



**LAURUS
RYECROFT**

**Year 9 Options Booklet
For study 2026 – 2028**

INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Laurus Ryecroft Options Booklet. In this booklet you will find advice and guidance on the Options process. The booklet details how the Options process runs, what the Key Stage 4 curriculum at Laurus Ryecroft looks like, the different assessment options we offer, and some advice on how to make these choices.

The booklet also has specific details regarding each Core subject (a subject all students are required to do) and the Option subjects. These details are designed to help parents, carers and students make the best choices possible.

We know that the Key Stage 4 Option choices are some of the biggest decisions many young people have ever had to make, particularly in terms of the impact on their futures. We hope that the information in this booklet, and any subsequent communications with school help students make decisions that support them in opening the door to the future of their choice.

If you have any questions regarding the Options process please do not hesitate to contact the school.

THE OPTIONS PROCESS

First, you get this booklet.
Please read it!



Second, you come to the Options Day Talk
on Wednesday 11th March.



Third, you indicate your four preferences via the My Child At School (MCAS) app. A guide to using the app to make Options selections will be shared after the February half term. Please contact the school if you require access to the MCAS app.



Finally, soon after the Easter break, Option choices will be confirmed for next year.

11th March 2026 - Year 9 Options Day

- Options Assembly in the morning for all of Year 9
- Options Afternoon (Units 5 and 6). There will be subject talks from teachers in the afternoon. Students will select the talks they wish to attend.
- Parent/Carer KS4 Options Day Talk: Information and Guidance Presentation (17:00-18:00)

The Curriculum

Part 1: Core Curriculum

There is a core curriculum that is the essential learning for all students and is compulsory:

- **English Language & English Literature**
- **Mathematics**
- **Science**
- Beliefs and Values (Non-assessed)
- Physical Education (Non-assessed)

Part 2: Option Subjects

Students will have **THREE** Options subjects to add to their core curriculum.

The various Option subjects are listed later in this booklet. Students will be required to select 4 Option choices, 3 of which will be taken as Key Stage 4 Options.

The English Baccalaureate (EBacc)

This is a combination of subjects which offer an important range of knowledge and skills and keep options open to young people. It is **recommended** that most students follow this curriculum. The EBacc consists of:

- **English Language & English Literature**
- **Mathematics**
- **Science**

Plus (chosen as Options)...

- **History and/or Geography**
- **A Language (ancient or modern)** – Spanish GCSE is perfect, and students will already have completed this.

IMPORTANT: Conditions and considerations:

- Parents/Carers must indicate four preferences via the MCAS app.
- Your choices can be ranked by preference, but this is no guarantee that a student will get the choice they select first.
- Ebacc Options will be given higher priority due to their value for future opportunities.
- We will try our best to create a timetable that allows students to study their preferred subjects. This will not be possible in all cases.
- Depending on numbers, in some cases, subjects may be withdrawn from our offer after students have made their choices.
- Some combinations of subjects are not allowed. This is usually where the content and assessment procedure are too similar.
- Only current and prior attainment will be taken into account when allocating places to courses. We do not consider potential future attainment levels.

Where it exists students must meet subject specific entrance requirements. In some cases, there may need to be a further meeting with a school Head of Subject in order to assess suitability for a course.

IMPORTANT: We will try our best to create a timetable that allows students to study their preferred subjects. You will need to meet the entrance criteria for those subjects. This will not be possible in all cases.

Making Option Choices

In the week following the Year 9 Options Day parents/carers will be required to complete Option selections via the MCAS app. **The selection window will open on Friday 13th March at 9am, and close on Friday 20th March at 2pm.**

After the February half term a guide to selecting Options via the MCAS app will be shared with all parents/carers via the MCAS app.

Mr Herring has overall responsibility for the Options process. Please direct any questions to him.

IMPORTANT: If too few students select a subject, the course may be withdrawn. We will contact you about this as soon as this becomes a possibility.

IMPORTANT: You must select four preferences via the MCAS app. We will do our best to create a timetable that allows you to study three of your choices as long as you have met the entrance criteria.

Option Choices: Qualification Types

We offer a range of courses at KS4. Each subject can be assessed in a variety of different ways, including traditional examination elements, and non-examined assessment elements (NEAs). The courses fit into 2 main categories in terms of assessment:

GCSE Courses

We offer a wide range of GCSE subjects, and in nearly all cases students will have to sit a number of final examinations. Please read the course details later in the booklet to find out more details of subject specific assessment elements. All GCSEs are graded from 9 – 1 (9 being the highest).

It is our school's aim to have each and every student achieve the best grades possible in a broad and balanced range of subjects.

To succeed in GCSEs you will need to:

- Be able to perform well in examinations
- Be able to revise from your exercise books
- Be able to recall information and use it effectively to solve problems
- Be well organised

When considering GCSE courses students must listen very carefully to their teachers' advice. Some subjects require particular skills. For example, PE GCSE requires not only a good level of practical ability in a number of activity areas, but also a solid grounding in Science to be able to cope well with the theory exam paper. Also, History and Geography require good literacy skills, and Media uses a lot of IT.

In all courses, students will be expected to work very hard and be responsible for all the work in their books and folders, which will have to be maintained very carefully so that they can revise properly for examinations.

Tech Award courses

Alongside GCSEs we offer Level 2 Tech Award courses (including BTECs). This means that they are the equivalent of one GCSE qualification. Tech Awards are graded Distinction*, Distinction, Merit, or Pass.

These courses differ from GCSE courses in that they **do not have as many examinations**. Assessment is largely based on coursework (NEAs). However, these courses do still have an external examination element.

All the work done in these courses takes place in a 'vocational context'. That means that you are expected to put yourself in the place of a person who is actually working in a job in the type of industry your work is connected to. For example, in Sport as a Fitness Centre Assistant. BTECs can be continued post 16 to Level 3 - A Level equivalent.

To succeed in these courses the most important thing is to keep up with your work deadlines. Each course usually involves doing a number of separate units of work and if you are absent from school a lot you will find it hard to keep up. Nevertheless, you will be able to work at your own pace more than if you were taking a GCSE course - some of you will work towards Pass level whilst others will attain a Merit or even Distinction.

IMPORTANT: Please note that all course outlines are correct at the time of this publication but all course content is subject to alteration by individual exam boards and final approval by OFQUAL.

Students: Thinking About Your Future

There is a long way to go before you decide what you will do when you are 16 and then 18. However, you should be aware that your Options choices can have a direct impact on your future choices.

What if my aim is to go to a 'top' university?

These universities have made it clear that they will be looking for high grade A Level passes in some of what they consider to be the most challenging subjects:

- Maths and Further Maths
- English Literature
- Physics, Chemistry, Biology
- History
- Geography
- Languages (Classical and Modern)
- Economics
- Computing

If you think you might want to go on to do A Levels in any of these subjects, then you should think very carefully about taking some of them at GCSE. Maths, English and Science are compulsory and will be well supported by EBacc subjects.

What if I want to do A Levels but not in these subjects?

That is fine. There are hundreds of Universities and thousands of degree courses to

choose from, and if the traditional academic subjects listed above are not what you are interested in then you can go on to do A Levels and degrees in a wide variety of subjects. A broad and balanced base of strong GCSEs leaves your options open to choose a range of A Levels.

What if I want to do vocational courses?

Then you can do and this will still allow you to go on to university in the future if that is what you want. Tech Awards at Level 2 can lead on to Level 3 qualifications and then on to university degrees and equivalent. There are also a host of other vocational qualifications related to specific employment sectors. It is about what is right for you.

What if I don't want to do any more qualifications after leaving school at 16?

All young people will be required to do additional training or education at age 16. The most common route into employment for 16 year olds is through **Apprenticeships**, and you will need at least five good GCSE grades (5 or above) including Maths and English to access most of them.

For all the above possible routes it is essential that you do as well as you possibly can at KS4, because you will then have a wider range of choices available to you post 16.

What Should You Think About When Making Your Choices?

We advise you to think of the following:

- Does it help me in my future choices?
- Am I interested in the subject and will I enjoy it?
- Will the type of assessment suit me?
- Will I be able to succeed in it?

It is very important that you are able to **achieve** in your chosen course. We want you to leave school as qualified as you can be, because this will give you greater choice and more opportunities not just at Key Stage 5 but in also in employment and for many years to come.

Next, consider the **assessment requirements** of your choices - are you better at class and coursework, or examinations? Which suit your strengths? Finally, do not do subjects that are too similar in nature; for example, GCSE PE and BTEC Sport. We do not allow some combinations and these are detailed throughout this booklet.

What Should You NOT Think About?

Please do **NOT** choose courses just because your **friends** are choosing them. These choices must be based on what is best for **you**.

Don't be easily swayed by what **former students** have done – courses and teachers change very quickly!

Do not think that choosing a course means that you have to follow that pathway to employment. A BTEC in Health and Social Care does not mean that you have to follow a career in Social Care. A good grade in a Tech Award says that you have worked well to deadlines, have shown skill and judgement, and that you are capable of organising your workload to reach an expected standard.

Of course, if you have a particular career in mind then choosing a connected course will help.

Lastly, you will not be allowed to choose subjects that are virtually the same, for example PE GCSE and BTEC Sport for instance.

What Happens If There Are Small Numbers of Students Choosing a Subject?

We will consider the implications of very small classes for the school. It is not possible to have too many small classes in terms of resources or available rooms. If we decide not to run a course, then we will speak with you and ask you to make another choice. You will be given plenty of time to think about this and talk to your parents/carers and subject teachers.

What Happens When Too Many Students Choose a Subject?

This very rarely happens, but if it does then we will consult closely with subject leaders to ensure that the right decisions are made. Decisions will never be made without speaking directly with students and parents/carers.

An Important Note about Science

All students will study Science over the next two years as it is a Core Subject. This will result in a combined award of 2 GCSEs. However, some students may wish to study each of the three Separate Sciences – Biology, Chemistry and Physics - in greater depth and sit a GCSE in each, resulting in the award of 3 GCSEs. **If you do this, it will take up one of your Options.**

If students are interested in taking the Separate Science Option, they should already have had a conversation with their science teacher about this. Parents/carers will also have discussed this at the Progress evening.

If students have a love of Science, a good track record of success in assessments, and a possible wish to study Science at A Level then it may well be a good choice for them. Entry to this course is limited and students will have been asked to discuss their choice with Science Department staff, whose job it is to make sure that students have made an appropriate decision. This will have been discussed at the Progress Evening.

IMPORTANT: You do NOT need to have taken the Separate Science Option to gain access to A Level courses in our or other Sixth Forms, but it is an advantage.

A Note about Languages

Most students have already been studying a GCSE in a modern foreign language (Spanish), which they will complete this year. This contributes towards the EBacc, which means choosing Geography or History completes the English Baccalaureate. However, because students will (hopefully) already have a good qualification in a language, this doesn't mean that they cannot choose to study a second language. In fact, a second language is highly valued by top universities.

What Now?

The pages that now follow contain information regarding the subjects taught at KS4.

We hope you find the information useful. Please do not hesitate to contact the school if you have any questions.

CORE SUBJECTS

The subjects on the next few pages form part of the core offer and are not part of the Options process.

ENGLISH (CORE)

Examination Board and Syllabus

- AQA English Language (8700)
- AQA English Literature (8702)

Form of Assessment – GCSE English Language

Module	Method of Assessment	Content
English Language Paper 1	Examination 1 hr 45 min	Unseen fiction text and creative writing
English Language Paper 2	Examination 1 hr 45 min	Comparison of unseen non-fiction texts and non-fiction writing
NEA Speaking and Listening	Speech / Presentation	Students' choice

Form of Assessment – GCSE English Literature

Module	Method of Assessment	Content
English Literature Paper 1	Examination 1 hr 45 min	Shakespeare and the 19th Century Novel
English Literature Paper 2	Examination 2 hr 15 min	Modern prose/ drama and poetry

Course Content

Language:

- Students will read widely focusing on the way in which an author utilises language, structure, form and context to express their ideas.
- Students will also develop their writing skills to create engaging and controlled compositions.
- Students will develop their speaking and listening skills by presenting to their peers on a topic of their choice.

Literature:

- Students will study a range of British literature including but not limited to:
 - Priestley's *An Inspector Calls* (play)
 - Dickens' *A Christmas Carol* (novel)
 - Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* (play)
 - A collection of poetry focused on War and Conflict
- Students will read in depth, critically and evaluatively to appreciate the depth and power of the English literary heritage.
- Students will respond to these literary works through writing accurately, effectively and analytically about their reading.

Skills and qualities required for success

Since it is a requirement that all students study English Language and Literature, both courses aim to broaden horizons by including a broad range of texts; students who embrace this and regularly read for pleasure undoubtedly attain higher than peers who do not. Likewise, both courses require students to write with precision and flare. This allows students to develop their functional skills but also allows them to express themselves creatively.

Futures

Most jobs and Sixth Form Colleges now require a minimum of a grade 5 GCSE for entry. However, increasingly places are asking for a grade 6. Universities also require a grade 6.

MATHEMATICS (CORE)

Examination Board and Syllabus

OCR Specification GCSE Mathematics (J560) is used. The class teacher will decide on the most appropriate tier of entry for your child.

Form of Assessment

No coursework requirement

Foundation grades 1 - 5

Higher Level Grade 3 - 9

Students will sit three examinations to achieve a GCSE in Mathematics, one non-calculator paper and two calculator papers. Each paper is equally weighted and lasts 1 hour 30 minutes and will have a range of questions.

All examinations must be taken at the same tier and will take place at the end of Year 11.

Course Content

Students will be assessed on 3 key areas of mathematics:

- AO1 Using and applying standard techniques
- AO2 Reasoning, interpreting and communicating mathematically
- AO3 Solving non-routine problems in mathematical and non-mathematical contexts

Skills and qualities required for success

- Rational thinking
- Appreciation of different methods and approaches
- Ability to solve problems in familiar and unfamiliar contexts
- Ability to make links, find connections and generalise

Futures

Computer Games developer, Furniture designer, Actuary, Aerodynamicist, Avalanche researcher are just some of the exciting and rewarding careers you could have if you go on to study Mathematics at college and university, see www.mathscareers.org.uk for further information about opportunities Maths can offer.

A grade 7 at GCSE is required if students wish to study Maths at A Level at Laurus Ryecroft, and it is advantageous if students wish to study Maths at A Level at an alternative institution. A grade 8 is required if students wish to study Further Maths at A Level at Laurus Ryecroft.

Most jobs and Sixth Form Colleges now require a minimum of a grade 5 GCSE for entry. However, increasingly places are asking for a grade 6. Universities also require a grade 6.

SCIENCE (COMBINED)

Examination Board and Syllabus

AQA Combined Science: Trilogy

Specification code: 8464

Form of Assessment

The GCSE is assessed by six terminal written exams (1 hour 15 minutes each) at the end of Year 11, each accounting for 16.7% of total GCSE grade.

Course Content

The specification is divided into topics which each cover different key areas of Biology, Chemistry and Physics. Practical skills are developed throughout the course and assessed in the written papers.

Biology	Chemistry	Physics
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Cell biology2. Organisation3. Infection and response4. Bioenergetics5. Homeostasis and response6. Inheritance, variation and evolution7. Ecology	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Atomic structure and the periodic table2. Bonding, structure, and the properties of matter3. Quantitative chemistry4. Chemical changes5. Energy changes6. The rate and extent of chemical change7. Organic chemistry8. Chemical analysis9. Chemistry of the atmosphere10. Using resources	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Energy2. Electricity3. Particle model of matter4. Atomic structure5. Forces6. Waves7. Magnetism and electromagnetism

Skills and Qualities required for success

Since it is a requirement of the National Curriculum that all students study Science, this course encourages students to be inspired, motivated and challenged by following a broad, coherent, practical, satisfying and worthwhile course of study.

It encourages learners to develop their curiosity about the living, material and physical worlds and provides insight into, and experience of, how Science works.

It enables learners to engage with Science and to make informed decisions about further study in Science and related disciplines, and career choices.

Futures

This course provides a good route to A Levels in a broad range of subjects.

BELIEFS AND VALUES (Non-assessed CORE)

At Key Stage 4 students will study key elements of the RS, Citizenship and PSHE curriculum. These three subject areas are taught in an interdisciplinary fashion and are known as Beliefs and Values.

This combined programme will include the effects of diverse and conflicting values on individuals, families and communities and ways of responding to them. Students will look at how the media portrays young people, religion, body image and health issues. Students will investigate the importance of forming and maintaining positive relationships, increasing their understanding of safe and responsible sex as well as studying mental health and internet safety. Students look at issues such as racism, prejudice, discrimination, ethics and Human Rights. Issues of ethics, morality and world religions are also explored. The course allows students to be exposed to the national requirements for RS, Citizenship and PSHE at Key Stage 4. However, Beliefs and Values as a subject is not confined simply to the classroom as they are subjects that students will encounter most days both in and out of school.

Beliefs and Values encourage:

- Open mindedness
- Respect and tolerance
- Analytical skills
- Literacy skills
- A global perspective (an interest in the world around us)
- Self-confidence and self-respect
- Empathy and understanding of the beliefs of others.

This course encourages the development of the following skills:

- The ability to use evidence from various sources to express and evaluate personal responses
- The ability to analyse different ideas and viewpoints
- Investigation of religions and beliefs, reflecting on fundamental questions, and engaging with them intellectually and responding personally
- Spiritual and moral development, and health and well being

Ways in which you can give yourself a head start:

- Keep up-to-date with recent news developments
- Take part in school activities, such as House activities and the student council
- Read quality newspapers
- Take the time to think about what issues matter to you and why
- Share your opinions with your peers and teachers.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION (Non-assessed CORE)

Every child will continue with their PE lessons throughout KS4 where we expect students to further develop their knowledge and understanding of a variety of sports with the opportunity to work on leadership skills.

During lessons students will work on a wide variety of physical activities – football, rugby, netball, OAA, handball, trampolining, rounders, cricket, athletics, volleyball and fitness. During the course, students will develop leadership skills either supporting to run sessions in lesson time or running sessions after school for our feeder primary schools.

We aim at KS4 to encourage our students to adopt an active and healthy lifestyle. This is promoted in lessons and then through our electives provision.

OPTIONS SUBJECTS

The following pages contain information about the Option Subjects, that student are required to select from.

You can use the links below to move around the booklet.

You can return to this page by clicking [OPTIONS](#) in the top right corner of a page

Fine Art	Textiles	Business
Computer Science	Design & Technology	Drama
Enterprise and Marketing	Engineering	French
Geography	History	Hospitality & Catering
Health and Social Care	Media Studies	Music
PE GCSE	BTEC Sport	Religious Studies
	Separate Sciences	

Examination Board

AQA (Fine Art)

Form of Assessment

Component 1: Portfolio (coursework) 60%

Component 2: Externally Set Assignment: 40%

Course Content

The course is divided into two main parts: Portfolio and Externally Set Assignment. Both aspects must satisfy the following assessment objectives:

1. Develop ideas through investigations, demonstrating critical understanding of sources.
2. Refine work by exploring ideas, selecting and experimenting with appropriate media, materials, techniques and processes.
3. Record ideas, observations and insights relevant to intentions as work progresses.
Written annotation is an integral aspect of the creative process.
4. Present a personal and meaningful response that realises intentions and demonstrates understanding of visual language.

Students are expected to show evidence of written annotation and drawing in both Component 1 and Component 2.

Portfolio (60%)

Throughout Year 10 and 11, students work on a series of projects. Near the end of the course students are required to select and submit from this a Portfolio. This must consist of a sustained project (including preparatory work, development of ideas and processes, and final pieces) and a selection of further work. Students will have the opportunity to produce work from a variety of starting points. They will investigate the work of Artists and Designers as well as art from different times and cultures. On this course candidates must show evidence of working in at least one of the following areas:

- Drawing
- Painting
- Printmaking
- Sculpture
- Installation
- Mixed media
- Graphic design or photography

Externally Set Assignment (40%)

Towards the end of the course students are given an Externally Set Assignment. Here they receive an AQA paper containing a range of starting points from which they must select one and independently produce a unit of work. During this time, they are given general guidance on how to work through this task. They have approximately seven weeks to develop supporting preparation work before they sit a ten - hour practical session, which is split over two days, to create a final piece(s).

The preparatory work is marked alongside the final piece(s) and, together with the externally set assignment, contributes 40% towards the final GCSE grade.

Skills and attitudes required for success

This course offers students the opportunity to produce work in a wide range of materials, to build up technical skills and to express their feelings and creative ideas in both two and three dimensions.

This course is aimed at enthusiastic students with an adventurous and enquiring approach to art and design, who wish to learn new skills as well as develop those acquired at Key Stage 3. It is best suited for those who have a particular interest or ability in art and design and wish to improve their creative thinking and problem-solving skills further. Students will need to take the initiative in decision making and be able to research projects in their own time, so a firm sense of commitment to the subject is essential, whilst also being highly self-motivated.

Students must also be prepared to attend lunch and twilight sessions.

Futures

The career opportunities available in the Art World are vast and diverse as are the routes which students who wish to pursue their art and design education can take; from AS/A2 Levels, to BTEC National courses specialising in specific areas such as 3D Design, Fashion and Clothing and Photography.

Courses such as these can then lead on to Higher Education courses and careers in Architecture, Fine Art, Animation and Illustration, Media, Jewellery Design, Fashion, Education, Graphic Design, Furniture Design and Film to name but a few.

Alternatively, if a student would rather enter the work place post 16, then there are many careers in the creative industries that would welcome a GCSE in Art and Design, some of which provide further learning opportunities within them, for example a Modern Apprenticeship.

Additional Requirements

Under normal circumstances it is essential that those students who wish to opt for this course have achieved a Foundation Stage Level 4 or higher in Year 9 and have a pristine attendance, homework and behaviour record.

Students are also encouraged to purchase the following materials*;

- A4 sketchbooks
- A range of soft 'B' pencils for sketching and drawing
- A good quality eraser, pencil sharpener, biro and fineliners
- Coloured pencils
- Oil pastels
- A small set of water colour paints or acrylics
- Paint brushes
- A camera is also a great asset but not essential

In some circumstances, the school can support the purchase of supplies

Examination Board

AQA (Textile design)

Textile design is defined here as the creation of designs and products for woven, knitted, stitched, printed or decorative textiles that might have a functional or non-functional purpose.

Form of Assessment

Component 1: Portfolio (coursework)	60%
Component 2: Externally Set Assignment:	40%

Course Content

The course is divided into two main parts: Portfolio and Externally Set Assignment. Both aspects must satisfy the following assessment objectives:

1. Develop ideas through investigations, demonstrating critical understanding of sources.
2. Refine work by exploring ideas, selecting and experimenting with appropriate media, materials, techniques and processes.
3. Record ideas, observations and insights relevant to intentions as work progresses.
Written annotation is an integral aspect of the creative process.
4. Present a personal and meaningful response that realises intentions and demonstrates understanding of visual language.

Students are expected to show evidence of written annotation and drawing in both Component 1 and Component 2.

Portfolio (60%)

Throughout Year 10 and 11, students work on a series of projects. Near the end of the course students are required to select and submit from this a Portfolio. This must consist of a sustained project (including preparatory work, development of ideas and processes, and final pieces) and a selection of further work. Students will have the opportunity to produce work from a variety of starting points. They will investigate the work of Artists and Designers as well as art from different times and cultures. On this course candidates must show evidence of working in at least one of the following areas:

- Art textiles
- Fashion design and illustration
- Costume design
- Constructed textiles
- Printed and dyed textiles
- Surface pattern
- Stitched and/or embellished textiles
- Soft furnishings and/or textiles for interiors
- Digital textiles
- Installed textiles

Externally Set Assignment

Towards the end of the course students are given an Externally Set Assignment. Here they receive an AQA paper containing a range of starting points from which they must select one and independently produce a unit of work. During this time, they are given general guidance on how to work through this task. They have approximately seven weeks to develop supporting preparation work before they sit a ten - hour practical session, which is split over two days, to create a final piece(s).

The preparatory work is marked alongside the final piece(s) and, together with the externally set assignment, contributes 40% towards the final GCSE grade.

Skills and attitudes required for success

This course offers students the opportunity to produce work in a wide range of textile materials, to build up technical skills and to express their feelings and creative ideas.

This course is aimed at enthusiastic students with an adventurous and enquiring approach to art and design, who wish to learn new skills as well as develop those acquired at Key Stage 3. It is best suited for those who have a particular interest or ability in art and design / textiles and wish to improve their creative thinking and problem-solving skills further. Students will need to take the initiative in decision making and be able to research projects in their own time, so a firm sense of commitment to the subject is essential, whilst also being highly self-motivated.

Students must also be prepared to attend lunch and twilight sessions.

Futures

The career opportunities available in the Art World are vast and diverse as are the routes which students who wish to pursue their art and design education can take; from AS/A2 Levels, to BTEC National courses specialising in specific areas such as Interior Design, Fashion design and Illustration.

Courses such as these can then lead on to Higher Education courses and careers in Illustration, Media, Jewellery Design, Fashion, Education and Furniture Design to name but a few.

Alternatively, if a student would rather enter the work place post 16, then there are many careers in the creative industries that would welcome a GCSE in Art Textiles, some of which provide further learning opportunities within them, for example a Modern Apprenticeship

Additional Requirements

Under normal circumstances it is essential that those students who wish to opt for this course have achieved a Foundation Stage Level 4 or higher in Year 9 and have a pristine attendance, homework and behaviour record.

Students are also encouraged to purchase the following materials*;

- A4 sketchbooks
- A range of soft 'B' pencils for sketching and drawing
- A good quality eraser, pencil sharpener, biros and fineliners
- Coloured pencils
- A small set of water colour paints or acrylics
- Paint brushes

In some circumstances, the school can support the purchase of supplies

Examination Board and Syllabus

Pearson Edexcel Level 1/Level 2 GCSE (9-1) in Business (1BS0)

Form of Assessment

Theme 1 – Investigating small business (105-minute Exam worth 50% of the final grade)*

Theme 2 – Building a Business (105-minute Exam worth 50% of the final grade)*

* Both exams will consist of calculations, multiple-choice, short-answer and extended-writing questions which are based on business contexts given in the paper.

Course Content

GCSE Business offers students a new course and learning experience. Students who take the subject find the concepts interesting and challenging as they have not been introduced to the subject during KS3.

The course is divided into two main themes:

Theme 1 – Investigating Small Business

- Topic 1.1 Enterprise and entrepreneurship
- Topic 1.2 Spotting a business opportunity
- Topic 1.3 Putting a business idea into practice
- Topic 1.4 Making the business effective
- Topic 1.5 Understanding external influences on business

Theme 2 – Investigating Small Business

- Topic 2.1 Growing the business
- Topic 2.2 Making marketing decisions
- Topic 2.3 Making operational decisions
- Topic 2.4 Making financial decisions
- Topic 2.5 Making human resource decisions

Skills and Qualities Required for Success

Students who take Businesses must enjoy learning and researching new areas of study. The diverse teaching and content of the subject allows students to engage in lessons and test the theories of the subject to their own business ideas.

Futures

Business is one of the largest and most popular courses taken during higher education. It allows students to specialise in either the subject itself or particular elements which they may have enjoyed.

Additional Requirements

Students usually require a minimum FS4 in English and Maths at KS3 to take the course. Business students require good literacy skills to make progress in the subject. Business Students also require good Mathematical skills to access the financial calculations. Exam success is influenced by the ability to structure an exam response in detail with good evaluation and analysis

Examination Board and Code

OCR J277

Form of Assessment

Unit J277/01: Computer systems – External Exam (50%)

Unit J277/02: Computational thinking, algorithms and programming - External Exam (50%)

Course Content

- The subject content for this qualification consists of the following areas of study:
- Understanding the components of a computer system and how data is processed.
- Understanding of binary representation, data representation, data storage and compression.
- Understanding of how computer networks, the internet and the World Wide Web work.
- Understanding of how to protect our data from attacks including encryption and utility software.
- Awareness of emerging trends in computing technologies, the impact of computing on individuals, society and the environment, including ethical, legal and ownership issues.
- Understand the need to decompose problems into sub-problems
- Ability to create original algorithms or work with algorithms produced by others.
- Ability to design, write, test and evaluate programs.

GCSE COMPUTER SCIENCE allows students, not only the opportunity of developing their knowledge and understanding of programming, but also the underlying principles of logic, decomposition, algorithms, data representation and communication.

Skills and Qualities Required for Success

- Keen interest in Computer Science
- Keen to develop computational thinking skills and be able to apply these skills to solve real problems and produce robust programs
- Enjoying working independently, finding out your own answers – not just being taught
- Ability to complete work by the deadlines set

Futures

The skills and knowledge covered during this Level 2 qualification will prepare students for A Level Computing, as well as supporting students who wish to seek employment at entry or trainee level, within a wide range of different working environments.

Additional Requirements

Throughout the GCSE Computer Science course, you will need to show a keen interest in keeping up-to-date with emerging technologies and to meet career challenges in the future, it is important that you are self-reliant as well as good communicators and problem solvers.

A minimum of working towards **FS Level 5 in Maths and FS Level 4 in English** at Key Stage 3 is required for those students opting for the GCSE Computer Science course. Students may be considered if they can show sufficient evidence of programming experience.

Given the content of this course a further consultation with the Head of Department may be appropriate before a student is accepted onto the course.

Examination Board and Syllabus

AQA (8552): GCSE Design & Technology: Core Materials

Form of Assessment

50% - Written Examination - 2 hours - 100 marks

50% - Non-Examined Assessment (NEA) - 30-35 hours - 100 marks

Course Content:

GCSE Design and Technology sets out the knowledge, understanding and skills required to undertake the iterative design process of exploring, creating and evaluating. The majority of the specification is delivered through written theory and practical application, intended to develop students' knowledge and understanding.

Areas of study

- Core technical principles - including: materials and their properties, energy and conservation, new and emerging technologies, systems and mechanics.
- Specialist technical principles - including: forces and stresses, applied mathematics, ecological and social footprint, scales and methods of production, using and working with a range of different materials, including paper and boards, woods and polymers.
- Designing and making principles - including: research and investigation, prototype development, manufacturing techniques, the work of others and communication methods of designers.

Skills and Qualities Required for Success:

Students wishing to undertake the Design and Technology GCSE should have an interest in products and how they are made, materials, their properties and sources and the environment. The Design and Technology GCSE will involve a high level of creativity, sketching and modelling, prototyping potential designs and lots of written analysis, theory and evaluation. It will include using Computer Aided Design software to present and even model and prototype potential ideas. Students must also demonstrate mathematical/ scientific knowledge and understanding, in relation to design and technology.

Futures

Students can progress from this qualification to:

- A Level D&T: Product Design
- Level 3 vocational qualifications, e.g. the BTEC Level 3 qualifications in Engineering
- Employment, e.g. in a Design or Technology-based industry where an apprenticeship may be available

Additional Requirements:

Students achieving an FS Level 4 and above in Maths & Science will be given first consideration for places on the Design and Technology GCSE.

A creative or problem-solving mind would be advantageous.

Examination Board and Syllabus

Edexcel 1DR0

Form of Assessment

Component 1: Devising (40% of the qualification).

Coursework: A portfolio that covers the creating and developing process and an analysis and evaluation of this process (45 marks). Practical assessment: A devised performance from a stimuli (15 marks) Teacher assessed, externally moderated.

Component 2: Performance from Text (20% of the qualification).

Students perform in two key extracts from a performance text (48 marks). Externally assessed by a visiting examiner.

Component 3: Theatre Makers in Practice (40% of the qualification).

1 hour 45-minute written examination. Practical exploration and study of one complete text (45 marks) and one live theatre production (15 marks). Externally assessed and moderated.

Course Content

Term 1: Revising drama skills, practitioners and techniques and collaborating as an ensemble. Component 1 mock assessment and practical exploration of the set text.

Term 2: Observation of a live theatre production to feed into Component 3 preparation and further exploration of the set text incorporating written responses. Preparation for Component 1 and exploration of stimuli alongside portfolio compilation.

Term 3: Rehearsal for Component 1 practical assessment and preparation of portfolio. Completion of Component 1 assessment and coursework portfolio. Component 3 preparation continues throughout the term.

Term 4: Preparation for the Component 2 examination. Practical exploration of Component 3 text. Component 3 written exam practice continues throughout the term.

Term 5: Component 2 examination takes place. Component 3 preparation (NB preparation for this exam will be taught throughout the whole course, alongside the other components).

Term 6: Component 3 examination.

Skills and Qualities Required for Success

- Good social skills and a willingness to mix with groups of people
- Ability to write with analysis, justification and evaluative response
- Bravery to try out new drama exercises in groups
- Ability to articulate ideas in voice and movement skills
- Desire to direct and encourage others to problem solve using drama strategies
- Confidence to perform work to others and give positive feedback
- Imagination to record drama work in written/diagrammatic form
- Sensitivity to listen and focus attention on others
- Ability to create imaginative drama without a given script.

Futures

Caring Professions; care work, teaching, law, medicine, police, social services, therapy, welfare, youth work.

Creative Industries; art administration, advertising, architecture, computer games, tourism, management, media, personnel, retail, acting, presenting, stage management and directing.

Additional Requirements

They should have demonstrated a clear interest in the subject to manage this demanding course. Students must also be prepared to write in detail about their drama work on a regular basis in preparation for their controlled assessments.

As part of this course students are expected to attend the arranged theatre visits which form part of their coursework. Therefore, there will be a small cost involved to cover the payment of tickets and transport.

There is an expectation that all GCSE Drama students are part of/support extra-curricular events within the Performing Arts faculty.

Examination Board and Syllabus

OCR Cambridge National Level 2 Engineering Design (J822)

Form of Assessment:

60% - Written Examination – 75 Mins Including a mixture of long and short answer questions.
40% - Non-Examined Assessment (NEA) – 2 short projects set by the exam board

Course Content:

Our Cambridge National in Engineering Design will encourage students to:

- understand and apply the fundamental principles and concepts of Engineering Design, including the design process, types of drawings, influences on design, and the use of Computer Aided Design (CAD)
- develop learning and practical skills that can be applied to real-life contexts and work situations
- think creatively, innovatively, analytically, logically and critically
- develop independence and confidence in using skills that would be relevant to the engineering design and development sector and more widely
- analyse problems in design terms through practical experience of solving such problems, including designing, and modelling designs to meet a design brief
- understand the different stages of the iterative design process, recognising the cyclical nature of this approach
- evaluate designs through product disassembly and the process of using product analysis

Areas of study;

R038: Principles of engineering design This is assessed by an exam. In this unit you will learn about the design process, and all of the stages that are involved. Topics include:

- Designing processes
- Designing requirements
- Communicating design outcomes
- Evaluating design ideas

R039: Communicating designs This is assessed by a set assignment. In this unit you will learn how to use sketching and engineering drawings to communicate your ideas. Topics include:

- Manual production of freehand sketches
- Manual production of engineering drawings
- Use of computer aided design (CAD)

R040: Design, evaluation and modelling This is assessed by a set assignment. In this unit you will learn how to create and test models of your design. Topics include:

- Product evaluation
- Modelling design idea

Skills and Qualities Required for Success:

- Well-developed practical skills.
- Clear material understanding from Key Stage 3 Design and Technology
- Independence and capability for writing up assignments.

- Ability to use research skills.
- Ability to work as part of a team.
- Ability to manage their own time effectively.

Students must also demonstrate mathematical/ scientific knowledge and understanding, in relation to Design and Technology.

Futures

Students can progress from this qualification to:

- A Level D&T: Product Design
- Level 3 vocational qualifications, e.g. the BTEC, Tech Levels and Apprenticeships at Level 3 qualifications in Engineering
- Employment, e.g. in a Design or Technology-based industry where an apprenticeship may be available
- DEC Award and Further DEC qualifications

Additional Requirements:

Students achieving an FS Level 4 and above in Maths & Science will be given first consideration for places on the Engineering Design Level 2 Qualification. A creative or problem-solving mind would be advantageous.

Examination board and Syllabus

Cambridge OCR Level 1/Level 2 J837: Enterprise and Marketing

Form of Assessment

- One externally assessed unit (exam)
- Two centre-assessed units (NEA)

Course Content

Three mandatory units:

Enterprise and Marketing Concepts

This is assessed by an exam. In this unit, you will learn about the key factors to consider and activities that need to happen to operate a successful small start-up business.

Design a Business Proposal

This is assessed by a set assignment. In this unit, you will identify a customer profile for a specific product, complete market research to generate product design ideas, and use financial calculations to propose a pricing strategy and determine the viability of their product proposal.

Market and Pitch a Business Proposal

This is assessed by a set assignment. In this unit, you will develop pitching skills to be able to pitch your business proposal to an external audience. Finally, you will review your pitching skills and business proposal using self-assessment and feedback gathered.

Skills and Qualities Required for Success

Required for Success Students who take Businesses must enjoy learning and researching new areas of study. The diverse teaching and content of the subject allows students to engage in lessons and test the theories of the subject to their own business ideas.

Futures

Business is one of the largest and most popular courses taken during higher education. It allows students to specialise in either the subject itself or elements which they may have enjoyed.

Additional Requirements

Students usually require a minimum FS4 in English and Maths at KS3 to take the course. Business students require good literacy skills to make progress in the subject. Business Students also require good Mathematical skills to access the financial calculations.

Examination Board and Syllabus

AQA GCSE French

Forms of Assessment

Four exams: Listening (25%), Reading (25%), Speaking (25%) and Writing (25%).

Course Content

Of course, the main content of the GCSE French course is the French language! You'll learn how to use the language, with lots of speaking and games to practise it all.

You have a huge amount of existing knowledge which you can bring to French. It's a closely related language to Spanish, so it has a lot of the same vocabulary, tenses and structures. You understand the imperfect tense in Spanish? Great – French also has the imperfect tense, and you already know how to use it! You are also already an expert in how to translate, how to write and how to speak to get a good grade, so you won't need to re-learn all of that. That's why, **In the Laurus Trust, the majority of students who take a second GCSE language do just as well or even better than they did in their first one.**

You'll be familiar with the topics that we'll be speaking about in GCSE French, as they're similar to the ones we've spoken about in Spanish. They are:

- identity and culture, including social media, relationships and festivals;
- local, national, international and global areas of interest, including your house, your neighbourhood, volunteering, the environment, and travelling abroad; and
- current and future study and employment, including school and career choices.

Futures

Whatever you want to do in life, knowing more languages will grant you more opportunities. As a scientist, you may want to collaborate with Universities around the world; as a journalist, you might want to interview people in different countries; or as an engineer, you might get the chance to work on a major international project. Whatever job you're applying for, speaking multiple languages could put you ahead of all the other candidates.

Students who are hoping to go to University will benefit particularly from GCSE French. Universities know that languages are demanding, academic subjects; that they improve your ability to speak and write in English; and that they help you recognise patterns and crack codes more quickly than others. Having extra GCSE languages can therefore mark you out as particularly talented, whatever course you may be applying for.

If you are thinking of studying Spanish at University, having another language will really help. It will improve your abilities in languages generally, and it will therefore improve your ability in Spanish. It will also help you to apply for top University places.

But, of course, it's not all about jobs and courses. Some of the biggest social problems we face today come from a lack of understanding and respect between people from different parts of the world. Learning languages helps you to understand people from other cultures, and to make yourself understood to them too – so, by learning more of them, you could become part of the force that solves these problems for good.

Examination Board and Syllabus

AQA GCSE Geography (8035)

Assessment

Paper 1 – Living with the *physical* environment, 35% of GCSE, 88 marks available, written exam lasting 1h30.

Paper 2 – Challenges in the *human* environment, 35% of GCSE, 88 marks available, written exam lasting 1h30.

Paper 3 – Geographical applications, 30% of GCSE, 76 marks available, written exam lasting 1h30.

Course Content*Living with the physical environment*

- The challenge of natural hazards (tectonics, atmospheric, climate change)
- The living world (ecosystems, rainforests, deserts)
- Physical landscapes in the UK (coasts, rivers)

Challenges in the human environment

- Urban issues and challenges (including two contrasting case studies of a city in a LIC/NEE compared to a major UK city)
- The changing economic world (development, development indicators, causes of uneven development, including a case study of a LIC or NEE)
- The challenge of resource management (Food)

Geographical applications

- Issue evaluation (Decision making exercise based upon a pre-release document sent out 12 weeks before the exam)
- Geography fieldwork (Questions based around our human and physical geography fieldwork visits)
- Geographical skills (Graphical, Cartographic, Numerical, Statistical)

Skills and Qualities Required for Success

Geographers can:

- Make a concise report
- Handle data
- Ask questions and find the answers
- Make decisions about an issue
- Analyse material
- Manage themselves
- Solve problems
- Think independently

Geographers are:

- Good communicators
- Spatially aware
- Socially and environmentally aware
- Problem solvers
- Good team players
- Computer literate
- Well rounded, flexible thinkers

Futures

Post 16 A-Level

Geography, Geology, Sociology and Environmental Science.

Career Pathways

Geography is a broad subject and is relevant to many different occupations. Consider the list below as a sample:

Urban/Rural Planning, Environmental Consultancy, Risk assessor, Hazard/Emergency Management, Government policy advisor, Journalist, Oceanography, Teaching, Architecture, Geographical Information Systems (GIS), Travel consultant, Transport manager, Climatologist, Aid worker.

Additional Requirements

An enthusiasm for Geography, an inquisitive approach to the world around you and a desire to find out how the world is going to change in the future and how humans can deal with the challenges of the 21st century.

At least a FS4 in Maths and English is recommended as students are expected to develop and demonstrate a number of geographical skills, including numerical and graphical skills, as they use and analyse different types of data. In addition, Geography is an academic subject requiring competency in reading and writing ahead of three written exams.

Examination Board and Syllabus

AQA

Form of Assessment

The course has two assessments completed at the end of Year 11:

Paper 1

'Understanding the modern world', 50%, 2 hours.

Paper 2

'Shaping the nation', 50%, 2 hours.

GCSE History does not offer a tier entry.

Course Content

Paper 1

Section A: PERIOD STUDY Germany, 1890–1945: Democracy and Dictatorship

- Germany and the growth of democracy
- Germany and the Depression
- The experiences of Germans under the Nazis

Section B: PERIOD STUDY Conflict and tension: the inter-war years, 1918–19

- Peacemaking
- The League of Nations and international peace
- The origins and outbreak of the Second World War

Paper 2

Section A: THEMATIC STUDY – Migration, Empires and the People c790AD to the present day

- Conquered and conquerors
- Looking west: Britain and the Atlantic world
- Expansion and empire
- Britain in the twentieth century

Section B: British depth studies and historic environment

Elizabethan England, c1568–1603

- Elizabeth's court and Parliament
- Life in Elizabethan times
- Troubles at home and abroad
- The historic environment of Elizabethan England

Skills and Qualities Required for Success

There is no escaping the fact that GCSE History places great demands on students. It is extremely important that students can demonstrate the ability to work independently. The course requires students to assess their own performance and respond positively to feedback and advice. Research skills are not essential on entry to the course, but students must be prepared to function as part of a group. A sound level of literacy is a must given the dependence upon written communication in the assessment of the course.

Futures

History is a universal qualification which increases the prospects of any students. The course is respected throughout colleges and higher education establishments. The study of History develops the ability to balance arguments, analyse evidence and add weight to any argument. GCSE History is valued for any post-16 course. Furthermore, the skills are transferable to careers that require analysis of situations and handling of information.

Additional Requirements

Students would ideally need to be performing at FS4 (or above) in English. Furthermore, students would need to have demonstrated a commitment to their studies throughout the course of Year 9 History.

Examination Board and Syllabus

Eduqas- 5569QA

Form of Assessment

- Examination: 40% - 1 written paper - 80 mins a mix of question styles on Hospitality in the Catering Industry.
- Controlled Assessment: 60% - Consists of a written project and a 3 hour practical exam, 12 hours total) Briefs are set by the exam board.

Course Content

This course concentrates on the hospitality and catering industry. You will develop the understanding related to a range of Hospitality and Catering providers; how they operate and what they have to consider to be successful.

This course provides students with the opportunity to develop a range of employability skills and techniques, understanding, personal qualities and attributes essential for success in working life.

You will have the opportunity to learn about issues related to nutrition and food safety and how they affect successful hospitality and catering operations. In this qualification, you will also develop food preparation and cooking skills as well as transferable skills of problem solving, organisation and time management, planning and communication.

Areas of study

- The industry – food and drink
- Job roles, employment opportunities and relevant training.
- Health, safety and hygiene – relevant legislation.
- Food preparation, cooking and presentation techniques.
- Nutrition and menu planning.
- Costing and portion control.
- Specialist equipment.
- Communication and record keeping within the sector.
- Environmental considerations in the sector.

Skills and Qualities Required for Success

- Well-developed practical skills.
- Clear ingredient understanding from Key Stage 3 Food and Nutrition
- Independence and capability for writing up assignments.
- Ability to use research skills.
- Ability to work as part of a team.
- Ability to manage their own time effectively.

Futures

Successful completion of this qualification will allow access to the following career pathways:

- Employment in any hospitality area or a specialist catering service including hospitality management
- Further study at college for Level 3 courses in Hospitality and Catering, Hospitality management or Patisserie courses.
- Further study at a 6th Form in Level 3 Food Science and Nutrition.

Additional Requirements

- It is intended that students wishing to choose this course should be dedicated and self-motivating and have a genuine interest in the subject.
- Students must be able to demonstrate a consistent work ethic throughout Key Stage 3 in Food and Nutrition.
- Be prepared to have to do their own shopping and bring ingredients into school.

Examination Board and Syllabus

BTEC Tech Awards Health & Social Care (2022)

Form of Assessment

Component 1: Human Lifespan Development

Learners will explore different aspects of growth and development and the factors that can affect this across the life stages. They will explore the different events that can impact on individuals' physical, intellectual, emotional and social development and how individuals cope with and are supported through changes caused by life events.

Component 2: Health and Social Care Services and Values

Learners will explore health and social care services and how they meet the needs of service users. They will also study the skills, attributes and values required when giving care.

Component 3: Health and Wellbeing

Learners will explore the factors that affect health and wellbeing, learning about physiological and lifestyle indicators, and person-centred approaches to make recommendations to improve an individual's health and wellbeing.

Why choose Health & Social Care?

This qualification is for learners interested in taking a hands-on course alongside their GCSEs that will offer them an insight into what it is like to work in one of the fastest growing sectors in the UK: Health & Social Care. The course covers some of the fundamental aspects of health and social care, including growth and development, health and social care services and values, and health and wellbeing, giving learners a broad introduction to a sector that transects a wide range of careers from social care and social work to many different branches of healthcare. The breadth of this course allows learners to identify their strengths and interests to help inform next steps in education and training.

Skills and Qualities Required for Success

The Tech Award combines theory with plenty of practical application, giving learners the opportunity to develop key skills relevant to the health and social care sector such as research techniques and measuring physical health, as well as developing their written communication skills as they create health and wellbeing plans. Through the two internally assessed components, learners complete realistic tasks and activities that allow them to fully connect knowledge to practice and evidence core knowledge, understanding and skills

Futures

Taking Health & Social care will enable you to get a taste of what a sector is like. You will gain transferable skills and confidence that will help them in the world today and prepare them for their futures.

You will also have opportunities to apply learning from their GCSE subjects to everyday and work contexts.

You will build applied knowledge and skills that show an aptitude for further learning, both in the sector and more widely.

Further study at Sixth form like A level Psychology

Further study at college like Child Development & Health and Social Care

Examination Board and Syllabus

Eduqas

Form of Assessment

70% Exam

30% Non-exam assessment

Component 1: Exploring the Media – 40%

Critical exploration into a range of media industries (newspapers, print advertising, film marketing, video games and radio).

Component 2: Understanding Media Forms and Products – 30%

In-depth study of representation, media industry and audience from set study areas (television crime drama / music videos, magazine, online and social media).

Component 3:
Coursework project

An individual practical production for an intended audience.

Past briefs include:

Film: Create a marketing campaign for a new thriller film such as a DVD cover, billboard and theatrical poster

Television: Create a sequence from a new TV crime series

Music: Create a music video or a website to promote a new artist / band

Magazines: Create a new print or online magazine for a teenage audience.

Course Content

You will study a wide range of different media in this subject, some of which you may already have some knowledge. We will look at the television, film and music industry and you will learn how to analyse and interpret various media texts in preparation for the exam.

You will have access to industry-standard software, such as Adobe Photoshop and Canva. Using Digital SLR cameras, you will also develop your photography skills through practical workshops.

Skills and Qualities Required for Success

Most importantly, you need to have a keen interest in the media, be that film, music, the internet or photography to name but a few. You need to be keen to develop your interest and enjoyment of media communication in local and global contexts.

You need to be willing to form your own opinions and become a critical reader of the media by investigating and researching topics independently. The ability to manage your own time and work to deadlines in this subject is also a must, just as it is in the media industry.

Futures

GCSE Media studies can lead onto A Level Media studies and BTEC Level 3 Media courses. It also complements other creative subjects as well as the study of people such as Sociology and Psychology.

Possible routes into employment may involve roles in the creative media industry such as journalism, film production, TV, radio, advertising, photography, game design, amongst many other roles that involve interacting with others and using digital technologies.

A strong knowledge of how the media works will also support other careers, such as social care, law and education.

Exam Board & Code Pearson Edexcel Level 1/Level 2 GCSE (9-1) in Music (1MU0)

Form of Assessment

Exams (40%) and coursework (60%)

Component 1: Understanding Music - 40%

- Listening to, commenting upon and answering questions about musical extracts (both unfamiliar music & study pieces)

Component 2: Performing Music - 30%

- Performance 1: Solo Performance
- Performance 2: Ensemble (group) Performance

Component 3: Composing Music - 30%

- Composition 1: Composition to a brief
- Composition 2: Free composition (students choose their own style and instrumentation)

Course content

This is [Pearson Edexcel](#) GCSE offers a clear and coherent structure with three engaging components, assessed through practical performances, compositions and one externally examined paper. Students will gain a holistic understanding of music where you will investigate, analyse and evaluate music and its features. Building on this, and by using practical methods, students are encouraged to take a more holistic view of their knowledge, performance and compositional skills that will develop a breadth and depth of Music, creating a knowledge of a diverse musical heritage

There are four areas of study:

- Instrumental Music 1700–1820
- Vocal Music
- Music for Stage and Screen
- Fusions.

Skills and Qualities Required for Success

Prior instrumental ability is not essential but advised along with a drive for learning an instrument is. Students will need to play a musical instrument (this includes the voice) for performances in both solo and ensemble performances as part of the course. We are not restricting non instrumentalists as tuition is available but a drive for learning an instrument is essential.

A genuine passion for this subject is vital. This course is an opportunity to take creative risks, experience on-stage performances and explore independent thinking and group work in a close-knit setting.

Futures

This GCSE Music course provides a solid foundation for AS and A Level as well as preparation for a music related career. Even if music is not a career path, universities prefer students who are well rounded and have skills outside of the chosen subject – GCSE Music demonstrates this well. Aside from this, GCSE Music equips students with the skills that are preferable to employers such as teamwork, communication, presenting skills, confidence, perseverance and problem solving.

Further relevant information

Under normal circumstances students require a FS Level 5 to select this option. Attendance at one extra-curricular activity during the course (per week) is compulsory as this supports performance and musical growth.

Examination Board and Syllabus

Edexcel GCSE in Physical Education

Form of Assessment & Course Content

Theory: 60%

This is externally assessed through two written examination papers these include multiple-choice questions, short-answer, and longer-answer questions.

Component 1 - Fitness and Body Systems: 36%

Exam 1 hour 45 minutes

Topics include:

Applied anatomy and physiology - bodies systems Movement analysis

Physical training Use of data

Component 2 – Health and Performance: 24%

Exam 1 hour 15 minutes

Topics include:

Health, fitness and well-being Sport psychology Socio-cultural

influences Use of data

Practical: 40%

Component 3 - Practical Performance: 30%

All students must complete three practical activities one of which must be a team activity and one must be a game activity.

Component 4 – Personal Exercise Programme – 10%

Students will be required to plan, carry out and evaluate their own personal exercise programme. This must be done on one of the three activities from component 3.

Students can offer off site activities if participating to a high standard. A full list of activities is available on the Edexcel website.

Entry Requirements to GCSE Physical Education:

GCSE Physical Education is a very challenging GCSE course requiring very specific skills and abilities. For this reason, we insist on a separate process for access to the qualification. Entry to this course is restricted to those students who have performed at the highest level in Physical Education throughout Key Stage 3 as a performer.

In order to be accepted on to the course you must have:

- An exemplary record of attendance and kit in PE lessons
- Evidence of extra-curricular activity both in and outside of school – must already be undertaking extra-curricular clubs in at least two activities and regularly participating in an activity outside of school from the examination boards recognised list of activities.
- Genuine ability in THREE different practical areas
- Under normal circumstances, students would require a secure FS4 in English, Maths and Science to select this as an option'

Some students may need a further consultation with the subject leader for PE and a member of SLT before being accepted on to the course.

Skills and Qualities Required for Success

Students taking GCSE Physical Education will be required to work independently, in pairs and also in teams in the practical elements of the course. They will also be expected to attend extra-curricular clubs. In theory lessons students will be required to make notes, complete presentations and research projects and produce and perform a six-week personal exercise programme.

Futures

As well as ideal preparation for the A Level Physical Education course, PE allows for progression to related vocational qualifications, such as BTEC, Firsts and Nationals in Sport or Sport and Exercise Sciences.

This course can lead on to other opportunities in: physiotherapy, nutrition, analysis of sporting performance, recreational management, leisure activities, the fitness industry, coaching and officiating.

Examination Board and Syllabus

Edexcel – Level 2

Course Content

Component 1 - *Preparing participants to take part in sport and physical activity.*

During classroom lessons, students will explore the different types and provision of sport and physical activity available for different types of participants. They will identify the barriers to participation and ways to overcome these barriers to increase participation in sport and physical activity. They will also research equipment and technological advances in a chosen sport or physical activity and how to prepare our bodies for participation in sport and physical activity.

During practical lessons, students will be tasked with planning and delivering a sporting warm up to their peers. This will reinforce the work covered in class and computer rooms.

Component 2 - *Taking part and improving other participants.*

Students will investigate the components of fitness and their effect on performance, take part in practical sport, explore the role of officials in sport and learn to apply methods and sporting drills to improve other participants' sporting performance.

During practical lessons, students will be tasked with planning and delivering both a sporting warm up and main activity to their peers. This will reinforce the work covered in class and computer rooms.

Component 3 - *Developing fitness to improve other participants performance in sport and physical activity.*

This component is externally assessed, it is worth 60 marks and is a 90- minute exam.

Form of Assessment

The course will be assessed through the following methods:

- A written exam
- Typed Coursework
- Practical performances (both delivering a sport session and performing sporting skills)

Skills and Qualities Required for Success

- Evidence of attendance at one extra-curricular per week, either at lunch times or after school.
- A keen interest in all areas of sport, not just practical lessons
- Competence in the use of computers
- A keen interest in how the body copes with sporting activities
- Ability to lead others
- Ability to work independently on a task over several lessons
- The ability to produce presentations and perform them in front of others
- Bringing your PE kit to every practical lesson.

Futures

BTEC Sport allows for progression to related vocational qualifications, such as BTEC, Firsts and Nationals in Sport or Sport and Exercise Sciences.

This course can lead on to other opportunities in: physiotherapy, nutrition, analysis of sporting performance, sports science, sports psychology, sports rehabilitation, sports massage, journalism, teaching / lecturing, recreational management, leisure activities, the fitness industry, strength and conditioning, biomechanics, physiology, coaching and officiating.

Please note that there will only be ONE practical sports lesson a week which will vary from fitness testing to analysing practical performance – you will not be playing a sport every lesson.

Examination Board and Code

AQA 8062A

Specification

GCSE Religious Studies A - Full Course

Form of Assessment

100% of the course assessment will be via two external written examinations. All assessment is linear, with both exams taking place at the end of Year 11.

Paper 1 - The study of religion: beliefs, teaching and practices:

- Written exam: 1 hour 45 minutes
- 96 marks (plus 3 marks for spelling, punctuation, grammar and specialist terminology)
- 50% of GCSE

Paper 2 - Thematic Studies

- Written exam: 1 hour 45 minutes
- 96 marks (plus 3 marks for spelling, punctuation, grammar and specialist terminology)
- 50% of GCSE

Course content

Students will complete two components of study over the two-year course. Component one (Paper 1) will be a study of the religious beliefs, teachings and practices of Christianity and Islam. Component two will involve the study of four Social, Philosophical and Ethical themes.

Skills and qualities required for success

- A genuine interest in Religion and Philosophy and how it influences people's lives
- An awareness of differing viewpoints
- A good standard of spelling, punctuation and grammar
- The ability to be well organised and to meet deadlines for P&P
- A willingness to think deeply about key questions
- A willingness to listen to others and respect their opinions
- The ability to use evidence from various sources to express and evaluate personal responses
- The ability to analyse different ideas and viewpoints and being willing to justify your point of view
- The ability to debate respectfully
- A willingness to share your personal opinions and defend your choices
- A willingness to build relationships with your peers and gain valuable skills for your future.

Futures

A GCSE in RS is a highly valued qualification. Colleges, universities and employers value Religious Studies as an academically challenging and rigorous subject which provides students with vital transferable skills and above all else a knowledge and understanding of issues of relevance to all people across society.

Progression onto further study including AS/A Level study in Religious Studies and Philosophy and other subjects including: History, Geography, English, Law, Psychology, Ethics, Theology, Sociology and Politics.

Careers which favour a Religious Studies qualification include: teaching, academia, the police service, nursing, medicine, law, journalism, social work, teaching, politics, the armed forces and many more.

GCSE RS and Philosophy enables students to:

- Adopt an enquiring, critical and reflective approach to the study of religion
- Explore religions and beliefs, reflect on fundamental questions, and engage with them intellectually and respond personally
- Enhance their spiritual and moral development, and contribute to their health and well being
- Enhance their personal, social and cultural development, their understanding of different cultures locally, nationally and in the wider world, and contribute to social and community cohesion
- Develop their interest in, and enthusiasm for, the study of RS, and relate it to the wider world
- Reflect on and develop their own values, opinions and attitudes in light of their learning.
- Assess current world issues critically and fairly

RS gives you the chance to be yourself, explore your personal beliefs and to spend time with like-minded students.

Examination Board and Syllabus

AQA GCSE Biology (8461)

AQA GCSE Chemistry (8462)

AQA GCSE Physics (8463)

Form of Assessment

This course provides three separate GCSE qualifications (it is NOT possible to take them individually). Each GCSE is assessed by two terminal written exams at the end of the course (end of Year 11) which means students will sit six exams in total, each being 1 hour 45 minutes in length.

Course Content

The specifications are divided into topics which each cover different key areas of Biology, Chemistry and Physics. Practical skills are developed throughout the courses and assessed in the written papers.

GCSE Biology	GCSE Chemistry	GCSE Physics
1. Cell biology 2. Organisation 3. Infection and response 4. Bioenergetics 5. Homeostasis and response 6. Inheritance, variation and evolution 7. Ecology 8. Key ideas	1. Atomic structure and the periodic table 2. Bonding, structure, and the properties of matter 3. Quantitative chemistry 4. Chemical changes 5. Energy changes 6. The rate and extent of chemical change 7. Organic chemistry 8. Chemical analysis 9. Chemistry of the atmosphere 10. Using resources	1. Energy 2. Electricity 3. Particle model of matter 4. Atomic structure 5. Forces 6. Waves 7. Magnetism and electromagnetism 8. Space physics

Skills and Qualities required for success

The GCSEs in Separate Sciences encourage students to be inspired, motivated and challenged by following a broad, coherent, practical, satisfying and worthwhile course of study. It encourages learners to evolve their curiosity about the living, material and physical worlds and provides insight into, and experience of, how Science works. Studying this course, rather than Combined Science, allows students to develop a broader and deeper understanding of important areas of the subject domain.

Futures

Although not essential, the Separate Sciences course is highly recommended for those students considering choosing Sciences at A Level. The course provides an excellent grounding for A Levels in a broad range of subjects (especially in the Sciences) as well as other Further Education courses.

Studying Separate Sciences is a great first step towards a career in Medicine or Science but it also helps develop powerful knowledge and skills that are vital for many different careers.

Additional requirements

Under normal circumstances, students would be expected to be working at a minimum of a FS4 at the end of Year 9. As well as the Year 9 Christmas exam, students will need to apply to take the course and teacher assessment will be used to determine the suitability of the course for each student.



LAURUS
RYECROFT

Laurus Ryecroft
Lumb Lane
Droylsden
Manchester
M43 7LJ

t: 0161 507 5500
e: enquiries@laurusryecroft.org.uk
w: laurusryecroft.org.uk