



AKELEY WOOD
SCHOOL

GCSE Information
2019/20



HOW DO GCSEs WORK?

In Key Stage 4 (Years 9 -11) students will take **up to 9 GCSEs**. Students will take the core **compulsory subjects**:

1. English Language GCSE and English Literature GCSE
2. Mathematics GCSE
3. Science - either Combined (2 GCSE's) or Separate (3 GCSE's)

See subject pages for detailed guidance on each of these subject areas.

How many Option subjects can I choose?

Students will then be able to select **4 Option subjects**.

Reasons to choose a subject

- If you enjoy it
- If you are good at it and feel you would achieve a good grade to have on your CV
- If it will support future choices (A' Levels, University, Apprenticeship, Job etc.)
- To achieve a balance e.g. a language, a humanities subject, an arts subject

Reasons not to choose a subject

- Because you like a particular teacher
- Because your friends are doing it
- Because someone in your family did it
- Because it sounds new or different

Qualifications

The recent transition for GCSE specifications is now complete and all courses are now using new specifications. All of our Key Stage 4 examination courses lead to a General Certificate of Secondary Education qualification (GCSE). GCSE courses are assessed through written examinations with a few including a Non-Exam Assessment (NEA) component.

Tiers

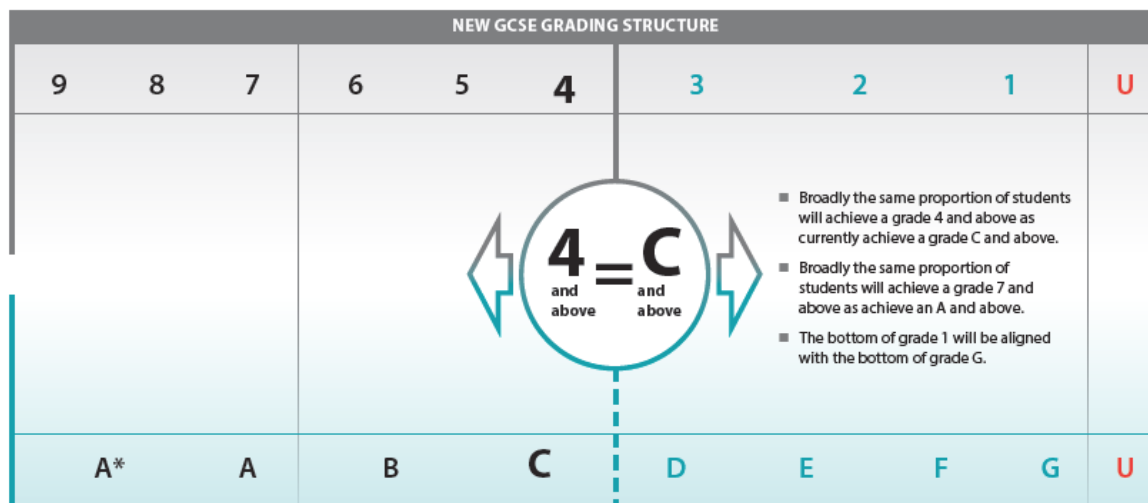
Some GCSE courses enable students to take the examination at one of two levels, or tiers, depending on their ability in the subject and likely final grade. Subject staff will advise.

SEN Students

If you have any questions regarding the best route and choices for your child, please contact the SENCO to arrange a meeting or phone call.

Grades

These qualifications are graded on the new scale of Grade 1 up to Grade 9, with Grade 9 being a measure of the highest attainment possible. The graphic below shows how the new grading system compares to the old letter grades.



- Grade 4 is considered a “Standard pass”
- Grade 5 is considered a “Good pass”

If a student realises after the option blocks have been constructed or within the first term of Year 9 that the choice they have made is not right, changes are still able to be made, in consultation with staff. However, after the start of Year 9, any change of subjects would need to be made within the block structure and available subjects and may also be dependent on class size.

KS4 CURRICULUM SUBJECT OVERVIEW

CORE EXAMINATION SUBJECTS (Compulsory)
English Language English Literature
GCSE Combined Science – (counts for 2 GCSEs) ¹ or GCSE Separate Sciences – Biology, Chemistry and Physics (counts for 3 GCSEs)
Mathematics

OPTIONS EXAMINATION SUBJECTS	
Art ²	French
Business	Geography
Computer Science	History
Design & Technology	Music ³
Drama	Music with Music Technology focus ³
Fashion & Textiles ²	PE (Sports Studies)
Film Studies	Religious Studies
Food & Nutrition	Spanish

ADDITIONAL LESSONS
Games & PE
Life Learning
Enriched Curriculum

Footnote:

¹Students will study **either** for GCSEs in the Combined Science course; which results in two separate GCSE qualifications **or** for GCSEs in the Separate Sciences; which results in three separate GCSE qualifications.

²Students can only take **one** of Art or Fashion & Textiles.

³Students can only take **one** of Music or Music with Music Technology focus.

GCSE ART & DESIGN

Specification code Art and Design - ART, CRAFT AND DESIGN 1AD0 [EDEXCEL]

Overview

The specification meets the criteria outlined by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority for a full course GCSE. It combines the necessary breadth and depth of study, with the freedom of choice required to accommodate a range of abilities and material resources. An appreciation of the need to visit various sources of inspiration and to realise the importance of thorough research will be evident from the start.

Aims

The aims of the course are to enable each student to:

- actively engage in the process of art and design in order to develop as effective and independent learners and as critical and reflective thinkers with enquiring minds.
- develop creative skills through learning to use imaginative and intuitive powers when exploring and creating images and artefacts that are original and of value.
- develop competence, with increasing independence, refining and developing ideas and proposals, personal outcomes or solutions. Learning to actively engage with a broad range of materials and techniques, including, when appropriate, traditional and new technologies.
- develop cultural knowledge and understanding and application of art, craft, design and media and technologies in historical and contemporary contexts, societies and cultures.
- develop critical understanding through investigative, analytical, experimental, interpretive practical, technical and expressive skills to develop as independent learners.
- develop personal attributes including self-confidence, resilience, perseverance, self-discipline and commitment.

Content

Students will have the opportunity to develop their drawing and painting skills starting with natural and man-made forms from direct observation. A variety of different media will be available for experimentation. Students will experience various printmaking techniques, which may include: monoprints, collographs, stencil and relief printing methods. Developmental work might involve ceramics, three-dimensional problem-solving in sculpture and an exploration of mixed media methods. Visits to national galleries will enable students to collect contextual information and research relevant artists to relate to a personally selected theme. Students will learn how to analyse and evaluate works of art. Historical, cultural and social appreciation is a necessary part of the course. Reference to artists, designers and crafts people must be a part of each unit of work (including the Externally Set Task).

Scheme of Assessment

Students are assessed in two components:

Component	Weighting	Method of Assessment	Duration
1AD0/01 Portfolio of work	60%	Non-Exam Assessment	Year 10 and 11 lesson time and independent working to develop 2 Coursework Projects
1AD0/02 Externally-set task	40%	Non-Exam Assessment	Start of Project: January of Year 11 Approximately 4 months to develop a project, concluding in 10 hours of controlled time to create a final realisation for the project.

The scheme of assessment covers grades 1 to 9. Grades will be awarded on that scale.

Suitability

This course allows for the study of art and design in both breadth and depth. It provides progression from Key Stage 3, a strong and appropriate foundation for further progression to A Level Art and Design. Students will have exciting and stimulating opportunities to explore their interests in art and design in ways that are personally relevant and truly developmental in nature.

Better to be aware of now

Independent working is very important for Art and Design as well as the desire to experiment and explore new skills.

Students will not be able to select both Art and Fashion & Textiles as Options because both courses fall under the same specification.

GCSE BUSINESS

Specification code BUSINESS 1BSO [EDEXCEL]

Course Overview

Business is designed to equip our students with comprehensive knowledge and skills they will need to overcome challenges presented during their future study and careers. Students apply their knowledge and understanding to different business contexts ranging from small enterprises to large multinationals and businesses operating in local, national and global contexts. Students develop an understanding of how these contexts impact on business behaviour.

Course Requirements

The assessment methods for Business are such that students require a sound level of numeracy and literacy. Students will need to write extended, analytical essays to questions on a wide range of topics in addition to confidently interpreting financial data and completing their own calculations using formulae.

Opportunities

Business students can progress to Business or Economics A Levels at Akeley Wood School. Beyond this, there are a large number of Business courses offered by Universities providing breadth of subjects and methods of study. Business, Marketing and Management studies can be pursued in their own right or linked to Accountancy, Computing, Food, Science, Languages, Mathematics and Psychology.

Course Content

The content includes:

- Business in the real world
- Influences on business
- Business operations
- Human resources
- Marketing
- Finance

Assessment

The GCSE assessment consists entirely of three written examinations at the end of the year and no coursework is involved.

Influences of operations and HRM on business activity	Influences of marketing and finance on business activity
What's assessed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business in the real world • Influences on business • Business operations • Human resources 	What's assessed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business in the real world • Influences on business • Marketing • Finance
Written exam: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 hour 45 minutes • 90 marks • 50% of GCSE 	Written exam: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 hour 45 minutes • 90 marks • 50% of GCSE
Questions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Section A has multiple choice questions and short answer questions worth 20 marks. • Section B has one case study/data response stimuli with questions worth approximately 34 marks. • Section C has one case study/data response stimuli with questions worth approximately 36 marks. 	Questions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Section A has multiple choice questions and short answer questions worth 20 marks. • Section B has one case study/data response stimuli with questions worth approximately 34 marks. • Section C has one case study/data response stimuli with questions worth approximately 36 marks.

Better to be aware of now

Pupils will not have studied Business Studies at KS3 but are welcome to sign up for taster lessons at the event this evening if they would like to experience these this term.

GCSE COMPUTER SCIENCE

Specification (J276): [OCR]

Overview

The future of computing is ever changing with new demands appearing every year. Do you want to be at the cutting edge of artificial intelligence and human-computer interaction? Would you like to pioneer the development of biomedical engineering and medicine? What about developing better security for computer systems or supporting the future of digital democracy? Wherever your career path may take you, the GCSE in Computer Science will enable you to take that next step.

At the heart of the course is the focus on developing you as a computational thinker who when confronted with any type of problem is able to determine a range of possible approaches and consider the needs of the end-user and the tools at your disposal.

Through solving problems, designing systems and understanding human and machine intelligence we will help you develop and extend your skills in an exciting and engaging manner.

Aims

This specification aims to encourage students to:

- Understand and apply the computational skills of abstraction, decomposition, logic, algorithms, and data representation to a wide range of programming problems.
- Analyse problems in computational terms through practical experience of solving such problems, including designing, writing and debugging programs.
- Think creatively, innovatively, analytically, logically and critically.
- Understand the components that make up digital systems, and how they communicate with one another and with other systems.
- Understand the impacts of digital technology to the individual and to wider society
- Develop valuable thinking and programming skills that are extremely attractive in the modern workplace.
- Develop a deep understanding of computational thinking and how to apply it.

Content

Component Description

Component 01: This examination focuses on computer systems covering primarily the physical elements of the computer; systems architecture, memory, storage, networks and system software. We also consider the wider impact of Computer Science through the consideration of ethical, legal, cultural and environmental concerns as well as system security.

Component 02: This examination focuses on computational thinking, algorithms and programming and within this unit students will have the opportunity to learn about programming techniques and how to produce robust programs in different computing languages as well as data representation and computational logic.

Component 03: Programming project (non-exam assessment) Applying the knowledge and skills developed in unit 02 to plan, design suitable algorithms, develop the code, test and evaluate an innovative and creative solution to a set problem.

Scheme of Assessment

Paper Weighting Method of Assessment Duration

Component 1 50% Written examination 1 hour 30 minutes

Component 2 50% Written examination 1 hour 30 minutes

Component 3 Non-examination 20 hours

Suitability

GCSE Computer Science is suitable for students who enjoy solving problems and investigating a range of possible solutions. It will allow students to explore what is happening inside the computer and how many of the processes that we take for granted actually work, such as; sending files, encryption, communicating between devices and security.

Better to be aware of now

20% of the course is project based and this will give you the opportunity to experience the process a programmer will go through to create an effective and efficient programming solution. There are many new technical terms that you will need to learn and understand and throughout the course you will be provided with programming challenges that will constantly challenge and stretch your application of new skills and understanding.

GCSE DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

Specification Code: Pearson Edexcel Level 1/Level 2 GCSE (9 - 1) in Design and Technology (1DT0)

Overview

The GCSE in Design and Technology enables students to understand and apply iterative design processes through which they explore, create and evaluate a range of outcomes. The qualification enables students to use creativity and imagination to design and make prototypes (together with evidence of modelling to develop and prove product concept and function) that solve real and relevant problems, considering their own and others' needs, wants and values. It gives students opportunities to apply knowledge from other disciplines, including mathematics, science, art and design, computing and the humanities.

Students will acquire subject knowledge in design and technology that builds on Key Stage 3, incorporating knowledge and understanding of different materials and manufacturing processes in order to design and make, with confidence, prototypes in response to issues, needs, problems and opportunities. Students learn how to take design risks, helping them to become resourceful, innovative and enterprising citizens. They should develop an awareness of practices from the creative, engineering and manufacturing industries.

Through the critique of the outcomes of design and technology activity, both historic and present day, students should develop an understanding of its impact on daily life and the wider world and understand that high-quality design and technology is important to the creativity, culture, sustainability, wealth and wellbeing of the nation and the global community. In the context of this document, the term 'prototype' refers to a functioning design outcome. A final prototype could be a highly-finished product, made as proof of concept before manufacture, or working scale models of a system where a full-size product would be impractical.

Aims

- Demonstrate their understanding that all design and technological activity takes place in contexts that influence the outcomes of design practice
- Develop realistic design proposals as a result of the exploration of design opportunities and users' needs, wants and values
- Use imagination, experimentation and combine ideas when designing
- Develop the skills to critique and refine their own ideas while designing and making
- Communicate their design ideas and decisions using different media and techniques, as appropriate for different audiences at key points in their designing
- Develop decision-making skills, including the planning and organisation of time and resources when managing their own project work
- Develop a broad knowledge of materials, components, technologies & practical skills

- To develop high-quality, imaginative and functional prototypes
- Be ambitious and open to explore and take design risks in order to stretch the development of design proposals, avoiding clichéd or stereotypical responses
- Consider the costs, commercial viability and marketing of products

Scheme of Assessment

Students are assessed in two components:

Component 1 (1DT0/01): Written examination: 1 hour45 minutes **50% of the qualification**

Content overview

1 – Core content

and any **one** from the following material categories:

2 – Metals

3 – Papers and boards

4 – Polymers

5 – Systems

6 – Textiles

7 – Timbers

Assessment overview

The paper consists of two sections. **Section A (40 marks) is assessed on the core content** and **Section B (60 marks) is assessed on the material category** students have chosen: Metals, Papers and boards, Polymers, Systems, Textiles or Timbers.

Component 2 (Paper code: 1DT0/02) Non-examined assessment (*Coursework portfolio and made outcome*) **50% of the qualification**

Content overview

There are four parts to the assessment:

1 – Investigate: (16 marks) - This includes investigation of needs and research, and a product specification

2 – Design: (42 marks) -This includes producing different design ideas, review of initial ideas, development of design ideas into a chosen design, communication of design ideas and review of the chosen design

3 – Make (36 marks) - This includes manufacture, and quality and accuracy

4 – Evaluate (6 marks) - This includes testing and evaluation.

Suitability

The students who have enjoyed Design and Technology lower down the school and have an aptitude for making things will thrive on this course. The course will also appeal to those of lesser practical ability but who simply enjoy designing and making activities.

GCSE DRAMA

Specification Code AQA Drama (8261)

Aims

GCSE Drama provides a curriculum to ignite and engage students' creativity, passion and interests. It also provides freedom for them to experiment and take risks with their work.

We will explore plays and a range of themes and issues: some are funny, some are moving and some are thought-provoking. You need to be prepared to think deeply about difficult situations and support others. You need to be open-minded and respect different opinions.

Most of what we do is carried out practically in groups of varying sizes – you must be comfortable working with different people but also be comfortable with working on your own in the spotlight.

Content and Assessment

	Component Name	Marks	Duration	Weighting
1	<u>Component 1: Understanding Drama</u> Written Paper 40% 80 marks 1 hour 45 minute written exam • Section A: theatre roles and terminology • Section B: set text • Section C: live theatre production (Open book – extract)		1 hour 45 mins paper	40%
2	<u>Component 2: Devising Drama</u> Practical/Written 40% 80 marks • Devising log (60 marks) • Devised performance (20 marks)		Non-exam internal assessment portfolio. Practical externally marked.	20%
3	<u>Component 3: Texts In Practice</u> Practical Exam 20% 50marks • Performance of Extract 1 (25 marks) • Performance of Extract 2 (25 marks)		Practical externally marked performance.	40%

Suitability

This course will suit you if:

- You enjoy performing
- You enjoy going to the theatre
- You like working collaboratively and creatively
- You can put yourself in other people's shoes
- You can self-motivate and work independently

Better to be aware of now

Please note the weighting of the written element of this course (40%).

GCSE ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Specification Code 8700 [AQA]

Overview

This course embraces the key concepts of competence, creativity, cultural understanding and critical understanding. This allows students to develop reading skills for both literary and non-fiction texts, writing skills for both imaginative and practical tasks, and also spoken English skills.

This is a linear course. It consists of two externally examined components and one endorsement for Spoken Language. Students must complete all assessments in the same exam series.

Aims

The aims of the English Language GCSE course are to enable each student to:

- read a wide range of texts fluently and with good understanding
- read critically and use knowledge gained from wide reading to inform and improve their own writing
- write effectively and coherently using Standard English appropriately
- use grammar correctly, punctuate and spell accurately
- acquire and apply a wide vocabulary alongside knowledge and understanding of grammatical terminology and linguistic conventions for reading, writing and spoken language
- listen to and understand spoken language and use spoken Standard English effectively. Spoken language will be reported as a separate grade on the student's certificate.

Content

Component 1: Explorations in Creative Reading and Writing

- Study selections from a range of prose fiction.
- Develop skills to analyse and evaluate fiction extracts.
- Develop imaginative writing skills to engage the reader.
- Use spelling, punctuation and grammar accurately.

Overview of assessment

- Section A – Reading: questions on an unseen fiction extract.
- Section B – Writing: a choice of two creative writing tasks. The tasks are linked by a theme to the reading extract.
- Assessment duration 1 hour and 45 minutes.
- 50% of the total GCSE.

Component 2: Writers' Viewpoints and Perspectives

- Study a range of non-fiction texts (including literary non-fiction).
- Develop skills to analyse, evaluate and compare non-fiction extracts.

- Develop transactional writing skills for a variety of forms, purposes and audiences.
- Use spelling, punctuation and grammar accurately.

Overview of assessment

- Section A – Reading: questions on two thematically linked, unseen non-fiction extracts.
- Section B – Writing: a choice of two writing tasks. The tasks are linked by a theme to the reading extracts.
- Assessment duration: 1 hour 45 minutes.
- 50% of the total GCSE.

Assessment of Spoken Language

The preparation and assessment of spoken language is a compulsory requirement of the course of study. It will appear on all students' certificates as a separately reported grade, alongside the overall grade issued.

Students will be required to:

- demonstrate presentation skills in a formal setting
- listen and respond to questions and feedback to presentations
- use spoken English effectively

The spoken language presentation may take a variety of forms, including:

- a) speech or talk by a student, followed by questions from the audience or
- b) formal debate or dialogue, such as an interview where the student is able to prepare extended responses to questions or prompts which have been shared in advance, followed by questions from the audience.

Students are awarded a Pass, Merit or Distinction. Students who do not reach the Pass standard, or who do not attempt the assessment, are recorded as Not Classified.

GCSE ENGLISH LITERATURE

Specification Code 8702 [AQA]

Aims

The aims and objectives of the GCSE course in English Literature are to enable students to:

- read a wide range of classic literature fluently and with good understanding, and make connections across their reading
- read in depth, critically and evaluatively, so that they are able to discuss and explain their understanding and ideas
- develop the habit of reading widely and often
- appreciate the depth and power of the English literary heritage
- write accurately, effectively and analytically about their reading, using Standard English
- acquire and use a wide vocabulary, including grammatical terminology, and other literary and linguistic terms. They need to criticise and analyse what they read.

Content

This is a linear course. It consists of two externally examined components. Students must complete all assessments in May/June in any single year.

Component 1: Shakespeare and the 19th-century novel.

- Study a Shakespeare play and a 19th-century novel.
- Develop skills to analyse how the language, form, structure and context of texts can create meanings and effects.
- Develop skills to maintain a critical style and informed personal response.

Overview of Assessment

- Section A – Shakespeare: students will answer one question on their play of choice. They will be required to write in detail about an extract from the play then to write about the play as a whole.
- Section B – 19th-century novel: students will answer one question on their novel of choice. They will be required to write in detail about an extract from the novel and then to write about the novel as a whole.
- Assessment duration: 1 hour and 45 minutes.
- Closed book (texts are not allowed in the examination).
- 40% of the total GCSE

Component 2: Modern texts

- Study a modern text and a poetry collection set by the exam board.
- Develop skills to analyse how the language, form, structure and context of texts can create meanings and effects.
- Develop skills to maintain a critical style and informed personal response.
- Develop comparison skills.

Overview of Assessment

- Section A – Modern texts: students will answer one essay question from a choice of two on their studied modern prose or drama text.
- Section B – Poetry: students will answer one comparative question on one named poem printed on the paper and one other poem from their chosen anthology cluster.
- Section C – Unseen poetry: Students will answer one question on one unseen poem and one question comparing this poem with a second unseen poem.
- Assessment duration: 2 hours and 15 minutes.
- Closed book (texts are not allowed in the examination).
- 60% of the total GCSE.

GCSE ART & DESIGN – TEXTILE DESIGN

Specification Code Art and Design - Textile Design (1TE0) Edexcel

Overview and Aim

Students work with a range of different textile techniques to produce original and innovative outcomes. They are encouraged to look at Art Textiles, Fashion, Costume and Printmaking. Students are taught a repertoire of different techniques and processes including printing, fabric manipulation, embroidery and machine skills.

This is a 3 year course with Year 9 acting as a foundation year being taught all of the techniques that you will develop further in your Personal Portfolio in Year 10. In your Personal Portfolio you will build on this knowledge and understanding and be encouraged to work independently experimenting with your ideas and recording them in a variety of ways. You will make connections with the work of artists and designers in a range of different mediums and you will refine your work and choose your own discipline to develop into a final piece that reflects aspects of this work you have completed in your personal portfolio.

Textile Design offers the opportunity for students who can offer a combination of artistic, inventive and creativity, the opportunity to express their ideas, technical knowledge and organisational skills. It is an exciting and challenging course, which especially needs creative flair enthusiasm and determination.

How will I be assessed?

Personal Portfolio of work 60% : Non-Exam Assessment in Year 10 and 11 lesson time and independent working to develop a portfolio of work, the themes for this are set internally.

Externally-set task 40% : The theme is issued by the Exam board (Edexcel) in the January of Year 11. Approximately 3 months to develop a project, concluding in 10 hours of controlled time to create a final realisation for the project.

Suitability

This course allows for the study of Textile design and provides progression from Key Stage 3. This GCSE is a natural path to the Textiles A-Level that we also offer, this can prepare students into a career in a wide variety of related fields and job roles such as Fashion Design, Visual Merchandising, Printmaking and Interior Design.

Better to be aware of now

Independent working is very important for Textile Design as well as the desire to experiment and explore new skills.

Students will not be able to select both Art and Textile Design as Options because both courses fall under the same specification.

GCSE FILM STUDIES

Specification Code 5350 [WJEC]

This is a 9-1 assessed GCSE course

Overview

Film is an important part of many people's lives. Those who choose to study it characteristically bring with them a huge enthusiasm and excitement for all things film which constantly motivates them in their studies. They experience a powerful medium which inspires a range of responses from the emotional to the reflective as they are drawn into characters, their narratives, and the issues films raise. The root of that power is the immersive audio-visual experience film offers – one which can exploit striking cinematography, composition, and locations, as well as powerful music and sound. It is not surprising that many consider film to be the major art form of the last hundred years and that many feel it important to study a medium which has such a significant influence on the way people think and feel. The WJEC Eduqas specification in GCSE Film Studies is designed to draw on learners' enthusiasm for film and introduce them to a wide variety of cinematic experiences through films which have been important in the development of film and film technology.

Aims

GCSE Film Studies aims to develop knowledge and understanding of:

- the ways in which meanings and responses are generated through film
- a contrasting, culturally diverse range of films from different national contexts
- film as an aesthetic medium
- how films reflect the social, cultural and political contexts in which they are made
- the relationship between film and film technology over time.
- how to construct your own film sequence or screenplay.

Content

Component 1: Key Developments in US Film

Written examination: 1 hour 30 minutes; 35% of qualification

Component 2: Global Film: Narrative, Representation and Film Style

Written examination: 1 hour 30 minutes; 35% of qualification

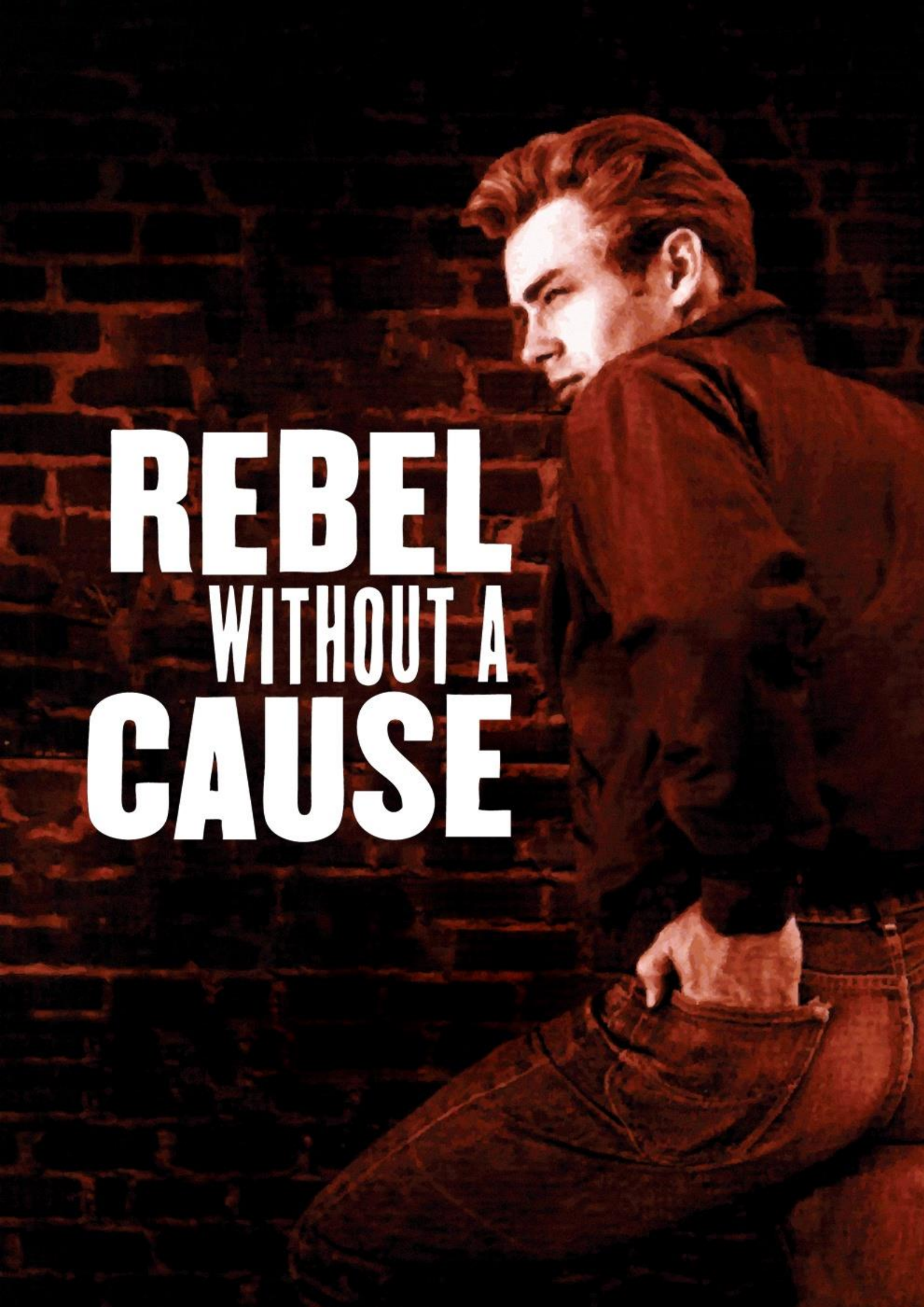
Component 3: Production; NEA assessment

Audio/visual genre-based film extract or screenplay

The choice of films are:

Mainstream US films, in pairs:

- King Solomon's Mines (Bennett & Marton, USA 1950) and Raiders of the Lost Ark (Spielberg, USA, 1981)
- Singin' in the Rain (Donen & Kelly, USA, 1952) and Grease (Kleiser, USA, 1978)

A man with dark hair, wearing a dark jacket and jeans, is leaning against a brick wall. He is looking back over his right shoulder towards the camera. The lighting is dramatic, with strong highlights and deep shadows, creating a moody atmosphere. The brick wall is the background, and the overall color palette is dominated by dark reds and browns.

**REBEL
WITHOUT A
CAUSE**

- Rear Window (Hitchcock, USA, 1954) and Witness (Weir, USA, 1985)
- Rebel without a Cause (Ray, USA, 1955) and Ferris Bueller's Day Off (Hughes, USA, 1986)
- Invasion of the Body Snatchers (Siegel, USA, 1956) and E.T. the Extra-Terrestrial (Spielberg, USA, 1982)

Independent US films:

- Little Miss Sunshine (Dayton/Faris, USA, 2006)
- Juno (Reitman, USA, 2007)
- The Hurt Locker (Bigelow, USA, 2008)
- Whiplash (Chazelle, USA, 2014)
- Me and Earl and the Dying Girl (Gomez-Rejon, USA, 2015)

Global:

- Rabbit-Proof Fence (Noyce, Australia, 2002)
- Slumdog Millionaire (Boyle, UK, 2008)
- An Education (Scherfig, UK, 2009)
- District 9 (Blomkamp, South Africa, 2009)
- Song of the Sea (Moore, Eire, 2014)
- Spirited Away (Miyazaki, Japan, 2001)
- Tsotsi (Hood, South Africa, 2005)
- Let the Right One In (Alfredson, Sweden, 2008)
- The Wave (Gansel, Germany, 2008)
- Wadjda (Al-Mansour, Saudi Arabia, 2012)

Contemporary UK films (produced after 2010):

- Submarine (Ayoade, UK, 2010)
- Attack the Block (Cornish, UK, 2011)
- My Brother the Devil (El Hosaini, UK, 2012)
- Skyfall (Mendes, UK, 2012)
- Brooklyn (Crowley, UK, 2015).

Suitability

Film Studies is an analytical subject that explores the world of the film and the meanings encoded within films as texts. It is suitable for students who enjoy analysing cinematography and sound as art forms, and those that like to question the world around them. As well as those students that like to 'tell stories' of their own through film. The course also develops students independent learning and critical thought. Film Studies is very well received on 6th Form and University applications due to the analytical and creative elements fostered on the course. Many of the Russell Group universities offer degree courses in Film and Media, and Cambridge University a PhD in Film Studies.

GCSE FOOD PREPARATION & NUTRITION

Specification Code 8585 [AQA]

Overview

The GCSE Food Preparation and Nutrition course is an exciting and creative course which focuses on practical cooking skills to ensure students develop a thorough understanding of nutrition, food provenance and the working characteristics of food materials. Food preparation skills are integrated into five core topics:

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

Content

Paper 1: Theoretical knowledge of the topics above

Non-exam assessment:

Task 1: Food investigation demonstrating students' understanding of the working characteristics, functional and chemical properties of ingredients. Evidenced by written or electronic report (1,500–2,000 words) including photographic evidence of the practical investigation.

Task 2: Food preparation assessment demonstrating 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 three hours, planning in advance how this will be achieved. Evidenced by written or electronic portfolio including photographs.

Scheme of Assessment

Component	Weighting	Method of Assessment	Duration
Paper 1	50%	Exam Paper	1h 45mins
Paper 2	50%	Portfolio	

Suitability

This course is suitable for those who enjoy practical cookery and would like to understand the complexities of the food we eat and how to plan diets for those with nutritional needs.

Better to be aware of now

It is an essential part of the course that practical work is undertaken so parents must be prepared to supply ingredients and undertake the cost that this involves.

There is a large percentage of written work and you need to be able to understand and apply the principles of food science and nutrition.

You are also required to complete two NEA projects independently.

GCSE GEOGRAPHY

Specification Code 8035 [AQA]

Overview

This exciting and relevant course studies geography in a balanced framework of physical and human themes and investigates the link between them. Students will travel the world from within lessons, exploring case studies in the United Kingdom, higher income countries (HICs), newly emerging economies (NEEs) and lower income countries (LICs). Students are also encouraged to understand their role in society, by considering different viewpoints, values and attitudes.

Aims

The specification provides opportunities for students to:

- develop and extend their knowledge of locations, places, environments and processes, and of different scales, including global; and of social, political and cultural contexts (know geographical material)
- gain understanding of the interactions between people and environments, change in places and processes over space and time, and the inter-relationship between geographical phenomena at different scales and in different contexts (think like a geographer)
- develop and extend their competence in a range of skills including those used in fieldwork, in using maps and GIS and in researching secondary evidence, including digital sources; and develop their competence in applying sound enquiry and investigative approaches to questions and hypotheses (study like a geographer)
- apply geographical knowledge, understanding, skills and approaches appropriately and creatively to real world contexts, including fieldwork, and to contemporary situations and issues; and develop well-evidenced arguments drawing on their geographical knowledge and understanding (applying geography).

Content

This qualification is linear, with 3 examination papers to be sat at the end of the course. The topics covered on each paper are as follows:

Paper 1: Living with the Physical Environment

- The challenge of natural hazards
- The living world
- Physical landscapes in the UK
- Geographical skills



Paper 2: Challenges in the Human environment

- Urban issues and challenges
- The changing economic world
- The challenge of resource management
- Geographical skills

Paper 3: Geographical Applications

- Issue evaluation (a critical thinking and problem solving assessment based on a different pre-released resource booklet each year)
- Fieldwork
- Geographical skills

Fieldwork

Whilst coursework is no longer a feature of GCSE Geography, fieldwork has enhanced importance, as all students must complete at least two fieldwork enquiries (one physical and one human geography investigation), with the third exam paper featuring questions about their fieldwork. Students will still have to plan, carry out, process, present, analyse and evaluate their fieldwork in depth, however will be asked to do so under examination conditions rather than as a piece of coursework.

Geographical Skills

Students are required to develop and demonstrate a range of geographical skills, including cartographic, graphical, numerical and statistical skills, throughout their study of the specification. Skills will be assessed in all three written exams.

Scheme of Assessment

Component	Weighting	Method of Assessment	Duration
Living with the Physical environment	35%	Exam Paper	1h 30mins
Challenges in the Human environment	35%	Exam Paper	1h 30mins
Geographical Applications	30%	Exam Paper	1h 15mins

Suitability

Geography is an ideal subject for students who have an interest in the links and processes between the physical and human environments that will help them make sense of the world in which they live. It has many cross-curricular links to other subject areas including Science, Mathematics, History and Business Studies, and provides the perfect platform for further study at A Level.

Better to be aware of now

Students have to undertake compulsory fieldwork for three days to the Field Studies Centre in Snowdonia where they learn the skills and techniques for the Paper 3 element of the course. The current cost of this trip is approximately £350.

GCSE HISTORY

Specification Code 8145 (AQA)

'Whoever wishes to foresee the future must consult the past'

Machiavelli (Italian diplomat, politician, historian, philosopher, humanist,
and writer of the Renaissance period.)

Overview

This course provides the opportunity to study history from a variety of perspectives including political, social and economic, thereby helping students appreciate the diversity and complexities of the societies studied. The course actively engages students in the process of historical enquiry to develop them as effective and independent learners with enquiring minds ready for the challenge of being leaders in the 21st Century.

Aims

The strengths of history as a qualification lie in the many possibilities and opportunities it opens up. Employees and educational establishments alike will appreciate the variety of transferable skills provided through study of the subject, chiefly the ability to understand and analyse issues and events to a high level of competence. Success in the subject provides students with the ability to express their views and opinions (both oral and written) in a clear manner, to put forward well researched ideas and arguments in a concise manner, to investigate and assess a variety of materials and to organise such material in a logical and coherent way.

Content

Paper 1: Understanding the modern world

Section A: Period study - 1D **America, 1920–1973**: Opportunity and inequality

This allows students to focus on a substantial and coherent medium time span of at least 50 years. The study will require students to understand an unfolding narrative of substantial developments and issues.

Section B: Wider world depth studies - Conflict & tension between **East and West, 1945-1972**

Depth studies enable students to focus on a substantial and coherent short time span. The studies enable students to gain understanding of the complexities of a society or historical situation and the interplay of different aspects within it.

Paper 2: Shaping the nation

Section A: Thematic study 2A **Britain: Health** and the people: c1000 to the present day

This enables students to understand change and continuity across a long sweep of history.

Section B: British depth studies & the historic environment - **Norman England, c1066–c1100**

The study of the historic environment should focus on a particular site in its historical context and enable students to study the relationship between a place and historical events and developments. There is no requirement to visit the site.

Scheme of Assessment

PAPER 1: UNDERSTANDING THE MODERN WORLD	PAPER 2: SHAPING THE NATION
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Written exam: 1 hour 45 minutes• 84 marks• 50% of GCSE• Section A – 6 compulsory questions (40 marks)• Section B – 4 compulsory questions (40 marks)• 4 marks for spelling, punctuation and grammar	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Written exam: 1 hour 45 minutes• 84 marks• 50% of GCSE• Section A – 4 compulsory questions (40 marks)• Section B – four compulsory questions (40 marks)• 4 marks for spelling, punctuation and grammar

Suitability

History is an ideal subject for those who enjoy the challenge presented by relying on a range of evidence to understand the past. It suits a student who is keen to understand why the world around them is the way it is today: the strengths and the flaws within their society. History is a thoroughly well-respected qualification from the view-point of employers, universities, colleges and society. It is regarded as one which shows academic rigour and develops skills such as balanced judgement and independent enquiry.

Better to be aware of now

We enjoy the opportunity created by mixed ability classes – to both support and stretch students' abilities to maximise their progress. We are well-resourced and seek to make students' exercise books 'revision ready' so they become a piece of work which each student values and can be proud of when it comes to revision.

There is no coursework but there is an on-going need for independent thought, creativity and determination – there are no set answers, unlike other subjects, we are dependent on analysing and evaluating the sources of evidence available to us. But this is our exciting challenge – investigating these history mysteries. To learn from the past in order to enrich our future is a journey which we are delighted to span over a three year GCSE curriculum.

GCSE MATHEMATICS

Specification Code 1MA1 [EDEXCEL]

Overview

Students will follow the newly designed specification for Edexcel Linear course (1MA1). Recent changes to the GCSE specifications have produced an increased focus on the need for students to be able to solve problems and analyse different strategies. This means an increased focus on problem solving and analytical thinking in the classroom, which runs through the teaching of all of the topics in the course.

Aims

Mathematics encompasses a wide range of numeracy skills which all students will need to use in a variety of ways throughout their life. This course aims to equip students with the right skills to meet these challenges. GCSE Mathematics will also provide an important foundation for many of the courses you may take in employment or further education, and it is a requirement for many University courses. The higher tier course prepares students for A level study in Mathematics should that be a suitable choice for the student at Sixth Form.

Content

GCSE Mathematics covers a wide range of basic mathematical knowledge and skills, grouped into the following areas:

- Number
- Algebra
- Ratio, Proportion and Rates of Change
- Geometry and Measures
- Probability
- Statistics

The new Assessment Objectives place greater emphasis on mathematical problem solving and mathematical reasoning and communication. These Assessment Objectives are:

- AO1: Use and apply standard techniques
- AO2: Reason, interpret and communicate mathematically
- AO3: Solve problems within mathematics and in other contexts

With new content added to both tiers, an increased emphasis on mathematical problem solving and reasoning, an increase in assessment time and a change in the structure of the papers; GCSE Mathematics examinations will be more demanding in the future.

Scheme of Assessment

Students are assessed at either Foundation Tier or Higher Tier (to be decided in Year 11) in each Assessment Objective. They will be assessed with three terminal exams. All papers have a maximum of 80 marks and are 1hour 30mins long. Paper 1 is non-calculator and Papers 2 and 3 are calculator papers.

Mathematics is a compulsory subject in Years 9, 10 and 11. The final tier of entry is decided in Year 11.

GCSE MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

(French and Spanish)

Specification Code 8658 (French) 8696 (Spanish) AQA

Overview

In a world where the opportunities for international travel continue to grow, the ability to communicate in a foreign language is a highly valued skill at all levels. Learning another language can enhance employment prospects whatever career students are considering. A GCSE in a modern foreign language is a multi-skill course rewarding practical communication and adding an international dimension to the curriculum. The course at Akeley Wood School meets the GCSE criteria specified by QCA and builds on the students' previous language study and ability to understand and respond in the foreign language.

Aims

These courses help students to

- be able to demonstrate skills in speaking, listening, reading and writing and a positive attitude to language learning
- develop knowledge and understanding of countries/ communities where the language is spoken
- develop the ability to understand and to communicate effectively in the target language
- provide a suitable foundation for further study and to apply ICT skills for further research.

Content

The 3 themes covered are:

1. Identity and Culture
 - a. Me, my family and friends
 - b. Technology in everyday life
 - c. Free-time activities
2. Local, national, international and global areas of interest
 - a. Home, town, neighbourhood and region
 - b. Social issues
 - c. Global issues
 - d. Travel and tourism
3. Current and future study and employment
 - a. My studies
 - b. Life at school/college
 - c. Education post-16
 - d. Jobs, career choices and ambitions

Students whose home language is Italian, Portuguese or German can be entered for GCSE exams. There is no formal teaching element to this, but teaching staff will do their utmost to assist.

Scheme of Assessment

Students are assessed at either Foundation Tier or Higher Tier (to be decided in Year 11) in all four skills: reading, speaking, writing and listening.

Paper	Weighting	Method of Assessment	Duration
Paper 1 - Listening	25%	Written Exam	40mins (Foundation) 50 mins (Higher)
Paper 2 - Speaking	25%	Oral presentation	7-9 mins (Foundation) 10-12 mins (Higher) + 12 mins prep
Paper 3 - Reading	25%	Written Exam	45mins (Foundation) 1hr (Higher)
Paper 4 - Writing	25%	Written Exam	1hr (Foundation) 1hr15 (Higher)

Suitability

These courses will suit all students who are interested in culture/languages and are open to language learning.

GCSE MUSIC

SPECIFICATION CODE 8271 [AQA]

Overview

GCSE Music is about making and listening to music. The course covers performing, composing and listening to music in a wide variety of musical styles – popular music, world music, and western classical music.

Aims

The aim of the Music course is to enable students to:

- develop skills in performing and composing using voice or instrument
- develop skills in listening and be able to respond to music from a variety of historical periods to the present day
- develop awareness and understanding of cultural and stylistic aspects of music.

Content

Students will complete work in three main areas:

Component 1: Understanding Music – all students

Students will listen to a CD and answer questions on the four areas of study which cover: The Western Classical Tradition 1650-1910, Popular Music, Traditional Music and the Western Classical Tradition since 1910. Students will also need to answer questions based on set study pieces they have analysed as part of the GCSE Music course.

Component 2: Performing Music

Students will be required to complete two performances. One of the pieces must be a solo in any style and on any instrument or voice. The other performance will be performed as an ensemble. It is important that students choose an ensemble piece that shows off their musicality and awareness of performing with others.

Component 3: Composing Music

Students will compose two pieces. The compositions must be written in a score, or written about in detail and recorded. The compositions should show an awareness and understanding of musical elements including melody, harmony, chords, rhythm, texture, timbre and structure. One composition is to a brief set by the examination board and the other is a free choice. Music technology is used to record work and to produce printed scores.

Scheme of Assessment

Students are assessed in three main areas:

Component	Weighting	Method of Assessment	Duration
Understanding Music	40%	Exam Paper	1h 30mins
Performing Music	30%	Coursework	Two performances (Year 11)
Composing Music	30%	Coursework	Two compositions (Year 11)

Suitability

Students with a genuine interest in performing and composing are suitable candidates. A wide range of instruments, plus voice, are acceptable for the recital. It is expected that a Music GCSE student has a weekly lesson on their solo instrument (or voice) and practices regularly. An ability to read music at the start of the course, at least at a very basic level is expected.

Better to be aware of now

It is ideal for students to be at least Grade 2 (or equivalent) at the start of the course, although exceptions may be made in consultation with the Director of Music. If you cannot read music well, you may still join the course but you must expect to have to do catch up work from the start.

Students who take GCSE music also must take part in at least one extra-curricular music ensemble.

Students will not be able to select both Music and Music Technology as Options because both courses fall under the same Specification Code.

GCSE MUSIC - with Music Technology Focus

SPECIFICATION CODE 8271 [AQA]

Overview

GCSE Music (Music Technology Focus) is about making and listening to music. The course covers performing, composing and listening to music in a wide variety of musical styles – popular music, world music, and western classical music. It is worth noting that this course will provide students with a GCSE Music qualification; however, the coursework completed will have a focus on Music Technology as opposed to more traditional music.

Aims

The aim of the Music (Music Technology Focus) course is to enable students to:

- develop skills in performing and composing using voice, instruments or music technology
- develop skills in listening and be able to respond to music from a variety of historical periods to the present day
- develop awareness and understanding of cultural and stylistic aspects of music.

Content

Students will complete work in three main areas:

Component 1: Understanding Music

Students will listen to a CD and answer questions on the four areas of study which cover: The Western Classical Tradition 1650-1910, Popular Music, Traditional Music and the Western Classical Tradition since 1910. Students will also need to answer questions based on set study pieces they have analysed as part of the GCSE Music course.

Component 2: Performing Music

Students will be required to complete two performances. These will be created using sequencing and/or multi-tracking techniques. Solo performances must have a minimum of three tracks, with at least one track performed live in real time. The ensemble performance must have a minimum of three tracks, three of which must be performed by the student, and at least one performed by another musician.

Component 3: Composing Music

Students will compose two pieces. The compositions will be generated digitally using music software. A score is not necessary however, an annotation of the composition must be submitted to the exam board. The compositions should show an awareness and understanding of musical elements including melody, harmony, chords, rhythm, texture, timbre and structure. One composition is to a brief set by the examination board and the other is a free choice. Music technology is used to record work and to produce printed scores.

Scheme of Assessment

Students are assessed in three main areas:

Component	Weighting	Method of Assessment	Duration
Understanding Music	40%	Exam Paper	1h 30mins
Performing Music	30%	Non-Exam Assessment	Two performances (Year 11)
Composing Music	30%	Non-Exam Assessment	Two compositions (Year 11)

Suitability

Students with a genuine interest in performing and composing are suitable candidates. Students must have an interest in Music Technology and prior knowledge of sequencing software would be an asset, however not a necessity.

Better to be aware of now

An ability to read music at the start of the course, at least at a very basic level is expected. If you cannot read music well, you may still join the course but you must expect to have to do catch up work from the start.

Students who take GCSE music also must take part in at least one extra-curricular music club or ensemble.

Students will not be able to select both Music and Music Technology as Options because both courses fall under the same Specification Code.

GCSE PHYSICAL EDUCATION

SPECIFICATION CODES 8582 [AQA]

Overview

GCSE PE allows students to study the theoretical components of sport, whilst also giving the opportunity for students to further develop their practical skills as a performer.

The course enables students to study the physiology and psychology behind what it takes to be an elite performer, whilst also focusing on the social issues in sport. The breadth of the theory content is also reflected in the range of physical activities in which students can be assessed. Students are assessed in either two team sports and one individual sport or one team sport and two individual sports.

Aims

GCSE PE allows students to gain a greater understanding of how the body works and responds to the demands of exercise. It focuses on providing pupils with opportunities to lead a healthy, active lifestyle through participation in a range of activities. The GCSE PE course gives students a wider insight into the world of sport by looking at the impact of political infrastructure and analysing the social reasons why people take part in sport.

Content

The course covers a wide range of knowledge and skills, grouped into the following areas:

- The human body and movement in physical activity and sport.
- Socio-cultural influences and well-being in physical activity and sport.
- Practical performance in physical activity and sport.

Scheme of Assessment

Students are assessed in each assessment objective as follows:

Component	Weighting	Method of Assessment	Duration
The Human Body and Movement	30%	Exam Paper	1h 15mins
Socio-Cultural Influences	30%	Exam Paper	1h 15mins
Practical Performance	40%	Non-Exam Assessment	3 supervised activities as a performer (1 team activity, 1 individual activity and a 3 rd in either team or individual activity)

In both papers there will be a range of multiple choice, short answer and long answer questions. On the practical side pupils will be assessed in both skills (10 marks per activity) and the full context of their activity (15 marks per activity).

Suitability

This course is suited to students who are actively taking part in sporting activity both in and outside of school. This course is also suited to those students who have a keen interest in the theory behind their sporting performance. The course provides a clear pathway to A level PE and BTEC Nationals and is excellent for those that may wish to pursue a career in sports science, education, coaching and physiotherapy.

Better to be aware of now

The course is 60% theory based and therefore there is a significant focus on the theoretical content.

There are weekly practical sessions covering a range of individual and team sports on the specification.

It is expected that students are taking part in sport both in and outside of school in order to maximise their practical marks.

GCSE COMBINED SCIENCES

SPECIFICATION CODE: J250 OCR Gateway Combined Science A

Overview

We are teaching the new Science GCSE courses. Depending on student interest, assessment results and report commentary, students will follow either the Combined Science (2 GCSEs) or Separate Science (3 GCSEs) course. Biology, Chemistry, and Physics, will be taught as separate subjects in both courses.

The Combined Science course will cover all of the same broad topics as the Separate Science courses, omitting some of the more challenging elements and mathematical skills. Combined Science is the ideal course for students aiming to get their highest possible grades in Science GCSEs.

Examinations now may only be sat terminally at the end of Year 11, and there is no coursework element – practical skills will be assessed formally in the written papers, and informally, in frequent experiments and practical activities during the normal course of teaching.

Aims

The courses emphasise explanations, theories and modelling in science along with the implications of science for society. Strong emphasis is placed on the active involvement of students in the learning process and the specifications encourage a wide range of teaching and learning activities, with particular focus on practical skills.

Scheme of Assessment

Students are assessed in six written examination papers:

Component	Weighting	Method of Assessment	Duration
Biology Paper 1	16.7%	Exam Paper	1h 10mins
Biology Paper 2	16.7%	Exam Paper	1h 10mins
Chemistry Paper 1	16.7%	Exam Paper	1h 10mins
Chemistry Paper 2	16.7%	Exam Paper	1h 10mins
Physics Paper 1	16.7%	Exam Paper	1h 10mins
Physics Paper 2	16.7%	Exam Paper	1h 10mins

Suitability

The Combined Science pathway is suitable for the majority of students. Students will work towards two GCSEs in Science.

Better be aware of now

Students will study the same topics (but to less depth) in Combined Science compared to the Separate Science courses, but **will still be provided with an excellent route for accessing Science A levels.**

Please complete and return the survey to indicate which Science pathway you are currently considering. This is helpful information for us to be able to plan and to know how to advise you, but does not commit you to a decision. There will be an opportunity to speak to your Science teacher at Year 8 Parents' Evening as the next step. Decision making will be a guided process and any deadlines and further information will be communicated to you separately.

GCSE SEPARATE SCIENCES

SPECIFICATION CODES: J247 OCR Gateway Biology A, J248 OCR Gateway Chemistry A, J249 OCR Gateway Physics A

Overview

We are teaching the new Science GCSE courses. Depending on student interest, assessment results and preferred options, students will follow either the Combined Science (2 GCSEs) or Separate Science (3 GCSEs) course. Biology, Chemistry, and Physics, will be taught as separate subjects in both courses. In the Separate Sciences, students will be taught by subject specialists for each of the disciplines, experiencing the same broad topics as the Combined Science students, but with more challenging elements and a greater mathematical demand. Students will study the material required to give them access to three separate GCSEs in Biology, Chemistry and Physics.

Aims

The courses emphasise explanations, theories and modelling in Science along with the implications of Science for society. Strong emphasis is placed on the active involvement of students in the learning process and the specifications encourage a wide range of teaching and learning activities, with particular focus on practical and mathematical skills.

Scheme of Assessment

Students are assessed in six written examination papers:

Biology

Component	Weighting	Method of Assessment	Duration
Paper 1	50%	Exam Paper	1h 45mins
Paper 2	50%	Exam Paper	1h 45mins

Chemistry

Component	Weighting	Method of Assessment	Duration
Paper 1	50%	Exam Paper	1h 45mins
Paper 2	50%	Exam Paper	1h 45mins

Physics

Component	Weighting	Method of Assessment	Duration
Paper 1	50%	Exam Paper	1h 45mins
Paper 2	50%	Exam Paper	1h 45mins

Suitability

Due to the increased difficulty of challenge that the Separate Sciences now pose, this pathway and its demands is suitable for students with strong mathematical performance, and a deep enthusiasm for all three Science subjects. Students will work towards the **three** full GCSEs in Biology, Chemistry and Physics. Students will study a greater depth of content compared to the Combined Science course, and will be provided with a rigorous foundation for Science A' Levels.

Better to be aware of now

The route that students will follow in choosing between either the Separate Science, or the Combined Science, courses will be based on student interest and KS3 Science reporting and assessment data. This is a pathway to be taken in consultation with staff, and the final decision will be based on data, staff advice and chances of maximum success.

There may be some flexibility in Term 1 of Year 9 to for students to change from the Separate Science course (3 GCSEs) to the Combined Science course (2 GCSEs). Please consider the choice carefully now and take advice as changes in Year 9 would have ramifications in terms of what is possible within the timetabling.

GCSE RELIGIOUS STUDIES

AQA Specification A

Overview

Like all exam boards, this specification covers two core areas: study of religion and philosophy and ethics. It will build on their learning in KS3, pulling together themes from across the years.

Aims

Taking Religious Studies at GCSE opens up many possibilities and opportunities. Students will pick up a number of transferable skills, which are highly valued by both employers and educational establishments. Studying this course will give students the ability to analyse and evaluate both their own views and the views of others. Well-researched evidence will be encouraged to support those views and will be put forward in a concise, clear and logical manner. As such, this course will help develop literacy skills. It will also give an insight into how religion affects the lives of so many people in the world today: a time when an understanding of this is crucial for a peaceful and cohesive society.

Content

Students will study two key components:

Study of Religion: students will study the key beliefs, teachings and practices in two religions: Christianity and Judaism. There will be an emphasis on how religion is lived in the 21st century helping students to understand why religious believers behave in the way they do.

Philosophy and Ethics: Using the religions in component one as starting points students will consider religious responses to various philosophical and ethical issues. The topics studied include life and death; good, evil, and suffering; arguments for the existence of God; human rights; religion and social justice; religion, peace, and conflict; and abortion and euthanasia.

Scheme of Assessment

Students are assessed in two key areas:

Component	Weighting	Method of Assessment	Duration
Component 1: Study of Religion	50%	Exam	1h 45
Component 2: Philosophy & Ethics	50%	Exam	1h 45

Students are taught and examined for a scheme of assessment covering the new grades 1-9 according to the GCSE marking framework. The two assessment objectives (knowledge / understanding and evaluation) are equally weighted with marks and consideration given to the quality of written communication and spelling, grammar and punctuation. There are no controlled assessments for this course. Questions on the paper range from 1 mark to 12 marks for the longer questions.

Suitability

Religious Studies is ideally suited to students who enjoy debate and are prepared to listen to and analyse other people's views. The transferable skills will work well with other subjects such as English, History, and Drama.

Better to be aware of now

This course does require a lot of written work and there is a lot of content to learn. However, most of the skills have been gradually integrated into work throughout Years 7 and 8 to make the transition to GCSE as smooth as possible. You will be expected to make use of resources on Firefly throughout the course.



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