



Sir Roger Manwood's School

Year 9

**Your Key Stage 4 Option Choices
2018-2020**

TO THE PARENTS OF YEAR NINE PUPILS

- Your child is being asked to make some important decisions early in the Spring term concerning the subjects he/she will study next year. Some subjects are compulsory, but there is a certain degree of choice where the others are concerned. A list of subjects is given further on in this document. In due course a form will be given to your son/daughter which should be filled in and returned to me. To help me find the best fit possible, I ask that you rank the subjects in order of importance and give as much information as possible so that I know what to do if I cannot provide your child with all of his/her choices.
- The fact that a subject is listed does not necessarily mean that the subject will run. If the number of pupils choosing it is too small to be economic, then we shall have to ask the pupils choosing it to opt for another subject.
- We will try to give as much advice and guidance as possible. Your child has had/will have talks from various members of staff including myself, and has been or will be shown round the Careers Room. In addition, there are two opportunities for you to ask questions:
- **Options Evening.** On Wednesday 22nd November at 6:00pm in the School Hall, I shall talk about the options process, and you will then be able to ask any questions you want. There is no point in your child attending this meeting, as he/she will have heard it all before.
- **Parents' Evening.** This will be on Tuesday 16th January in the Sports Hall, from 4:00pm to 7:00pm. There most definitely is a point to your child attending this meeting, as it will be the chance for you to ask about the desirability of particular option choices.
- **Most important:** the completed form should be returned to me by Friday 19th January. To do the job properly, I need as much time as possible.

Ms C A Kernick
November 2017

Introduction for pupils

In July, you will have completed Key Stage 3 of the National Curriculum and will be ready to embark upon Key Stage 4 which ends with your external GCSE examinations. Soon you will be asked to make the choice of subjects you wish to study in Years 10 and 11. This document offers a brief overview of what is involved in the various subjects up to GCSE. It will also help you to think about the process of making your decision. You will be given assistance and you will need to consult your parents and give much thought to the topic before you choose.

One of our basic principles is to offer as free a choice as regulations permit, and then to devise a timetable which will allow as many of you as possible to study your chosen subjects. Hence the need for decisions at this stage. You might consider that you would prefer to delay your choice of subjects until after this summer's examinations. We believe that this is an incorrect approach - you know your strengths and weaknesses without the judgement provided by a single examination. Our experience shows that, from the first provisional list of choices to the final selection, few pupils change their mind radically. However, we have to construct a timetable before the final choices are required. In other words, the final choices are made from blocks of subjects, which have been put together to fit as many pupils' choices as possible.

The Head of Year and I supervise the process and vet the choices, and we re-advise anyone whose selections go against any evidence that we may have. We also need to keep an eye on numbers selecting subjects - if there are insufficient numbers, we may have to withdraw a subject from the list, and if too many, we may have to consider an individual's aptitude for that particular subject.

Once the timetable line-up is settled it will not be changed, but it may be possible for you to change your choices within the framework.

Key Stage Four Curriculum

In the course of each fortnight, pupils will have:

Subject	Hours	GCSE
English (Lang/Lit)	7	2
Maths	6	1
Science (Biology/Chemistry/Physics)	12	3
MFL option	5	1
Option 2	5	1
Option 3	5	1
Option 4	5	1
PE	2	0
Religious Education	1	0

Thus, unless it is deemed double award Science is more important for some, our pupils will take **ten** GCSEs at the end of year eleven.

Options

Everyone will study four of these, including one foreign language, each leading to a GCSE. They must be chosen from the following list:

French	Art	Business	Computer Science
German	Design and Technology	Drama	Geography
Spanish	History	Music	Religious Studies
Mandarin Chinese	Sports Studies		

What criteria should you consider when you are making your choices?

Although the core subjects provide a fundamental balance to the course, it is important that you think through the choices carefully. Ask yourself a series of questions:

a. **Which subjects do I enjoy most?**

You will be most likely to succeed in subjects which give you a degree of satisfaction.

b. **What does the subject involve?**

The GCSE syllabus may involve different work from that undertaken in Years 7-9. You should know what the course involves before you start it.

c. **What are my chances of success?**

If you enjoy a subject, you are likely to succeed in it. However, you should also think carefully about how good you are at that subject.

d. **How do my choices fit together?**

You should consider whether your choices give you sufficient variety. Also try to play to your strengths.

e. **What do teachers and parents think of my choice?**

They have known you for a long time: it's worth listening to them - if in doubt ask!

Your choices ideally, should be made in the light of future intentions, which may include prospective career requirements or a Sixth Form course. However, remember that your ideas, likes and dislikes, and career intentions may well change, so a most important piece of advice is: **beware of limiting your future choices: keep your options open.**

We are not only keen for you to do well in your GCSE courses, but we also feel strongly that your educational development should be appropriately broad. Consequently, we require you to:

- continue with Religious Education
- continue with PE
- attend organised PSHE curriculum days
- undertake a fortnight's Work Experience at the end of Year Eleven

Individual teachers will advise on their own subjects. The notes on subjects which follow give you information about GCSE courses; ask subject teachers if you would like to know more. Remember you cannot make informed choices without sensible thought and consultation.

What action should I take now?

STUDY this booklet carefully.

THINK about the questions mentioned earlier.

SHOW your parents this document and **DISCUSS** the choices with them.

CONSULT as appropriate:

- your subject teachers;
- your form tutor;
- the Head of Year;
- the Deputy Head (Ms Kernick)
- people who are taking, or have taken, courses you are interested in;
- people who have experience in the kinds of job which interest you.
- the Careers Service, especially Mr Ainsworth
- the Boarding Staff (if appropriate)

DECIDE for yourself!

You will have to submit your choices shortly after the Year 9 Parents Evening, by Friday 19th January, 2018.

Miss K L Lightfoot
Head of Year 9

Ms C A Kernick
Deputy Headteacher



KS4 Option Choices Form 2018-20

Name of Pupil:		Form:
1. Choose a language (Mandarin Chinese, French, German and Spanish)		
2. Choose 3 more subjects from the list below. Write 1 next to the subject which is most important to you, then 2 and 3. These may include one more language (but not normally two).	Art Business Mandarin Chinese Computer Science Design and Technology Drama French Geography German History Music Religious Studies Sports Studies Spanish	
3. If I cannot provide you with one of the subjects you have chosen above, what would you like me to do? The more information you can give me, the more likely it is that I can help you. You can continue overleaf.		
4. If there is anything else you would like me to know, please write it here. For example, if you really do not mind which of two subjects you do, say so.		

Please confirm your option choices (in rank order) here:

Language:

1.

2.

3.

Reserve:

This form can be returned at Parent's Evening (**Tuesday 16th January**) or to the main office by (**Friday 19th January**).

Subject: GCSE Art & Design (Fine Art)

Examination Board and Specification Number: AQA

Course Content

Please note, the course structure, specification and assessment criteria for the new GCSE in Art and Design were approved for first teaching in September 2016. If researching AQA's GCSE Art & Design online, please ensure that you choose the correct specification and not any of the previous specifications that may be out there.

Component 1: (Coursework Portfolio)

Coursework is built up throughout the two year course and consists of two projects, the themes of which are set internally. The *Natural Forms* project is studied in the Autumn and Winter terms of Year 10 (September-April) and the *Identity* project is studied through the Summer term of Year 10 and the Autumn term of Year 11 (May-January). The aims of these projects are to encourage students to explore a wide range of media, techniques and ideas in their work. As well as experimenting with traditional drawing and painting techniques, students will explore a range of printmaking skills (including lino-cutting, mono-printing and dry-point etching), photography, digital media, sculpture and ceramics. An important part of this exploration will include the study of artists, designers and craftspeople to help students develop their own ideas and to give them a deeper understanding of the place of art, craft and design in history and within society. The building up of a lively sketchbook full of research, ideas and experimentation is a central part of the course. It is through these sketchbooks and some larger, mounted work that students should show a clear development from a starting point (the theme of the project) to a conclusion (the final piece/s).

Component 2: (Externally Set Assignment)

The Art exam is unique, as it requires no revision, but it lasts over 3 months (from February-May in Year 11). In February, students will be required to choose one starting point from a selection sent by the exam board to be the theme of their exam project. Students will then research artists, designers and craftspeople and explore a range of techniques and ideas – much in the same way as they did for the coursework projects. The only difference between the externally set task and the coursework projects is the time limitations. Students have to complete their project in a much shorter period of time (3 months), and have to complete the final piece/s to their project in a 10-hour exam (spread over 2 school days).

Assessment:

Component 1: Coursework Portfolio (worth 60%)

This consists of 2 projects that are marked as one unit, and is assessed using the following 4 Assessment Objectives (AOs), each worth 24 marks (giving a total out of 96 marks).

AO1 – Developing ideas through research of artists, designers, craftspeople, etc. (24)

AO2 – Refining work through experimentation with a range of ideas, media, materials and techniques. (24)

AO3 – Recording ideas through observational drawing, photography and explanations. (24)

AO4 – Presenting a personal, informed and meaningful response (final outcome/s) to the theme. (24)

Component 2: Externally Set Assignment (worth 40%)

This is assessed using the same 4 Assessment Objectives and marking criteria as above. Only the final piece is produced under exam conditions, which lasts 10 hours.

Skills Developed and Possible Future Careers

The Art & Design course will not only develop students' techniques and ability across a wide range of media, but also their understanding of different ways of working and ways of approaching themes. As the course develops, so too will the students' confidence as they begin to work more and more independently and creatively both in and out of lessons in the development towards their final outcomes.

If you intend to take A-Level Art & Design, or go on to study art or design-related courses at college, or even follow a creative pathway in the future then this course is important for you. For those thinking further ahead, university courses that past students have gone on to study include Fine Art, Illustration, Architecture, Graphic Design, Photography, and Art History/Journalism, to name just a few.

Furthermore, as GCSE Art & Design is now considered one of the most time-demanding courses on offer, more and more colleges and universities are recognising that gaining a high grade in GCSE Art & Design shows that you must be a very hard-working, creative, independent and dedicated student; attributes that almost all courses will admire in their applicants.

Please visit the Art Department's website (arts-cool.co.uk) for further information on the Art courses we offer, to read tips, help and advice on a range of Arts-related matters and for more information on possible careers and further / higher education courses in the field of Art and Design.

Subject: Biology

Examination Board and Specification Number: OCR J263

Course Content

The assessment papers are either Foundation or Higher tier and are based on six topics.

- Topic B1: Cell level systems
- Topic B2: Scaling up
- Topic B3: Organism level systems
- Topic B4: Community level systems
- Topic B5: Genes, inheritance and selection
- Topic B6: Global challenges

Assessment:

The assessment papers are either Foundation or Higher tier and are based on six topics:

Foundation tier (Grades 1 to 5) Paper 1: 90 marks – 1h 45min. 50% of whole GCSE

OR

Higher tier (Grades 4 to 9) Paper 3: 90 marks – 1h 45min. 50% of whole GCSE

Topics B1, B2, B3 assessed

Foundation tier (Grades 1 to 5) Paper 2: 90 marks – 1h 45min. 50% of whole GCSE

OR

Higher tier (Grades 4 to 9) Paper 4: 90 marks – 1h 45min. 50% of whole GCSE

Topics B4, B5, B6 assessed (*And assumed knowledge from Topics B1- B3*)

Skills Developed And Possible Future Careers

GCSE Biology encourages learners to develop their curiosity about the living world and provide insight into and experience of how science works. Students acquire many skills from problem solving through to manual dexterity, therefore supporting future study in most curriculum areas. When combined with other sciences the doors are opened to a vast range of future careers, from medicine through to law.

Subject: Business

Examination Board and Specification Number: Edexcel 1BS0

Course Content

Content includes the following topic areas:

Theme 1 Investigating small business

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

Theme 2 Building the business

Expanding the business
Making Marketing decisions
Making Operational decisions
Making Financial decisions
Making Human Resource decisions

Assessment:

Two examination papers at the end of the two-year course, one on each of the above themes, make up the full GCSE. Each paper is worth 50% of the marks.

Each paper will consist of calculations, multiple-choice, short-answer and extended-writing questions.

Skills Developed and Possible Future Careers

A student would be expected to develop the following skills during the course: practical skills, presentational skills, personal skills, interpersonal skills, cognitive skills, analytical skills and evaluative skills. Possible futures careers include Business Management, Marketing, and Accounting and Finance. The course provides an understanding of the environment that all students will face when they leave education and embark on their careers.

Subject: Chemistry

Examination Board and Specification Number: OCR J248

Course Content

The assessment papers are either Foundation or Higher tier and are based on six topics.

- Topic C1: Particles
- Topic C2: Elements, compounds and mixtures
- Topic C3: Chemical Reactions
- Topic C4: Predicting and identifying reactions and products
- Topic C5: Monitoring and controlling chemical reactions
- Topic C6: Global challenges

Assessment:

Foundation tier (Grades 1 to 5) Paper 1: 90 marks – 1h 45min. 50% of whole GCSE

OR

Higher tier (Grades 4 to 9) Paper 3: 90 marks – 1h 45min. 50% of whole GCSE

Topics C1-C3 assessed

Foundation tier (Grades 1 to 5) Paper 2: 90 marks – 1h 45min. 50% of whole GCSE

OR

Higher tier (Grades 4 to 9) Paper 4: 90 marks – 1h 45min. 50% of whole GCSE

Topics C4-C6 assessed (*and assumed knowledge from Topics C1 – C3*)

Skills Developed and Possible Future Careers

GCSE Chemistry develops students' numerical, observational, practical, enquiry-based and problem-solving skills. It also develops their abilities to evaluate claims based on science through critical analysis of evidence, both quantitatively and qualitatively.

A qualification in chemistry opens doors to a wide range of careers. Chemistry is involved in our everyday lives and there is a vast range of jobs and careers open to those who have studied chemistry at any level; great career opportunities exist both inside and outside the lab. Nobody knows what the jobs of the future will look like, but many of them will be created in chemistry to solve global challenges such as human health, energy and the environment.

Subject: Mandarin Chinese

Examination Board and Specification Number: Edexcel

Why study Chinese?

China has an ancient civilisation, a population of 1.6 billion and is one of the fastest growing economies in the world. Mandarin Chinese is the most widely spoken language in the world. It is also spoken in the important and influential Chinese communities of Indonesia, Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore, Brunei, the Philippines, and Mongolia.

People with knowledge of Chinese are going to be very much in demand in the world of work. Also, the study of Chinese - with its ideograms, its four tones and its 'different' grammar - is interesting and rewarding in itself.

Mandarin Chinese is an up-and-coming subject in Britain, and many schools are now beginning to teach it. At Manwood's we have over five years' experience in developing this subject and exam results have been encouraging. Several students have gone on to study Chinese at university.

Who can take GCSE Chinese?

The course that we are now offering is based on what has already been studied in Key Stage 3. This means that it is for students who have taken Chinese in years 8 and 9.

Assessment:

How is the course structured?

This Edexcel course has a similar structure to the other MFL courses which we offer at GCSE. All four skills (Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing) are tested with controlled assessments in Speaking and Writing.

Skills Developed and Possible Future Careers

What opportunities will I have?

Every year we have an opportunity to take part in the British Council Chinese Speaking Competition in which the winning students will spend a week in Beijing for free, visiting historical sites and interacting with local students. All GCSE students will also have an opportunity to be on a school trip to Chinatown and experience Chinese culture.

We have a strong link with our partner school, Heng Shui High School, where a group of sixth-formers teach at an English Summer School every year. This is generally followed by a trip to Beijing.

We also send a number of students on British Council intensive language courses in China.

Subject: GCSE Design and Technology

Examination Board and Specification Number: AQA 8552

GCSE Design and Technology will prepare students to participate confidently and successfully in an increasingly technological world. Students will gain awareness and learn from wider influences on Design and Technology including historical, social, cultural, environmental and economic factors. Students will get the opportunity to work creatively when designing and making and apply technical and practical expertise.

The GCSE allows students to study core technical and designing and making principles, including a broad range of design processes, materials techniques and equipment. They will also have the opportunity to study specialist technical principles in greater depth.

This qualification is linear, which means the students will sit all their exams and submit all their non-exam assessment at the end of the course.

Course Content

1. Core technical principles
2. Specialist technical principles, **students follow one of the following specialisms**
 - **Papers and boards**
 - **Timber based materials**
 - **Metal based materials**
 - **Polymers**
3. Designing and making principles.

Assessment:

Paper 1 – Written Examination– 2 hours – 100 marks – 50% of the GCSE

The paper is divided into three key sections:

Section A – Core technical principles (20 marks)

A mixture of multiple choice and short answer questions assessing a breadth of technical knowledge and understanding.

Section B – Specialist technical principles (30 marks)

Several short answer questions (2–5 marks) and one extended response to assess a more in depth knowledge of technical principles.

Section C – Designing and making principles (50 marks)

A mixture of short answer and extended response questions including a 12 mark design question.

Non-exam assessment (NEA)– Approximately 30-35hours –100 marks – 50% of GCSE

Practical application of:

- Core technical principles
- Specialist technical principles
- Designing and making principles

Students will respond to a chosen 'Substantial design and make task' set by the examination board.

Assessment Criteria for the NEA will be focused on the following:

Investigating

Designing

Making

Analysing and Evaluating

In the spirit of the iterative design process, the above should be awarded holistically where they take place and not in a linear manner

Contextual challenges to be released annually by AQA on 1 June in the year prior to the submission of the NEA

Students will produce a working prototype and a portfolio of evidence (max 20 pages)

Skills Developed and Possible Future Careers

The skills developed in the course naturally lead onto the 'A' Level Design and Technology: Product Design

There are opportunities to embark on a diverse array of Post 16 studies and careers, these include, engineering, architecture, biomedical, video gaming platforms, product/industrial design, graphic design, illustration, advertising and interior design.

Subject: Drama

Examination Board and Specification Number: Drama WJEC Eduqas GCSE (9-1)

Course Content

The course offers students the opportunity to explore drama as a practical art form in which ideas and meaning are communicated to an audience through choices of form, style and convention. Students will be introduced to key practitioners, theoretical influences and influential playwrights whilst developing and building their core practical performance skills. The subject content for GCSE Drama is divided into three components:

1. Devising theatre (practical, coursework portfolio and evaluation) (40%)
2. Performing from a text (practical) (20%)
3. Interpreting theatre (written exam) (40%)

In the practical components students may specialise in performing and/or design (lighting, sound, set including props or costume including hair and makeup). Whilst there is a fundamental emphasis on the practical element in this course, the building up of a lively portfolio full of inspiration, ideas, collaboration, experimentation and finally evaluation, is also a central part of the course. Thus GCSE Drama allows all students to pursue the course in a way consistent with their preferred creative style.

Assessment:

- AO1: Create and develop ideas to communicate meaning for theatrical performance.
- AO2: Apply theatrical skills to realise artistic intentions in live performance.
- AO3: Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of how drama and theatre is developed and performed.
- AO4: Analyse and evaluate their own work and the work of others.

Components 1 & 2: Practical Work (60%)

Component 1 (40%) consists of creating and performing devised drama using either the techniques of an influential theatre practitioner or genre (students may choose to contribute as performer or designer). Students will analyse and evaluate their own work with the creation and development of a coursework portfolio (devising log) and an evaluation assessment.

Component 2 (20%) consists of a performance of two extracts from one play (this text must be a contrast to the play examined in the written exam). Students may choose both the text and also may contribute as performer or designer.

Component 3: Written Exam (40%)

Component 3 (40%) consists of the written paper – an exam of 1½ hours

Section A: Set Text: A series of questions on one set text explored as an actor, designer and director (open book)

Section B: Live Theatre Review: One question from a choice of two requiring analysis and evaluation of one live theatre production seen during the course.

Skills Developed and Possible Future Careers

Drama offers students the opportunity to explore a range of creative as well as critical thinking skills while engaging and encouraging them to become imaginative and confident performers and designers. It implements and instils key skills applicable to a variety of careers as you learn to present yourself in public with confidence. You will also learn to collaborate, communicate and negotiate with others, think analytically and evaluate effectively. You will gain the confidence to pursue your own ideas, reflect and refine your efforts. Whatever the future holds, you will emerge with a toolkit of transferable skills, applicable both in further studies and in the workplace.

This course is for you if you intend to study AS or A-level Drama, as you will already have become familiar with studying whole set texts for the written papers. You will also have built solid foundations in reviewing a live theatre production and in interpreting key extracts. Drama students go on to pursue careers in Performing Arts, Entertainment Industry, Media, Politics, Teaching, Events Management etc. while Universities view Drama A level in conjunction with other appropriate subjects as acceptable for study in Medicine and Law.

Subject: English Language

Examination Board and Specification Number: Edexcel English Language

Course Content

Component 1: Fiction and Imaginative Writing

- Study selections from a range of prose fiction;
- Develop skills to analyse and evaluate 19th century fiction extracts;
- Develop imaginative writing skills to engage the reader;
- Use spelling, punctuation and grammar accurately.

Component 2: Non-fiction and Transactional writing

- Study a range of 20th and 21st century non-fiction texts;
- 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.

Assessment:

Component 1: Fiction and Imaginative Writing

Written paper: 1 hour 45 minutes - 64 marks available

Section A – Reading: questions on an unseen 19th century fiction extract;

Section B – Writing: a choice of two writing tasks. The tasks are linked by a theme to the reading extract.

Component 2: Non-fiction and Transactional writing

Written paper: 2 hours - 96 marks

Section A – Reading: questions of 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.

Skills Developed and Possible Future Careers

It is essential for all Arts and Humanities courses to have a good grounding in English Language. The course develops your skills of written communication and equips you to understand the ways writers use language for a wide range of effects. These are skills that are vital in all workplaces.

Subject: English Literature

Examination Board and Specification Number: Edexcel English Literature

Course Content

Component 1: Shakespeare and Post-1914 Literature

- Study a Shakespeare play such as *Macbeth* or *Romeo and Juliet*;
- Study a post-1914 British play or novel;
- Develop skills to analyse the effect of language, structure, form and context.

Component two: 19th Century novel and poetry since 1789

- Study a 19th Century novel such as *Great Expectations*, *Frankenstein* or *Jane Eyre*;
- Study a collection of poetry on the theme of Relationships, Conflict or Time and Place;
- Develop skills to analyse the effect of language, structure, form and context;
- Develop comparison skills;
- Develop a critical style of writing.

Assessment:

Component 1: Shakespeare and Post-1914 Literature

Closed book exam. 1 hour 45 minutes – 80 marks

One question on each text.

Component 2: 19th Century novel and poetry since 1789

Closed book exam. 2 hours 15 minutes - 80 marks

One closed textual analysis of an extract from the novel and a further question making links to the wider novel.

One question on two poems from the anthology. One question comparing two unseen contemporary poems

Skills Developed and Possible Future Careers

You will learn the skills of literary analysis. These will help with your study of any Arts and Humanities subjects. You will be encouraged to develop a life-long appreciation and love of literature. Good analytical skills are vital in many workplaces.

Subject: French

Examination Board and Specification Number: AQA GCSE FRENCH 8658

Course Content

In the French Department, we strongly believe in languages as a skill for life and something students should enjoy and find rewarding. With the proximity of France, and thinking further ahead to the post Brexit area, we are convinced that the knowledge of the French language will become a paramount asset in the world's work market. Indeed, being proficient in French is an invaluable tool on a CV.

This is why we offer a comprehensive course in year 10 and 11 that students will enjoy and, at the same time, achieve very high grades in.

Following the AQA course, we will study:

Theme 1: Identity and culture (Family, Technology, Free time activities)

Theme 2: Local, national, international and global areas of interest (Area, Social issues, Global issues, Travel and Tourism)

Theme 3: Current and future study and employment (My studies, Life at school, Jobs))

Assessment:

Paper 1: Listening – 45 min - Final exam – 25% (Tiered)

Paper 2: Speaking final exam – 25% (Tiered)

Paper 3: Reading – 50 min - Final exam – 25% (Tiered)
Comprehension questions and a translation from French to English

Paper 4: Written final exam – 25% (Tiered)
Structured writing questions in English and translation into French

Skills Developed and Possible Future Careers

GCSE French is a highly regarded qualification for most university courses, and for any profession which requires clear communication and precision. It can prove helpful for careers in medicine, science, engineering or business. Students will also have the opportunity to go on a five day residential trip to Paris in year 10.

Subject: German

Examination Board and Specification Number: AQA GCSE German 8668

Course Content

During the 2 year course the following themes are being studied:

Identity and Culture (Me, my family and friends, Technology in everyday life, Free-time activities)

Local, National, International and Global Areas of Interest (Home, town, neighbourhood and region, Social issues, Global issues, Travel and tourism)

Current and Future Study and Employment (My studies, Life at school/college, Education post-16, Jobs, career choices and ambitions)

Assessment:

All four skills (Listening, Reading, Writing and Speaking) are assessed at the end of year 11 with equal weighting (25% each) in either foundation or higher tier (it is not possible to combine both tiers). Both listening and reading exams include questions in English as well as in German (20% of questions in the listening and 30% of questions in the reading exam). The reading exam includes translations from German into English and the writing exam includes translations from English into German.

The following aspects are tested in the different units of the assessment:

Unit 1: Listening

Understanding and responding to different types of spoken language

Unit 2: Speaking

Communicating and interacting effectively in speech for a variety of purposes

Unit 3: Reading

Understanding and responding to different types of written language

Unit 4: Writing

Communicating effectively in writing for a variety of purposes

Skills Developed and Possible Future Careers

GCSE German is a highly valued qualification for any course in Higher Education, in particular courses and professions which entail clear communication. It is especially helpful in areas such as History, Politics, Music and Science.

Subject: Geography

Examination Board and Specification Number: AQA GCSE Geography (8035)

Course Content

Physical Geography:

We study how the landscape is formed and how that influences human life. This includes topics on Natural Hazards such as volcanoes, earthquakes and tropical storms. We will also study how our local landscape is heavily influenced by the activity of rivers and the sea. We will go on two local fieldtrips, including one to the beach at Sandwich Bay to calculate whether there is a risk of sea floods in our local area.

Human Geography:

We study some of the contemporary issues that shape our world. This includes the challenges of dealing with an ever increasing urban population in the world's biggest cities and we will go on a fieldtrip to look at how the Olympic Park in London has helped bring life back to that part of East London. We study how food resources come under pressure as the world's population increases. Finally, we study how Globalisation means that we are ever more interconnected with parts of the world that we're unlikely to visit on holiday.

Assessment:

Unit 1 (Physical Geography) – 1hr 30 minutes exam that accounts for 35% of the overall marks.

Unit 2 (Human Geography) – 1 hr 30 minutes exam that accounts for 35% of the overall marks.

Unit 3 (Applied Geography) – 1hr exam that accounts for 30% of the overall marks. In this paper, students will apply their knowledge and skills to solve a geographical problem.

Skills Developed and Possible Future Careers

Geography is a broad subject which makes its students think widely and deeply. This makes them suited to a wider range of jobs and higher education courses than any other subject. Geographers are found in almost all professions from TV weather presenters to commanding officers in the Army and have one of the highest levels of employment of any subject. This is because a geographer develops a whole range of employability skills including numeracy, analytical skills, ICT and teamwork through regular field trips. Also, the subject gives you an up to date understanding of how the world is changing and a cultural sensitivity that helps geographers to stand out.

Students who go on to study Geography at University can specialise in areas of interest which range from degrees in Population Studies to Geology or can opt to study more general Geography courses.

Subject: History

Edexcel: History 9-1 The Modern World

Course Content

Paper 1: Warfare and Society from the Middle Ages until the Present

Students will look at the ways society has been influenced by warfare through a study of some of the most dramatic events in British history. The course is thematic and allows a focus on change and continuity across a wide period of history. A special study is made of London during the blitz.

Paper 2: Superpower Relations and the Cold War, 1941-1995

This unit looks at the growth in tension between east and west at the end of WW2 and then in the latter 1940s. The unit goes on to study tensions in Eastern Europe and the building of the Berlin Wall in 1961. Students will also look at the Cuban missile crisis and then attempts to build improved relations. The unit finishes with the consequences of the collapse of the USSR.

Henry VIII and his ministers

This unit focuses on one of the most dramatic periods of British History and looks at how England was ruled as well as explaining the changes in religion and how Henry related to his ministers

Paper 3: Modern Depth Study-Germany 1918-1939

We study the establishment of the Weimar Republic in Germany from the wreckage of WW1 and look at the problems facing the new regime. Germany's partial recovery in the 1920s was brought to an end by the crisis of the Wall St Crash of 1929 and the consequent World Depression. We look at these events and the rise of Hitler and the Nazi Party which was able to take over the Government in 1933. We then study the ways in which the Nazis ruled the country up to 1939 and consider what life was like for ordinary Germans.

Assessment:

Paper 1: Thematic Study-Warfare and Society and the historic environment-1 ¼ hours (30%)

Paper 2: Period Study and British Depth Study-1 ¾ hours (40%)

Paper 3: Modern Depth Study- 1 1/3 hours (30%)

Skills Developed and Possible Future Careers

History is a widely recognised subject that can enable students to move into a wide variety of A levels and careers. It offers a way of understanding how the modern world has been shaped as well as giving background on current affairs.

Subject: Mathematics

Examination Board and Specification Number: Edexcel 1MA1 2015

Course Content

The syllabus and assessment style were revised to bring them into line with equivalent international qualifications and produce a more forward thinking curriculum. Its aim is to be demanding, rigorous, inclusive and empowering. There is an increased focus on problem solving and application of skills in contexts relevant to real life.

Aims and objectives are to enable students to:

- develop fluent knowledge, skills and understanding of mathematical methods and concepts
- acquire, select and apply mathematical techniques to solve problems
- reason mathematically, make deductions and inferences and draw conclusions
- comprehend, interpret and communicate mathematical information in a variety of forms appropriate to the information and context.

The main sections of study are:

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

Assessment:

There will be three equally weighted examination papers of 90 minutes each. The first of which will be non-calculator.

The marks will be allocated as follows:

- Use and apply standard techniques 40%
- Reason, interpret and communicate mathematically 30%
- Solve problems within mathematics and in other contexts 30%

Skills Developed and Possible Future Careers

While being provided with the numeracy and problem solving skills necessary for everyday life, through investigations you will also be given the opportunity to discover that Mathematics is a source of beauty, interest and excitement. It is the purest science and an essential tool in most disciplines. Reasoning, accuracy, persistence and logic are all additional skills developed through Mathematics. A strong foundation is essential for further study, hence it's requirement at a grade 4 or above for most higher education courses.

Subject: Music

Examination Board and Specification Number: Eduqas / WJEC

Course Content:

Unit 1: Performing – Students need to prepare a minimum of two pieces, one of which must be an ensemble performance of at least one-minute duration. The other piece(s) may be either solo and/or ensemble. One of the pieces performed must link to an area of study of the learner's choice.

Unit 2: Composing – Students will need to complete two compositions. One is to a brief set by Eduqas / WJEC and the other is a free composition set by the student. During the first year of the course, they will learn to use *Sibelius* and *Logic*. These are both music software packages, which enable the students to create multi-layered music with choice and control over sounds, tempo and mixing of their music. The software also generates the recordings and printed scores needed for assessment. Composition techniques are taught and explored practically during year 10 preparing them to tackle this creative and enjoyable part of the course.

Unit 3: Appraising – Students will sit a listening-based examination in May / June of Year 11. There will be eight questions in total, two on each of the four areas of study. Two of the eight questions in the listening exam will be based on specific set works that will be studied in depth.

The four areas of study covered by the course are: *AoS1: Musical Forms and Devices; AOS 2: Music for Ensemble; AOS 3: Film Music; AOS 4: Popular Music.*

Assessment:

Unit 1: Performing is internally assessed and externally moderated and consists of a minimum of two pieces, of which one must be an ensemble performance – this unit forms 30% of the final mark.

Unit 2: Composition is also internally assessed and externally moderated. The two compositions form 30% of the final mark.

Unit 3: The listening paper is a formal written exam externally assessed and is 40% of the final mark.

Skills Developed And Possible Future Careers

GCSE Music is an excellent start to studying the subject and develops students' creative skills in composition. Music, especially through technology is playing a popular part in many young people's self-expression. A practical, creative entry in a CV always looks good whether on a higher education application or for employment, particularly as this evidence is so easily shared on mobiles and tablets. Musical performing skills also give young people a wonderful social opportunity with choirs and ensembles. How many people say later in life 'I wish I'd learned a musical instrument'? GCSE Music is the obvious pathway to study music at advanced level.

Music students learn to work with others, to concentrate, to think creatively and logically, to express, present and evaluate their ideas, and to make critical judgements. These skills are highly valued by employers. Universities regard music as a good academic preparation for study of subjects such as Law and Philosophy, and music A level combined with other appropriate subjects, is acceptable for entry to Medical School.

Subject: Physical Education (Sports Studies)

AQA GCSE Physical Education (8582)

Course Content

Theory Unit 1: Physical Factors Affecting Performance – topics include:

Anatomy and Physiology

The structure and function of the cardio-respiratory system

Anaerobic and aerobic exercise

Movement analysis

Physical training

Theory Unit 2: Socio-cultural Issues and Well-Being in Sport – topics include:

Sports Psychology

Socio-cultural influences

Commercialisation of physical activity and sport

Ethical Issues

Health and fitness

Students will also be required to interpret data within a range of these topics.

Practical Unit: Practical Performance and Analysing Performance.

Practical performance is split into team activities and individual activities. One of your chosen sports must be individual based and the other from a team activity. The final sport can be chosen from either of these categories.

The list of the sports that can be chosen:

Individual – Amateur boxing, Athletics, Badminton, Canoeing/Kayaking, Cycling, Dance, Diving, Golf, Gymnastics (artistic), Equestrian, Rock climbing, Sculling, Skiing, Snowboarding, Squash, Swimming, Table Tennis, Tennis, Trampolining.

Team – Association Football, Badminton, Basketball, Camogie, Cricket, Dance, Gaelic Football, Handball, Hockey, Hurling, Lacrosse, Netball, Rowing, Rugby League, Rugby Union, Squash, Table Tennis, Tennis, Volleyball.

Assessment:

Paper 1: Written Exam (30%)

Paper 2: Written Exam (30%)

Practical: Assessment in 3 practical activities (30%) and in a Performance Analysis task (10%)

Skills Developed And Possible Future Careers

GCSE Physical Education provides opportunities for the development of Communication, Application of Number, Information Technology, Working with Others, Improving Own Learning, Performance and Problem Solving skills.

The course provides an obvious link to A Level Physical Education and combines with a range of AS and A Level subjects including Business Studies, Psychology, History and Maths. Taken with sciences, particularly Biology, it supports applications for a wide range of university courses including Sports Sciences, Sports Therapies, Sport-specific Coaching, Recreation and Leisure Studies.

Students wishing to pursue employment after GCSE's may consider a wide variety of prospects in the leisure industry including coaching, lifeguarding, technical support and recreational management.

Subject: Physics

Examination Board and Specification Number: OCR J265

Course Content

The assessment papers are either Foundation or Higher tier and are based on eight topics:

Foundation tier (Grades 1 to 5) Paper 1: 90 marks – 1h 45min. 50% of whole GCSE

OR

Higher tier (Grades 4 to 9) Paper 3: 90 marks – 1h 45min. 50% of whole GCSE

- Topic P1: Matter
- Topic P2: Forces
- Topic P3: Electricity
- Topic P4: Magnetism and magnetic fields

Foundation tier (Grades 1 to 5) Paper 2: 90 marks – 1h 45min. 50% of whole GCSE

OR

Higher tier (Grades 4 to 9) Paper 4: 90 marks – 1h 45min. 50% of whole GCSE

- Topic P5: Waves in matter
- Topic P6: Radioactive decay – waves and particles
- Topic P7: Energy
- Topic P8: Global challenges
- *And assumed knowledge from Topics P1- P4*

Practical element.

Learners will undertake a wide variety of practical activities during the course. These will cover the eight Practical Activity Groups (PAGs) and will range from whole investigations to simple activities involving measuring quantities.

Skills Developed and Possible Future Careers

GCSE Physics develops students' numerical, observational, practical, enquiry-based and problem-solving skills. It also develops their abilities to evaluate claims based on science through critical analysis of evidence, both quantitatively and qualitatively.

Qualifications in Physics lead to careers in Theoretical Physics, Experimental Physics, Astronomy, Engineering, Medicine, Aeronautics, Environmental Science, Meteorology, as well as areas as diverse as Journalism, Law and Economics.

Subject: Religious Studies

Examination Board and Specification Number: AQA 8062 A

Course Content

The two religions studied at GCSE are Christianity and Islam. The course also involves a study of Ethics and the Philosophy of Religion.

Component 1: The study of Christianity and Islam: beliefs, teachings and practices.

Component 2: Thematic studies. Four religious, philosophical and ethical studies themes are studied:

Theme 1: Relationships and families.

Theme 2: Religion and life.

Theme 3: The existence of God and revelation.

Theme 4: Religion, crime and punishment.

Assessment:

Component 1: Written exam: 1 hour 45 minutes.

Component 2: Written exam: 1 hour 45 minutes.

Skills Developed and Possible Future Careers

Following a R.S. GCSE course in Religion, Philosophy and Applied Ethics will enable students to study, explore and question what people believe about God, authority, worship, beliefs, values and truth. The study of religion, philosophy and ethics will also help students to make connections with a whole range of other important areas such as art, economics, geography, history, literature, music, politics, science and social issues.

Religious Studies GCSE is a highly regarded qualification by employers, colleges and universities. It complements all subjects including the humanities, languages and sciences. The philosophy and ethics studied particularly develop critical thinking skills and personal development, which will prove very useful for careers in business, law, medicine, science, teaching and many other areas of employment.

Subject: Spanish

Examination Board and Specification Number: AQA 8698

Course Content

The GCSE course aims to enable you to get the most out of any travelling you do. The topics range from talking about yourself, your school and your family to social and environmental concerns. Even if you have no plans for foreign travel in the near future a qualification in any language is useful for gaining access to a wide variety of careers and courses. Spanish is a language of great international importance – not just for holidays!

Assessment:

Unit 1: Listening paper (35/45 mins) 25% of total grade

Unit 2: Speaking exam (7-9 mins or 10-12 mins) 25% of total grade

Unit 3: Reading paper (45 mins/1 hour) Comprehension questions and a translation from Spanish to English (25% of total grade)

Unit 4: Written paper (1 hour/1 hour 15 mins) structured writing questions in Spanish and translation into Spanish (25% of total grade)

Skills Developed And Possible Future Careers

Spanish is the main language in over 20 different countries around the world. It is spoken by over 400 million people and the number is growing all the time! Spanish is the second language of the USA. More than 25 million US citizens are of Spanish speaking origin. The use of Spanish in the USA dates from the 16th century!

Students that study a language will be more successful with applications to a wide variety of careers and courses – not solely language courses.

You will, of course, have to work hard throughout the two years to build up your topic vocabulary and practise the skills needed to obtain high grades. However, if you have a sense of adventure, want to learn more about other cultures and would like to expand your Spanish vocabulary beyond “paella” and “¡hasta la vista!” then this is the course for you!