Options 2026

Cabot Learning Federation

Bristol Brunel Academy

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A message from the Principal

Choosing your Key Stage 4 options is an important moment in your journey at Bristol Brunel Academy.

The decisions you make now will shape not only what you study over the next two years, but also the habits, attitudes and ambitions you carry forward into adult life.

The subjects you choose will shape the next two years of your education and help prepare you for the opportunities ahead.

At BBA, we believe in high expectations for every student. We want you to choose subjects that will challenge you, develop your knowledge and skills, and allow you to succeed through hard work and commitment. This is not about choosing what is easiest or following friends, it is about making thoughtful decisions that are right for you.

Your teachers will guide and support you through this process, offering honest advice because we believe in telling you the truth and helping you rise to it. Read this booklet carefully, ask questions, and take time to reflect on what you enjoy and where you want to go next.

Be brave. Aim high. Work hard.

Your future starts here.

Ms Jen Cusack

Principal

Bristol Brunel Academy

Making the right choices

Choosing the right subjects is your first step toward the future you want. **Your choices should reflect your interests, strengths, and commitment**, as they will shape the skills you develop and the opportunities available to you beyond Year 11.

This booklet and Options Evening are designed to help you choose the right combination of subjects to study at Key Stage 4 (Year 10 and 11). The information contained in this booklet, along with assemblies and ongoing advice, will guide you in the right direction for your future career. There are a variety of different jobs featured in this booklet to make you aware of the many potential career opportunities available.

The Options Evening will allow you to fully understand the subject areas so that you make the correct choices. The choices that you make need to be right for you. As well as listening to careers advice, your teachers and your parents, you should consider which subjects you enjoy studying.

Things to consider

You should choose subjects that YOU want to do. You will be studying these subjects for two years. Completing a qualification needs commitment, so it is vital that you are happy with the subjects you choose.· Consider subjects that you are good at. Completing a qualification is challenging, so choosing subjects you will be successful in is important.

Don't pick a subject because your friends have chosen it or because you like the teacher. Besides not being a good reason to choose a subject, there is no guarantee your friends will be in the same class as you, or that you will be taught by your favourite teacher.

'It is important to achieve balance in your options choices. Make sure you think carefully about the demands of both coursework and exams"

Your attendance matters

Attendance in Years 10 and 11 is crucial to success at GCSE. Regular attendance allows students to fully access teaching, develop subject knowledge, and prepare effectively for assessments. Vocational courses place a particularly strong emphasis on completing coursework within fixed assessment windows, many of which cannot be revisited if missed. This requires consistent attendance, organisation, and meeting deadlines over time. Students with low or inconsistent attendance may struggle to complete required evidence and keep pace with course demands. In these cases, choosing a GCSE course may be more appropriate, as GCSEs often offer greater structure, continuity, and assessment flexibility.

Before you start

There are some important things you need to consider. Some subjects have **specific requirements** - you will find these outlined below.

University Pathway

For students whose aim it is to apply to university, especially for competitive courses, our advice is to study both a language (French or Spanish) and at least history, geography or computer science. Having a modern foreign language shows universities that students have an aptitude for communication. Language skills can give a significant advantage to students as well as giving them links to another culture.

Combined or Triple Science

Students who are keen to pursue the study of science in more depth can also choose to study triple science. This would be one of their four option choices. The key difference from combined science (two GCSEs) is that they gain three GCSEs – one in each science and so this takes more lesson time across the week. **If you study Triple Science, you will have to stay for one lesson after school each week.** If your child is in doubt about whether this would be the right route for them, they should speak to their science teacher.

GCSE PE or BTEC Sport

Both GCSE PE and BTEC Sport require you to be playing for a team outside of school — this is essential for either course. GCSE PE is more exam-focused, with 60% of your grade from written theory exams alongside practical performance assessments, suiting students comfortable with balancing theory and practice. BTEC Sport is more hands-on and coursework-based, with only one externally assessed component, rewarding consistent effort and focusing on applying knowledge in practical contexts like coaching and performance improvement. Both pathways lead to A-level PE, sports science, and careers in sport and fitness, so speak to your PE teacher to discuss which is the best fit for you.

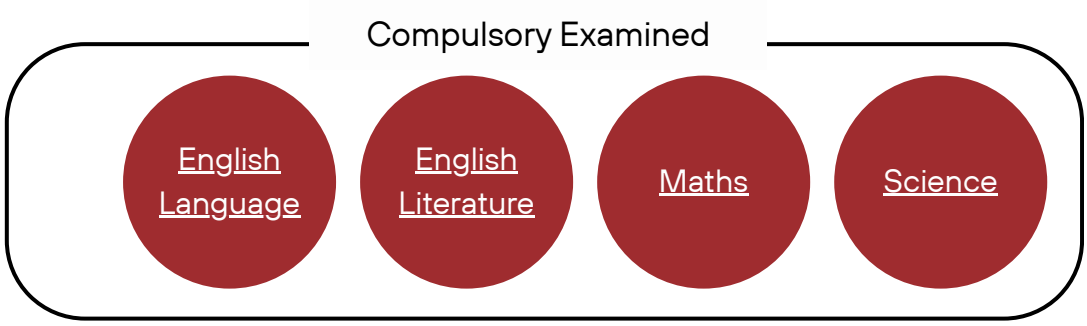
GCSE Music

GCSE Music is one of the more demanding courses available. Unlike most GCSEs, it requires you to actively perform - both solo and in a group - which accounts for 30% of your final grade. **This means you must already play an instrument or sing, or show sufficient aptitude to learn one, from the start.** The remaining 70% covers a written, listening and analysis exam and two compositions, both of which require a solid understanding of how music works. Without a strong foundation to build on, students would struggle to keep pace and achieve a competitive grade. If you're unsure whether Music is right for you, speak to your Music teacher early - they can help you decide whether your current level suits the course.

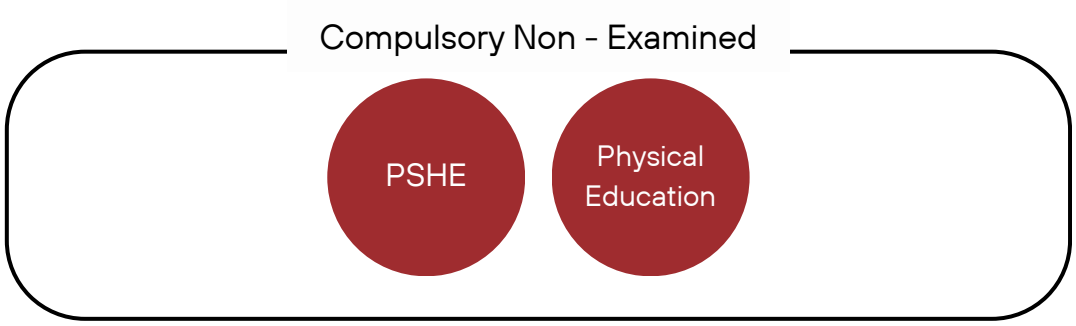
The Options Process

All students will study 10 subjects at GCSE. These are made up of 4 compulsory examined subjects and 2 compulsory non-examined subjects. Students must then make 1 compulsory option choice and then 3 further free choices.

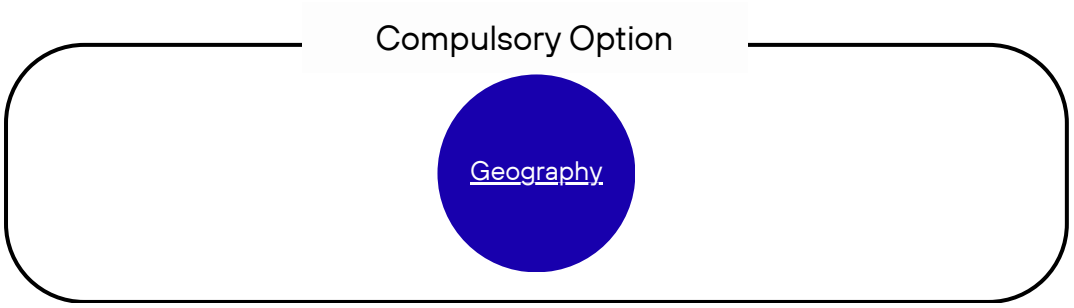
All students will study the four compulsory examined subjects.



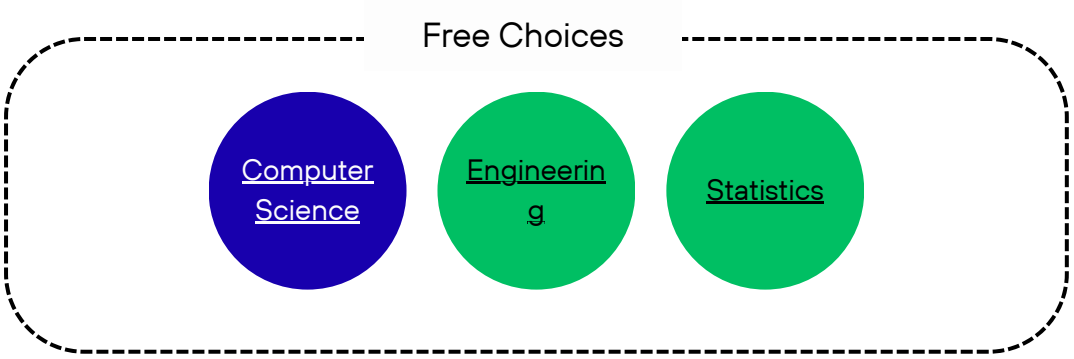
All students must take the two compulsory non-examined subjects.



All students must choose one subject from the compulsory options subjects.



Students must pick a further three subjects as part of their 'free choices'.



Your options

Compulsory Examined

- English Language
- English Literature
- Maths
- Science

Compulsory Non - Examined

- PSHE
- Physical Education

Compulsory Option

- Geography
- History
- French
- Spanish
- Computer Science

Guided Choices

A reduced subject offer to include ASDAN pathway. Students who are suitable for this pathway will be invited during term 4, and this will be discussed with parents/carers

Free Choices

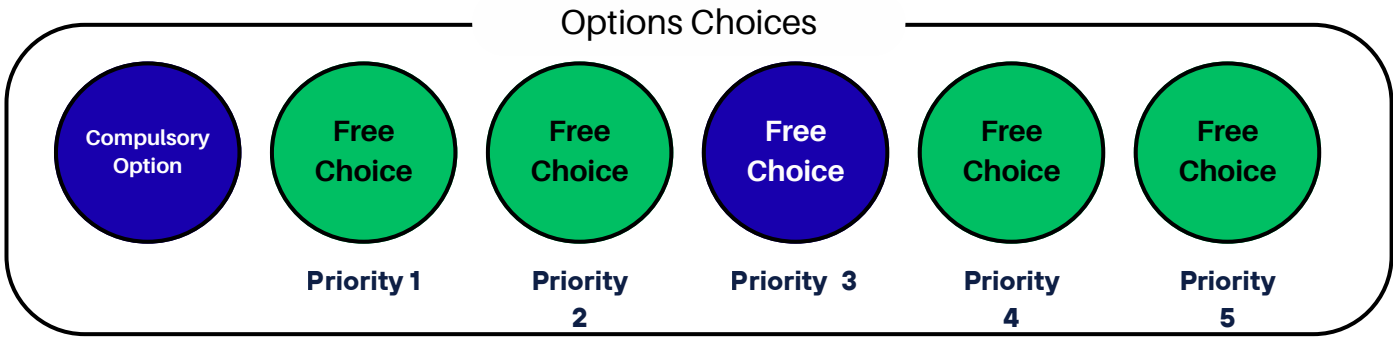
- Geography
- History
- French
- Spanish
- Computer Science
- Art
- Business
- Drama
- Food Prep and Nutrition
- Music
- PE
- Product Design
- Photography
- Religious Studies
- Statistics
- Textiles

Vocational Choices

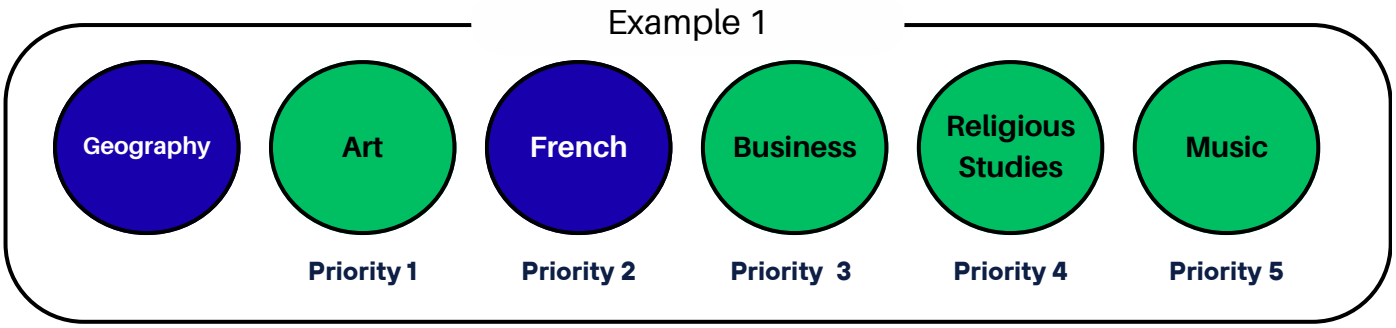
- Engineering
- Health and Social Care
- IT
- Sport

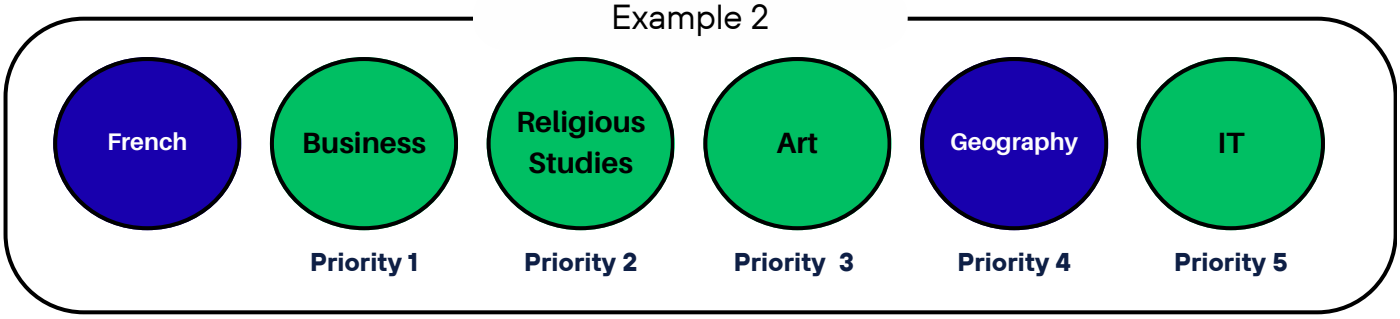
Completing your options choices

All students must choose one compulsory option and then make five free choices. At least one of your five free choices must be a 'blue' free choice subject. These choices must be in order of priority. You will be allocated a compulsory option and then 3 of your free choices.

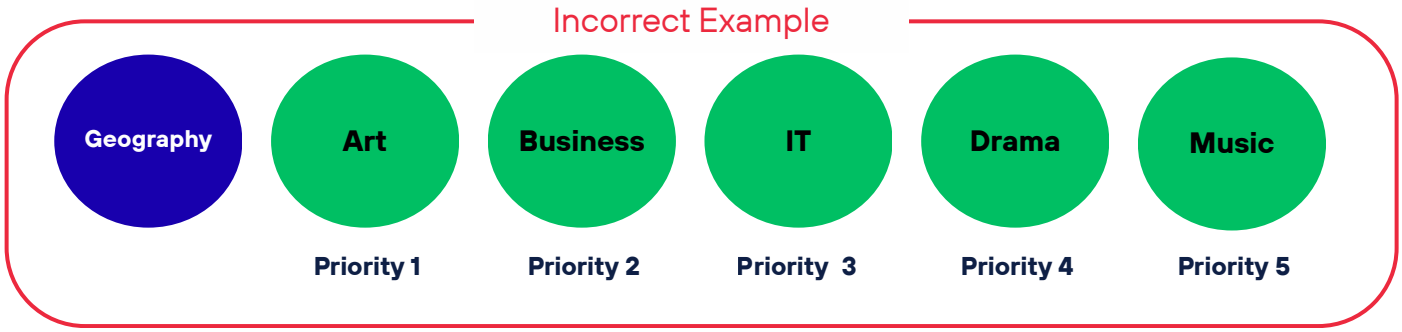


The following are both examples of correctly completed options choices. In both examples the student has included an additional 'blue' free choice subject and has completed the free choices in order of priority.



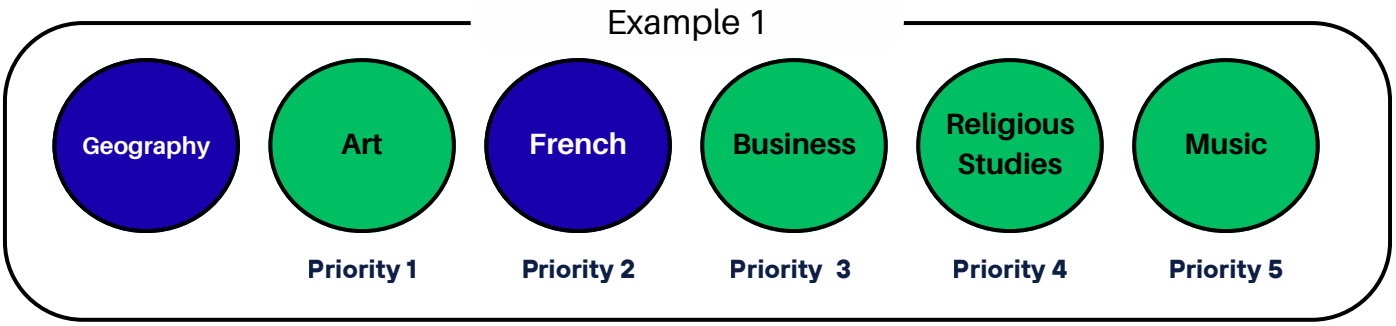


The following example has been incorrectly completed as it does not include one further 'blue' free choice subject.

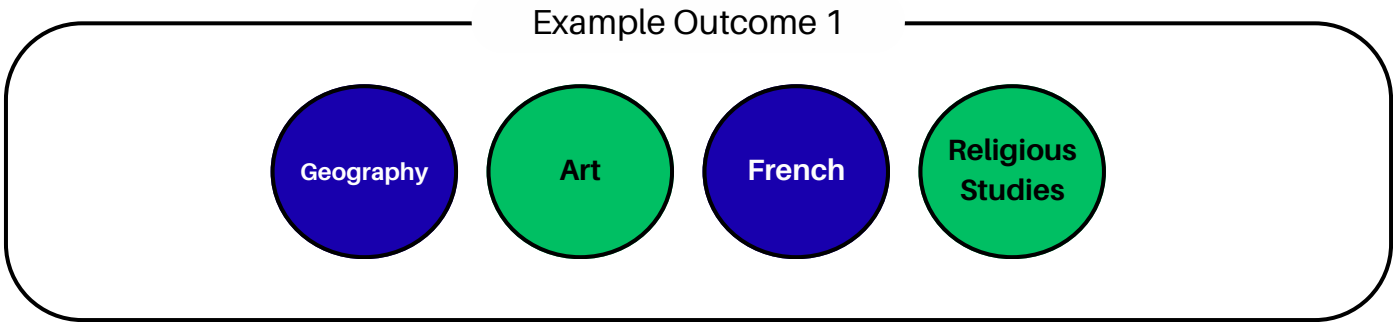


Allocating your options choices

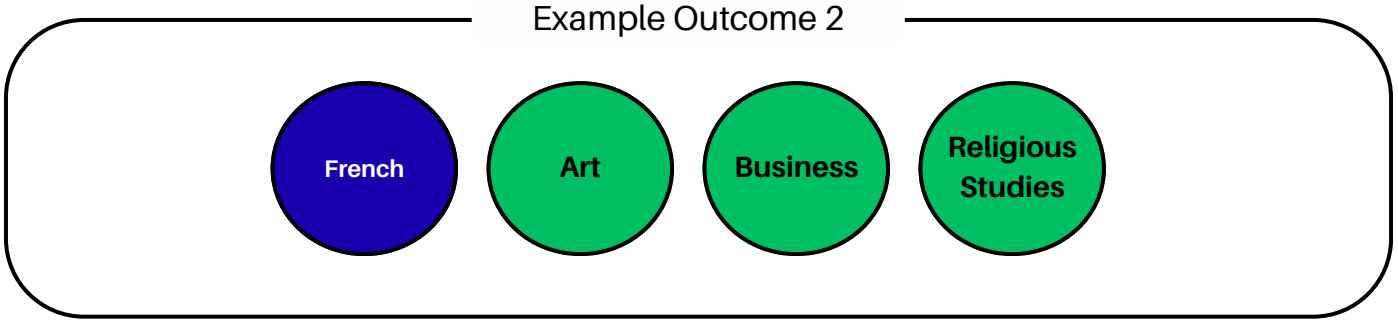
When allocating your options, we will do our best to try and achieve a combination of your compulsory options choices, as well as your other priority subjects. Due to subject combinations and class sizes, it will not be possible to give all students exactly what they want. Below are two possible scenarios based off the same example options choices.



The following example shows the final outcome from the student options process. Notice how the student has received their compulsory blue option but has not received their Priority 3 subject.



The following example shows an alternative final outcome from the student options process. Notice how the student has received many of their free choices but has not received their initial 'blue' compulsory option.



English Language

The AQA GCSE English Language course develops students' reading, writing, speaking and listening skills. Building on Key Stage 3, students learn to analyse texts, write clearly for different purposes and communicate ideas with confidence. The course provides essential skills for further study, future careers and everyday life.

What you will learn

English Language is a compulsory subject. Students will read, understand and respond to a wide range of texts, from Shakespeare and Dickens to modern plays and poetry. Throughout the course, students will develop key skills including reading and responding to texts, writing effective descriptions, writing to advise and inform, summarising information, and analysing the effects of language.

How you will be assessed

Language Paper 1 (the fiction paper). 1 hr 45 min

A single exam with five questions; four reading questions, asking the student to analyse a piece of fiction. Question 5 is a creative writing task; student produces either a descriptive piece or a part of a story. Worth 50% of the GCSE .

Language Paper 2 (the non-fiction paper). 1 hr 45 min

A single exam with five questions; four reading questions, asking the student to analyse a piece of non-fiction: a newspaper article, speech, diary, letter etc. Question 5 is a creative writing task where the student is asked to produce their own speech, letter etc. on a given topic. Worth 50% of the GCSE .

Speaking and Listening Award

Student delivers a short presentation on their chosen topic to a teacher. An additional certification, not counted toward to the GCSE.

Future Pathways

GCSE English Language is essential for future study, apprenticeships and employment, with a strong pass often required. It develops key skills such as communication, critical thinking and confident reading and writing, which are valued in all careers. English supports pathways into a wide range of subjects and jobs, including law, journalism, teaching, business, healthcare, media and the public services, and is vital for success beyond school.

English Literature

The AQA GCSE English Literature course develops students' skills in reading, analysing and interpreting a wide range of literary texts. Building on Key Stage 3, students explore novels, plays and poetry from different periods, learning to understand themes, characters and the writer's craft. The course helps students think critically, write thoughtfully and communicate ideas clearly

What you will learn

English Literature is a compulsory subject. Students will read and respond to a wide range of texts, exploring major themes, the writer's context and intentions, their use of techniques, and developing their own personal responses. Following the AQA specification, the course includes study of a 19th-century text (A Christmas Carol), a Shakespeare play (Macbeth), a modern play (An Inspector Calls), the 'Power and Conflict' cluster of poems, and unseen poetry.

How you will be assessed

Literature Paper 1:

A single closed-book exam (1 hr 45 mins). Students complete one essay on the 19th Century text, and one essay on their Shakespeare play. Worth 40% of the GCSE.

Literature Paper 2:

A single closed-book exam (2 hr 15 mins). Students complete one essay on the modern play, one comparative poetry essay, two questions on unseen poetry. Worth 60% of the GCSE .

Future Pathways

Studying GCSE English Literature opens many future pathways. It develops critical thinking, analytical skills, and the ability to interpret complex ideas—skills valued in further education, apprenticeships, and careers. Students may progress to A-level English Literature or other humanities subjects. Strong literary and communication skills can lead to careers in law, journalism, teaching, publishing, media, marketing, and the creative industries, while also providing a foundation for lifelong learning and success in any field requiring analysis and clear communication.

Maths

AQA GCSE Mathematics

The GCSE Mathematics course develops students' skills in problem-solving, reasoning, and applying mathematical concepts to real-world situations. Building on Key Stage 3, students study number, algebra, geometry, statistics, and probability, learning to think logically and work systematically. The course helps students develop confidence in calculations, analytical thinking, and problem-solving, while fostering persistence and precision.

What you will learn

Mathematics is a compulsory subject and builds on the skills you have been developing throughout your education in line with the national curriculum. In GCSE Maths, you will study a range of interconnected topics, including number, algebra, ratio and proportion, shape, space and measure, probability, and statistics and data handling. Many problems require you to apply knowledge from multiple areas, helping you develop logical thinking, problem-solving skills, and the ability to approach challenges in a structured way.

How you will be assessed

GCSE Mathematics is assessed at the end of Year 11 through three 90-minute, 80-mark exams. Students are entered for either the Higher tier (grades 3–9) or the Foundation tier (grades 1–5) based on where they are most likely to succeed, with the final decision confirmed late in Year 11.

All papers cover the following core areas; Number, Algebra, Ratio, Proportion and Rates of Change, Geometry and Measure, Probability and Statistics.

Paper 1: Non Calculator assessment
Paper 2: Calculator assessment
Paper 3 Calculator assessment.

All three papers are "mixed-topic" assessments, meaning each paper blends questions from all areas of mathematics This approach tests your ability to apply knowledge across different mathematical concepts and make connections between them.

Future Pathways

GCSE Mathematics provides essential skills for almost every future pathway. Strong numeracy, problem-solving, and logical thinking are highly valued in further study, apprenticeships, and a wide range of careers. Students can progress to A-level Mathematics, Further Mathematics, or vocational courses, which open doors to fields such as engineering, finance, computing, architecture, medicine, science, business, and technology. Beyond specific careers, maths develops critical thinking and analytical skills that are useful in everyday life, helping students make informed decisions, solve problems, and approach challenges with confidence.

Combined Science

Pearson Edexcel GCSE in Combined Science

Combined Science is a compulsory subject that builds on the knowledge and skills developed in Key Stage 3. Students study interconnected topics in Biology, Chemistry, and Physics, including cells, chemical reactions, forces, energy, and electricity. Many questions require applying knowledge across areas, helping develop problem-solving, analytical thinking, and a logical approach to scientific challenges.

What you will learn

In GCSE Combined Science, you will study six core topics: B1, C1, P1, B2, C2, and P2.

B1 – Biology: Key concepts in biology, cells and control, genetics, natural selection, and health and disease.

C1 – Chemistry: Key concepts in chemistry, states of matter, chemical changes, and extracting metals.

P1 – Physics: Motion, forces and conservation of energy, waves and the electromagnetic spectrum, and radioactivity.

B2 – Biology: Plant structures and their functions, animal coordination and homeostasis, exchange and transport in animals, and ecosystems and material cycles.

C2 – Chemistry: Groups in the periodic table, rates of reaction and energy changes, fuels, and earth science
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P2 – Physics: Forces and energy, electricity and circuits, magnetic fields, and matter.

How you will be assessed

GCSE Combined Science is assessed entirely through exams at the end of Year 11. There are six papers—two each in Biology, Chemistry, and Physics—each lasting 1 hour 10 minutes. Students are entered for either Foundation or Higher tier papers, and at the end of the course, each student is awarded two GCSEs for Combined Science.

Future Pathways

GCSE Combined Science provides a strong foundation for further study and a wide range of careers. It supports progression to A-levels or vocational qualifications in Biology, Chemistry, Physics, or Applied Science. Science skills are highly valued in careers such as medicine, engineering, research, healthcare, environmental science, and technology. Beyond specific careers, the course develops problem-solving, analytical thinking, and logical reasoning—skills that are useful in everyday life and any future pathway.

Separate Science

Pearson Edexcel GCSE in Biology, Chemistry and Physics

Separate Science is a course that we provide for students who are excelling in science. The lessons are delivered at a faster pace, there is extra content in Biology, Chemistry and Physics, it really helps to bridge the gap between GCSE and A levels and students are awarded three science GCSEs, as opposed to two. Due to the demands of the course, there is an entrance exam to identify whether a student would be suitable for the course.

What you will learn

GCSE Combined Science is assessed through six exam papers: B1, C1, P1, B2, C2, and P2.

B1 – Biology: Key concepts in biology, cells and control, genetics, natural selection, and health and disease.

C1 – Chemistry: Key concepts in chemistry, states of matter, chemical changes, extracting metals, and Separate Chemistry 1.

P1 – Physics: Motion, forces and conservation of energy, waves and the electromagnetic spectrum, radioactivity, and astronomy.

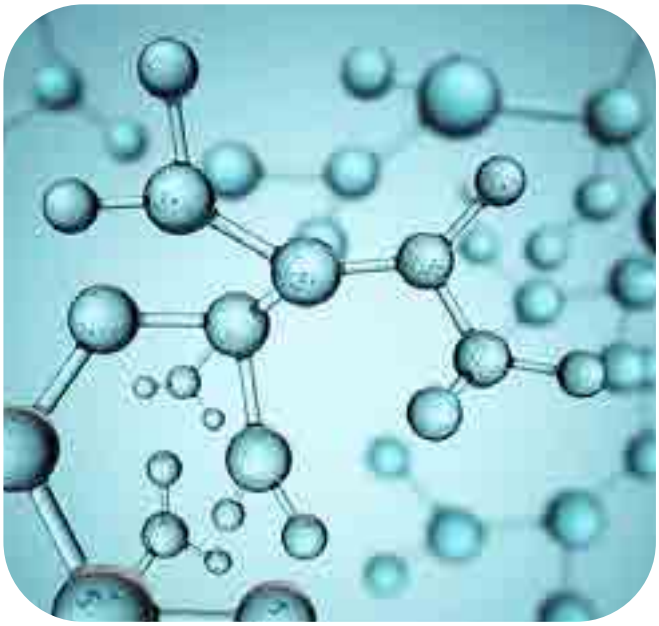
B2 – Biology: Plant structures and their functions, animal coordination and homeostasis, exchange and transport in animals, and ecosystems and material cycles.

C2 – Chemistry: Groups in the periodic table, rates of reaction and energy changes, fuels, earth science, and Separate Chemistry 2.

P2 – Physics: Forces and energy, electricity and circuits, electric and magnetic fields, and matter.

How you will be assessed

GCSE Separate Science is assessed entirely through exams at the end of Year 11. There are six papers - two each in Biology, Chemistry, and Physics - each lasting 1 hour 45 minutes. At the end of the course, students are awarded three separate GCSEs: one in Biology, one in Chemistry, and one in Physics.



Future Pathways

GCSE Combined Science provides a strong foundation for further study and a wide range of careers. It supports progression to A-levels or vocational qualifications in Biology, Chemistry, Physics, or Applied Science. Science skills are highly valued in careers such as medicine, engineering, research, healthcare, environmental science, and technology. Beyond specific careers, the course develops problem-solving, analytical thinking, and logical reasoning—skills that are useful in everyday life and any future pathway.

Combined or Triple Science?

All students study Combined Science, which covers Biology, Chemistry, and Physics. Some students may be offered the chance to study Triple Science, which goes deeper into each discipline and awards three separate GCSEs. **A Year 9 assessment helps determine suitability for this pathway.**

What's the difference?

Both Combined Science and Triple (Separate) Science cover the same three disciplines — Biology, Chemistry, and Physics — but they differ in depth, pace, and the number of qualifications you walk away with.

Combined Science

Combined Science awards two GCSEs and covers the core content across all three sciences in a single course. It's a solid foundation that suits students who want a broad understanding of science without committing to the heavier workload of the alternative. Assessment is through six exam papers (two per discipline), each lasting 1 hour 10 minutes, and the content is designed to be accessible while still being rigorous.

Triple Science

Triple Science also covers Biology, Chemistry, and Physics, but goes significantly further in each subject. Students study additional material beyond the core — for example, astronomy in Physics, or more advanced topics in organic Chemistry - and the six exam papers are each 35 minutes longer, at 1 hour 45 minutes. The course is delivered at a faster pace, and the depth of content is greater, which means it demands more from students both in and out of the classroom. In return, students earn three separate GCSEs - one in each discipline. **At BBA, students who study Triple Science must attend an additional lesson after school each week to fulfill the requirements of the course.**

Why might Triple Science matter?

So why might Triple Science matter? If you're aiming for a career in medicine, engineering, research, or any science-based field, Triple Science provides the stronger foundation. Universities and sixth forms often look for it when offering places on competitive A-level science courses, and the extra depth helps bridge the gap between GCSE and A-level study. It's also a signal of confidence and ambition in the sciences. That said, it's a demanding course, and Combined Science remains an excellent qualification for students whose interests or career plans sit outside of science.

Geography

AQA GCSE Geography

The Geography course develops students' understanding of physical and human processes and how they shape the world around us. Building on Key Stage 3, students study a range of topics including natural hazards, ecosystems, urban environments, and resource management, while developing key geographical skills such as issue evaluation, data analysis, and evaluation. Fieldwork is an essential part of the course, with two compulsory trips to Bristol Harbourside and Blaise Castle.

What you will learn

In GCSE Geography, you will explore both human and physical geography through a variety of engaging topics, all assessed in three exams at the end of Year 11 following the AQA specification. In Paper One – Living with the Physical Environment – you will study natural hazards, ecosystems, and the physical landscapes of the UK, learning how the natural world works and how people respond to its challenges. Paper Two – Challenges in the Human Environment – focuses on urban development, global economic change, and resource management, helping you understand how societies adapt to growth and environmental pressures.

Paper Three – Geographical Applications – develops your skills in issue evaluation and fieldwork, allowing you to apply your knowledge to real-world problems. Fieldwork is an essential part of the course, with two hands-on trips.

Throughout the course, you will develop key skills including map reading, data analysis, and critical thinking, enabling you to evaluate evidence and understand the complex world around you.

How you will be assessed

GCSE Geography is assessed through three exams at the end of Year 11, with no coursework.

- Paper 1 (90 mins) – Living with the Physical Environment (35%):
- Paper 2 (90 mins) – Challenges in the Human Environment (35%):
- Paper 3 (75 mins) – Geographical Applications (30%):

Questions include multiple-choice, short-answer, and extended writing to test knowledge, analysis, and evaluation skills

Future Pathways

GCSE Geography opens doors to further study and a wide range of careers. Students can progress to A Level Geography, building knowledge of physical and human processes, fieldwork, and analytical skills. It also supports related subjects such as Economics, History, and Environmental Science. At university, students can study Geography, Environmental Science, Urban Planning, or International Development. Geography GCSE also provides skills for careers in urban planning, surveying, GIS, sustainability, travel and tourism, and emergency planning. Critical thinking, data analysis, and report-writing skills gained through the course are highly valued across many professions.

History

Pearson Edexcel GCSE History

The Edexcel GCSE History course develops students' understanding of key events, people, and turning points that have shaped the modern world. Building on Key Stage 3, students study a range of topics including Crime and Punishment, Early Elizabethan England and Superpower relations during the Cold War, The course develops students' skills in source analysis, interpretation, and extended writing, encouraging them to think critically about cause, consequence, and change over time.

What you will learn

In GCSE History, you will explore fascinating events, people, and ideas that have shaped the modern world. You will study four engaging units, developing your understanding of how societies have changed over time and the forces that have influenced them. In Crime and Punishment through Time, you will investigate the evolution of the justice system, with a gripping case study of the Whitechapel murders. Early Elizabethan England explores the challenges and achievements of one of history's most intriguing monarchs. Turning to the modern era, you will examine Superpower Relations in the Cold War, discovering how rivalry between the USA and the USSR shaped global politics. Finally, in The USA, 1954–75: Conflict at Home and Abroad, you will explore the Civil Rights movement and the impact of the Vietnam War on society and politics. Throughout the course, you will develop vital skills in analysing sources, evaluating interpretations, and constructing persuasive arguments, learning to think critically and understand history from multiple perspectives.

Future Pathways

Students can progress to A Level History, developing analytical, evaluative, and research skills, and it complements subjects such as Politics, English, and Economics. At university, it provides a foundation for degrees in History, Politics, Law, or International Relations. GCSE History also supports careers in law, journalism, teaching, public service, heritage, and research. The course develops transferable skills in critical thinking, evaluating evidence, constructing arguments, and understanding complex issues.

How you will be assessed

GCSE History is assessed entirely through exams at the end of Year 11, with no coursework. The course is divided into three papers:

- Paper 1 (80 mins)– Crime and Punishment through Time & Whitechapel 1870–1900: Assesses knowledge of historical events, change over time, and source analysis.
- Paper 2 (110 mins) – Early Elizabethan England: Focuses on key political, social, and economic developments, including how Elizabeth I dealt with challenges during her reign.
- Paper 3 (90 mins) – Superpower Relations & The USA, 1954–75: Examines international relations, conflict, and domestic change, testing understanding of causes, consequences, and interpretations.

French

AQA GCSE French

The GCSE French course develops students' ability to communicate confidently in French and understand the language in real-life contexts. Students explore topics including people and lifestyle, popular culture, and communication and the world around us, while building key skills in speaking, listening, reading, and writing.

What you will learn

YIn GCSE French, you will develop the ability to communicate confidently and creatively in real-life situations, while exploring a wide range of engaging topics. In People and Lifestyle, you will discuss family, relationships, health, school life, jobs, and future ambitions, learning to express your ideas clearly and confidently. Popular Culture allows you to explore music, cinema, television, food, sport, customs, and celebrations, giving you insight into French-speaking cultures and everyday life. In Communication and the World Around Us, you will cover travel and tourism, your local area, media and technology, and environmental issues, linking language learning to the wider world. Throughout the course, you will develop key skills in listening, speaking, reading, writing, and translation, building fluency and accuracy. By combining language practice with cultural understanding, GCSE French not only equips you to communicate effectively but also inspires curiosity, creativity, and confidence in navigating both familiar and unfamiliar situations in French.

How you will be assessed

GCSE French is 100% exam-based, with four skills tested at the end of Year 11: Listening (25%), Speaking (25%), Reading (25%), and Writing (25%). The speaking exam includes role-plays, photo discussion, and a conversation on your topics. Listening and reading tasks test comprehension of authentic French materials, while writing tasks include short messages, extended answers, and translations. All assessments focus on using vocabulary and grammar confidently and creatively in real-life contexts.

Future Pathways

Studying GCSE French opens up a wide range of opportunities for further study and future careers. Students can progress to A Level French, developing advanced language skills and cultural understanding. French also complements subjects such as English, History, Business, and International Relations. At university, it provides a foundation for degrees in French, Modern Languages, International Studies, and European Studies. GCSE French also supports careers in translation, tourism, international business, diplomacy, journalism, teaching, and global development. Beyond specific career paths, the course develops transferable skills in communication, critical thinking, and problem-solving, equipping students with confidence and fluency to succeed in both academic and professional contexts.

Spanish

AQA GCSE Spanish

The GCSE Spanish course develops students' ability to communicate confidently in Spanish and understand the language in everyday and real-world contexts. Students explore topics including people and lifestyle, popular culture, and communication and the world around us, while building key skills in speaking, listening, reading, and writing.

What you will learn

In GCSE Spanish, you will explore the language and culture of Spanish-speaking countries while developing practical communication skills. You will study People and Lifestyle, learning to talk about family, friendships, school, health, jobs, and your future ambitions. In Popular Culture, you will explore music, film, television, sport, food, and celebrations, discovering the vibrant traditions of Spanish-speaking communities. Communication and the World Around Us covers travel, tourism, your local area, media, technology, and the environment, helping you apply Spanish in real-world contexts. Throughout the course, you will build confidence in listening, speaking, reading, writing, and translation, developing accuracy and fluency. By the end of the course, you will not only be able to communicate effectively in Spanish but also gain cultural insight, independence, and confidence to use the language creatively in both familiar and new situations.

How you will be assessed

GCSE Spanish is 100% exam-based, with four equally weighted papers: Listening (25%), Speaking (25%), Reading (25%), and Writing (25%). The speaking exam includes role-plays, photo discussion, and a conversation on your chosen topics. Listening and reading tasks test comprehension of authentic Spanish materials, while writing tasks include short messages, extended answers, and translations. All assessments focus on using vocabulary and grammar accurately, confidently, and creatively in real-life situations.

Future Pathways

Studying GCSE Spanish opens doors to further study and a wide range of career opportunities. Students who achieve a strong pass can progress to A Level Spanish, building advanced language skills and deeper cultural understanding. Spanish also complements subjects such as English, History, Business, and Geography. At university, it provides a foundation for degrees in Modern Languages, International Relations, European Studies, and Global Business. GCSE Spanish also supports careers in translation, tourism, international business, diplomacy, journalism, and teaching. Alongside language skills, the course develops transferable abilities in communication, problem-solving, and cultural awareness, equipping students with the confidence and fluency to succeed in further study and professional life.

Computer Science

The OCR GCSE Computer Science course develops students' skills in problem-solving, programming, and understanding how computers work. You will explore algorithms, data, networks, and cybersecurity, while building practical skills in coding, logical thinking, and computational problem-solving. The course prepares you for A Level Computer Science, further study, or careers in technology and digital industries.

What you will learn

In GCSE Computer Science, you will explore the fascinating world behind the technology we use every day. You will learn how computer systems work, including hardware, software, and how they interact to make devices function. You will discover different types of networks, their real-world uses, and the advantages, challenges, and security issues they present. Through computational thinking, you will develop problem-solving skills and write your own programs. You will also study data representation, understanding how computers process text, images, sound, and video. Alongside this, you will explore algorithms, programming techniques, and ethical and legal issues. The course provides a broad and exciting experience of computing, building practical and analytical skills, and preparing you for further study or careers in technology and digital industries.

How you will be assessed

GCSE Computer Science is assessed entirely through exams and practical programming tasks at the end of Year 11. Paper 1 (90 mins) – Computer Systems (50%) covers system architecture, memory, storage, networks, security, and data representation.

Paper 2 (90 mins) – Computational Thinking, Algorithms, and Programming (50%) tests problem-solving, programming techniques, algorithms, and understanding of ethical and legal issues. Students are assessed on their ability to analyse problems, design and code solutions, and apply computing knowledge in real-world contexts.

Future Pathways

Studying GCSE Computer Science opens up opportunities for further study and careers in technology. Students who achieve a strong pass, usually Grade 5 or above, can progress to A Level Computer Science, building on programming, problem-solving, and analytical skills. The course also provides a foundation for degrees in Computer Science, Software Engineering, Cybersecurity, Data Science, and AI, as well as careers in coding, IT, web development, game design, and digital industries. Students develop transferable skills such as logical thinking, problem-solving, and project management, preparing them for further study and a rapidly evolving, technology-driven workplace.

Art

AQA Art and Design (Fine Art)

The GCSE Art and Design course has been designed to provide students with the opportunity to engage in the creative process of making art. The course allows students to develop their knowledge, skills and understanding of Art and Design, building on skills from Key Stage 3. It is suitable for students who wish to develop their skills and interest in Art and Design and lays the foundation for Post 16 studies.

Skills Required

Students studying this subject should have a genuine enthusiasm for art and the ability to explore, investigate and develop creative ideas. They should be willing to work independently, show self-motivation and resilience, and develop artistic skills using a range of materials and techniques. An interest in seeing works of art first-hand is important, as is the ability to draw, paint and make art. Students will also need the literacy skills to present written ideas, with support provided where needed.

Why Art?

This course helps to build independence and encourages students to make choices about their art and design. Students will engage with the work of artists, craftspeople and designers and learn to form opinions and make choices based on what they like. This allows students to develop knowledge about themselves and the world around them.

Students will develop creative thinking skills to explore ideas, techniques, and ways of working. Students will learn to solve problems and develop practical and intuitive solutions, working with improvisation as well as careful planning.

Students will improve their art and design skills working with a range of materials, techniques, and processes. They will build fine motor skills and understand how to bring different elements and ideas together.

Key Content

Students will be learning to use a range of materials and processes including - drawing, painting, photography, textiles, mixed media, ceramics, and print making. Sketchbooks are used to record, analyse and to develop students' personal ideas which will inform a range of finalised outcomes across a range of materials. We will use photography to make personal responses to the world around us and develop those photos into art pieces.

Coursework and Examination

All students work from a given theme, which will initially be explored together, working from observation, researching artists, exploring materials and new techniques. Students then develop their own ideas inspired by the theme, finishing in a refined piece or series of work. Over the course, two projects are completed. Year 10 begins with material-based workshops followed by a project on a theme. Year 11 begins with a mock exam project Sept- Dec, followed by their externally set assignment Jan- April. Hardworking, creative, enthusiastic, and open-minded students are welcomed onto this course.

Future Pathways

Many students go on to study A Level art, photography or BTEC art courses before completing an Art Foundation course followed by a degree in a specialist area. Anyone wanting a career in fine art, fashion and textile design, graphic design, communications, architecture, product and industrial design, interior design, web and new media design, photography, illustration, merchandising, theatre, and film design would benefit from this course as a basic grounding in art and design. The creative industries in the U.K are rapidly growing. They contribute £92 billion to the economy and employ over 3 million people. People with creative skills are highly valued in a rapidly changing world of work.

Possible careers include:

- Set Designer
- Artist
- Curator
- Art Director
- Animator
- Textile design
- Product design
- Photography
- Graphic design
- Fashion
- Costume design
- Marketing/ Advertising

Component 1: Portfolio:

· 60% of the overall grade, marked out of 96.
· Starts at the beginning of Year 10 until December of Year 11.
· Portfolio of work set and marked by the centre and moderated by AQA.

Component 2: Externally Set Assignment:

· 40% of the overall grade, marked out of 96.
· Question paper with 7 starting points given out in January. Students select a starting point and make work towards an outcome by exploring artists, techniques, and art materials.
· 10 hours practical exam- completed in the art classroom, students will produce a personal response following on from the work completed from the starting point.
· Work produced will be marked by the centre and moderated by AQA.

Throughout these assessment units, the following assessment objectives (AOs) will be examined:

AO1: Develop ideas through investigations, demonstrating critical understanding of sources.
AO2: Refine work by exploring ideas, selecting and experimenting with appropriate media, materials, techniques and processes.
AO3: Record ideas, observations and insights relevant to intentions as work progresses.
AO4: Present a personal and meaningful response that realises intentions and demonstrates understanding of visual language.

Business

Pearson Edexcel GCSE Business

This course develops students' understanding of how businesses operate and make decisions in the real world. You will explore topics including marketing, finance, operations, and human resources, while building practical skills in problem-solving, decision-making, and analysing business data. The course prepares you for A Level Business, further study, or careers in management, entrepreneurship, marketing, and the wider business world.

What you will learn

In GCSE Business, you will discover how businesses are created, run, and developed in the real world. You will begin by exploring small businesses, learning how entrepreneurs spot opportunities, turn ideas into successful ventures, and make decisions that help a business grow. You will examine the purpose of business activity and how external factors such as competition, technology, and the economy influence success. As the course progresses, you will build a deeper understanding of how businesses operate on a larger scale. You will study production processes, customer service, quality, and working with suppliers, as well as the vital role of finance, including costs, profit, cash flow, and managing money effectively. You will also explore the importance of people in business, focusing on recruitment, motivation, and teamwork. Throughout the course, you will develop valuable skills in decision-making, analysis, and problem-solving, helping you understand how businesses succeed in a competitive world.

How you will be assessed

GCSE Business is assessed entirely through examinations at the end of Year 11. Students sit two equally weighted exam papers, each lasting 1 hour and 45 minutes. Paper 1 – Investigating Small Businesses (90 marks) focuses on entrepreneurial activity and the operation of small businesses. Paper 2 – Building a Business (90 marks) examines how businesses grow and manage operations, finance, and people. Both papers include a mixture of multiple-choice, short-answer, and extended response questions linked to real-life business case studies, assessing students' knowledge, analysis, and decision-making skills.

Future Pathways

GCSE Business opens the door to a wide range of future opportunities. Students who achieve a Grade 5 or above can progress to A Level Business, developing a deeper understanding of how organisations grow and succeed. The skills developed—decision-making, financial awareness, communication, and problem-solving—are valued in almost every profession. GCSE Business is particularly relevant for careers in marketing, finance, human resources, management, and entrepreneurship, whether in a small start-up or a large multinational company. It also provides a strong foundation for roles such as accountant, recruitment consultant, stock broker, or business owner, building confidence and ambition for an ever-changing world of work.

Drama

Pearson Edexcel GCSE Drama

The Pearson Edexcel GCSE Drama course develops students' creativity, confidence, and performance skills. You will explore acting, stagecraft, and play-making, while studying professional theatre and developing your ability to analyse and evaluate live performances. The course prepares you for A Level Drama, further study, or careers in theatre, performance, production, and the wider creative industries.

What you will learn

In GCSE Drama, you will immerse yourself in the exciting world of theatre, developing creativity, confidence, and practical performance skills. You will perform from scripts to an audience, mastering physical and vocal techniques, while exploring the roles of performer, director, and designer. You will analyse and evaluate your own performances and professional theatre, building critical thinking and reflective writing skills. The course also allows you to work collaboratively to create an original piece of devised theatre, fostering teamwork, imagination, and problem-solving. Students will attend theatre trips to venues such as The Bristol Old Vic, Bristol Hippodrome, and the Tobacco Factory. Watching live professional theatre is integral to the course, helping students understand design elements and refine their analytical and evaluation skills. This combination of practical work, analysis, and theatre experiences prepares you for A Level Drama, further study, or careers in the performing arts, media, and creative industries.

Future Pathways

GCSE Drama is a strong foundation for further study and careers in the performing arts, including acting, directing, or design. The course develops collaboration, creativity, confidence, and analytical skills—transferable abilities valued across all industries. It also supports careers in business, leadership, public speaking, and management. Students gain practical experience and a creative toolkit that helps them stand out in A Level study, higher education, and the workplace.

How you will be assessed

GCSE Drama is assessed through three components:

- Component 1 (105 mins - 40%) – Devised Drama: Create and perform an original piece in a group, drawing on professional theatre techniques. Includes a coursework log detailing your creative ideas and rehearsal process.
- Component 2 (20%) – Performance from Script: Perform from a contemporary play, individually or in groups, or explore technical theatre through design.
- Component 3 (105 mins - 40%) – Written Exam: Analyse a set text (An Inspector Calls) and evaluate live theatre performances, with insights from theatre trips.

Assessment combines practical performance, creative coursework, and written analysis, developing your skills as a performer, designer, and critic.

Food Prep and Nutrition

WJEC Vocational Award in Hospitality & Catering

This course develops students' practical cooking skills alongside an understanding of nutrition, food science, and healthy eating. You will learn to plan, prepare, and cook a wide range of dishes while exploring food hygiene, diet, sustainability, and the impact of food on health. The course combines hands-on experience with theoretical knowledge, preparing you for further study in food, nutrition, hospitality, or careers in the wider food and catering industry.

What you will learn

In GCSE Food Preparation and Nutrition, you will develop the knowledge, understanding, and practical skills to cook with confidence while applying the principles of nutrition, food science, and healthy eating. You will learn how to make informed food choices for yourself and others, preparing nutritious and affordable meals now and in the future. The course covers a wide range of topics, including food commodities, the science of food, principles of nutrition, diet and health, food origins, and practical cooking techniques. Through hands-on experience, you will develop essential skills in planning, preparing, and presenting dishes, as well as understanding how food affects health and wellbeing. The course combines theory and practice, equipping you with lifelong knowledge and skills to enjoy, evaluate, and create food responsibly, preparing you for further study, careers in food, or everyday life.

How you will be assessed

GCSE Food Preparation and Nutrition is assessed through a combination of written examination and practical coursework. The written exam (1 hour 30 minutes, 50%) tests knowledge and understanding of nutrition, food science, diet, and health. The remaining 50% is based on two NEA (Non-Exam Assessment) practical projects, where you plan, prepare, cook, and present dishes, applying your skills and knowledge to real-world food tasks. Assessment focuses on practical cooking skills, understanding of nutrition, food preparation techniques, and the ability to evaluate and reflect on your own work.

Future Pathways

GCSE Food Preparation and Nutrition provides a strong foundation for further study and careers in food, nutrition, and health. Students achieving a Grade 5 or above can progress to A Level Food Science and Nutrition or Level 3 college courses, exploring diet, health, and food technology. It also supports vocational pathways such as BTEC Hospitality, Catering, Professional Cookery, or apprenticeships in food and nutrition. Beyond specialist careers, the practical, planning, budgeting, and problem-solving skills gained are highly transferable, preparing students to succeed in further study, vocational training, or employment across a wide range of sectors.

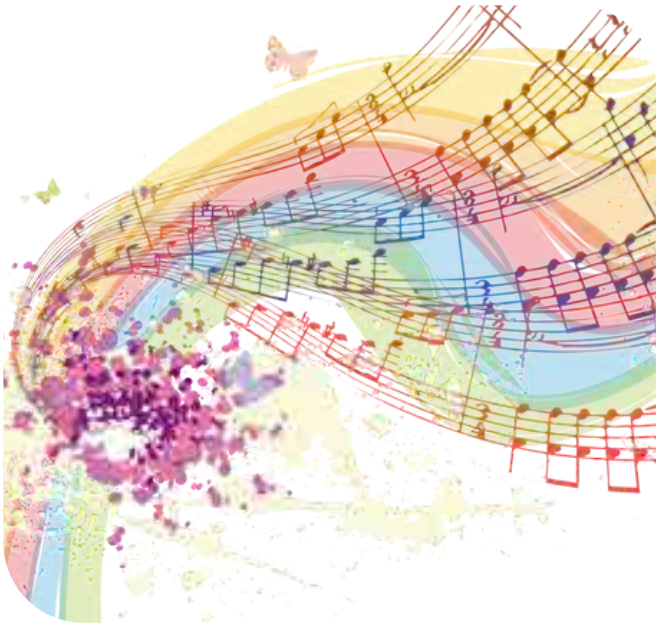
Music

AQA GCSE Music

This course develops creativity, performance, and musical understanding. **You must be able to play an instrument or sing and be willing to perform solo and in groups**. You should be open to exploring different musical styles and have a basic knowledge of reading music. The course also develops skills in composition, listening, and analysis, preparing you for A Level Music, further study, or careers in performance, composition, and the wider music industry.

What you will learn

In GCSE Music, you will explore a wide range of musical styles, from western classical to pop, rock, musical theatre, and film music. The course develops your skills in performing, allowing you to play or sing individually and in groups; composing, enabling you to create original music using a variety of techniques and styles; and understanding music, where you will analyse and appreciate how music is written, performed, and produced. Through practical and theoretical study, you will build confidence, creativity, and technical expertise, while developing your listening, analytical, and expressive skills. GCSE Music provides a strong foundation for A Level Music, further study, or careers in performance, composition, teaching, and the wider creative and music industries.



How you will be assessed

GCSE Music is assessed through three components:

- Understanding Music (90 mins - 40%) – You will study a wide range of musical styles and two set pieces in detail. Your knowledge and listening skills are assessed through a written exam at the end of the course.
- Composing Music (30%) – You will create your own compositions, including a free composition of your choice and a composition based on a given brief, such as a film clip or story.
- Performing Music (30%) – You will complete one solo and one group performance, showcasing your skills on an instrument, voice, or DJ setup.

This combination of practical performance, composition, and listening/analysis develops both technical and creative musical skills.

Future Pathways

GCSE Music provides a strong foundation for A Level Music or Level 3 music courses, developing performance, composition, and analytical skills. Careers are wide-ranging, from performer, composer, and session musician to producer, sound engineer, teacher, or workshop leader. While some roles are stable, others are freelance and competitive. The course also builds transferable skills—creativity, teamwork, and confidence—preparing students for further study or a variety of career paths.

PE

AQA GCSE Physical Education

The GCSE PE course develops students' understanding of how the body works in sport, fitness, and physical activity. You will explore anatomy, physiology, training, and health, while building practical skills through performance and analysis in a range of sports. The course prepares you for A Level PE, further study, or careers in sport, coaching, physiotherapy, and the wider fitness and health industry.

What you will learn

In GCSE PE, you will develop both your theoretical knowledge and practical skills in sport and physical activity. You will study applied anatomy and physiology, physical training, health, fitness, and well-being, as well as socio-cultural influences and sport psychology, learning how these impact performance and participation. Alongside this, you will take part in practical performances, completing three assessments across a mix of team and individual sports. The course encourages you to develop and maintain an active, healthy lifestyle, which supports creativity, decision-making, and performance in PE and beyond. **Both GCSE PE and BTEC Sport are best suited to students who are actively involved in sports clubs and extra-curricular activities, with a minimum expectation of participation in competitive school sports.** The course helps you improve physical skills, understand the science behind performance, and provides a strong foundation for A Level PE, further study, or careers in sport, coaching, health, and the wider fitness industry.

How you will be assessed

- OCR GCSE Physical Education is assessed through a mix of written exams and practical performance. Written Exams (60%): Two external exams, 1 hour each, covering applied anatomy and physiology, physical training, socio-cultural influences, sport psychology, health, fitness, and well-being.
- Practical Performance (30%): Assessment of skills in three sports (a mix of team and individual).
- Personal Exercise Programme (10%): Design, complete, and evaluate a 6-week training programme tailored to your sport-specific fitness needs.

Future Pathways

GCSE PE provides a strong foundation for further study and careers in sport, health, and fitness. Students achieving a Grade 5 or above can progress to A Level PE or Level 3 vocational courses in sport, coaching, exercise science, or physical activity leadership. The course also supports careers in physiotherapy, sports psychology, teaching, personal training, sports management, and leisure and fitness industries. Beyond specialist roles, the skills developed—teamwork, leadership, problem-solving, planning, and decision-making are highly transferable, preparing students for further education, apprenticeships, or a wide range of careers. By combining practical performance with theory, GCSE PE equips students with the confidence, knowledge, and fitness to succeed both on and off the field.

Product Design

This course develops students' creativity, problem-solving, and practical skills in designing and making products. You will explore materials, manufacturing processes, and design theory while creating innovative solutions to real-world challenges. The course prepares you for A Level Product Design, further study, or careers in engineering, industrial design, architecture, and the wider creative and manufacturing industries.

What you will learn

In GCSE Product Design, you will explore your creativity and practical problem-solving while learning how to design and make real-world products. You will study the full design and manufacturing process, gaining an understanding of a wide range of materials—their properties, uses, and suitability for different projects. You will create a detailed, visually engaging portfolio documenting your design process, alongside a final functional product that can be made using materials such as wood, metal, plastic, fabric, and smart materials. The course develops your design thinking, technical skills, and innovation, preparing you for further study in A Level Product Design, vocational courses, or careers in engineering, architecture, manufacturing, and the wider creative industries. GCSE Product Design combines imagination with practical skills, giving you the opportunity to bring your ideas to life while building a strong foundation for your future.

Future Pathways

GCSE Product Design provides a foundation for further study and careers in design, engineering, and manufacturing. Students achieving a Grade 5 or above can progress to A Level Product Design or Level 3 vocational courses, and on to university degrees in Design, Industrial Design, or Engineering. Careers include product designers who develop new products, create prototypes, and use computer-aided design software. The course also builds transferable skills in creativity, problem-solving, and planning, supporting success in many design and engineering roles.

How you will be assessed

GCSE Product Design is assessed through a combination of practical coursework and written examination:

- Non-Exam Assessment (NEA) – 50%: You will design and make a final, functional product, producing a detailed portfolio that demonstrates your research, design development, planning, and evaluation skills. This practical project allows you to showcase creativity, problem-solving, and technical ability.
- Written Examination – 50%: A 2-hour exam testing your understanding of materials, manufacturing processes, design theory, and the wider influences on product design, including sustainability and commercial considerations.

Photography

AQA Art and Design Photography

The GCSE Photography course develops students' creativity, technical skills, and artistic vision. You will explore composition, lighting, editing, and a range of photographic techniques while creating your own original work. The course combines practical projects with critical analysis of professional photographers, preparing you for A Level Photography, further study, or careers in creative industries, media, and visual arts.

What you will learn

In GCSE Photography, you will develop your creativity and technical skills using DSLR cameras and digital editing software such as Photoshop. You will explore a wide range of photographic styles, including portraiture, location and studio photography, experimental imagery, documentary photography, and moving image, while developing your own ideas inspired by themes. Throughout the course, you will research photographers and other sources (AO1), experiment with techniques and materials (AO2), record observations and insights (AO3), and create a personal and meaningful final response (AO4). You will gain essential skills in lighting, viewpoint, aperture, depth of field, and shutter speed, building a professional portfolio and developing the confidence and expertise to progress to A Level Photography, further study, or careers in photography, media, and the creative industries.

Future Pathways

GCSE Photography provides a strong foundation for further study and careers in the creative industries. Students achieving a Grade 5 or above can progress to A Level Photography, Art and Design, or Level 3 vocational courses, developing skills in digital imaging, composition, and creative problem-solving. Careers include professional photographer, commercial and editorial work, fashion, documentary, film and video production, and graphic design. Beyond specialist roles, the skills developed—creativity, observation, technical expertise, critical thinking, and self-expression—are highly transferable, supporting success in media, advertising, teaching, and other creative professions.

How you will be assessed

GCSE Photography is assessed through two components:

- Component 1 – Portfolio (60%): Completed from Year 10 to December of Year 11, the portfolio showcases your research, development, experimentation, and final outcomes. Work is set and marked by the centre, then moderated by AQA. Students explore themes, study photographers, experiment with techniques, and produce a refined personal response.
- Component 2 – Externally Set Assignment (40%): Starting in January of Year 11, students select from seven starting points and develop work through research, techniques, and experimentation. The project concludes with a 10-hour practical exam, producing a personal response in the classroom.

Religious Studies

WJEC Eduqas GCSE in Religious Studies

Thiss course develops students' understanding of religion, morality, and contemporary ethical issues. You will explore questions about life, death, human rights, relationships, and beliefs, examining Christian and Muslim perspectives alongside wider social and ethical debates. The course encourages critical thinking, discussion, and reflection, preparing you for A Level Religious Studies, further study, or careers in law, education, social work, and the wider public and community sectors.

What you will learn

In GCSE Religious Studies, you will explore some of the biggest questions about life, morality, and belief. You will investigate issues such as good and evil, human rights, relationships, and life and death, asking questions like: Why should humans have rights? Does sexuality or gender matter? Should abortion be allowed? Is human life sacred? What happens when we die? Can science and religion both be right? You will also study Christian and Muslim beliefs and practices, exploring how faith informs ethical decisions and shapes societies. Throughout the course, you will develop skills in critical thinking, ethical reasoning, and evaluating different perspectives, gaining the ability to reflect on your own beliefs and understand those of others, preparing you for further study, citizenship, and life in a diverse world.

Future Pathways

GCSE Religious Studies provides a strong foundation for further study in A Level Religious Studies, Philosophy, Ethics, or Sociology, helping students develop analytical, critical thinking, and communication skills. The course also supports vocational pathways in law, journalism, social work, public service, healthcare, education, and charity work, where understanding diverse perspectives and ethical reasoning is essential. Beyond specific careers, the skills gained—evaluating arguments, debating ethical issues, and reflecting on complex moral questions—are highly transferable, preparing students for higher education, apprenticeships, and the wider workforce, and helping them engage thoughtfully and responsibly with the world around them.

How you will be assessed

GCSE Religious Studies is assessed through three written exams, all taken at the end of Year 11:

- Component 1 – Religion and Ethics (50%): A 1 hour 45-minute exam covering Christian and Muslim beliefs, practices, and ethical issues.
- Component 2 – Thematic Studies (25%): A 1 hour exam exploring key moral and philosophical themes, including good and evil, relationships, life and death, and human rights.
- Component 3 – Religion, Philosophy, and Ethics in Action (25%): A 1 hour exam focusing on religion in the modern world, applying beliefs to contemporary ethical issues.

Statistics

Pearson Edexcel GCSE Statistics

The Pearson Edexcel GCSE Statistics course develops your ability to analyse data, solve problems, and make informed decisions. You will explore probability, averages, data presentation, and statistical reasoning, learning to draw conclusions and make informed decisions. Students should have D ('deepening') or O ('on track') in Year 9 Maths and check with their Maths teacher before choosing this course. It prepares you for A Level Maths, further study, and careers in business, finance, and data-driven industries.

What you will learn

In GCSE Statistics, you will develop the skills to analyse and interpret data and apply your learning to real-world problems. You will study collecting and processing data, probability, averages and spread, data presentation, and statistical reasoning, learning how to summarise information and draw valid conclusions. At BBA, students who study statistics make an entire grade more progress in their Maths GCSE compared to those who don't, giving you a real advantage. This course is particularly useful if you plan to take A Levels in Maths, Sciences, Psychology, Economics, Geography, or Business, or other Level 3 courses that rely on strong analytical and data-handling skills.

Future Pathways

GCSE Statistics provides an excellent foundation for A Level Mathematics, Further Maths, and Level 3 courses in subjects that rely on data analysis, including Chemistry, Biology, Physics, Psychology, Economics, Geography, and Business. The skills developed—data interpretation, problem-solving, and statistical reasoning—are highly valued in finance, research, marketing, scientific analysis, and data-driven industries. Students who achieve well in statistics are better prepared for higher education and careers that require logical thinking and evidence-based decision making. This course equips you with analytical skills and confidence to tackle complex problems in both academic study and the workplace.

How you will be assessed

GCSE Statistics is assessed entirely through two written exams, taken at the end of Year 11:

- Paper 1 – Non-Calculator (50%): 1 hour 30 minutes, assessing your ability to handle data, calculate averages, probability, and spread, and interpret information without a calculator.
- Paper 2 – Calculator (50%): 1 hour 30 minutes, covering probability, statistical reasoning, data analysis, and problem-solving using a calculator.

Textiles

The GCSE Textiles course develops students' creativity, technical skills, and understanding of materials and design. You will explore fabrics, techniques, and construction methods while creating your own original textile projects. The course combines practical work with critical evaluation, preparing you for A Level Textiles, further study, or careers in fashion, textile design, interior design, and the wider creative industries.

What you will learn

In GCSE Textiles, you will develop your creativity, practical skills, and design thinking by designing and making a range of textile products, from fashion to interiors. You will work on exciting project briefs that challenge you to create products for different target markets, building confidence and expertise in construction, fabric manipulation, and practical techniques. You will also learn how textile products are made in industry, gaining insight into professional design and manufacturing processes. This course is perfect for students who enjoy problem-solving, hands-on work, and working to design briefs, and for those interested in careers in fashion, textile, or interior design, including e-textiles.

Future Pathways

GCSE Textiles provides a strong foundation for further study and careers in the creative industries. Students achieving a Grade 5 or above can progress to A Level Textiles, Product Design, Fashion, or Level 3 vocational courses, developing advanced skills in design, fabrication, and creative problem-solving. Careers include textile designer, fashion designer, interior designer, costume designer, or roles in e-textiles and the wider creative industries. Beyond specialist roles, the course builds transferable skills—creativity, attention to detail, problem-solving, and project management—preparing students for further education, apprenticeships, or employment in a variety of design and manufacturing sectors.

How you will be assessed

GCSE Textiles is assessed through a combination of coursework and an externally set assignment:

- Component 1 – Portfolio (60%): Completed over the course, your portfolio will showcase your research, experimentation, design development, and practical work. You will document your ideas and processes, culminating in a final textile product. Work is set and marked by the centre and moderated by WJEC.
- Component 2 – Externally Set Assignment (40%): Students select a starting point from a range of briefs provided by WJEC. You will develop your ideas through research, experimentation, and planning, producing a final outcome within a 10-hour practical exam.

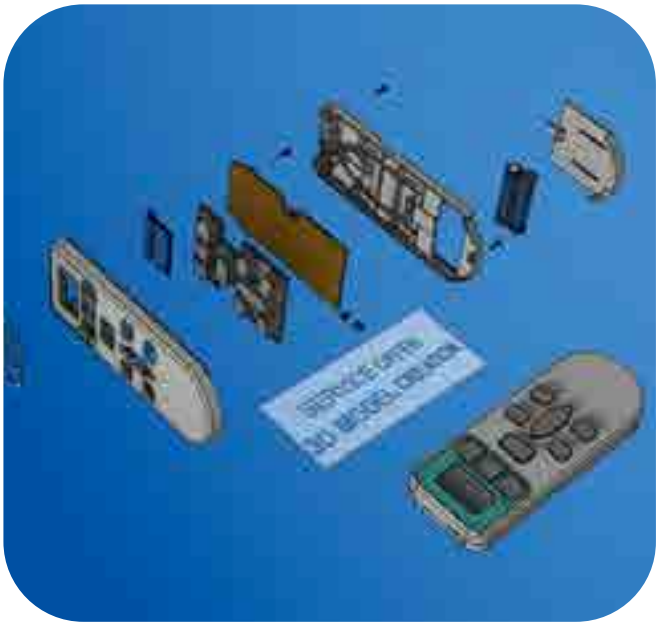
Engineering

OCR Cambridge Nationals in Engineering Design

This course develops students' creativity, technical skills, and understanding of engineering principles. You will explore design processes, materials, and manufacturing techniques while creating practical engineering projects. The course builds problem-solving, analytical, and CAD skills, preparing you for further study in engineering, A Level Design and Technology, or careers in engineering, product design, and manufacturing industries.

What you will learn

In OCR Cambridge Nationals Engineering, you will develop practical and technical skills while exploring the exciting world of engineering, from renewable energy to aerospace, automotive, and bioscience. You will study engineering design concepts, including the design process, technical drawings, influences on design, and the use of Computer Aided Design (CAD) to bring ideas to life. The course allows you to create real products, from designing a remote-controlled device to building a working prototype, giving hands-on experience in problem-solving, innovation, and precision. This qualification builds a strong foundation for A Level Engineering, vocational courses, apprenticeships, or careers in engineering and technology, preparing you for a future in one of the UK's most in-demand and rapidly evolving industries.



Future Pathways

OCR Cambridge Nationals in Engineering opens the door to a wide range of post-16 opportunities. Students achieving a Grade 5 or above can progress to A Level Engineering, Product Design, or Level 3 technical courses. Others may choose vocational pathways or apprenticeships in engineering, manufacturing, or advanced technology, gaining hands-on experience while earning. The course develops problem-solving, technical, and design skills that are highly valued across industries, meaning learners can also explore careers in automotive, aerospace, renewable energy, robotics, and more. With this qualification, students have the flexibility to pursue academic study, practical training, or a combination of both, building a versatile foundation for the future.

How you will be assessed

The OCR Cambridge Nationals in Engineering is assessed through three components:

- R038 – Engineering Design Principles (40%): An externally examined written paper (75 mins) covering engineering concepts, the design process, types of drawings, and the use of CAD.
- R039 – Design Project (30%): An internally assessed project, such as designing a remote-controlled device, allowing students to demonstrate practical application of design knowledge.
- R040 – Design and Build Prototype Project (30%): An internally assessed project where students create a working prototype, such as a clock or remote control, applying technical skills and problem-solving.

Health and Social Care

Pearson BTEC Tech Awards Health and Social Care

This course develops students' understanding of health, wellbeing, and care in real-world settings. You will explore human growth and development, factors affecting health, and how care services meet individual needs, while developing practical, analytical, and problem-solving skills. The course prepares you for further study, including BTEC Nationals or A Levels, and careers in nursing, social work, health care, and related professions.

What you will learn

In Pearson BTEC Health and Social Care, you will explore the world of human development, health, and care services, gaining knowledge and skills that are directly relevant to supporting people across their lives. You will learn how individuals grow and develop through different life stages, how life events and personal traits can affect wellbeing, and how support networks can make a difference. You will also study the range of health and social care services, how they work together, the barriers people may face, and how care values, skills, and attributes are applied to support individuals. Finally, you will explore the factors that influence health and wellbeing, how to interpret health indicators, and the ways health professionals help people improve their quality of life. This combination of practical, real-world learning and exam-based assessment prepares you for further study or careers in health and social care.

Future Pathways

BTEC Health and Social Care provides a strong foundation for further study and careers in the care sector. Students achieving strong grades can progress to A Level Health and Social Care, Level 3 vocational courses, or apprenticeships in nursing, social work, childcare, therapy, or public health. The course develops key skills in communication, empathy, problem-solving, and teamwork, making it valuable for academic study and employment. Whether pursuing higher education, professional training, or a career supporting individuals, this qualification equips you with practical knowledge and experience to succeed in the diverse and in-demand health and social care industry.

How you will be assessed

BTEC Health and Social Care is assessed through a combination of controlled assessments and an exam:

- Human Lifespan Development: Assessed via four written controlled assignments, covering life stages, factors affecting growth and development, life events, and sources of support.
- Health and Social Care Services and Values: Assessed via five written controlled assignments, focusing on how services work together, barriers to access, and the skills and values needed to support individuals.
- Health and Wellbeing: Assessed through a written exam, including multiple-choice and extended response questions on factors affecting health and how professionals support wellbeing.

IT

OCR Cambridge National in Information Technology

This course develops students' practical and theoretical understanding of information technology in real-world contexts. You will explore digital systems, data management, communication tools, and creating IT solutions, while building key skills in problem-solving, analysis, and project work. The course prepares you for further study, including BTEC Nationals or A Levels, and careers in IT, digital media, and technology industries.

What you will learn

In OCR Cambridge Nationals IT, you will develop the knowledge, skills, and confidence to use technology effectively in real-world contexts. You will explore the use of IT in the digital world, including data manipulation, human-computer interaction (HCI), augmented reality, and the Internet of Everything. The course encourages you to think creatively, analytically, logically, and critically, while learning to apply IT solutions for different purposes and audiences. You will gain practical, transferable skills in problem-solving, communication, project management, and digital technology. These skills are essential for understanding how technology drives modern industries, equipping you to handle complex tasks, make informed decisions, and contribute effectively in a wide range of academic, vocational, and workplace contexts.

Future Pathways

OCR Cambridge Nationals IT provides a strong foundation for further study or employment in the technology sector. Students achieving strong grades can progress to A Level IT, Computer Science, or Level 3 vocational IT courses, developing advanced digital, programming, and analytical skills. The course also prepares learners for apprenticeships or careers in IT support, networking, software development, digital media, and computing industries. Beyond specialist roles, the problem-solving, critical thinking, and practical technology skills gained are highly valued across a wide range of sectors, giving students a versatile and flexible platform for future academic or professional success.

How you will be assessed

The Cambridge National in IT is assessed through a combination of exam and coursework:

- R050 IT in the Digital World (40% external exam) covers design tools, human-computer interfaces, hardware and software uses, data storage in businesses, cyber security, legislation, and digital communication.
- R060 Data Manipulation Using Spreadsheets (30% controlled assessment) focuses on planning, designing, and evaluating a spreadsheet solution for a client.
- R070 Using Augmented Reality to Present Information (30% controlled assessment) introduces AR concepts and requires students to develop a prototype to present information to a target audience.

Sport

Pearson BTEC Sport Tech Award
Level 1/2

The Pearson BTEC Tech Award in Sport develops students' knowledge and skills in fitness, health, and sports performance. You will explore anatomy, physiology, training, and practical performance, while building teamwork, leadership, and problem-solving skills. The course prepares you for further study, including BTEC Nationals or A Levels in Sport, and careers in coaching, fitness, sports science, and the wider health and sports industry.

What you will learn

In Pearson BTEC Sport, you will develop both practical and theoretical skills in sport and physical activity. You will learn to prepare participants for activity, take part and improve performance, and develop fitness to enhance sporting outcomes. The course combines hands-on experience with knowledge of training, coaching, and physical development, helping you understand how to support and improve others' performance. **This course is only suitable for students who attend regular sports clubs outside school and are actively involved in multiple extracurricular activities within the PE Department, with a minimum expectation of participation in competitive school sports.** It is ideal for those passionate about sport and physical activity.

Future Pathways

BTEC Sport provides a strong foundation for further study and careers in the sports and fitness industry. Students achieving strong grades can progress to A Level Physical Education, Level 3 BTEC Sport, or vocational courses in coaching, fitness training, and sports development. The practical and theoretical skills gained—fitness training, coaching, leadership, teamwork, and performance analysis—also prepare students for apprenticeships, higher education, or careers in sports science, physiotherapy, personal training, leisure management, or professional sport. With a combination of hands-on experience and applied knowledge, this course equips students with the confidence and expertise to succeed in both academic and industry-focused pathways.

How you will be assessed

Pearson BTEC Sport is assessed through internal and external assignments:

- Component 1 – Preparing participants (30%) and Component 2 – Improving performance (30%) are internally assessed by your teacher.
- Component 3 (90 mins)– Developing fitness (40%) is externally assessed by Pearson under timed conditions.

Grades are awarded at Level 1 Pass, Merit, Distinction or Level 2 Pass, Merit, Distinction, Distinction* depending on your achievement across all components.

ASDAN

Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network

A Practical, Confidence-Building Route to Success

Choosing the right qualification at GCSE is an important decision for both students and parents. Alongside traditional GCSEs, ASDAN qualifications offer a highly respected, engaging and practical alternative that helps young people succeed academically and develop the real-world skills they need for further education, employment and life. They are designed to support students of all abilities, particularly those who thrive through applied learning, coursework and practical achievement.

What is ASDAN?

ASDAN qualifications focus on personal development, employability and life skills, while still meeting national standards. Many ASDAN courses are approved as GCSE-equivalent qualifications,.

Key features include:

- A coursework-based approach rather than high-pressure final exams
- Real-life, meaningful learning activities
- Clear links to further education, training and employment
- Strong emphasis on confidence, independence and motivation

Why Parents Choose ASDAN

ASDAN a qualification that is credible, supportive and future-focused.

1. Recognised and Respected

ASDAN qualifications are nationally recognised and valued by Further Education colleges, Sixth Forms and Training providers & Employers. They provide a solid foundation for progression to Level 2 and Level 3 courses, apprenticeships and employment.

2. Reduced Exam Stress

For many students, traditional exam-only GCSEs can cause anxiety and underperformance. ASDAN uses continuous assessment, allowing students to demonstrate their skills over time in a supportive environment.

This approach:

- Reduces stress and exam pressure
- Rewards consistent effort
- Gives students multiple opportunities to succeed

3. Real-World Skills for Life

ASDAN develops skills that matter beyond school, including:

- Communication and teamwork
- Problem-solving and decision-making
- Time management and organisation
- Confidence and self-belief

These are skills parents know are essential for adult life and employability.

Why students choose ASDAN

ASDAN qualifications are designed to be engaging, practical and relevant.

1. Learning That Feels Meaningful

Students work on real-life tasks such as:

- Planning projects
- Working in teams
- Solving practical problems
- Reflecting on their achievements

This helps learning feel purposeful, not just theoretical.

2. Show What You Can Do

ASDAN allows students to build a portfolio of evidence that proves their abilities. Instead of one exam deciding everything, students can:

- Demonstrate strengths in different ways
- Learn at a steady pace
- Take pride in completed work

3. Build Confidence and Motivation

Many students who find traditional exams difficult thrive with ASDAN. Success builds confidence, which often leads to improved attendance, better engagement in school and increased self-esteem and ambition

What will I study?

ASDAN offers a flexible and practical curriculum designed to develop skills for life, learning, and work. Students study units such as:

Personal and Social Development: building confidence, communication, teamwork, and self-reflection
Employability and Work Skills: CV writing, interview practice, work placements, problem-solving
Independent Living Skills: budgeting, meal planning, daily routines, personal responsibility
Creative and Practical Projects: arts, media, enterprise, or community projects
Community and Volunteering: charity work, environmental projects, or local initiatives

How is ASDAN assessed?

ASDAN qualifications are assessed through continuous coursework, rather than a single final exam. This approach allows students to demonstrate their learning over time, in a supportive and structured way.Students complete a range of clearly defined tasks and activities linked to real-life situations. Evidence of achievement may include:

- Written work and short responses
- Project work and planning documents
- Practical activities
- Photographs, logs or witness statements
- Tutor observation and feedback

All work is collected into a portfolio of evidence, which shows progress, effort and achievement across the course.

Future Pathways

ASDAN qualifications are designed with progression in mind, helping students develop the skills, confidence and evidence they need to take their next steps successfully, whatever route they choose. While ASDAN is not a GCSE, it is a nationally recognised qualification taken at Level 1 or Level 2, comparable to GCSE study, and is often completed alongside GCSEs. It provides a strong foundation for progression to sixth form and college courses, Level 2 and Level 3 vocational qualifications, and specialist or supported learning pathways. Through portfolio-based assessment, students are able to demonstrate their abilities clearly to colleges and training providers, particularly in areas such as teamwork, communication and independent learning. ASDAN is also highly valued for its focus on employability skills, supporting progression into apprenticeships, traineeships and other work-based learning programmes. Key skills such as time management, problem-solving and working effectively with others are embedded throughout the qualification, helping students feel confident and prepared for the workplace.

The ASDAN route is only available through discussion with learning support and is not available to everyone.

Subject Course Overview

Subject	Course Type	Coursework	Exams
English Language	GCSE	×	2 × 1 hr 45 mins
English Literature	GCSE	×	2 (1 hr 45 mins, 2 hrs 15 mins)
Maths	GCSE	×	3 × 1 hr 30 mins
Combined Science	GCSE	×	6 × 1 hr 10 mins
Separate Science	GCSE	×	6 × 1 hr 45 mins
Geography	GCSE	×	3 (1 hr 30 mins, 1 hr 30 mins, 1 hr 15 mins)
History	GCSE	×	3 (1 hr 20 mins, 1 hr 50 mins, 1 hr 30 mins)
French	GCSE	×	Listening: 35 mins (F) / 45 mins (H) Speaking (NEA): 7–9 mins (F) / 10–12 mins (H) + 15 mins prep Reading: 45 mins (F) / 1 hr (H) Writing: 1 hr (F) / 1 hr 15 mins (H)
Spanish	GCSE	×	
Computer Science	GCSE	×	2 × 1 hr 30 mins
Art	GCSE	✓	1 × 10 hrs
Business	GCSE	×	2 × 1 hr 45 mins
Drama	GCSE	✓	1 × 1 hr 45 mins
Food Prep and Nutrition	GCSE	✓	1 × 1 hr 30 mins
Music	GCSE	✓	1 × 1 hr 30 mins
PE	GCSE	✓	2 × 1 hr
Product Design	GCSE	✓	1 × 2 hrs
Photography	GCSE	✓	1 × 10 hrs
Religious Studies	GCSE	×	3 (1 hr 45 mins, 1 hr, 1 hr)
Statistics	GCSE	×	2 × 1 hr 30 mins
Textiles	GCSE	✓	1 × 10 hrs
Engineering	Vocational (BTEC)	✓	1 × 1 hr 15 mins
Health and Social Care	Vocational (BTEC)	✓	1 x 2 hrs
IT	Vocational (BTEC)	✓	1 × 1 hr 30 mins
Sport	Vocational (BTEC)	✓	1 × 1 hr 30 mins
ASDAN	A certificate of recognition	✓	None

Questions to guide your options choices

This checklist helps students, parents, and teachers make informed subject choices by reflecting on interests, learning style, support needs, and future pathways. Use it to guide discussion, identify suitable courses like ASDAN, and plan the best combination of subjects for success.

Interests and Strengths	Which subjects do you enjoy and feel confident in?	
Motivation & Engagement	Which subjects keep you motivated?	
Learning & Assessment Preferences	Do you prefer exams, coursework, or practical projects?	
Practical & Vocational Interests	Do you enjoy hands-on or project-based learning?	
Workload & Balance	Can you manage homework, coursework, and exams? How does your attendance and punctuality affect your learning?	
Post-16 Plans	Sixth form / college / vocational training / apprenticeship? Which subjects support these plans?	
Advice & Experience	Have teachers, careers advisors, or older students recommended subjects for you?	
Support Needs	Do you have SEN or an EHCP, and what support will help you succeed?	

Next Steps

The options process spans a number of weeks. We have spread this out to allow multiple opportunities for students and parents to engage with teachers and discuss their possible options choices in detail. This approach ensures everyone has enough time to gather information, ask questions, and make thoughtful, informed decisions. The following chart outlines the key dates in the process, helping families plan ahead and stay on track with deadlines and events.

1 Options Booklet

Parents and students recieve the options booklet. The options process begins. The options booklet explains the subjects you can choose, what each course involves, and how they're assessed. It's important because it helps you pick subjects that match your interests, strengths, and future plans.

9th Feb

2 Student Assemblies

Options subject briefings in assemblies are important because they explain what each subject involves, how it is assessed, and what skills are needed. They give students a chance to hear from teachers, ask questions, and make informed, confident choices about workload, enjoyment, and future pathways before choosing their subjects wisely.

6th March

3 Options Evening

Options evening is an event where students and parents learn about the different GCSE subjects, ask questions, and get guidance from teachers. It's important both attend so students make informed choices, parents understand the options, and together they can discuss strengths, interests, and future career or study plans.

12th March

4 Options Form

The GCSE options form is the place where students officially select the subjects they want to study. Understanding its requirements is important to ensure choices meet school rules, course prerequisites, and personal goals. Meeting the deadline is crucial.

Form Opens 12th March
Form Closes 20th March

Contact us

Got a question? Email the team.

Need help with the GCSE options process? Our dedicated team is here to answer any questions about subjects, key dates, timelines, or next steps. Whether you're unsure about your choices, need clarification on course content, or want advice on planning for the future, we're ready to support you every step of the way. Don't hesitate to get in touch—we're here to make the process clear, manageable, and stress-free for both students and parents.

Email the team: options@bba.clf.uk

Ellie Ackerman

Pastoral Support Assistant

Annie Heatherstone

Pastoral Year Leader

Ian Slocombe

Head of Year

Luke Green

Associate Assistant Principal