work guide- £10

## Classical Civilisations

### OCR GCSE (9-1) Classical Civilisation

#### Overview - Why Study Classical Civilisation?

This is a fantastic course for anyone with an interest in mythology and the ancient world. As a multidisciplinary subject, it has interesting connections with a range of subjects including art, drama and history. Through this subject, students cultivate a wide range of skills, including critical thinking, analytical reasoning, and the ability to evaluate different perspectives. The study of classical texts and artefacts fosters strong interpretative skills, encouraging students to examine evidence, consider historical context, and draw informed conclusions. Additionally, Classical Civilisation helps enhance students' writing and communication abilities, as they learn to construct well-supported arguments and articulate complex ideas clearly. These skills are transferable across many disciplines and careers, making Classical Civilisation a valuable subject for both academic and personal development.

#### How Will I Be Assessed?

Paper 1 - Thematic Study	Paper 2 - Literature and Culture
1 hour and 30 minutes 50% of overall GCSE  You will study: The Gods including the myths associated with them and how they are represented in art and architecture; Heracles/Hercules including his 12 labours and links to the Olympic games; religious ideas including temple buildings, statues and how the gods were worshipped; the foundation myths associated with Athens and Rome focusing on Theseus, Romulus, and Aeneas; festivals and how they were celebrated; myths about the underworld.	1 hour and 30 minutes 50% of overall GCSE  You will study: Roman housing including buildings in Pompeii and Herculaneum; the Roman home and family; how Roman society was structured; Roman entertainment including drama, chariot racing, gladiatorial shows and the baths; satirical writing by Horace, Juvenal and Petronius; letters about Roman life by Pliny and what these writings reveal about Roman city life and culture.

100% assessed by final exams, there is no NEA element.

#### Further Information and Opportunities

<b>What are the post-16 opportunities?</b>	Post-16 opportunities for students who have studied GCSE Classical Civilisation are varied and enriching, offering pathways into further education and a wide range of careers. In addition, the skills developed through Classical Civilisation are highly transferable to a broad spectrum of other A-level subjects, including history, English literature, religious studies, politics, and even art history, where the understanding of ancient culture can enhance a student's analytical abilities. For those considering higher education, universities offer a range of classical and humanities-based degrees such as Classics, Archaeology, Ancient History, Philosophy, and Classical Languages, all of which benefit from a strong GCSE foundation. Careers in law, journalism, education, heritage and museum work, and even international relations and politics often value the critical thinking, problem-solving, and communication skills honed through classical studies. Beyond academics, Classical Civilisation fosters an appreciation for history, culture, and human thought, which can inspire personal growth and a lifelong interest in the ancient world.
<b>Trips and Visits</b>	The Classics Department actively seeks to enrich students by offering a variety of trips and visits throughout the course, for example seeing performances related to the study of the ancient world and visiting the British Museum.
<b>Costs</b>	Optional trip costs vary.

# Computer Science

## OCR GCSE (9-1) Computer Science

### Overview - Why Study Computer Science?

Studying GCSE Computer Science provides students with a foundational understanding of the rapidly evolving world of technology, equipping them with essential skills for the digital age. This subject enables students to explore how computers work, how software is developed, and how data is managed, preparing them for a wide range of future opportunities in both academic and career pathways. Through Computer Science, students develop critical problem-solving skills as they learn to write algorithms, debug programs, and think logically to create efficient solutions. The course also fosters computational thinking—an approach to breaking down complex problems into manageable parts—which is invaluable not only in technology-based fields but across various disciplines. Students gain practical programming skills using languages like Python or Java, which introduces them to real-world coding practices, as well as a solid understanding of computer hardware, networks, cybersecurity, and ethical implications of technology. The course involves mathematical problem solving and there will be a large amount of time spent programming therefore an interest in these is a must.

### How Will I Be Assessed?

Paper 1 - Computer Systems	Paper 2 - Computational thinking, algorithms and programming
1 hour and 30 minutes 50% of overall GCSE  Component 1 introduces students to the central processing unit (CPU), computer memory and storage, data representation, wired and wireless networks, network topologies, system security and system software. It also looks at ethical, legal, cultural and environmental concerns associated with computer science.	1 hour and 30 minutes 50% of overall GCSE  Students apply knowledge and understanding gained in component 1. They develop skills and understanding in computational thinking: algorithms, programming techniques, producing robust programs, computational logic and translators.

100% assessed by final exams, there is no NEA element.

### Further Information and Opportunities

What are the post-16 opportunities?	Post-16 opportunities for students who have studied GCSE Computer Science are abundant and offer clear pathways into further education, higher-level qualifications, and a wide range of technology-driven careers. After completing GCSE Computer Science, students can progress to A-level Computer Science, where they deepen their understanding of algorithms, programming, data structures, and computational theory. This advanced study provides a solid foundation for those interested in continuing into more specialised areas of computing. For higher education, university degrees in Computer Science, Software Engineering, Data Science, Artificial Intelligence, Game Development, Network Engineering, and Cybersecurity are all natural progressions. Many universities offer combined degrees that pair computer science with fields like Business, Mathematics, Physics, or Design, reflecting the interdisciplinary applications of technology. In terms of careers, Computer Science opens doors to high-demand roles such as software developer, app developer, systems analyst, network engineer, data analyst, AI specialist, game designer, IT consultant, and cybersecurity expert. The critical thinking, problem-solving, and programming skills students develop are also useful in a wide variety of non-technical fields, such as finance, engineering, biotechnology, and digital media.
Trips and Visits	The Computer Science Department will likely run a curriculum-supporting trip abroad in Year 10.
Costs	Optional trip costs vary



## Design and Technology - Graphic Products

### Edexcel GCSE (9-1) Design and Technology - Graphic Products

#### Overview - Why Study Design and Technology - Graphic Products?

Studying GCSE Design and Technology: Graphic Products offers students a unique opportunity to combine creativity with practical skills, providing them with the ability to design, create, and problem-solve using graphic design principles. This subject encourages students to explore how everyday products are designed and produced, from concept to final product, developing an understanding of materials, manufacturing techniques, and the importance of form and function in design. Students learn essential skills such as visual communication, where they develop the ability to express ideas and concepts through sketches, technical drawings, and digital tools like CAD (Computer-Aided Design) software. The course fosters problem-solving and critical thinking as students work through design challenges, considering user needs, sustainability, and manufacturing constraints. They gain an understanding of the design process—from research and ideation to prototyping and evaluation—building practical skills alongside creative innovation. This subject also enhances students' ability to manage time and projects, as they plan and execute designs, often working to specific briefs and deadlines, which mirrors real-world design industries.

#### How Will I Be Assessed?

Paper 1 - Core, specialist, design and making technical principles	Non-Examination Assessment (NEA)
<p>1 hour and 45 minutes 50% of overall GCSE</p> <p>The paper consists of two sections. Section A is assessed on the core content and Section B is assessed on the material category Papers and Boards.</p>	<p>50% of overall GCSE [30-35 hours approx.]</p> <p>Students will undertake a project based on a contextual challenge released a year before certification. Students will produce a portfolio of evidence maximum of 20 pages of A3 and a working prototype. The focus for this task will be papers and boards.</p> <p>The project will test students' skills in investigating, designing, making and evaluating a prototype of a product. Task will be internally assessed and externally moderated</p>

50% assessed by final exams and 50% NEA element.

#### Further Information and Opportunities

What are the post-16 opportunities?	<p>Post-16 opportunities for students who have studied GCSE Design and Technology: Graphic Products are diverse and offer pathways into both creative and technical fields. After completing the course, students can progress to A-levels in related subjects such as Design and Technology, Graphic Design, Product Design, or Art and Design, where they can further develop their skills in visual communication, design thinking, and practical project work. These courses allow students to explore more advanced design concepts, materials, and techniques, and often provide opportunities for portfolio development.</p> <p>In addition to A-levels, students can also pursue vocational qualifications such as BTECs or T-levels in areas like Graphic Design, Product Design, 3D Design, Engineering, or Creative Media Production. For those interested in higher education, university degrees in fields such as Graphic Design, Industrial Design, Architecture, Product Design, Interior Design, Engineering, and Digital Media are natural extensions of the skills developed in GCSE Design and Technology: Graphic Products. In terms of career opportunities, this subject prepares students for roles in industries such as graphic design, advertising, product development, branding, packaging design, and manufacturing, as well as technical fields like CAD design and engineering.</p>
Trips and Visits	We run various trips throughout the year which also includes a Paris (Disney) trip.
Costs	Trip costs vary and Paris is about £600 approx



## Design and Technology - Resistant Materials

### Edexcel GCSE (9-1) Design and Technology - Resistant Materials

#### Overview - Why Study Design and Technology - Resistant Materials?

Studying GCSE Design and Technology: Resistant Materials offers students an exciting chance to combine creativity with hands-on practical skills in designing and making products using materials like wood, metal, and plastics. This subject encourages students to engage with the entire design process—from generating ideas and creating detailed plans to developing prototypes and constructing finished products—giving them the opportunity to bring their concepts to life while understanding the properties and applications of different materials. Students develop a range of valuable skills, including problem-solving and critical thinking, as they work through design challenges that require them to consider factors such as material choice, product function, sustainability, and manufacturing methods. The course fosters technical skills, such as woodworking, metalworking, and working with tools and machinery, alongside computer-aided design (CAD) and computer-aided manufacturing (CAM), providing students with practical experience that mirrors modern industry practices. Furthermore, the subject enhances project management skills, as students learn to plan their work, manage time effectively, and complete projects to deadlines.

#### How Will I Be Assessed?

Paper 1 - Core, specialist, design and making technical principles	Non-Examination Assessment (NEA)
<p>1 hour and 45 minutes 50% of overall GCSE</p> <p>The paper consists of two sections. Section A is assessed on the core content and Section B is assessed on the material category Resistant Materials.</p>	<p>50% of overall GCSE [30-35 hours approx.]</p> <p>Students will undertake a project based on a contextual challenge released a year before certification. Students will produce a portfolio of evidence maximum of 20 pages of A3 and a working prototype. The focus for this task will be Resistant Materials.</p> <p>The project will test students' skills in investigating, designing, making and evaluating a prototype of a product. Task will be internally assessed and externally moderated</p>

50% assessed by final exams and 50% NEA element.

#### Further Information and Opportunities

What are the post-16 opportunities?	Post-16 opportunities for students who have studied GCSE Design and Technology: Resistant Materials are wide-ranging, offering pathways into both further education and technical careers. After completing the course, students can progress to A-levels in related subjects such as Product Design where they can deepen their understanding of materials, manufacturing processes, and product development. These courses provide more advanced skills in designing, prototyping, and working with materials like wood, metal, and plastics, helping students to further refine their creative and technical abilities. In higher education, there are many degree options available, including Product Design, Industrial Design, Mechanical Engineering, Manufacturing Engineering, Architecture, Interior Design, and Sustainable Design. Career opportunities for students who study Resistant Materials are diverse and rewarding. Roles such as product designer, furniture designer, industrial designer, architect, engineer, carpenter, construction manager, and machinist are just a few examples of the careers students may pursue. The practical skills, problem-solving, and design thinking developed through this subject are highly valued in industries like construction, manufacturing, and engineering, where the ability to innovate and create functional products is crucial.
Trips and Visits	We run various trips throughout the year which also includes a Paris (Disney) trip.
Costs	Trip costs vary and Paris is about £600 approx

## Design and Technology - Textiles

### [Edexcel GCSE \(9-1\) Design and Technology - Textiles](#)

#### Overview - Why Study Design and Technology - Textiles?

Studying GCSE Design and Technology: Textiles offers students an exciting opportunity to explore the world of fashion, fabrics, and design, blending creativity with technical knowledge. This subject allows students to develop practical skills in textile techniques such as pattern cutting, sewing, and fabric manipulation, while also encouraging them to think critically about fashion design, sustainability, and innovation in the textiles industry. Through this course, students learn the design process, from research and initial sketches to prototyping and final products, enabling them to bring their creative ideas to life. They develop problem-solving skills as they address real-world design challenges, considering factors such as material choice, functionality, sustainability, and target audience. Students are also introduced to the world of fashion technology, where they can experiment with innovative materials, smart textiles, and digital tools like Computer-Aided Design (CAD) to enhance their designs. Studying textiles fosters important transferable skills such as time management and project planning, as students work to specific briefs and deadlines, balancing creative exploration with practical execution.

#### How Will I Be Assessed?

Paper 1 - Core, specialist, design and making technical principles	Non-Examination Assessment (NEA)
<p>1 hour and 45 minutes 50% of overall GCSE</p> <p>The paper consists of two sections. Section A is assessed on the core content and Section B is assessed on the material category textiles.</p>	<p>50% of overall GCSE [30-35 hours approx.]</p> <p>Students will undertake a project based on a contextual challenge released a year before certification. Students will produce a portfolio of evidence maximum of 20 pages of A3 and a working prototype. The focus for this task will be textiles.</p> <p>The project will test students' skills in investigating, designing, making and evaluating a prototype of a product. Task will be internally assessed and externally moderated</p>

50% assessed by final exams and 50% NEA element.

#### Further Information and Opportunities

What are the post-16 opportunities?	Post-16 opportunities for students who have studied GCSE Design and Technology: Textiles are diverse and provide exciting pathways into further education and a range of creative and technical careers. After completing the course, students can progress to A-levels in related subjects Art and Design, or Design and Technology, where they can continue to refine their creative and technical skills. Higher education offers a wide range of degree courses in Fashion Design, Textile Design, Fashion Technology, Textile Engineering, Costume Design, and Sustainable Fashion. Universities also offer degrees in related areas such as Fashion Marketing, Fashion Buying and Merchandising, Fashion Journalism, and Interior Design, allowing students to specialize in the business or creative sides of the fashion industry. Many courses also focus on innovative fields like sustainable textiles, smart fabrics, and digital fashion, reflecting the growing importance of technology and sustainability in fashion. In terms of careers, students who study textiles can pursue roles such as fashion designer, textile designer, costume designer, fashion buyer, pattern maker, fashion technologist, interior designer, and product developer. The skills gained through GCSE Textiles—such as creativity, problem-solving, technical precision, and an understanding of sustainability—are highly sought after in the fashion, design, and retail industries.
Trips and Visits	We run various trips throughout the year which also includes a Paris (Disney) trip.
Costs	Trip costs vary and Paris is about £600 approx

# Drama

## OCR GCSE (9-1) Drama

### Overview - Why Study Drama?

Studying GCSE Drama offers students a unique and engaging opportunity to explore creativity, self-expression, and teamwork through performance. This subject provides a platform for students to develop both their practical acting skills and their understanding of the technical and theoretical aspects of theatre. By exploring various styles of drama, from classical to contemporary, and studying key practitioners, students gain a well-rounded understanding of the world of theatre and performance arts. GCSE Drama helps students build a wide range of important skills. Communication is at the heart of drama, and students learn to express themselves clearly and confidently, whether through spoken dialogue, body language, or written reflection.

### How Will I Be Assessed?

Component 1 - Devising Drama	Component 2 – Presenting and Performing Texts	Component 3 – Performance and Response
<p>30% of overall GCSE</p> <p>Students devise a performance using stimuli provided by the exam board. Marks are awarded for the final performance and a written portfolio. This is completed in Year 10</p>	<p>30% of overall GCSE</p> <p>An external examiner comes in and marks students on 2 extracts from a play. We provide a range of plays to choose from.</p> <p>Students can choose to perform a combination of monologues, duologues and group pieces.</p> <p>A short pro forma is written and submitted to the examiner before the practical exam.</p>	<p>1 hour and 30 minutes 40% of overall GCSE</p> <p>There are 2 sections. Section A is a set text. We study the play Missing Dan Nolan by Mark Wheelwright. You will explore the play from the perspectives of a designer, director and performer. Section B is a live theatre evaluation - essay based on a production we go and see.</p>

40% assessed by final exams and 60% NEA element.

### Further Information and Opportunities

<p>What are the post-16 opportunities?</p>	<p>Post-16 opportunities for students who have studied GCSE Drama are diverse, offering pathways into further education, creative industries, and a range of performance-related careers. After GCSE, students can progress to A-level Drama, where they can develop their acting, directing, and technical skills in greater depth, exploring more advanced performance styles and studying theatre history and theory.</p> <p>For those interested in vocational qualifications, BTEC courses in Theatre Production, Acting, or Musical Theatre provide practical experience in areas such as stage management, lighting, sound, and set design, offering a solid foundation for careers in technical theatre and performance. Higher education offers a wide range of degree courses in Theatre Studies, Drama, Performing Arts, Stage Management, and Theatre Production. Many universities also offer specialized courses in Film and Media Production, Drama Therapy, and Creative Writing, opening doors to roles in film, television, radio, and digital media.</p> <p>In terms of careers, the communication, collaboration, and creative problem-solving skills developed through GCSE Drama are also highly valued in careers outside the arts, such as public relations, marketing, education, and events management.</p>
<p>Trips and Visits</p>	<p>We aim to take GCSE students to the theatre twice in Year 10 and twice in Year 11. Students also need a copy of the set text Missing Dan Nolan - this is £10.99.</p>
<p>Costs</p>	<p>Price varies between £20 and £30 per trip.</p>

## Food Preparation & Nutrition

### Eduqas GCSE (9-1) Food Preparation and Nutrition

#### Overview - Why Study Food Preparation & Nutrition?

Studying GCSE Food Preparation and Nutrition provides students with essential life skills and knowledge that go beyond the kitchen. This course helps students develop practical culinary skills, enabling them to prepare healthy, balanced meals and understand the science behind food. It also teaches critical thinking, problem-solving, and time management, as students must plan, prepare, and evaluate their dishes. Moreover, the subject promotes a deeper understanding of nutrition and the importance of making informed food choices for a healthy lifestyle. Students also enhance their creativity, teamwork, and adaptability, which are valuable skills both in personal and professional contexts. Ultimately, this course prepares students for real-life challenges and encourages a lifelong appreciation for good food and healthy living.

#### How Will I Be Assessed?

Component 1 - Principles of Food Preparation and Nutrition	Component 2 – Food Preparation and Nutrition in Action. Non- Examination Assessment
1 hour and 45 minutes 50% of overall GCSE  This component will consist of two sections both containing compulsory questions and will assess the six areas of content: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Food commodities</li> <li>2. Principles of nutrition</li> <li>3. Diet and good health</li> <li>4. The science of food</li> <li>5. Where food comes from</li> <li>6. Cooking and food preparation</li> </ol>	50% of overall GCSE (NEA)  Students will complete two NEA tasks (completed in year 11) NEA 1: The Food Science Investigation/Report. This is worth 15% of the total GCSE grade and consists of a written report (1,500-2,000 words) based on a food science brief to include practical experiments. NEA 2: The Food Preparation Task. Candidates are given the choice between two briefs as directed by the exam board. This is worth 35% and culminates in a 3hr practical exam supported by a portfolio of written work  Task will be internally assessed and externally moderated

50% assessed by final exams and 50% NEA element.

#### Further Information and Opportunities

What are the post-16 opportunities?	Post-16 opportunities for students who study GCSE Food Preparation and Nutrition are varied and can lead to exciting careers in the food and hospitality industries. Students can progress to a Level 3 course in Food Technology, further deepening their understanding of food science and nutrition. Vocational diplomas, such as those in professional cookery or catering, provide hands-on, practical training for those interested in becoming chefs or working in hospitality. Apprenticeships in the food and hospitality sector offer real-world experience and career development, while courses in nutrition or hospitality management are ideal for students looking to pursue careers in health, dietetics, or managing restaurants and hotels. These pathways equip students with valuable skills, opening doors to careers as chefs, sports nutritionists, food technologists, or hospitality managers.
Trips and Visits	We run various trips throughout the year which also includes a Paris (Disney) trip. Students also have the opportunity to attend other food preparation areas.
Costs	Trip costs vary and Paris is about £600 approx

# Music

## Eduqas GCSE (9-1) Music

### Overview - Why Study Music?

Studying GCSE Music offers students a unique opportunity to explore their creativity while developing a range of valuable skills. Through practical performance, composition, and music theory, students enhance their ability to express themselves and build confidence in performing both individually and as part of a group. The course promotes critical thinking, listening, and analysis skills, as students evaluate different genres and styles of music. It also fosters discipline, time management, and resilience through regular practice and performance preparation. Additionally, GCSE Music nurtures teamwork, communication, and collaboration, essential skills for working in any professional setting. Whether students pursue music further or not, this course helps them develop transferable skills that can be applied to a wide range of careers.

### How Will I Be Assessed?

Component 1 - Performing	Component 2 – Composing	Component 3 - Appraising
<p>30% of overall GCSE (NEA)</p> <p>A minimum of two pieces, one of which must be an ensemble performance – a combined minimum total of 4 minutes. The other piece(s) may be either solo and/or ensemble. One of the pieces performed must link to an area of study of the learner's choice (for example: Popular Music).</p> <p>Task will be internally assessed and externally moderated.</p>	<p>30% of overall GCSE (NEA)</p> <p>Two compositions, one of which must be in response to a brief set by Eduqas. Learners will choose one brief from a choice of four, each one linked to a different area of study. The briefs will be released during the first week of September in the academic year in which the assessment is to be taken. The second composition is a free composition for which learners set their own brief.</p> <p>Task will be internally assessed and externally moderated.</p>	<p>1 hour and 45 minutes 40% of overall GCSE</p> <p>This component is assessed via a listening examination. 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 of the eight questions are based on prepared extracts set by Eduqas.</p>

40% assessed by final exams and 60% NEA element.

### Further Information and Opportunities

What are the post-16 opportunities?	Post-16 opportunities for students who study GCSE Music include A-levels in Music or Music Technology, BTEC diplomas in Music, and apprenticeships in areas such as sound engineering or music production. Talented musicians can also audition for conservatoires to receive specialized training in performance or composition. Additionally, students can pursue higher education degrees in music performance, composition, musicology, or music business, leading to careers as professional musicians, sound engineers, music producers, teachers, or in arts management. These pathways provide a strong foundation for a wide range of careers within the music and creative industries.
Trips and Visits	The music department offers a variety of trips throughout the academic year to orchestra concerts and workshops.
Costs	Each trip approximately will cost between £35 and £45 It is recommended students have a weekly music lesson on one or more instruments costing approx £22+ per lesson for the duration of the course. It is also recommended students have an instrument of student/intermediate quality available to them for the duration of the course (Approx. £100-£1000).

## Physical Education

### Edexcel GCSE (9-1) Physical Education

#### Overview - Why Study Physical Education?

Studying Physical Education gives you the opportunity to combine academic and practical knowledge. With rising obesity rates in this country, it is essential we understand how to train our bodies to follow a healthy and active lifestyle. Studying Physical Education enables students to develop important transferable skills for progression to the next level, including numeracy, communication and an understanding of practical performances. The blend of scientific and social knowledge positions students to access a range of qualifications.

#### How Will I Be Assessed?

Component 1 - Fitness and Body Systems	Component 2 – Health and Performance	Component 3 - Practical Performance	Component 4 - Personal Exercise Programme (PEP)
1 hour and 30 minutes 36% of overall GCSE  Students are assessed by written exam on 4 topic areas:  Topic 1: Applied anatomy and physiology Topic 2: Movement analysis Topic 3: Physical training Topic 4: Use of data	1 hour and 15 minutes 24% of overall GCSE  Students are assessed by written exam on 4 topic areas:  Topic 1: Health, fitness and wellbeing Topic 2: Sport psychology Topic 3: Socio-cultural influences Topic 4: Use of data	30% of overall grade (NEA)  The assessment consists of students completing three physical activities from a set list. One must be a team activity. One must be an individual activity. The final activity can be a free choice. Students must participate in three separate activities.  Each activity can last up to 12 hours. These will be assessed by the teacher and moderated by Pearson.	10% of overall grade (NEA)  The assessment consists of students producing a Personal Exercise Programme (PEP), and will require students to analyse and evaluate their performance. These will be assessed by the teacher and moderated by Pearson.

60% assessed by final exams and 40% NEA element.

#### Further Information and Opportunities

What are the post-16 opportunities?	Post-16 opportunities for students who study GCSE Physical Education include A-levels in Physical Education, Sports Science, or Biology, as well as BTEC Level 3 Diplomas in Sport or Fitness. Students can also pursue apprenticeships in sports coaching, personal training, or fitness instruction. Higher education courses in Sports Science, Physiotherapy, Sport Psychology, and Sports Management provide further academic progression, leading to careers in teaching, coaching, sports therapy, fitness training, or sports administration. These pathways offer a broad range of career options in the sports, health, and fitness industries.
Trips and Visits	The PE department provides several trips across the year including netball and football PGL, as well as our annual ski trip.
Costs	Approximately £20 for recommended resources for the two years of study Trip costs vary

# Psychology

## AQA GCSE (9-1) Psychology

### Overview - Why Study Psychology?

Studying GCSE Psychology provides students with valuable insights into human behavior, thought processes, and emotions. It encourages students to explore the reasons behind why people think and act in certain ways, fostering a deeper understanding of themselves and others. Through this course, students develop critical thinking, analytical, and research skills as they learn to design experiments, interpret data, and evaluate psychological theories. GCSE Psychology also helps build communication and problem-solving abilities, as well as an appreciation for ethical considerations in research. These skills are highly transferable and beneficial in many fields, making GCSE Psychology an excellent foundation for further study and a wide range of careers.

### How Will I Be Assessed?

Paper 1 - Cognition and Behaviour	Paper 2 - Social Context and Behaviour
1 hour and 45 minutes 50% of overall GCSE  What's assessed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Memory</li> <li>• Perception</li> <li>• Development</li> <li>• Research methods</li> </ul> Students will be expected to draw on knowledge and understanding of the entire course of study to show a deeper understanding of these topics.	1 hour and 45 minutes 50% of overall GCSE  What's assessed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social influence</li> <li>• Language, thought and communication</li> <li>• Brain and neuropsychology</li> <li>• Psychological problems</li> </ul> Students will be expected to draw on knowledge and understanding of the entire course of study to show a deeper understanding of these topics.

100% assessed by final exams, there is no NEA element.

### Further Information and Opportunities

What are the post-16 opportunities?	Post-16 opportunities for students who study GCSE Psychology include A-levels in Psychology, Sociology, or related social sciences. Students can also pursue apprenticeships in areas such as mental health support or social work. Higher education options include degrees in Psychology, Criminology, Neuroscience, or Counselling, which can lead to careers in clinical psychology, forensic psychology, counseling, social work, or research. These pathways open doors to a wide range of careers focused on understanding and helping people.
Trips and Visits	Students will get the opportunity to visit a visual illusion museum where they will be able to see first hand some of the illusions we study in the perception topic
Costs	Recommended GCSE Psychology textbook- £24



## Religious Studies (Philosophy, Religion and Ethics)

Edexcel GCSE (9-1) Religious Studies (Philosophy, Religion and Ethics)

### Overview - Why Study Religious Studies (Philosophy, Religion and Ethics)?

Studying GCSE Religious Studies (Philosophy, Religion and Ethics) gives students the opportunity to explore different belief systems, cultures, and ethical issues, fostering a deeper understanding of the diverse world we live in. It encourages open-mindedness, empathy, and respect for others' views while promoting critical thinking and ethical reasoning. Through examining religious teachings and philosophical ideas, students develop the ability to analyse complex issues, debate moral dilemmas, and consider multiple perspectives. These skills—critical thinking, communication, and ethical awareness—are highly transferable and useful in a wide range of careers, as well as in personal growth and contributing to a more tolerant society.

### How Will I Be Assessed?

Paper 1 - Religion and Ethics	Paper 2 - Religion, Peace and Conflict
1 hour and 45 minutes 50% of overall GCSE	1 hour and 45 minutes 50% of overall GCSE
What's assessed Unit 1: Christian Beliefs Unit 2: Marriage and the Family, including societal issues Unit 3: Practices linked to Beliefs Unit 4: Matters of Life after Death, including medical ethics	What's assessed Unit 1: Buddhist Beliefs Unit 2: Crime and Punishment, including the legal system Unit 3: Practices linked to Beliefs Unit 4: Peace and Conflict, including international relations

100% assessed by final exams, there is no NEA element.

### Further Information and Opportunities

What are the post-16 opportunities?	Post-16 opportunities for students who study GCSE Religious Studies include A-levels in Religious Studies, Philosophy, Ethics, or Sociology, as well as BTEC qualifications in Social Sciences or Humanities. Students can also pursue apprenticeships in community work, social care, or roles within charitable organisations. Higher education options include degrees in Theology, Religious Studies, Philosophy, or Ethics, leading to careers in teaching, social work, counseling, law, journalism, or roles within non-profit organisations. These pathways equip students with valuable analytical and ethical skills for a wide range of careers that involve understanding people and addressing moral and societal issues.
Trips and Visits	The Religious Studies Department looks at ways to enhance students' knowledge and understanding of topics covered such as visits to places of worship.
Costs	Recommended optional £6 study guide.

# Sociology

## [Edugas GCSE \(9-1\) Sociology](#)

### Overview - Why Study Sociology?

Studying GCSE Sociology provides students with a deeper understanding of society, social structures, and human behavior. It encourages students to critically explore topics such as social inequality, education, crime, and family dynamics, helping them make sense of the world around them. Through this course, students develop critical thinking, analytical, and research skills, as they learn to evaluate evidence, interpret data, and understand diverse perspectives. Sociology also promotes empathy, cultural awareness, and the ability to debate and discuss complex social issues. These valuable skills are highly transferable, preparing students for further education and careers in areas such as social sciences, law, journalism, or public services.

### How Will I Be Assessed?

Paper 1 - Religion and Ethics	Paper 2 - Religion, Peace and Conflict
1 hour and 45 minutes 50% of overall GCSE  This paper focuses on the themes of socialisation, identity and culture. Learners study the key concepts of cultural transmission, including socialisation and the acquisition of identity, and develop these through detailed study of families and education. Sociological research methods are presented as a separate topic area.	1 hour and 45 minutes 50% of overall GCSE  The focus of this paper is on social differentiation, power and stratification. (Social inequality) This includes the theme of criminology, power, issues of social order and social control, studied through crime and deviance. Learners also study applied methods of sociological enquiry

100% assessed by final exams, there is no NEA element.

### Further Information and Opportunities

What are the post-16 opportunities?	Post-16 opportunities for students who study GCSE Sociology include A-levels in Sociology, Psychology, Politics, or other social sciences, as well as BTEC qualifications in Health and Social Care or Applied Law. Students can also pursue apprenticeships in social care, community work, or youth services. At the higher education level, degrees in Sociology, Criminology, Social Work, or Public Policy can lead to careers in social research, public services, education, law, journalism, or community development. These pathways equip students with strong analytical and communication skills, opening doors to a wide range of professions that focus on understanding and improving society.
Trips and Visits	Students will be given the opportunity to visit a real life courtroom where they will be able to see how the criminal justice system in action
Costs	Recommended GCSE Sociology textbook- £27