



**Rye Hills
Academy**

Key Stage 4 Options Guide



A note from our Head of School

Dear Parents and Carers,

Following the Key Stage 4 Options Evening students are asked to make a number of choices in relation to the curriculum they will study in Years 10 and 11.

The subjects studied in Year 7, 8 and 9 are currently very similar for all students. However, in Years 10 and 11 students have a degree of choice and can select the option subjects they wish to study. As a parent/carer, you have a key role in this process, as well as supporting your son/daughter as they enter the next phase of their education at Rye Hills Academy.

All students are expected to follow examination courses in English, Mathematics and Science. In addition, all students will participate in Physical Education and Beliefs and Values lessons. These subjects are known as Compulsory Subjects and they are not optional. Students will then select from a range of courses which are shown on the Options Decision Form. A brief outline of the courses offered is also included in the brochure.

The Key Stage 4 Options Evening will give parents/carers and students the opportunity to talk to staff and discuss the content of the individual courses on offer.

Yours faithfully



Hijab Zaheer
Head of School

Curriculum

In Year 10 and 11, all students continue to follow the National Curriculum. In Year 9 we are introducing an element of choice as students prepare for Key Stage 4. Whilst the majority of the Key Stage 4 curriculum is prescribed by the Department for Education, we still have some flexibility at Rye Hills Academy.

There have been significant changes made both in the statutory curriculum offered and the way in which student performance is measured. However, we want to continue to offer our students a curriculum that is appropriate to their individual needs, whilst ensuring it enables them to meet the expectations set out by the Department for Education.

With this in mind, students will follow a curriculum which reflects the recent changes and, wherever possible, this is tailored to suit your child's individual skills and abilities. Thinking about potential future careers is also a key part of this process. Students have had the opportunity to learn about different career paths in their careers lessons this term.

This brochure is about the courses your child will study over the next two years. **Please read it carefully.**

Choosing – The process

Throughout the process there are lots of opportunities to find out more:

- Year 9 Parents' Evening
- Key Stage 4 options assemblies
- Careers sessions
- Key Stage 4 options guide
- Options Evening for students and parents/carers
- Head of Department subject videos on the Y9 Student Pod page

After the Options Evening all students will have to complete an options decision form online.

PLEASE NOTE: IF THE OPTIONS DECISION FORM IS COMPLETED LATE, YOU ARE LESS LIKELY TO GET YOUR PREFERRED OPTIONS.

Completed Options Decision Forms will be checked to ensure that your child has chosen a **BROAD** and **BALANCED** range of subjects allowing them access to as wide a range of careers as possible in the future.

We will do our very best to accommodate your child's choices, but it will be necessary for reserve choices to be made. Therefore, your child should choose their reserve choices carefully. We are offering a wide range of courses but may not be able to run them all if class sizes are not viable.

If there is a problem with any of their choices, we will discuss this with your child. Otherwise, he/she will start their chosen courses when they start Year 10 in September. Please contact Mrs G Sands (Progress Leader) if you have any further questions about the options process.

Compulsory subjects

English

Two GCSEs which includes English Language and English Literature.

Mathematics

One GCSE.

Science

Two GCSEs by following the Combined Science Trilogy Award or three GCSEs if students sit a separate GCSE in each of the three Sciences.

Physical Education

No qualification awarded.

Belief and Values

No qualification awarded.



Compulsory subject

AQA GCSE English Language

The specification offers two equally balanced papers, relating reading sources to the topic and theme of writing tasks. Each paper has a distinct identity, looking at how writers use narrative and descriptive techniques to engage the interest of readers and how different writers present a similar topic over time. The unit will also draw on good practice of students' verbal skills. However, this does not contribute to the overall GCSE result.

Areas of study

Students will read and analyse a range of texts from the 19th, 20th and 21st Centuries.

There are two pieces of Extended Writing in the examinations. For Speaking and Listening, students will be expected to present, ask and respond to questions and use Standard English.

Learning Outcomes

Students will learn to:

- Read fluently, and with good understanding, a wide range of texts from the 19th, 20th and 21st Centuries, including literature and literary non-fiction as well as other writing such as reviews and journalism
- Read and evaluate texts critically and make comparisons between texts
- Summarise and synthesise information or ideas from texts
- Use knowledge gained from wide reading to inform and improve their own writing
- Write effectively and coherently using Standard English appropriately
- Use grammar correctly and punctuate and spell accurately
- Acquire and apply a wide vocabulary, alongside a knowledge and understanding of grammatical terminology, and linguistic conventions for reading, writing and spoken language
- Listen to and understand spoken language and use spoken Standard English effectively

Future Options

Next Steps: English is a facilitating subject and is necessary for most post-16 courses. Students who achieve a good grade in English Language at GCSE can go on to study A-Level Language or Literature at Sixth Form.

Possible Careers: The ability to analyse sophisticated ideas and communicate them fluently supports progression into a variety of professions including medicine, engineering, veterinary sciences and law. Subject specific careers include marketing, public relations and journalism as well as work in the wider creative industries.

Assessment

Unit 1 - 50% Examination - 1 hour 45 minutes. Explorations in Creative Reading and Writing.

Unit 2 - 50% Examination - 1 hour 45 minutes. Writers' Viewpoints and Perspectives.

Unit 3 - 0% Internal Assessment - Externally Moderated Range of Spoken Language tasks.

Compulsory subject

AQA GCSE English Literature

GCSE English Literature encourages students to develop knowledge and skills in reading, writing and critical thinking. Through literature, students have a chance to develop culturally and acquire knowledge from some of the best thinkers and writers. Studying GCSE English Literature encourages students to read widely for pleasure and is preparation for studying literature at a higher level.

Areas of study

Students will study a range of poetry, prose and drama texts, including:

- A Shakespeare play
- Modern drama or novel
- 19th century novel
- A cluster of 15 thematically-linked poems associated with power and conflict or love and relationships and written between 1789 and the present day
- A selection of 'unseen' poems in preparation for the 'unseen' element of the Paper 2 examination

Learning Outcomes

Students will learn to:

- Read a wide range of classic literature fluently and with good understanding, and make connections across their reading
- Read in-depth, with critical and evaluative processes, so that they are able to discuss and explain their understanding and ideas
- Develop the habit of reading widely and often
- Appreciate the depth and power of our English literary heritage
- Write accurately, effectively and analytically about their reading, using Standard English
- Acquire and use a wide range of vocabulary, including the grammatical terminology and other literary and linguistic terms they need to criticise and analyse what they read

Future Options

Next Steps: English is a facilitating subject. The ability to analyse sophisticated ideas and communicate them fluently. Students who achieve a good grade in English Literature at GCSE can go on to study A-Level Language or Literature at Sixth Form.

Possible Careers: English supports progression into a variety of professions including medicine, engineering, veterinary sciences and law. Subject specific careers include marketing, public relations and journalism as well as work in the wider creative industries.

Assessment

Unit 1 - 40% Written examination: 1 hour 45 minutes. Paper 1: Shakespeare and the 19th-century novel.

Closed book examination (students will not have access to the texts they have studied in the exam).

Unit 2 - 60% Written examination: 2 hour 15 minutes. Paper 2: Modern texts and poetry. Closed book examination (students will not have access to the texts they have studied in the exam).



Compulsory subject

OCR GCSE Maths

Mathematics is an interconnected subject in which we expect our students to be able to build on their learning in the early stages of Key Stage 3 to further develop their fluency, mathematical reasoning and competence in solving increasingly difficult problems.

Areas of study

There will be a mixture of formal, practical and investigation work in the lessons covering the areas of:

- Number
- Algebra
- Ratio, proportion and rates of change
- Geometry and measures
- Probability
- Statistics

This will lead to students being assessed by 3 terminal examination papers taken at the end of Year 11:

- Higher Tier paper will allow students to gain grades from 4 to 9
- Foundation paper will allow students able to gain grades from 1 to 5

Learning Outcomes

By studying Mathematics it is expected that our students will be able to develop and consolidate connections across

mathematical ideas through the three aims of the curriculum:

- Develop their fluency. Consolidate their numerical and mathematical capability from Key Stage 3. Be able to select and use appropriate calculation strategies and use mathematical language and properties precisely
- Be able to reason mathematically. Extend their ability to assess the validity and accuracy of a given way of
- presenting information. Reason deductively in geometry, number and algebra
- Solve Problems. Develop their knowledge through solving problems and evaluating the outcomes, including multi-step problems. Make and use connections between different parts of Mathematics to solve problems

Future Options

Next Steps: Maths is a facilitating subject and is necessary for most post-16 courses and many jobs. Students who achieve a good grade in Maths at GCSE can go on to study A-Level Maths at Sixth Form.

Possible Careers: Every single job and every aspect of life involves some element of maths, it is a vital and intrinsic part of society, whether this be basic numeracy, complex algorithms, or any level of problem solving.

Assessment

Unit 1 – 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ % Examination (90 minutes) Foundation and Higher Tier

Written papers to assess knowledge and understanding of syllabus. Requires mental calculation.

Unit 2 - 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ % Examination (90 minutes) Foundation and Higher Tier

Written papers to assess knowledge and understanding of syllabus. Requires complex calculation.

Unit 3 - 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ % Examination (90 minutes) Foundation and Higher Tier.

Written papers to assess knowledge and understanding of syllabus. Requires complex calculation.

Compulsory subject

AQA GCSE Science (Trilogy)

The course places a strong emphasis on exploring the science that underpins day to day life and encourages students to think about what science can tell them about themselves, the environment and the universe. It provides the opportunity to acquire the scientific skills, knowledge and understanding necessary for life. There is a strong emphasis on explanations, theories and modelling in science along with the implications of science in society.

Areas of study

Biology -

Unit 1 Cell biology, Organisation, Infection and response and Bioenergetics

Unit 2 Homeostasis and response, Inheritance, variation, evolution and Ecology

Chemistry -

Unit 1 Atomic structure Periodic table, Bonding, structure and properties, Quantitative chemistry, Chemical changes, Energy changes.

Unit 2 The rate of chemical change, Organic chemistry, Chemical analysis, Chemistry of the atmosphere and Using resources.

Physics -

Unit 1 Energy, Electricity, Particle model of matter, Atomic structure,

Unit 2 Forces, Waves and Magnetism and electro- magnetism. (Space physics is taught in the physics Triple award)

Learning Outcomes

Students will study all three science subjects throughout Years 10 and 11 leading to a GCSE in Combined Science: Trilogy. This qualification is worth 2 GCSEs. At the end of Year 11, students will take six exams: two Biology, two Chemistry and two Physics. Each of the papers will assess knowledge and understanding from distinct topic areas. The final grades will be awarded from the total marks achieved across all six papers.

GCSE Science Triple Award

Students who have shown an aptitude for Science in Key Stage 3 will be selected to take this course. It allows students to experience a broader, more in-depth coverage of topics. At the end of the course they will achieve separate qualifications in GCSE Biology, GCSE Chemistry and GCSE Physics, therefore leading to 3 GCSE qualifications. The grades will be awarded from the two papers from discipline.

Future Options

Next Steps: At the end of this GCSE you will be ready to play your part in scientific and technological advances in society. If you wish to continue to study Science after Year 11 there are a wide range of courses on offer including: A level Biology, A level Chemistry, A level Physics, BTEC Level 3 Science. However you will also find that GCSE Science underpins a wide range of vocational courses and apprenticeships beyond Year 11.

Possible Careers: Aerobiologist, aerospace engineer, agricultural scientist, acoustician, analytical chemist, applied mathematician, archaeologist, astronomer, atomic physicist, architect, astrophysicist, biochemist bioinformatician, biology researcher, biomechanics engineer, biomedical engineer, biomedical researcher, biomedical scientist, biophysicist, biostatistician, biotechnologist, botanist, chemical engineer, chemical health and safety regulator, chemical physicist, cheminformatics, civil engineer, cosmetic chemist, crystallographer, food technologist forensic scientist, geochemist and many more!

Assessment

Trilogy

Each paper is worth 70 marks, 420 in total, each worth 16% of the final grade.

Biology unit 1 - Written exam based on topics 1 - 4.

Biology unit 2 - Written exam based on topics 5 - 7.

Chemistry unit 1 - Written exam based on topics 8 - 12 Chemistry unit 2 - Written exam based on topics 13 - 17.

Physics unit 1 - Written exam based on topics 18 - 21. Physics unit 2 - Written exam based on topics 22 - 14.

Triple award

Each paper is worth 100 marks, 200 in total, each worth 50% of the final grade, in each discipline.

Biology unit 1 - Written exam based on topics 1 - 4.

Biology unit 2 - Written exam based on topics 5 - 7.

Chemistry unit 1 - Written exam based on topics 1-4

Chemistry unit 2 - Written exam based on topics 5-8

Physics unit 1 - Written exam based on topics 1-5

Physics unit 2 - Written exam based on topics 6-10

Compulsory subject

Core PE

All Rye Hills Academy students will receive at least one hour of high-quality PE every week. Within lesson time we aim to deliver a broad and balanced curriculum which is designed to engage all students.

Areas of study

Within Core PE lessons classes are gender-specific, allowing boys and girls to follow a different curriculum. Furthermore, within boys' and girls' Core PE we aim to differentiate further by tailoring the curriculum to meet the needs of all students within each group. Activities taught during Core PE include the following:

- Football
- Rugby
- Dance
- Netball
- Trampolining
- Fitness
- Handball
- Table tennis
- Athletics
- Tennis
- Rounders
- Cricket
- Softball

Learning Outcomes

Core PE aims to develop students' understanding of the benefits of participating in physical activity and sport. Also, students are encouraged to be self-motivated and develop key transferable skills such as resilience, communication, leadership and adaptability.

Future Options

Students are encouraged to value and lead a healthy active lifestyle after compulsory education.

Assessment

Effort Level Assessment

All students will receive an effort level grade in line with each whole school grade update.

Options you may choose

We are offering the following range of courses in September 2026:

French

Geography

History

Art, Craft and Design

Computing: Computer Science

Computing: Creative iMedia

Digital Art (Graphic Communication)

Drama

Engineering & Design

Health & Social Care

Hospitality & Catering

Music

Philosophy & Ethics

Photography

Sports Studies

All students must study History or Geography.

All students are strongly encouraged to study French.

All students will then choose 2 further subjects from the Options list.

All students will also be asked to indicate TWO RESERVE choices on the Options Decision Form.



Optional subject

AQA GCSE Art, Craft and Design

Art and Design is a course that is primarily concerned with visual and tactile modes of expression. It is a unique vehicle for communication and self-expression through a variety of art and design activities to develop creative, imaginative, conceptual and practical skills.

Areas of study

Learners will investigate art, craft and design practice to inform the generation and communication of ideas and will develop practical skills through exploration of specialist materials, techniques and processes. Projects are designed to develop a range of creative skills and will include activities such as drawing, painting, supportive photography, print-making, 3D techniques, experimentation with media and techniques, annotation using specialist vocabulary, and studying the work of artists, designers and craftspeople.

Learners will develop and produce art and design work in response to a creative brief, concept or topic provided by the exam board. This provides evidence of the students' ability to work independently within specified time constraints, realise intentions that are personal and meaningful, and explicitly address the assessment objectives.

Learning Outcomes

Art, Craft and Design should encourage students to:

- Actively engage in the creative process of art, craft and design in order to develop as effective and independent learners, and as critical and reflective thinkers with enquiring minds
- Develop creative, imaginative and intuitive capabilities when exploring and making images, artefacts and products
- Become confident in taking risks and learn from experience when exploring and experimenting with ideas, processes, media, materials and techniques
- Develop critical understanding through investigative, analytical, experimental, practical, technical and expressive skills
- Develop and refine ideas and proposals, personal outcomes or solutions with increasing independence

Future Options

Next Steps: A lot of students who study Art, craft and Design go on to study multimedia design, fashion, interior design, graphics, theatre set design, photography, 3D design, vehicle design, animation, computer game design, surface design, curation, prop creation, film, media and marketing.

Possible Careers: artist, architect, photographer, car designer, colourist, illustrator, interior designer, landscaper, product designer, graphic designer, blacksmithing, silversmithing, textile design, pattern maker, editor, cartoonist, film and TV, games designer, retail and purchasing, fashion and beauty, fashion designer, make-up artist, special effects, set design, costume design, animator, tattoo artist, advertising.

Assessment

Unit 1 – 60%: Internal assessment

Unit 2 – 40%: Externally set assessment

Optional subject

Computing: GCSE Computer Science

In a digital age, computers are a major part of life. Computer scientists have designed, developed and applied the hardware and software for the programmes we all use today. Computing teaches problem solving, technical skills and allows creativity, all of which can be used in everyday life.

Areas of study

Computer Systems – Externally assessed written exam focusing on computer systems, covering the physical elements of computer science and the associated theory. Studying how processors work and investigating computer memory and storage, including understanding how we store data within a computer in binary form, students will also explore modern network layouts and how they function. This will also help them build skills in the ever-important realm of cyber security. Students will develop knowledge of how types of software are used within computer systems, as well as exploring some more technical content through the understanding of Boolean algebra (AND, OR, NOT). This unit will also stretch wider comprehension of how computers and computing affect ethical, legal, cultural and environmental issues.

Computational Thinking, Algorithms and Programming - Externally assessed written exam focusing on the core theory of computer science and the application of computer science principles. Students will study fundamental algorithms in computer science and build a firm foundation in programming techniques. They will learn how to produce programs through diagrams and thoroughly test programs making them resistant to misuse. There will also be dedicated practical lessons, where students will learn the fundamentals of computer programming and how to code using a text-based language. A range of practical tasks will be completed and we will develop the knowledge, skills and understanding required for Component 2.

Learning Outcomes

Computer Science is a practical subject where learners can apply the knowledge and skills learned in the classroom to real-world problems. It is an intensely creative subject that involves invention and excitement. Our Computer Science qualification will value computational thinking, helping learners to develop the skills to solve problems and design systems that do so. It gives young people valuable thinking and programming skills that are extremely attractive in the modern workplace. A deep understanding of problem solving and experience in creating logical and efficient solutions, along with the ability to write down solutions to problems for other people to understand, will help give them a good grounding in mainstream computing theory and understanding.

Future Options

Next Steps: GCSE (9-1) Computer Science is effective preparation for a range of qualifications including AS Level Computer Science, A Level Computer Science, Cambridge Technicals – IT Level 3 or Digital Media Level 3.

Possible Careers: Engineering, software application development, computer programming, cyber security, graphics designer, ICT manager and many more.

Assessment

Unit 1 - 50% External Written Exam - Computer Systems

Unit 2 - 50% External Written Exam - Computational Thinking, Algorithms and Programming

Unit 3 - 0% Class-based practical programming tasks

Optional subject

Computing: Cambridge National Creative iMedia

This vocationally related qualification takes an engaging, practical and inspiring approach to learning and assessment. It will equip learners with a range of skills and provide opportunities to develop, in context, transferable skills such as research, planning, and review, working with others and communicating creative concepts effectively. The hands-on approach has strong relevance to the way young people use the technology required in creative media.

Areas of study

Creative iMedia in the media industry – Externally assessed written exam. Pupils will learn about the sectors, products and job roles that form the media industry. They will learn the legal and ethical issues considered and the processes used to plan and create digital media products. They will learn how media codes are used within the creation of media products to convey meaning, create impact and engage audiences. They will learn to choose the most appropriate format and properties for different media products.

Visual identity and digital graphics – Internally assessed assignment. Pupils will learn how to develop visual identities for clients. They will also learn to apply the concepts of graphic design to create original digital graphics which incorporate their visual identity to engage a target audience.

There is one additional internally assessed component that will be determined by teaching staff, based upon the skills of our pupils. This course includes a large percentage of coursework. Much of the work completed in class is counted towards the final grade.

Learning Outcomes

Pupils will understand and apply the fundamental principles and concepts of digital media including factors that influence product design, use of media codes and conventions, pre-production planning techniques, legal issues and creation/publishing/distribution considerations. They will also develop learning and practical skills that can be applied to real-life contexts and work situations. Thinking creatively, innovatively, analytically, logically and critically, they will develop independence and confidence in using skills that would be relevant to the media industry and more widely, designing, planning, creating and reviewing digital media products which are fit for purpose meeting both client and target audience requirements.

Future Options

Next Steps: Students could move to Cambridge Technicals – IT Level 3 or Digital Media Level 3 (these are vocational qualifications that offer an alternative to A-levels for students aged 16+). Students could also consider moving into AS and A Level Computer Science.

Possible Careers: An IT-based qualification is suitable for careers in software application development, computer programming, cyber security, graphics designer, ICT manager and many more.

Assessment

Unit 1 - 40% External Written Exam (R093: Creative iMedia in the media industry)

Unit 2 - 30% Internal Controlled Assessment (R094: Visual identity and digital graphics)

Unit 3 - 30% Internal Controlled Assessment (R097: Interactive digital media products)

Optional subject

EDUQAS GCSE Drama

The Drama course is practical, engaging and creative. It will provide opportunities to explore performing and gives students the opportunity to work independently in order to create their own performances. Students are encouraged to be independent, critical thinkers and effective decision-makers. These personal attributes make students stand out as they progress through their education and into employment.

Areas of study

The lessons will be mostly practical rehearsing and performing sessions however, there will be frequent written tasks to complete to prepare you for the assessed units where you have to write about your performances under controlled conditions.

Learning Outcomes

This course allows you to:

- experience different styles of performance and unlock your own creativity
- develop your acting or design skills through improvised, devised and scripted work
- plan and rehearse performances to live audiences, working with others
- perform effectively on-stage in an acting role
- design lighting/sound/costume/set to be used within a performance
- analyse and evaluate your own acting or design skills and provide feedback to others
- analyse scripts and learn rehearsal techniques to bring a text and character to life
- experience professional live theatre as an audience member

Future Options

Next Steps: GCSE Drama is effective preparation for a range of qualifications including GCE Drama and Theatre Studies at AS and A2 level or BTEC National Performing Arts or RSL Level 3 creative and Performing Arts.

Possible Careers: The skills gained from studying Drama can be transferred to **EVERY** and **ANY** job or career.

Assessment

Unit 1 - 40%

Non-examined Assessment Devising Theatre

Learners participate in the creation, development and performance of a piece of devised theatre using either the techniques of an influential theatre practitioner or a genre, in response to a stimulus set by WJEC.

Unit 2 - 20%

Non-examined Assessment Performing from a text.

Learners will be assessed on either acting or design. Learners study two extracts from the same performance text chosen by the centre. Learners participate in one performance using sections of text from both extracts.

Unit 3 - 40%

Written Examination - 1 hour 30 minutes Interpreting Theatre

Section A: Set Text A series of questions on one set text. Section B: Live Theatre Review One question, from a choice of two, requiring analysis and evaluation of a given aspect of a live theatre production seen during the course.

Optional subject

OCR Cambridge National: Engineering Design

The course is designed to introduce students to the industry of Engineering Design. Everyday products like pull cord handles, electric drills, pumps and speakers are analysed fully, own ideas are developed and a prototype will be realised. Students are directed to the products they will explore as the assignments are set by the board.

Areas of study

Students will study the following four stages of the design process:

Design briefs, design specifications and user requirements - This unit explores the relationship between the design brief and the design specification and how the specification is used to develop a new product.

Product Analysis and Research- Students learn how commercial production methods impact on the design of products and components.

Developing and presenting engineering designs - Students build on their existing knowledge of free hand sketching in 2D and 3D to develop and generate ideas using a range of techniques including rendering and using shade, tone and texture to communicate ideas.

3D design realisation - In order to realise a 3D prototype, pupils must consider different planning processes that help to consider specification, time, availability of resources/materials, safety and testing prior to manufacturing.

Learning Outcomes

Students will develop their technical knowledge and skills over the two-year course. They will learn how to effectively communicate design ideas while refining and developing designs. Students will need to be critical thinkers to allow for continuous progress and development. Students will actively engage in the process of designing through 2D and 3D sketching and design realisation.

Future Options

Next Steps: Students could move on to A Level Engineering, A Level Design & Technology, T levels, the Cambridge Nationals Level 3 Engineering Diploma or apprenticeships.

Possible Careers: Architect, built environment, construction (joiner, plumber, electrician), product designer, games design, engineer- mechanical, electrical, material and structural, retail and purchasing, fashion and beauty, art and design, advertising.

Assessment

Unit 1 - 40%

R038: Principles of engineering design. **Written** exam - 1 hour written exam.

Unit 2 - 30%

R039: Communicating designs. Controlled assessment (coursework)

Unit 3 - 30%

R040: Design, evaluation and modelling Controlled assessment (coursework)

Optional subject

AQA GCSE Digital Art (Graphic Communication)

Graphic communication is a course that is primarily concerned with designing visual material to convey information, ideas, meaning and emotions in response to a given or self-defined brief. The brief might, for example, have a commercial, social or environmental focus or be concerned with other aspects specific to the creative industries. How ideas, themes, forms, issues and needs can provide the stimulus for creative, imaginative, thoughtful and appropriately focused responses that are fit for a specific intended purpose.

Areas of study

Learners will investigate art and design practice to inform the generation and communication of ideas and will develop practical and digital skills through exploration of specialist materials, techniques and processes. Projects are designed to develop a range of digital and practical skills and will include activities such as designing, digital drawing, editing photographs, experimentation with media and techniques, annotation using specialist vocabulary, and studying the work of artists, designers and photographers.

Learners will develop and produce digital artwork in response to a creative brief, concept or topic provided by the exam board. This provides evidence of the students' ability to work independently within specified time constraints, realise intentions that are personal and meaningful, and explicitly address the assessment objectives.

Learning Outcomes

Digital art should encourage students to:

- Actively engage in the creative process of digital art in order to develop as effective and independent learners, and as critical and reflective thinkers with enquiring minds
- Develop creative, imaginative and intuitive capabilities when exploring and making images, designs and products
- Become confident in taking risks and learn from experience when exploring and experimenting with ideas, processes, media, materials and techniques
- Develop critical understanding through investigative, analytical, experimental, practical, technical and expressive skills
- Develop and refine ideas and proposals, personal outcomes or solutions with increasing independence

Future Options

Next Steps: A lot of students who study Digital art go on to study multimedia design, fashion, interior design, graphics, theatre set design, photography, 3D design, vehicle design, animation, computer game design, surface design, curation, prop creation, film, media and marketing.

Possible Careers: artist, architect, photographer, car designer, colourist, illustrator, interior designer, landscaper, product designer, graphic designer, blacksmithing, silversmithing, textile design, pattern maker, editor, cartoonist, film and TV, games designer, retail and purchasing, fashion and beauty, fashion designer, make-up artist, special effects, set design, costume design, animator, tattoo artist, advertising.

Assessment

Unit 1 – 60%: Internal assessment

Unit 2 – 40%: Externally set assessment

Optional subject

AQA GCSE Geography

This exciting course is based on a balanced framework of physical and human geography. Students investigate the link between the two themes and travel the world from their classroom, exploring case studies in the United Kingdom, higher income countries, newly emerging economies and lower income countries. Students are also encouraged to understand their role in society by considering different viewpoints, values and attitudes.

Areas of study

Unit 1 This unit aims to develop an understanding of different physical processes, their dynamic nature and human interaction with them at a range of scales and in a range of places. Topics include Natural Hazards (earthquakes, tropical storms, extreme UK weather and climate change), Coastal Landscapes, Rivers, Ecosystems, Tropical Rainforests and Hot Desert Environments.

Unit 2 This unit aims to develop an understanding of the factors that produce a wide range of human environments. Topics include Urbanisation, Challenges and Opportunities in Rio and Newcastle, Sustainable Living, The Changing Economic World (Development, study of Nigeria, UK Industry) and The Challenges of Resource Management, focusing on energy.

Unit 3 This unit aims to develop fieldwork skills covering both human and physical geography. Students will take part in two compulsory fieldwork visits to Redcar Beach and Newcastle. This unit includes map skills, describing, analysing and explaining fieldwork data, data recording and statistical analysis. Part of the unit is a piece of work based on an issue relating to another part of the course. Resources are released by the exam board 3 months before the exam, which are studied, cumulating an evaluation on the issue.

Learning Outcomes

Students will explore case studies in the UK and newly emerging economies such as Nigeria and Brazil. In the specification content, students are required to use both case studies and examples. Case studies are broader in context and require greater breadth and depth of knowledge and understanding. Examples are more focused on a specific event or situation, are smaller in scale and do not cover the same degree of content.

Future Options

Next Steps: A GCSE in Geography is suitable for anyone wishing to study Geography at A Level. Geography also complements any Sixth Form advanced course of study. Geography is a facilitating subject, giving you a distinct advantage when applying for places at the top universities.

Possible Careers: Town planner, surveyor, structural engineer, landscape architect, meteorologist, forest worker, ecologist, food scientist, geologist, renewable energy researcher, mining engineer, water consultant, teacher, environmental officer, transport planner, planning officer, pilot, tour manager, travel consultant.

Assessment

Unit 1 - 35% Written Exam - 1 hour 30 minutes. Living With the Physical Environment.

Unit 2 - 35% Written Exam - 1 hour 30 minutes. Challenges In the Human Environment.

Unit 3 - 30% Written Exam - 1 hour 30 minutes. Geographical Applications (Issue Evaluation and Fieldwork)

All the exam papers are not tiered. 10% of marks are from maths skills.

Optional subject

Pearson BTEC Health & Social Care

The Pearson BTEC Level 1/Level 2 Tech Award in Health and Social Care is for learners who want to acquire sector-specific applied knowledge through vocational contexts by studying human lifespan development, health and social care services and values, and health and wellbeing as part of their Key Stage 4 learning. The qualification recognises the value of learning skills, knowledge and vocational attributes to complement GCSEs. The qualification will broaden learners' experience and understanding of the varied progression options available to them.

Areas of study

Students study three units:

- Human Lifespan Development
- Health and Social Care Services and Values
- Health and Wellbeing

The vocational course is assessed through coursework and one written exam. Students gain a Pass, Merit or Distinction for their work and must pass all three units to attain the award.

Learning Outcomes

Students learn about different life stages and life events that can affect individuals positively or negatively. They learn about key areas in the NHS and social care and develop an understanding of the barriers and obstacles that can prevent people from accessing the care that they need.

Future Options

Next Steps: Health & Social Care can lead to the study of a Level 3 BTEC course at Sixth Form which can progress to further higher education opportunities.

Possible Careers: Nurse, Dietician, Radiographer, Health Visitor, Paramedic, Teacher, Nursery Manager, Childcare or Occupational Therapist.

Assessment

Unit 1 - 30%

Internally- Assessed Assignments

Complete a series of tasks to create a portfolio of evidence to explain how individuals grow and develop through the life stages, factors and life events that influence development and how people cope with the changes caused by life events.

Unit 2 - 30%

Internally Assessed Assignments

Complete a series of tasks to create a portfolio of evidence to explain the range of health and social care services that individuals use and the barriers they may experience in accessing these services. Investigate and evaluate the care values that underpin current practice in health and social care.

Unit 3 - 40% Exam

Complete an exam covering aspects relating to health and wellbeing including knowledge built up through the preparation for coursework questions.

Optional subject

EDEXCEL GCSE History

The GCSE History course will be of interest to anyone who wants to learn more about the past and understand how the past enables us to understand the present day on a local, national and global scale.

Areas of study

Unit 1 This unit aims to develop students' understanding of the historic environment in a thematic approach by investigating continuity and change in medicine over time, incorporating source skills.

Unit 2 This is a combination of a period study on The American West, c1835-c1895 and a British depth study on Early Elizabethan England 1558-88.

Unit 3 This is a modern depth study on Weimar and Nazi Germany, 1918-39, incorporating source skills and analysis of interpretations of history.

Learning Outcomes

Students should develop and extend their knowledge and understanding of key events in local, British and wider world history and of the wide diversity of human experience.

They should engage in historical enquiry as independent learners and critical and reflective thinkers. Learners should develop the ability to ask relevant questions about the past, to investigate issues critically and to make valid historical claims by using a range of sources in their historical context.

Also, students should develop an awareness of why people, events and developments have been accorded historical significance and why different interpretations have been constructed about them. They should organise and communicate their historical knowledge and understanding in different ways, reaching substantiated conclusions.

Future Options

Next Steps: A GCSE in History is suitable for anyone wishing to study History at A Level and complements any Sixth Form advanced course of study. History is also a facilitating subject, giving you a distinct advantage when applying for places at the top universities.

Possible Careers: lawyer, researcher, school teacher (both primary and secondary), curator, librarian, journalist, museum guide, archaeologist, public relations, reporter and presenting.

Assessment

Unit 1 - 30% Written Exam - 1 hour 20 minute exam.

Medicine Through Time c1250 - present and the British sector of the Western Front, 1914-18, injuries, treatments and the trenches.

Unit 2 - 40% Written Exam - 1 hour and 50 minute exam paper.

Early Elizabethan England, 1558-88 and the American West, c1835-c1895.

Unit 3 - 30% Written Exam - 1 hour and 30 minute exam paper.

Weimar and Nazi Germany, 1918-1939

Optional subject

Level 1/2 Hospitality & Catering

Hospitality and Catering enables learners to gain knowledge, understanding and skills relating to hospitality and catering as well as supporting learners to develop essential employability skills. Knowledge and understanding will relate to businesses that provide food, beverages and accommodation services.

Areas of study

Unit 1: The Hospitality and Catering Industry

Unit 2: Hospitality and Catering in Action

Learning Outcomes

Unit 1: The Hospitality and Catering Industry

Learners apply their learning by considering all aspects of the vocational sector. They should acquire knowledge of all aspects of the industry and be able to propose new hospitality and catering provision for specific locations. Learners will be able to use their learning of different types of establishment and job roles to determine the best option. They will then apply their learning in relation to front of house and kitchen operations to determine how the proposed hospitality and catering provision will operate efficiently legally and financially whilst meeting the needs of their potential market. This unit provides a broad introduction to the vocational sector in a way that is purposeful and develops a range of transferable skills.

Unit 2: Hospitality and Catering in Action

Learners apply their learning to safely prepare, cook and present nutritional dishes. They will draw on their learning of different types of provision, kitchen and front of house operations in Unit 1, as well as personal safety in their preparations. The content is relevant not only to employees within food production, but also those with a responsibility for food safety in the industry, nutritionists and managers and owners. This extends the learners' appreciation of the whole vocational area beyond the kitchen environment.

Future Options

Next Steps: This qualification could lead onto a Level 3 Diploma in Food Science and Nutrition, Level 3 Hospitality & Catering. It is also helpful for learners studying BTEC Health and Social Care.

Possible Careers: Chef / cook, hotel manager, restaurant manager, waiter / waitress, home economist, food scientist, food technologist, food product development, environmental health officer, nutritionist, food production operative, food quality controller, food taster.

Assessment

Unit 1 - 40% Short and extended answer questions based around applied situations. Learners will be required to use stimulus materials presented in different forms to respond to questions.

Unit 2 - 60% Controlled Assessment.

Plan nutritional dishes based on a brief. Written assessment – 6 hours.

Safely prepare, cook and present nutritional dishes. Practical Exam – 3 hours.



Optional subject

EDUQAS GCSE Music

GCSE Music gives students an insight into the Performing Arts. The focus is on performing, composing and an appreciation of music ranging from the Baroque period to the most current styles and everything in between.

Areas of study

Learners cover 4 areas of music ranging from the baroque period to the most current styles and everything in between.

Area of study 1: Musical Forms and Devices

Area of study 2: Music for Ensemble

Area of study 3: Film Music

Area of study 4: Popular Music

Learning Outcomes

Learners will develop their performing skills both as part of an ensemble and as a solo performer, compose in a range of styles responding to different briefs and appraise both familiar and unfamiliar music applying knowledge of musical elements, context and language.

Future Options

Next Steps: Having completed this course students are able to progress to A Level music or performing arts at Sixth Form.

Possible Careers: Learners gain essential performing, composing and appraising skills essential for a career in the music industry. Further career options include Lawyer, Broadcaster, Musician, Business Management, Performer.

Assessment

Unit 1 - 30% Internally-Assessed Assignments Performing (4-6 minutes)

Learners are encouraged to develop their knowledge and understanding of music through performing. All learners are required to perform at least 2 pieces one of which must be part of an ensemble, the other can be a solo or ensemble piece. Learners need to be taking regular lessons on their chosen instrument/voice to access this course.

Unit 2 - 30% Internally-Assessed Assignments Composing (3-6 minutes)

All learners are required to compose two pieces of music. Composition 1 is in response to a brief set by Eduqas related to the areas of study. Composition 2 is a free composition where learners compose in a style of their choice.

Unit 3 - 40% Written Examination

This component encourages learners to develop skills in appraising music through the exploration of a wide variety of music linked to the four areas of study. Each area of study includes a list of terms focusing on particular musical knowledge and understanding.

Optional subject

AQA GCSE Philosophy & Ethics

Religion permeates every aspect of our world and heavily influences debate. A good understanding of religion, philosophy and ethics will help you appreciate the rapidly changing world in which we live. Students with an inquisitive mind who enjoy thinking about and debating topical, moral and philosophical issues will find this subject particularly appealing.

Areas of study

Unit 1

Students will gain an understanding of different beliefs and teachings in Modern Britain focusing specifically on Christianity and Buddhism. Students will explore key teachings and how believers follow their faith in a modern 21st Century world.

Unit 2

Students will explore how religion can be applied to several ethical topics looking specifically at religion and life; relationships and families; peace and conflict; and crime and punishment. Key issues include abortion, animal experimentation, weapons of mass destruction, euthanasia, the death penalty, sexual ethics and terrorism.

Learning Outcomes

Students will develop their knowledge and understanding of religious beliefs and practices in the world around them. They will develop skills in analysis, application of beliefs and critical evaluation. The subject will develop students' ability to construct well-argued, informed and balanced arguments.

Future Options

Next Steps: Universities are keen to accept students who have acquired philosophical skills. It is a popular A level choice and features in the subjects accepted by many departments at universities. The skills gained are highly transferable as the subject encompasses writing, communication, empathy, analysis and evaluation.

Possible Careers: Medicine, nursing, legal work, prisons, working with animals, charity work such as the red cross or humanitarian aid charities, politics, public services, advice worker, archivist, charity fundraiser, counsellor, civil service administrator, community development worker, editorial assistant, newspaper journalist, police officer and youth worker.

Assessment

Unit 1 - 50%

Written exam

The Study of Religions: Beliefs, Teachings and Practices.

Unit 2 - 50%

Written Exam

Religious, Philosophical and Ethical Themes.

Optional subject

AQA GCSE Photography

This specialist course will allow students to explore a range of digital and traditional photographic techniques and processes. Students will be given the opportunity to investigate and respond to a variety of historical and contemporary sources through different lens-based media including Photoshop and studio technique development.

Areas of study

In **Component 1** (portfolio) students are required to complete a minimum of two themed projects from an initial concept or topic. These projects are designed to develop a range of creative skills and will include activities such as photography, experimentation with media and techniques, annotation using specialist vocabulary, and studying the work of photographers.

In **Component 2** (externally set assignment), students respond to a concept or topic provided by the exam board. This provides evidence of the students' ability to work independently within specified time constraints, realise intentions that are personal and meaningful and explicitly address the requirements of all four assessment objectives. The assessment objectives focus on:

- A01 – Investigate
- A02 – Experiment & Refine
- A03 – Record Ideas
- A04 – Present a meaningful and personal outcome

Learning Outcomes

GCSE Photography should encourage students to:

Develop a critical understanding of sources by actively engaging in independent research to inform effective ideas and intentions.

Experiment, develop and refine key techniques and processes as work progresses. Record ideas, observations and insights relevant to intentions as work progresses.

Present a personal and meaningful response that realises intentions and demonstrates understanding of visual language.

Future Options

Next Steps: A lot of students who study Art and Design go on to study multimedia design, fashion, furniture design, graphics, theatre set, design, photography, 3d design, vehicle design, animation, computer game design, surface design, curation, marketing, promotion and content creation.

Possible Careers: artist, architect, photographer, car designer, colourist, illustrator, interior designer, landscaper, product designer, graphic designer, blacksmithing, silversmithing, textile design, pattern maker, editor, cartoonist, film and TV, games designer, retail and purchasing, fashion and beauty, fashion designer, make-up artist, special effects, set design, costume design, animator, tattoo artist, advertising.

Assessment

Unit 1 - 60%Themed projects

Component 1 is assessed as a whole, using the assessment objectives to determine the students' overall performance.

Unit 2 - 40% Externally set task

Component 2 is assessed as a whole, using the assessment objectives to determine the students' overall performance.

Optional subject

AQA GCSE French

As part of the global society, learning a second language offers a distinct advantage for employees. In competitive business, the ability to converse, translate and communicate in a second language is a highly desirable skill. Studying a language also develops social and inter-personal skills, promotes confidence in learners and encourages respect for others.

Areas of study

The GCSE French course builds and progresses the skills already acquired at Key Stage 3. It is divided into three themes which comprise:

- Theme 1: People and lifestyle
- Theme 2: Popular culture
- Theme 3: Communication and the world around us

The 4 key linguistic skills of Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing will be covered across the topics.

Learning Outcomes

During the GCSE French course you will advance your linguistic skills and gain a key understanding of the way that languages work.

- The skills acquired through the course will allow you to:
- Apply grammatical rules to create language independently
- Translate short phrases and texts from and to the target language
- Understand and relate key information from written and spoken target language texts
- Give your opinion and point of view about a range of topics

Future Options

Next Steps: A qualification in French at GCSE can progress into an A Level course for those who wish to continue their language learning in Sixth Form. French is a facilitating subject, giving you a distinct advantage when applying for places at the top universities.

Possible Careers: Air traffic controller, intelligence specialist, art dealer, international account representative, banking correspondent, international banking officer, bilingual educator, international consultant, civil service employee, international trade economist, interpreter, copywriter, investment analyst, cultural attaché, linguist, cultural officer, loan officer, customs-immigration officer, doctor, police officer, financial planner, foreign correspondent, pharmaceutical representative, foreign diplomat, sports agent, foreign exchange trader, teacher, foreign service officer, tour organiser, translator, travel agent, travel writer, intelligence researcher, software.

Assessment

Unit 1 - 25% Listening Examination - Foundation or Higher entry.

Unit 2 - 25% Speaking Examination (with teacher). Foundation or Higher entry. Role-play, Reading aloud task and short conversation and Photo card discussion.

Unit 3 - 25% Reading Examination. Foundation or Higher entry.

Unit 4 - 25% Written Examination. Foundation or Higher entry.



Optional subject

Cambridge National Award in Sports Studies

Sports Studies is suitable for students that want to undertake a sports qualification but are more suited to a vocational style of study and assessment. The course has been designed to encourage students to develop learning and practical skills that can be applied to real-life contexts in the sport sector.

Areas of study

The Cambridge National Award in Sports Studies is equivalent to one GCSE grade. Students develop an understanding of topical and contemporary issues in Sport, including why people do and do not participate in sport, the promotion of ethics and values, the role of National Governing Bodies and high-profile events have in sport, as well as how technology is used in sport. Students will also develop as a sports performer and leader by planning, delivering, and evaluating activity sessions. The relationship between the media and sport will also be explored through studying real-world examples and looking at the different ways in which sports are represented.

This course will be assessed through completion of 3 units of study:

- Contemporary issues in sport (external exam)
- Performance and leadership in sport activities (Coursework and teacher assessment)
- Developing knowledge and skills in outdoor activities (coursework)

Students can gain a pass, merit or distinction grade for each of the units completed.

Learning Outcomes

Students will develop knowledge, understanding and practical skills that can be used in the Exercise, Physical Activity, Sport and Health Sectors.

Future Options

Next Steps: Skills developed when studying this course will help you to progress onto further study in the Exercise, Physical Activity, Sport and Health sectors. This could include studying a Level 3 vocational qualification such as BTEC National in Sport or studying A Level Physical Education.

Possible Careers: Professional athlete, PE teacher, athletic trainer, physical therapist, medical assistant, sports medicine aide, assistant athletic trainer, physical therapy assistant, sports massage therapist, sports and fitness nutritionist.

Assessment

Unit 1: Contemporary issues in sport. Written examination- 40% of final grade

Unit 2: Performance and leadership in sport activities Non examined assessment- 40% of final grade

Unit 3: Developing knowledge and skills in outdoor activities. Non examined assessment- 20% of final grade

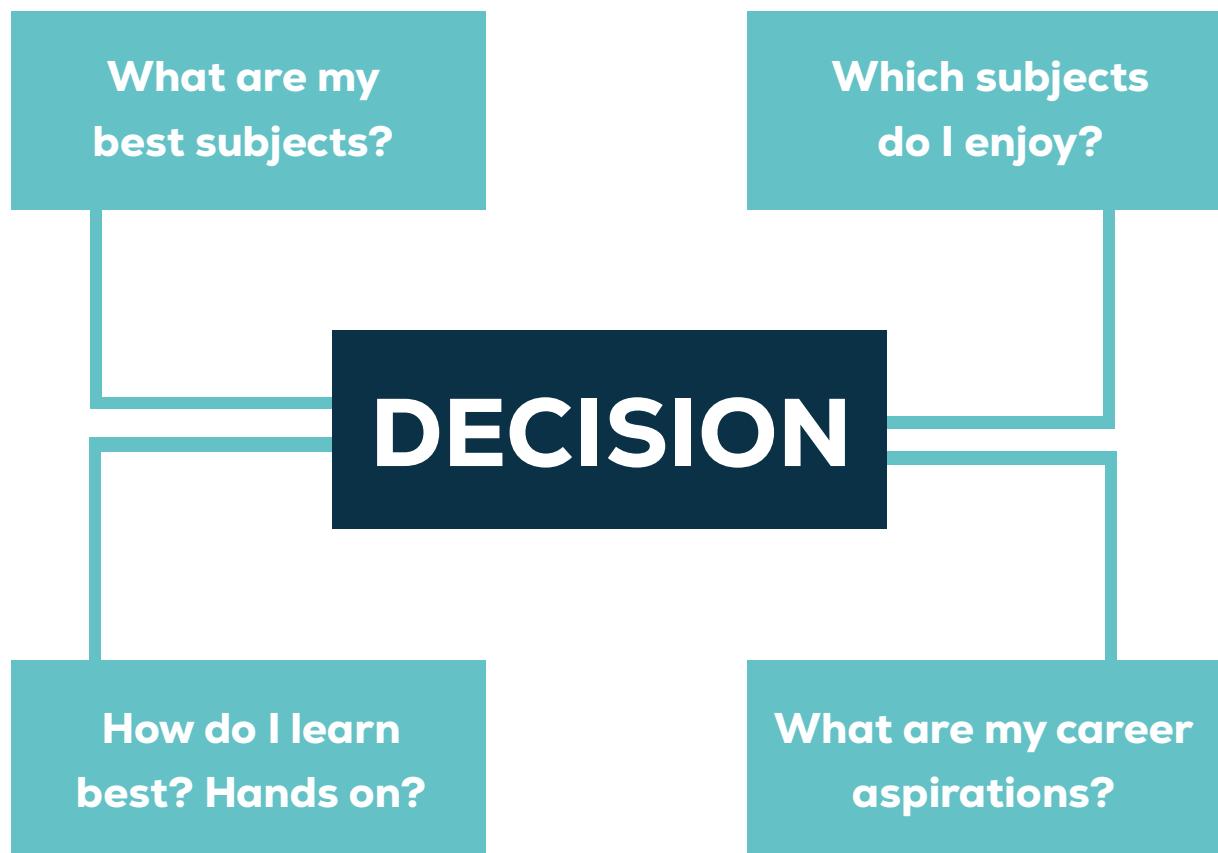


Next Steps

This is an exciting time at school and an important stage in your career development. For the first time, you get to make choices. Making the right choice can inspire you to greater successes and motivate you to get the most out of your education. It can influence your career, but nearly all career possibilities are achievable no matter which subjects you end up choosing. This is because your core subjects (those you have to do) provide the foundation for most career pathways.

Research is important; find out everything you need to know about potential subject choices. Teachers are a great source of information for this, so speak to the people who teach the subjects you are thinking of taking and ask questions about the course content and assessments methods.

You will have the opportunity to discuss your subject choices at the Key Stage 4 Options Evening with members of the Senior Leadership Team, Subject Leaders, teachers and further education providers.



Key Stage 4 Option Choices

ALL students must study History or Geography.

ALL students are strongly encouraged to study French

ALL students will then have **TWO** free choices to make up their total of **FOUR**.

TWO RESERVE choices should also be selected in case of over-subscribed courses or some courses not running.

Please indicate your preferred choice of subjects on the online form using the link sent by Parent Pay after Options Evening.

Below is a list of all the subjects available to choose.

Use the information in this booklet to help you make your final decision.

French

Geography

History

Art, Craft and Design

Computing: Computer Science

Computing: Creative iMedia

Digital Art (Graphic Communication)

Drama

Engineering & Design

Health & Social Care

Hospitality & Catering

Music

Philosophy & Ethics

Photography

Sports Studies





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