



West Hill School
Aiming High since 1927

YEAR 9 PATHWAYS





An introduction to pathways

Welcome to the Year 9 Pathways information booklet. I hope that the information contained provides you with the confidence to make the right choices for you as you move into your final years at West Hill School.

The pathways process can feel very daunting, you are being asked to make decisions that can affect your future, not just when you leave school, but when you move into the working world too.

This booklet details the whole process, and sets out a timeline for you to follow.

You will also have the opportunity this evening to speak to Curriculum Leaders for each option subject, and find out which subjects could be right for you.

Some students will already know which subjects they wish to take, and the career path they wish to pursue, others will not know what they want to do when they leave school (you're only 14 - that's ok!) and so will continue to study a broad range of subjects in order to keep their options open. Both are completely fine, and you are likely to fall somewhere in-between.

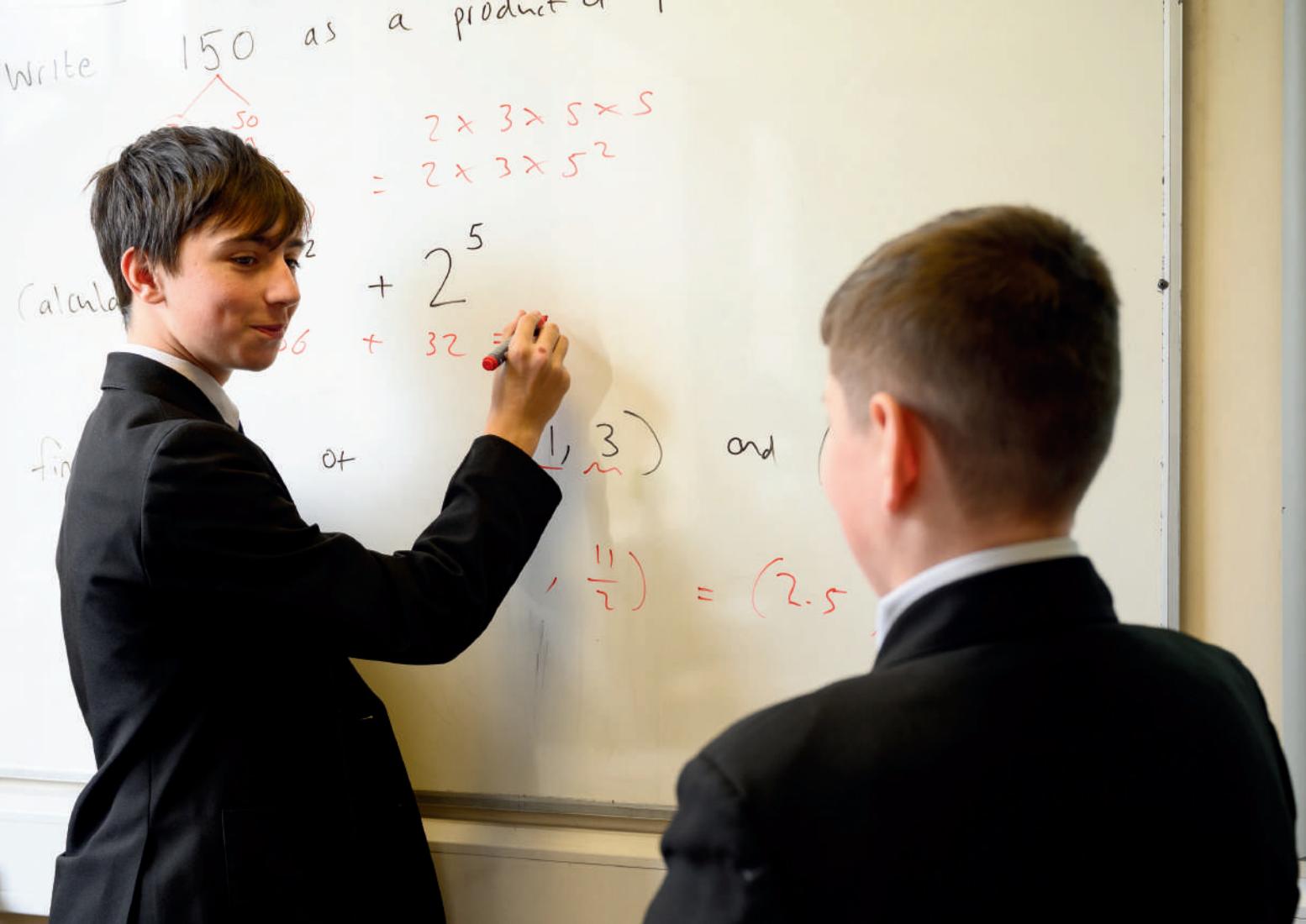
You have time to think, to find out information, to discuss with your parents, to talk to your teachers. We all want what is best for you.

Good luck in your choices!

Mrs Barton

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How to choose your options



Do

- Read and digest all of the information in this booklet.
- Choose subjects that interest you.
- Make sure your choices are balanced, a good mix of subjects ensures a good mix of skills developed.
- Talk to your parents, teachers, and other family members.



Don't

- Choose something because it's what your friends are doing.
- Choose based on who you think your teacher will be, this changes every year.
- Decide before you have completed the subject taster sessions on Friday 6th February.

A note on BTECs and VCERTs

As a school, we offer some BTEC and VCERT qualifications, these are intended to be accessible, skill-based courses, with more practical elements. The assessment method often involves coursework, rather than being 100% examined like traditional GCSE courses.

Pathways Timeline



**5th
February**

Progress and pathways evening

Parents and carers have the opportunity to meet with core subject teachers and explore all option subjects.



**6th
February**

Option subject taster sessions

Taster sessions in every option subject are delivered to all of Year 9.



**6th
February**

Pathway form opens

The link to the pathways form is sent to students using their school email address and on the West Hill app.



**27th
February**

Pathway form submission deadline

All options choices must be made by this deadline.



**22nd
May**

Confirmation

Option choices are confirmed by email to parents/carers and students.

To ensure all students have a broad and balanced curriculum, some subjects are compulsory for everyone. English, Maths and Science are examined whilst the others are not.



Core Curriculum



Mathematics



English Language and English Literature



Science

All students will be able to choose between the Trilogy course and the Separates course. See the subject pages for more information.



IDP

IDP encompasses citizenship, PSHE and careers topics which are not examined.



Games

All students will have one hour of games per week. This is not examined.



Alongside the core curriculum, you can choose 3 other subjects to study. There are the following conditions on the choices you make:

1. You must choose one subject from each block (A, B and C).
2. Two out of your three choices must be green, pink or orange (excluding white).
3. You can have a maximum of one white subject.
4. You can have two of the same colour, but your third choice must then be a different colour (excluding white).

Block A

Geography
History
Art
Spanish
German
Business Studies
Computer Science

Block B

Geography
History
RE
Music
Design Technology
BTEC Digital Information
PE
VCERT Business Enterprise
Computer Science

Block C

History
RE
Art
Design Technology
BTEC Sports Studies
PE
Business Studies
Food Preparation and Nutrition

Example options

You like humanities

You enjoy humanities and want to study both Geography and History. As these are both green, you need to choose a pink or orange option for your third choice. Your available options now look like this:

Block A

Geography
History
Art
Spanish
German

Block B

Geography
History
Music
Design Technology

Block C

History
Art
Design Technology

You like trying new things

You would like to try something new and are considering Business Studies or Business Enterprise. Your other two options must be a colour. Your available options now look like this:

Block A

Geography
History
Art
Spanish
German
Business Studies

Block B

Geography
History
RE
Music
Design Technology
Business Enterprise

Block C

History
RE
Art
Design Technology
Business Studies

Example options

You like practical subjects

You enjoy practical subjects and want to study Design Technology with either PE or Sports Studies. As one is pink and one is white you will need a green or orange final subject. Your available options now look like this:

Block A

Geography
History
Spanish
German

Block B

Geography
History
RE
Design Technology
PE

Block C

History
RE
Design Technology
Sports Studies
PE

You like creative subjects

You enjoy creative subjects and want to study Art. As this is a pink subject you will need one other colour, green or orange. You can also add in a white subject. Your available options now look like this:

Block A

Geography
History
Art
Spanish
German
Business Studies
Computer Science

Block B

Geography
History
RE
Digital Information
PE
Business Enterprise
Computer Science

Block C

History
RE
Art
Sports Studies
PE
Business Studies
Food Preparation and Nutrition

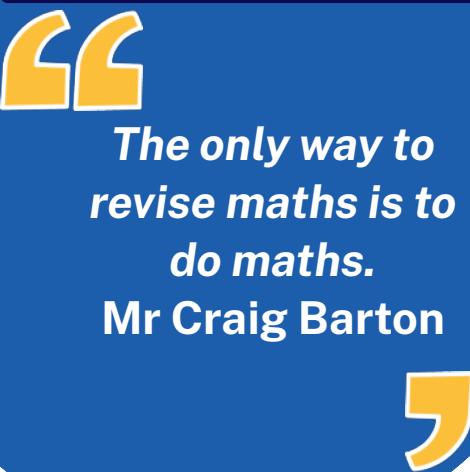
Option Subject	Considering?	Notes
Art		
VCERT Business Enterprise		
Business Enterprise		
Computer Science		
Design Technology		
BTEC Digital Information		
Food Preparation and Nutrition		
Geography		
German		
History		
Music		
PE		
RE		
Spanish		
BTEC Sports Studies		

Use this page to take notes and start to narrow down your choices.



Subject Information CORE

2026



Qualification: GCSE

Awarding body: Pearson Edexcel

CORE

COURSE OVERVIEW

GCSE Maths is separated into 6 key areas: number, algebra, ratio and proportion, geometry and measures, probability and statistics. These are not equally weighted, however. Key differences are that there is more number and less algebra at the foundation tier and more algebra and less number at the higher tier with everything else being similar. The foundation tier goes from a grade 1 up to a grade 5 with the higher tier going from a grade 4 / 5 up to a grade 9 at the very top. No final decision about the tier of entry is made until the time is right for each individual student, however we do monitor this carefully and classes are based on targets, progress and any assessment data collected.

Assessment



There are 3 examinations at the end of the course. Each exam is 1 hour 30 minutes or 90 minutes long. Paper 1 is non-calculator and Paper 2 and Paper 3 are both calculator papers. Any topic can in theory appear on any paper. Students sit either the Foundation or the Higher paper depending on their target, progress and predicted grades.

Skill development



Problem solving skills are continued to be developed along with recall of key facts and knowledge which builds on learning through Key Stage 2 and 3.

Careers and Post-16



Every job, career and aspect of life requires an element of maths skills so this is a real life qualification as well as needed for level 3 courses at college and the need to retake if a grade 4 or better is not achieved. A Level opportunities are popular with most requiring a grade 7 as a minimum.

English Language & Literature

CORE

“English is the key that unlocks every subject, every career, and every voice.”

Qualification: GCSE

Awarding body: AQA

COURSE OVERVIEW

Students study GCSE English Language and GCSE English Literature through the AQA Specification.

GCSE English Language:

This course develops practical communication skills that students will use throughout their lives. Students will read and analyse a wide range of fiction and non-fiction texts through which they will develop skills of interpretation, inference and evaluation. They will produce imaginative, persuasive, and transactional writing to showcase their skills. Students are also given the opportunity to build their confidence in spoken language through presentations and discussions.

GCSE English Literature:

This course explores powerful and influential texts that have shaped literature and society. Students will study:

- Macbeth (Shakespeare)
- A Christmas Carol (19th Century Novel)
- Animal Farm (Drama text)
- Power and Conflict Poetry (x15 poems)
- Unseen Poetry

Students learn to analyse language, structure, and themes while developing personal and critical responses.

Assessment



100% examination

Language:

2 exams each 1hr 45m

- Paper 1: Explorations in Creative Reading and Writing (50% of GCSE)
- Paper 2: Writers' Viewpoints and Perspectives (50% of GCSE)

Literature:

2 exams: 1hr 45m, and 2hr 15m

- Paper 1: Shakespeare and the 19th Century novel (40% of GCSE)
- Paper 2: Modern texts and poetry (60% of GCSE)

Skill development



Throughout the two courses, students will develop essential skills, including:

- Analytical reading and interpretation
- Clear, accurate, and effective writing
- Confident verbal communication
- Critical thinking and problem-solving
- Independent learning and time management

Careers and Post-16



A strong grade in English is essential for most post-16 pathways and careers. GCSE English supports progression to:

- A Levels and vocational qualifications
- Apprenticeships and T Levels
- Further and higher education

English is highly valued in careers such as:

- Journalism, media, and publishing
- Law, teaching, and education,
- Marketing, advertising, and public relations
- Business, management and customer services
- Creative industries and communications e.g. web content design

Separate Sciences



**The important thing
is to never stop
questioning**

Albert Einstein



Qualification: GCSE

Awarding body: AQA

CORE

COURSE OVERVIEW

The Separate Science qualification provides three individual GCSEs in Biology, Chemistry, and Physics. The course includes the same core scientific topics as Combined Science but delves deeper and includes additional content such as space. Students will either sit a foundation paper (grades 1 to 5) or a higher tier (grades 4 to 9) depending on their target, progress and predicted grades. This is an ideal course for those passionate about Science and provides a pathway to A-Levels in Science, university degrees in STEM fields (like medicine, engineering), or science-related careers.

Assessment



- There are 6 examinations at the end of the course, each exam is 1hr 45 min duration:
 - 2 biology,
 - 2 chemistry
 - 2 physics
- Examinations assess knowledge and understanding from distinct topic areas. Each paper contains multiple choice, structured, closed short answer, and open response questions.

Skill development



- Problem solving
- Working scientifically
- Investigative skills
- Data analysis
- Numerical skills
- Communication skills
- Literacy skills
- Risk management
- Ethical reasoning

Careers and Post-16



- A-level Biology, Chemistry or Physics
- Apprenticeships
- Medicine
- Dentistry
- Veterinary science
- Engineering
- Pharmacy
- Finance
- Data analysis
- Nuclear physicist
- Video games developer

And many more!

Combined Sciences: Trilogy



Nothing in life is to be feared, it is only to be understood

Marie Curie



Qualification: GCSE

Awarding body: AQA

CORE

COURSE OVERVIEW

The Combined Science qualification provides two GCSEs by blending Biology, Chemistry, and Physics together. The course focuses on core scientific topics, where students carry out a list of required practicals, alongside their theory, which are designed to help bring science learning to life and develop students' independent thinking skills. Students will either sit a foundation paper (grades 1-1 to 5-5) or a higher tier (grades 4-4 to 9-9) depending on their target, progress and predicted grades.

Assessment



- There are 6 examinations at the end of the course, each exam is 1hr 15 min duration:
 - 2 biology,
 - 2 chemistry
 - 2 physics
- Examinations assess knowledge and understanding from distinct topic areas. Each paper contains multiple choice, structured, closed short answer, and open response questions.

Skill development



- Problem solving
- Working scientifically
- Investigative skills
- Data analysis
- Numerical skills
- Communication skills
- Literacy skills
- Risk management
- Ethical reasoning

Careers and Post-16



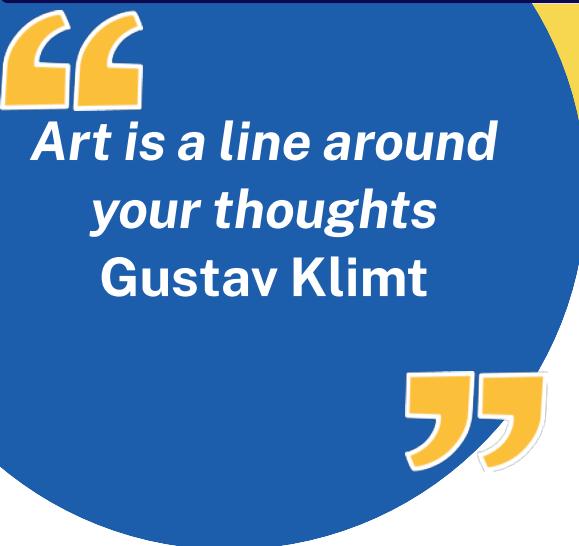
- T-levels
- Apprenticeships
- Engineering
- Healthcare
- Social care
- Environmental
- Forensics

And many more!



Subject Information OPTIONS

2026



Qualification: GCSE

Awarding body: AQA

COURSE OVERVIEW

Students who choose art for GCSE will take AQA GCSE Art and Design (Fine Art)

This consists of two components:

Component 1: Portfolio

Component 2: Externally set assignment

Students will have three, one-hour lessons per week

There will be 3 different components:

Component 1 (Portfolio) projects that you will study over the two years (One of these is the mock exam project).

Component 2 (The externally set assignment) is a project which consists of around 12 weeks of preparation work, followed by a final piece which can take up to 10 hours to complete.

Work completed in school or at home can count towards your coursework.

Assessment



The exams and non-exam assessment will measure how students have achieved the following assessment objectives:

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.

Skill development



Researching and understanding the work of different artists and art practitioners.

Developing creative ideas.

Experimenting with media, materials and techniques (like drawing, painting, printing, 3D).

Recording observations visually and in writing (annotation)
Creating a personal and meaningful final piece.

Careers and Post-16



AQA GCSE Art opens doors to creative careers such as Graphic Design, Fashion Design, Animation, Illustration, Architecture, Photography, and Curation, plus roles in media, games, theatre, and marketing.

Pathways often lead through A-Levels, Foundation Diplomas, or apprenticeships into university or directly into the creative industries, fostering skills for roles from Web Designer to Art Therapist or Set Designer to Tattoo Artist.

Business Enterprise

There are no rules in Business. You will learn by doing, and by failing
Richard Branson
(world-renowned British entrepreneur)

Qualification: VCERT

Awarding body: NCFE

COURSE OVERVIEW

The NCFE Level 1/2 Technical Award in Business and Enterprise (VCERT) is avocational alternative to the GCSE. While it covers similar ground to the Edexcel GCSE, it is more "hands-on" and focuses on the practical application of business tools through a project in Year 11. The course is built around eight mandatory content areas: entrepreneurship & stakeholders, marketing & market research, operations management, human resources, business growth, finance, external influences and business planning.

The biggest difference between the VCERT and GCSE Business Studies is the assessment split. Instead of being 100% exam-based, the VCERT allows you to earn 60% of your grade through a practical project.

Assessment



NCFE VCERT Business &Enterprise is assessed by one external exam and one synoptic project:

Exam - A 1 hour 30-minutewritten exam (80 marks). It includes multiple-choice, short-answer, and extended-response questions. 40% of the qualification.

Non-Exam Assessment (NEA) - A Synoptic Project where you apply everything you've learned to a specific business brief. You typically get around 21 hours of supervised time to complete this. 60% of the qualification.

Skill development



The VCERT provides a "significant core of knowledge" focused on how to start and run a venture. Such as entrepreneurial fundamentals, business operations, practical marketing, external environment and enterprise planning.

The VCERT is designed to develop "transferable personal and vocational skills" that are directly useful in the workplace. Such as project management & planning, organisation & time management, presentation skills and problem solving.

Careers and Post-16



The qualification is designed to provide a vocational & project-based route into the business sector. The progression paths often favour practical and technical specialisations: Further education, Level 3 courses – A-Level Business or Economics. Vocational routes: BTEC in Business, T-Level in Business & Administration or specialised courses in Accounting, Marketing or Law. Apprenticeships in Business Administration, Accounts/Finance Assistant, Digital Marketing or Retail.

Business Studies

**The more you learn,
the more you earn**

**Warren Buffett
(American investor
and philanthropist)**

Qualification: GCSE

Awarding body: Pearson Edexcel

COURSE OVERVIEW

GCSE Business Studies is designed to take you from the initial spark of a startup to the complexities of a global empire. You will begin by exploring the mindset of an entrepreneur, learning exactly what it takes to launch and run a small business, before shifting focus to how major corporations scale up and dominate the international market. The course is split into two equally weighted themes, culminating in two final exams that test your ability to think like a business leader.

This qualification is about more than just theory; it's about real-world application. You will develop the sharp analytical skills needed to navigate diverse business environments, from local independent shops to massive multinational brands. By mastering professional terminology and learning how external factors influence business behaviour, you'll gain the ability to solve complex problems in any context. Whether you dream of running your own company or working for a global brand, this course provides the toolkit to understand and succeed in the modern business world.

Assessment



Edexcel GCSE Business Studies is assessed by two linear exams of two equally weighted papers.

Paper 1: Investigating small business.

Written exam: 1 hour and 45 minutes
90 marks
50% of the qualification.

Paper 2: Building a business.

Written exam: 1 hour and 45 minutes
90 marks
50% of the qualification.

Skill development



Subject knowledge of the business world, including marketing, finance, operations, ownership, economic variables, legislation.

Soft skills that are highly valued by employers and in higher education such as analysis, balancing arguments, decision making, contextualisation, problem solving and numerical interpretation.

Careers and Post-16



Further education, such as Level 3 courses: A-Level Business or Economics. Vocational routes such as BTEC in Business, T-Level in Business & Administration or specialised courses in Accounting, Marketing or Law. Apprenticeships in Business Administration, Accounts/Finance Assistant, Digital Marketing or Retail.

Computer Science

“ Everybody should learn how to program a computer... because it teaches you how to think.

Steve Jobs

Qualification: GCSE

Awarding body: Pearson Edexcel

COURSE OVERVIEW

GCSE Computer Science develops students' understanding of how computers and digital systems work, alongside strong problem-solving and programming skills. The course encourages logical thinking, creativity, resilience, and responsible use of technology. Programming is a core part of the course, giving students practical experience of writing, testing, and improving code.

This qualification is well suited to students who enjoy problem-solving, technology, mathematics, and creative thinking.

Assessment



Paper 1 is a written paper – worth 50%.

Paper 2 is a practical 'on-computer' coding exam using the Python programming language - worth 50%.

Skill development



- Problem-Solving
- Logical Thinking
- Programming Skills
- Computational Thinking
- Understanding the responsible use of AI
- Understanding the hardware components in both a computer system and a network.
- Creativity and Innovation
- Digital Literacy and Responsibility

Careers and Post-16



- A Level Computer Science
- Vocational courses (BTEC/Levels) in IT and digital qualifications.
- Apprenticeships in: IT Support, Software Developer, Cyber Security, Data, Digital Marketing, Network Engineer.
- Careers in software development, cybersecurity, data science, engineering, AI, game/app/web design and many other digital industries.
- It also develops transferable skills valued in all careers, including problem-solving, logical thinking, and resilience.

Design and Technology

“Design is not just what it looks like and feels like. Design is how it works.”

Sir James Dyson

Qualification: GCSE

Awarding body: Eduqas

COURSE OVERVIEW

GCSE Design and Technology is a dynamic and engaging subject that combines creativity, problem-solving and technical knowledge. The course is not just about making; students develop a strong understanding of design theory, materials, processes and modern technologies alongside practical projects. This knowledge is applied directly to real design challenges, allowing students to create informed, high-quality outcomes.

Design and Technology opens the door to a wide range of career opportunities worldwide, from construction and engineering to product design and creative industries. The course is assessed through 50% written examination and 50% Non-Exam Assessment (NEA). The NEA is a substantial design-and-make project completed over an extended period of time in class, enabling students to demonstrate their creativity, technical skills and understanding in depth.

Assessment



- Non-Exam Assessment (NEA) – 50% of final grade.**
- Students undertake a major design and make project, developing an idea from initial research and design through to prototype manufacture and evaluation.
- Written Examination – 50% of final grade.**
- A formal exam assesses students' knowledge and understanding of design processes, core technical principles, specialist technical principles, and designing/manufacturing in the wider world.

Skill development



Students will develop a wide range of valuable skills including:

- Problem-solving and creative thinking
- Research and analysis
- Technical drawing and CAD (Computer-Aided Design)
- Modelling and prototype development
- Material selection and practical manufacturing
- Evaluation and reflective thinking

These skills are highly applicable across academic subjects and in real-world contexts.

Careers and Post-16



Careers:

- CAD Designer
- Architecture
- Product Designer
- Construction (Various)
- Electrician. Electrical engineer
- Engineering (Various)
- Game design

Post-16 options:

- A Levels in Design & Technology, Engineering or related subjects
- T Levels in Construction, Design or Engineering
- Apprenticeships in construction trades, engineering or manufacturing
- Further Education and vocational courses leading to skilled employment

Digital Information Technology

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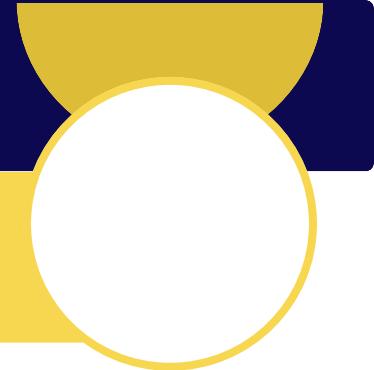
Design is not just what it looks like and feels like. Design is how it works.

Steve Jobs

”

Qualification: BTEC

Awarding body: Pearson Edexcel



COURSE OVERVIEW

BTEC Digital Information Technology develops students' understanding of how digital systems are used in real-world business and everyday contexts. The course focuses on developing practical IT skills, problem-solving, and the ability to design, create, and present digital solutions. Students learn how to manage data, design effective user interfaces, and use technology safely, responsibly, and efficiently.

This qualification is well suited to students who enjoy working with computers, being creative with digital tools, solving real-world problems, and developing skills that link directly to further study and careers in technology, business, and digital industries.

Assessment



Component 1: Exploring User Interface Design Principles and Project Planning Techniques – Internal assessment (NEA) completed over 6 hours. **Worth 30% of the overall grade.**

Component 2: Collecting, Presenting and Interpreting Data – Internal assessment (NEA) completed over 7 hours. **Worth 30% of the overall grade.**

Component 3: Effective Digital Working Practices – External examination (90 minutes). **Worth 40% of the overall grade.**

Skill development



- Project planning
- Computer hardware and software
- Creating user interfaces
- Collecting, presenting and interpreting data
- Cyber security
- Legal and ethical codes of conduct
- User experience
- Reflective practice, identifying areas for improvement.

Careers and Post-16



- Vocational courses (BTEC/T Levels) in IT and digital qualifications.
- Apprenticeships in: IT Support, Cyber Security, Data, Digital Marketing.
- Careers in data analysis, cybersecurity, systems design, UX, digital marketing, and other digital industries.
- It also develops transferable skills valued in all careers, including communication, problem-solving, teamwork, and digital confidence.

Food Preparation & Nutrition

“First we eat, then we do everything else”

M.F.K.Fisher

Qualification: GCSE

Awarding body: Eduqas

COURSE OVERVIEW

The GCSE in Food Preparation and Nutrition equips learners with the knowledge, understanding and skills required to cook and apply the principles of food science, nutrition and healthy eating. It encourages learners to cook, enables them to make informed decisions about food and nutrition and allows them to acquire knowledge in order to be able to feed themselves and others affordably and nutritiously, now and later in life.

Assessment



Component 1: Principles of Food Preparation and Nutrition

- Written examination taken at the end of Year 11
- 1 hour 45 minutes.
- 50% of qualification.

Component 2: Food Preparation and Nutrition in Action NEA:

- Internally assessed, externally moderated.
- Assessment 1: 8 hours.
- Assessment 2: 12 hours.
- 50% of qualification.

Skill development



Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of nutrition, food, cooking and preparation.

Plan, prepare, cook and present dishes, combining appropriate techniques.

Analyse and evaluate different aspects of nutrition, food, cooking and preparation, including food made by themselves and others.

Areas of Content

1. Food commodities
2. Principles of nutrition
3. Diet and good health
4. The science of food
5. Where food comes from
6. Cooking and food preparation

Careers and Post-16



A level Biology, Chemistry, Business Studies, Psychology, Sports Science/ Nutrition, Food Technology, Product Development, Level 3 Food Science and Nutrition, Hospitality and Catering Apprenticeships.

Food can lead to careers such as:

- Dietitian/Nutritionist
- Food Product Developer
- Environmental Health Officer
- Sports Nutritionist/ Chef
- Food Photographer/Journalist
- Food Technologist / Media

Geography

“ Geography graduates are highly employable because they have the skills employers look for
- Royal Geographical Society ”

Qualification: GCSE

Awarding body: AQA

COURSE OVERVIEW

GCSE Geography helps you understand the world around you and why places are the way they are. You'll learn about real issues happening right now, such as climate change, natural hazards, cities, and global inequality.

You will explore places in the UK and around the world, including richer and poorer countries, using real-life case studies. The course encourages you to think for yourself, see different viewpoints, and understand how people's choices affect the planet. Geography helps you build skills in problem-solving, decision-making and using evidence – skills that are useful for future study and many careers.

Assessment



Paper 1: Living with the physical environment . 35% of GCSE

- Written exam: 1 hour 30 minutes 88 marks (including 3 marks for spelling, punctuation and grammar)

Paper 2: Challenges in the human environment 35% of GCSE

- Written exam: 1 hour 30 minutes
- 88 marks (including 3 marks for spelling, punctuation and grammar)

Paper 3: Geographical applications 30% of GCSE

- Written exam: 1 hour 30 minutes
- 76 marks (including 3 marks for spelling, punctuation and grammar)
- Pre-release resources made available from mid-March in the year of the exam

Skill development



- Understanding **how and why places change**
- Learning about **real-world issues** like climate change and cities
- Using **maps, data and photos** to investigate places
- **Thinking for yourself** and explaining your opinions using evidence
- Building strong **exam and writing skills**

Careers and Post-16



GCSE Geography keeps lots of options open after Year 11. It is a popular subject at **A-level** and works well alongside science, business and humanities subjects. Geography can lead to careers such as:

- Environmental science and conservation
- Town and city planning
- Engineering and architecture
- Travel, tourism and international work
- Weather, climate and natural hazards
- Teaching, business, law and the media

“ what you learn in GCSE German shapes not just your results, but your opportunities for life. ”

Qualification: GCSE

Awarding body: Edexcel

COURSE OVERVIEW

GCSE German consists of three externally-examined papers assessing separately listening, reading and writing and one speaking assessment set by Pearson and conducted by a teacher in school. The GCSE is separated into six thematic areas which enable students to communicate across a range of engaging and relatable thematic contexts, which are relevant to their current and future needs.:

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

There is a supportive interactive word list which contains all the words which students are expected to know.

Students will have access to both foundation and higher content throughout Years 10 and 11 and will then be entered for either Foundation or Higher tier as appropriate. Foundation tier provides access to grades 1-5 and Higher tier grades 4-9.

Assessment



Paper 1 speaking 25%

Students are assessed on their ability to speak using clear and comprehensible language. There are three consecutive tasks: read aloud, role play and a picture task.

Paper 2 Listening & dictation 25%

Students are assessed on their understanding of standard spoken German.

Paper 3 Reading & translation 25%

Students are assessed on their understanding of written German across a range of contexts.

Paper 4 Writing 25%

Students are required to produce responses of varying lengths and types to express ideas and opinions in German. The instructions to students are in English.

Skill development



Recognises the importance of languages.

Develops students' ability to communicate independently about subjects that are meaningful and interesting to them.

Builds students' confidence and broadens their horizons, enabling them to exceed familiar cultural boundaries, developing new ways of seeing the world, better understanding relationships between the foreign language and the English language. Enables students to become familiar with aspects of the contexts and cultures of the countries and communities where the language is spoken.

Careers and Post-16



A-Level, vocational, future careers?

Good if you want to study A level German or progress to a degree course and add German alongside another subject.

Transferable Skills You Gain

GCSE German also builds skills valued in any career, such as:

- Public speaking skills
- Reading and listening for detail and meaning.

German can lead to careers such as:

Travel, tourism and international work

Teaching, business, law and the media

Graduate schemes in international companies.

History

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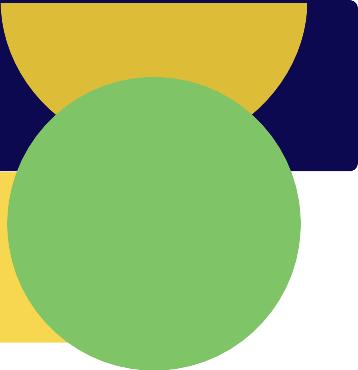
I love studying History as it gives me opportunities to show off my knowledge about the around me -

Current Year 11

”

Qualification: GCSE

Awarding body: Edexcel



COURSE OVERVIEW

GCSE History is about power, conflict, and change over time. You will explore how individuals, governments, and societies have shaped the modern world, and how their decisions still affect us today. You will investigate medicine from the Middle Ages to the present day, discovering how people fought disease, how war transformed treatment, and how science and technology save lives. You will study World War One and the Western Front, exploring trench warfare, injuries, and medical breakthroughs under pressure.

You will explore Elizabethan England, a time of plots, religious tension, and exploration, and uncover how Elizabeth I held power in a dangerous world. You will also study Weimar and Nazi Germany, examining how a democracy collapsed, how Hitler rose to power, and how fear, propaganda, and control shaped people's lives. The Cold War completes the course, where you will explore nuclear tension, spies, space, and global conflict.

Throughout the course, you will develop the skills of a historian: analysing sources, evaluating interpretations, constructing arguments, and making judgements. You will question evidence, debate key issues, and learn how to explain complex events clearly and confidently. GCSE History is dramatic, challenging, and relevant and prepares you to understand and engage with the world around you.

Assessment



Paper 1: Thematic study and historic environment

- Written exam: 1hr and 30 Mins
- 52 Marks
- Worth 30% of Qualification

Paper 2: Period study and British depth study

- Written exam: 1 hr and 50 Mins
- 64 Marks
- Worth 40% of Qualification

Paper 3: Modern Depth study

- Written exam: 1 hour and 30 mins
- 52 Marks
- Worth 30% of Qualification

Skill development



GCSE History helps students develop strong analytical and communication skills that are highly valued by colleges, universities and employers.

Students will learn how to:

- Think critically and analyse complex information
- Interpret evidence, including sources such as photographs, letters and statistics.
- Construct clear arguments and justify their opinions using evidence.
- Understand cause and consequence, change and continuity over time.

Careers and Post-16



Employers value a GCSE in History? History students are trained to **think independently, communicate clearly, and evaluate** evidence, skills that are useful in almost every profession. For example:

Lawyers & Solicitors: analyzing evidence, constructing arguments and evaluating reliability.

Politicians & Civil Servants: understanding society, decision-making and policy analysis.

Journalists & Media Professionals: researching sources, questioning reliability and clear writing.

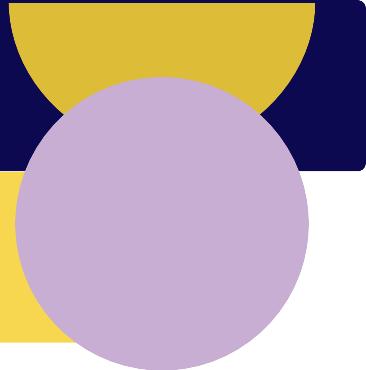


Studying music develops skills you'll use for life, not just exams



Qualification: GCSE

Awarding body: AQA



COURSE OVERVIEW

GCSE Music offers students the opportunity to build upon skills learnt during KS3. The three areas of Performing, Listening and Composing are the basic components that make up the course.

Most students choose music because they enjoy playing their instrument. Therefore, a large percentage of marks are allocated to performance. Students are required to perform individually and in a group. Ideally, students choosing GCSE Music will have already been learning an instrument before they enter Year 10. If this is not the case, please speak to Mr. Wells before choosing music. GCSE Music is also accessible to students with a music technology background. For further advice and guidance regarding this, see Mr. Wells.

Students will be taught composition techniques and how to incorporate these into their own compositions. They will use the Apple Mac suite and learn how to use the music software 'Sibelius' and 'Garageband' to compose two original compositions in their chosen style.

Throughout the course, students will listen to a range of musical genres and study two set works selected by the exam board. Through this process they will learn the history of music, musical vocabulary and how to recognise musical techniques and devices used by composers. All of which is required knowledge for their final written exam.

Students choosing Music must be committed to playing their instrument, attending their weekly instrumental lesson and regularly practicing their instrument to a satisfactory standard.

Assessment



Unit 1: Understanding Music
(written exam) – 40%

Unit 2: Performing Music – 30%

Unit 3: Composing Music – 30%

Skill development



GCSE Music helps students develop a wide range of musical, academic, and transferable skills.

- Performance skills
- Composition skills
- Listening & analysis
- Music theory
- Critical evaluation
- Concentration and focus
- Memory skills
- Problem-solving
- Creativity
- Time management
- Self-discipline
- Teamwork
- Communication skills
- Confidence

Careers and Post-16



GCSE music is a great foundation for going on to study both creative and academic courses at A-level or BTEC and beyond. Future employers value GCSE music because it:

- Shows creativity and originality
- Demonstrates commitment and self-discipline
- Builds teamwork and communication
- Develops confidence and presentation skills
- Encourages problem-solving and independent learning

PE (Physical Education)

“
What you learn in GCSE PE shapes not just your results, but your confidence, health, and mindset for life.

Qualification: GCSE

Awarding body: OCR

COURSE OVERVIEW

What is studied in Year 10?

- Applied anatomy and physiology
- Effects of exercise on the body
- Components of fitness
- Movement analysis
- Injury prevention
- Principles of training

What is studied in Year 11?

- Engagement patterns in physical activity
- Ethical & socio-cultural issues in sport.
- Sports psychology
- Health, fitness and well-being
- Analyse and evaluate performance (coursework, worth 10% of your overall mark)
- Commercialisation of sport

Assessment



Unit 1 Externally assessed

2 written examinations, each 1 hour. - Contributes a maximum of 60% towards the total marks.

Examinations will be taken at the end of Year 11.

Unit 2 Assessed in two sections.

Section 1 30% total marks

3 practical performances in the role of player in competition.

Section 2 – 10% total marks

Analysis of Performance in one of the chosen activities. Includes a written Personal Exercise Programme.

Note: Unit 2.1 is an on-going assessment and is finally assessed in March of Year 11.

Skill development



- Develop theoretical knowledge and understanding of the factors that underpin physical activity and sport. Use this knowledge to improve performance.
- Understand how physiological and psychological states affect performance.
- Perform effectively in different physical activities by developing skills & using tactics, strategies and/or compositional ideas.
- Develop ability to analyse and evaluate to improve performance in physical activity and sport.
- Understand the contribution which physical activity and sport make to health, fitness and well-being.

Careers and Post-16



Access for A-Levels or BTEC at 6th Form College. It can lead to careers in:-

- Health & Science
- Sport & Fitness
- Education & Youth Work
- Sports Industry & Business
- Emergency & Public Services
- Media & Technology

Transferable Skills

GCSE PE also builds skills valued in any career, such as:

- Teamwork
- Leadership
- Communication
- Discipline
- Time management

Religious Education

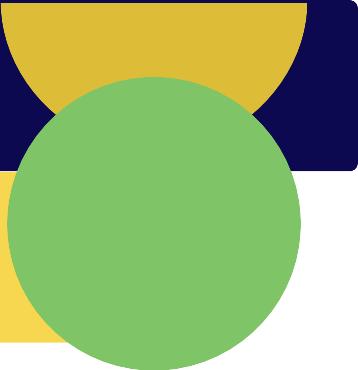


RE shows how religion has shaped history, politics and culture, so the news and the world make more sense.



Qualification: GCSE

Awarding body: Edexcel



COURSE OVERVIEW

You will explore religious, atheist, and personal responses to moral issues like capital punishment, war and matters of life and death. You will also gain a deep understanding of core Christian and Islamic beliefs, and how they shape believers' lives today. The course splits 50/50 between thematic studies and religious practices.

No religious belief is required — just an interest in religion, ethics, debates, diverse views, and reflection on questions like 'What happens after death?' or 'Is war justified?'.

The topics studied in Year 10 are:

Christian Beliefs, Marriage and the Family, Living the Christian Life and Matters of Life and Death.

The topics studied in Year 11 are:

Islamic Beliefs, Crime and Punishment, Living the Islamic Life and Peace & Conflict.

Assessment



Two examinations are taken at the end of Year 11.
Each exam is 1hr 45 mins.

- **Religion and Ethics: Christianity** covering the content studied in Year 10
- **Religion, Peace and Conflict: Islam** covering the content studied in Year 11

Skill development



- Analytical thinking
- Extended writing
- Argument construction
- Empathy and reflection
- Critical evaluation
- Effective communication

Careers and Post-16



Many of our previous students have gone on to study A-Level Religious Studies.

Religious Studies links to sectors like healthcare, law, social work, politics, policing, ministry, journalism where critical analysis and understanding diverse perspectives is key.

The emphasis on cultural awareness also supports roles in international aid, counselling, community development and public service.

Spanish

“
What you learn in
GCSE Spanish
shapes not just
your results, but
your opportunities
for life.” ”

Qualification: GCSE

Awarding body: Edexcel

COURSE OVERVIEW

GCSE Spanish consists of three externally-examined papers assessing separately listening, reading and writing and one speaking assessment set by Pearson and conducted by a teacher in school. The GCSE is separated into six thematic areas which enable students to communicate across a range of engaging and relatable thematic contexts, which are relevant to their current and future needs.

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

There is a supportive interactive word list which contains all the words which students are expected to know.

Students will have access to both foundation and higher content throughout Years 10 and 11 and will then be entered for either Foundation or Higher tier as appropriate. Foundation tier provides access to grades 1-5 and Higher tier grades 4-9.

Assessment



Paper 1 speaking 25%

Students are assessed on their ability to speak using clear and comprehensible language. There are three consecutive tasks: read aloud, role play and a picture task.

Paper 2 Listening & dictation 25%

Students are assessed on their understanding of standard spoken German.

Paper 3 Reading & translation 25%

Students are assessed on their understanding of written German across a range of contexts.

Paper 4 Writing 25%

Students are required to produce responses of varying lengths and types to express ideas and opinions in German. The instructions to students are in English.

Skill development



Recognises the importance of languages.

Develops students' ability to communicate independently about subjects that are meaningful and interesting to them.

Builds students' confidence and broadens their horizons, enabling them to exceed familiar cultural boundaries, developing new ways of seeing the world, better understanding relationships between the foreign language and the English language.

Enables students to become familiar with aspects of the contexts and cultures of the countries and communities where the language is spoken.

Careers and Post-16



A-Level, vocational, future careers?

Good if you want to study A level Spanish or progress to a degree course and add Spanish alongside another subject.

Transferable Skills You Gain

GCSE Spanish also builds skills valued in any career, such as:

- Public speaking skills
- Reading and listening for detail and meaning.

Spanish can lead to careers such as:

- Travel, tourism and international work
- Teaching, business, law and the media
- Graduate schemes in international companies.

Sport Studies

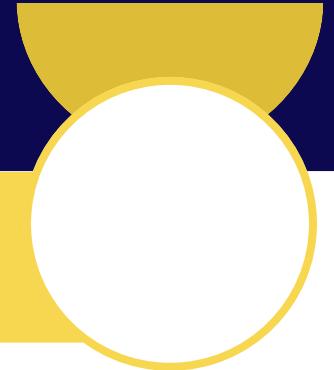
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Sport Studies will encourage students to think for themselves about the study of sport and the application to real life practical sport.

”

Qualification: BTEC

Awarding body: OCR



COURSE OVERVIEW

Over two years, students will develop an understanding of sport in modern society alongside practical performance and leadership skills. They will explore participation in sport, including barriers to involvement, the promotion of values and ethical behaviour, and the impact of major sporting events, National Governing Bodies, and technology.

Students will take part in a range of sporting activities, developing their skills as both performers and leaders while building transferable skills such as teamwork, communication, and decision-making. They will also learn about outdoor and adventurous activities, including how to access opportunities, plan activities safely, and use appropriate equipment and technology.

By the end of the course, students will have a balanced understanding of sport in theory and practice, preparing them for further study or careers in sport and physical activity.

Assessment



Unit R184 – Assessed by a 75 minute exam.

Units R185 & R187 are non-examined assessment units.

Skill development



Practical Performance Skills:

Techniques & Tactics, Practice Methods, Officiating

Leadership & Delivery:

Planning & Leading Sessions, Problem-Solving.

Analysis & Evaluation:

Performance Analysis.

Transferable Skills:

Teamwork & Communication, Research & Planning, Independence.

Careers and Post-16



Level 3 Vocational qualifications:

Cambridge Technical award, A Levels.

Graduates of Drew Feig High School have pursued higher education at prestigious universities worldwide, including:



What happens now?

- On Friday 6th February you will complete taster sessions in all option subjects

- On Friday evening, the options form will open. This will be sent to you via the West Hill App.

The Form

Part 1 Select which Science course you wish to study.

Part 2 Make a selection from each block, ensuring you meet the option criteria set out on page 7 of this booklet.

Part 3 Select a 4th ‘back-up’ option, incase one of your first three choices is unavailable.

Submit Submit your form by the deadline: Friday 27th February 3pm.

Careers help and support

Which subjects will best support my career aspirations or possible future career?

Some students may already have ideas about what they want to do in the future, however we encourage active career exploration throughout your time in school and do not expect a Year 9 student to know their exact career path. At this stage, it's more about recognising interests and strengths.

Students should think about:

- What they enjoy (e.g. problem-solving, creative work, helping others)
- What they're good at and feel confident in (e.g. writing, practical tasks, maths, communicating)
- What kinds of careers or activities they find interesting.

For example:

- Enjoying Science and problem-solving could link to careers like medicine, engineering, or forensics.
- Enjoying creative work (drawing, acting, making music, designing) may lead to design, media, or arts related careers.
- Enjoying organising, debating, or helping others might point toward law, teaching, social care, or public services.

Some subjects support specific career areas, while others build general skills valued by colleges and employers. Choosing a mix linked to interests and future possibilities can help you stay motivated and successful.

Is the subject suited to my strengths?

Different subjects suit different learning styles. Students are more likely to succeed when the subject matches how they learn. Students should think about how they prefer to work and what helps them achieve their best.

Examples:

- **Essay-based subjects** like History or English Literature suit students who prefer writing, researching, and analysing texts.
- **Practical subjects** like DT, Art, Music, PE or Food Preparation & Nutrition, suit students who enjoy hands on tasks and creating things.
- **Subjects with coursework** suit students who prefer gradual assessment rather than final exams.
- **Maths-based subjects** like Computer Science or Physics suit students who like logical thinking and problem-solving.
- **Creative subjects** suit students who enjoy imaginative work and expressing ideas visually or through performance.

Careers help and support

How do my GCSE choices affect my options at age 16?

When you finish Year 11, you'll choose your next step: A-levels, vocational courses, or apprenticeships. Your GCSE subjects and grades will influence these options:

A-levels

Many sixth forms and colleges require specific GCSE subjects and grades for certain A-levels.

- Maths A-level → Usually needs a strong grade in GCSE Maths. (6+)
- Science A-levels → Often require at least two GCSE sciences (and good grades).
- Languages A-level → You must take the language at GCSE first.

Vocational Courses

- Courses like Engineering, Health & Social Care, or ICT often prefer related GCSE subjects.
- Practical subjects (Design Technology, Food, PE, BTECs and VCERTs) can help with vocational pathways.

Apprenticeships

Most require passes in English and Maths; Competitive apprenticeships (e.g. engineering, digital, business) → GCSE Maths, English and sometimes Science are important.

Even if a student is unsure, choosing a range of subjects helps ensure they can access the widest range of post-16 choices.

How do my GCSE choices affect my options at age 18 (university, higher apprenticeships, employment)?

Even after A-levels or vocational courses, GCSEs can still matter.

Most university courses look mainly at A-level subjects, but GCSEs still matter.

- Medicine, Dentistry, Veterinary Science → strong GCSEs in Science, Maths, and English are important for application.
- Engineering → GCSE Maths and Science are often essential.
- Teaching → GCSE English, Maths (and often Science for primary teaching) are required.
- Creative degrees (Art, Graphic Design, Fashion) → GCSE Art helps develop early portfolio skills.
- Competitive universities (e.g. Russell Group) → often expect a strong balanced GCSE profile including a language and a humanity.

Frequently asked questions



Can't you just tell me which Science to do?

We could, but we want you to have a choice. The Science Team will be able to advise you on the key differences between the courses, and your teacher will help you to identify which one is best for you.



Why do I have to pick a back up option?

Sometimes if numbers are low for a particular course, we are unable to run it. Equally, some courses may have too many sign up. When this is the case, Mrs Barton will look at students 4th choice.



What happens if I can't do something that I picked?

This won't happen out of the blue, Mrs Barton will speak with you and your parents to discuss alternatives, including your 4th reserve choice.



I really don't know what to pick!

That's ok! We start this process early so that you have time to research, and talk to different people. Mrs Appleby can also help you understand the sorts of options for when you leave school. She's located in the Library every day.

For more information, help and support, speak to the following people in school:

- **Form Tutor**
- **Subject teachers**
- **Mr Evans, Head of Year**
- **Mrs Barton, SLT**
- **Mrs Appleby, Careers Lead**