



Paxman
ACADEMY

Year 9 Options

Booklet

Programme of Study

2026 - 2028

Key Stage 4 Curriculum



Contents

Welcome to the Options process for 2026-28	4
Key Stage 4 Curriculum	6
Grading Systems	7
Key Information	8
Frequently Asked Questions	9
English Language: GCSE	11
English Literature: GCSE	12
Mathematics: GCSE	13
Combined Science: Double GCSE	14
Physical Education	15
Lessons 4 Life: Philosophy, Religion and Ethics & Relationships and Sex Education	16
Art: GCSE	18
3D Design : GCSE	19
Child Development: Level 2	20
Computer Science: GCSE	21
Creative Media: Level 2	22
Dance: GCSE	23
Drama: GCSE	24
Engineering: Level 2	25
Geography: GCSE	26
Health and Social Care: Level 2	27
History: GCSE	28
Hospitality and Catering: Level 2	29
Music: GCSE	30
Religious Studies: GCSE	31
Spanish: GCSE	32
Sports Studies: Level 2	33
Textiles: GCSE	34
Triple Science: GCSE	35
Choosing your Options	36

Dear Students

Welcome to the Options process for 2026-28

Choosing your Option subjects for Key Stage 4 is an important stage in your education. This is the process that allows you to think about your future goals and supports you to choose some of the subjects that you will study over the next two years. We know that it can be a difficult time and can cause anxiety because there are a lot of questions that you might have, such as "Which subject is right for me?" or "What if I don't know what I want to do in the future?" Rest assured, we will help you to make choices about your future learning that are right for you. The important thing is that this is also an exciting time for you as well. The beginnings of you taking responsibility over where you are going and how you are going to get there.

This booklet and the Options process are designed to make this time less worrying (and more exciting) for you and your parent/s/carer/s. It will help you to start making decisions about your learning and to choose subjects that suit your aspirations, skills and needs. Please use all of the information available to you: this booklet; advice from teachers and your form tutors, as well as your parent/s/carer/s. All of these people know you well and may be able to suggest whether they think a subject would suit you as a learner.

We will do what we can to give you your preferred options however this may not always be possible. You will be able to select Key Stage 4 Options using the Google Form on our website which will be made available after the Year 9 Options Evening. The deadline for submitting your completed form will be **13th March at 3:30pm**.

Timeline from then for the rest of the year:

- By **30th April** student Option requests will be collated from all students and the final class numbers decided
- By **31st May** the final Option blocks, teaching allocations, group allocations and set lists will be determined
- By **end of June** Options allocations will be distributed to all Year 9 students for checking and adjustments (**at this point there will be communication home and with students about what they have been allocated.**)
- By **end of July** all Option groups and choices will be finalised for all Year 9



We always hope to offer you your first choice of subjects. On rare occasions this may not be possible if the take up of an individual subject is particularly low or classes are full already.

In such an event, we will discuss this with you and your parent/s/carer/s personally from the **31st of May**.

Please take your time to consider all subjects carefully so that you make the best choices for your future career.

Mrs Kershaw
Headteacher

Key Stage 4 Curriculum

The curriculum at Key Stage 4 is divided into three groups of subjects.

Core Curriculum Subjects:

These are compulsory subjects that ALL students are required to study.

English Language & Literature	Physical Education (Core)
Mathematics	Core Philosophy, Religion and Ethics and Relationship and Sex Education
Science	

Guided Option Subjects:

At *least* one guided subject must be selected. Additional selections from this list can also be made through the remaining Options slots.

History	Spanish
Geography	Triple Science (by agreement)
Computer Science	

Open Option Subjects:

The 3 remaining Options slots can be filled with subjects from the list below **and the guided Option list above.**

** Can **only** select one of these options

Art** (GCSE)	Hospitality and Catering (WJEC Level 2)
Child Development (OCR Level 2)	Creative Media (BTEC Level 2)
Drama (GCSE)	Music (GCSE)
Engineering (WJEC Level 2)	Religious Studies (GCSE)
3D Design** (GCSE)	Sports Studies (OCR Level 2)
Health and Social Care (BTEC Level 2)	Textiles** (GCSE)
Dance (GCSE)	

Grading Systems

GCSEs:

Students taking GCSEs in 2028 will be awarded qualifications under the 9-1 grading system (grades '9-1' instead of the traditional 'A*-G'). The higher the number the better the result will be, i.e. '9' is the top grade, descending down to '1' at the bottom. There is still a 'U' grade for students who fall below that level. Grade 4 (roughly in line with the old grade C) is a 'standard pass' whilst a grade 5 is a 'strong pass'. Grade 7 is in line with an old grade A.

Level 2:

Students taking any Level 2 qualifications will be awarded these by a variety of examining bodies. BTECs, Cambridge Nationals, and WJEC are all examples of Level 2 qualifications and they are all the equivalent to GCSEs at different levels. See the table below for further details.

Vocational Rough Equivalency	New Grading Structure	Old Grading Structure
Level 2 Distinction *	9	A*
Level 2 Distinction	8	A
Level 2 Merit	7	
Level 2 Pass	6	B
	5	
	4	C
Level 1 Distinction	3	D
Level 1 Merit	2	E
Level 1 Pass	1	F
U	U	G
		U

Examination, Coursework and Assessment

GCSEs and other qualifications are assessed through examinations and coursework. This means that some of the school work done from an early stage in Year 10 is directly assessed by your teacher, and forms an important part of your final grade.

Key Information

Please take the time to read the information in the following pages. You will find an outline of all the courses offered next year. Each course will give information about the type of qualification awarded, the assessment process and progression routes for this subject. All of these will be helpful and informative when considering which subjects to choose next year.

You should remember the following when selecting Options:

Do:

- Choose subjects which you like or enjoy
- Choose subjects at which you are successful
- Choose subjects which you may need for a career or further education
- Find out everything that you can about the subject before you choose it. Once you have started a subject we expect you to stick with it for the full two years
- Talk to the people who know you best
- Listen to the advice your subject teachers give you



Don't:

- Choose a subject just because your friend has chosen it, friendships may change with time but your GCSE grades will remain with you forever, you also may end up in different groups
- Choose or disregard a subject because of any particular teacher. They may not end up teaching you



Frequently Asked Questions

Who can students speak to for advice?

All staff at Paxman Academy will help to advise students in their Option choices. The list of people below would be a good starting point:

- The people who teach you each and every day
- Mr N Murray – Assistant Headteacher
- Mrs D Chapman-Roberts – SENDco
- Form Tutors
- Heads of Department

How many Options does a student take?

All students take 4 Options by selecting subjects in their preferred order. You must select them in your preferred order, with your guided options first followed by your remaining choices, including 3 reserves - Remember you may be studying your reserve choice!

Can students choose any subjects they want?

The core curriculum subjects are compulsory. There is then a range of other guided subject choices for students to opt from. We cannot guarantee students will always be allocated their first Option choices but we will always aim to ensure students are pleased with the qualifications they will be working towards.

Will students be able to change their mind in Year 10?

This is very unlikely. Students need to choose their Options carefully because it is difficult for us to move students around once the timetable is finalised.

How can students make appropriate subject choices?

It is important that students consider their choices very carefully. This booklet provides a lot of information but students should also talk to their Form Tutors, Subject teachers and the staff listed above. If students would like more information they can book an appointment with the staff mentioned above.

Are Options allocated on a first come-first served basis?

No. Where possible, students will be allocated their preference of Options. If a subject is at full capacity we consider suitability, KS3 progress and conduct in this subject area. Reserve choices are important, be sure to get your ranking orders complete.

Core Curriculum

Subject Details

English Language: GCSE

English Language at GCSE combines skills of critical reading, comprehension, creative writing and speaking and listening. Students will explore a wide range of topics and themes, covering both fiction and non-fiction texts from the 19th, 20th and 21st centuries.

How you will be assessed



This is a linear qualification and is assessed through examinations at the end of Year 11. There is no coursework for this qualification.

Paper 1: Explorations in Creative Reading and Writing (50% of overall grade)

Paper 2: Writers' Viewpoints and Perspectives (50% of overall grade)

Non-exam Assessment: Speaking and Listening (0% of overall grade but must be completed)

Who this course will suit

All students are required to complete their English Language GCSE.

Anything else I need to know?

English Language is a crucial subject which helps students to develop the vital skills required in order to be successful in many other subject areas.

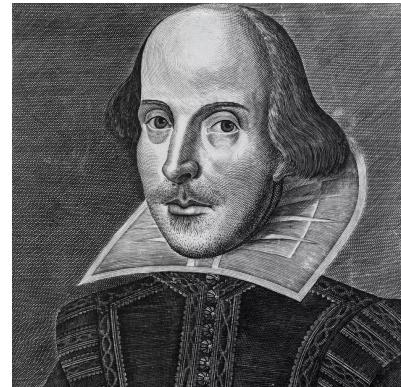
Important Information

Any student that does not pass an English GCSE with at least a grade 4 will have to re-sit the GCSE at their chosen future destination for education, employment or training. This study will have to take place until a grade 4 pass is achieved, or until 18 years of age.

English Literature: GCSE

English Literature is a fascinating and challenging subject. Students will read and respond to a range of literary works from a variety of genres across time. This includes the study of poetry, drama and prose fiction texts from the 19th, 20th and 21st centuries.

How you will be assessed



This is a linear qualification and is assessed through examinations at the end of Year 11. There is no coursework for this qualification.

Paper 1: Shakespeare and the 19th Century Novel (40% of overall grade) - TEXTS: Macbeth, and A Christmas Carol

Paper 2: Modern Texts and Poetry (60% of overall grade) - TEXTS: An Inspector Calls and Power & Conflict Anthology

Who this course will suit

All students are required to study GCSE English Literature.

Anything else I need to know?

The skills developed in GCSE English Literature overlap with many other subjects and contribute to the development of analytical, comprehension and critical thinking skills. This course complements the study of GCSE English Language, allowing students to develop their analytical skills through the exploration of a wide range of literary texts.

Important Information

Any student that does not pass an English GCSE with at least a grade 4 will have to re-sit the GCSE at their chosen future destination for education, employment or training. This study will have to take place until a grade 4 pass is achieved, or until 18 years of age.

Mathematics: GCSE

GCSE maths will provide you with a varied and useful 'toolbox' of skills with which you can understand a wide variety of mathematical problems. It will train you to be logical and systematic and see the relevance and beauty of maths in all areas of life.



The Edexcel Mathematics GCSE will develop and test your knowledge and competency in three ways:

1. Mathematical Fluency – teaching you how to use mathematical skills and procedures on a variety of concepts; from the simple, to the more complex.
2. Problem Solving – teaching you how to approach unfamiliar multi-step questions.
3. Reasoning – teaching you how to communicate effectively and explain using mathematical ideas.

How you will be assessed

There will be three exams that aim to assess your mathematical competency in the summer term of Year 11.

Two of these papers will allow the use of a calculator, but the other will not – therefore requiring a higher degree of numerical acumen.

GCSE mathematics is assessed in tiered papers – this means some students will sit ‘Foundation’, and some ‘Higher’. Both tiers allow students to access a Grade 5 and this decision will only be made after March 2028.

Anything else I need to know?

Students wishing to pursue future mathematical careers have a wide range to choose from. Many great mathematicians go into the fields of accountancy, actuary and investment banking. Some take a more scientific root with computing, engineering sciences, statistical research, or research sciences.

Important Information

Any student that does not pass maths GCSE with at least a grade 4 will have to re-sit the GCSE at their chosen future destination for education, employment or training. This study will have to take place until a grade 4 pass is achieved, or until 18 years of age.

Combined Science: Double GCSE

Combined Science combines the three Sciences (Biology, Chemistry and Physics) to make an award equivalent to two GCSEs. The content is designed to inspire and challenge students of all abilities and aspirations as well as give them a sound grounding for potential future studying of all Sciences.

Fundamentally, the course teaches students to understand and explain the biological, physical and chemical world around them.



- **Biology** topics include: microscopy, cells, organ systems, genetics, natural selection, health, disease and the development of medicines, plant structures and their functions, animal coordination, control and homeostasis, exchange and transport in animals and ecosystems and material cycles.
- **Chemistry** topics include: atoms, ions, isotopes, states of matter and mixtures, chemical changes, extracting metals, groups in the periodic table, rates of reaction and energy changes, fuels and earth science.
- **Physics** topics include: motion and forces, conservation of energy, waves, light and the electromagnetic spectrum, radioactivity, forces and their effects, electricity and circuits, magnetism and the motor effect, electromagnetic induction, the particle model and forces and matter.

How you will be assessed

Combined Science is assessed by sitting six exams at the end of Year 11. The final grades are determined solely by these exams.

The exams (2 Biology, 2 Chemistry and 2 Physics) are each scored out of 70 marks. Each written exam is 1 hour 15 minutes, offered at both Foundation and Higher tier. Their score is combined to give two GCSEs. The final certificate does not indicate the tier.

Who this course will suit

All students are required to study Combined Science as a minimum and this course is suited to students who choose not to study Triple Science. Choosing to study Combined Science will allow students to choose to study sciences at A-level.

Head of Department: Mr B Lewis

Physical Education

Core PE is an opportunity for students to continue to take part in a range of practical activities. Students will continue to be taught the physical, mental and social benefits of taking part in regular activity with a view to promoting lifelong participation in sport.



Students will be given greater opportunity to select some of the activities that they take part in and will be expected to take greater responsibility for running and officiating in some of these activities.

How you will be assessed

There is no formal assessment for Core PE Students will receive effort and participation grades

The PE Option

You may also want to choose Sports Studies as one of your Options to complement your core PE sessions.

Anything else I need to know?

There will be a comprehensive programme of clubs and fixtures to support the core PE programme.

Head of Department: Miss J Blatch

Lessons 4 Life: Philosophy, Religion and Ethics & Relationships and Sex Education

Philosophy, Religion and Ethics	Relationships and Sex Education
<p>Philosophy, religion and ethics will be a core part of Paxman's curriculum throughout KS4. All students will be expected to fully engage with their lessons as they continue to explore religious, philosophical and sociological issues around the world. The aim of this is to enrich students and enable them to be positive contributors to the global community in which we live.</p> <p>Students will be covering three topics which focus on the 'Three Lenses' in which we investigate religious issues.</p> <p>How will you be assessed? There are no formal assessments for this course. Students will be expected to complete three, in class, knowledge assessments.</p> <p>Anything else I need to know? Students will be asked to reflect on their own understandings, ideas and opinions throughout.</p>	<p>Relationships and Sex Education is defined by the PSHE Association as 'learning about the emotional, social and physical aspects of growing up, relationships, sex, human sexuality and sexual health'. This content is delivered in an age appropriate way at Paxman Academy with regard to the age and stage of students.</p> <p>The aim of Relationships and Sex Education in our school is to equip children and young people with the information, skills and values they need to have safe, fulfilling and enjoyable relationships and take responsibility for their physical, sexual and emotional health and wellbeing.</p> <p>How will you be assessed? Students will complete reflection tasks throughout the year, these are informal and used to allow students to consider the knowledge that they have been given and how it applies to the world in which they live.</p> <p>Anything else I need to know? At Paxman Academy we are aware of the statutory guidance in relation to the delivery of RSE. Our curriculum meets this expectation and goes beyond this in order to achieve our intent.</p> <p>More information can be found here: https://www.paxmanacademy.org.uk/key-information/rse/</p>

Options Subject Details

Art: GCSE

This course will allow you to develop your passion for art and all things creative through a range of topics and skills. The course will enable you to go on to do A level Art & Design or a Level 2 Art based qualification. Career paths in the creative industries are incredibly varied and include photography, illustration, model making and graphic design.

How you will be assessed

You will be assessed on:

Component 1 - your sketchbooks and final pieces that you do across the two years

Component 2 - exam board set topic sketchbook and a 10 hour final practical exam in Year 11



Who this course will suit

The course is best suited for a **disciplined** student who enjoys being **creative** in and out of school. You should also be willing to be **experimental** and enjoy learning new skills. Confidently working from feedback given is essential to develop your skills as the process of making an artwork is as important as the final piece.

Anything else I need to know?

The course takes you on a journey through a range of topics and involves homework to expand, explore and refine your ideas and skills. You will be asked to do work at home, during after school focused sessions, as well as in class.

The course differs from KS3 as you are encouraged to develop your ideas in a range of ways that meet a topic outline, building sketch books that are full of a variety of processes, thoughts, ideas and research before refining them into a final piece.

You can only study one of Art, 3D design or Textiles as these are considered similar subjects.

Head of Department: Ms M Newman

Examination Board: AQA

3D Design : GCSE

This course will allow you to develop your skills in making 3D products and your eye for design. The course will enable you to go on to do A level Art & Design, Sculpture or a Level 2 Art based qualification. Career paths in the creative industries are incredibly varied and include Architecture, set design, merchandising, product design and model making.

How you will be assessed

You will be assessed on:

Component 1 - your sketchbooks and final pieces that you do across the two years

Component 2 - exam board set topic sketchbook and a 10 hour final practical exam in Year 11



Who this course will suit

The course is best suited for a **disciplined** student who enjoys being **innovative** and **exploring** how things are made. You should also be willing to be **experimental** and enjoy learning new skills. Working from feedback given with **confidence** and **positivity** is essential to develop your skills.

Anything else I need to know?

The course takes you on a journey through a **range of topics** with homework set that helps you to expand, explore and refine your ideas and skills. You will be asked to do work at home, during after school focused sessions, as well as in class. It will help if you explore and investigate designers and innovators to inspire your work.

The course encourages you to develop your ideas in a range of ways that meet a topic outline, building sketch books that are full of a variety of processes, thoughts, ideas and research before refining them into a range of final pieces.

You can only study one of Art, 3D design or Textiles as these are considered similar subjects.

Child Development: Level 2

Child development will inspire and equip students with independence and confidence by using skills that are relevant to the childcare sector and more widely. It covers all aspects of child development, from conception to five years, as well as providing safe and nurturing environments.



How you will be assessed

You will complete 3 units of work:

R057: Health and well-being for Child Development

- 1 hr and 15 min exam (70 marks)

R058: Create a safe environment and understand the nutritional needs of children from birth to five years

- Centre assessed controlled assessment (Coursework)

R059: Understand the development of a child from one year to five years

- Centre assessed controlled assessment (Coursework)

Who this course will suit

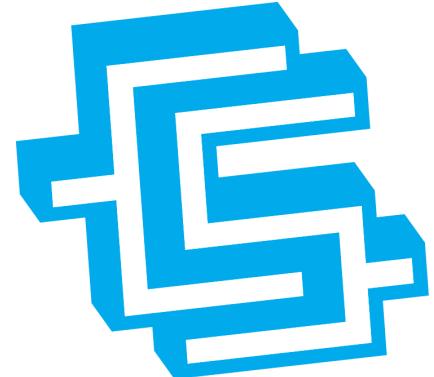
This course would suit any student who has a genuine interest in the care of children and who sees themselves pursuing this as a career path in early years environments for children aged 0-5 years.

Anything else I need to know?

By developing applied knowledge and practical skills, this course will help give you the opportunity to progress on to A Levels, a Cambridge Technical in Health and Social Care, an apprenticeship or university. Child Development could be the first step of a career as a Nursery Nurse, an Early Years Teacher, Family Support Worker, Nursery Manager, Children's Nurse, Social Worker and more.

Computer Science: GCSE

Computer Science introduces students to applied algorithmic thinking along with the technology used to implement it into our daily lives. Students will focus on topics investigating the central processing unit (CPU), computer memory and storage and data representation. Alongside this students develop skills and understanding in computational thinking: algorithms, programming techniques, producing robust programs, computational logic and translators.



How you will be assessed

You will sit two papers at the end of Year 11:

Unit 1: Computer Systems (50%) / 80 Marks / 1 hour 30 minute exam

Unit 2: Computational thinking, algorithms and programming (50%) / 80 Marks / 1 hour 30 minute exam

Who this course will suit

This course will suit those students who are mathematically minded and have a keen interest in algorithmic thinking and technological developments. It is considered one of the hardest GCSE Options to take.

Anything else I need to know?

This course would enable you to study Computer Science at A level and then eventually take it into a career such as an application analyst, applications developer, cyber security analyst or game developer.

Head of Department: Mr R McKenzie

Examination Board: Pearson Edexcel

Creative Media: Level 2

As the BTEC Tech Award in Creative Media Production is a practical introduction to life and work in the digital media industry, as a student you will explore the sector while:

- developing technical skills and techniques
- producing a digital media product in response to a brief
- reviewing and reflecting on the process and outcome

How you will be assessed

The course has two internally assessed components, and one that's externally assessed:

Internally Assessed:

Component 1: Exploring Media Products (30%)

The aim of this unit is to learn about the sector and investigate media products across the following sub-sectors: • audio/moving • publishing • interactive media.

Component 2: Developing Digital Media Production Skills (30%)

The aim of the unit is to develop technical skills and techniques in the chosen discipline(s) of audio/moving image, publishing and interactive media.

Externally Assessed:

Component 3: Responding to a brief (40%)

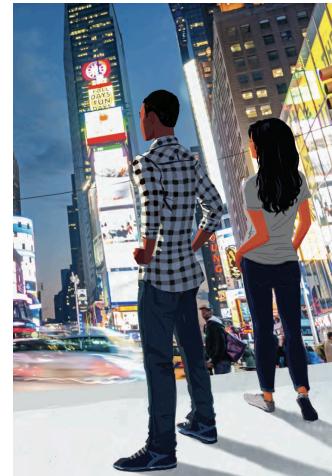
The aim of this unit is to apply digital skills and techniques by responding to a digital media brief.

Who this course will suit

This will suit students looking to work directly within the media industry such as a journalist, digital content creator, interactive media designer.

Anything else I need to know?

There is a Level 3 course available at the Colchester Institute.



Lead Teacher: Mrs S Parker

Examination Board: AQA

GCSE Dance

All students will experience a dance programme of study, which provides students with the training necessary to understand and critically analyse dance performances, pursue dance as a career, and/or study dance at a college and professional levels.

In order to complete this course, you will be required to take part in multiple showcases to live audiences.



This course allows you to challenge yourself if you are an experienced dancer, or allows you to start from the beginning and gain new skills if dance is something you are wanting to get into. We have the support and levels in place to build your skills as a dancer. Those who love hobbies like majorettes and cheerleading can transfer these skills to develop their Dance skills.

What does the course cover?

Students will participate in regular rehearsals, continuing the development of skills and techniques with reference to existing performance types, styles and repertoire. They will complete all the content as a dancer and choreographer.

How you will be assessed:

The assessments are clear and straightforward. There are three assessment components.

1. *Performance - 30% of GCSE (40 marks)* Set solo performance (1 min) or a Duo/Trio performance (3 -5mins)
2. *Choreography- 30% of GCSE (40 marks)* Solo or group choreography – a solo (1.5-2mins) or a group dance for (3 -5mins)
3. *Dance appreciation* 40% of GCSE Written exam: 1 hour 30 minutes (80 marks)

Anything else I need to know?

You must be a performer who is happy to explore different styles and techniques of dance. You must be prepared to perform in front of others and commit to one dance rehearsal outside of lesson time each week in order to perfect your technique. There is no written exam at the end of this course.

Head of Department: Mrs N Denikiewicz

Examination Board: Pearson Edexcel

Drama: GCSE

The GCSE Drama course is the ideal choice for students who wish to develop their understanding of performance and the theatre.

During the course students will study a number of plays, such as 'DNA' by Dennis Kelly as well as being offered a number of texts in which students will be examined. The course allows students to follow a number of schemes of work that look to deepen the students skill set for devising and performance, considering elements such as costume and lighting.

This course is perfect for those who wish to develop their performance skills and their knowledge of drama practitioners and the theatre. It also assists with developing confidence and public speaking skills.



How you will be assessed:

The assessments are clear and straightforward.

There are **three** assessment components.

- 1. Component 1 -Devising Component = 40%**
- 2. Component 2 -Performance from text = 20%**
- 3. Component 3-Theatre Makers in Practice = 40%**

Written portfolio as well as a written exam are also part of the assessments.

Who this course will suit

If you enjoy performing and have a passion for theatre then this course is for you. This course inspires creativity and confidence and has a practical focus at heart.

The course also has a strong focus on written skills in which you will express not only your ideas but also your subject knowledge.

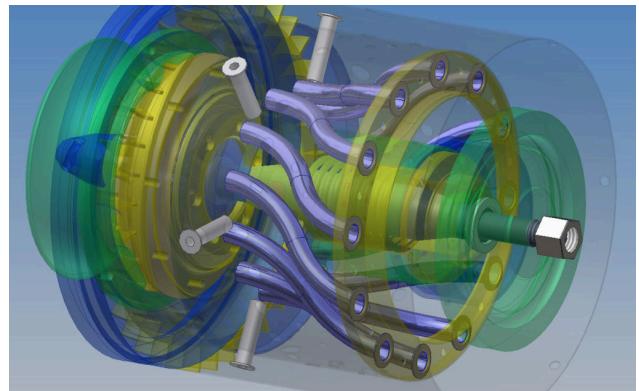
Anything else I need to know?

Unlike Key Stage Three Drama, there is an emphasis on writing within GCSE Drama. You must be a confident performer who is happy to explore different genres of theatre. You must also be prepared to perform in front of others.

Engineering: Level 2

This is all about 'plan, do, review'. This approach mirrors both engineering production and the iterative design process, whilst also providing learning in a range of contexts enabling learners to apply and extend their knowledge.

The qualification provides learners with a broad appreciation of work in engineering related industries and wider opportunities for progression into further education, employment or training. The successful completion of this qualification could provide the learner with opportunities to access a range of Level 3 qualifications. These include: Engineering; Design & Technology; Principal Learning Level 3 in Engineering; Apprenticeships in Engineering.



How you will be assessed

Unit 1 (9791): Producing Engineering Products - Coursework (40%)

Unit 2 (9792): Engineering Design- Coursework (20%)

Unit 3 (9793): Solving Engineering Problems - Exam (40%)

Who this course will suit

An innovator with an inquisitive nature, you should have a passion for **Science**, a good understanding of **maths** and a sound grasp on all aspects of **DT** and most importantly a drive to be an engineer who wants to make a difference, find out how things work and to constantly be asking how things can be made better. You should be well organised and eager for perfection.

Anything else I need to know

This course is made up of both coursework and exam, so you should be someone who is also organised, as some time may need to be spent doing work during lessons, after school and at home to make sure you complete the work to the best of your ability.

Geography: GCSE

"The study of geography is about more than just memorising places on a map. It's about understanding the complexity of our world, appreciating the diversity of cultures that exists across continents. And in the end, it's about using all that knowledge to help bridge divides and bring people together." – former US President Barack Obama



GCSE Geographers explore both the physical properties of Earth's surface and the human societies spread across it. Students gain a wider understanding of the world we live in, the global issues we face, and develop a range of critical skills. Fieldwork skills are developed through two compulsory fieldwork daytrips.

How you will be assessed

There is no coursework or controlled assessments; 100% of the grade is determined by exams at the end of year 11.

Paper 1 (1 hour 30 minutes - 35% of the GCSE): Living with the physical environment

Units: The challenge of natural hazards, The living world (tropical rainforests & deserts) & Changing UK landscapes (coasts & rivers)

Paper 2 (1 hour 30 minutes - 35% of the GCSE): Challenges in the human environment

Units: Urban issues & challenges, The changing economic world & Resource management (food, water & energy supply)

Paper 3 (1 hour 30 minutes - 30% of the GCSE): Geographical applications

Units: Fieldwork skills, students' two fieldwork investigations & a decision-making exercise (the topic changes each year, and is released 12 weeks before the exam).

Compulsory fieldwork

A compulsory element of the course is to complete two fieldwork enquiries. These will be two day trips to different locations. Past enquiries have been physical geography at Walton-on-the-Naze, and human geography enquiries at Colchester or Stratford.

Who this course will suit

Students must be adept at extended writing, decision making and mathematical skills. Geography covers a wide range of topics, so it suits people with varying interests. Students interested in scientific processes and understanding how things work from biological components in the rainforest to what makes volcanoes erupt, may prefer physical geography. If you like debating the solutions to our planet's water crisis or what can be done to make cities more sustainable, you may be more interested in human geography.

Anything else I need to know?

Geography provides you with a wealth of useful skills such as: decision making and reasoning, communication skills, data analysis, as well as having a better understanding of our planet. Geography could help you on your way to becoming: an architect, engineer, town planner, weather forecaster, flood protection manager, travel writer, TV researcher, lawyer, aid worker, diplomat and give you skills to help you in many more careers and jobs.

Lead Teacher: Miss L Frost

Examination Board: Pearson Edexcel

Health and Social Care: Level 2

Health and Social Care gives you an insight into some aspects of the health and social care environment, ranging from how the human develops from birth to death, to different types of support that might be used, and seeing how care values are expressed.

Studying Health and Social Care teaches you about providing physical, emotional and social support to help people live their lives. In this subject we aim to academically challenge you through a broad curriculum and a wide range of real life scenarios that will prepare you for your life beyond school.

How you will be assessed

- 60% Coursework - internally assessed
- 40% Examination - externally assessed



The qualification consists of two internally assessed components making up 60% of the qualification, broken down to two assignments each having a 30% weighting and a final externally assessed component.

- Component 1: Coursework on 'Human Lifespan Development'.
- Component 2: Coursework on 'Health and Social Care Services and Values'.
- Component 3: Exam on 'Health and Well Being' constitutes 40% of the overall grade.

Who this course will suit

It offers a real opportunity to consider vocational careers and is an excellent opportunity for those students who may be considering employment in caring for the elderly, young, or vulnerable members of society. Nursing, social work, child care, paramedics, and counselling are all examples of where this qualification could be beneficial.

Anything else I need to know?

This course will offer a progressive route through to A-levels, BTEC courses and other Level 3 vocational qualifications.

History: GCSE

History at GCSE encompasses a variety of topics from the medieval period to the 21st century. Students will have the chance to build on topics studied during their Key Stage 3 curriculum as well as some entirely new and diverse topics. It will include a mix of both world and British history.

The 'Medicine' course is a thematic study through time, which includes a case study on the Western Front and is followed in Year 10 by a modern depth study on the Cold War (1942-1989)



In Year 11 our initial focus is on Modern international History, with a depth study on Germany, followed by a depth study on the reign of Elizabeth I, including events like the defeat of the Spanish Armada. We are currently exploring options to organise a trip in Year 10 or Y11 to provide enrichment and context for our learning in the classroom.

How you will be assessed:

The qualification is linear so all exams will be taken at the end of Year 11. There is no coursework or controlled assessments; 100% of the grade is determined by exams.

Paper 1 (1 hour 20 minutes - 30% of the GCSE)

Medicine in Britain, c1250-present including the British sector of the Western Front, 1914–18: injuries, treatment and the trenches.

Paper 2 (1 hour 50 minutes - 40% of the GCSE)

Superpower relations and the Cold War, 1941-91 and Early Elizabethan England, 1558-88

Paper 3 (1 hour 30 minutes - 30% of the GCSE)

Weimar and Nazi Germany, 1918-39

Who this course will suit

You should choose GCSE History if you are interested in and willing to develop the following skills: analysis through historical enquiry; looking at events from differing viewpoints; extraction of information from sources of evidence; gaining political awareness.

Please note that GCSE questions require extended writing, it has a heavy volume of content and a thorough Y11 revision programme. Students of all abilities are welcome.

Anything else I need to know?

There are many careers that you can go into after studying History. Some of these include; civil service, lawyer, media, financial sector, police, military, historian, researcher, teacher, archaeologist, sports analyst, journalist, comedian. 12 former British prime ministers have History or Classics degrees! But History gives you skills useful for any profession!

Hospitality and Catering: Level 2

This course has been designed to develop in learners the knowledge and understanding related to a range of hospitality and catering providers; how they operate and what they have to take into account to be successful. There is the opportunity to learn about issues related to nutrition and food safety and how they affect successful hospitality and catering operations. In this qualification, learners will also have the opportunity to develop some food preparation and cooking skills as well as transferable skills of problem solving, organisation and time management, planning and communication.

How you will be assessed



Two mandatory units:

Unit 1: The Hospitality and Catering Industry - Exam

Unit 2: Hospitality and Catering in Action - Coursework

Who this course will suit



The course is suited to students who are interested in a career in the food or hospitality industry. Students will need to be well organised, prepared to work to their best ability and be able to extend their knowledge and practical skills through home learning and targeted after school sessions when required, to build on theory and practical skills.

Anything else I need to know?

This course enables a smooth transition to Level 3 courses available at the Colchester Institute, following on to careers in a range of areas in hospitality including cooking, nutrition, front of house and management.

Music: GCSE

Music is a varied subject which will allow you to explore a wide range of study and disciplines. Studying Music will help you to develop creative skills, which employers are increasingly looking for, to employ people with skills within the Arts from the creative industry. Music is also highly regarded as an academic subject and so studying it could supplement your studies in leading to any professional career.



This course will help you build on skills and knowledge from Key Stage 3 in three components.



How will you be assessed?

1. **Performance (30%)** - Teaching you how to build on your performance skills.

This can be using;

- An instrument or your voice to sing
- Rapping/MC-ing
- Beatboxing / DJ-ing

2. **Composing (30%)** - Creating music of your own choice and to a brief, by coaching you how to;

- Develop your musical ideas & Demonstrate your creative choices
- Compose with an understanding of your music

3. **Listening and Appraising (40%)** - Developing your knowledge and understanding of Music through the following four areas;

- Musical Forms and Devices; Music for Ensemble; Film Music; Popular Music

Who this course will suit?

Having an interest or passion in music is a good start! If you enjoy playing an instrument as an individual or in an ensemble and you enjoy creating and editing your own ideas using Logic.

Anything else I need to know?

You will be expected to practise and perform as a soloist and with others in an ensemble. This course is practical and very hands-on when composing and performing, but some lessons will be dedicated to study the listening and appraising parts of the course. You will also be expected to dedicate time to practise and perform in a variety of contexts depending on your performance choice.

Head of Department: Ms J Blatch

Examination Board: Pearson Edexcel

Religious Studies: GCSE

Choosing Religious Studies opens so many doors due to the nature of the subject being wisdom and analytical skills. If you enjoy reading and writing, this is the perfect subject for you as it covers a broader range of topics than most, such as Psychology, Sociology, Law, Politics, issues surrounding marriage, divorce, peace and conflict. The course offers the chance to explore your own thoughts and compare them with Christian and Muslim viewpoints, as well as non-religious.



How you will be assessed

The qualification is linear so all exams will be taken at the end of Year 11. There is no coursework or controlled assessments; **100% of the grade is determined by exams.**

Paper 1 (1 hour 45 minutes - 50% of the GCSE) Christianity: Religion and Ethics

Paper 2 (1 hour 45 minutes - 50% of the GCSE) Islam: Religion, Peace and Conflict

Who this course will suit

This course will suit an inquisitive and questioning student who has a thirst for knowledge, as well as someone that wishes to learn about the wider world and the people within it. Students who enjoy extended writing and deconstructing sources will enjoy the opportunity to deconstruct parts of the Bible, Qur'an, Hadiths and Catechisms as well as scientific research.

Anything else I need to know?

Students who take Religious Studies GCSE will become independent thinkers who are able to evaluate and question the knowledge that they are given. Students are able to express themselves and bring together ideas from different doctrines and practices. They will also have a good working knowledge of current affairs and the world we live in today.

Spanish: GCSE

Studying any language is a vital asset in the modern world. Every industry is desperate for graduates who have the skills and qualities that learning languages grant you. It sets you apart from other job seekers, as well as increases your salary by up to 20%.

As well as learning the language itself you will learn about the wider Spanish-speaking cultures and nuances to enable you to increase your understanding of the world we live in.

We have also launched our first ever MFL Trip to Barcelona, for February 2027, which GCSE students will have priority, to give students an opportunity to practice and use their language in real-life situations!



How you will be assessed

Language GCSEs are tiered, this means that there are two different sets of exams, Foundation (maximum grade of a 5) and a Higher tier (maximum grade of 9). A final decision on tiering is made during Spring of Year 11.

Language GCSEs are assessed over 4 different areas worth 25% each of your grade. Every exam is taken at the end of Year 11.

Paper 1: Listening - Written exam: 35 minutes (Foundation Tier), 45 minutes (Higher Tier)

Paper 2: Speaking - 7-9 minutes + preparation time (Foundation), 10-12 minutes + preparation time (Higher) usually sat in April-May of Year 11.

Paper 3: Reading - Written exam: 45 minutes (Foundation tier), 1 hour (Higher Tier)

Paper 4: Writing - Written exam: 1 hour 10 minutes (Foundation Tier), 1 hour 15 minutes (Higher Tier)

Who this course will suit

Those who like to chat! Language is all about communication. Additionally, if you are curious and like to learn new words and cultures, 21 countries have Spanish as an official language and around 450 million speak it! You will need to be independent, as you will need to learn vocabulary each week and develop your language skills outside of the classroom!

Anything else I need to know?

The course content is split into 3 themes -

Theme 1: People & Lifestyle (Free-time activities, Healthy living and lifestyle, education and work)

Theme 2: Popular Culture, (Free-time activities, customs, festivals and celebrations, celebrity culture)

Theme 3: Communication and the world around us, (travel and tourism, media and technology, the environment and where people live.)

This will directly build on what we have been studying for the last three years.

Head of Department: Mr B Lewis

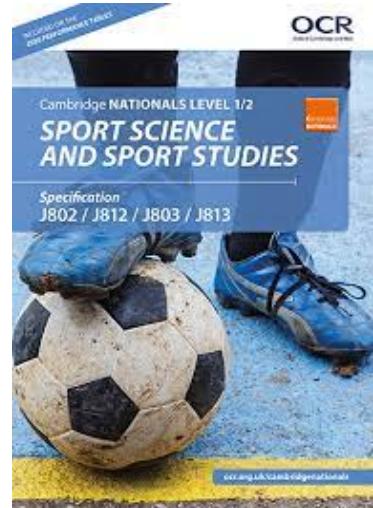
Examination Board: OCR

Sports Studies: Level 2

A Cambridge National in Sport Studies will encourage students to think for themselves about the study of sport and the application to real life practical sport, leadership and evaluation of the skills required there. They will study up to the minute topics affecting sport through the contemporary issues unit, both play and lead sporting activities, as well as having the chance to either explore the media and sport.

How you will be assessed

You will study 3 separate units for the course:



- **Contemporary issues in sport** - a written exam in Year 11. This involves participation levels, barriers to completing sporting activities, how participation is impacted, high-profile sporting events, national governing bodies and technology within sport.
- **Performance and leadership in sports activities** - this is predominantly a written assessment (coursework) based on practical experience. This involves performing in two different sporting activities, and leading a sporting event. Working independently and as part of a team in front of an audience.
- **Sports and the media** - this is a written assessment (coursework) based on theoretical experience. This involves understanding the different media sources, applying real life examples, how rapid development in technology is enabling sport to be viewed, replayed and discussed whenever and wherever the spectator wants.

Who this course will suit

This course will suit a student who is interested in sport from a theoretical perspective or people considering a career in sports leadership/coaching/analysis/business.

Anything else I need to know?

The majority of this course is assessed by completing written assignments, only 25% is available for practical performance. The majority of the practical element will be expected to be completed through extra curricular activities. It is not an extension of core PE in Year 9.

Lead Teachers: Miss P Manktelow/Ms M Newman

Examination Board: AQA

Textiles: GCSE

This course will allow you to develop your knowledge and understanding of textiles with a creative and expressive approach, whilst learning a range of skills based around fibres and fabrics. The course will enable you to go onto do A level Art & Design or a level 2 Art based qualification. Career paths in the creative industries are incredibly varied and include fashion design, interior design, stylist, costume, fabric development, print design and mixed media production.



How you will be assessed

You will be assessed on:

Component 1 - your sketchbooks and final pieces that you do across the two years

Component 2 - exam board set topic sketchbook and a 10 hour final practical exam in Year 11

Who this course will suit

The course is best suited for a disciplined student who enjoys being **creative** in and out of school. You should also be willing to be **experimental** and **enjoy learning** new skills. Confidently working from feedback given is essential to develop your skills as the process of making a piece is as important as the final outcome.

Anything else I need to know?

The course takes you on a journey through a range of topics and involves homework to expand, explore and refine your ideas and skills. You will be asked to do work at home, during after school focused sessions as well as in class. This could be practical skills, research or designing.

The course encourages you to develop a portfolio of ideas in a range of ways that meet a theme, building sketch books that are full of a variety of practical skills, thoughts, design ideas and research before refining them into a final textile piece.

You can only study one of Art, 3D design or Textiles as these are considered similar subjects.

Head of Department: Mr R Segade Vieito

Examination Board: AQA

Triple Science: GCSE

Students following the Triple Science course will study three separate GCSEs in Biology, Chemistry and Physics. All of these qualifications have been developed in order to inspire and challenge students. Whilst the content of this course is similar to that studied in the Combined Science qualification, it covers some topics in more depth and includes different content.

The topics covered in GCSE Biology are similar to those studied in Combined Science, however they do include extra topics such as the brain, the eye, the kidney, protein synthesis, monoclonal antibodies and cloning.



The topics covered in GCSE Chemistry are similar to those studied in Combined Science, however they do include extra topics in the form of polymerisation, nanoparticles, alcohols and a grounding in substance analysis.

The topics covered in GCSE Physics are similar to Combined Science, however they do include extra topics including Space, the formation of the solar system, the life cycle of stars, lenses, pressure, nuclear fission and fusion.

How you will be assessed

The GCSEs in Biology, Chemistry and Physics are assessed by sitting six exams at the end of Year 11. The final grades are determined solely by these exams.

The exams (2 Biology, 2 Chemistry and 2 Physics) are each scored out of 100 marks. Each written exam is 1 hour 45 minutes.

This qualification will lead to successful students gaining three separate GCSEs in Biology, Chemistry and Physics and a grade for each one.

Who this course will suit

Those students with a passion for Science are encouraged to choose the more challenging separate Sciences route. Students that are successful in Triple Science tend to have strong skills in both reading and mathematics. We remind students that in Year 10, choosing Triple Science will mean more than 25% of your lessons will be Science across a two week period.

Choosing your Options

You have a free choice of Options to choose from. You will need to select a **guided option as well as a reserve guided option**.

After that you then submit your next 3 choices in rank order followed by 3 further reserves. Do NOT repeat any choices other than your reserve guided option.

The [google form linked here](#) will guide you through the process.

If you change your mind after submitting your ranked choices please use the link above to resubmit. We will take the latest choices as your preferred options.

We have given you a draft choice form to use for notes before you submit your final choices in the google form above.

Draft and notes

Guided Option Choice

History	Spanish
Geography	Triple Science* (by agreement)
Computer Science	

Guided Option Choice : _____

Reserve Guided Option Choice: _____

Other Option Choices

History	Spanish
Geography	Triple Science (by agreement)
Computer Science	

Art (GCSE)	Hospitality and Catering (WJEC Level 2)
Child Development (OCR Level 2)	Creative Media (BTEC Level 2)
Drama (GCSE)	Music (GCSE)
Engineering (WJEC Level 2)	Religious Studies (GCSE)
3D Design (GCSE)	Sports Studies (OCR Level 2)
Health and Social Care (BTEC Level 2)	Textiles (GCSE)
Dance (BTEC Level 2)	

You can only select one of Art, 3D Design or Textiles.

1st Choice: _____

2nd Choice: _____

3rd Choice: _____

1st Reserve: _____

2nd Reserve: _____

3rd Reserve: _____