WESTFIELD ACADEMY
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Key Stage 4

Options Booklet for 2022

Dear Parents and Carers,

Welcome to our Year 8 Options Evening.

It's a pleasure to welcome you to what is a very important evening. It's not long since your child was "settling into" Westfield Academy, and now we are talking about their GCSEs. It seems soon. However, as they are so very important, it's probably wise to say, "the sooner the better." At Westfield Academy, our exam results have been the strongest of all the "non-selective" schools. We believe this is partly down to our options process. There are two key elements to it:

1. It is three years, not two. Why? Well it seems wise. If as we know success at GCSEs is vitally important, then surely we should allow the teachers and the students three years, not two, to focus on them, in order to get the best results.

2. The key changes are:

   BTEC Sport Science. All students have to do "Games" – it is good for their health and well-being – however, it is a significant amount of curriculum time over three years. So, what we decided is that, as they are studying it, they should get a qualification. All students will study BTEC Sport Science as part of their "Games" lessons. The qualification is worth 1 GCSE if they achieve a Level 2 Pass.

Thank you for your support, we can guarantee that your child will have the best possible chance of success.

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The Curriculum 2021 / 22

Compulsory study for all students

English Literature:	1 GCSE
English Language:	1 GCSE
Mathematics:	1 GCSE
Combined Science:	2 GCSE
History or **Geography:**	1 GCSE
French or **Spanish:**	1 GCSE
BTEC Sport:	1 BTEC
PSHE	

Options – pick two of the following subjects

- GCSE Separate Sciences (Grade 5+ only)
- GCSE Business
- GCSE Economics
- GCSE Computing
- GCSE Art
- GCSE Drama
- GCSE Dance
- GCSE Music
- GCSE Food and Nutrition
- GCSE Product Design
- GCSE Psychology
- GCSE Religious Education
- GCSE Sociology
- BTEC Health & Social Care
- BTEC Tech Award in Business Enterprise
- BTEC Tech Award in Digital Information Technologies
- BTEC Tech Award in Creative Media Productions

Aims of our curriculum

Westfield Academy is committed to providing a broad, balanced, accessible and inclusive curriculum for all our students. We aren't a selective school and we don't believe that "one size fits all". It is our aim to provide equally for the needs of all our students and offer support, where necessary, to allow access to the full curriculum. We aim for excellence for all and are committed to ensuring that students can enjoy their studies and achieve success.

We want to make sure that all students have a positive learning experience and we believe that our curriculum will motivate and engage students, challenging them to achieve to the very best of their ability.

We will ensure that, where possible, all students have the opportunity to study their preferred courses and they are provided with the necessary information and guidance that will enable them to make these important choices.

How important are your GCSE grades?

Find out how GCSEs affect your future choices and studies, and what to do if they don't go to plan.

Your GCSE results are a very important part of your academic journey. The results you get can affect the following:

- The sixth form you go to;
- The qualifications you take next;
- Your eligibility for a university course;
- The universities you can apply to; and / or
- Your career prospects.

What are GCSEs?

GCSEs (General Certificate of Secondary Education) are subject-based academic qualifications. Students study towards GCSEs at secondary school in England and Wales over a period of two years, usually in Years 10 and 11. They are currently graded on a new scale of 9-1 (as of September 2017) instead of the previous A*-G rating.

How will GCSEs affect my future studies?

GCSEs can determine the Sixth Form you go to

Entry requirements for school and college sixth forms vary – ranging from four to five C grades (that's 4-5 in the new GCSE grading system), with perhaps Bs in the subjects you want to study, through to at least six GCSEs at Grade A for the most selective colleges.

Your GCSE performance is usually a good indicator of how well you'll do in A-Level or other advanced studies – in fact, it's the only real hard-and-fast evidence of your academic abilities a college has to go on. Many sixth forms use a scoring system, based on GCSE grades, to predict how well you're likely to do (and from that, decide whether or not to accept you).

For instance, five B grades (6) and five C grades (4 or 5) at GCSE could roughly translate to a predicted CCD at A-Level, while straight A grades would suggest AAA is possible.

The lower your GCSE grades, the lower you will be scored – which could limit the number of colleges and sixth forms open to you.

If you're worried your grades might not cut it with the sixth form or college you want to go to, see if they're prepared to be flexible – otherwise, you may need to approach some alternatives, learn more about what to do if your grades don't go to plan.

GCSEs determine the qualifications you take next

Some sixth forms may say you can't do a particular subject unless you've got at least a Grade A (at least a 6 or 7) in that subject at GCSE.

If your grades are mostly Cs (4 or 5), studying A-Levels could be off limits altogether; a sixth form may offer you a vocational (i.e., a more practical and hands-on) course such as a BTEC Level 3 qualification instead.

GCSEs could be used to assess eligibility for a university course

Regardless of the subject you want to study, the majority of university courses look for at least a C grade in English, Maths and perhaps Science - that's Grade 4 or 5 under the new structure.

Some university courses go further and ask for specific subjects at GCSE, with certain grades, so check directly with universities if you're in doubt. For example:

- Management at the University of Leeds specifies that you must have at least a Grade B (Grade 6+) in English Language and Maths under your belt.
- Psychology at the University of Bath asks for "a strong set of GCSEs, such as grade A*, 8 or 9 in at least five relevant GCSEs or Grade A or 7 in the majority of GCSEs. We strongly prefer applicants who can demonstrate a solid grounding in Mathematics or statistics, such as those with GCSE Grade A or 7 in Mathematics".
- Law at Manchester Metropolitan University will accept applicants with GCSE Grade C or 4 in English Language or Level 2 Functional Skills English.

Don't let a disappointing GCSE performance put you off applying to the university course you really want. Given recent A-Level reforms, universities will use your GCSE grades more than before when deciding whether to accept you or not.

GCSEs may limit the universities you can apply to

Some of the top academic universities (often belonging to the Russell group) will ask for very high A-level grades – AAB or higher - for most courses.

Because of the assumed connection between your GCSE and A-level results, it'll be down to you to prove you're able to achieve top grades. Grades B and C (or a 4 to 6) at GCSE are suggestive of Cs and Ds at A-level – which won't be enough to get into some universities.

The more competitive the university and course, the higher the number of high-achieving students with top GCSE marks applying.

Here's another example. Applicants to LSE need to have 'achieved a strong set of GCSE grades including the majority at A and A*, or equivalent. Your GCSE (or equivalent) English Language and mathematics grades should be no lower than B. We also consider your overall GCSE subject profile.

GCSEs can affect the career you end up doing

A career-related degree may also have subject-specific entry requirements:

- Engineering courses such as chemical engineering: you'll usually need A-Levels or equivalent in Chemistry and Maths, and Physics for other engineering courses, which in turn means you'll need to have good GCSE grades in Science and Maths.
- Medicine: competitive courses like medicine may ask for a whole suite of good GCSEs. The University of Birmingham's medical school, for example, specifies: "normally, applicants must offer A* grades in English (either English Language or English Literature), Mathematics and all Science subjects. Integrated Science (double certificate) is acceptable as an alternative to Single Sciences. Overall GCSE performance will be considered".
- Social work and secondary school teaching: these professions won't consider you without at least a Grade C (or 4 or 5) in Maths and English Language at GCSE
- Nursing and primary school teaching: Grade C (or 4 or 5) in GCSE English, Maths and Science.

Information for students

Making the right choices for you is very important. Your parents will also help, and, more importantly, will be asking you to discuss why you are making particular decisions. You have a real choice in making decisions about what you study, in addition to the core subjects of GCSE English, English Literature, Mathematics and Science. Most of the courses in this booklet lead directly to GCSEs or Level 2 vocational qualifications – some help to improve the grades you can get in GCSE and others are enrichment opportunities.

Do

- ➢ Ask lots of people for advice – teachers, parents, older sisters or brothers, careers advisers, relatives and friends.
- ➢ Make sure you keep your choices balanced.
- ➢ Find out what qualifications will be needed if you know what you want to do for a career or at university.
- ➢ Read about the subjects and how they are assessed.
- ➢ Ask for help if you don't understand the information you are given.
- ➢ Make notes about your choices and your reasons and keep them.
- ➢ Keep this booklet safe as it contains information you will need later. Make notes in it, highlight areas of particular interest or where it raises questions.

Do NOT

- ➢ Choose subjects of one type only.
- ➢ Choose a combination of subjects that overload you.
- ➢ Choose a subject just because you like or do not like a particular teacher.
- ➢ Choose a subject just because your friend has chosen it.

We try very hard to provide the first two choices for all students. It is not always possible to do this because of timetabling clashes or because some groups would be too large or too small.

If you do not get your first two choices, we will discuss other possible options with you personally.

GCSE English

What will I learn in English?

All students will be completing two courses over the two-year period which will provide them with two separate GCSE results. One of the two qualifications will be completed during Year 10, the other at the end of Year 11.

The first course they will be following during the two years will be English Literature where students will look more closely at poetry, Shakespeare, a play and a piece of prose. They will sit two examinations for Literature at the end of the course along with their English Language exams.

The second of the courses will be English Language where students will develop skills in their reading and writing, which will be assessed by two exams at the end of the course. Students will also complete a speaking and listening unit which will be sent to the exam board and will provide a separate mark.

How will I be assessed?

English Language (2 exams)	Unit 1 – 50%
	Unit 2 – 50%
Speaking & Listening	0%
English Literature (2 exams)	Unit 1 – 50%
	Unit 2 – 50%

English and my career

English is, quite possibly, the most important subject for your career – whatever you choose to do – because all employers require individuals with strong reading, writing, speaking and listening skills. In short, English is about exploring how people communicate their ideas, and so it's a vital subject at the heart of the school curriculum, and for thriving in our communications age!

Who should I see about English?

Mr Black, Head of English

GCSE Maths

What will I learn in Maths?

This is a compulsory subject. In Year 11 students sit three exams (one non-calculator paper and two calculator papers). Years 9, 10 & 11 will be following the GCSE course over three years. During the course you will continue to develop the skills that you have been learning throughout Key Stage 3.

The main topics are:

- Statistics and Probability;
- Number and Algebra;
- Problem Solving;
- Geometry and Measures.

In recent years there has been an increased focus on Functional Maths (how you can apply the maths you learn to real life situations). This will be incorporated into the GCSE course to make it relevant to each and every student.

How will I be assessed?

You will be studying Edexcel 9-1 GCSE. This course is assessed either at Higher or Foundation Level. Assessment will take place every half term. The examinations will take place at various stages of Year 11 according to your progress and needs.

There is NO Coursework; all assessments are formal exams.

What other students have said about Maths

"It's really important that I pass Maths because I want to be able to go on to the Sixth Form or to college so that I can get a good job. The Edexcel exam was really straight forward and I'm confident that I'm going to be able to get my grade 4."

Maths and my career

As Maths is a core subject, most employers and colleges require you to have at least a Grade 4 before they will offer you a placement or position. Maths is used in a wide range of Further Education courses and jobs and is therefore invaluable. Even if you do not choose a career in the mathematical sciences, studying as much Mathematics as you can is a good way to keep your career options open. Mathematics is an excellent foundation for, and is usually a prerequisite to, study in all areas of science and engineering. Students in such areas as Anthropology, Sociology, and Psychology, as well as Law, Business, and Medicine, also benefit from a solid background in Mathematics and Statistics. It will help you to better understand Science and Technology and their effects on our world.

To study Maths at A-Level you will need to achieve at least a Grade 7 at GCSE. A-Level Maths can lead to a career in Engineering, Medicine or Finance particularly, as well as many more.

Who should I see about Maths?

Mr Okemadu, Head of Maths

GCSE Combined Science

What will I learn in Science?

Science encompasses ideas about the material, physical and living world. Combined Science will include Chemistry, Physics and Biology – investigating, observing, experimenting and testing out ideas and thinking about them. The way scientific ideas flow through Combined Science will support students in building a deep and valuable understanding of science. This will involve talking about, reading and writing about Science plus the actual doing, as well as representing Science in its many forms both mathematically and visually through models, so students are engaged and enthused.

How will I be assessed?

Pupils will sit six exams at the end of their course in Year 11, two Biology, two Chemistry and two Physics papers.

What other students have said about Science

"I like the discussions and role plays we do."
"It's helpful that some of the equations we have to use come up in maths too"
"My teacher said that some of what we cover touches on A level science, which is great for me as I want to go on the study science in 6th form."

Science and my career

Our Combined Science course leads nicely into studying Science A-Levels in the Sixth Form, usually for those considering careers such as medicine, dentistry, pharmacology, ophthalmology and scientific research. This course can also lead to Level 3 Applied Science to consider work as a science technician, as a quality control analyst in a research lab or possibly working for a scientific magazine.

Who should I see about Science

Miss Rafter, Head of Science

GCSE History

What will I learn in History?

History is a vital subject. The course we do was specially designed for young people. We have an exciting new specification to work from that gives the student a broader understanding of history in Britain and the wider world. In our World History, we will complete a Period Study focusing on Germany 1890-1945, and the period directly after WW2 known as The Cold War. Our British History paper involves a Depth Study looking at the History of Crime and Punishment in England from the Middle Ages until today, this topic includes a study on a Historic Environment for which we shall study Whitechapel in London. Our final topic will be the period of Elizabeth I and her achievements at this time.

How will I be assessed?

There are three exams: Paper 1 (British) is worth 30%, Paper 2 (Period Study) is worth 40% and Paper 3 (Modern) is worth 30%. We use the Edexcel exam board and their new 2016 specification.

What other students have said about History

"GCSE History is wonderful. You learn new and interesting things. The topics we learn are very interesting. The teachers are always there to help and support. I would recommend taking History".
"I like History. It is fun."
"GCSE History is a very interesting subject and the teachers are amazingly supportive".
"It is fun to learn about other cultures".
"It can be a useful subject for later life".

History and my career

History is useful for careers in Law, Business, Government and Education. The skills learned can be used in many careers. GCSE History is a useful subject to study if you want to pursue further study in History, Law or Politics.

Who should I see about History?

Mrs Hunt, Head of Humanities

GCSE Geography

What will I learn in GCSE Geography?

In GCSE Geography students will study Edexcel GCSE Geography B (2016).

Students who have enjoyed Geography in Years 7 and 8 should consider GCSE Geography to continue to learn about the topics they have studied already in more depth and to develop their geographical skills further.

Students will study the following topics over the three units outlined below.

Unit 1: Global Geographical Issues

- Hazardous Earth (earthquakes and volcanoes)
- Development Dynamics
- Challenges of an Urbanising World (cities)

Unit 2: UK Geographical Issues

- The UK's Evolving Physical Landscape (coasts)
- The UK's Evolving Human Landscape (dynamic inner cities)
- Geographical Investigations (fieldwork)

Unit 3: People and Environment Issues

- People and the Biosphere
- Forests Under Threat (rainforests)
- Consuming Energy Resources
- Making a Geographical Decision

How will I be assessed?

You will be assessed regularly in GCSE Geography by mid and end of unit assessments. There will also be a number of full unit mocks in Years 10 and 11.

At the end of the GCSE Geography course you will be assessed in official exams outlined in the table below:

	Unit 1	**Unit 2**	**Unit 3**
Format	Exam	Exam	Exam
Date	Summer 2018	Summer 2018	Summer 2018
Title	Global Geographical Issues	UK Geographical Issues	People and Environment Issues
Weight	37.5%	37.5%	25%

What can I do with GCSE Geography?

There are many things that you can do in GCSE Geography. A GCSE in Geography would be very useful if you are interested in planning for local development such as railways and airports or international development such as working for charities. The benefit of a GCSE in Geography is that it allows you to develop a wider variety of skills than any other subject to turn you into a well-rounded individual.

Who to see about GCSE Geography?

Miss Westlake, Head of Geography

GCSE French

What will I learn in French?

In GCSE French, we will study the new GCSE course with the AQA Exam Board. Over the three years of study we will study topics under the umbrella of three main themes:

- **Theme 1:** Identity and culture
- **Theme 2:** Local, national, international and global areas of interest
- **Theme 3:** Current and future study and employment

During the course students will develop their language skills further and learn to read all sorts of materials in French and continue to improve their ability to communicate in writing. Grammar and translation skills will be developed and drilled in preparation for the new style examination.

Additionally, pupils will also learn more about the culture of the countries where French is spoken and they will have the opportunity to practice their speaking skills with a native French speaker.

How will I be assessed?

- A **listening** exam worth 25% of the final grade.
- A **reading** exam worth 25% of the final grade.
- Short **speaking** tasks with your teacher worth 25% of the final grade.
- One **writing** exam worth 25% of the final grade.

French and my career

- Employers are keen to employ people who have a language qualification. You don't have to be fluent to be useful to an employer and a small amount of a language can give you the edge over someone without this skill.
- Some universities specify a language GCSE as an entry requirement for certain non-language courses.
- People with language skills and knowledge are highly thought of in the modern world and could create greater opportunities to work abroad.
- People with a language can potentially earn more as there are greater avenues of opportunity for those with another language.
- It is a useful skill to have on holiday.

Who should I see about French?

Mrs Ampah-Korsah, Head of MFL

GCSE Spanish

What will I learn in Spanish?

In GCSE Spanish, we will study the new GCSE course with the AQA Exam Board. Over the three years of study, we will study topics under the umbrella of three main themes:

- **Theme 1:** Identity and culture
- **Theme 2:** Local, national, international and global areas of interest
- **Theme 3:** Current and future study and employment

During the course, students will develop their language skills further and learn to read all sorts of materials in Spanish and continue to improve their ability to communicate in writing. Grammar and translation skills will be developed and drilled in preparation for the new style examination.

Additionally, pupils will also learn more about the culture of the countries where Spanish is spoken and they will have the opportunity to practice their speaking skills with a native Spanish speaker.

How will I be assessed?

- A **listening** exam worth 25% of the final grade.
- A **reading** exam worth 25% of the final grade.
- Short **speaking** tasks with your teacher worth 25% of the final grade.
- One **writing** exam worth 25% of the final grade.

Spanish and my career

- Employers are keen to employ people who have a language qualification. You don't have to be fluent to be useful to an employer and a small amount of a language can give you the edge over someone without this skill.
- Some universities specify a language GCSE as an entry requirement for certain non-language courses.
- People with language skills and knowledge are highly thought of in the modern world and could create greater opportunities to work abroad.
- People with a language can potentially earn more as there are greater avenues of opportunity for those with another language.
- It is a useful skill to have on holiday.

Who should I see about Spanish?

Mrs Ampah-Korsah, Head of MFL

BTEC Level 2 Award in Sport

What will I learn in BTEC Sport?

This course provides an engaging and relevant introduction to the world of sport. It incorporates important aspects of the industry, such as fitness testing and training for sport and exercise, the psychology of sport, practical sports performance and sports leadership. It enables you to develop and apply your knowledge, while also developing a range of relevant practical, communication and technical skills.

How will I be assessed?

There will be a combination of coursework tasks and external examinations. The tasks range in style from PowerPoint presentations to practical performances.

You will study three mandatory units, covering the underpinning knowledge and skills required for the sports sector:

- fitness for sport and exercise;
- practical performance in sport; and
- applying the principles of personal training.

You will build on the knowledge gained in the mandatory units by choosing one further unit which is the sports performer in action.

What other students have said about Technical Award Sport

"I enjoy learning about how the body changes with exercise"
"The practical assignment has been good fun to complete because I was able to improve my fitness"

BTEC Level 2 Award Sport and my career

Anyone who is considering a career in Sports Performance, Sports Management or Sports Psychology – if you are considering joining one of Westfield Academy's sports courses in Sixth Form, then this would give you the access requirements for those courses.

Who should I see about

Mr Chalk, Head of PE

GCSE Separate Sciences

What will I learn in Separate Sciences?

This GCSE level course comprehensively includes investigating, observing, experimenting and testing out ideas and thinking about them. The way scientific ideas flow through the course will support in building a deep understanding of all three Sciences with our students. This will involve talking about, reading and writing about Biology, Chemistry and Physics plus the actual doing, as well as representing the Sciences in their many forms both mathematically and visually through models.

Students will attend Combined Science lessons four times per week and Separate Science lessons twice per week.

In order to study the Separate Sciences, students will be required to sit an internal entrance exam for which they must achieve 70% or more. This exam will take place two weeks prior to the October half term. Those that do not achieve 70% will choose an alternative option and commence study for this new subject after the October half term.

Biology

Paper 1

Topics: Cell Biology; Organisation; Infection and Response; and Bioenergetics. How it's assessed:

- Written exam – 1 hour 45 minutes
- Foundation and Higher Tier
- 50% of GCSE

Paper 2

Topics: Homeostasis and Response; Inheritance; Variation; and Evolution and Ecology. How it's assessed:

- Written exam – 1 hour 45 minutes
- Foundation and Higher Tier
- 50% of GCSE

Chemistry

Paper 1

Topics: Atomic Structure and the Periodic Table; Bonding, Structure, and the Properties of Matter; Quantitative Chemistry; Chemical Changes; and Energy Changes. How it's assessed:

- Written exam – 1 hour 45 minutes
- Foundation and Higher Tier
- 50% of GCSE

Paper 2

Topics: The Rate and Extent of Chemical Change; Organic Chemistry; Chemical Analysis; Chemistry of the Atmosphere; and Using Resources. How it's assessed:

- Written exam – 1 hour 45 minutes
- Foundation and Higher Tier
- 50% of GCSE

Physics

Paper 1

Topics: Energy; Electricity; Particle Model of Matter; and Atomic Structure. How it's assessed:

- Written exam – 1 hour 45 minutes
- Foundation and Higher Tier
- 50% of GCSE

Paper 2

Topics: Forces; Waves; Magnetism and Electromagnetism; and Space Physics. How it's assessed:

- Written exam – 1 hour 45 minutes
- Foundation and Higher Tier
- 50% of GCSE

Separate Sciences and my career

Our Separate Science course leads nicely into studying Science A-Levels in the Sixth Form, usually for those considering careers such as medicine, dentistry, pharmacology, ophthalmology and scientific research.

Who should I see about Separate Sciences?

Miss Rafter, Head of Science

GCSE Religious Studies

What will I learn in Religious Studies?

Students will study two units, each one focused on a different religion.

Unit 1: Christianity – Religion and Ethics

- Christian beliefs
- Living the Christian life
- Marriage and the family
- Matters of life and death

Unit 2: Islam – Peace and Conflict

- Muslim beliefs
- Living the Muslim life
- Crime and punishment
- Peace and conflict

The religions chosen for the course are Christianity and Islam. This is due to the fact that Christianity, Islam and non-believers make up the majority of the school's students.

The aim of the course is to give students a solid understanding of the core beliefs and practices of the two religions, and then apply those beliefs to a range of real-world topics that can create discussion and debate.

How will I be assessed?

Assessment is through two exams – each worth 50%. Exams are at the end of Year 11. We use the Edexcel exam board. There is no coursework.

What other students have said about Religious Studies

"RS is really fun. The teachers make it really simple and easy to understand"

"RS is an interesting subject. I really enjoy it because we learn about different things, ranging from worship, to love and marriage. In this subject I have learnt about different religions can be so similar or contrasting."

Religious Studies and my career

RS is useful for all careers particularly those that require an understanding of wider world perspectives such as politics, media, law or education.

It is also useful to understand the beliefs that drive the actions of so many people around the world, so would be useful for anyone genuinely interested in people in general.

Who should I see about Religious Studies?

Mrs Hunt, Head of Humanities

GCSE Business

What will I learn in Edexcel 9-1 Business?

Edexcel 9-1 Business concentrates on the key business concepts, issues and skills involved in starting and running a small business. It provides a framework to explore core concepts through the lens of an entrepreneur setting up a business.

You will learn about how small businesses are developed and discover how businesses promote themselves and keep their customers happy. You will learn how businesses manage their finances and how they manage the people who work for them.

GCSE Business will enable you to understand more about the business world. It will motivate, challenge and prepare you to make informed decisions about further study and career pathways.

What will I be studying?

Theme 1: Investigating small business

- Enterprise and entrepreneurship
- Spotting a business opportunity
- Putting a business idea into practice
- Making the business effective
- Understanding external influences on business

Theme 2: Building a business

- Growing the business
- Making marketing decisions
- Making operational decisions
- Making financial decisions
- Making human resource decisions

How will I be assessed?

There will be two external written exams at the end of Year 11, worth 50% each. Both papers will be 1 hour and 30 minutes long, and will consist of multiple choice, short and long answer questions.

Business and my career

Business is an ideal subject for developing a range of skills, such as researching, presentation skills and finance. The skills you develop will support you in further studies and/or employment. You will acquire skills, knowledge and understanding that will be highly valued by employers and will be useful in the world of work. A GCSE in Business is a stepping stone to a whole range of future career opportunities such as running your own business, banking, advertising, law, economics, sales and much more.

Who should I see about studying GCSE Business?

Mrs Otung, Head of Business

GCSE Computer Science

What will I learn in GCSE Computer Science?

GCSE Computer Science gives you an in-depth understanding of how computer technology works. It will give you an insight into what goes on 'behind the scenes', including computer programming, which many students find absorbing. The course provides excellent preparation for further study and employment in the field of Computer Science.

The course will develop critical thinking, analysis and problem-solving skills through the study of computer programming, giving you a fun and interesting way to develop these skills, which can be transferred to other subjects and even applied in day-to-day life. An ideal Computer Science student should be able to think outside the box, be an independent learner, and have good ICT and mathematical skills. If you want to study or work in areas that rely on these skills, especially where they are applied to technical problems, such as areas like engineering, financial and resource management, science and medicine, then this is the course for you.

What will I be studying?

- ➢ Problem solving;
- ➢ Programming;
- ➢ Data (How do computers store data such as text, images, sound? How is it kept secure?);
- ➢ Computers (Looking at hardware – how do computers function?);
- ➢ Communication and the Internet; and
- ➢ The bigger picture (What impact has computing had on the world?).

This course is based upon two terminal exams (taken in Year 11) and a programming project (conducted in Year 11). The programming project is designed to allow students to learn about a high-level programming language and have the opportunity to show that they can use it to solve problems. It is a requirement of the course but does not contribute directly to the final marks.

How will I be assessed?

Computer Systems 01 (theoretical paper)

This written paper contains short-answer and structured questions. 50% of total marks.

Computational Thinking, Algorithms & Programming 02 (theoretical paper)

This written paper contains short-answer and structured questions. 50% of total marks, involving aspects of algorithm design & interpretation.

Programming Project 03

Students will design, develop and test a solution to a problem within the OCR set scenario.

Computer Science and my career

Computer Science is academically challenging, which is why it is part of the English Baccalaureate group of subjects. The course is suited to those who are more technically, scientifically or mathematically inclined and provides excellent preparation both for study in higher education and for employment in the IT industry, which is currently experiencing a major skills shortage.

Who should I see about Computer Science?

Mrs Abuelreesh, Head of ICT

GCSE Economics

GCSE Art and Design

What will I learn in Art & Design?

GCSE students are encouraged to explore in a sketchbook a variety of Art based disciplines which allow students to discover their own individual strengths through a variety of investigative processes that include: drawing, painting, mixed media, relief work, sculpture, printing, contextual studies and textile-based work.

By Year 11, we encourage students to work on independent set projects which demonstrate their personal skills.

Projects we do

Year 9

- **Skulls:** A fun and vibrant opportunity to explore different materials looking first hand at skulls. An introduction into colour, collage and printmaking.
- **Close ups:** Exploration of natural forms – shells, flowers and leaves – through the medium of watercolour, acrylic and drawing techniques.

Year 10

- **Arrangements:** Discovering how different artists view the world through objects and sweet treats. An interesting look at Cubism and Pop Art using a wide range of materials.
- **Identity:** Experimenting with self-portraits, celebrities, friends and family linking to artists, illustrators and photographers to create interesting outcomes. Skills such as creating accurate skin tones, painting with alternative equipment and linking colours with emotions are explored.

Year 11

- **Order and disorder:** Students have the opportunity to explore their own interests linking to assessment criteria for this project. Themes such as music, emotions, age and culture have been investigated previously to create an interesting journey of ideas, development and a final outcome using all the skills they learn in Year 10.
- **Externally set exam:** This unit is based on a title given by Edexcel where students again explore a range of themes and ideas around their interests and complete a final piece in a controlled 10-hour exam.

How will I be assessed?

- **Coursework:** Personal Portfolio in Art & Design 60% of the final GCSE grade.
- **Exam:** Externally set assignment in Art & Design 40 % of the final GCSE grade.

Students are given 8 weeks to prepare for their 10-hour exam following a similar structure as the course work. They will be expected to be producing a personal response to a theme. Students work using a variety of different techniques and ideas to create an outcome they are most proud of. One on one support is always provided to students so they have the best opportunity to demonstrate and display the vast amount of skills they have learnt.

Art and my career

GCSE Art and Design provides an excellent foundation for A-Level Art, Graphic Design, Product Design or Photography amongst many others.

It works particularly well with other subjects such as Philosophy, Psychology and English because of their connections with artists and subject matter.

After degree level, careers such as graphic design and advertising, textiles, fashion and jewellery designing, illustration and 3D opportunities like furniture, interior and set design are just a few of the areas that are open to students wanting to get into the creative industries.

Expectations

All materials will be provided for students however there are homework tasks that will require materials. Students are encouraged to utilise the Art department at lunchtimes or they are welcome to spend some time after school to complete such tasks.

Art is a 100% coursework subject so students are expected to spend a minimum of one hour per week completing homework or finishing off work.

What other students have said about Art

"I chose Art as I have always enjoyed being creative and practical. I never expected there to be so much materials that I could use; I have learnt how to print, sew, draw using unusual materials, model with clay and wire and make large and small final outcomes. It has been hard work but fun and most of the time it doesn't feel like work"

Who to see about Art?

Mrs Bastienne-Andrews, Head of Creative Arts & Design

GCSE Drama

What will I learn in Drama?

If you choose to study Drama, you will be encouraged to use your creativity to plan, create and present practical work which reflects twenty-first century theatre practice and develop a wide range of performance and design skills.

You will be expected to undertake your own private study consisting of extra rehearsals and logbook / portfolio notes. An essential part of the course is being able to see a variety of live theatre productions and the department will provide opportunities for students to attend trips throughout the 3-year course.

How will I be assessed?

The GCSE Drama course consists of two coursework components and one externally examined paper.

Component 1: Devising – 40% of the qualification (60 marks)

- **Content overview:** Create and develop a devised piece from a stimulus.
- **Assessment overview:** Internally assessed and externally moderated. There are two parts to the assessment:
  - A portfolio covering the creating and developing process and analysis and evaluation of this process.
  - A devised performance / design realisation.

Component 2: Performance from text – 20% of the qualification(48 marks)

- **Content overview:** Perform in and / or design for two key extracts from a performance text.
- **Assessment overview:** Externally assessed by visiting examiner. There are two options to the assessment:
  - Performance / design realisation covering both key extracts (48 marks).
  - Two separate performances covering two extracts, performance / design realisation (24 marks).

Component 3: Theatre makers in practice – 40% of the qualification (60 marks)

- **Content overview:** Practical exploration and study of one complete performance text. Live theatre evaluation.
- **Assessment overview:** Written examination – 1 hour 30 minutes.
  - **Section A: Bringing Texts to Life** – this section consists of one question broken into six parts based on an unseen extract from the chosen performance text.
  - **Section B: Live Theatre Evaluation** – this section consists of two questions to analyse and evaluate a live theatre performance they have seen.

Due to the exam requirement of attending and reflecting on a live theatre performance, a financial commitment will need to be made by parents. This will be approximately £70 across the 3-year course.

If there are hardship issues, then please approach the school for support.

What other students have said about Drama

"I love that I get to use the technical equipment and think about how a performance looks."
"The best bit of the course is when you are assessed for a performance - you get grades for doing something you enjoy."

Drama and my career

GCSE Drama doesn't necessarily lead to becoming an actor but the skills learned during the Drama course will provide you with skills for life.

If you wish to go into acting / the theatre, you will find GCSE Drama a requirement to go on to KS5 Drama and to get into stage schools.

Who should I see about Drama?

Mrs Gentle, Head of Drama

GCSE Music

What will I learn in Music?

GCSE Music offers you the opportunity to develop your performing, composing and listening skills.

You will develop skills on your chosen musical instrument (you will have individual instrumental lessons alongside your GCSE classes) and listen to a wide range of music. You will learn how to write your own music and how to perform in a group and on your own, as well as learning how to analyse music from a wide variety of genres including modern and classical eras and how to assess your own and professional work in discussion and in writing.

You will learn about music from a variety of genres: The Western Classical Tradition / Popular Music of the 20th and 21st Centuries / World Music, through the following areas of study: Rhythm and Metre / Harmony and Tonality / Texture and Melody / Timbre and Dynamics / Structure and Form.

How will I be assessed?

You will be assessed in the following areas:

Unit 1: Listening to and appraising music

A 1-hour exam at the end of Year 11 will test your knowledge of music through a variety of pieces of music from various genres and require you to answer questions relating to what you hear and about music theory. This unit will be marked by an external examiner.

As part of the GCSE Music it is vital that students undertake lessons on an instrument or voice. These lessons will be during the school day and financially supported by the Academy for the duration of the GCSE course.

Unit 2: Composing and appraising music

You will compose a piece of music and complete a 2-hour appraisal exam which explains your composition process. This piece will be linked to the strand and evidence specific elements of the style.

This exam can be prepared in advance and you will be able to take in notes of the exam with you. This unit will be marked by an external examiner.

Unit 3: Performing music

You will record two performances, one solo and one ensemble (group) piece. These can be recorded in your instrumental or vocal lessons or during class lessons and at any time during the course. This unit will be marked by your teacher and moderated by an external examiner.

Unit 4: Composing music

You will have 25 hours to compose a piece of music which will be linked to the areas of study. The piece can be in any style and will be marked by your teacher and moderated by an external examiner.

What other students have said about GCSE Music

"I enjoy studying GCSE Music because we get to learn about different styles of music and we get to develop our skills on an instrument of our choice".

"GCSE Music is good fun, we really enjoy performing and have found it interesting learning about the different styles of music from classical to modern"

Music and my career

Music GCSE provides an excellent grounding for either Music or Music Technology at KS5 and also works well as a Performing Art to accompany / prepare you for Drama and Theatre Studies or Dance. The discipline in learning an instrument and honing your skills as a soloist and ensemble member is highly prized amongst employers and will always be well regarded in an application process, regardless of the field of employment.

Who should I see about Music?

Ms Adesiyan, Head of Music

GCSE Food Preparation and Nutrition

What will I learn in Food Preparation and Nutrition?

Food Preparation and Nutrition allows you to demonstrate your creativity through Cookery. Students are given the opportunity to test foods already on the market, make changes to existing recipes and try those out and also be able to create their own dishes based around a theme.

Students are encouraged to use their sight, sound, smell, taste and feel for food to evaluate and discuss dishes.

Presentation is important in food technology so students will look at different ways of plating up food to make it look appealing as well as widen their cooking vocabulary.

The Food Preparation skills are integrated into five core topics:

- Food, nutrition and health
- Food science
- Food safety
- Food choice
- Food provenance

How am I assessed?

Exam: 50% OF GCSE

- **Paper 1:** Food preparation and nutrition
- **Written exam:** 1 hour 45 minutes (100 marks)

NEA (Coursework): 50% OF GCSE

- **Task 1: Food investigation** – students' understanding of the working characteristics, functional and chemical properties of ingredients. Practical investigations are a compulsory element of this NEA task. Written or electronic report *(1,500 – 2,000 words) including photographic evidence of the practical investigation*.
- **Task 2: Food preparation assessment** – students' knowledge, skills and understanding In relation to the planning, preparation, cooking, presentation of food and application of nutrition related to the chosen task. Students will prepare, cook and present a final menu of three dishes within a single period of no more than 3 hours, planning in advance how this will be achieved. *Written or electronic portfolio including photographic evidence. Photographic evidence of the three final dishes must be included.*

Students will spend a large part of their time practically in the kitchen but will also have to learn the theory behind different cooking methods. Students will have to understand the 'science' behind the functions of food and the combination of ingredients as well as being able to explain why dishes work and sometimes do not work.

As with Key Stage 3, students had to contribute to the buying of food ingredients; students selecting this option will also have to pay £60 per year which will cover all your cooks and taste testing for the course.

Is Food Technology for me?

- ➢ Are you interested in learning about food?
- ➢ Are you good at following recipes and able to understand different cooking methods?
- ➢ Are you able to expand your knowledge about food and ingredients?
- ➢ Are you interested in learning about nutrition, science and diet?

Food Technology and my career

Students having taken this course have been able to do apprenticeships in the catering industry; hotels and restaurants. Food technology opens up opportunities to study food at a higher level and could potentially lead to working abroad in the food and tourism industries.

Who should I see about Food Technology?

Mrs Crabbe, Head of Food

GCSE Product Design

What will I learn in Product Design?

If you choose to study Product Design, you will undertake a number of design projects using a variety of materials, processes and pieces of equipment. Through these projects you will learn a wide range of methods used to develop products. Students will become proficient in 2D working drawings and interactive 3D modelling. Design and Technology is purposeful, as well as being fun and exciting!

Studying GCSE Design and Technology will build on what you learnt about designing and making in Key Stage 3. You will use your knowledge and skills to design and make new and better solutions to real problems – on your own and with others – working with materials you choose.

GCSE D & T opens the door to a wide range of careers in the creative, engineering and manufacturing industries. It is also excellent preparation for careers in many other fields e.g. medicine, law and computer science. Whatever career you choose, the knowledge and skills you learn, particularly those concerned with rapidly developing technologies, will be extremely valuable. You will also develop skills, such as teamwork and time management which are highly prized by employers

How will I be assessed?

Coursework: A major project carried out at the end of Year 10 worth 50% of the final GCSE grade.

Written examination: 50% of final grade. 15% of this will be based on Maths calculation questions. Exam length 1 hour 45 minutes and out of 100 marks.

- **Section A: Core** – this section is 40 marks and contains a mixture of different question styles, including open-response, graphical, calculation and extended-open-response questions. There will be 10 marks of calculation questions in Section A.
- **Section B: Material category is timber** – this section is 60 marks and contains a mixture of different question styles, including open-response, graphical, calculation and extended-open-response questions. There will be 5 marks of calculation questions in Section B.

The Exam Board is Edexcel. Coursework starts on the 1st of June of Year 10 and students will be expected to use the iterative design processes. The project will test students' skills in investigating, designing, making and evaluating a prototype of a product. Tasks will be internally assessed and externally moderated.

The marks are awarded for each part as follows:

- 1 – Investigate (16 marks)
- 2 – Design (42 marks)
- 3 – Make (36 marks)
- 4 – Evaluate (6 marks)

If you choose to study Product Design, because you will be making a variety of wood work outcomes, you will be required to pay £35 for the three years. This will supply all your materials per year and the final outcomes will be yours to keep and take home once assessed.

Who should I see about Product Design?

Mr Pritchard, Head of Design Technology

GCSE Psychology

What will I learn in Psychology?

This qualification introduces students to the fundamentals of psychology, developing critical analysis, independent thinking and research skills. It explores a range of psychological topics which helps to understand one's self and others, and how psychological understanding can help to explain everyday social phenomena.

Topics taught through the course are as follows:

- Memory
- Perception
- Development
- Research methods
- Social influence
- Language, thought and communication
- Brain and neuropsychology
- Psychological problems

How will I be assessed?

This is a linear course, with two written examinations taking place at the end of the course.

- **Paper 1:** 1 hour and 45 minutes (100 marks) = 50% of overall grade
- **Paper 2:** 1 hour and 45 minutes (100 marks) = 50% of overall grade

Each paper comprises multiple choice, short answer and extended writing.

What current A-Level students have said if they had GCSE Psychology as option

"It would have given us an insight into the subject and made it easier for us to understand the A Level at the beginning of the course."
"It's great this is an option as it would widen the scope of opportunities we had when we were picking our options."

Psychology and my career

This course is ideal for any student who wishes to continue studying Psychology at A-Level and beyond. This also applies to Sociology and Health & Social Care.

There are lots of career pathways with a qualification in Psychology:

- Forensic Psychology
- Clinical Psychology
- Children's Psychology
- Occupational Psychology
- Criminology
- Education
- Police Force

Who should I see about Psychology?

Mrs Choudhury-Smith, Head of Social Sciences

GCSE Sociology

What will I learn in Sociology?

In GCSE Sociology, students will gain knowledge and understanding of key sociological areas including families, education, crime and deviance and social stratification.

Students will study the topics outlined below:

Families	Crime and Deviance
• Functions of families	• Social control
• Family forms	• Criminal and deviant behaviour

• Relationships within families	• Data and crime
	• Education

Roles and functions of education, the relationship between education and capitalism, educational achievement, processes within schools, social stratification, life chances, poverty, power relationship, research methods, design and types of research methods.

How will I be assessed?

This is a linear course, with two written examinations taking place at the end of the course.

Paper Topics Length Weighting of total grade (%):

- **Paper 1: Families and Education** – 1 hour 45 mins 50.
- **Paper 2: Crime and Deviance and Social Stratification** – 1 hour 45 mins 50.

What can I do with GCSE Sociology?

A GCSE in Sociology would be very useful if you are interested in joining the police force, criminology specialisms, working for charities, law, and much more.

Who to see about GCSE Sociology?

Mrs Choudhury-Smith, Head of Social Sciences

BTEC Tech Award in Health & Social Care

What will I learn in Health & Social Care?

Studying Health & Social Care could not be more fitting to what is going on in the world today. The Coronavirus pandemic highlights the significance of Health & Social Care as a subject and a future career, one that nationally and globally we could not have coped without. The course looks at a wide range of aspects required when working in the Health & Social Care sector. This includes:

- The development of key skills that prove your aptitude in Health & Social Care such as interpreting data to assess an individual's health.
- The process that underpins effective ways of working in Health & Social Care, such as designing a plan to improve an individual's health and wellbeing.
- Attitudes that are considered most important in Health & Social Care, including the care values that are vitally important in the sector, and the opportunity to practise applying them.
- Knowledge that underpins effective use of skills, process and attitudes in the sector such as Human Growth & Development, Health & Social Care services, and factors affecting people's Health & Wellbeing.

How will I be assessed?

There are three units in BTEC Tech Award in Health & Social Care:

- **Component 1: Human Lifespan Development** – internally assessed (30%).
- **Component 2: Health & Social Care Services and Values** – internally assessed (30%).
- **Component 3: Health and Wellbeing** – externally assessed; synoptic (40%).

Health & Social Care and my career

This course is ideal for any student who wishes to continue studying Health & Social Care at Level 3 and beyond. There are a range of career pathways with a qualification in Health & Social Care:

- Nursing
- Midwifery
- Social work
- Healthcare assistant
- Occupational therapy
- Youth worker
- Care assistant
- Support worker

Who should I see about Psychology?

Mrs Choudhury-Smith, Head of Social Sciences

BTEC Digital Information Technology

What will I learn in Edexcel BTEC Technical Award in Digital Information Technology?

The Pearson BTEC Tech Award in Digital Information Technology will enable students to develop sector-specific knowledge and skills in a practical learning environment through vocational contexts by studying the knowledge, understanding and skills related to user interface designs, data management, data interpretation, data presentation, data protection and effective use of digital information technology as part of their Key Stage 4 learning. This builds on the learning that has already taken place at Key Stage 3.

What will I be studying?

You will explore user interface design and development principles, investigate how to use project planning techniques to manage a digital project, discover how to develop and review a digital user interface, explore how data impacts on individuals and organisations, draw conclusions and make recommendations on data intelligence, develop a dashboard using data manipulation tools, explore how modern information technology is evolving, consider legal and ethical issues in data and information sharing and understand what cyber security is and how to safeguard against it.

How will I be assessed?

Component 1: Exploring user interface design principles & project planning techniques – internal assessment 30% of the course.

In this first component pupils will develop their understanding of what makes an effective user interface and how to effectively manage a project. They will use this understanding to plan, design and create a user interface such as a mobile phone app or website.

- Investigate user interface designs for an individual and organisations.
- Use a project planning techniques to plan and design a user interface.
- Develop and review a user interface.

Component 2: Collecting, presenting & interpreting data – internal assessment 30% of the course.

In this second component pupils will understand the characteristics of data and information and how they help organisations in decision making. They will use data manipulation methods to create a dashboard to present and draw conclusions from information.

- Investigate the role and impact of using data on individuals and organisations.
- Create a dashboard using data manipulation tools.
- Draw conclusions and review data presentation methods.

Component 3: Effective digital working practices – summative external examination (1 hour 30 minutes) 40% of the course.

This external component builds on knowledge, understanding and skills acquired and developed across the qualification. It requires pupils to select and integrate knowledge and understanding synoptically from all components. It is assessed through external assessment that is set and marked by Pearson.

BTEC Digital Information Technology
Revision Guide info
BTEC Tech Award Digital Information Technology Student Book
ISBN 9781292208374

The specification can be found here: BTEC Tech Award in Digital Information Technology.

IT and my career

Students will be provided with opportunities to develop their planning, research, presentation and analytical skills through the creation, use and evaluation of a range of IT products. The course requires a significant amount of independent study and will benefit students in developing logical reasoning and problem-solving skills.

The course empowers students to take charge of their own learning and development. The course will develop students' skills and knowledge to enable progression onto further IT qualifications. It provides a firm base for many careers or general further study and is a worthwhile course for students who are thinking about a career in the IT industry or in careers which involve use of IT, an area currently experiencing a major skills shortage.

Who should I see about IT?

Mrs Abuelreesh, Head of ICT

BTEC Tech Award in Enterprise

What will I learn in BTEC Tech Award in Enterprise?

BTEC Tech Awards are new Key Stage 4 BTECs, where learners develop knowledge and understanding by applying their learning and skills in a work-related context. Additionally, they are popular and effective because they encourage learners to take responsibility for their own learning and to develop skills that are essential for the modern-day workplace.

These skills include: team work; working from a prescribed brief; working to deadlines; presenting information effectively; and accurately completing administrative tasks and processes. BTEC Tech Awards motivate learners and open doors to progression into further study and responsibility within the workplace

What will I be studying?

➢ **Exploring Enterprises Aim:** examine different enterprises to develop knowledge and understanding of the characteristics of enterprises and the skills needed by entrepreneurs.

- **Planning for and Pitching an Enterprise Aim:** select an enterprise idea to plan, pitch for and run.
- **Promotion and Finance for Enterprise Aim:** explore promotional methods, financial records, planning and forecasting.

Business and my career

BTEC Tech Award in Enterprise will enable you to understand more about the business world. Motivate and challenge and prepare you to make informed decisions about further study and career pathways.

Entry into employment or other training in specific aspects of business, such as apprenticeships and vocational qualifications which focus on more specialised business areas.

Careers such as banking and finance, sales, promotion, recruitment, events planner and management

Who should I see about BTEC Tech Award in Enterprise?

Mrs Otung, Head of Business

BTEC Tech Award in Creative Media Productions

What will I learn in BTEC Tech Award in Media Production?