

Oxford Spires Academy

2026-2027

KS4 Options



”

Pupils study an ambitious and enriching curriculum that is well suited to their needs and prepares them well for their next steps.

Ofsted (Nov 2023)



Welcome

This year you will be making your subject choices for Year 10. At this stage, the curriculum will still be broad, so that you can continue to extend your knowledge and skills in a central core of subjects. At the same time, you will begin to make choices in other areas, based on your own abilities and preferences.

It is important that you keep as many options open as possible. You should bear the A Level curriculum in mind. You should not be too quick to see yourself as a 'Scientist' or a 'humanities' student, as combinations of these subjects will be encouraged right up to A Level. Universities and apprenticeships will be looking for students with breadth as well as depth in their subject knowledge.

This booklet contains information for each GCSE and BTEC subject, covering the basic outline of the course, the nature of any coursework expected and the method of assessment. It is written to guide you through your choices and assist you in making the best decisions. Each subject has also produced additional material to help you understand the subject in more detail. You should discuss these decisions with your parents/carers, Form Tutor and other staff in the relevant subject areas.

**Oxford Spire Academy is a highly inclusive school,
and pupils describe it as a 'beautiful community'**

Ofsted (Nov 23)



The Process

12th Jan 2026: Year 9 options process begins. Options assemblies are held every day for Year 9 students to learn about subjects on offer.

14th Jan 2026: Year 9 Options Evening. This evening will begin at 5.30pm and there will be a short presentation in the Theatre at the beginning of the evening. You will be able to talk to subject leaders to find out more information about the subjects on offer.

29th Jan 2026: Year 9 Parents' Evening. This will help you understand how successful you are in each of your current subjects. This evening will focus on how you are doing now in Year 9. This will help you decide which subjects are a good choice for you and in which you will be able to excel.

27th Feb 2026: This is the deadline for submitting your choices on Bromcom.

Please do:

- Think carefully about why you like a subject.
- Think about your own skills and abilities.
- Think about what you want to do after Year 11.
- Talk to people – your family, your teachers and Year 10 students on the courses that interest you.

Please do not:

- Choose a subject because you think it is easy; you must find out about the course content.
- Choose a subject because your friend is doing it; it must appeal to you, and you will need to achieve well in it.
- Choose a subject because you like the teacher; you can never guarantee you will have that teacher.

If you have any questions regarding Options, please contact:

- Miss Wilkinson at mwilkinson@oxfordspires.anthemtrust.uk
- Mrs Cooper at FCooper@oxfordspires.anthemtrust.uk
- Mr Khan at skhan@oxfordspires.anthemtrust.uk
- Mr Dixon at MDixon@oxfordspires.anthemtrust.uk



Pathways

The following core subjects are **compulsory** for all students:

- English Language,
- Mathematics,
- Science – Combined Science or Triple Science
- English Literature
- Statistics

Science

There are two different routes that students can follow in Science GCSE. Students will either follow the Combined Science GCSE course, leading to two equivalent GCSE qualifications in a combination of all three Sciences or the Triple Science GCSE course, leading to three separate GCSE qualifications in Biology, Chemistry and Physics.

Students can achieve the full range of grades up to grade 9 following either route. To cope with the demand of the triple Science course, students will be required to have met an appropriate level of achievement during their Year 9 Science assessments.

All students are **expected** to pick one of the following Humanities subjects.

- History, Geography or Religious Studies

All students are strongly **encouraged** to select one of the following languages

- French, German or Spanish

Students will then choose their option(s) subject from the following choices.

Art, Craft and Design	History
Business	Hospitality & Catering
Computer Science	Media Studies
Design & Technology	Music
Drama	Photography
French	Physical Education
Geography	Religious Studies
German	Spanish
Health & Fitness	

Many careers & top-level universities will expect you to have BOTH a language & a humanities subject at GCSE. All students will take at least 9 GCSEs. All students will take at least 9 GCSEs; 6 core GCSE and 3 optional GCSEs.



FAQs

What do GCSE grades mean?

GCSE grades begin at grade 1 and go up to grade 9.

Grade 4 is considered a “Standard pass”, and Grade 5 is considered a “Strong pass”

As parents will be more familiar with the old letter grading system, the grades are roughly equivalent to:

Grades 7 to 9 = old grades A* & A
Grades 4 to 6 = old grades B & C
Grades 1 to 3 = old grades D to G

What is a BTEC or vocational subject?

While GCSEs are mostly assessed at the end of Year 11 in formal exams, vocational courses are assessed through a portfolio of completed assignments with shorter exams during the course. While students have fewer exams to take, they do have to produce good regular work to achieve a pass. The courses are designed to be more applied to the workplace and study real life applications of the subject. Sport is offered at Level 1 and 2. Grades awarded are Level 1 Pass, Level 2 Pass, Merit and Distinction.

What do Level 1 and Level 2 mean?

This describes the level of difficulty at which a student is working. Level 1 means the students are achieving the equivalent of GCSE grades 1 to 3. Level 2 means they are achieving the equivalent of grade 4 or higher. A Level content is equivalent to Level 3.

What is the English Baccalaureate (EBacc)?

The EBacc is a nationally recognised measure of performance. It means you have studied the most academic subjects: English Language, English Literature, Mathematics, Science, Computer Science, Geography or History, Languages.

While it is not compulsory for students to study the EBacc subjects, it is highly recommended if you can. A study by the UCL Institute of Education shows that studying subjects included in the EBacc provides students with greater opportunities in further education and increases the likelihood that a student will stay on in full-time education. Sutton Trust research reveals that studying the EBacc can help improve a young person's performance in English and Maths.



How will I pick my subjects?

You will be able to choose your option choices on Bromcom. Your tutor will give you information on how to do this during a morning tutor session. We encourage you to discuss your options at home and complete your options on Bromcom at home with parents. If you are unable to access Bromcom at home your tutor will plan time in a computer room, and you will be able to input your option choices there. You will be asked to choose a range of subjects in order of preference and provide some reserve/backup choices.

What happens next?

Once students give us their options, the subjects will need to be organised into the best fit timetable blocks taking every student's choice into consideration. Your tutors and teachers will also review your choices and talk to you if they think you need to reconsider any of your options.

Are my choices guaranteed?

Unfortunately, No. It may be that the timetable blocks will not fit all your preferred options or there may not be enough teachers available to meet the demand in each subject. Options cannot be guaranteed until you receive your options letter confirming your choices. After you receive your letter, you will be able to discuss your options allocation with your tutor and, if there is space, you may be able to change your options before the end of the summer holidays.

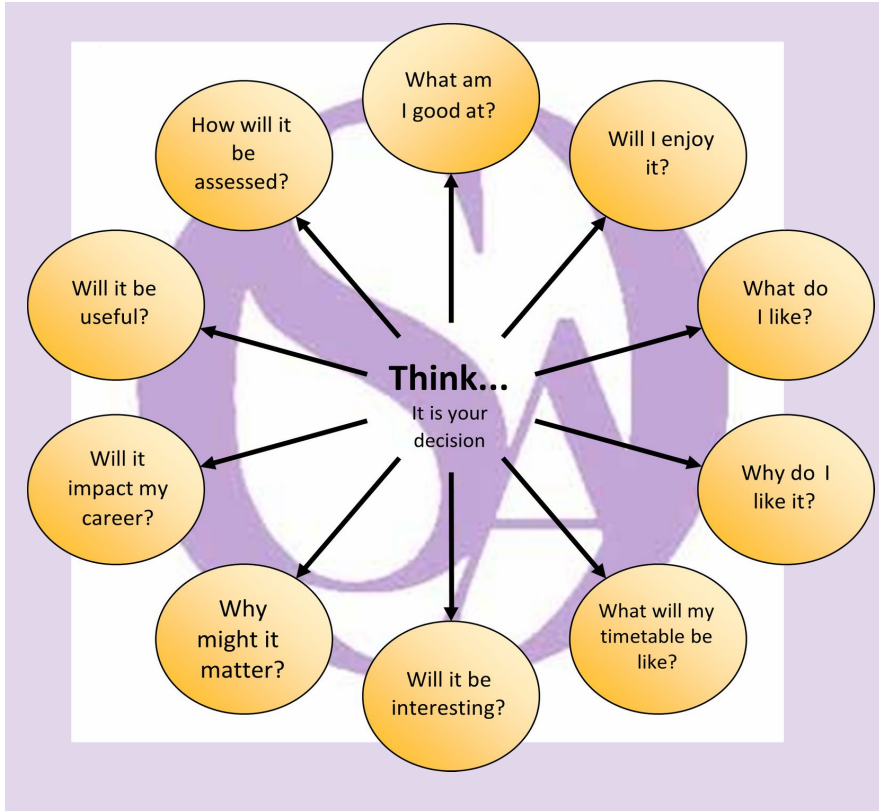
Can I change my mind?

If you change your mind, please let your tutor know and they will check if there is space in the subjects you wish to change to. If there is room in the new class, we will normally allow you to change your options. However, if the class is over-subscribed, we will not be able to do this but will support you in making the best choice for you. We will allow choices to be changed until the end of the second week in Year 10 as after this it will be too late to catch up and be successful.

Teachers are skilled at adapting their teaching to address any misconceptions

Ofsted (Nov 23)

How can I choose?



Who can help me decide?

Your Form Tutor, Subject Teachers, Parents / Carers, Miss Wilkinson Your Head of Year, Mrs Cooper, Mr Khan, Mr Dixon, Mrs Booth the OSA Careers Manager, Mr Bijang Pastoral Leader for Careers.

Students value the strong support they receive that prepares them well for the next stage of their education, employment or training

Ofsted (Nov 23)



This subject is compulsory

English Language – AQA

Components

C1: Exploration in creative reading and writing (Exam 50% 1hr 45 mins)

C2: Writer's viewpoint and perspectives (Exam 50% 1hr 45 mins)

C3: Spoken language (*not a formal written exam*) (centre declaration teacher assessed).

What will you study?

Paper 1 Exploration in creative reading and writing - 1hr 45 mins exam

In section A, reading a literature fiction text in order to consider how established writers use narrative and descriptive techniques to capture the interest of readers.

In section B, writing their own creative text, inspired by the topic that they have responded to in section A to demonstrate their narrative and descriptive skills in response to a written prompt, scenario or visual image.

Paper 2 Writers' viewpoints and perspectives - 1hr 45 mins exam

The aim of this paper is to develop students' insights into how writers have particular viewpoints and perspectives on issues or themes that are important to the way we think and live our lives. It will encourage students to demonstrate their skills by:

In section A, reading two linked sources from different time periods and genres in order to consider how each presents a perspective or viewpoint to influence the reader

In section B, producing a written text to a specified audience, purpose and form in which they give their own perspective on the theme that has been introduced to them in section A.

What can you do next?

It is important to secure a GCSE pass, at least Grade 4, as currently this is the pass mark which would require you to continue your study of this subject and many other subjects post-16.

The essential skills covered within your English Language and English Literature studies (reading, writing, synthesis, evaluation, analysis and oracy) are key life skills that are transferable to many different post-16 study and apprenticeship pathways (including A-level and Level 3 qualifications)



This subject is compulsory

English Literature – AQA

Components

C1: Shakespeare and the 19th Century novel (Exam 40% 1hr 45 mins)

C2: Modern texts and poetry (Exam 60% 2hr 15 mins)

What will you study?

Paper 1: Shakespeare and the 19th century novel - Macbeth' and the 19th century novel 'A Christmas Carol'. You will need to write in detail about an extract from both texts and the play/novella.

Paper 2: Modern texts and poetry

Section A – Modern prose or drama 'An Inspector Calls'.

You will be required to answer one question from a choice of two. There will be no extract to work with, and you will need to recall knowledge from your study of the play.

Section B – Poetry 'Power and Conflict'

You will answer one comparative question on one named poem that will be printed and appear in the paper with a second poem that you will need to recall from your study of the 15 poems within the anthology.

Section C – Unseen poetry

You will answer one question on one unseen poem before comparing this poem to a second poem.

Getting GCSE Ready

In Year 9, you will prepare for your two English GCSEs by learning many of the skills you will need to be successful on the course. Throughout Year 9 you will have also developed your appreciation and understanding of the different methods that a writer uses to convey meaning, as well as being able to identify and explore contextual links, themes and writer's intent.

All the skills that you have learnt during Key Stage 3 (close analysis, shared and guided writing, note making, and inference) will continue to be developed as you transition into Key Stage 4.

What can you do next?

GCSE English Literature is a subject that equips students with key skills that support further study at A-Level (English Literature, English Language, Humanities, Social Sciences, Media).



This subject is compulsory

Mathematics – Pearson Edexcel

Components

C1: Non-Calculator (Exam 33.3% 1 hr 30 mins)

C2: Calculator (Exam 33.3% 1 hr 30 mins)

C3: Calculator (Exam 33.3% 1 hr 30 mins)

What will you study?

You will study and develop various mathematical techniques related to numeracy (working with numbers), algebra (working with unknown quantities), geometry (working with shapes) and statistics (working with real-world information).

In addition to the content of the GCSE Mathematics course, you will also develop skills in reasoning, forming logical arguments, spatial awareness and interpreting and communicating skills.

The learning structure for our mathematics curriculum is based around some key principles:

Fluency, Mathematical reasoning, Multiplicative reasoning, Problem solving, Progression, CPA approach – Concrete – Pictorial – Abstract, Relevance, Modelling, Reflection, Linking

We aim to cater for students of all abilities through stretch, challenge and support. Our resources are structured to deliver engaging and accessible content across differentiated tiers supported by worked examples, key points, literacy and strategy hints.

Success in maths comes from: excellent behaviour; doing your best every single lesson; being in every lesson, doing everything that your teacher instructs you to do; completing every homework set to the best of your ability; revising for assessment and revising properly for end of year or external exams. If you have any questions about GCSE Mathematics, then see your class teacher or speak to Mrs Thorne.

What can you do next?

A Maths GCSE develops critical transferable skills such as problem-solving, analytical thinking, and logical reasoning. These skills are essential for further study, including A-levels and apprenticeships, and are highly valued in careers like finance, engineering, and technology. Maths GCSE also builds confidence in everyday tasks like budgeting and decision-making.



This subject is compulsory

Statistics - Pearson Edexcel

Components

C1: Paper 1 (Exam 50% 1hr 30mins)

C2: Paper 2 (Exam 50% 1hr 30mins)

What will you study?

Statistics is a very key application of the universal language of mathematics. It has been very important in recent times due to the pandemic. Statistics, like mathematics, is all around us. It is used in sport, in science and in humanities. The statistics GCSE further develops the students' ability to understand data and how to interpret the data also.

In Years 10 and 11 we look at collecting data, processing data, displaying data, and interpreting data.

Each half term the students will sit a development test to ensure all students are still on track for their statistics GCSE. As there is also a lot of statistics in the mathematics GCSE there is a strong basis for the statistics GCSE already.

Analysing data and looking at trends is an essential skill in many non-mathematical subjects the content that is taught in GCSE statistics is an excellent grounding for studying biology, psychology, criminology and sociology.

What can you do next?

A good grade in a statistic GCSE is a great GCSE to have as it is not taught in many schools. It provides a great base for the A level statistics modules in A level mathematics.

Studying statistics can be useful to also talk about in interviews when applying for jobs or further study. The jobs you could be applying for are jobs such as data scientist or any other jobs in the finance or mathematics sector. To pursue a career in computer science or mathematics you will normally be expected to have a very good GCSE Maths grade and study maths and further maths at A Level. Taking GCSE statistics is excellent preparation for this course.



This subject is compulsory

Science Combined (Equivalent to 2 GCSEs) - AQA

Components

Biology Paper 1&2 (Exam each paper 16.6% and 1hr 15mins)

Chemistry Paper 1&2 (Exam each paper 16.6% and 1hr 15mins)

Physics Paper 1&2 (Exam each paper 16.6% and 1hr 15mins)

Science Triple

Biology Paper 1&2 (Exam each paper 50% and 1hr 45 mins)

Chemistry Paper 1&2 (Exam each paper 50% and 1hr 45 mins)

Physics Paper 1&2 (Exam each paper 50% and 1hr 45 mins)

What will you study?

Students will study the following topics in both Combined and Triple GCSE Science:

Cell biology, Organisation, Infection and response, Bioenergetics, Homeostasis and response, Inheritance, variation and evolution, Ecology
Atomic structure and the periodic table, Bonding, structure, and the properties of matter, Quantitative chemistry, Chemical changes, Energy changes, the rate and extent of chemical change, Organic chemistry, Chemical analysis, Chemistry of the atmosphere, Using resources. Energy, Electricity, Particle model of matter, Atomic structure, Forces, Waves, Magnetism and electromagnetism.

What can you do next?

Both the Combined and Triple Science qualification routes can lead to the study of science subjects at A level. These courses develop transferable skills like critical thinking, data analysis, and problem-solving; skills that are valuable for further study, including A-levels and vocational qualifications, and open pathways to careers in healthcare, engineering, and environmental sciences. Science at GCSE also encourages curiosity and understanding of the natural world, supporting informed decision-making in daily life.

Art, Craft and Design – Pearson Edexcel

Components:

C1: Personal Portfolio (*not a formal written exam*) (Coursework: 60%)

C2: Externally Set Assignment (Exam: 40% 10hr over two days)

What will you study?

In Year 10 you will work with set themes and project briefs, focusing on observational drawing, experimenting and building skills across a range of specialist areas, such as drawing, painting, ceramics, photography, printmaking etc. You will develop skills in recording ideas and creating refined responses and build your Art historical knowledge and analytical skills by linking your work to the work of others/ artists. You learn to explore, select & review techniques and processes that develop your personal response.

In Year 11 you will refine your artistic responses and final outcomes. You will receive the exam board brief for the externally set assignment in January and create your portfolio for your final 10-hour exam at the end of the year.

GCSE Art and Design covers a range of practical experience across a range of specialisms alongside in-depth written assignments. You will have the opportunity to experiment with different media, techniques and processes in order to explore your strengths and preferences. There are a wide range of options within the different endorsements. The aim of the course is to develop your visual language skills and for you to build a comprehensive portfolio of work that showcases your skill and ideas and to progress to further courses or employment.

You will:

- Develop transferrable skills such as effective communication, problem solving, project management, effective research skills, working independently, working collaboratively, and working to a brief.
- Develop your visual skills
- Experience new and exciting materials, techniques and processes
- Be creative, enthusiastic and imaginative
- Experiment and take risks with your work
- Develop your ability to think innovatively
- Develop cultural awareness and aesthetic appreciation
- Practice practical application of your own ideas.

What can you do next?

Art and Design GCSE provides a foundation for A Level Art and future careers within the creative industries; in areas such as advertising; architecture; the art and antiques market; crafts; design; designer fashion; film and video; interactive leisure software; music; the performing arts; publishing; software and computer games; and television and radio. Creative industries are the fastest growing employment sector.



Business – OCR

Components:

C1: Business activity, marketing, and people (Exam 50% 1hr 30)

C2: operations, finance, and influences on business (Exam 50% 1hr 30)

What will you study?

The course is divided into 7 units.

- Business Activity
- Marketing
- Operations
- Human Resources
- Finance
- Ethics and the Environment
- The interdependent nature of Business

Would you like to be your own boss in the future and run your own business and understand what goes on in the world of work for your future career? Would you like to learn business skills such as communication and decision making to help you with your future?

GCSE Business is an excellent choice for anyone either wanting to run their own business, work in the corporate world or someone who just has an entrepreneurial interest that they would like to explore further! or work for a business in the future. Students have the chance to build and develop key skills including communication, teamwork, decision making and situational analysis- all of which are vitally important in the world of work! Building on key skills such as teamwork, decision making and communication, this course helps equip you better for your future in whatever direction you choose this to be.

If you enjoy taking the knowledge and concepts you have learnt and applying them to real life scenarios. If you are interested in exploring the success of a wide range of businesses that exist today, and you are determined and hard- working with a drive towards bettering your analytical and problem-solving skills

What can you do next?

Business GCSE can lead on to many vocational qualifications at college and is a good stepping stone for you in A-Level subjects, especially economics, accountancy and of course A Level Business. Business can be a good subject if you are applying for apprenticeships as it shows you have a good understanding of the world of work.



Computer Science – OCR

Components:

C1: Computer Systems (Exam 50% 1 hr 30mins)

C2: Computational thinking, algorithms & programming (Exam 50% 1 hr 30 mins)

C3: Centre Declaration 20 hr NEA Project

What will you study?

Computer Science in GCSE is a rigorous and challenging academic subject that fits well with students who have a strong command of language, are creative, yet sufficiently self-resilient to keep at solving a problem using the language Python3 until they succeed. You should be interested in how computers work and be eager to learn Python 3 programming to solve specific problems you are tasked with. An interest in programming is essential to success in this course.

During the course you will complete several programming projects, teaching you knowledge and experience needed in section B of the second paper exam.

- Systems architecture, memory and storage – how computers are designed and work.
- Data representation – how numbers, characters, sound and images are stored as binary codes.
- Wired and wireless networks – how computer networks are designed and work.
- Systems software and security – the role of the operating system and keeping networks safe.
- Ethical, legal, cultural and environmental concerns

Paper 2 Computational Thinking, Algorithms and Programming

- Computational thinking and algorithms – methods for sorting and searching lists.
- Logic and languages - Boolean logic & computer related mathematics.
- Programming – in Pseudocode & Python culminating in a coding project using arrays, files and string handling. This experience is tested in section B.

Section B:

- Assesses students' practical programming skills and their ability to design, write, test and refine programs.

What can you do next?

The course aims to lay a firm foundation for students wishing to progress to A-Level computer Science. The OCR J277 course provides excellent progression into AS and A Level Computer Science (H046 & H446).



Design & Technology – Eduqas

Components

C1: Design & Technology in the 21st Century (Exam 50% 2hrs)

C2: Design & make task (*not a formal written exam*) (Coursework 50%)

What will you study?

In Yr10 the subject is taught through design and make tasks (DMTs). These tasks provide pupils with a vehicle to develop knowledge and skills in

- Identifying, investigating and outlining design possibilities
- Developing a design brief and specification
- Generating and developing design ideas
- Manufacturing a prototype
- Analysing and evaluating design decisions and prototypes
- Analysing and evaluating wider issues in design and technology.

The tasks are carefully managed in a safe environment, allowing pupils to make progress and grow in confidence, which results in them being more creative and taking risks with their solutions to design problems. The subject is not material specific and will require pupils to develop knowledge by working with a range of materials.

In Year 11 they will be given a context from the examination board and will be required to identify a design opportunity, within that context, and use the design process to manufacture a solution.

Component 1 is a mix of short answers, structured and extended writing questions assessing candidates' knowledge and understanding of:

- Technical principles
- Designing and making principles along with their ability to analyse and evaluate design decisions and wider issues in design and technology.

What can you do next?

Design and Technology GCSE will prepare students to participate confidently and successfully in an increasingly technological world. Students will gain awareness and learn from wider influences on Design and Technology including historical, social, cultural, environmental and economic factors.

The course is challenging, demanding but most importantly rewarding. Through its application of mathematics and science to solve material problems it provides learners with a cross-curricular opportunity to develop a deeper and greater understanding of their GCSE subjects.

Drama – Pearson Edexcel

Components

C1: Devising (*Coursework and internally assessed performance*): 40%

C2: Performance from text (*Externally assessed performance*): 20%

C3: Theatre Makers in Practice (1 hr 45 mins written exam): 40%

What will you study?

If you enjoy working in groups often under pressure, sharing ideas, negotiating, discussing and performing, creating and performing, reflecting and reviewing your work and the work of others, watching live theatre and analysing the impact on the audience - Drama GCSE could be for you!

You will start Year 10 by completing a unit on practitioners and performance techniques, to gain understanding of how to create work inspired by specific theatrical styles. You will learn how to use a range of explorative strategies, to develop ideas for the given stimuli for Component 1. You will complete both an original performance and written portfolio (40% of the course) - in Cycle 2. Finally, in Cycle 3, you will begin studies of *The Crucible* by Arthur Miller in preparation for your mock Component 3 exam in the summer.

In Year 11 you will begin preparing your scripted performance exams for Component 2, which will be assessed by an external examiner in Cycle 2 (20% of the overall grade). Having completed this, you will watch a piece of live theatre and continue your revision of *The Crucible*, all of which will be assessed in your final exam during the summer. The work you already have completed in Component 1 and Component 2 will also help you understand the role of an actor, designer and director, which is the focus of the exam.

What can you do next?

Drama GCSE isn't just about acting. When you go for job, or have college or university interviews, studying Drama provides you with the required skills to communicate and deliver confidently in front of others. By watching live theatre, reading scripts and acting, you put yourself into another person's shoes and develop empathy skills that help your relationships with others. GCSE Drama teaches you to work as part of a team. You will have to balance ideas, work with and listen to others, evaluate your work and develop your independent organisational skills. In adult life, there will be many occasions where you will need to work as part of a team and studying GCSE Drama will equip you with this.

Hospitality and Catering (Level 1/2 Vocational Award) – WJEC Eduqas

Components

C1: The hospitality and catering industry (Exam 40% 1hr 20 mins)

C2: Hospitality and catering in action (*not a formal written exam*)
(Coursework 60% 12hr)

What will you study?

This is an exciting and creative course which focuses on practical cooking skills to ensure students develop a thorough understanding of nutrition, food origin and the working characteristics of food materials. At its heart, this qualification focuses on nurturing students' practical skills, development and understanding of the food and catering practices and industry.

Food Preparation Skills Are Integrated into Four Core Topics:

- Hospitality & Catering provision
- How hospitality and catering providers operate
- Health & Safety in hospitality and Catering
- Food safety in hospitality and Catering

Unit 1 Hospitality and Catering Exam

This will assess students' knowledge and understanding in relation to the 4 core topics. The exam will have a range of short and extended answer questions.

Unit 2 Practical Controlled Assessment

Students receive and respond to a learner assignment brief over a time frame of 9 hours

- 3 hours - To carry out a nutrition and food choice analysis (no resources permitted)
- 2 hours - To create a production plan for the two dishes
- 3.5 hours - To make and present two high quality dishes that meet the assignment brief requirements
- 3.5 hours - Self-evaluation on cooking and the whole assessment performance.

What can you do next?

The Hospitality and Catering (Level 1/2 Vocational Award) equips learners with practical industry skills and valuable transferrable skills like teamwork, communication, and problem-solving. These skills can support progression to further education, apprenticeships, or careers in hospitality and beyond, including customer service, event planning, and retail.



Students are expected to pick one humanities subject

Humanities – Geography Pearson Edexcel B

Components

C1: Global Geographical Issues (Exam 37.5% 1hr 30 mins)

C2: UK Geographical Issues (Exam 37.5% 1hr 45 mins)

C3: People and Environment Issues – Making Geographical Decisions (Exam 25% 1hr 30mins)

What will you study?

In geography lessons, you will get the chance to make BIG decisions about the planning and management of major projects, investigate crimes and the expensive mistakes made by the world's superpowers!

You will use ICT to help you learn about real life issues and you will visit some different places to experience what you have learnt about in class. This will build on the skills and knowledge you learnt in Year 7, 8 and 9 and develop your thinking so you will be able to succeed in exams and assessments.

We will also go on two field trips. One focuses on quality of life around Oxford, and the other looks at coastal processes at the beach.

Why should you choose this subject?

Studying geography at GCSE will help you to understand many aspects and features of our complicated world. It is a subject about the past, present and the future. You should take this course if you are interested in the world around you and want to understand more about people, places and the environment.

Geography also helps prepare you for a wide range of careers and is a qualification that is favoured by employers in this country and beyond!

What can you do next?

Studying geography at GCSE will help you to understand many aspects and features of our complicated world. It is a subject about the past, present and the future. Geography also helps prepare you for a wide range of careers and is a qualification that is favoured by employers in this country and beyond!



Students are expected to pick one humanities subject

Humanities History – WJEC Eduqas

Components

C1: Changes in Crime and Punishment in Britain (Exam 30% 1hr 15 mins)

C2: The development of the USA, 1929-2000 (Exam 20% 45 mins)

C3: Germany in Transition, 1919-1939 (Exam 25% 1hr)

C4: The Elizabethan Age, 1558-1603 (Exam 25% 1hr)

What will you study?

The course will develop students to become effective, independent & resilient learners & use historical enquiry to enhance critical & reflective thinking.

Changes In Crime and Punishment in Britain, c.500 To the Present Day

Topics include vagrancy, heresy & treason in the 16th & 17th Century; the growth of smuggling & highway robbery in the 18th Century; Bow St. Runners; Peel & the setting up of the Metropolitan Police; the purpose of punishment in public over time; the concept of banishment in the 18th and 19th centuries; the use of prisons to punish & reform in the nineteenth century.

Elizabethan England

This course considers the upheaval that occurred during Elizabeth's reign. Topics include the coronation & popularity of Elizabeth I. The importance of popular entertainment. Contrasting lifestyles of rich and poor. Issues of poverty, unemployment & vagrancy. The fate of Mary, Queen of Scots. Reasons for & Course of the Armada. Catholic & threats to Elizabeth's life.

Germany In Transition, 1919-1939

How did Germany's defeat in WW1 lead to the Nazi party? How were different groups treated by the Nazis? The aftermath of WW1 on Germany. 'Golden Age' & the failure of the Weimar Republic. Hitler's process to becoming the Fuhrer, the use of propaganda.

The Development of the USA, 1929-2000

How the USA developed from isolationist country to a dominant power. We explore how the lives of US citizens changed. Topics include The Wall St. crash & the Republican response. The Civil Rights Movement. Changes in youth culture & the role of women. International relations in the Cold War.

What can you do next?

For those who wish to go on to study any A level subject, especially History, Politics and Classical Civilisations. The GCSE is also valued by universities and can assist in jobs such as journalism, law, teaching, politics or media.

Students are expected to pick one humanities subject

Humanities - Religious Studies – WJEC Eduqas

Components

C1: Religious, Philosophical & Ethical Studies in the modern world (Exam 50% 2hr)

C2: Study of Christianity (Exam 25% 1hr)

C3: Study of a World Faith Option 3: Islam (Exam 25% 1hr)

What will you study?

- Learn to put your views across in speech and in writing in a structured and confident way
- Explore your own belief and opinion about a wide variety of topics; from the way society should live and the basis for valid rules, to the way we understand and describe spirituality and a sense of the 'other'.

Philosophy and ethics in the modern world

Students will explore philosophical and religious responses to a wide range of topics including the nature of good and evil, human rights, euthanasia and concepts of wealth and poverty.

Christianity: beliefs and practices

Beliefs includes the life & teachings of Jesus, philosophical understandings about the nature of God, & belief in the afterlife. Practices include teaching about infant & adult baptism, the Eucharist, the role of prayer & different types of worship.

Islam: beliefs and practices

Beliefs includes the life & teachings of Muhammad (pbuh), beliefs about God (Allah) & beliefs about life. Practices include the role of the Five Pillars of Islam & the celebration of festivals in Islam.

Why study Religious Studies?

Religious Studies helps students to develop the core critical thinking & interpersonal skills they will require in life, by exploring a range of philosophical & ethical issues from a wide variety of perspectives. These will include Christian, Humanist & Islamic views. Students will develop the ability to empathise with & think critically about the ideas & the different responses to them before formulating their own conclusions.

What can you do next?

This subject prepares students for a range of subjects Post-18 and University courses. Students are also set up for success in careers such as law, medicine, social work, education, journalism, and public services such as the police force.

Media Studies – WJEC Eduqas

Components

C1: Exploring the media (Exam 40% 1hr 30 mins)

C2: Understanding Media Forms and Products (Exam 30% 1hr 30 mins)

C3: Creating Media Products (*not a formal written exam*) (Coursework 30%)

What will you study?

In Year 10 you will study Advertising, Magazines, Film, Video Games, Radio and Newspapers. You will also start creating your NEA media product. In Year 11 you will study, Television, Music Video and complete the NEA Coursework Component.

The course focuses on developing understanding of how the media industries function, and the effect they have on us as individuals, and society. It also develops your skills in decoding the hidden meanings within media products, and who has the control of the messages and news that shape our view of the world. Finally, you learn the practical skills of photography and design so you can create your own media product.

- Media Language – how meaning is created through decisions made in the production process of media products.
- Media Representations – the ways in which groups of people and events are presented in the media, stereotyping and how this affects identity.
- Media Industries - how different industries go through processes to create, develop and produce.
- Media Audiences – how different audiences respond to products and what engages them.

You will then use all this knowledge to create your own media products for the NEA.

What can you do next?

You will be able to progress to A Levels in Media, English Language, English Literature, Film, Sociology, Art, Business or marketing. You could also access vocational courses in Creative Media Production, Graphic Design, Photography or Digital Marketing.

These pathways will prepare you well for careers in Media and Communications, Television, Photography, Journalism, Film Production, Marketing and Advertising, Public Relations, Social Media management, Web design, Game design, Campaign management, Branding, Event planning and Digital Media Design.

Students are encouraged to pick one language

Modern Foreign Language - Pearson Edexcel

Components

C1: Listening and Understanding French/German or Spanish (Exam 25% 45mins or 1 hour)

C2: Speaking in French/German or Spanish (Exam speaking 25% 7-9mins or 10-12 mins)

C3: Reading and understanding French/German or Spanish (Exam 25% 45mins or 1hr)

C4: Writing in French/German or Spanish (Exam 25% 1hr 15 or 1hr 20 mins)

What will you study?

Built on a foundation of inclusivity, accessibility and transparency, this qualification takes a compassionate, student-centered approach and caters to the needs of all learners, regardless of background, ability or reason for studying a language. Combining clear, concise and straightforward assessments with engaging, meaningful and relatable content, this qualification will equip students for life & careers in a global setting.

We offer French, German or Spanish and these subjects will enable you to share your interests and opinions with other speakers of your chosen language. You will have an international dimension to your GCSEs, which is increasingly important and sought by higher education institutions as well as employers.

The language, grammar and skills you have already learned during Key Stage 3 have prepared you to take on a GCSE in your chosen language. You will build on the topic areas you have been studying and have the opportunity to move on to new topic areas such as equality, mental health, the natural world, gaming, relationships and shopping. This GCSE will cover subjects linked to themes such as my personal world; Lifestyle and wellbeing; Media and technology and Travel and tourism.

What can you do next?

You will develop a range of skills which will be useful in whatever career route you choose, for example, the ability to communicate effectively with others, to speak out in public, to use different problem-solving strategies and so on. All of this will give you opportunities to work abroad or for British companies who have international links. Employers are increasingly looking for those who are able to offer a foreign language.



Music - Pearson Edexcel

Components

C1: Performing (coursework) (Exam practical 30%)

C2: Composing (coursework) (Exam practical 30%)

C3: Listening and Appraising (Exam 40% 1hr 45)

What will you study?

In Year 10 you will complete a unit on: Musical Language and Composition using a range of computer programs. Performing, Music Theory and Music Vocabulary. Solo and Ensemble Performing and Composing plus develop knowledge on all four Areas of Study (AoS) for Component 3. In Year 11 you will complete units on: Analysis and Listening – Consolidation of AoS. Final Solo and Ensemble Performances, Final Compositions and Exam Technique and Preparation.

If you want to develop these skills and **already play a musical instrument or sing**, music would be a great choice for you!

You will work collaboratively with other musicians on ensemble performance tasks; you will also gain experience of using a range of music programs; Soundtrap and Noteflight to compose. The final written exam is based on a range of music taken from various periods and genres, designed to engage and challenge your understanding of music.

C1: Performing: You will take part in many performances over the duration of the course. For your final submission you must submit a solo performance on your main study instrument and an ensemble. This means you will need to perform for at least 4 minutes in front of your teacher, and you will need to perform on your own and also within a group.

C2: Composing: You will complete several compositions over the duration of the course – a range of 'free' compositions and composition work that must be completed to a given brief. At the end of the course, you will submit your best response to a given brief and your best 'free' composition.

C3: Listening and Appraising: A written exam draws together the practical and theoretical elements of music. You will learn about music from a range of different periods and places including Instrumental Music 1700 -1820, Vocal Music, Music for Stage and Screen and World Music Fusions.

What can you do next?

Music GCSE is the perfect foundation to go on and study Music A level or any other further music qualification which will prepare you for a career in musical performance or composition including careers as a performer, composer, music producer, music teacher and music therapist.

Photography – Pearson Edexcel

Components

C1: Personal Portfolio in Art and Design (*not a formal written exam*)
(Coursework 40%)

C2: Externally set Assignment in Art and Design (Exam 60% 10hr)

What will you study?

In Year 10 you will be introduced to DSLR Cameras and Compositional skills, you will complete work around set themes and project briefs, focusing on camera techniques and photoshoots inspired by photographers. You will start by exploring Street Photography, with a focus on Henri Cartier Bresson and contemporary artist Slinkachu. You will develop skills in recording ideas and creating refined responses. You will build your Art historical knowledge and analytical skills by linking your work to the work of photographers. You will learn to explore, select and review techniques and processes that will help develop your personal response.

In Year 11 you will continue to work on your personal portfolio around internally set themes up until January, when you will begin your exam unit. You will receive the exam board brief and start to create your portfolio to support your final 10-hour exam, providing you with practical experience within a more focused specialism alongside in-depth written assignments.

What can you do next?

Photography GCSE provides a foundation for A Level Photography and possibly Art A Level and future careers within the creative industries; in areas such as advertising; architecture; the art and antiques market; crafts; design; designer fashion; film and video; interactive leisure software; music; the performing arts; publishing; software and computer games; and television and radio. The creative industries are the fastest growing employment sector.

Studying photography, you will develop transferrable skills such as effective communication, ICT Skills, problem solving, project management, effective research skills, working independently, working collaboratively, and working to a brief. The study of Photography allows you to:

- Develop your visual skills
- Experience new and exciting digital techniques and hand manipulation processes
- Be creative, enthusiastic and imaginative
- Experiment and take risks with your work
- Develop your ability to think innovatively
- Develop cultural awareness and aesthetic appreciation
- Practice practical application of your own ideas.



Level 1/ 2 Technical Award in Health & Fitness – NCFE

Components

C1: Written Exam (Exam 40% 1hr 30mins)

C2: Synoptic Project (*not a formal written exam*) (Coursework 60%)

What will you study?

The Level 1/2 Technical Award in Health and Fitness is designed for learners who want an introduction to health and fitness that includes a vocational and project-based element. It is aimed at 14- to 16-year-olds studying key stage 4 (KS4) curriculum who are interested in the health and fitness sector.

This qualification is designed to match the rigour and challenge of GCSE study. The qualification is graded at level 1 pass, merit, distinction and level 2 pass, merit, distinction and distinction* (equivalent to GCSE grades 8.5 to 1).

This qualification will promote the learner's understanding of:

- The structure and function of body systems
- The effects of health and fitness activities on the body, health and fitness and the components of fitness
- The principles of training
- The impact of lifestyle on health and fitness
- Testing and developing components of fitness
- Health and fitness analysis and setting goals, planning, developing and taking part in a health and fitness programme and understanding how to prepare safely.

What can you do next?

The qualification will appeal to learners who wish to pursue a career in the health and fitness sector or progress onto further study. The NCFE Level 1/2 Technical Award in Health and Fitness (603/7007/5) complements GCSE qualifications.



Physical Education – Exam Board AQA

Components

C1: The human body and movement in physical activity & sport (Exam 30% 1hr 15)

C2: Socio-cultural influences and wellbeing in physical activity and sport (Exam 30% 1hr 15)

C3: Practical performance in physical activity and sport (Performance in 3 sports 30% and Coursework - Analysis and evaluation of performance 10%)

What will you study?

This is a linear qualification; this means that all students will sit their exams and submit non-exam assessments at the end of the course. You will be assessed across two exam papers (worth 60% of the GCSE) and practical performance (worth 40% of the GCSE).

Unit 1

In unit 1 students study the human body and movement in physical activity and sport.

You will learn applied anatomy and physiology (the human body and how it works in sport), movement analysis, physical training and how to interpret data.

Unit 2

In this unit students will study socio-cultural influences and well-being in physical activity and sport.

You will learn socio-cultural influences on sports participation, sports psychology, health, fitness and well-being and how to interpret data.

Non-Examination Assessment

You will be assessed across a range of sports, whereby performance in 3 sports will be selected as your assessment. You will be assessed in the role of performer/player in a team and individual sports. You will also learn how to analyse performance to bring about improvement in your chosen sport. On completion of this course, students will be able to access the Level 3 (Post-16) courses in sport and physical education with a view to working in the sporting industry.

What can you do next?

The qualification could lead to pathways in the PE & Sports sector including A Level PE or Level 3 BTEC in Sport. This would be a step towards studying PE & Sport at university or working within the sports industry.