



Hoe Valley School



Year 8 GCSE  
Preferences

Subject Brochure for  
September 2025

*Inspiring a Love of Learning*

# Contents

A letter from the Assistant Head Teacher .....	02
Something further to consider .....	03
What GCSE subjects do I need for particular courses at University? .....	04
The GCSE Grading System .....	05
Career-specific GCSE considerations .....	06
Year 9 Core Subjects .....	07
• English	
• Maths	
• Science	
Year 9 Option Subjects .....	11
• Art	
• Business	
• Computer Science	
• Drama	
• Food Preparation & Nutrition	
• Geography	
• History	
• Hospitality & Catering	
• Information Technology	
• Latin	
• Media Studies	
• Modern Foreign Languages	
• Music	
• Photography	
• Physical Education	
• Religious Studies	
• Resistant Materials - Design Technology	
• Textiles - Design Technology	
• Travel & Tourism	

# A letter from the Assistant Head Teacher



Dear student/parent,

As I am sure you are aware, you have 4 important choices to make next year, which could potentially have an impact on career options you have available to you in the future. The future is uncertain and most of you will not be able to picture yourself as a working adult in a career you enjoy - this is normal; however, choosing the right combination of subjects could set the foundations for access to further education or a career that you will excel in and enjoy. This booklet aims to give you as much relevant information concerning the subjects available to you and where these might lead. I am excited to be working with you in the coming months.

Best wishes

Mr O Woolley



# This Booklet, GCSEs and Beyond

Entry to university is based on both A levels and Level 2 Qualifications (e.g. GCSEs), so before making your final choice it is worth checking if there are any special requirements for an A levels that you might be interested in.

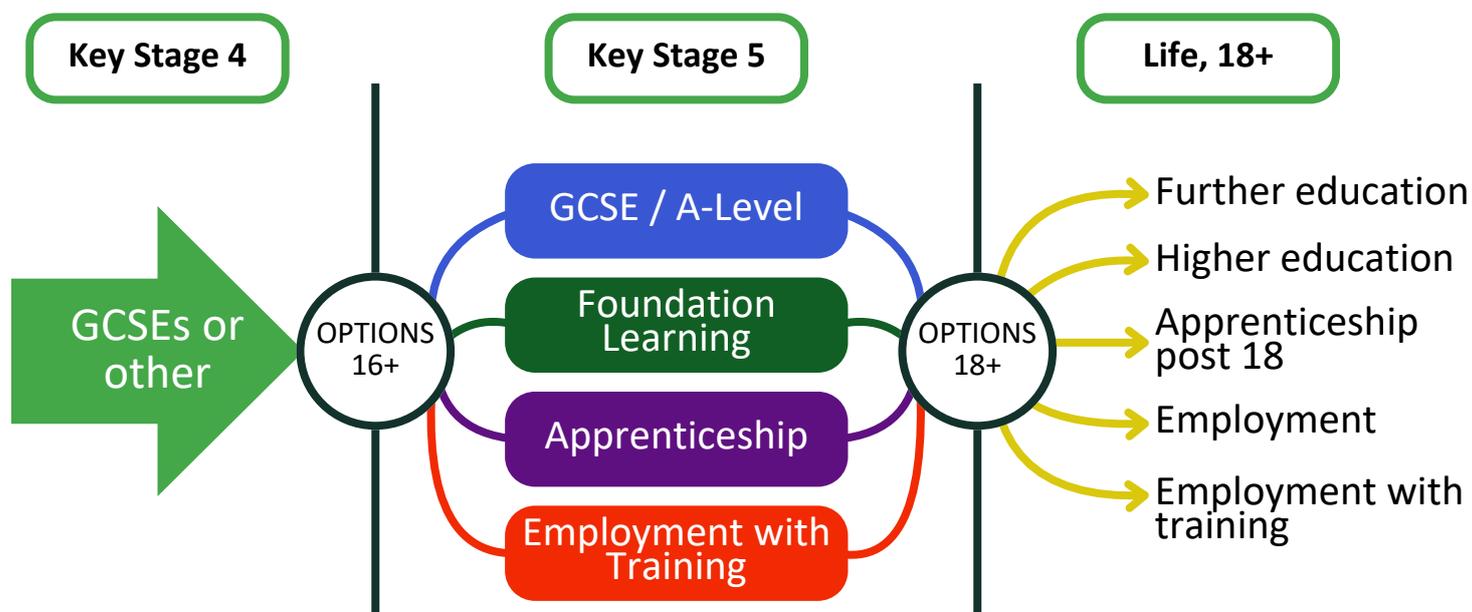
Details of all the subjects and the levels at which you will be studying them are contained in this booklet. GCSEs will be a significant educational qualification for you that can help determine your future career pathway, so it is important that you know exactly what is involved and what you have to do to be successful. So make sure you find out as much as possible before finalising any choices.

- Read this booklet - details of all the subjects and the levels at which you will be studying them are contained in this booklet.
- Talk to your subject teachers.
- Attend the **Y8 Parents' Evening on Wednesday 29th January, 2025 from 6.00pm.**
- If anything is unclear, ask your tutor.
- Keep your parent/carer informed.
- If you still have an issue with any part of the process, come and see Mr Woolley.

When you have made your final choices, complete the GCSE Options Google form, **no later than Friday 14th February 2025**. More information will be sent about how to complete this nearer the time.

Students should aim to make selections for GCSEs which will support progression to our Sixth Form and for life beyond education. Students should look ahead at what courses and qualifications they may need for each level beyond Year 11 to ensure their choices allow them to progress as they hope. The range of pathways from Year 9 to higher education or employment post-18 is illustrated below.

The sooner students begin thinking about their long-term ambitions, the easier they will find making their GCSE choices. Students unsure of their long-term plans should select a range of courses offering breadth and balance.



Entry requirements into our Sixth Form is the equivalent of 5 GCSE qualifications grade 9 - 5 including English and Maths, with certain subjects having specific criteria. More information can be found on the school website.

# What GCSE subjects do I need for particular courses at University?

If you are thinking of applying to University you will need to have a **GCSE pass in English and Maths** (at grade 4 + or higher).

The **Russell Group** universities (the top 24 in the UK) prefer you to take **facilitating subjects** - these are subjects that will help you to gain entry to the top universities and onto competitive courses.

Facilitating subjects are:

English Language	German
English Literature	French
Maths	Spanish
Chemistry	Geography
Physics	History
Biology	Computer Science

## What is the English Baccalaureate (E-Bacc)?

The E-Bacc is not a qualification in itself but the Government hopes that more pupils will be offered the chance to take a broad core of more traditional academic options. The Government have also argued that many of these subjects will carry more weight for entry into higher education. Higher Education universities do prefer facilitating subjects but the E-Bacc is not an entry requirement.

The E-Bacc is designed to encourage students to choose the six subjects within the E-Bacc which are English, Maths, Science (Biology, Chemistry, Physics or Computer Science), a language (French, Spanish or German) and a humanities subject (History or Geography). To achieve the full baccalaureate a language and humanities would need to be selected alongside the core curriculum. Students need to secure a grade 5 or above in all subjects at GCSE level across a core of five academic subjects listed above to achieve the E-Bacc. Students on Pathway One are required to select subjects that would enable them to fulfil the E-Bacc requirements.

# The GCSE Grading System

GCSEs have a grade system from 9 to 1 as highlighted below.

New Grade	Old Grade
9	A*
8	
7	A
6	B
5	C
4	D
3	E
2	F
1	G
U	U

Grade 9 is beyond an A\*  
Grade 5 is a STRONG Pass  
Grade 4 is a STANDARD Pass

There are also specific subjects that you need if you want to apply for the following courses that lead to particular types of careers:

<b>Architecture</b>	Maths and Physics (Art is also desirable)
<b>Art and Design</b>	Fine Art and/or Photography
<b>Business and Management</b>	Business or Economics or Maths
<b>Chemical Engineering</b>	Chemistry, Physics and Maths
<b>Criminology</b>	Psychology or humanities subjects like History, Law or English
<b>Design</b>	Product Design or Art or Photography
<b>Drama</b>	Drama, English Literature or Language
<b>Economics</b>	Maths or Economics
<b>Engineering</b>	Maths and Physics
<b>English</b>	English Literature or Language and two other literary subjects
<b>Forensic Science</b>	Chemistry or Biology
<b>Geography</b>	Geography
<b>History</b>	History plus two other literary or art based subjects
<b>Law</b>	A wide range of literary or art subjects e.g. History, Law, English
<b>Maths</b>	Maths, Further Maths and/or Physics
<b>Medicine</b>	Chemistry, Biology and Maths or Physics
<b>Modern Languages</b>	French or Spanish or another Language
<b>Pharmacology/Physiology</b>	Chemistry and Biology
<b>Theology</b>	Philosophy and Ethics or other literary subjects
<b>Politics</b>	Politics, History and possibly a Language
<b>Psychology</b>	Psychology and other art or literary based subjects
<b>Sociology</b>	A range of art and science subjects
<b>Veterinary Science</b>	Chemistry, Biology, Maths or Physics

# Year 9

## Core Subjects

All students will study GCSE courses in the following core subjects:

- English
- Maths
- Science

All students will also follow a non examination course in core P.E and will study PSHE throughout the formal curriculum.

Useful links:



# English

English  
G.C.S.E

All students will be entered for two GCSEs in English: GCSE English Language and GCSE English Literature with AQA.

## GCSE English Language

Students will draw upon a range of texts as well as real and relevant contexts. Students will have opportunities to develop higher-order reading and critical thinking skills that encourage genuine enquiry into different topics and themes. This specification will ensure that students can read fluently and write effectively. Students will be able to demonstrate a confident control of Standard English and write grammatically correct sentences, deploying figurative language and analysing texts.

Assessment by Terminal Examination:

Paper 1: Explorations in Creative Reading and Writing  
*1 hour 45 minutes*

Paper 2: Writers' Viewpoints and Perspectives  
*1 hour 45 minutes*

## GCSE English Literature

Students will develop skills of literal and inferential comprehension, critical reading, evaluation of a writer's choice of vocabulary, grammatical and structural features and text comparison. In their written responses, students will produce clear and coherent texts and write effectively about literature for a range of purposes. They will use Standard English, including accurate spelling, punctuation and grammar.

Assessment by Terminal Examination:

Paper 1: Shakespeare and the 19th Century Novel  
*1 hour 45 minutes*

Paper 2: Modern Texts and Poetry  
*2 hour 15 minutes*



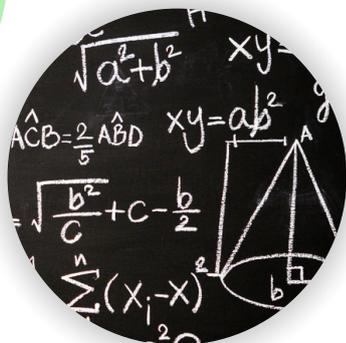
Maths  
G.C.S.E

# Maths

The course will cover topics from Number, Algebra, Geometry and Measures, Statistics, Probability, Ratio, Proportion & Rates of Change as laid down in the National Curriculum, and will be appropriate for the grades of each tier. There is **no coursework** for GCSE Mathematics.

The exam board is Edexcel.

The GCSE for Mathematics begins in Year 9 to allow time to stretch and challenge students of all abilities.



This table outlines the percentages of topics covered:

Topic	Approx. Weighting - Foundation Tier	Approx. Weighting - Higher Tier
Number	25%	15%
Algebra	20%	30%
Ratio, Proportion and Rates of Change	25%	20%
Geometry and Measures	15%	20%
Statistics and Probability	15%	15%

	<b>Paper 1</b> Non-calculator <i>1 hour 30 minutes</i> 80 marks (33.3% weighting)	<b>Paper 2</b> Calculator <i>1 hour 30 minutes</i> 80 marks (33.3% weighting)	<b>Paper 3</b> Calculator <i>1 hour 30 minutes</i> 80 marks (33.3% weighting)
<b>Foundation</b> (Grades 1 - 5)			
<b>Higher</b> (Grades 4 - 9)			

# Science

Science  
G.C.S.E

## What is involved in taking GCSE Science?

All students will study the triple science pathway. This will result in students achieving 3 GCSEs; one in Biology, one in Chemistry, and one in Physics.



## How is the course structured and what exam board do we use?

The board we use is AQA and the examination part of each GCSE accounts for 100% of the total marks.

## What skills do I need to be successful in the subject?

- Numeracy and ability to deal with statistics
- Good control of language and spelling
- Good command of scientific and technical vocabulary
- A precise and informative writing style
- Familiarity with SI units and use of scientific symbols
- Ability to interpret and produce charts and graphs

## How will this help me prepare for my future?

Science is a method, process, procedure, and system used to study the physical world. If you can see, feel, hear, taste, smell or measure something, Science will investigate. Scientists ask questions about how the world works then gather data to answer the question. Studying Science develops young minds to make informed decisions in the real world. Studying Science at further education opens a number of doors into modern careers in industry, education, medicine, research, military... the list is endless.

# Year 9

## Option Subjects

Students have been allocated one of three pathways based on their prior attainment.

### Pathway One

Pathway One students are required to study subjects that will enable them to achieve the E-Bacc. Students on Pathway One must select:

- One language (German, French, Spanish, Latin)
- One humanity (Geography, History)
- Two 'free choice' subjects from the remaining available

### Pathway Two

Pathway Two students are required to select at least one of the following subjects and may choose any remaining subjects for the other three:

- Computer Science
- German, French, Spanish, Latin
- Geography, History

### Pathway Three

Pathway Three students need to select at least two subjects that are assessed through coursework, and may choose any other two subjects. Coursework subjects are:

- Art
- Hospitality & Catering
- Music
- Resistant Materials - DT
- Media
- Travel & Tourism
- Drama
- PE
- Food Preparation & Nutrition
- IT Cambridge National
- Textiles - DT
- Photography

Students cannot take Resistant Materials (DT) *and* Textiles (DT).  
Students cannot take Hospitality & Catering *and* Food Preparation & Nutrition.

Useful links:



# Art

Art  
G.C.S.E

Coursework

## What is GCSE Art about?

The GCSE Art course allows you to work in a variety of areas such as drawing, painting, printing, collage, computer graphics, ceramics, sculpture and photography. We have a very well equipped department. You will observe the work of other artists, study the reasoning behind their work and gain ideas to inspire your own work. There are also opportunities to visit galleries and exhibitions.



## How is GCSE Art structured?

Throughout the course you will complete a Portfolio Unit. The portfolio should be selected from work undertaken during the course of study. It is recommended that the total portfolio submission will comprise of approximately 45 hours of work. Coursework starts in Year 9 from day one and prep work is very important. Students need to be able to build up sketchbooks and so will need basic art equipment of their own at home. The coursework makes up 60% of the GCSE grade. The exam or externally set assignment is a practical test similar to a coursework project with allocated time for students to prepare after the paper has been given to them. The exam is 10 hours over two days and students are expected to produce a final piece in response to the brief set on the exam paper. The exam is worth 40% of the overall grade.

## What skills do I need to be successful?

Throughout the course, students will develop their visual literacy skills with an understanding of form, shape, space and colour with particular emphasis on art, craft and design.

## How does GCSE Art help me prepare for my future?

In today's culture we are surrounded by art, from architecture to sculpture, from fashion to photography, from painting to advertising. The artist is a valuable person in our modern world. Art and Design is a large employment area in the UK and is growing due to the increase in demand of digital arts. Art enhances fine motor skills, hand-eye coordination, problem solving skills, lateral thinking, complex analysis and critical thinking skills. No matter what career you choose, those who can arrange, present and display material in a what that is aesthetically pleasing have an advantage.

## Exam Board

The exam board that we use is AQA.

Business  
G.C.S.E

# Business

## Why choose Business?

Business GCSE will help you develop your Communication skills, teamwork skills, I.T knowledge, personal confidence and research skills.



## What is involved in taking Business GCSE?

Business GCSE is exam based - there is no coursework element. The course is taught through

case studies, guest speakers, role plays, group work, and classroom based discussion. You will be considering questions such as why do large companies sell shares on the stock exchange? What makes one company buy a competitor? What was the most successful UK marketing campaign of all time and why? Why does the government make loans to small businesses?

## How is the course structured and what exam board do we use?

The exam board that we use is AQA.

<p><b>Paper 1</b> Influences of operations and HRM on business activity <i>1 hour 45 minutes</i></p>	<p><b>Paper 2</b> Influences of marketing and finance on business activity <i>1 hour 45 minutes</i></p>
<p>Business in the real world Influences on business Business operations Human resources</p>	<p>Business in the real world Influences on business Marketing Finance</p>

## What skills do I need to be successful in the subject?

Skills required include the ability to learn and apply business terms to case studies, good organisation ability, the ability to create structured, logical and extended responses, an enjoyment of Maths, problem solving skills and an interest in watching business programmes on TV.

## How will this help me prepare for my future?

This course will help you for studying A level Business. Following A levels you can take a degree in Business, Management, Economics, Law or Accountancy or any other social science course.

# Computer Science

Computer  
Science  
G.C.S.E

## Why choose Computer Science?

The most important aspect of Computer Science is problem solving; an essential skill for life. As we live in a digital age, it is also becoming an essential subject for most of the industries around today.

Computer Science impacts everything, from scientific research to health development, transport, banking, communications to name a few. Students who study Computer Science get far better access to enhanced training and job opportunities from employers in the future.



## What skills do I need to be successful?

The skills needed are that you are competent using the computer, that you have an interest in programming and like to look at how software and systems work.

## How will this help me prepare for my future?

Computer Science is a great way to develop critical thinking, analysis and problem-solving skills, which can be transferred to further learning and to everyday life. Students will develop 'underpinning' concepts which are useful in many subjects, for example mathematics, science and engineering. The rigorous approach of the subject will facilitate a smooth transition to the next level of study.

## Exam Board

The exam board for the Computer Science GCSE is OCR.

	Content	Duration	Weighting
Component 01	The first component is an exam focused on computer systems covering the physical elements of computer science and the associated theory.	1 hour 30 minutes	50% of total GCSE
Component 02	This component is focused on computational thinking, algorithms and programming	1 hour 30 minutes	50% of total GCSE

Drama  
G.C.S.E

# Drama

This is an exciting course that will offer you the chance to explore the art of drama, theatre and acting, while developing crucial personal, social and life skills you will need in the future. You will explore theatre and stagecraft in a practical way from the point of view of a performer, director, designer and an audience member. Students have the opportunity to devise their own work, as well as studying numerous plays through practical workshops, bringing 'page to stage'.

Coursework



## How is the course structured and what exam board do we use?

We follow the AQA GCSE course.

<p><b>Component 1 - Written exam</b> <b>40% of GCSE</b> 1 hour 45 minutes</p>	<p>Three sections - 80 marks total. 4 multiple choice questions 4 questions on the play "Blood Brothers". 1 question on live theatre seen</p>	<p>Exam sat in the Summer Term of Year 11. Marked by exam board.</p>
<p><b>Component 2 - Devising drama (practical) with written portfolio</b> <b>40% of GCSE</b> Performance with 2500 essay or design portfolio</p>	<p>Students are given a variety of stimuli to devise from. They will create a performance or design specialisation (10%) and document the journey with a 2000-2500 word portfolio (30%) or design portfolio</p>	<p>Can be completed in Year 10. Teacher assessed and moderated by exam board.</p>
<p><b>Component 3 - Texts in practice (practical)</b> <b>20% of GCSE</b> Practical exam performed to examiner</p>	<p>Performance of two extracts from one play. Can be performed as a monologue, duologue or group. Students have the alternative option of choosing a design specialism e.g. costume, set, lighting or sound</p>	<p>External examiner visits to mark the students in Year 11.</p>

## What skills do I need to be successful in the subject?

To succeed on this course, you need to be an excellent team-player and have superb creative, listening and problem-solving skills. You must enjoy performing, have self-discipline, motivation and strong organisation skills. Drama is a fantastic subject if you want to undertake a course that is both practical and theoretical. The written work is merely an extensive of what we study practically in class, but please understand the written work is crucial for success and has to have your full commitment in order to pass. Rehearsal of practical work is completed in lessons and after school, so time management and a willingness to rehearse in your own time is essential.

## How will this help me prepare for my future?

GCSE Drama is popular with all employers and colleges, as it shows that you have developed your personal, social and life skills. Self-expression, confidence, creativity, initiative and communication are all developed in Drama. This subject is a good choice if you are considering any career path where teamwork, creativity or communication are at the heart of the job, such as; the police, teaching, armed forces, design, retail and of course any aspects of performing arts or design. Drama is all about helping you develop transferable skills which you can take into ANY career.

# Food Preparation & Nutrition

Food Preparation & Nutrition  
G.C.S.E

Coursework



## What is Food Preparation & Nutrition about?

Food Preparation & Nutrition is a subject that involves lots of practical work - cooking and experiments. The cooking skills are varied and are a great preparation for cooking complex dishes independently. Nutrition provides the main focus of the theory work. Each nutrient is studied in depth. There is a clear link to food science.

## What skills do I need to be successful in the subject?

- Good time management and organisation
- A keen interest in food and cookery
- An interest in nutrition and a solid understanding of science

## How is Food Preparation & Nutrition structured?

You will be assessed on your theory knowledge in an exam at the end of Year 11. This exam accounts for 50% of the GCSE grade.

You will also complete two pieces of Non Examination Assessment (NEA) which together account for 50% of the GCSE.

- NEA 1 is based on Food Science
- NEA 2 is based on real life scenario and involves a practical exam

## How will this help me prepare for my future?

Food Preparation & Nutrition is a great course for students who are interested in studying A Levels and might like a career in the medical professions, sports nutrition or working in the social care sector.

Geography  
G.C.S.E

# Geography

## What is involved in taking GCSE Geography?

The GCSE covers a wide range of physical, human and environmental geography topics as well as giving students numerous geography skills that transfer well to many other GCSE subjects.

## How is the course structured and what exam board do we use?

The exam board and specification is Edexcel Geography Specification A

<p><b>Paper 1 - The Physical Environment</b> 37.5% of total GCSE 1 hour 30 minutes</p>	<p><b>Paper 2 - The Human Environment</b> 37.5% of total GCSE 1 hour 30 minutes</p>
<p><b>Paper 1 is divided into three sections (A, B and C).</b> Section A: The Changing Landscape of the UK Section B: Weather Hazards and Climate Change Section C: Ecosystems and management</p>	<p><b>Paper 2 is divided into three sections (A, B and C).</b> Section A: Changing Cities Section B: Global Development Section C: Resource Management</p>
<p><b>Paper 3 - Geographical Investigations: Fieldwork and UK Challenges</b> 25% of total GCSE 1 hour</p>	<h2>What skills do I need to be successful in the subject?</h2> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An interest in the world around you, how we influence the environment and how it affects us.</li> <li>• Strong written communication skills.</li> <li>• Ability to analyse and interpret different sources of information e.g. maps, graphs, photographs and written sources.</li> <li>• Capable of looking at issues from different perspectives.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Paper 3 is divided into three sections (A, B and C).</b> <b>Section A: Geographical Investigations - Physical Environments</b> Coastal Landscapes - fieldtrip to West Wittering <b>Section B: Geographical Investigations - Human Environments</b> Central/Inner Urban Areas - fieldtrip to East London <b>Section C: UK Challenges</b></p>	

## How will this help me prepare for my future?

- Geography will develop many geographical and transferable skills e.g. data and statistics, map reading, analysing and interpreting information, decision making, ICT skills, critical analysis, fieldwork skills and many more.
- A highly regarded subject by education providers and employers.
- A clear understanding of the world you live in, the current issues we face, and how to be a responsible global citizen.

# History

History  
G.C.S.E

## What is involved in taking GCSE History?

Students have already started their journey towards GCSE History by developing the skills needed to be successful through KS3.

## How is the course structured and what exam board do we use?

Exam Board and Specification: Edexcel GCSE History 9-1 (2016)

### **Paper 1 - British Thematic Study and Historic Environment**

- Medicine in Britain c1250 - present
- The British Sector on the Western Front 1941 - 1991

### **Paper 2 - Period Study and British Depth Study**

- Early Elizabethan England 1558 - 1588
- Superpower Relations and the Cold War 1941 - 1991

### **Paper 3 - Modern Depth Study**

- Weimar and Nazi Germany 1918 - 1939

## What skills do I need to be successful in the subject?

In History you will need to interpret, analyse and use thinking skills. You will need to show the use of independent thought, evaluation skills and the ability to use pictorial and written sourced material.

## How will this help me prepare for my future?

History gives you a broad range of knowledge and understanding, including a sense of development over time, and an appreciation of the culture and attitudes of societies other than our own.

The top 20 universities list History as the most important subject students can study due to transferable skills students gain while completing the GCSE. Good Historians can answer questions on how the world has worked in the past and make informed decisions about how it will work in the future. History develops young minds to make reasoned decisions in the real world. Studying History at further education opens a number of doors into modern careers in law, education, research, politics and even finance.



Hospitality  
& Catering  
Level 2

Coursework



# Hospitality & Catering

*Technical Level 2  
Award*

## What is Hospitality & Catering about?

You will be doing lots of practical work to learn new skills with weekly practical lessons. Therefore, it is essential that you are prepared to bring ingredients at least once a week.

As well as practical work you will undertake theory work to understand the hospitality and catering industries, as well as gaining an excellent understanding of nutrition.

## What skills do I need to be successful in the subject?

- Good time management and organisation
- Willingness to work as part of a team
- A keen interest in food, cooking and nutrition

## How is Hospitality & Catering structured?

You will study 4 theoretical units on the Hospitality & Catering industry, Health and Safety and Food Safety & Hygiene. You will be assessed on this knowledge in regular progress tests and a written exam in Year 11. Alongside this you will study nutrition and a range of challenging food preparation and cooking techniques, which you will be assessed on in a piece of non-examined assessment including a practical assessment.

## How will this course help me prepare for my future?

This course would be particularly good for anyone who may be interested in working in the hospitality and catering industry in the future. The course will also teach you valuable life skills.

## Exam Board

The Exam Board that we follow is Eduqas/WJEC.

# Information Technologies

Information  
Technology  
Level 2  
Award

Coursework

## Why choose Information Technologies?

Cambridge National IT will develop knowledge, understanding and practical skills that would be used in the IT sector. You may be interested in this if you want an engaging qualification where you will use your learning in practical, real-life situations. The qualification will also help you to develop learning and skills that can be used in other life and work situations.



## How will I be assessed?

OCR Cambridge Nationals is the exam board.

## What skills will I develop during the course?

- Using different applications and tools to design, create and evaluate IT solutions and products
- Creating data manipulation spreadsheets
- Creating an Augmented Reality prototype
- Planning and designing IT solutions and products for a given purpose
- Selecting the best tools and techniques to solve a problem
- Solving problems by exploring different software application tools and techniques
- Creating IT solutions and digital products
- Use of planning techniques to complete tasks in an organised and timely way
- Finding imaginative ways to solve IT problems

Unit Title	Contents of the Unit	Weighting
IT in the digital world	In this unit you will learn about design and testing concepts for creating an IT solution or product, and the uses of IT in the digital world	Exam is 40% of certificate
Data manipulation using spreadsheets	In this unit you will learn how to plan, design, create, test and evaluate a data manipulation spreadsheet solution to meet client's requirements	Internal Assessment is 30% of certificate
Using Augmented Reality to present information	In this unit you will learn how to design, create, test and review an Augmented Reality model prototype to meet a client's requirements	Internal Assessment is 30% of certificate

## Is this the right subject for me?

If you like project work and using practical skills you may find a Cambridge National a better option than a GCSE. If you also like learning new skills in different packages which will be used in life and work situations, the Cambridge National IT could be for you.

Latin  
G.C.S.E

# Latin

Latin is highly regarded for its breadth and the valuable skills it develops. Studying Latin enhances your understanding of the connections between European languages, enriches your English, and improves your writing skills across all subjects. Additionally, the literary and historical content is genuinely enjoyable!



## What is involved at GCSE?

At GCSE, we start by developing your writing and comprehension skills. You will learn Latin through reading and translating short passages and exercises

using our innovative digital textbook, Suburani, which follows the lives of a diverse group of characters in Rome during Emperor Nero's reign. In Year 10, you will begin studying two set texts by ancient authors, analysing and evaluating them to build your essay writing and critical thinking skills — especially valuable if you're also taking Humanities or Arts subjects.

## How is the course structured, and which exam board do we use?

The OCR GCSE course is divided into two equally weighted components:

- **Language:** Focused on translating unseen passages and comprehension exercises into English, with limited translation from English to Latin. The passages are engaging stories from mythology or history.
- **Literature:** Involves reading two set texts—one prose, one poetry—in Latin and answering analytical questions in English.

## What skills do I need to be successful in this subject?

To excel in Latin, you need strong literacy skills and an interest in ancient stories and cultures. Latin is rigorous and requires attention to detail, but with dedication and focus — especially in learning vocabulary consistently — you will be well-supported to succeed. Be prepared to have a go, stay brave, and build a disciplined approach to mastering the basics!

## How will Latin prepare me for my future?

Like Modern Foreign Languages, Latin is a highly regarded facilitating subject among colleges and universities. The skills you gain, including close reading, critical thinking, and analysis, are transferable to many other fields. Additionally, it provides insight into the early civilizations of ancient Europe, which influenced literature, art, architecture, politics, and philosophy throughout history. This broad-based knowledge serves as an excellent foundation for numerous careers and studies.

## Additional Recommendation

Strong linguists are encouraged to consider Latin alongside another language. If you would like to study Latin without a Modern Foreign Language, please discuss this with Mrs. Boniface, who will be more than happy to assist.

# Media Studies

Media  
Studies  
G.C.S.E

Coursework

## What is involved in taking Media studies GCSE?

Media studies looks at:

- How the media works
- How the media is created, and by whom
- The reasons the media tells you some things and not others
- Why the media shapes your decisions on everything that affects you



## How is the course structured and what exam board do we use?

We use the Eduqas exam board. There are two 90-minute exams at the end of Year 11. This is 70% of the final mark. This is on a wide variety of media products that will have been researched throughout the GCSE course. There is also a Non Exam Assessment (Coursework) that makes up 30% of the final mark. Each year the exam board release a fresh set of briefs for the cohort. The briefs have in the past covered making your own media such as a television sequence, some radio products, a website, a music video, sections of a newspaper, sections of a magazine, or an advertising campaign. You will be offered guidance on which brief to choose from the ones released for your year to use your strengths effectively. In each assignment there is some written work (a short statement) and quite a lot of practical work.

## What skills do I need to be successful in the subject?

An interest in the media and the world around you is essential. You do need to be creative, as you will be developing ideas for a huge variety of media products. A good level of English is also required, as the exams will feature some longer essay questions for which your skill at developing a well-supported argument will be assessed, as well as your knowledge of the world of media. Students who are curious about the world, self-motivated and hard-working will find the course very enjoyable.

## How will this help me prepare for my future?

As well as giving you a better understanding of how all current forms of media work, it will give you the skills to research a topic, organise your ideas, and run a successful practical project. It will not teach you how to be a TV presenter (but it might teach you how to deal with the press if you become famous). It will definitely give you the knowledge to use the media to your advantage in almost any job you can think of. Media would suit students interested in Journalism, TV and Film and Advertising, and it goes well with subjects like History, Art and Photography.

Modern  
Foreign  
Languages  
G.C.S.E

# Modern Foreign Languages



Sprechen Sie Deutsch?  
Parlez-vous français?  
¿Habla español?

Being able to speak another language confidently and competently is a lifelong skill. It will open doors for you in your career and personal life.

## Modern Foreign Language Facts

- Employers rank foreign language skills highly, second only to computer literacy.
- 72% of UK businesses need workers who can speak different languages.
- The top three languages valued by UK employers are German, French, and Spanish.
- Post-Brexit, the UK continues to trade with countries both within and outside Europe.

## What is involved at GCSE?

At GCSE, we focus on Listening, Reading, Speaking, and Writing. Using a variety of resources and materials, each lesson is designed to develop specific exam skills. You will build strong speaking and communication skills and be able to hold confident conversations on a range of topics. Strong linguists should consider taking two languages.

## How is the course structured, and which exam board do we use?

At GCSE with Edexcel, the GCSE Languages qualification is focused on fostering communication, broadening perspectives, introducing new cultures and developing students into global citizens.

We cover the following contexts:

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

## What skills do I need to be successful in this subject?

To succeed in a Modern Foreign Language, you should have good literacy skills and a strong work ethic. Attention to detail and a willingness to always try are essential. Additionally, you should be interested in learning about other countries and cultures. Students who study a Modern Foreign Language (or two) at GCSE develop resilience, independence, confidence, and problem-solving skills.

## How will GCSE French/German/Spanish help me prepare for my future?

Modern Foreign Languages are considered facilitating subjects by many colleges and universities. For some, a GCSE in a foreign language is even an entry requirement for any course.

## Future Career Prospects

The world is your oyster. A GCSE in a language can enhance your future job prospects, even if the job isn't specifically related to languages. On average, people with a language qualification earn significantly more per year than those without. Languages are valuable in a wide range of careers.

# Music



## What is involved in taking GCSE Music?

This is an exciting course that will offer you the chance to explore the art of musical performance, composition and a range of musical styles while developing crucial personal, social and life skills you will need in the future. You will explore musical performance in a practical way through solo and ensemble work. You will have the opportunity to create your own music in a variety of styles.

## How is the course structured and what exam board do we use?

We follow the Eduqas course.

<p><b>Unit 1 - Performance</b> <b>30% of GCSE</b> <i>A minimum of 2 pieces lasting a total of 4 - 6 minutes, recorded in the year of assessment</i></p> <p>Teacher assessed</p> <p>All performances are completed in Year 11</p>	<p>Practical Coursework (15%)</p> <p>Once piece must be an ensemble (group piece) lasting at least one minute. One piece linked to an Area of Study.</p> <p>Grade 3 music is the standard level and can score full marks if played perfectly. You can use any instrument or voice, or choose a technology option</p>	<p>Practical Coursework (15%)</p> <p>The second performance can be a solo or an ensemble.</p> <p>Grade 3 music is the standard level and can score full marks if played perfectly. You can use any instrument or voice, or choose a technology option.</p>
<p><b>Unit 2 - Composition</b> <b>30% of GCSE</b> <i>2 completed composition pieces lasting a total of 3 - 6 minutes</i></p> <p>Teacher assessed. Composition 1 can be started in Year 10. Composition 2 completed in Year 11.</p>	<p>Practical Coursework (15%)</p> <p>One composition in response to a brief set by Edquas - there are 4 to choose from each year.</p>	<p>Practical Coursework (15%)</p> <p>A second composition in any style you wish.</p>
<p><b>Unit 3 - Listening &amp; Appraising</b> <b>40% of GCSE</b></p> <p>Examiner Assessed</p> <p>Exam sat in Summer Term of Year 11</p>	<p>Written Examination Listening Examination</p> <p>8 questions, 2 on each area of study:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Musical Forms and Devices (including a set work)</li> <li>• Music for Ensemble</li> <li>• Film Music</li> <li>• Popular Music (including a set work)</li> </ul>	<p>GCSE Music requires students to use listening, performance and composing skills. You will be expected to listen and experience music from all over the world and throughout history to more recent music. Students who are enthusiastic, have good listening and performance skills would be well suited to this course.</p>

## How will this help me prepare for my future?

GCSE Music is popular with employers and colleges because it helps you develop the important personal, social and life skills they are looking for. Self-expression, confidence and courage, self-discipline, initiative, communication and group work skills are all developed in Music as well as an ability to respond to, develop and present ideas in a creative way. This subject is a good choice if you are considering any career path where teamwork, creativity or communication are key aspects, such as the police, teaching, armed forces, design, retail, travel and tourism etc and of course any performing arts. Music is all about helping you develop transferable skills which you can take into most careers.

Photography  
G.C.S.E

Coursework



# Photography

## What is GCSE Photography about?

Photography is about looking, learning, thinking and communicating ideas. It inspired creative thinkers. Photography means 'drawing with light' and this is what many photographers do when they take a picture. Many photographers have explored various techniques to create images that make a personal statement about things that have interested or concerned them. The most exciting aspect of photography is that you are capturing the world as you see it. The Exam Board we use is AQA.

## How is GCSE Photography structured?

In Year 9 you will complete a number of workshops on how to use a Digital SLR camera in manual mode, how to use digital manipulation software such as Photoshop and how to arrange and take good photographs. In Year 10 you will develop work for a personal investigation into a theme supported by written material. This will count for 60% of your total GCSE marks. In component 2 you will produce personal work in response to one of eight exciting starting points which will count for 40% of your total GCSE marks.

## What skills do I need to be successful in the subject?

GCSE Photography is a practical course in which you learn by doing, so you will be able to create imaginative personal work. You will find out about a whole range of techniques and processes. You will develop your creativity and independent thought, learn to express yourself visually and let your imagination flourish. An ability to self-manage, be well organised and take creative risks will help lots.

## How will this help me prepare for my future?

Photography is a great companion to all other subjects as creativity, imagination and problem solving skills can give you great ideas for your other subjects. GCSE Photography career development suggests; Animation, Commercial Photography, Creative & Editorial Photography, Digital Media, Fashion Photography, Film & Television, Film & Visual Culture, Forensic Photography, Graphics with Photography, Medical Photography, Visual Communication.

# Physical Education

Physical Education  
G.C.S.E

Coursework

## What is involved in taking GCSE P.E.?

Over the three years you will be assessed in a number of individual activities/sports such as table tennis, badminton and athletics and team sports such as netball, handball and football. You will be assessed a number of sports, however only your best three activities/sports will count towards your final assessment. You must also belong to a club inside and most importantly outside of school. You will be required to collate video evidence regularly of your performance in your competitive fixtures for your clubs outside of school. From Year 9-11 you will get 6 GCSE lessons every 2 weeks. This will be made up of 2 practical lessons and 4 classroom based lessons. You will also have to complete an independent piece of coursework in which you will need to analyse your own sporting performance identifying related to competition in or outside school. You will be assessed on your ability to identify your own strengths and weaknesses, suggesting ways that you could improve.



## How is the course structured and what exam board do we use?

The practical element of the course accounts for 30% of the overall mark.  
The theory element of the course accounts for 70% of the overall mark.  
The exam board is AQA.

## What skills do I need to be successful in the subject?

You must have both a strong practical ability and theoretical knowledge. You should be achieving at least 70% in your Yr7 and 8 assessments. Falling short of this level will make it incredibly difficult to achieve a grade 4 at the end of the course. You should have at least one specialism which you must play to a high standard outside of school, for a recognised club - you will need this in order to gain a good practical mark and to complete the coursework requirements. A willingness to learn new sports and spend extra time outside of school to develop upon your skills. You will be required to join a school club and take part in team fixtures - you must also be attending a club outside of school which is part of a recognised competition. As this is a science-based subject, the theory side of the course requires the same academic skills as Science GCSE.

## How will this help me prepare for my future?

A good grade at GCSE will allow you to study Physical Education further at either A Level or BTEC Level 3. Although not essential, studying Physical Education has links to many areas of employment, such as: Sports Science, Sports Coaching, Occupational Therapy and Physiotherapy, Chiropractor, Sports Journalism, Personal Trainer/Instructor, Sports Marketing, Lifeguarding, Youth Work, Sports Nutrition, Sports Psychology, Teaching and the medical profession.

Religious  
Studies  
G.C.S.E

# Religious Studies

## What is involved in taking R.S GCSE?

Students have already started their journey towards GCSE Religious Studies by developing the skills needed to be successful through KS3.



## How is the course structured and what exam board do we use?

Exam Board and Specification: AQA GCSE Religious Studies 9-1 (2016)

### **Paper 1 - The study of religions: beliefs, teachings and practices**

Beliefs, teachings and practices of:

- Christianity
- Islam

Written exam, 96 marks - 50% of GCSE

*1 hour 45 minutes*

### **Paper 2 - Thematic Studies**

Four religious, philosophical and ethical studies themes from:

- Relationships and families
- Religion and life
- The existence of God and revelation
- Religion, peace and conflict
- Religion, crime and punishment
- Religion, human rights and social justice

Written exam, 96 marks - 50% of GCSE

*1 hour 45 minutes*

## What skills do I need to be successful in the subject?

- Communication: written and oral
- Good analytical skills
- Independent thought, a questioning mind and evaluation skills

## How will this help me prepare for my future?

It will provide students with the opportunity to:

- Develop their knowledge, skills and understanding of religion by exploring the significance and impact of beliefs, teachings, sources, practises, ways of life and forms of expressing meaning
- Express their personal responses and informed insights on fundamental questions and issues about identity, belonging, meaning, purpose, truth, values and commitments.

# Resistant Materials

## *Design Technology*

### What is GCSE Design and Technology about?

If you enjoy problem solving, designing and making products and testing your ideas, then our GCSE in Design and Technology is an ideal subject for you.

### What do I need to know, or be able to do, before taking this course?

The GCSE is a single qualification which focuses on developing practical skills within a particular material area, allowing students to manufacture high quality outcomes. you will learn about commercial processes and careers in related industries, as well as developing core transferable skills, such as collaboration and communication.

### What will I learn?

GCSE Design and Technology covers a wide range of topics exploring technology, materials, design processes and making processes. You will also have the opportunity to study specialist material areas (timbers and plastics) in greater depth. Students will gain awareness and learn from wider influences including historical, social, cultural, environmental and economic factors. Students will get the opportunity to work creatively when designing and making to apply their technical and practical expertise.

### How will I be assessed?

AQA is the exam board and all students will evidence their work within a portfolio of evidence amounting to 50% of their overall mark. This includes a student made practical outcomes. The final written examination taken in Year 11 is 50% of the overall GCSE and taken in the Summer Term of Year 11.

Assessment Point 1	Assessment Point 2
Knowledge and understanding of core technical and specialist design principles	Creative Design and Make Activity in your choice of specialism
Written Exam - 100 marks (50%)	Coursework NEA - 100 marks (50%)
The examination will be based on a structured exam paper which your teacher will be able to guide you through. Everything that you need to learn for this unit is set out in the specification so your teacher will know exactly how to prepare you for the exam	The new specification is designed to be completed in class with a focus on practical elements like developing and manufacturing your final product. Students will produce a working prototype and a portfolio of evidence. Homework tasks will involve important research tasks.



Design  
Technology  
G.C.S.E

# Textiles

## *Design Technology*

Coursework



### What is Textiles about?

This course is practical and involves lots of visual research, experimentation, sketching, designing and making. You should have a keen interest in fashion and textiles.

### What skills do I need to be successful in the subject?

- Good time management and organisation
- Strong self motivation
- A keen interest in the fashion and textiles world
- Willingness to be experimental with your work
- Some drawing skills

### What will I learn?

You will learn a wide range of practical techniques including both decorative techniques such as tie dye and printing, and construction techniques such as garment making. You will learn how to respond to a brief in an exciting and original way through carrying out effective research, lots of experimentation and a range of designing techniques. You will learn how to analyse others work as well as critiquing your own work.

### How is Textiles GCSE structured and what exam board do we use?

You study Textiles and DT theory which you will be assessed on in the GCSE exam in Year 11. This exam accounts for 50% of your final grade. You will make a number of practical items in Year 9 and 10. In the summer term of Year 10 you will start your Non Examination Assessment. This involves creating a portfolio and making an item. The Non Examination Assessment accounts for 50% of the final GCSE.

The exam board that we follow is AQA, and students are unable to choose both GCSE Textiles and GCSE Design Technologies.

### How will this course help me prepare for my future?

This course will aid progression into further studies in art, fashion and textiles. The course also helps you to be analytical, experimental and open minded and to develop your creative side.

# Travel & Tourism

## *BTEC Tech Award Level 1 / 2*

### What is involved in taking the BTEC Tech Award in Travel & Tourism?

Over the course of the qualification you will cover three units of work. Year 9 (core content will be taught from both internal and external components of the course). In Year 10, Component 1: Travel and Tourism Organisations and Destinations will be taught and an internal piece of coursework will be completed in February of Year 10; Component 2: Customer Needs in Travel and Tourism will be taught in the summer term of Year 10 and the internal coursework will be completed in October of Year 11; and Component 3 is the external exam, the content of which will be delivered in the spring and summer term of Year 11 with the exam in the summer.

#### **Unit 1: Travel and Tourism Organisations and Destinations**

36 guided learning hours, 30% of final grade and an internal piece of coursework. Completed February Year 10

#### **Unit 2: Customer Needs in Travel and Tourism**

36 guided learning hours, 30% of final grade and an internal piece of coursework. Completed October Year 11.

#### **Unit 3: Influences on Global Travel and Tourism**

36 guided learning hours, 30% of final grade and an external exam.

The rationale for all qualifications in the Pearson BTEC awards in Travel and Tourism is to:

- Inspire you to consider a career in the travel and tourism sector
- Give you the opportunity to gain a broad knowledge and understanding of, and develop skills in, the travel and tourism sector
- Support progression to Level 3 vocational or academic tourism course or an apprenticeship
- Have the opportunity to enter employment within a wide range of job roles across the travel and tourism sector, for example posts in travel agencies, visitor attractions and the tourist information centre

### How is the course structured and what exam board do we use?

The course will consist of three lessons per week and involves three units as outlined above. Core content will be taught in Year 9, one unit completed in Year 10 and two units completed in Year 11. The Exam Board is Pearson.

### What skills do I need to be successful in the subject?

The skills that you will need/learn in this subject are transferable to a range of qualifications that you will study. These include: researching, planning, and making decisions and judgements. You can use these transferable skills in a range of jobs within the travel and tourism industry.

### How will this help me prepare for my future?

If you are interested in working in the Leisure or Tourism industries, this could be the course that can help you develop skills that you will need to succeed in this area.

Travel & Tourism  
BTEC

Coursework



**HOE VALLEY SCHOOL**  
Egley Road  
Woking GU22 0NH

**01483 662627**

**info@hoevalleyschool.org**

**www.hoevalleyschool.org**

