



THE LINK
ACADEMY
Netherton

Year 9 Options

Options

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Introduction

Year 9 is the time for all learners to choose the subjects that they will study during the next two years. Some of these decisions can affect your chosen career pathway not just when you leave school but also in later life. These decisions are really important and you need to think very carefully about which subjects you choose.

At The Link Academy we are committed to raising achievement and ensuring that our learners dream big, have high aspirations and make the right choices. Our curriculum is designed so that all learners, regardless of background, have the opportunity to make progress across a broad choice of subjects and study programmes.

Choosing the right options now will enable learners to reach their full potential and achieve the grades of which they are capable.

The information in this booklet will allow you to make informed decisions. Remember to follow the instructions carefully and take your time, asking as many questions and seeking as much advice as you need in order to ensure the choices you make are the right ones for you.



Our Values:

- Dreaming big
- Rewarding effort
- Leading together
- Respecting each other and our world
- Learning that inspires

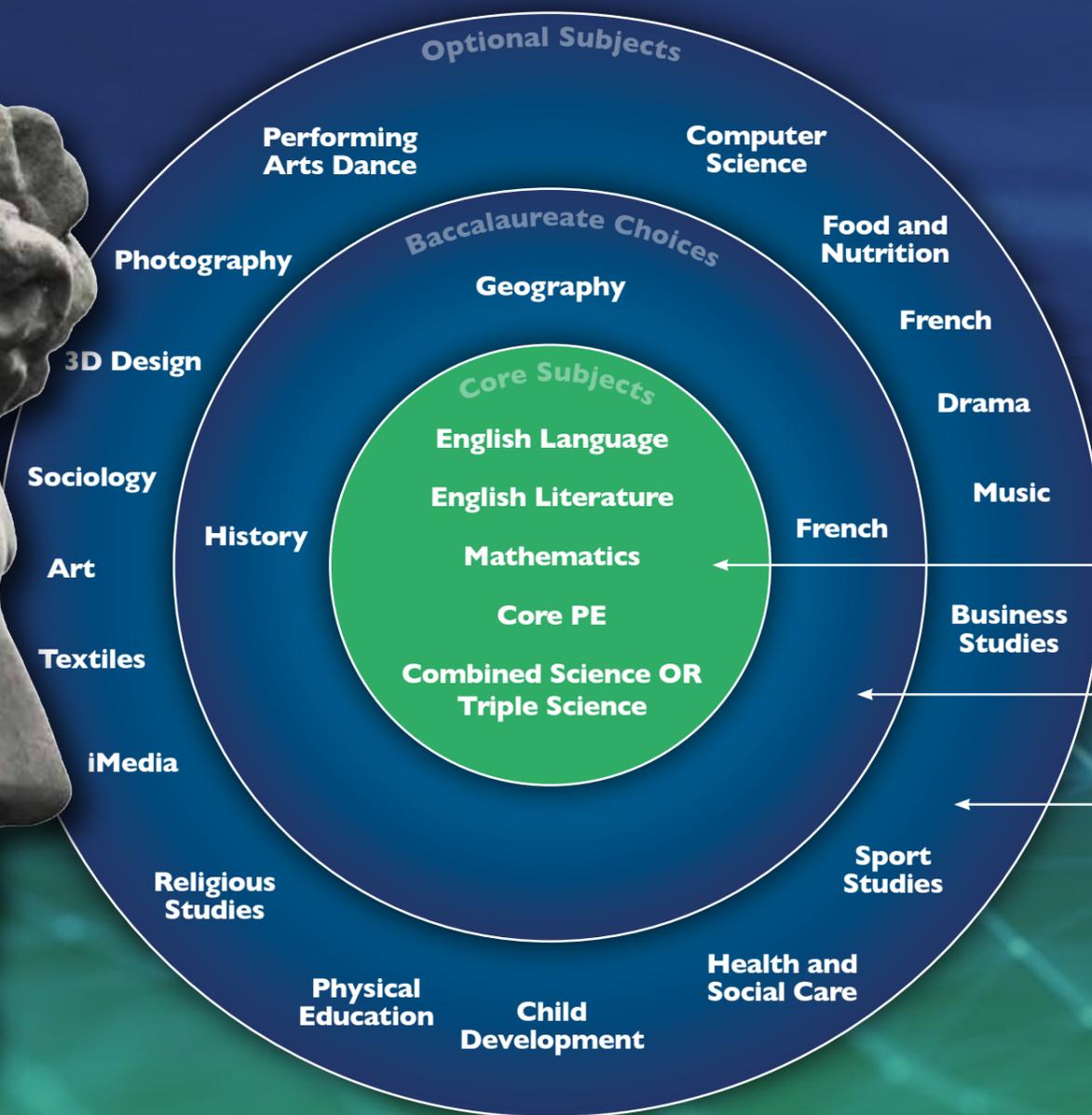
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Explaining the Choices

You will now follow an individualised pathway based on the following eight or nine subjects (nine subjects if you study Triple Science):

- Mathematics.
- English Language and English Literature.
- Combined Science (worth 2 GCSEs) OR Triple Science (worth 3 GCSEs)
- A choice of History or Geography.
- Learners selected for the Baccalaureate Pathway will study GCSE French and choose one further subject from ZONE 3.
- Learners not following the Baccalaureate Pathway will choose two further subjects from ZONE 3.

It is these choices that you have to make over the next few weeks.



Success in English, Mathematics and Science will provide a solid foundation for progression to higher level courses and future careers. The other courses that you choose will help to shape your future studies and career path.

The Baccalaureate Pathway

Following the Baccalaureate Pathway shows sixth forms, universities and employers that you are academic and hard-working. Some sixth forms will only accept GCSEs and not other qualifications from learners applying for places. If you are keen to study subjects at A-Level or are keen for your child to follow the A-Level route, you should consider the implications of not following the Baccalaureate Pathway.

Learners can attain the English Baccalaureate if they pass GCSEs with Grade 5 or above in all of the following subjects: Maths, English, Science, a Humanities subject (Geography or History) and a Modern Foreign Language.

How to make your choices

- 1. Think hard about:**
 - Which subjects you enjoy.
 - Which subjects you are good at.
 - Which subjects lead on to the A Levels or college courses that you want to do.
 - Which subjects will build towards the careers that you have in mind for yourself.
- 2. Get advice! You can ask your teachers, form tutor or careers advisor.**
- 3. Take as much time as you can to find out everything you need to know about the choices you are about to make.**

How we can help you

We are here to offer advice. By effectively using prior attainment data and national progress data we can provide a clear indication of the likely progress you will make on particular courses and make firm recommendations to you and your parents or carers to support you to choose the right course for you. We can also make sure that the choices you make now match your career aspirations.

- **Zone 1 Core Subjects**
All learners study all subjects from this zone, being guided to either Combined Science or Triple Science.
- **Zone 2 Baccalaureate Choices**
All learners then choose either History OR Geography.
- **Zone 3 Optional Subjects**
For those Learners wishing to achieve the English Baccalaureate you will study GCSE French and choose one further subject from Zone 3. All other learners should choose two subjects from Zone 3. Don't forget to add a reserve subject! Learners can only choose one of the 'Art & Design' subjects from Fine Art, 3D Design, Textiles and Photography.

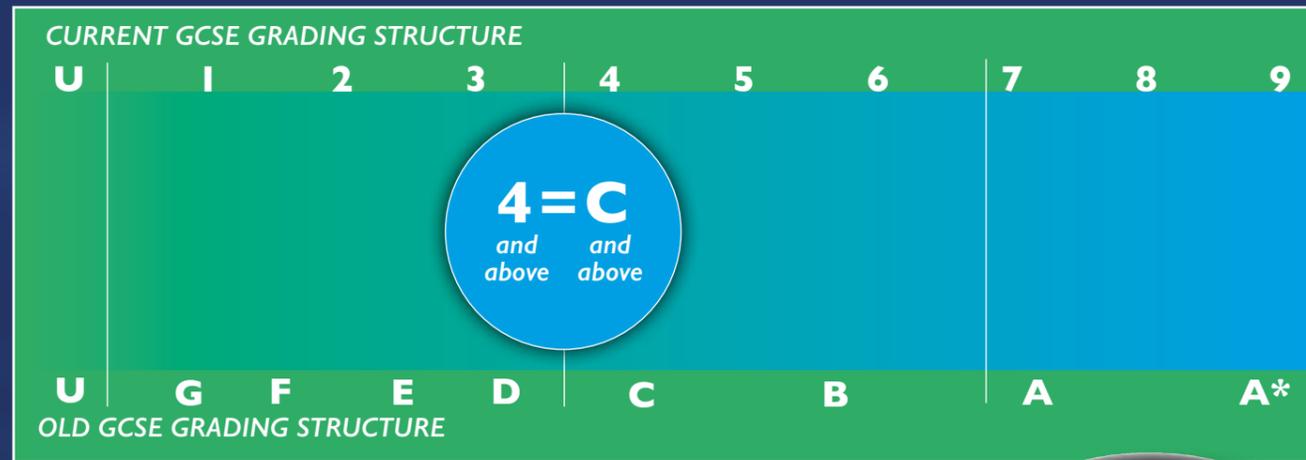


Please note: Single Science subjects will only run if sufficient numbers of learners opt to study them.

What qualifications will you achieve?

GCSEs

Most courses will lead to a qualification at GCSE (General Certificate of Secondary Education) level. GCSE is graded on a nine-point number scale from 9 to 1 (9 being the highest grade and 1 being the lowest).



BTECs, BTEC TECH Awards and Cambridge Nationals

BTECs, BTEC TECH Awards and Cambridge Nationals are vocational qualifications that focus more on skills and the practical application of these skills than GCSEs, which are more about knowledge and theory. BTEC and Cambridge National qualifications are not worth any less than GCSEs. Both will be accepted when it comes to applying to sixth forms and colleges.

GCSE qualifications tend to suit learners who perform better in examinations and controlled assessments, because learners sit exams and complete their coursework at the end of Year 11, whereas BTEC and Cambridge National courses have units that need completing all the way through Years 10 and 11.

BTEC and Cambridge National qualifications are an excellent foundation for progression to Level 3 vocational qualifications as well as A Levels and apprenticeships.

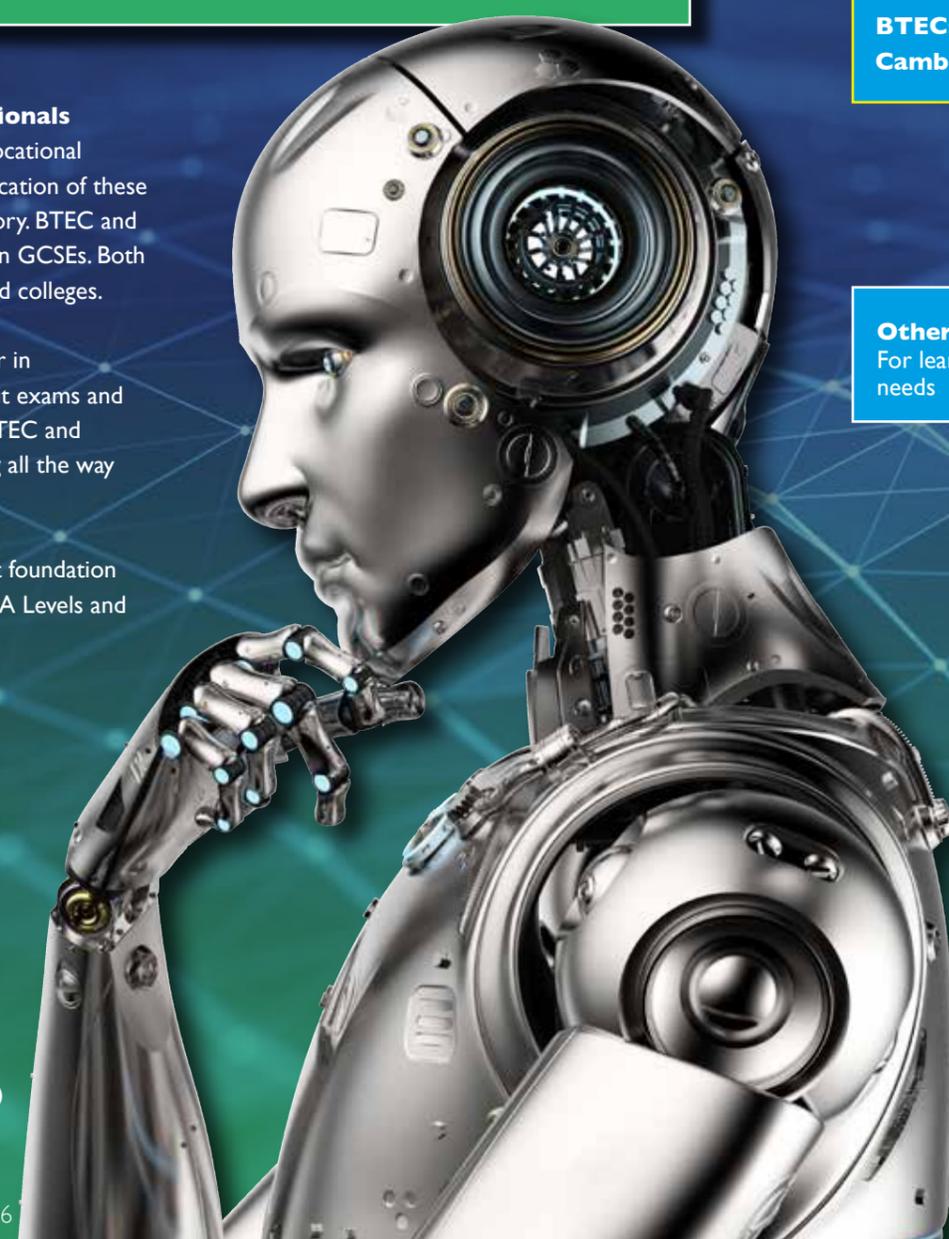
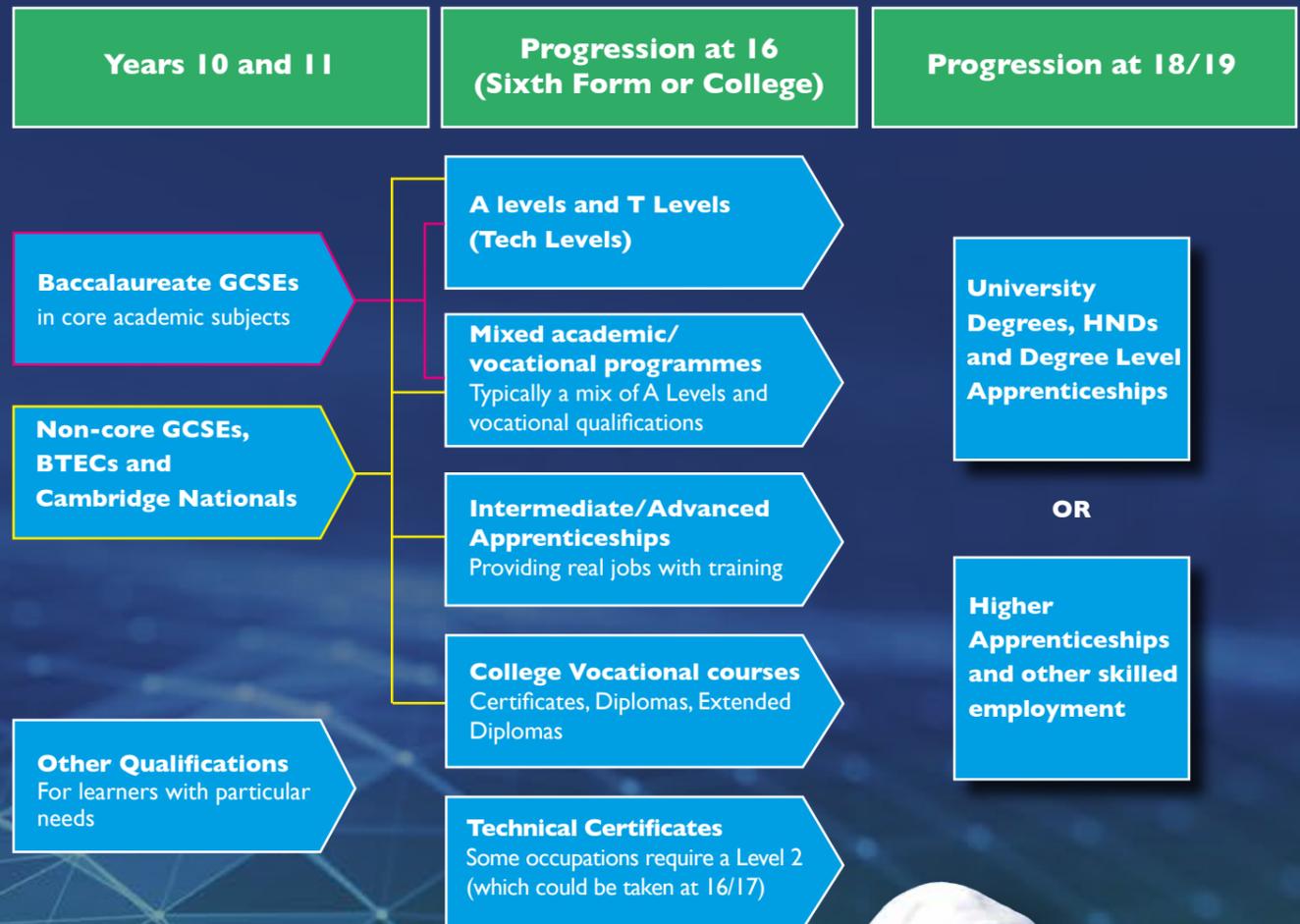
Grades attainable for BTECs are as follows (equivalent GCSE grades shown in brackets):
 Level 2 Distinction* (9/8), Distinction (8/7), Merit (6/5), Pass (5/4) and Level 1 Distinction (3), Merit (2), Pass (1).

Grades attainable for BTEC TECH Awards and Cambridge Nationals are:
 Level 2 Distinction* (9/8), Distinction (7), Merit (6/5), Pass (4) and Level 1 Distinction (3), Merit (2) and Pass (1).

Grades attainable for Cambridge Nationals are as follows:
 Level 2 Distinction* (9/8), Distinction (7), Merit (6/5), Pass (4) and Level 1 Distinction (3), Merit (2) and Pass (1).

How these choices can affect your future

The subjects you study over the next two years will ultimately affect your Post 16 options. This diagram outlines progression into sixth form, further education and higher education for learners once they leave school in two years' time, based on the GCSE subjects that they take.





What happens now?



The Microsoft Forms Survey does not commit you to your final choices. It is done so that your teachers can see how many learners are interested in each subject and identify learners whose choices do not match the subjects that they are good at. In addition, if a learner has no career goal, careers talks and advice can be arranged for them.

When filling in the Options Form, remember to choose a reserve subject; if you don't it could result in a subject being chosen for you.

Please do not wait for things to happen: start thinking and talking about it now!



Points to consider

Remember, there is always someone at the Academy that you can ask about which choices to make. There is also some really helpful advice and information on icould.com (<https://icould.com/stories/choosing-your-gcse-options/>).

Have you asked others for advice and considered carefully what they say?

There are lots of people available for you to ask for advice, including your teachers, your parents/carers, older siblings, your form tutor and Careers Advisor.

Have you thought about the subjects you are taking currently?

What do you enjoy about them? What do you think you are good at? Where are your strengths and weaknesses? It is important however that you don't make a decision about a subject based on how you feel about your class teacher as it is likely you will have a different teacher in years 10 and 11.

What if my friends choose different subjects from me?

Do not be tempted to make decisions based on the subjects your friends take in the hope that you will be in the same classes. You are choosing for yourself and for your future. You will still see your friends, whatever they choose.

Is it your decision?

Normally, it is your decision that counts. However, there are some circumstances that may mean you do not get every choice you hoped for:

- Your teachers may think that you have made an unwise choice and would want to discuss this with you and your parents/carers. Senior members of staff will discuss learners' suitability for their chosen courses.
- You may be unfortunate in choosing a combination of options that will not fit the timetable that suits the majority of our learners.
- A course may be so popular that more learners opt for it than the school can provide for. In this case we have a very thorough and fair selection process, which ensures that learners of all abilities are given a chance to take the course. The arrangements will be explained in detail if this problem arises in your options.



Core Subjects

GCSE Mathematics

Why study Maths?

Mathematics gives learners lively and enquiring minds and enables each learner to develop, within their capabilities, the mathematical and numerical skills and understanding required for adult life, for employment and for further study and training.

We will provide each learner with such Mathematics as may be needed for their study of other subjects and develop 'mathematical thinking'. We will help each learner to develop an appreciation of and enjoyment of Mathematics; this will improve their realisation of the role Maths has played and will continue to play both in the development of science and technology and of our civilisation. It will ensure that every learner is aware that Mathematics provides them with a powerful means of communication.

What will I learn?

Learners will develop and extend their understanding in the following areas:

- Number - Learners will extend their previous knowledge and will study structure and calculation, fractions, decimals, percentages as well as measures and accuracy.
- Algebra – Learners will extend their previous knowledge and will study notation, vocabulary, manipulation, graphs, solving equations, inequalities and sequences.
- Ratio, proportion and rates of change – Learners will use skills from Number and Algebra to apply to Mathematical, Science and technology problems.
- Geometry and Measure – Learners will extend their previous knowledge and will study properties and construction of two dimensional shapes, mensuration and calculation and vectors.
- Probability – Learners will extend their previous knowledge and will be looking at theoretical and experimental probability and their applications.
- Statistics – Learners will extend their previous knowledge and will study a wide range of collection and interpreting data techniques.

How will I be assessed?

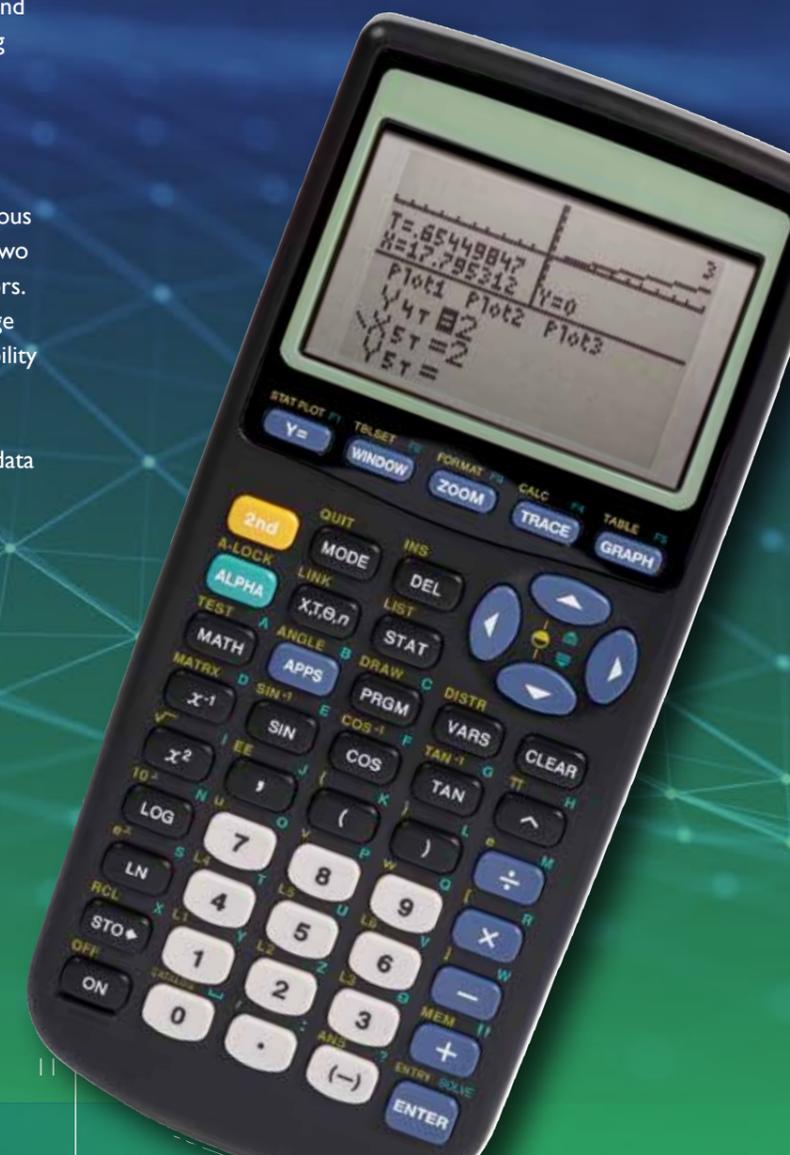
This is a GCSE qualification and is graded from 9 to 1 (Taken at two levels Higher and Foundation). This qualification is 100% examination sat at the end of Year 11, across three 1.5 hour exams (non- calculator first, followed by two calculator exam papers).

- 40% (Higher) and 50% (Foundation) of the marks will be awarded based on using and applying standard techniques on the topics and skills listed previously.
- 30% (Higher) and 25% (Foundation) of the marks will be awarded based on reasoning, interpreting and communicating on the topics listed previously.
- 30% (Higher) and 25% (Foundation) of the marks will be awarded based on problem solving on the topics listed previously.

What can I do after I have completed the course?

A GCSE in Mathematics is a pre-requisite for most Post 16 qualifications, and essential for A-level Mathematics, and higher level professions such as teaching, medicine etc.

This GCSE also develops a range of skills that will benefit you in a range of related and non-related academic and vocational qualifications at Post-16.



GCSE English Language

Why study English Language?

The English Language GCSE enables learners to enjoy reading and critically engage with the world around them. Across years 10 and 11, they further develop the skills they need to appreciate, understand and analyse a wide range of different texts covering the 19th, 20th and 21st century time periods. Learners will also develop their ability to write clearly, coherently and accurately using a range of vocabulary and sentence structures and for a range of different purposes. This GCSE is taught alongside the English Literature GCSE and many of these skills are transferable.

During the course you will:

- Read and explore a wide variety of fiction texts from 20th and 21st century.
- Read, explore and compare non-fiction texts from the 19th, 20th and 21st century.
- Write creatively with and without the use of stimulus.
- Write for a wide variety of different purposes.
- Present in formal situations and respond to questions.

What will I learn?

- To enjoy and appreciate a range of fiction and non-fiction by taking part in exploratory activities designed to develop confidence in reading.
- To create personal responses to literature through analysing unseen texts.
- To explain, comment on and analyse how writers use language and structure to achieve effects and influence readers, using relevant subject terminology to support their views.
- To develop a precise and accurate writing style through practising technical aspects of written and spoken expression.
- How to compare writer's viewpoints and perspectives and the ways in which they are conveyed.

How will I be assessed?

- 100% examination made up of two papers of equal weighting
- Paper 1: Explorations in creative reading and writing - 1 hour 45 minutes.
Section A - Reading: questions on an unseen, 20th or 21st century fiction extract.
Section B - Writing: a choice of two writing tasks.
- Paper 2: Writers' viewpoints and perspectives - 1 hour 45 minutes.
Section A - Reading: questions on two thematically linked, unseen non-fiction extracts.
Section B - Writing: choice of two writing tasks.
- Both papers un-tiered.

What can I do after I have completed the course?

A grade 4 in English Language will be required for most college courses. The study of English Language will support the study of all subjects and careers as it develops reading skills and the ability to communicate in both the written and spoken forms. Many of the skills you develop in your study of the English Language GCSE are transferrable to the English Literature GCSE.

During the course you will:

- Develop skills to maintain a critical style and informed personal response.
- Select appropriate details and evidence from texts to support ideas and interpretations.
- Develop skills to analyse how language, form, structure and context of texts can create meanings and effects.
- Show an understanding of how texts have been influential over time and relate texts to their social and historical contexts and traditions.
- Develop comparison skills.

GCSE English Literature

Why study English Literature?

The English Literature GCSE enables you to enjoy and explore texts across a range of different genres and time periods. You will engage with and analyse the context in which the texts are set. Learners usually study English Literature because they love reading and want to understand literature in greater depth, they are interested in theatre or writing, or they wish to study English at university. Learners will also develop their ability to write clearly, coherently and accurately using a range of vocabulary and sentence structures and for a range of different purposes.

What will I learn?

- Shakespeare – You will read the play 'Macbeth' focussing on plot, character, themes and context. In the exam you will be given an extract that you analyse and then discuss this extract in terms of the whole play.
- Poetry – You will study an anthology of 15 poems based around the theme of conflict; these poems range from 1789 to the modern day. As well as appreciating the poems on their own, you will learn how to compare the poems. In the exam, there is also a section on unseen poems.
- Modern text – You will read the play 'An Inspector Calls' focussing on plot, character, themes and context. In the exam, there is no extract given just a question on the text in its entirety.
- 19th century novel – You will study the novel 'The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr Hyde' focussing on plot, character, themes and context. In the exam you will be given an extract that you analyse and then discuss this extract in terms of the whole novel.

How will I be assessed?

- 100% examination made up of two papers.
- Paper 1: Shakespeare and the 19th Century Novel - 1 hour 45 minutes.
Section A – 'Macbeth'.
Section B – 'The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde'.
- Paper 2: Modern Texts and Poetry – 2 hours 15 minutes.
Section A – 'An Inspector Calls'.
Section B – Anthology poetry.
Section C – Unseen poetry.
- Both papers un-tiered.

What can I do after I have completed the course?

English Literature is often highly regarded by colleges and employers. An enjoyment and appreciation of the books we read in English Literature fosters a love in reading in critical thinking. Reading widely also helps you to improve your own writing, as well as giving a fresh and creative angle from which to approach your writing.



GCSE Combined Science

Why study Combined Science?

There are six papers: two Biology, two Chemistry and two Physics. Each of the papers will assess knowledge and understanding from distinct topic areas.

What will I learn?

Topics / Skills studied in Biology:

- Cell Biology.
- Organisation.
- Infection and Response.
- Bioenergetics.
- Homeostasis.
- Inheritance and Evolution.
- Ecology.

Topics / Skills studied in Chemistry:

- Atomic Structure.
- Bonding.
- Quantitative Chemistry.
- Chemical Changes.
- Energy Changes.
- Rate of Reaction.
- Organic Chemistry.
- Analysis.
- Chemistry of the Atmosphere.
- Resources.

Topics / Skills examined in Physics:

- Energy.
- Electricity.
- Particles of Matter.
- Atomic Structure, Nuclear Fission and Nuclear Fusion.
- Forces and their Effects.
- Waves.
- Electromagnetism.

How will I be assessed?

All examinations will be 1 hour 15 minutes

There will be six papers. Each paper is 70 marks, 16.7 % of GCSE. Questions are multiple choice, structured, closed short answer, and open response.

Biology Paper 1

Biology topics 1–4: Cell Biology; Organisation; Infection and response; and Bioenergetics.

Biology Paper 2

Biology topics 5–7: Homeostasis and response; Inheritance, variation and evolution; and Ecology.

Chemistry Paper 1

Chemistry topics 8–12: Atomic structure and the periodic table; Bonding, structure, and the properties of matter; Quantitative chemistry; Chemical changes; and Energy changes.

Chemistry Paper 2

Chemistry topics 13–17: The rate and extent of chemical change; Organic chemistry; Chemical analysis; Chemistry of the atmosphere; and Using resources.

Physics Paper 1

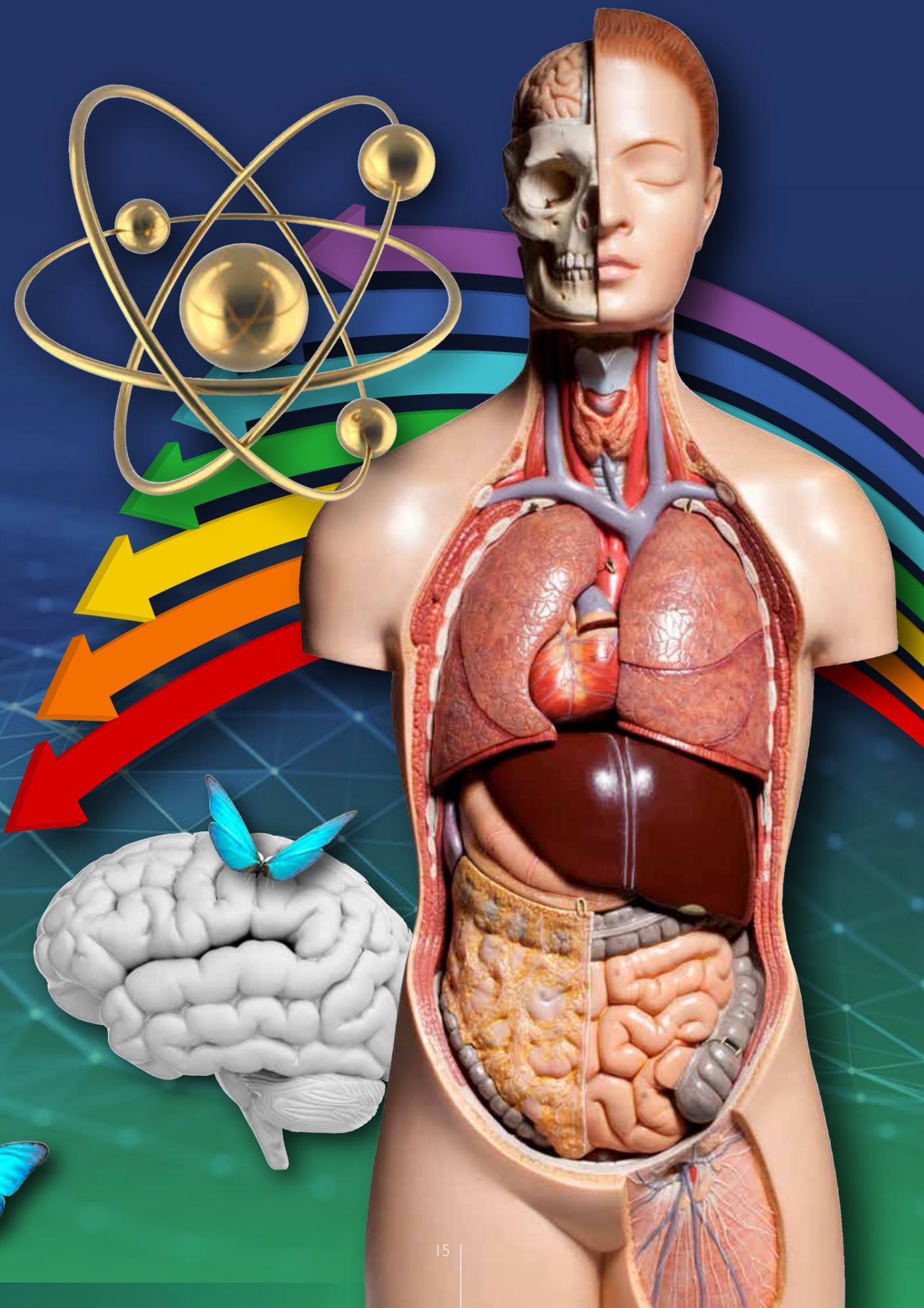
Physics topics 18–21: Energy; Electricity; Particle model of matter; and Atomic structure.

Physics Paper 2

Physics topics 22–24: Forces; Waves; and Magnetism and electromagnetism.

What can I do after I have completed the course?

Science is a way of helping the brain grow in finding new knowledge and helps us defeat our curiosity about how the world develops and works today. Science is important because it has helped form the world that we live in today. After completing the GCSE course you can then study an A level in Biology, Chemistry or Physics which allows you to progress to work in any of the following careers: Medicine, Radiography, Forensics, Space Exploration, Veterinary Science, Pharmaceuticals.



GCSE Physics

Why study Physics?

Physics is the science of the fundamental concepts of field, force, radiation and particle structures, which are linked to form models of the behaviour of the material universe. From such models a wide range of ideas have emerged, from the broadest issue of the development of the universe over time to the numerous and detailed ways in which new technologies may be invented. These have enriched both our basic understanding of, and our many adaptations of, our material environment.

What will I learn?

Learners studying Physics will develop and extend their understanding in the following areas:

1. Energy.
2. Electricity.
3. Particles of Matter.
4. Atomic Structure, Nuclear Fission and Nuclear Fusion.
5. Forces and their effects.
6. Waves.
7. Electromagnetism.
8. Space Physics.

How will I be assessed?

All examination papers are 1 hour 45 minutes long.

Two papers. Each paper is 100 marks, 50 % of the GCSE.

Questions are multiple choice, structured, closed short answer, and open response. Each of the papers will assess knowledge and understanding from distinct topic areas:

Physics Paper 1

Physics topics 1 – 4: Energy; Electricity; the Particle Model of Matter; and Atomic Structure.

Physics Paper 2

Physics topics 5 – 8: Forces; Waves; Magnetism and Electromagnetism, Space Physics.

What can I do after I have completed the course?

Physics is a way of helping you to develop your skills in solving problems through an analytical approach. It helps you to understand how things work teaching your brain the skills you need to grasp complicated problems and construct logical arguments to explain what you see and gain new knowledge of how the world develops and works. Physics is important because it has helped form the world that we live in today. After completing the GCSE course you can then study an A level in Physics which allows you to progress to work in any of the following careers: Architecture, Electrical Engineering, Engineering, Medical Technology, Research, Physiotherapy, Space Exploration.

Please note: Single Science subjects will only run if sufficient numbers of learners opt to study them.

GCSE Biology

Why study Biology?

Learners will study and observe the complex and diverse phenomena of the natural world. Biology is the science of living organisms (including animals, plants, fungi and micro-organisms) and their interactions with each other and the environment. The study of Biology involves collecting and interpreting information about the natural world to identify patterns and relate possible cause and effect. Biological information is used to help humans improve their own lives and strive to create a sustainable world for future generations.

What will I learn?

Learners studying Biology will develop and extend their understanding in the following areas:

1. Cell Biology.
2. Organisation.
3. Infection and Response.
4. Bioenergetics.
5. Homeostasis.
6. Inheritance and Evolution.
7. Ecology.

How will I be assessed?

All examination papers are 1 hour 45 minutes long.

Two papers: each paper is 100 marks, 50 % of GCSE. Questions are multiple choice, structured, closed short answer, and open response. Each of the papers will assess knowledge and understanding from distinct topic areas:

Biology Paper 1

Biology topics 1 – 4: Cell Biology; Organisation; Infection and Response; and Bioenergetics.

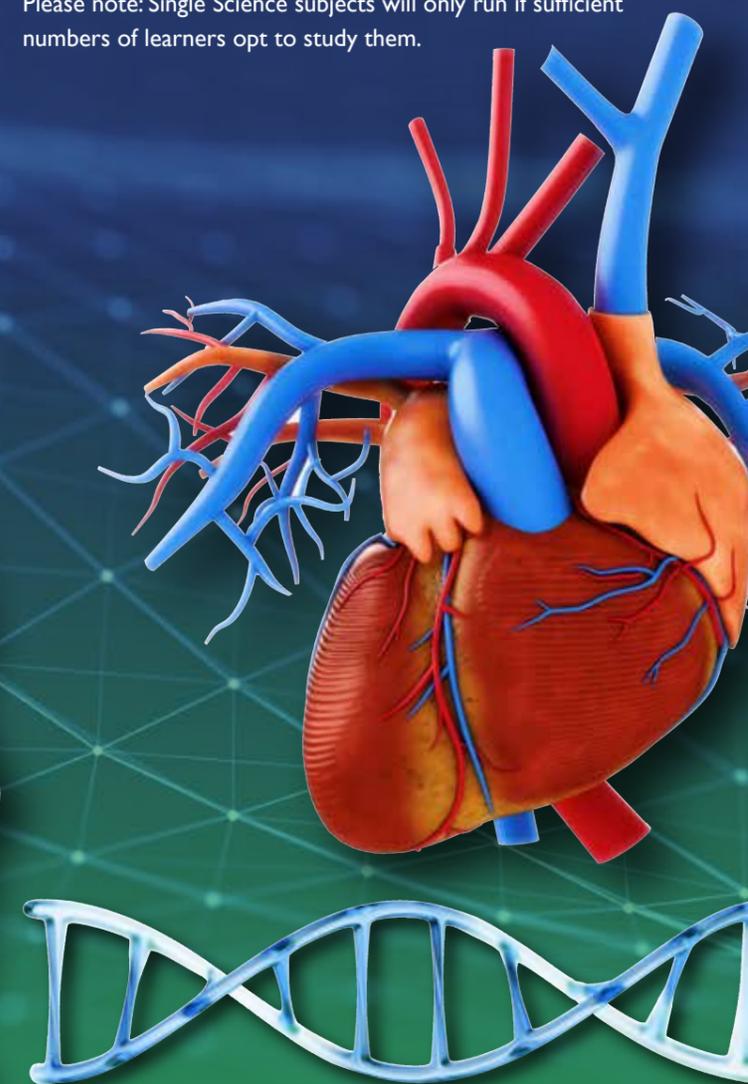
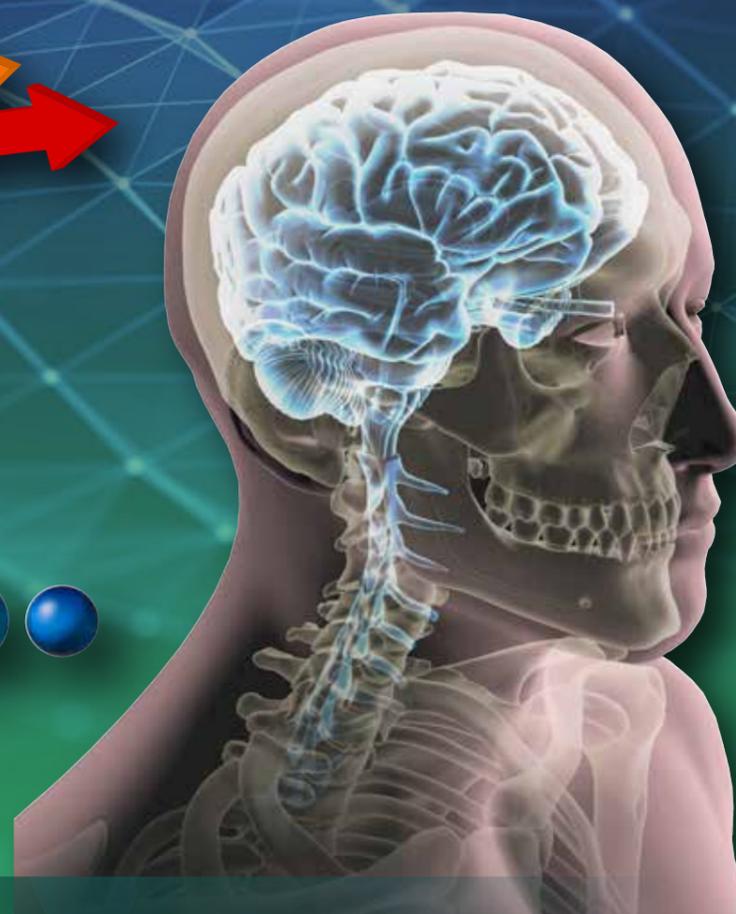
Biology Paper 2

Biology topics 5 – 7: Homeostasis and Response; Inheritance, Variation and Evolution; and Ecology.

What can I do after I have completed the course?

Biology is the study of life in our world, it is a science that teaches you to pay attention to detail and gives you an understanding of how, lifestyle, behaviour, health, environment, all impact life. This knowledge informs decisions that are made about our world and contributes to the success of the economy and society. After completing the GCSE course, you can then study an A level in Biology which allows you to progress to any of the following careers: Medicine, Zoology, Nutritionist, Marine Science, Veterinary Science, Pharmaceuticals.

Please note: Single Science subjects will only run if sufficient numbers of learners opt to study them.



GCSE Chemistry

Why study Chemistry?

Chemistry is the science of the composition, structure, properties and reactions of matter, in terms of atoms, atomic particles and the way they are arranged and link together. It is concerned with the synthesis, formulation, analysis and characteristic properties of substances and materials of all kinds. Learners will appreciate the advances made by modern day Chemistry.

What will I learn?

Learners studying Chemistry will develop and extend their understanding in the following areas:

1. Atomic Structure.
2. Bonding.
3. Quantitative Chemistry.
4. Chemical Changes.
5. Energy Changes.
6. Rate of reaction.
7. Organic Chemistry.
8. Analysis.
9. Chemistry of the atmosphere.
10. Resources.



How will I be assessed?

All examination papers are 1 hour 45 minutes long.

Two papers. Each paper is 100 marks, 50 % of GCSE. Questions are multiple choice, structured, closed short answer, and open response. Each of the papers will assess knowledge and understanding from distinct topic areas:

Chemistry Paper 1

Chemistry Topics 1-5: Atomic Structure and the Periodic Table; Bonding, Structure, and the Properties of Matter; Quantitative Chemistry; Chemical Changes; and Energy Changes.

Chemistry Paper 2

Chemistry topics 6-10: The Rate and Extent of Chemical Change; Organic Chemistry; Chemical Analysis; Chemistry of the Atmosphere; and Using Resources.

What can I do after I have completed the course?

Chemistry plays a role in everyone's lives and touches almost every aspect of our existence in some way. Chemistry is essential for meeting our basic needs of food, clothing, shelter, health, energy, and clean air, water, and soil. After completing the GCSE course, you can then study an A level in Chemistry which allows you to progress to any of the following careers: Medicine, Geochemist, Forensic Scientist, Veterinary Science, Pharmaceuticals, Chemical Engineering.

Please note: Single Science subjects will only run if sufficient numbers of learners opt to study them.





Why learn a Modern Foreign Language?

Everyone knows that learning a foreign language can be very useful if you want to travel abroad. Did you know that 29 countries have French as their main language and 20 countries have Spanish? Both of these languages are understood in many other countries, too.

What you may not realise is how useful foreign languages can be for finding work and succeeding in your career. People who can speak fluent German, French or Spanish will find many career opportunities that are not open to others.

Learners can attain the English Baccalaureate if they pass GCSEs with Grade 5 or above in all of the following subjects: Maths, English, Science, a Humanities subject (Geography or History) and a Modern Foreign Language. This additional 'award' tells sixth forms, universities and employers that you are academic and hard working. It can help you to progress when you leave school.

Lastly, learning a foreign language actually improves your brain and helps you with other subjects. It improves the way that you think!

Baccalaureate Subjects

GCSE French

Why study French?

Studying a foreign language makes you more employable, develops your communication and listening skills, and improves your memory and your understanding of English.

French is a global language spoken on all five continents. It is recognised as the language of international relations, being an official language of the United Nations, the European Union, UNESCO, International Olympic Committee, International Red Cross and NATO. The new French GCSE has been created to inspire students by developing a knowledge and understanding of the French speaking culture including film, music and literature.

What will I learn?

Skills in French will be developed through the study of three themes.

Theme 1: People and Lifestyle:

- Identity and Relationships.
- Healthy Lifestyles.
- Education and Work.

Theme 2: Popular Culture:

- Free Time.
- Customs, Festivals and Celebrations.
- Celebrity Culture.

Theme 3: Communication and The World Around Us:

- Travel and Tourism.
- Media and Technology.
- Environment and Where People Live.

How will I be assessed?

The examination prepares learners for today's working world. It includes skills essential in the workplace such as dictation and translation.

Assessment is by examination, with exams in the four skills of Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing.

Each exam is worth 25% of the final grade.

What can I do after I have completed the course?

Learning a language has specific relevance for many careers such as: the travel industry, journalism and business. As competition increases in the work place, more and more employers are placing greater importance on those who are able to offer an additional language. Employers and Colleges look favourably upon those applicants who are able to offer a foreign language as they recognise the dedication and commitment necessary to succeed. Progression to AS/ A2 Level courses is one of many routes. Opportunities also exist for vocational study in languages.





GCSE History

Why study History?

History is the study of past cultures, examining the political, economic and social impacts of key events. The subject develops strong analytical and writing skills through the study of sources, interpretations and information. It is valuable to the study of a wide variety of university courses and teaches skills that are useful in many professions.

How will I be assessed?

This qualification is 100% examinations, sat at the end of Year 11.

Four key skills will be tested in two exams:

- Knowledge and understanding of the time period.
- Second order concepts such as change and continuity, cause and consequence, similarity and difference, and significance.
- Analysis of primary sources.
- Analysis of interpretations.

What will I learn?

Living under Nazi Rule, 1933-1945

This world depth study should enable learners to understand the impact of the Nazi dictatorship on people's lives both within Germany and across occupied Europe. It explores the interplay of political, economic, social, racial and cultural forces at work in Nazi society.

The Elizabethans, 1580-1603

This in-depth study should enable learners to understand the complexity of late-Elizabethan society and the political, religious, economic, social and cultural forces within it. Learners should be able to identify and describe the main features of late-Elizabethan England and should develop an understanding of the diverse lives and experiences of the Elizabethans at a time when political, economic and religious tensions tested the stability of the kingdom.

The People's Health, c.1250 to present

This thematic study should enable learners to understand changes and continuities in public health in Britain from c.1250 to the present. The study should reveal wider changes in aspects of society over the centuries, allowing learners to understand the most significant characteristics of different ages and to make comparisons between different periods of history.

History Around Us: Local site study

The study should enable learners to understand how the physical features of a selected local site and other supporting sources inform understanding of historical events and developments.

The Making of America, 1789-1900

This period study follows the story of the making of America from the first president in 1789 to the end of the nineteenth century when the USA was set to become the world's dominant power. Learners will need to understand how and why American territory expanded during these years and the relationship between this expansion and the cultures of Native Americans, African Americans and white Americans.

What can I do after I have completed the course?

History GCSE helps demonstrate a high literacy level, critical thinking skills and independent learning skills that appeal to a wide range of employers and colleges. These skills can be applied to a variety of A-Levels including History, Psychology, Politics, Engineering and Law.

GCSE Geography

Why study Geography?

Geography offers a greater understanding of the world around us by providing valuable insights into our physical landscapes, human societies, and the complex relationships between them. Learners will enhance their knowledge and skills on a range of topics, which will help them to gain the tools needed to navigate our complex world, make informed decisions, and contribute to sustainable solutions for the challenges that lie ahead.

What will I learn?

GCSE Geography topics include:

- Challenges of natural hazards (plate tectonics, weather, and climate change).
- The living world (ecosystems, including tropical rainforests)
- Physical landscapes in the UK (rivers and coasts).
- Urban issues and challenges (UK and global cities).
- Changing economic world (UK and global development gaps).
- Challenges of resources management (issues facing our food, water, and energy supplies).

Learners will also complete two **fieldwork enquiries**, which will be assessed in one of the final written exams.

How will I be assessed?

GCSE Geography is 100% examination based. At the end of Year 11, learners will complete all three written exam papers:

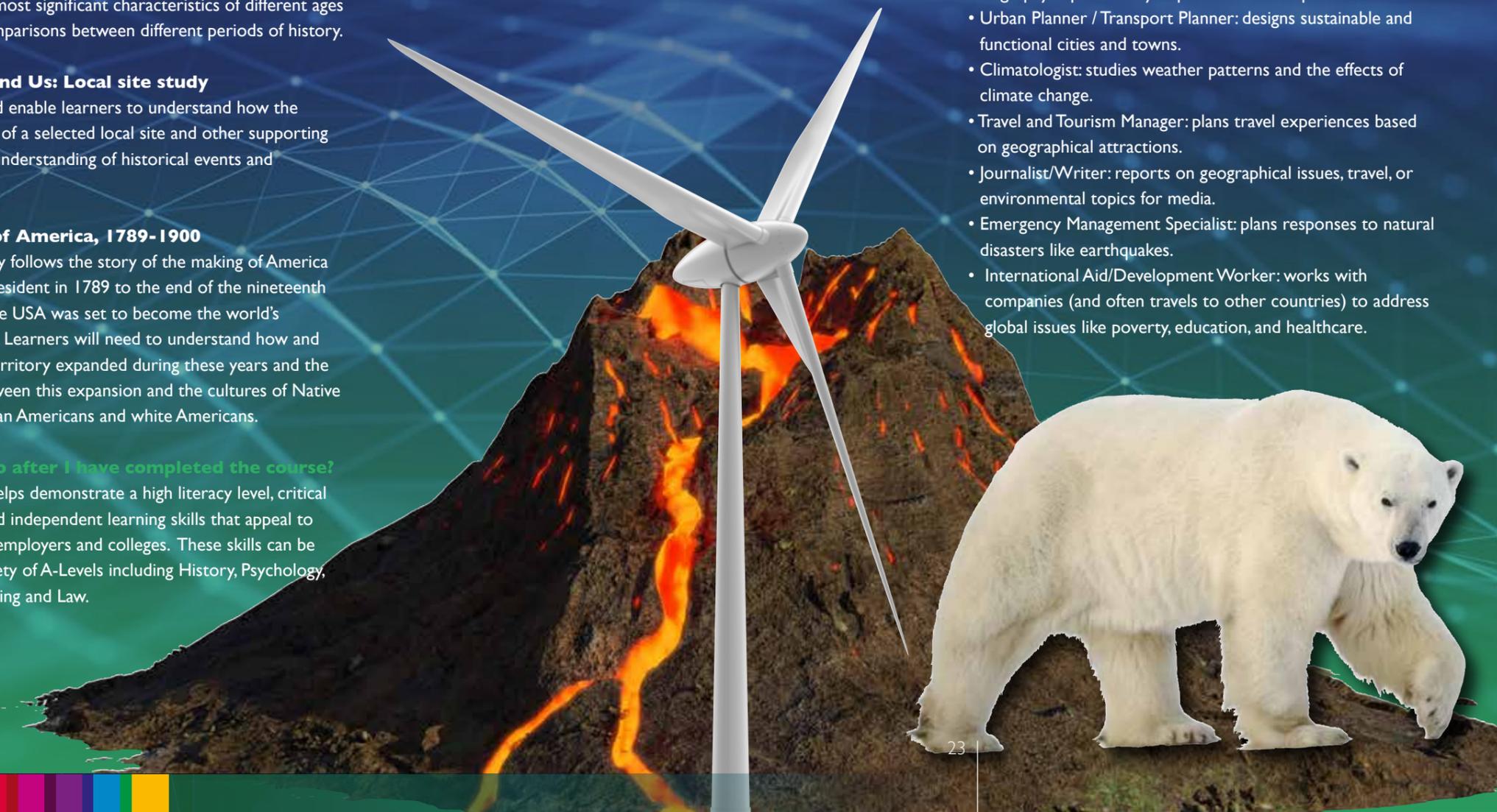
Paper	Exam Title	Weighting towards final GCSE grade	Length of exam
1	Living with the physical environment	35%	1 hour 30 minutes
2	Challenges in the human environment	35%	1 hour 30 minutes
3	Geographical applications (including fieldwork)	30%	1 hour 15 minutes

What can I do after I have completed the course?

The knowledge and skills learnt in Geography are highly valued in a wide range of careers and further & higher education courses. After studying GCSE Geography, learners may wish to continue with A Level and degree courses in Geography, Geology, Mountain Leadership or Environmental Sciences.

Geography is particularly important in these professions:

- Urban Planner / Transport Planner: designs sustainable and functional cities and towns.
- Climatologist: studies weather patterns and the effects of climate change.
- Travel and Tourism Manager: plans travel experiences based on geographical attractions.
- Journalist/Writer: reports on geographical issues, travel, or environmental topics for media.
- Emergency Management Specialist: plans responses to natural disasters like earthquakes.
- International Aid/Development Worker: works with companies (and often travels to other countries) to address global issues like poverty, education, and healthcare.





GCSE Art & Design – Fine Art

Why study Fine Art?

Art and Design gives learners the opportunity to actively engage in the creative process of art, craft and design when exploring and making images, artefacts and products to produce their own portfolio of art and design work.

Learners will develop confidence in taking risks and learn from experience when exploring and experimenting with ideas, processes, media, materials and techniques, demonstrating safe working practices. They will develop an awareness of the purposes, intentions and functions of art, craft and design in historical and contemporary contexts, societies and cultures and as appropriate to their own work. Learners will gain experience in a broad range of art and design areas, e.g. drawing, painting, printing, ceramics, sculpture, digital and mixed media.

What will I learn?

All learners will build their knowledge and understanding of art in relation to:

- How artists, craftspeople or designers from contemporary and/or historical contexts, periods, societies and cultures inspire the development of ideas.
- Understand how meanings, ideas and intentions can be communicated through visual and tactile language, using the formal elements of colour, line, form, tone and texture.
- Know the effects of using different media, materials, techniques and processes, and the ways in which they can be used in their own creative intentions.
- Understand the different purposes, intentions and functions of art, craft and design in a variety of contexts.

They will build skills that allow them to demonstrate their ability to:

- Develop ideas through investigating, selecting and critically analysing sources.
- Apply and understand relevant practices in the creative and cultural industries to their work.
- Refine ideas as work progresses through experimenting with media, materials, techniques and processes.
- Record their ideas, observations, insights and independent judgements, visually and through written annotation, using appropriate specialist vocabulary, as work progresses.
- Use visual language critically as appropriate to their own creative intentions.
- Use media, materials, techniques and processes safely in the working environment.
- Use drawing skills for different needs and purposes.
- Realise personal intentions through the sustained application of the creative process.

How will I be assessed?

Assessment is 60% through your portfolio of artwork and 40% by practical examination at the end of Year 11.

What can I do after I have completed the course?

A GCSE in Art and Design is a strong foundation for further progression to Art and Design related courses at college and university. It can be the foundation for many careers including: architecture, interior design, advertising, fashion design, landscape design.

You can ONLY choose one of our four Art & Design specialisms: Fine Art, 3D Design, Photography or Textiles



Optional Subjects

GCSE Art and Design – Photography

Why study Photography?

Photography gives learners the opportunity to actively engage in the creative process of exploring and making images to produce their own portfolio of art and design work.

Learners will develop confidence in taking risks and will learn from experience when exploring and experimenting with ideas, processes, media, materials and techniques. Learners will gain experience in a broad range of Photography areas, e.g. digital processes, time-lapse photography, stop-frame animation, video, photomontage and digital manipulation.

What will I learn?

All learners will be taught how to:

- Understand the work and approaches of photographers from contemporary and/or historical contexts, periods, societies and cultures.
- Explore contemporary and/or historical environments, situations or issues.
- Know the ways in which meanings, ideas and intentions can be communicated through visual and tactile language, using formal elements of colour, line, form, tone and texture.
- Know the characteristics, properties and effects of using different media, materials, techniques and processes, and the ways in which they can be used in photography.
- Understand the different purposes, intentions and functions of photography in a variety of contexts.

All learners will also learn how to demonstrate their ability to:

- Develop ideas through investigating, selecting and critically analysing sources.
- Apply and understand relevant photographic practices in the creative and cultural industries to their work.
- Refine ideas as work progresses through taking, selecting, editing and presenting images.
- Record their ideas, observations, insights and independent judgements in ways that are appropriate to still and moving images.
- Use appropriate specialist vocabulary, as work progresses.
- Use visual language critically.
- Use drawing skills for different needs and purposes. Drawing may take the form of recording in light, storyboarding and image manipulation.
- Realise personal intentions in photography through the sustained application of the photographic process.

How will I be assessed?

60% of marks are earned by producing a portfolio of artwork, whilst 40% is by practical examination at the end of Year 11.

What can I do after I have completed the course?

A GCSE in Photography is a strong foundation for further progression to Art and Design related courses and college and university. There are a wide range of careers in Photography including high street, retail, commercial, wildlife and fashion photography as well as advertising and journalism.

You can ONLY choose one of our four Art & Design specialisms: Fine Art, 3D Design, Photography or Textiles



GCSE Art & Design – Textiles

Why study Textiles?

Textile Design is the creation of designs and products for woven, knitted, stitched or printed fabrics and involves an understanding of fibres, yarns and fabrics. You will develop skills, knowledge and understanding of Textile Design and fabrication. You will also explore the work of historical and contemporary textile designers and the different purposes, intentions and functions of Textile Design.

Learners will have the opportunity to work in one or more areas of Textile Design such as constructed textiles, digital textiles, dyed fabrics, printed fabrics, fashion design, installed textiles, soft furnishings and stitched and embellished textiles.

What will I learn?

Learners will be taught how to demonstrate their ability to work creatively with processes and techniques such as weaving, surface printing (block, screen or digital), pattern making, pattern cutting, embroidery (machine or hand), knitting, batik, appliqué and collage. They will develop skills in researching, designing and developing, making and evaluating, which they will be able to demonstrate in their portfolio at the end of the course.

How will I be assessed?

The GCSE has two components:

A portfolio of practical work showing your personal response to either a centre or learner-set starting point, brief, scenario or stimulus. The portfolio is 60% of your overall grade.

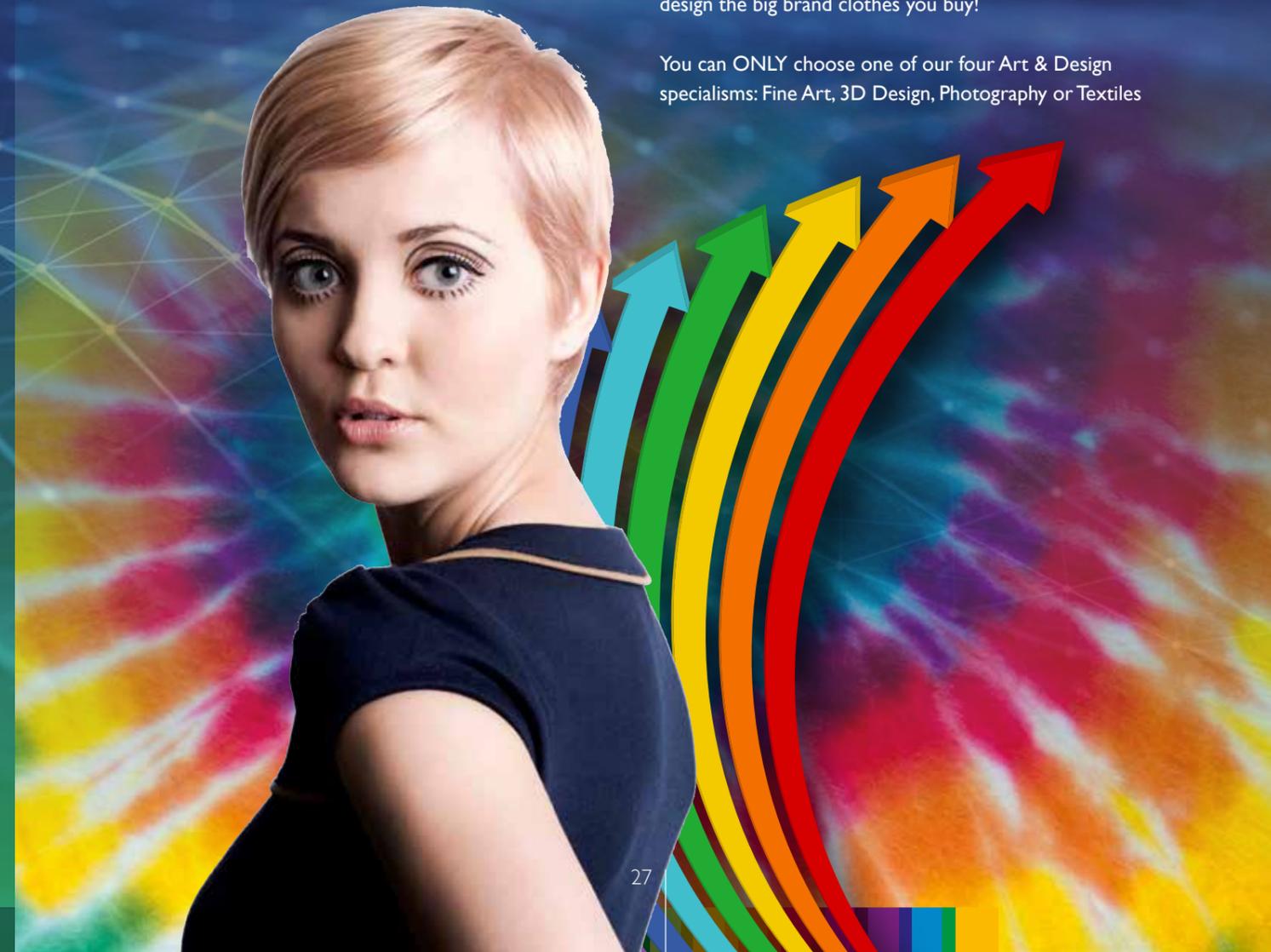
An externally set task will be issued on 2 January and will provide learners with five themes, each with a range of written and visual starting points and stimuli. Your response should be based on one of these themes and will be worth 40% of your overall grade.

What can I do after I have completed the course?

You will be ready to study on a Level 3 Art and Design course at college. After college, learners have gone on to study Applied Arts, Fine Art, Graphics, Illustration, Fashion/Textiles, Interior & 3D Design, Photography and Visual Communication.

Textiles can lead to careers such as Designer, Teacher, Wedding Dress Maker, Children's Wear Designer, Buyer, Merchandiser, Retail Manager, Textile Technologist and Interior Designer. Just think... it's the people who studied textiles at school who now design the big brand clothes you buy!

You can ONLY choose one of our four Art & Design specialisms: Fine Art, 3D Design, Photography or Textiles



GCSE Art & Design - 3D Design

Why study 3D Design?

Three-Dimensional Design (3D Design) is defined here as the design, prototyping and modelling or making of primarily functional and aesthetic consumer products, objects and environments.

Learners will explore, acquire and develop skills, knowledge and understanding through the application of techniques and processes specific to their chosen area(s) of study of 3D Design.

They will explore practical and relevant critical and contextual sources such as the work of historical and contemporary three-dimensional designers and the different purposes, intentions and functions of three-dimensional design as appropriate to their own work.

Learners will gain the ability to demonstrate their knowledge, skills and understanding through area(s) of study relevant to 2D Design.

What will I learn?

Learners will be taught how to work creatively with processes and techniques appropriate to the chosen area(s) of study such as: computer-aided design, model making, prototyping, constructing and assembling. They will develop an understanding of the relationship between form and function as an essential part of this course.

They will also learn how to demonstrate their knowledge and ability to carry out Research and Design as well as Developing, Making and Evaluating.

How will I be assessed?

The GCSE has two components:

Portfolio - A portfolio of practical work showing your personal response to either a centre or learner-set starting point, brief, scenario or stimulus. The portfolio is 60% of your overall grade.

An externally set task - The early release paper will be issued in January each year and will provide you with five themes, each with a range of written and visual starting points and stimuli. A response should be based on one of these options. Worth 40% of your overall grade.

What can I do after I have completed the course?

You can progress to any Level 3 Art and Design Course at college. There are also some apprenticeships available in this area.

Following on from college, learners have progressed to study Applied Arts, Fine Art, Graphics, Illustration, Fashion/Textiles, Interior and 3D Design, Photography, Product Design and Visual Communication.

You can ONLY choose one of our four Art & Design specialisms: Fine Art, 3D Design, Photography or Textiles

GCSE Drama

Why study Drama?

This qualification will engage our learners by encouraging creativity, developing skills and focusing on practical work which reflects twenty-first century theatre practice. Study in Performing Arts encourages greater individual responsibility, confidence, interpersonal and problem solving skills through working in groups to solve problems and meet deadlines.

What will I learn?

Component 1 - Learners will research and explore a stimulus provided by their teacher, work collaboratively and create their own devised performance. Learners will analyse and evaluate their devising process and performance.

Component 2 - Learners will develop and apply theatrical skills in acting by performing a showcase of extracts from a performance text.

Component 3 - Learners will practically explore and study a complete performance text to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of the work of theatre makers. Learners will analyse and evaluate a live theatre performance.

Learners should expect to perform in front of peers regularly, on their own and in groups, to build and develop their confidence. The course includes frequent written work.

How will I be assessed?

Component 1 – Devising. 40% of the qualification. Non-examination assessment.

Component 2 - Performance from Texts. 20% of the qualification. Visiting examiner.

Component 3 - Theatre Makers in Practice. 40% of the qualification. Written examination.

What can I do after I have completed the course?

Learners who wish to take Performing Arts further can progress on to study a wide range of vocational and academic qualifications including A Level Drama/Theatre Studies and BTEC Level 3 in Performing Arts.

We are proud of our learners' achievements and encourage learners to progress to studying Performing Arts at local colleges. Many of our learners have progressed to university and achieved degrees in drama, dance and other related subjects. Related careers include acting, stage management, TV and radio, set design, community arts, drama therapy and education/teaching.



GCSE Computer Science (OCR)

Why study Computing?

This course will enable learners to understand and apply the fundamental principles and concepts of computer science, including abstraction, decomposition, logic, algorithms, and data representation. The GCSE course will involve analysing problems in computational terms through practical experience, including designing, writing and debugging programs. Learners will be expected to apply their mathematical skills relevant to computer science. The course will encourage learners to think creatively, innovatively, analytically, logically and critically. Learners will understand the components that make up digital systems, and how they communicate with one another and with other systems.

What will I learn?

Learners studying Computer Science will develop and extend their understanding in the following areas:

- Current and developing technologies and how they work.
- How particular computer programs and algorithms work.
- How text, sound, and graphics inside computers are represented by using binary and hexadecimals.
- Solving problems using Boolean logic.
- The purpose and functionality of systems software, including the operating system and utility software.
- Characteristics of computer systems including hardware, storage and networks.
- Ethical, legal and environmental impacts of digital technology on wider society, including issues of privacy and cyber security.
- Characteristics and purpose of different levels of programming language, including low-level language.

How will I be assessed?

Paper 1: Written exam - 50% - Computer systems

Paper 2: Written Exam 50% - Computational thinking, algorithms and programming.

What can I do after I have completed the course?

With technology ever changing, there is a demand for professionals who are qualified in this area. Careers include games designer, software developer, network engineer, support technician, systems analyst, web designer, STEM (Science Technology Engineering Maths) related jobs and any career that needs logical thinking and problem solving.

If you want to progress to higher study and employment in the field of Computer Science, you will find that this course provides a superb stepping stone. Once you have taken a Computing GCSE you can then progress to study the subject at A Level and then university.

Creative iMedia (Cambridge National)

Why study iMedia?

Digital Media plays an important part in many areas of our everyday lives and is also an important part of the UK economy. There is a demand from employers for an increasingly skilled and technically literate workforce as more and more media products are produced digitally. The study of creative media provides learners with specific and transferable skills and a solid foundation in understanding and applying this subject, whether it is in employment or higher education.

This course focuses on the media sector, which includes film, television, web development, gaming and animation, all of which have IT at their heart. It provides knowledge in a number of key areas in this field from pre-production skills to digital animation.

What will I learn?

This course will give you skills in research, planning and media product development. Learners will also develop essential IT skills and will likely use software they have little or no experience of using to date.

There are two mandatory units:

Creative iMedia in the Media Industry

- Worth 40% of the overall qualification grade.
- Assessed by external exam.
- The exam is 1 hour 30 minutes long and has a potential 70 marks available.
- Exam topics include sectors and job roles with the media industry, digital product design and pre-production planning.

Visual Identity and Digital Graphics

- Worth 25% of the overall qualification grade.
- Assessed through a portfolio of work marked in school out of 50 and then externally moderated.
- This unit focuses on developing a visual identity and creating an original digital graphic.
- Assessment focuses on the quality of the visual identity and final graphic.

Learners must also complete one optional unit, worth the final 35% of the final qualification. Unit choices include:

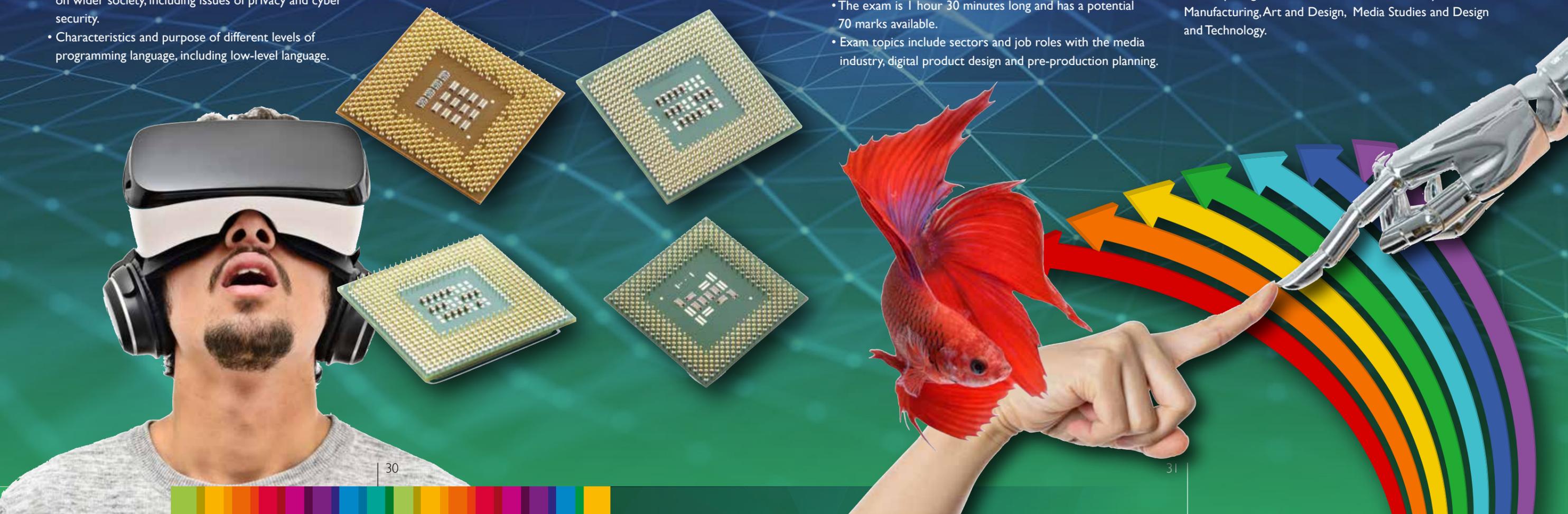
- Characters and Comics.
- Animation with Audio.
- Interactive Digital Media.
- Visual Imaging.
- Digital Games.

How will I be assessed?

Units that are assessed through coursework portfolios will be marked internally and moderated externally. Instead of grades 9 to 1, this course awards grades using a Pass, Merit and Distinction grading system. The top grade, Level 2 Distinction* is worth the equivalent of 8.5 in GCSE terms.

What can I do after I have completed the course?

Studying Creative iMedia will open up many opportunities in the creative and innovation sector. These allow future developments into A Levels, BTEC and apprenticeships in Computing, Business and Communication Systems, Manufacturing, Art and Design, Media Studies and Design and Technology.



GCSE Business Studies

Why study Business Studies?

This is a well-rounded introduction to the subject and an up-to-date and engaging qualification that is relevant to the world of business today. It equips learners with the skills and confidence to explore how different business situations affect business decisions. The course will encourage learners to make informed choices about a wide range of further learning opportunities and career pathways as well as develop life skills that enable them to become financially and commercially aware.

What will I learn?

The course covers the following topics:

- Business activity
- The role of business enterprise and entrepreneurship.
 - Business planning.
 - Business ownership.
 - Business aims and objectives.
 - Stakeholders in business.
 - Business growth.

Marketing

- The role of marketing.
- Market research.
- Market segmentation.
- The marketing mix.

People

- The role of human resources.
- Organisational structures and different ways of working.
- Communication in business.
- Recruitment and selection.
- Motivation and retention.
- Training and development.
- Employment law.

Operations

- Production processes.
- Quality of goods and services.
- The sales process and customer service.
- Consumer law.
- Business location.
- Working with suppliers.

Finance

- The role of the finance function.
- Sources of finance.
- Revenue, costs, profit and loss.
- Break-even.
- Cash and cash flow.

Influences on business

- Ethical and environmental considerations.
- The economic climate.
- Globalisation.

The interdependent nature of business

Learners will need to draw together knowledge, skills and understanding from different parts of the course and apply their knowledge to business decision-making within a business context.

How will I be assessed?

Assessment consists of two exams, 1h 30 minutes each.

What can I do after I have completed the course?

This qualification will allow you to progress to higher level and general qualifications such as A Level Business Administration, Finance, Accounting, Law and Level 3 Vocational qualifications. The enterprise skills used and developed in this subject are key to any successful future and apply to a large number of careers.

GCSE Food Preparation and Nutrition

Why study Food Preparation and Nutrition?

The GCSE Food Preparation and Nutrition qualification is an exciting and creative course which focuses on practical cooking skills to ensure learners develop a thorough understanding of nutrition, food provenance and the working characteristics of food materials. At its heart, this qualification focuses on nurturing learners' practical cookery skills to give them a strong understanding of nutrition.

What will I learn?

The five core topics are:

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

How will I be assessed?

Written exam: 50% of GCSE

Multiple choice questions (20 marks)

Five questions each with a number of sub questions (80 marks)

Non Examined Assessment: 50% of GCSE

Task 1: Food Investigation (30 marks)

1,500 – 2,000 word essay.

Task 2: Food preparation assessment (70 marks)

Written portfolio and practical exam.

What can I do after I have completed the course?

GCSE Food Preparation and Nutrition qualification will equip you to progress to a wide range of college courses. You could also embark on A-level study, begin an apprenticeship or perhaps begin employment in the catering or food industries. In addition, learners who complete this course will have the knowledge and skills to feed themselves (and others) affordably and nutritiously for life. Potential careers include Chef, Baker, Caterer, Nutritionist and a variety of other hospitality roles.



BTEC TECH Award in Health and Social Care

Why study Health and Social Care?

The Healthcare, Social Care and Residential Care sectors in the UK employ enormous numbers of people and offer a whole spectrum of jobs. This course is a good general introduction and, if you perform well throughout the course, you can progress to college, university and a range of jobs in many different disciplines.

What will I learn?

Firstly, you will gain a secure foundation of knowledge covering such areas as:

- Sociology, biology, nutrition, law, and ethics.
- Early years - how children grow and develop.
- Adolescence - contributing positive and negative factors affecting teenagers.
- Adulthood - how teenagers develop into independent adults.
- Elderly - care for the elderly.
- Career focus- looking at different career options and path ways.

You will study three components:

Component 1: How people grow and develop over the course of their life, from infancy to old age, this includes physical, intellectual, emotional and social development and the different factors that may affect them. An individual's development can be affected by major life events, such as marriage, parenthood or moving house, and you will learn about how people adapt to these changes as well as the types and sources of support that can help them.

Component 2: Learners will develop an understanding of the different types of health and social care services and barriers to accessing them. You will be given the opportunity to demonstrate care values in one or more simulated or real situations.

Component 3- Is an examination unit where you will need to show a broad understanding of Health and Social Care.

How will I be assessed?

Component 1 – Human Lifespan Development
36 learning hours assessed internally.

Component 2: Health and Social Care Services and Values
36 learning hours assessed internally.

Component 3: Health and Wellbeing
48 learning hours assessed by examination. This exam can be taken twice as the best grade attained is then counted.

What can I do after I have completed the course?

This course is designed to inspire learners interested in a career in the Health and Social Care sector. Learners can progress to study healthcare and social care courses at college and university. Depending on the qualification, learners may begin as care assistants and/or develop career pathways to become nurses, social workers, physiotherapists, counsellors, psychotherapists, paramedics or a range of other related occupations.

GCSE Sociology

Why study Sociology?

GCSE Sociology helps learners to gain knowledge and understanding of key social structures, processes and issues through the study of families, education, crime and deviance and social stratification.

Learners will develop their analytical, assimilation and communication skills by comparing and contrasting perspectives on a variety of social issues, constructing reasoned arguments, making substantiated judgements and drawing reasoned conclusions.

By studying Sociology, learners will develop transferable skills including how to:

- Investigate facts and make deductions.
- Develop opinions and new ideas on social issues.
- Analyse and better understand the social world.

What will I learn?

You will develop a knowledge and understanding of social issues within British society by studying the following units.

- The sociological approach.
- Social structures, social processes and social issues.
- Families.
- Education.
- Crime and deviance.
- Social stratification.
- Sociological research methods.

How will I be assessed?

Assessment is by two 1 hour and 45 minute examinations at the end of the course.



BTEC Tech Award in Music Practice

Why study Music?

BTEC Music is ideal for anyone who is looking to further their musical skills and knowledge. It also provides a solid platform to progress to A Level Music or a BTEC Level 3 Extended Diploma in Music. This course is fully coursework based and will enable you to explore many different musical practices before choosing which practice you would like to specialise in for each component – Performing, Composing and Producing. Learners will explore a variety of musical instruments and will be offered a free 1-1 lesson on an instrument of their choice, provided by Dudley Performing Arts. Learners will also explore music technology and learn the necessary skills to mix, DJ and compose.

The course provides learners with a fantastic diet of musical styles from Classical to Grime and anything in between – adequately preparing them for future work as a musician. The BTEC course also teaches the necessary communication, collaborative and team-building skills required for many jobs across the world of work!

What will I learn?

Learners will explore three components:

Exploring Musical Products and Styles

This component explores a huge variety of different musical genres such as Hip-Hop, Grime, Classical, Samba, Bhangra, Music for Media (film and game), Reggae, Britpop, Indie, Punk-Rock and many more. Learners will engage in performance tasks and compositional tasks to secure their knowledge before going on to create three mini musical products of their choice.

Musical Skills Development

This component delves into specific practices chosen by the learner. Once a practice has been chosen, content delivery will centre around professional skills within the industry such as time management, self-discipline, working collaboratively with others, correct and safe use of equipment, health and safety, auditing skills and planning development processes. Learners will then produce two musical products, keeping a commentary of their progress.

Responding to a Music Brief

This component allows learners to work to their strengths and interests and apply all of the skills acquired through the course. Learners will respond to the brief as either a composer, producer or performer.

How will I be assessed?

This course is 100% coursework assessed, all assessed internally and externally verified by Pearson.

What can I do after I have completed the course?

Learners who complete the BTEC Tech Award in Music Practice can continue their study at college or sixth form on courses such as BTEC Tech Award Level 3, or A Level Music. From here, learners can then apply to do a degree in Music, Music Production, Music Tech, Performing Arts and many more! The skills acquired during the BTEC Tech Award in Music Practice are transferable to a whole world of jobs, not just in the music industry.

BTEC TECH Award in Performing Arts (Dance)

Why study Dance?

If you already love dance and want to study it, practise it and perform it in public, this could be the course for you.

It is important that learners understand that BTEC Dance is not a 100% practical course and that there will be theory assessments. Learners should already have a sound ability within the subject at a practical level and must be prepared to perform in front of others. To be successful you will also need to commit yourself to attending extra-curricular rehearsals.

What will I learn?

All learners will study both theory and practical elements of dance. The qualification is equivalent to a GCSE and consists of 3 units:

- Exploring the Performing Arts.
- Developing Skills and Techniques in the Performing Arts.
- Performing to a Brief.

You will cover:

- Development of contemporary performance and choreography.
- Practice assessments in both practical and theory.
- Exploring the Performing Arts.
- Developing Skills and Techniques in the Performing Arts.

You will learn to develop and demonstrate:

- A good knowledge of dance styles.
- An ability to critically evaluate your own performances and the performance of others.
- Apply the theory of the subject to improve your performances.
- Have an interest in developing knowledge about professional dance artists.
- Demonstrate high levels of self-motivation, independence and enthusiasm.

How will I be assessed?

- 60% internally assessed coursework and 40% externally assessed coursework.
- Not all coursework is performance based.
- The coursework requires performances in a range of dance styles.
- It includes Performing to a Brief (external exam).

What can I do after I have completed the course?

There are many careers that dance can help you to progress to including: Teaching (Primary and Secondary), Dance Teacher – outside of school education, Professional Dancer, Dance Development Officer, Community Dance Artist, Dance Therapist, Choreographer, Theatre Management, Fitness Instructor.



GCSE Religious Studies

Why study Religious Studies?

Religious Studies enables learners to consider different beliefs and attitudes towards religious and non-religious issues in contemporary British society. The course involves the exploration of a range of topics and includes studying religious and non-religious views about a range of ethical issues, such as abortion, punishments (including the death penalty) and animal testing. Through this, learners develop their skills in debating and constructing their own reasoned arguments. Learners will also explore a range of religious beliefs and practices, with a focus on Christianity and Islam.

What will I learn?

Learners studying Religious Studies will develop and extend their understanding in the following areas:

Reasoned arguments – Learners will gain an appreciation of how religion, philosophy and ethics form the basis of our culture. They will develop analytical and critical thinking skills, the ability to work with abstract ideas, leadership and research skills.

Religious and non-religious issues – Learners will be challenged with questions about belief, values, meaning, purpose and truth, enabling them to develop their own attitudes towards a range of issues in contemporary British society.

Religious beliefs and practices – Learners will study a diverse range of Christian and Islamic beliefs and practices.

How will I be assessed?

This qualification is assessed 100% by examination at the end of Year 11.

What can I do after I have completed the course?

A GCSE in Religious Studies prepares learners for their future in many ways. They will be able to discuss the beliefs of others in society and constructively argue their own opinion. They will develop an ability to understand others and to communicate with them respectfully.

The skills and knowledge developed through this course have seen learners pursue careers in education, media, the medical and veterinary professions, as well as law, child care, charity work and many more.

Sport Studies (Cambridge Nationals)

Why study Sport?

The Cambridge Nationals in Sport Studies is a vocational qualification that takes an engaging, practical and inspiring approach to learning and assessment. Not only can you improve your practical performance but you also have the opportunity to develop your confidence in leading others whilst broadening your understanding of the range of factors influencing the sport.

What will I learn?

Learners studying CNAT Sport will develop and extend their understanding in the following areas:

- Contemporary issues in sport – Written exam.
- Performance and leadership in sports activities – Practical assessment/coursework.
- Increasing awareness of outdoor and adventurous activities – Practical assessment/coursework.

How will I be assessed?

This is the equivalent to a GCSE qualification and is graded from Level 1 Pass to Level 2 Distinction* which is the equivalent of 1 -8 on the grade scale.

40% of the course will be assessed through an external examination.

60% of the course is made up of marks from the coursework and practical elements of two other units.

What can I do after I have completed the course?

Sport and fitness is a huge industry. If you are keen on sport you can have a very rewarding career. Whether that is working for a football club, as a Personal Trainer at the local gym, or training to be a Physiotherapist, Sports Analyst, or a Sports Journalist. There are lots of opportunities. From professional sport through to amateur teams and individuals who just want to get in shape, sport and fitness is a fast growing business.

GCSE Physical Education

Why study GCSE PE?

This qualification will inspire learners who enjoy practical PE but also have a passion for both the science of sport and the social and cultural aspects of PE. The world of sport is ever changing and plays a big part in modern day living, not only for its physical and social benefits but also by creating a vast array of jobs from Physiotherapists to Sport Nutritionists.

What will I learn?

Practical

You will study a range of sports activities picking your three best to be assessed on. You will write a written piece of coursework to support your practical sport in GCSE PE.

Theory

You will study a range of exciting topics from the inner workings of the anatomy and physiology of your body to the nutritional and lifestyle choices that help develop an athlete. You will also explore theories surrounding sports psychology, and socio-cultural influences such as the media and modern technological advances in sports.

How will I be assessed?

You will be assessed in 3 different sports activities, which must cover both game and individual activities, alongside one written piece of coursework about your 3 sports. (40%)

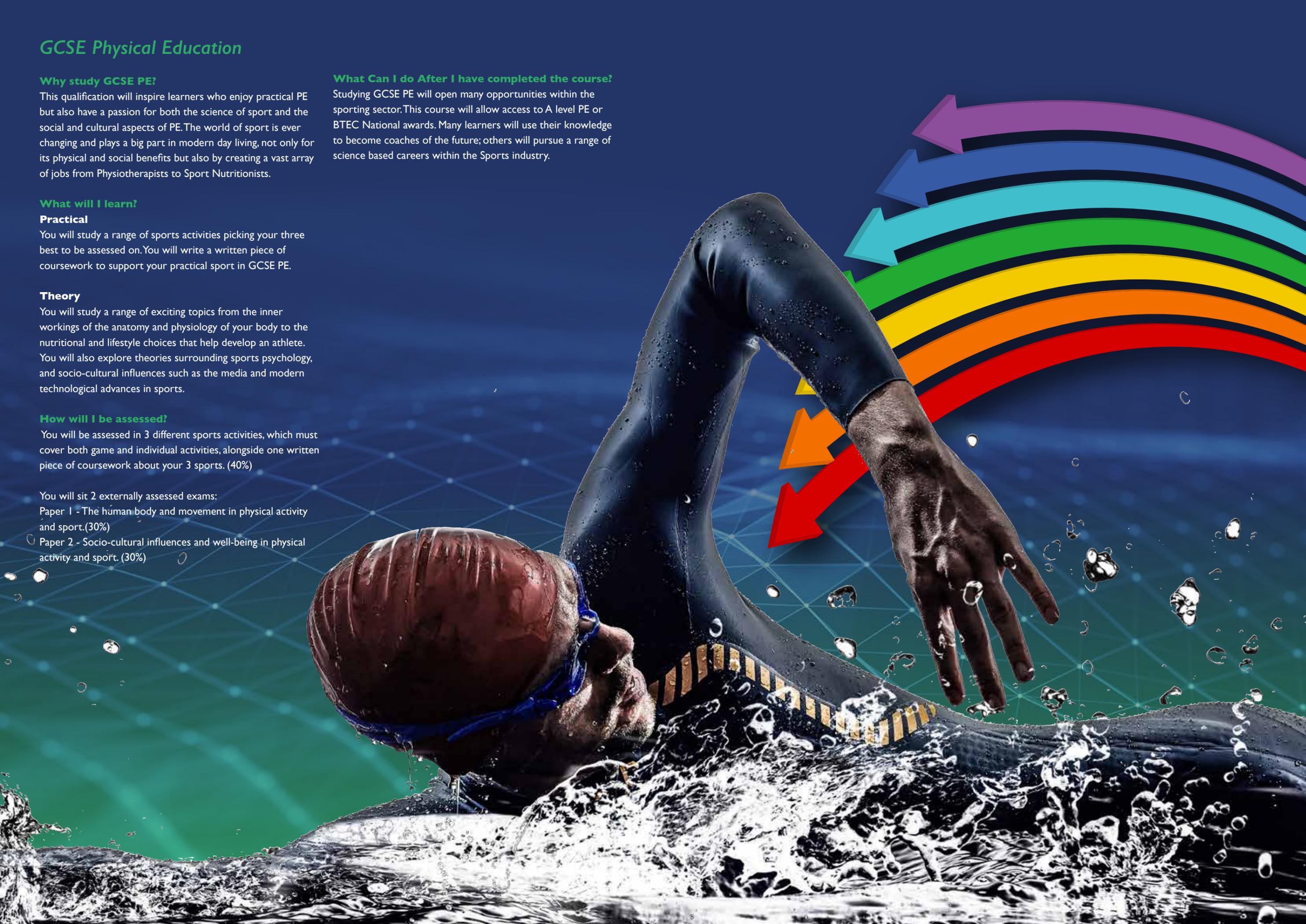
You will sit 2 externally assessed exams:

Paper 1 - The human body and movement in physical activity and sport. (30%)

Paper 2 - Socio-cultural influences and well-being in physical activity and sport. (30%)

What Can I do After I have completed the course?

Studying GCSE PE will open many opportunities within the sporting sector. This course will allow access to A level PE or BTEC National awards. Many learners will use their knowledge to become coaches of the future; others will pursue a range of science based careers within the Sports industry.



Child Development (Cambridge Nationals)

Why study Child Development?

This is a general introduction to a very wide variety of courses and careers that centre on childcare, children's development and education. By learning about why children develop in the way they do, we can work out the most effective ways to help them to grow as responsible adults, able to achieve their ambitions and make positive contributions to their community.

What will I learn?

This course covers the essentials of child development, including reproduction, parental responsibility, antenatal care, birth, postnatal checks, care, conditions for development, childhood illnesses and child safety.

You will gain knowledge of the equipment and nutritional needs of babies and young children and an understanding of the factors to be considered when choosing appropriate equipment to meet all these needs. You will also gain knowledge of nutrition and hygiene practices and will be given the opportunity to evaluate dietary choices.

The course will give you knowledge of, and skills in, observing development norms in children up to the age of five. You will research, plan and carry out activities with children and make observations of their development.

How will I be assessed?

40% by examination on Health and Well-being for Child Development;

60% by Controlled Assessment split into two units:

Creating a safe environment and nutritional needs of children from birth to five years.

Understanding the development of a child from birth to five years.

What can I do after I have completed the course?

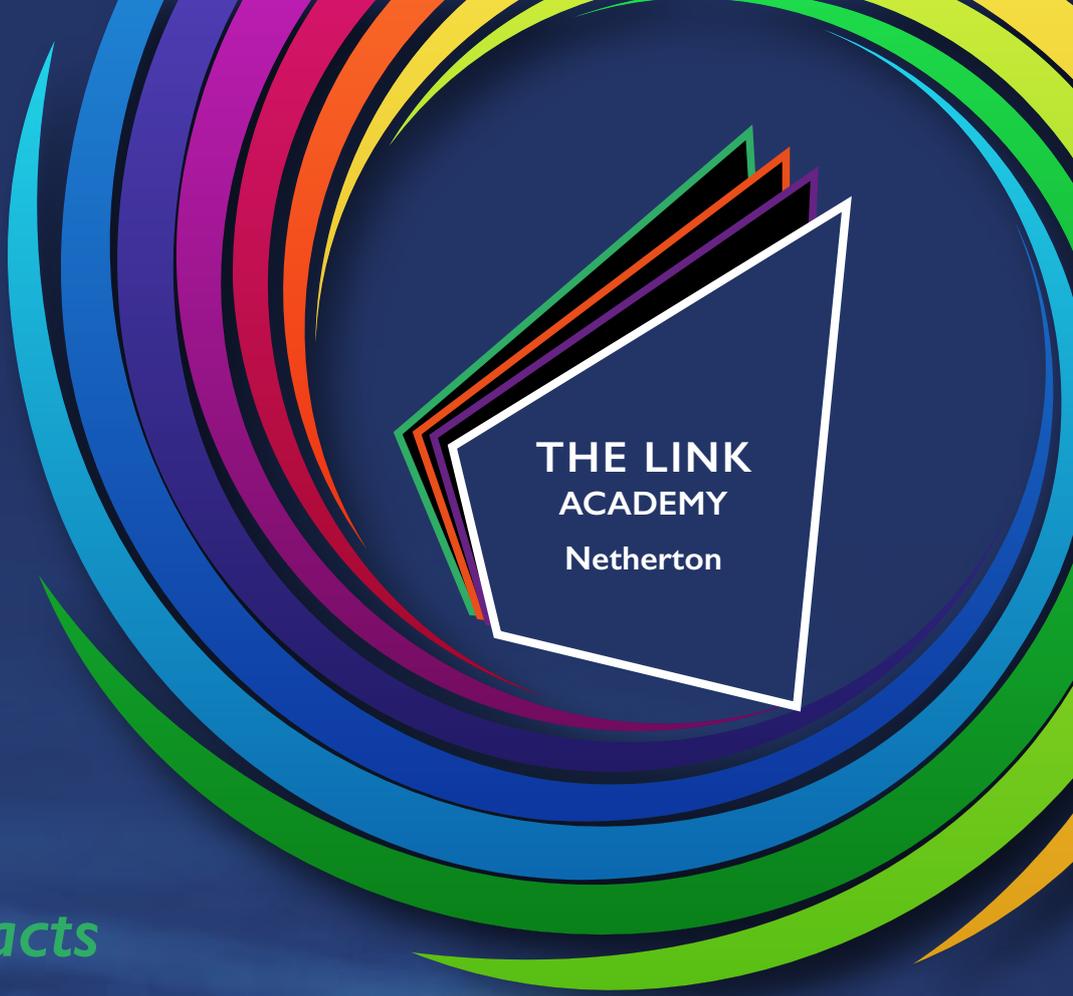
Cambridge Nationals provide a strong progression to Further Education. College courses include Childcare, Health and Social Care, and Early Years Education. This is an ideal course for anyone considering a job in early years' childcare, nursery teaching, nursing, midwifery or social working.

Our Careers Programme

Career choices will be a major focus of Years 10 and 11.

Our CareerFit programme ensures that every learner thinks about their career choices from the time that they join the Academy to the time that they leave. Learners can use our Careers Hub to find out about different career pathways, option choices, apprenticeships, T Levels, college applications, CV and letter writing and much more. Parents/carers are also welcome to make an appointment with their child to discuss post 16 options and career pathways.





**THE LINK
ACADEMY**
Netherton

Key Contacts

Main school switchboard

01384 986550

USEFUL WEBSITES

**The Link Academy
Dudley Academies Trust
Dudley College of Technology
Dudley MBC (Admissions)**

**www.thelinkacademy.org.uk
www.dudleyacademiestrust.org.uk
www.dudleycol.ac.uk
[www.dudley.gov.uk/resident/
learning-school/schools-and-
colleges/school-admissions/](http://www.dudley.gov.uk/resident/learning-school/schools-and-colleges/school-admissions/)**

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