

The King's School



KEY STAGE 4
COURSES
2026

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Choosing the options that your child will study for GCSE needs considerable time and thought. This booklet is designed to help both you and your child arrive at an informed decision.

At The King's School, all students must follow the core subjects. These are:

- English Literature and Language
- Mathematics
- Science (Combined Trilogy unless students opt to extend this to Separate Sciences)
- Core PE
- PSHE
- RPE short course (Year 9 and 10 only)

Beyond this core, your child is free to choose from a large variety of GCSE and Level 2 subjects that are outlined in this booklet. Your child's option choices should be broad and balanced, based on their interests. However, we strongly recommend that your child considers studying at least one humanities subject (Geography, History or RPE), a language (French or Spanish) alongside two other options of their choice.

I would strongly encourage your child to speak to their teachers in order to gain a greater understanding of the GCSE choices on offer alongside reading this option booklet carefully. We will discuss these options with you and your child in order to ensure that your child is on the correct Key Stage 4 pathway for their needs.

To help your child make well-informed decisions, there will be talks taking place during the **Year 9 Parents' Evening** on **15th January**. We will also send all parents, carers and students documentation which will guide you through the whole process including the how to access the online portal where students will be selecting their options. Please do take the time to read through all the documentation. To add to this, subject areas will provide presentations to students on the GCSE/Level 2 courses that they deliver at Key Stage 4 in January 2026 – either in lessons or through an assembly dependant on whether the subject is taught at Key Stage 3. This will provide further information to what is outlined in this booklet. We would also strongly recommend talking to your child at home about their options. [Talking Futures](#) has a toolkit to support parents/guardians with these conversations. We also have information on our [website](#) around careers which may well be of use.

To ensure that the options process runs smoothly please note and adhere to the deadlines that are laid out on the next page.

If you have any further queries on this process, please do contact Mr Twelves at the school who will be able to provide more information on the whole options process.

Yours sincerely

Mr R Gammon
Headteacher



The Option Process

In Years 10 and 11 students are able to study subjects of their choice for part of the Key Stage 4 Curriculum. The students are prepared for these choices during PSHE lessons, tutorial time as well as specific subject lessons.

Below are some of the key dates during this important process.

- | | | |
|---|---------------------------------|---|
| ◆ | Thurs 11th December 2025 | Year 9 reports home |
| ◆ | Week of 5th January 2026 | Year 9 assemblies & input from Exeter College. Option booklet and PPT home. |
| ◆ | Mon 6th - Wed 28th January 2026 | Teachers provide information about their courses during subject lessons. |
| ◆ | Thurs 15th January 2026 | Year 9 Parents' Evening |
| ◆ | Thurs 15th January 2026 PM | Students' instructions to access the Online Options system sent to all Parents/Carers and students. Online Options opens for all students. Parents/Carers sent an EduLink survey to fill in once their child has completed their options. |
| ◆ | Thurs 29th January 11:00 | Online Option system closes. |

Throughout this time Tutors will be guiding students about making their choices. The Head of the Skills for Learning department will also be involved in supporting students.

Compulsory Subjects

CORE SUBJECTS

English Language	Page 5
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Mathematics	Page 7
Core Physical Education	Page 8
PSHE & Citizenship	Page 9
Religious Education Short Course	Page 10
Combined Science: Trilogy	Page 11

GCSE English Language

You study this course because:

This course will:

- develop pupils' ability to communicate their ideas, knowledge, feelings and points of view orally and in the written form;
- develop pupils' ability to understand literary texts;
- develop pupils' ability to communicate an informed response and to speak and write effectively and accurately.



What content is covered?

Exam Board: AQA

Paper 1: Explorations in creative reading and writing

- Section A Reading: one literature fiction text
- Section B Writing: description or narrative writing

Paper 2: Writers' Viewpoints and Perspectives

- Section A Reading: one non-fiction text and one literary non-fiction text
- Section B Writing: writing to present a viewpoint

Non-examination assessment: Spoken language

- Presenting
- Responding to questions and feedback
- Use of standard English

How will I be assessed?

Paper 1

- Written exam: 1 hour 45 minutes
- 80 marks
- 50% of GCSE

Paper 2

- Written exam: 1 hour 45 minutes
- 80 marks
- 50% of GCSE

Spoken language (teacher assessment)

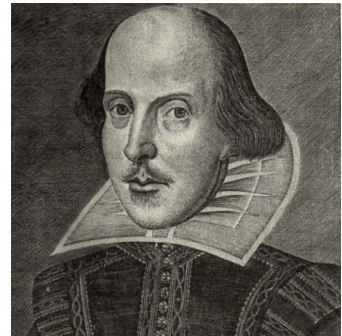
- Teacher set throughout course
- Marked by teacher
- Separate endorsement (0% weighting of GCSE)

GCSE English Literature

You study this course because:

This course will:

- develop pupils' ability to communicate their ideas, knowledge, feelings and points of view orally and in the written form,
- develop pupils' ability to understand literary texts,
- develop pupils' ability to communicate an informed response and to speak and write effectively and accurately.



What content is covered?

Exam Board: AQA

Paper 1: Shakespeare and the 19th-century novel

- Section A : Shakespeare: students will answer one question on their play of choice. They will be required to write in detail about an extract from the play and then to write about the play as a whole.
- Section B : The 19th-century novel: students will answer one question on their novel of choice. They will be required to write in detail about an extract from the novel and then to write about the novel as a whole.

Paper 2: Modern text, poetry and unseen poetry

- Section A : Modern texts: Students will answer one essay question from a choice of two on their studied modern prose or drama text.
- Section B : Poetry: Students will answer one comparative question on one named poem printed on the paper and one other poem from their chosen anthology cluster.
- Section C : Unseen poetry: Students will answer one question on one unseen poem and one question comparing this poem with a second unseen poem.

How will I be assessed?

Paper 1

- Written exam: 1 hour 45 minutes
- 64 marks
- 40% of GCSE

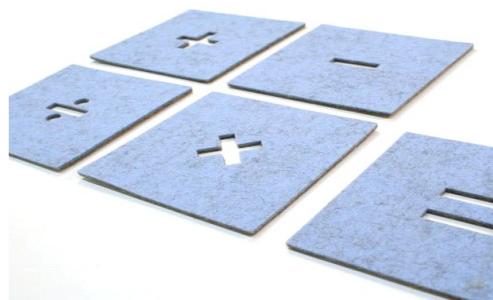
Paper 2

- Written exam: 2 hour 15 minutes
- 96 marks
- 60% of GCSE

GCSE Mathematics

You study this course so that:

You continue the study of mathematics; developing numerical, spatial and graphical skills as well as extending other areas of mathematics. The system of setting used in school supports students to learn and make progress at a rate appropriate to their ability. Current setting arrangements will be thoroughly reviewed at the end of Year 9, taking into account teacher assessments and performance in the department's end-of-year tests. The setting at the start of Year 10 will give an indication of the likely tier of entry, although final decisions will not be made until mid-way through Year 11. Independent study forms an essential part of the preparation for GCSE. Students should have their own scientific calculator which should be one that the examination board allows for use during examinations.



What content is covered?

Exam Board: Edexcel

The programmes of study in the mathematics syllabus for GCSE cover the areas of: number, algebra, geometry, probability, statistics, ration and proportion.

How will I be assessed?

Mathematics is assessed through written examination papers set in two tiers. At each tier there are three papers, one of which is a non-calculator paper and the other two calculator papers.

Paper 1:	80 marks	Non-Calculator	90 mins	33.3%
Paper 2:	80 marks	Calculator	90 mins	33.3%
Paper 3:	80 marks	Calculator	90 mins	33.3%

Core Physical Education

We continue to offer a wide and varied range of activities at Key Stage 4.

Students will have the opportunity to develop their skills and improve performance. They will take part in high quality physical activities and are encouraged to choose from a range of traditional PE activities:

ATHLETICS
BADMINTON
BASKETBALL
CRICKET
FOOTBALL
FUTSAL
GYMNASTICS
HOCKEY

NETBALL
ROUNDERS
RUGBY
TABLE TENNIS
TENNIS
FITNESS TRAINING
TRAMPOLINING
VOLLEYBALL



What content is covered?

Within the programme there will be opportunity for alternative provision to develop leadership skills and experience a wider range of activities, for example:

AEROBICS/PILATES/ZUMBA
CYCLING
DANCE LEADERS AWARD
DUKE OF EDINBURGH SCHEME
FENCING
GOLF **SWIMMING**

JUDO/KARATE
JUNIOR SPORTS LEADER AWARD (JSLA)
ORIENTEERING
OUTDOOR EDUCATION
SPINNING

How will I be assessed?

There is no exam for this course.

PSHE & Citizenship

During Key Stage 4, students continue to develop their understanding of themselves and the world around them. In particular they gain greater knowledge and understanding of the topics listed below:



- develop their ability to weigh up alternative courses of action.
- encouraged to make informed decisions.
- made aware of how to seek advice and help.
- experience the world of work and enterprise.

- learn to understand and value relationships with a wide range of people.
- learn to respect the views, needs and rights of other people.

What content is covered?

Key topics covered:

Work related and enterprise learning; career education; sex and relationship education; drug education; global issues; human rights; democracy issues; emotional health and well being; study and revision skills; economic awareness and people's rights.

How will I be assessed?

There is no exam for this course.

Students are encouraged to develop their opinions and share them with their peers and with the whole class. We explore issues in the media and promote the benefits of taking an interest in current affairs and volunteering in the local community.

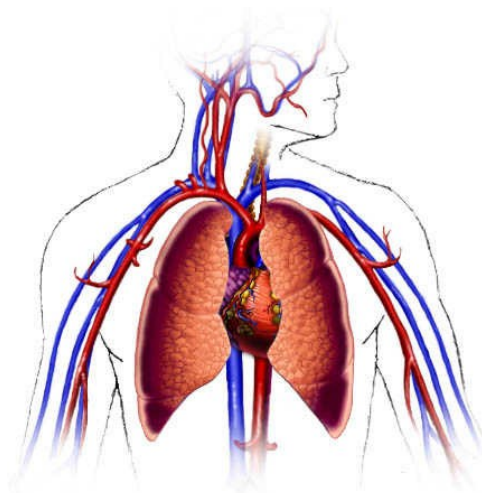
YOUNG MINDS

GCSE Combined Science: Trilogy

Why study this course?

Science is a crucial subject and plays a central role in society. Science trains you to think logically and enables you to understand technological innovations throughout your life. Science at King's is based on a practical approach through which ideas and theories are integrated.

This 2-year course covers biology, chemistry and physics. As Combined Science is a double award course, you will gain 2 GCSEs. This course will allow you to study any of the sciences at A-Level.



What content is covered?

Exam Board: AQA

Biology content covers: Cell biology; organisation; infection and response; bioenergetics; homeostasis and response; inheritance, variation and evolution; ecology.

Chemistry content covers: 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.

Physics content covers: Forces; energy; waves; electricity; magnetism and electromagnetism; particle model of matter; atomic structure.

How will I be assessed?

There are 6 exams: 2 biology, 2 chemistry and 2 physics. All exams are 1 hour 15 minutes long and available in Foundation and Higher Tier. Questions are a mixture of multiple choice, structured, closed short answer and open response questions. Each exam is 70 marks in total and 16.7% of GCSE level. All exams will be taken at the end of Year 11. There is no longer a coursework unit.

Of the many practicals you will do, there are 16 that are required practicals that you will complete in class. Knowledge of these practicals will be examined in the written exams.

Option Choices

Skills for Learning courses: (INVITATION only)

Core Skills

Life Skills

Work Challenge

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Art

Students can only select

Page 14

Textile Design

ONE of these subjects

Page 18

Business

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Computer Science

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Dance

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D&T Materials

Students can only select

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D&T Electronics & Mechanisms

ONE of these subjects

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Drama

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Food Preparation & Nutrition

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French

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Geography

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History

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IT Technical Award in Digital Applications

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Music

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Physical Education

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Religious Studies

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Separate Sciences

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Spanish

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Skills for Learning Courses

These courses is by invitation only.

Core Skills:

Core Skills is designed for students who would gain from having supplementary time and support to achieve their full potential in their GCSE studies. Specific lessons are timetabled to support their learning in Maths, English & Science. They are also given time to work on homework, with support if needed, as well as help preparing for work experience, mock interviews and post 16 applications. In addition, there are opportunities to develop oracy and presentation skills.

Life Skills:

Life Skills is designed to support preparation for independent living. Modules may include: cooking; gardening; food hygiene; home maintenance and childcare. It is a very small group with lots of time for discussion and reflection.

Work Challenge:

Work Challenge aims to equip learners with skills that are needed in the work place. Skills that are covered include: money; ICT; world of work, practical skills and various enterprise projects. Duke of Edinburgh's Bronze award is the main accreditation in Year 10 with some larger enterprise projects in Year 11.

Students will only be accepted onto these programmes by invitation. Parents and students who believe this might be a desirable option should discuss this with Ms Dighton.



GCSE Art

Why study this course?

Art at The King's School aims to widen students' understanding of the world of art and their place in it. Students are encouraged to think, to draw, to develop skills and personal ideas, to express themselves visually using a variety of materials, and to understand and use a specialist vocabulary.

Specifically students can take the opportunity to work in photography and digital medias, print making, painting, drawing, textiles, 3D sculpture and installation.

Art influences almost every aspect of our lives. Everything we purchase has at some point been designed. We all unconsciously make aesthetic judgements about our purchases and our environment.



What content is covered?

Exam Board: AQA

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

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

How will I be assessed?

Component 1 : 60% COURSEWORK - a portfolio that in total shows explicit coverage of the four assessment objectives. It must include a sustained project evidencing the journey from initial engagement to the realisation of intentions and a selection of further work undertaken during the student's course of study.

Component 2 : 40% EXTERNALLY SET ASSIGNMENT - students respond to their chosen starting point from an externally set assignment paper relating to their subject title, evidencing coverage of all four assessment objectives.

GCSE Business

Why study this course?



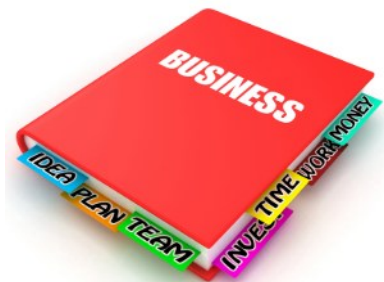
If you love watching The Apprentice and Dragon's Den then this could be the course for you.

This course is for the student who has lots of ideas and would like to know more about business — what is involved? How do you start up a business? This is your chance to find out all about the Alan Sugars and Richard Bransons and how they work.

This exciting course is designed to enable you to develop as a commercially-minded and enterprising individual.

You will learn to look at the world around you through real and relevant local and international brands. You will be thinking creatively, making decisions and communicating your ideas.

On completion of the course you can progress onto GCE Business (A-Level) which can then lead to a career in accountancy, law, marketing or the leisure industry.



What content is covered?

Exam Board: Edexcel

The course consists of 2 themes:

Theme 1 : Investigating small business

Enterprise and entrepreneurs/business ideas/risk and rewards.

Theme 2 : Building a business

How do businesses expand? Marketing/finance/people.

How will I be assessed?

Themes 1 and 2 are exam based units. Each exam will be 90 minutes long. Real life examples are used for questions. Questions are multiple choice, calculation, short-answer and extended-writing questions.

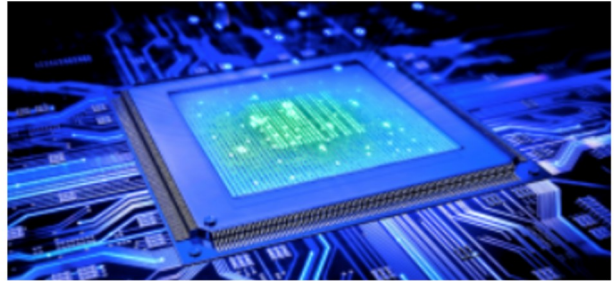
Each paper is worth 50% of the overall marks.

GCSE Computer Science

Why study this course?

This course is for students with a keen interest in finding out how computers work.

They will be investigating how computer hardware operates and studying how software is written through practical programming lessons.



Computing is a challenging subject to study and we dive quickly into the technical workings of computer technology and programming. Students should be driven, enthusiastic, have a good work ethic and good mathematical skills as this will enable them to understand the logic required for programming.

What content is covered?

Exam Board: OCR

- Fundamentals of computer systems
- Computer hardware
- Software
- Representation of data in computer systems
- Boolean logic and algorithms
- Computer communications and networking
- Ethical, legal, cultural and environmental concerns
- System security
- Programming theory/practice (Python v3 is our chosen language)

How will I be assessed?

There are two units and each has its own assessment:

- **Unit 1:** Computer Systems, written exam (50% of final mark)
- **Unit 2:** Computational thinking, written exam (50% of final mark)

GCSE Dance

Why study this course?

This course is aimed at students who have an interest in dance, who want to learn more about the subject and who are committed and hardworking. Performing and choreography play an important role in the course and there is also the opportunity to study other styles and genres of dance. The critical appreciation of dance is also central to developing students understanding of different styles and cultural influences.



What content is covered?

Exam Board: AQA

Component 1 : Performance and choreography

Performance

Set phrases through a solo performance (approximately 1 minute in duration)

Duet/trio performance (3½ minutes in duration)

Choreography

Solo or group choreography: solo (2-2 ½ minutes) or group dance for 2-5 dancers (3-3½ minutes)

Component 2 : Dance appreciation

Knowledge and understanding of choreographic processes and performing skills

Critical appreciation of own work

Critical appreciation of professional works

How will I be assessed?

Component 1 : Internally marked and externally moderated

Performance: 30% of GCSE, 40 marks (15 marks for set phrases and 25 marks for duet/trio performance)

Choreography: 30% of GCSE, 40 marks

Total component: 60%. Non-exam assessment marked by the centre, moderated by AQA

Component 2 : Dance appreciation

Written exam (1 hour 30 minutes): 40% of GCSE, 80 marks

Questions: Based on student's own practice in performance and choreography and the GCSE Dance anthology

GCSE Design & Technology

Textile Design

Why study this course?

This creative and practical course offers students an opportunity to pursue a GCSE in Textiles, centred around using themes, developing ideas, and making. This course is ideal for anyone who enjoys working with the medium of textiles, developing and studying ideas and working with practical processes and 3D forms. Students will learn about textile design, fashion design and interiors, and how they can develop their ideas to make products or artistic responses. They will respond to subject matter and explore a wide range of creative techniques such as screen printing, digital textile design, applique, machine and CAD (Computer Aided Design) embroidery, laser cutting, clothing construction and interiors. This GCSE is a fantastic course for students who enjoy working in Design & Textiles but wish to focus on the creative making process. It can lead on to further or higher study in textiles, fashion, interiors, or any future job role where creative thinking and responding is required.

What content is covered?

Exam Board: AQA

During the course you will complete in-depth projects relating to a theme, brief or subject matter. The initial stages are about gathering inspirational material and evidencing areas of interest, knowledge and skills. You might do this through photography, drawing, textile techniques and then develop these to work with more developed textiles skills. You will carry out investigations and experiments to see what materials, techniques and media suit your study, and then work on these to produce a final practical idea.



How will I be assessed?

Component 1: 60% COURSEWORK—a portfolio that evidences how you have completed the four assessment objectives. Your coursework will show that you have undertaken an in-depth project from investigatory work to development to a final idea.

Component 2: 40% EXTERNALLY SET ASSIGNMENT—students will be set an externally set subject/starting point and from this point will respond to their theme to meet the four assessment objectives as detailed by the exam board.

GCSE Design & Technology

(Core & Materials: Wood, Metal & Plastic)

Why study this course?

GCSE Design & Technology prepares you to participate confidently and successfully in an increasingly technological world. Through a mix of practical and theoretical tasks, you will learn about wider influences on design and technology and work creatively when designing and making.

This GCSE allows you to study core designing and making principles across the D&T subjects to give you a broad understanding of design processes, materials techniques and equipment. You will also have the opportunity to study working with wood, metal and plastics in greater depth.

Throughout the course, you will have the opportunity to use a variety of tools and machines to make products out of wood, metal and plastic. You will complete the course with a wider understanding of the developments in modern technology.

This GCSE is great for developing problem-solving skills and creativity. It also leads on to further/higher study in engineering and product design.



What content is covered?

Exam Board: AQA

The course is made up of 2 sections: **core** and **in-depth specialist study**.

With the **core** content, you will learn about a variety of different materials such as wood, metal, plastics, smart materials, electronics and mechanisms, basic textiles including fabrics/technical textiles, as well as paper and boards for modelling. Some of this content will be covered through practical tasks and the theory will also study the development of design and technology and how it relates to our modern world.

The **in-depth specialist study** will cover designing for and making in wood, metal and plastic, using tools, machines and CAD/CAM (computer-aided design/computer-aided manufacturing) equipment. You will learn about selecting materials for a job, forces and stresses, ecological and social footprint, sources and origins, using and working with materials, stock forms, types and sizes, scales of production, specialist techniques and processes, surface treatments and finishes.

How will I be assessed?

Students will develop a project title from a set challenge and will complete a design portfolio and practical project worth 50% of the overall GCSE. The final 2 hour written examination is also worth 50%.

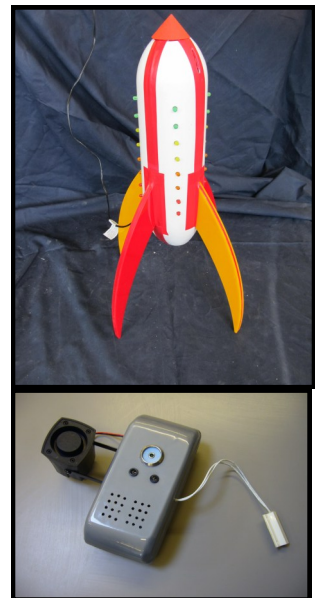
GCSE Design & Technology

(Core & Electronics and Mechanisms)

Why study this course?

This fully modernised GCSE recognises the rapid changes in technology within the last five years. It will develop and build on students' prior knowledge of technology. Students will learn to design, create and use a variety of materials, electronic and mechanical components, to create interesting and innovative products. Electronics, briefly introduced in Year 9, will be expanded further to gain an understanding of what happens within a circuit and how these are combined to create more complex circuits. Students will develop their programming abilities and use these to experiment with microcontroller circuits, creating a variety of design ideas.

Throughout the course, students will have the opportunity to experiment with practical projects, designing and making, programming, using 3d computer aided design and 3d printing, circuit simulation and modelling of mechanical systems. We look at the basic systems involved in robotics and how they are controlled, and students will develop their own Lego robot to complete a series of challenges. Students will complete the course with a wider understanding of the developments in modern technology; the course also provides a pathway to further/higher study in engineering, product design, computing and interfacing, and apprenticeships.



What content is covered?

Exam Board: AQA

The course is made up of 2 sections: **core** and **in-depth specialist study**. While the course will have a significant practical element, the theory covered will require a good level of confidence in mathematics and science.

The basic **core** area will include a study of a variety of different materials such as wood, metal, plastics, smart materials (such as electro-luminescent films, quantum tunnelling composite, etc.), basic textiles including fabrics/technical textiles as well as paper and boards for modelling. Students will also study the development of design and technology and how it relates to our modern world.

The **in-depth specialist study** will cover:

- Electronic systems - Inputs (sensors) and Outputs (sound, light and movement) are controlled by the student's own circuits.
- Programmable components - PICAXE microcontrollers and the Raspberry Pi Pico. Programs are written with the "Blockly" programming language or PICAXE BASIC. Embedded systems.
- Mechanical devices including gears, levers and linkages to control movement.
- 2d and 3d Design Software to include SolidWorks or OnShape Computer Aided Design.
- Making, Modelling, Joining and Surface Finishing techniques.

How will I be assessed?

Students will develop a project title from a set challenge and will complete a design portfolio and practical project worth 50% of the overall GCSE. The final 2 hour written examination is also worth 50%.

GCSE Drama

Why study this course?

As well as acquiring the skills involved in creating and performing drama, you will also be able to acquire skills in working with others, problem solving and communication. You will find that drama will help you feel more self-confident and prepare you to deal with a range of different situations and people.



What content is covered?

Exam Board: OCR

Students will be required to display a high level of commitment to the subject and to each other. Most practical lessons take place in a purpose-built, well equipped drama studio. We will explore voice, movement, space, script, dramatic styles and responses to live performances. We should have the opportunity to attend public performances and parental encouragement/support would be much appreciated. The content of this course is delivered through practical work and therefore a high level of social interaction and sensitivity is essential.

How will I be assessed?

The exam is divided into 3 components:

Component 1: Devising Drama - coursework worth 30%

Working in groups to produce a piece of devised drama. Students can focus on performance or technical support. A written portfolio will be produced along with the practical work.

Component 2: Performing a Text - coursework worth 30%

Working in groups to stage extracts from a selected text. Students can focus on performance or technical support. A written portfolio will be produced along with the practical work.

Component 3: Performance and Response - written exam worth 40%

Students will study a set text and answer questions on how an extract from the text could be realised in performance. Students will also answer a question that evaluates a live performance they have seen as part of their course.

GCSE Food Preparation & Nutrition

Why study this course?

The Food Preparation and Nutrition GCSE course equips learners with the knowledge, understanding and skills required to cook and understand the principles of food science, nutrition and healthy eating. It encourages learners to cook and raises awareness of food production and provenance, enabling them to make informed decisions in order to prepare meals affordably and nutritiously.

This course will prepare students well for a career in the food industry, including technological developments in commercial food manufacture, food science, nutrition, product development and catering.



Students opting for this course will be required to purchase chef whites at approximately £30. We aim to cook at least once a week and students will need to provide suitable ingredients.

What content is covered?

Exam Board: EDUQAS

- Safe and effective cooking skills. You will plan, prepare and cook a variety of dishes.
- An understanding of food commodities including how they are produced and processed, their functional properties and working characteristics in a variety of recipes.
- An understanding of the relationship between diet, nutrition and health.
- Factors affecting food choices.
- Food safety.
- Sensory analysis of food and evaluation

How will I be assessed?

Students will have 3 assessments in Year 11.

The Food Investigation Assessment (15% of GCSE Grade) - Autumn Term

Written project (1500-200 words) and 2 hour practical exam

This is a scientific food investigation which will assess the learner's knowledge, skills and understanding of the scientific principles underlying the preparation of food.

The Food Preparation Assessment (35% of GCSE Grade) - Spring Term

Written project (20-30 A4 pages) and 3 hour practical exam

You will research, prepare, cook and present 3 dishes and accompaniments to demonstrate your knowledge, skills and understanding of food preparation.

Written Exam (50% of GCSE Grade) 1 hour 45 minutes - Summer Term

This exam paper covers the theory of food commodities, principles of nutrition, diet and good health, food science, provenance, cooking and food preparation.

GCSE French

Why study this course?

GCSE French will encourage students to derive enjoyment and benefit from language learning, by recognising that their linguistic knowledge, understanding and skills help them to take their place in a multilingual global society.

The course will also prepare learners to make informed decisions about further learning opportunities and career choices.

GCSE French can lead onto an A-Level course in French (taught at the school) or an International Baccalaureate. A GCSE language may be a minimum entry requirement to certain universities and can lead to opportunities to travel and find jobs both here in the UK and within the European Union.



What content is covered?

Exam Board: AQA

- Listen and respond to different types of languages.
- Communicate in speech for a variety of purposes.
- Read and respond to different types of written languages.
- Communicate in writing for a variety of purposes.
- Understand and apply the grammar of the language.
- All these skills will be based around the broad contexts:
 - Theme 1: People and lifestyle.
 - Theme 2: Popular culture.
 - Theme 3: Communication and the world around us.

How will I be assessed?

Listening 25%, Speaking 25%, Reading 25% and Writing 25%.

GCSE French has a Foundation Tier (grades 1–5) and a Higher Tier (grades 4–9). All question papers must be taken in the same series.

Listening: 35 minutes (Foundation Tier), 45 minutes (Higher Tier).

Speaking: non-exam assessment: role-play, photo card discussion and reading aloud task and short conversation (7-12 minutes).

Reading: 45 minutes (Foundation Tier), 1 hour (Higher Tier) questions in English to be answered in English or non-verbally + translation from French into English (35-50 words).

Writing: 1 hour 10 minutes (Foundation Tier), 1 hour 15 minutes (Higher Tier) - Translation from English to French (both tiers).

GCSE Geography

Why study this course?

Geography is a lively and interesting subject containing many issues which will affect your future lives and the lives of all of the inhabitants of the planet.

It is suitable for students of all abilities and it is an excellent subject for almost any career due to its wide ranging content and transferable skills. Geography is a much sought after subject by employers because of the variety of subject content and the wide range of skills it develops. It provides the opportunity to acquire skills including report-writing, data analysis and presentation, plus many more. It also provides the opportunity to work outside the classroom on fieldwork.

We will be following the EDUQAS Geography B syllabus.



What content is covered?

Exam Board: EDUQAS

The course builds on your knowledge and skills from KS3 using a variety of lesson types to suit a variety of learning styles. The outline topic areas are as follows:

- Theme 1** Changing places, changing economies (urban and rural change, retail, leisure, globalisation, development)
- Theme 2** Changing environments (coasts, coastal management, rivers, river management, flooding, extreme weather, climate change)
- Theme 3** Environmental challenges (ecosystems operations, ecosystem threats, water supply and demand, desertification)

How will I be assessed?

The course is examined using 3 written exams. These examine your knowledge and geographical skills. Each paper has a different approach. **Paper 1** examines the three main themes in a series of written questions of varying length. **Paper 2** gives information about a real place in the world then guides you to suggest solutions to a real world problem that needs solving. **Paper 3** examines your understanding of the fieldwork that you have undertaken in Year 10 and 11.

Terminal exams

Component 1	Written exam - questions from Theme 1, 2 and 3	40%
Component 2	Written exam - problem-solving exercise	30%
Component 3	Applied fieldwork paper	30%

GCSE History

Why study this course?

This course is designed to help you achieve a broad understanding of history. It will develop and extend your knowledge and understanding of key events, periods and societies in local, British and wider world history. It will allow you to engage in historical enquiry and develop your skills as independent learners and critical and reflective thinkers.



What content is covered?

Exam Board: Edexcel

The content consists of 3 papers:

PAPER 1: Thematic study and historic environment *Crime and punishment in Britain, c1000-present and Whitechapel c1870-c1900: crime, policing and the inner city*

This unit will allow students to explore change and continuity across a long sweep of history. They include people, events and developments and reveal wider changes in aspects of society over the centuries and allow comparisons to be made between different periods of history. The historic environment is linked to the thematic study (crime and punishment) and focuses on that site (Whitechapel) in its historical context.

PAPER 2: Period study and British depth study *Superpower relations and the Cold War, 1941-91 and Henry VIII and his ministers, 1509-40*

The period study focuses on a substantial and coherent medium time span of at least 50 years and requires students to understand the unfolding narrative of substantial developments and issues associated with the period. In this paper, students will explore the ideological battle between the USA (the west) and the USSR (the east) which followed the end of the Second World War. The British depth study focuses on a short time span which will include exploring social, economic, political, religious and military aspects. The paper will explore Tudor society and government; key characters in Henry's government (such as Wolsey and Cromwell) and key events such as the break with Rome and Reformation.

PAPER 3: Modern depth study *Weimar and Nazi Germany, 1918-39*

The modern depth study focuses on a short time span which will include exploring social, economic, political, religious and military aspects. In this paper we will explore the new Germany created at the end of World War One, the problems with the Weimar Germany, the coming to power of Hitler and the Nazis and life in Nazi Germany.

How will I be assessed?

The course is 100% exam based.

Paper 1: Crime and punishment through time: 30% of the qualification.

Paper 2: Henry VIII and his ministers and Superpower relations and the Cold War: 40% of the qualification.

Paper 3: Weimar and Nazi Germany: 30% of the qualification.

IT (Edexcel) Technical Award in Digital Applications (equivalent to one GCSE)

Why study this course?

The UK has positioned itself to be the 'Digital capital of Europe' as it continues to invest billions every year in digital skills and commerce. The modern world expects digital skills to be as important as English and Maths. Having both technical skills and business understanding is the key to success.



This course makes sure students are prepared for the future with their digital skills, knowledge and understanding. After this course students can progress onto the Level 3 BTEC National in Information Technology in the sixth form (equivalent to one A-Level) or any other A-Level course available.

What content is covered? Exam Board: Pearson Edexcel

You will develop important technical skills in **data interpretation, data presentation and data protection**. You will cover aspects of **user interface** design and development, and learn how to develop a project plan for your own designs. **Cybercrime** is an increasing threat – understanding the different types of threats and how to mitigate against them is vital to any business that uses and retains sensitive data. You will develop an understanding of what **cyber security** is and the importance of legal and ethical considerations when using modern technologies. Digital projects today often involve working with diverse teams across different locations. You will develop an understanding of what a **virtual work environment** is and how **cloud technologies** allow remote teams to work together more effectively.

How will I be assessed?

Component 1: Exploring user interface design principles and project planning techniques.

Component 2: Collecting, presenting and interpreting data.

1 and 2 are completed under exam conditions and are worth 60% of the overall award.

Component 3: Effective digital working practices - externally assessed exam (one resit allowed).

GCSE Music

Why study this course?

GCSE music aims to engage passionate musicians in music-making and project-planning, providing a real focus for creativity and performance skills. The course is taught in a practical way to widen students' understanding of the world of music through interesting studies of particular genres, including an in-depth study of 2 set pieces. Students who opt for music are expected to be able to play an instrument, sing or rap. It can be an advantage if you can read musical notation before starting the course. Students who already have a background in music theory will be stretched and challenged further on this course, aiding any additional practical or theory exams they may wish to take. There is also a focus on music technology as part of this course.



What content is covered?

Exam Board: Eduqas

To enable the improvement of knowledge, skills and use of musical language, the exam board has structured the course into 4 areas of study:

- Area of study 1: Musical Forms and Devices (set work: 'Badinerie' by JS Bach)
- Area of study 2: Music for Ensemble
- Area of study 3: Film Music
- Area of study 4: Popular Music (set work: 'Africa' by Toto)

How will I be assessed?

Skills in performing, composing and listening/appraising will be assessed.

PERFORMING (30% - non-examined content): Students must perform at least one ensemble piece and one ensemble/solo piece lasting for a total of 4 minutes (minimum). This can be on **any instrument or voice** in **any genre**. This part of the course is entirely practical and students can use their rehearsal time to work on their performance skills to collaborate with each other to make bands/ensembles of any genre or work independently. Choice of repertoire is really important regarding the difficulty of the piece. Grade 3 is standard difficulty, grade 1-2 is less difficult and grade 4+ is more difficult. You do not have to have taken any grades in music, it is just a measure of the difficulty level of the piece.

COMPOSING (30% - non-examined content): Students must compose two pieces of music. One composition is in response to a set brief (choice of 4 set by the exam board) and the other is a free composition. Both compositions can involve **any instrument or voice** and the combined time is 3 minutes (minimum). Throughout the course we will experiment with composing in a wide variety of genres taking into consideration different cultures and periods in time to prepare students for this aspect of the course. This includes composing using music technology.

APPRAISING (40% - examined content): Throughout the course, students will study and experiment with dozens of pieces of music from the 4 areas of study listed above including Jazz, Blues, Pop, Rock, Reggae, Bhangra, fusions of genres, etc. and artists such as Queen, The White Stripes, Mozart, Beethoven, as well as music from musical theatre and films such as Star Wars, Pirates of the Caribbean, Jaws, etc. Knowledge of music will be tested in a listening examination lasting for 1 hour and 15 minutes. This involves a mixture of multiple choice and extended writing questions based on clips of music played in the exam.

GCSE Physical Education

Why study this course?

The course builds on the knowledge, understanding and skills established in Key Stage 3 Physical Education. It will give you exciting opportunities to be involved in a number of different sports and physical activities.



What content is covered?

Exam Board:

You will:

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

Is the subject right for me? Yes, if you enjoy:

- sport and recreation;
- developing knowledge and understanding through practical involvement;
- learning about the benefit of sport and exercise;
- improving your own performance in a range of sports roles;
- if you are considering a sports-related career.

How will I be assessed?

2 written papers: Scientific and Social - 60% exam
Practical Performance - 30% non-examinable assessment
Performance Analysis - 10% non-examinable assessment

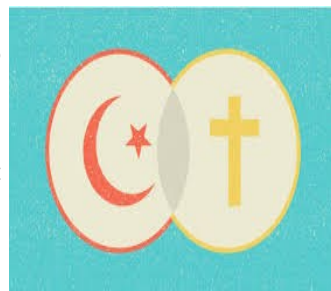
Components	Contribution	Content
Component 1 Fitness and Body Systems Written paper	30%	1 hour 15 minutes written paper (78 marks) Applied anatomy and physiology Movement analysis Physical training Use of data
Component 2 Socio-cultural influences, and well-being in physical activity and sport Written paper	30%	1 hour 15 minutes written paper (78 marks) Health, fitness and well-being Sport psychology Socio-cultural influences Use of data
Component 3 Practical performance in physical activity and sport Non-examinable assessment	40%	Internal assessment, external moderation (100 marks) (i) Performance: Skills during individual activities Skills during team activities Assessment in 3 activities - 1 must be in a team sport, 1 from an individual activity, 1 from a team or individual sport (ii) Performance analysis assessment

GCSE Religious Studies Full Course

Why study this course?

From the beginning of time, humans have been fascinated by fundamental philosophical questions, such as: What is the true meaning of life? What happens to us after death? How do we explain human suffering and injustices? These questions are still relevant to people today, regardless of whether you are religious or not.

Religious Studies is a lively and stimulating GCSE subject that provides a great opportunity for students to engage with current ethical issues and philosophical problems, developing social, cultural, political and historical awareness. It encourages philosophical thought, debate and decision making skills, enabling students to discuss and analyse topics they encounter in society and through the media - all skills that will be of great use no matter what career path you choose. Religious Studies helps students to develop an understanding of their own values and beliefs, gaining a greater sense of their own identity, whilst learning how to respect the rights and responsibilities of others.



What content is covered?

Exam Board: AQA

PAPER ONE : Christian Beliefs and Practices and Islamic Beliefs and Practices (50% of overall grade)

This paper enables a broad study of philosophy, ultimate questions, key beliefs and practices in relation to these global faiths, whilst assessing the impact they have had on history, society and the world.

PAPER TWO : Themes - Moral, and Ethical Issues (50% of overall grade)

Theme A Relationships and Families - a study of different beliefs about sexual ethics, gender and relationships in current society, including religious beliefs and non-religious views.

Theme B Religion and Life - a study of some of the most topical issues in society regarding abortion, euthanasia, the environment and animal rights, including religious and non-religious attitudes.

Theme D Religion Peace and Conflict - a study of the ethics of war and peace, including terrorism and weapons of mass destruction, holy war and Jihad, including religious and non-religious attitudes.

Theme E Religion Crime and Punishment - a study of the types of crime, religious attitudes to criminals, the prison system, corporal punishment and the death penalty, including religious and non-religious attitudes.

Higher Project

Those students who take Full Course RE as an option will also study for an additional Higher Project qualification in Year 10. A Higher Project is equivalent to half a GCSE. Students will be taught research skills and then find a topic of their choice to explore, completing a written project and giving a verbal presentation in Year 10. This is the GCSE equivalent of the Extended Project at A-Level. It is highly valued by employers and universities, demonstrating developed skills in independent research, written and communication skills.

How will I be assessed?

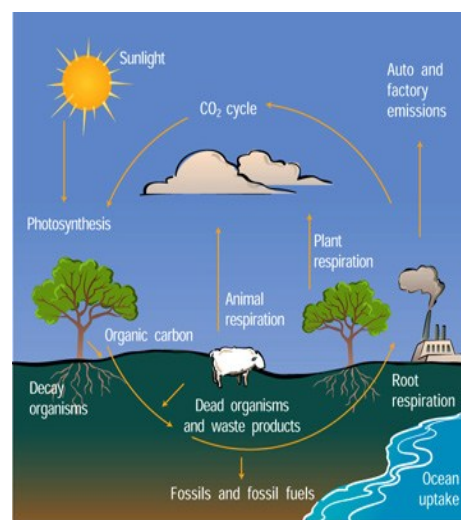
Full Course: Two 1 hour 45 minute exams at the end of Year 11.

Higher Project: Usually an extended essay and a presentation, however students can choose to write an illustrated story, or create an art installation which can be negotiated with their Higher Project supervisor. To be completed at the end of Year 10.

GCSE Biology, Chemistry & Physics (Separate Science)

Why study this course?

The sciences are a crucial subject and play a central role in society. These subjects train you to think logically and enable you to understand technological innovations throughout your life. This option is an alternative to combined science and you will achieve 3 very highly regarded GCSE qualifications and be taught by 3 specialist teachers. This course is an excellent choice for anyone who is interested in science and has a good work record already. Students should be able to work independently. We recommend this course for highly motivated students who want or need to have a good academic background in science. This course is most suitable for students working at the top of Level 5 and above by the end of KS3. You will extend your knowledge of science and develop a lifelong fascination for science. This option is an excellent preparation for A-Level science and beyond.



What content is covered?

Exam Board: AQA

GCSE Biology: Cell biology; organisation; infection and response; bioenergetics; homeostasis and response; inheritance, variation and evolution; ecology.

GCSE Chemistry: 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.

GCSE Physics: Forces; energy; waves; electricity; magnetism and electromagnetism; particle model of matter; atomic structure; space physics.

How will I be assessed?

For each subject (biology, chemistry and physics) there are 2 exams of 1 hour 45 minutes each sat at the end of Year 11. Exams are offered at Foundation and Higher Tier and are a mixture of multiple choice, structured, closed short answer and open response questions. Each exam is 100 marks and 50% of the GCSE. Of the many practicals you will do, there are 8 required practicals for each subject and knowledge of these practicals will be examined in the written exams.

GCSE Spanish

Why study this course?

GCSE Spanish will encourage students to derive enjoyment and benefit from language learning, by recognising that their linguistic knowledge, understanding and skills help them to take their place in a multilingual global society. The course will also prepare learners to make informed decisions about further learning opportunities and career choices. GCSE Spanish can lead onto an A-Level course in Spanish (taught at the school) or an International Baccalaureate. A GCSE language may be a minimum entry requirement to certain universities and can lead to opportunities to travel and find jobs both here in the UK and within the European Union.



What content is covered?

Exam Board: AQA

- Listen and respond to different types of languages.
- Communicate in speech for a variety of purposes.
- Read and respond to different types of written languages.
- Communicate in writing for a variety of purposes.
- Understand and apply the grammar of the language.
- All these skills will be based around the broad contexts:
 - Theme 1: People and lifestyle.
 - Theme 2: Popular culture.
 - Theme 3: Communication and the world around us.

How will I be assessed?

Listening 25%, Speaking 25%, Reading 25% and Writing 25%.

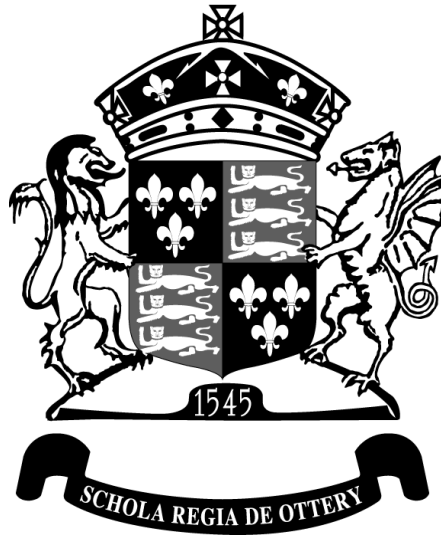
GCSE Spanish has a Foundation Tier (grades 1–5) and a Higher Tier (grades 4–9). All question papers must be taken in the same series.

Listening: 35 minutes (Foundation Tier), 45 minutes (Higher Tier).

Speaking: non-exam assessment: role-play, photo card discussion and reading aloud task and short conversation (7-12 minutes).

Reading: 45 minutes (Foundation Tier), 1 hour (Higher Tier) questions in English to be answered in English or non-verbally + translation from Spanish to English (35-50 words).

Writing: 1 hour 10 minutes (Foundation Tier), 1 hour 15 minutes (Higher Tier) - Translation from English to Spanish (both tiers).



The information contained in this document is correct at the time it was compiled. It should not be assumed that there will be no variation before the start of, or during, the particular school year, or subsequently. It is not intended to create a contractual relationship and may be varied in the light of changing circumstances.

Courses will only run if class sizes are viable

January 2026