STOUR VALLEY

COMMUNITY SCHOOL

'Brighter Futures'

Stour Valley Community School

Options Booklet 2025

Dear Parents/Carers,

Welcome to the Guide to Key Stage 4 Courses 2025 booklet. We hope it provides you with the necessary information to help you guide your child in making the right choices for them. This is an exciting time in any young person's life, when they are given some choice for the first time about which subjects they will study.

In Key Stage 4, it is important to ensure that education is broad, balanced and relevant. Our curriculum has compulsory and chosen subjects that will enable your child to follow courses appropriate to their interests and abilities. We offer a broad range of GCSEs and the option for the English Baccalaureate. You may be aware that the government is pushing for students to take EBacc subjects. Whilst the suite of subjects that comprise the EBacc all are worthy of study, and the Department for Education will report annually on how many of our students have been entered for and passed them, we do not insist on students taking this particular set of subjects. It is important, however, that you are aware of the following; firstly, our ambition is for all students to achieve to the maximum of their potential. Secondly, this means that many of them will choose to go on to study at university. Competition for places can be very high and I believe one way they will decide on who is offered a place is to expect at least a GCSE Grade 4 in a modern foreign language. Despite this, it is still their choice, and whilst it is in their best interests to consider very carefully all of the advice they are given, ultimately, they should and must decide. For this reason the school has not made the study of this subject compulsory. Whatever their choices, you can be certain that we will do everything we can to support them in achieving the qualifications necessary for the next stage of their development, and ultimately a fulfilled and happy adult life.

Additional information about each subject is now available from subject staff. You can email questions about GCSE courses to the relevant member of staff, your child's tutor or the SENDCo, for further advice. As usual, all students will be supported and guided and we look forward to supporting you in helping your child make clear, confident and exciting GCSE choices.

Yours faithfully,

Mrs R Kelly
Headteacher

Next Steps

Think about your preferences, skills and abilities and what you hope to do in the future. Discuss your ideas with your parents/carers and with your teachers.

Take the opportunity to talk to subject staff and your tutor. They are there to help you get more information and answer questions.

Look carefully at the course information contained in this brochure. What can each subject offer you? Which subjects best help you to pursue your intended post-16 course or future career? Are there any subjects that are a **requirement** for your proposed career or post-16 course?

Do

- ✓ Remember that all GCSE and BTEC subjects are of an equal standard;
- ✓ Choose subjects **you** are interested in and which you are likely to enjoy;
- ✓ Choose subjects in which you are likely to achieve success;
- ✓ Choose subjects that fit with your future needs;
- ✓ Remember, courses last for 2 years – you cannot change your mind at the end of Year 10!

Don't

- Choose subjects just because your friends have chosen them;
- Decide to take a subject just because you like the teacher you think will be teaching it;
- Be afraid to ask for advice or information from your form tutor, subject teachers, Year Leader and your family. They want to help you make the best choice for you.

English Baccalaureate (EBacc)

Although not a qualification in itself, the EBacc recognises those students that have secured a Grade 4, or better, across a core of academic subjects – English, Mathematics, Computer Science, History, Geography, Sciences and a Language. Students wishing to take A Levels, which could lead to a University course, should consider following EBacc subjects. Not doing so could potentially reduce options in the future if universities change their admissions arrangements.

The Russell Group of leading UK universities have published guidance on post-16 study choices and have included a list of 'facilitating subjects' which they list as Mathematics, English, Physics, Biology, Chemistry, Geography, History and Languages. Further information can be found at www.informedchoices.ac.uk. Of course there are also many other universities that will have different admissions criteria and are less likely to be so specific about 'facilitating subjects'. Most university courses will require a minimum of 5 GCSEs at Grade 4, or above.

Frequently Asked Questions

Should I study History or Geography and a language at GCSE?

For students potentially wishing to take an academic KS5 pathway (A Levels), which in turn might lead to study in Higher Education, it would be very sensible to study these subjects at KS4.

Does Religious Studies count as an EBacc subject?

Religious Studies, despite being a humanities subject, does not count towards the EBacc.

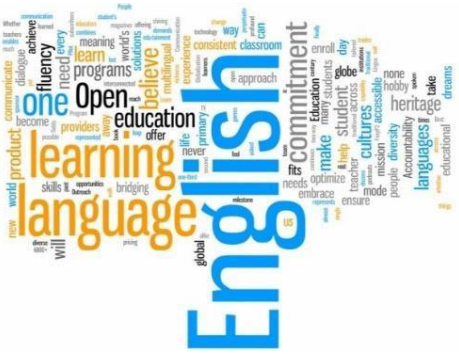
Are any universities currently insisting that students have taken the EBacc at GCSE?

Not currently, although a number of universities are identifying those included in the EBacc as desirable to support study at university – Mathematics, English, Physics, Biology, Chemistry, Geography, History or languages.

Compulsory Subjects

At Key Stage 4, some subjects are compulsory for every student. These are GCSE English, GCSE Mathematics, GCSE Science, Physical Education, Religious Studies and PSHE. Physical Education and Religious Studies can be studied at GCSE (see later pages).

English



Reading - The range of texts available to students will include poetry (Pearsons Edexcel *Poetry Belonging Anthology*), *An Inspector Calls or Coram Boy*, *A Christmas Carol*, and *Macbeth*. Students will also read and analyse letters, travel books, newspapers, literature from different eras and works of non-fiction and media.

Writing - Students will be given opportunities to demonstrate that they can: write about their experiences and express what they feel and imagine; understand, order and present facts, ideas and opinions; show a sense of audience and an awareness of style and use English grammar correctly.

Spoken Language - Students will be given opportunities to demonstrate that they can: articulate experience and express what they feel and imagine; understand, order and present facts, ideas and opinions and communicate a sensitive personal response to what is heard, read and understood in both discussions and presentations.

Assessment: English Language and English Literature (2 separate GCSEs). An additional Entry Level *Step Up to English* (AQA) qualification will be made available for students not achieving a GCSE standard.

Exam board: *Pearsons Edexcel for both Language and Literature*

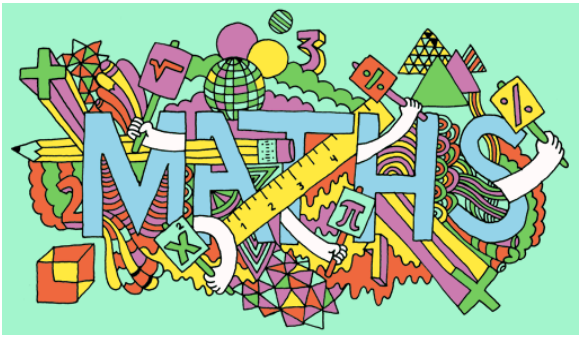
Who do I need to see for more information? Mrs Gill

Mathematics

The aims of the Mathematics Department are;

- To develop an ability to think and reason mathematically.
- To notice and realise the application of mathematics in the world.
- To have the understanding of how to use mathematics at GCSE level and create a firm foundation for those wishing to study the subject further.

Students study topics from six mathematical categories: Number, Algebra, Ratio and Proportion, Geometry and Measure, Statistics and Probability. New topics will be introduced under these headings, such as errors in calculations, surds, solving quadratic equations and trigonometry. New content such as calculating gradients of graphs, areas under graphs, and locating turning points of quadratic functions by completing the square will also be taught to students, depending on ability.



Students will be expected to develop the ability to apply their mathematical knowledge to real-life contexts and to have a good understanding of how to tackle unstructured questions.

Assessment: Higher tier (Grades 9 to 4) and Foundation tier (Grades 5 to 1); three, 1½ hour exams taken at the end of Year 11.

Exam board: Edexcel

Who do I need to see for more information? Mr Hayes

GCSE Science at Stour Valley Community School

As your child moves into Key Stage 4, GCSE Science will build on the skills and knowledge they have developed in Key Stage 3. The course is designed to strengthen scientific thinking, experimental skills, and analytical abilities, preparing students for further study and future careers.

GCSE Science covers all three disciplines—Biology, Chemistry, and Physics—with an increasing level of complexity as students' progress, through the course.

Key topics include:

- **Biology** – Understanding how plants and animals' function, alongside discussions on important ethical issues such as genetic engineering, population growth, and cloning.
- **Chemistry** – Exploring elements and compounds in more depth, with real-world applications such as nanotechnology and its environmental impact.
- **Physics** – Expanding on forces and energy, leading to more advanced topics like radioactivity and nuclear physics.

How is Science Taught?

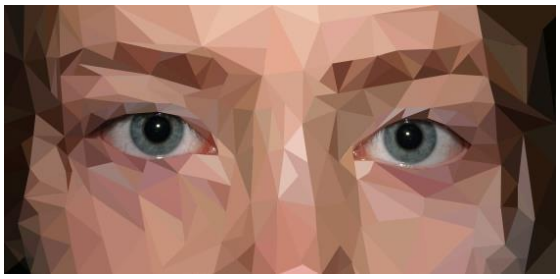
Lessons will be a mix of **practical experiments and theory**, ensuring students develop hands-on scientific skills alongside their theoretical understanding. Some practical tasks may appear in the final exams, so familiarity with these will be essential. Students will also be encouraged to develop independence in their learning.

Assessment & Qualification Pathway

- At the end of Year 9 or the first term of Year 10, a decision will be made regarding whether students will take Combined Science (worth **two** GCSEs) or Triple Science (**three** separate GCSEs in Biology, Chemistry, and Physics).
- More proficient students will typically follow the **Triple Science** route.
- All students will sit **six** exams at the end of Year 11.

Exam Board: AQA

For more information, please contact **Mr. Jenkins**.



Art & Design

What will I learn in this subject?

The GCSE covers a range of in-depth projects relating to various themes. This qualification is marked from four main areas including; recording, experimenting, developing and presenting. The GCSE course involves lots of drawing from observation therefore drawing is an important skill that underpins everything we do. Students will develop skills in different disciplines including design, painting, printmaking, ceramics, textiles and photography. The main aim of the course is to develop independent working skills in order to produce personal and exciting sketchbook projects and high quality final pieces.

What will I do in lessons?

During lessons students will be exploring and developing ideas in their sketchbooks in preparation for their final pieces. Researching other artists, drawing from observation and drawing design ideas are important elements of any project. A range of techniques and processes will be explored through both teacher led and students' own independent work resulting in personal responses of varying kinds. All project work produced during Year 10 and 11 will contribute towards the students' portfolio of work to be submitted for assessment. Homework is an integral part of the course, enabling students to develop and refine their work further in their own time. During Year 10 students work on their coursework portfolios and as they transfer into Year 11 they start their mock exam project, helping them to prepare for the final exam.

How will this subject be of use in the future?

Completion of the GCSE course could lead to further education including A Level Art, BTEC or Diplomas in Art, Photography, Textiles or Fashion.

Students will have a portfolio of work that will evidence their ability to pursue a two year course covering different assignments and producing a range of work. This will be valuable for an interview in further education or when applying for a job. Many employers look for candidates who are creative, can think creatively and can evidence commitment to a two year course in their portfolio.

How will I be assessed?

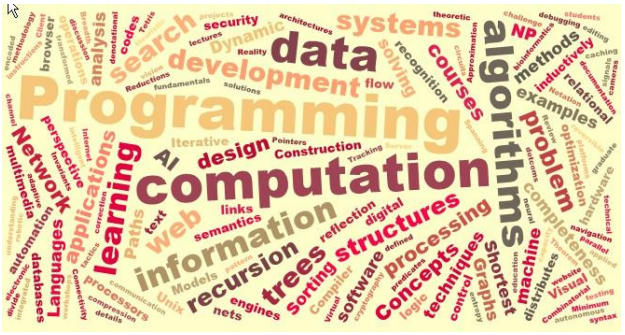
Unit 1: Personal Portfolio (Year 10) 60% Total Mark
Unit 2: Externally set assignment (Year 11) 40% Total Mark

Exam board: AQA

Who do I need to see for more information? Mrs Mayes

Computer Science

Computer Science is the fourth Science subject. Students will be required to complete any three Science subjects to meet the English Baccalaureate criteria.



What will I learn in Computer Science?

Engaging and contemporary – This course requires good analytical and problem solving skills. Using up to date technology this course has been designed with the help of Microsoft, Google and Cisco, Computing At School (CAS), plus teachers and academics.

Component 01: Computer systems

Introduces students to the central processing unit (CPU), computer memory and storage, data representation, wired and wireless networks, network topologies, system security and system software. It also looks at ethical, legal, cultural, environmental and AI concerns associated with computer science.

Component 02: Computational thinking, algorithms and programming

Students apply knowledge and understanding gained in Component 01. They develop skills and understanding in computational thinking: algorithms, programming techniques, producing robust programs, computational logic and translators.

Practical programming

Students are given the opportunity to undertake programming tasks during their course of study which allows them to develop their skills to design, write, test and refine programs using a high-level programming language. Students will be assessed on these skills during the written examinations, in particular Component 02 (section B).

How will this subject be of use in the future?

GCSE Computer Science allows students to progress with further study at A Level and beyond. Computer Science will be very beneficial to students wanting to pursue a variety of careers including IT, engineering, business, media and science.

How will I be assessed

Exam 1 Computer Systems 50%

Exam 2 Computational Thinking 50%

Exam board: OCR

Who do I need to see for more information? Mr Lee

Drama

What will I learn in this subject:

You will explore a variety of different acting techniques and styles, theatre practitioners, scripts and devising skills in a practical way, developing a range of skills that build on those studied at Key Stage 3. You will also learn more about technical aspects of theatre such as lighting, set design and costume design.

What will I do in lessons:

In practical lessons you will explore a variety of styles of theatre and acting, as well as learn how to use theatre design such as lighting to prepare for your two assessed group pieces. You can be assessed in acting, lighting, costume **or** set design for these assessments. In preparation for the written exam, both written and practical approaches are used to explore a play. You will also have the opportunity to visit live theatre productions throughout the course, and are required to write an evaluation of one of these in your written exam.

How will this subject be of use in the future:

As well as laying the foundations for careers in performing and theatre design, you will gain self-confidence and communication skills and you will increase your ability to work with other people as part of a team. Employers are looking for people with these sorts of skills, and a GCSE in Drama will be useful for any sort of profession where you are expected to communicate confidently with other people, or work as a member of a team.

How will I be assessed:

40% Controlled Assessment (Practical performance and written portfolio), **20% Practical Examination and 40% Written Examination**

Component One 40%	Component Two 20%	Component Three 40%
Controlled Assessment: You will work in a group to create a devised performance based on a theme, and using a particular theatre style. You can be examined on acting, set design OR costume design. You will also create a portfolio of Supporting Evidence, and write an evaluation of your final performance.	**Practical Examination:** You will work in a group to prepare a short performance of two key scenes from a script. You can be examined on acting, set design OR costume design.	**Written Examination:** Section A requires you to answer questions about acting, directing and design for selected scenes of a set text explored throughout the two year course. Section B requires you to write an evaluation of a live theatre performance you have seen during the course.

Exam board: WJEC Eduqas
Who do I need to see for more information? Miss Wright

Food Preparation and Nutrition

What will I learn in this subject?

The WJEC Eduqas GCSE in Food Preparation and Nutrition equips learners with the knowledge, understanding and skills required to cook and apply the principles of food science, nutrition, and healthy eating. It encourages learners to cook, enables them to make informed decisions about food and nutrition and allows them to acquire knowledge to be able to feed themselves and others affordably and nutritiously, now, and later in life.

What will I do in lessons?

Food Preparation and Nutrition consists of a varied selection of practical and theory lessons which aim to build on the existing skill base. By studying food preparation and nutrition learners will:

- Be able to demonstrate effective and safe cooking skills by planning, preparing, and cooking a variety of food commodities whilst using different cooking techniques and equipment
- Develop knowledge and understanding of the functional properties and chemical characteristics of food as well as a sound knowledge of the nutritional content of food and drinks
- Understand the relationship between diet, nutrition, and health, including the physiological and psychological effects of poor diet and health
- Understand the economic, environmental, ethical, and socio-cultural influences on food availability, production processes, diet, and health choices
- Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of functional and nutritional properties, sensory qualities and microbiological food safety considerations when preparing, processing, storing, cooking, and serving food
- Understand and explore a range of ingredients and processes from different culinary traditions (traditional British and international) to inspire innovative ideas or modify existing recipes.

Students will be expected to work independently and meet all deadlines relating to controlled assessment and homework tasks. A proficient level of organisation will be needed for this course as students will be expected to organise ingredients for lessons on a weekly basis. Enjoying cooking alone is not enough to succeed in this subject, students will be expected to apply an equal amount of effort into their research, planning and evaluating, as they do to any practical tasks.

This course can lead on to several opportunities in the future

- A Level study of Food Technology, Nutrition or Hospitality and Catering management
- Further vocational qualifications following a Professional Chef Diploma at West Suffolk College
- A confidence to prepare a range of foods and healthy meals for yourself and your family.

How will I be assessed?

- **Component 1: Principles of Food Preparation and Nutrition – 50% of qualification**

  Written examination: 1 hour 45 minutes

- **Component 2: Food Preparation and Nutrition in Action - 50% of qualification**

  2 x non-exam assessments – Food Science investigation assessment and Food Preparation assessment.

Students need to carefully consider that this course is not just about cooking or making dishes. They will need to link practical work to theory, research, planning and evaluating.

Exam board: WJEC Eduqas

Who do I need to see for more information? Mrs Iannone

Geography

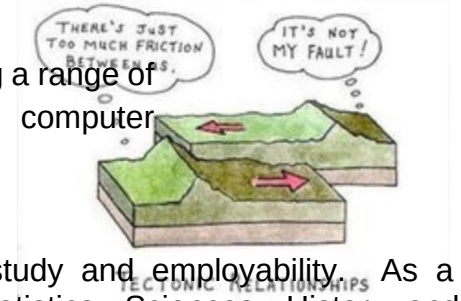
Geography as a subject is one of the most sought after qualifications by employers, providing many transferable skills and a global awareness that makes you stand out from other candidates. The Geography course is relevant, interesting and provides an excellent springboard for further study.

What will I learn in this subject?

Geography at GCSE builds on many of the units of work studied at KS3 as well as investigating some new topics, whilst continuing to make students aware of current geographical events and honing the skills required for further study. Anchoring all of this is the mantra of 'becoming a better Geographer'. In essence, gaining a deeper interest, so that they may be fully informed, aware and pro-active about the issues that they will face now and in the future.

What will I do in lessons?

During the course you will investigate these topics using a range of resources, fieldwork, making models, geographical computer programs, sketches as well as many others.



How will this subject be of use in the future?

Geography opens so many doors for both further study and employability. As a subject is complements so many other subjects, such as Statistics, Sciences, History and Resistant Materials. Future job opportunities include architecture, nature conservation, construction, marketing, environmental work, oceanography, veterinary and other science related jobs.

How will I be assessed?

All exams will take place at the end of Year 11. Students will undertake ***two*** pieces of fieldwork (one physical and one human) related to a particular topic. All exams are **1 hour 30 minutes** long.

Paper 1:	**Paper 2:**	**Paper 3:**
Global Geographical Issues	*UK Geographical Issues*	*People and Environment Issues*
Topics:	**Topics:**	**Topics:**
- Hazardous Earth	- The UK's evolving physical landscape	- People and the biosphere
- Development dynamics	- The UK's evolving human landscape	- Forests under threat
- Challenges of an urbanising world	- Geographical Investigations	- Consuming energy resources

Exam board: Edexcel

Who do I need to see for more information? Mr Craig and Mr Chapman

History

GCSE History involves studying five very different enquiries; each worth 20% of the total mark. The course will involve a site visit to a WW2 American airbase, documentaries, discussion of very big issues, films, source analysis and some longer written answers.

Thematic Study (20%) Crime and Punishment, c.1250 - today

Why was smuggling a problem? What was the 'Bloody Code'? Who were the major criminals and crimes in Victorian Britain? Investigate the effects of capital punishment. Was Britain right to get rid of the death penalty? has technology changed modern policing?

World Depth Study (20%): Living Under Nazi Rule, 1933-45

Explore how Hitler rose to power and how the Nazis maintained control of Germany. What was it like to live under Nazi rule? Would you have joined the Hitler Youth? Why was there so little opposition to Nazi rule within Germany? What was it like in Germany during World War Two?

Period Study (20%): The Making of Modern America

Why did the cotton plantations and slavery expand in the USA? How did the American Civil War begin? What was it like to be a Plains Indian?

British Depth Study (20%): The Elizabethans, 1580–1603

How big a threat was Mary Queen of Scots to Elizabeth I? Was Elizabeth right to execute a fellow queen? Investigate the witch hunts as well as the rise of English theatre.

History Around Us (20%): Local Site Study

Research life in the USAAF base at Lavenham during World War Two. Why was it called the 'friendly invasion'? What impact did 3,000 US servicemen and women have locally?

How will History GCSE be useful in the future?

Ideal for a very wide range of careers such as: journalism, law, politics and business studies. As the subject develops skills in the processing and analysis of evidence, it is advantageous for students wishing to pursue careers in psychology, criminology and the sciences.

Assessment: 3 written examinations at the end of Year 11. The examinations will include source evaluations and a range of questions worth 1-20 marks each.
Exam board: OCR
Who do I need to see for more information? Miss Terry and Miss Howard

Music

What will I learn in this subject?
Music is all around us and influences us in many ways. The GCSE course will help you to understand how music is created, through five Areas of Study, which focus on a wide range of music. You will:

- Enjoy of a wide range of music
- Perform and create music, on your own and with others
- Understand more about how music works

What will I do in lessons? All the work you do will be related to performing, composing, or listening and understanding specific types of music set out in the Areas of Study.

Area of Study 1 – My Music Studying any instrument or voice (including beatboxing, rapping and music technology) and performing and composing pieces in your preferred styles.	**Area of Study 2 – The concerto through time** Studying the orchestral concerto and its development from 1650-1910 throughout the Baroque, Classical and Romantic Period.	
Area of Study 3 – **Rhythms of the world** Studying the rhythmic roots of styles of music from around the world such as Indian and Punjab, Mediterranean music, Palestinian, South American, African and music from the Caribbean.	**Area of Study 4 – Film music** Studying music composed and used in film and computer games.	**Area of Study 5** **Conventions of Pop** Studying popular music in the form of 50's and 60's Rock and Roll, Rock Anthems from the 70's, and 80's, Pop Ballads from the 70's, 80's and 90's and Solo Pop Artists from 90's - modern day.

There is music theory work written work, which is usually covered through individual and group tasks. You must be prepared to practice regularly on your instrument outside lesson time and will also be expected to take part in school ensembles and music events.

How will this subject be of use in the future?

- You may want to study music more in the future, at A Level, BTEC or Degree.
- A job in radio, music administration, music technology and studio work, concert management or as a performer or composer of music for films, adverts and computer games to name but a few options.
- You will develop skills for self-management, creativity, performance, problem-solving, communication, discipline, memory skills, self-efficacy and teamwork.

How will the course be assessed?

Controlled Assessments (60% of the final grade) – This is a mixture of performing, composing and evaluating your work, and will be done during lessons. You will need to record a solo and group performance and do two compositions by the end of the course. Your performances can be on a live instrument/voice or you can use music software to recreate a piece of music of your choice. The compositions require you to write and record two of your own pieces of music, which you will do with the help of computer software.

Listening Test (40% of the final grade) – this is a 90-minute test, in which you will hear extracts of music and answer questions about them. We know the pieces will come from the Areas of Study provided by the exam board, but we do not know which pieces they will choose to play.

Exam board: OCR

Who do I need to see for more information? Mrs Hutchinson

Photography

What will I learn in this subject?

Students must be passionate and enthusiastic about photography and understand the weighting of written work involved with this course. Students will be required to take all photoshoots in their own time in order to capture high quality images, relevant to their intentions.

The GCSE covers a range of in-depth projects relating to various themes. This qualification is marked on four main areas including; recording, experimenting, developing and presenting.

The GCSE course will help students to develop practical photographic skills. However the research and preparation work are just as important as the final images. Students must use creative approaches which go beyond observation and recording. Students will develop skills in different disciplines including Photoshop, practical manipulation and in depth analysis of work. The main aim of the course is to develop independent working skills in order to produce personal and exciting projects. Students will learn processes and techniques in lessons that they will be expected to apply in their own time by going out and taking their own photographs. This course is not just about taking photos, drawing and sketching plans are important elements of the course.

What will I do in lessons?

During lessons students will be exploring and developing ideas in their sketchbooks in preparation for their final pieces. Researching other photographers, analysing, planning and evaluating are integral parts of each project. These are important factors to help any photographer develop and improve their work. During lessons students will develop their work using Photoshop. Homework is an integral part of the course, enabling students to develop and refine their work further in their own time. During Year 10 students work on their coursework portfolios and as they transfer into Year 11 they start their mock exam project, helping them to prepare for the final exam. Dedicating time, preparation and commitment to taking photo shoots are vital in GCSE Photography.

How will this subject be of use in the future?

On completion of your GCSE course you could progress to further education including A Level Photography, BTEC or Diplomas in Photography. Many employers look for candidates who are creative, can ‘think outside of the box’ and can evidence commitment to a two year course in their portfolio.

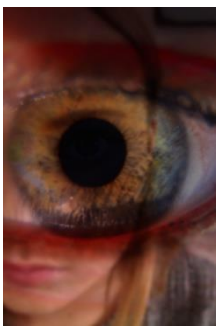
How will I be assessed?

Unit1: Personal Portfolio (Year 10) 60% of total mark

Unit 2: Externally set assignment (Year 11) 40% of total mark

Exam board: AQA

Who do I need to see for more information? Mrs Mayes



Cambridge Nationals in Sports Studies -Level 2

What will I learn in this subject?
Elite sport has embraced sport science disciplines wholeheartedly in the past few decades, moving from a perspective which assumed the primacy of natural talent in producing outstanding performance, to one which considers every minute detail of an athlete's training programme, rest time, environment and psychology in the pursuit of excellence.

The Cambridge Nationals in Sport Science offer learners the opportunity

• to develop a range of skills through involvement in sport and physical activity in different contexts and roles

• develop their ability to apply theoretical knowledge to practical situations

• gain a better understanding of the complexity of different areas of sport and the sports industry

• increase students' awareness of different ways to stay involved in sport and physical activity and of different careers and roles within sport.

What we study

RO41 - Reducing the risk of sports injuries (M) Learners will know how to prepare participants to take part in physical activity in a way which minimises the risk of injuries.

RO42 - Applying principles of training (M) Learners will develop knowledge and understanding of the principles and methods of training and the application of these in the design of training programmes along with practical skills in fitness testing.

R043 - The body's response to physical activity (O) Learners will understand key aspects of the structure and function of the musculo-skeletal and cardio-respiratory systems.

RO45 - Sports nutrition (O) Learners will consider the composition of a healthy, balanced diet being able to consider the necessity of certain nutrients in particular quantities and the effects of a poor diet. How your work will be assessed

What is a Level 2 course?

The OCR Level 2 courses are the same standard as a GCSE. They are accepted by colleges for further education courses in the same way as GCSEs. They are assessed by a Pass/Merit/Distinction/Distinction* system instead of 9-1 Grades, with a Level 2 Distinction* grade equivalent to a GCSE Grade 8/9.

What will I do in lessons?

Students will have 6 hours of Sport per fortnight. Five lessons will be classroom based and one will be practical. This mix will change throughout the course.

How will I be assessed?

A mixture of a written exam and coursework based units.

Who do I need to see for more information? Mr Leppard

Prince's Trust Achieve Programme
(Invite only)

What will I learn in this subject?

The Prince's Trust Achieve programme helps 11- to 19-year-olds develop the skills and confidence they need to reach their goals, through relevant, engaging and informal learning. Education should prepare young people for the future they want, and this course contributes to that aim.

What will I do in lessons?

Students will compile a portfolio of evidence that will help them to achieve the Prince's Trust Personal Development and Employability Skills (PDE) qualification. Students will complete a range of topics from the Achieve Programme such as interpersonal and self-management skills, teamwork, career planning, money management and supporting others in the community.

Students will also develop competence in the wider key skills of working with others, improving their own learning and problem-solving.

How will this subject be of use in the future?

* You will learn practical skills needed for everyday life when you leave school.

* You will study ways of making career pathway choices.

How will I be assessed?

There are no examinations at all. Assessment is based entirely on projects and coursework. Students gain 1 or 2 credits for each module completed. The credits for each unit will be used to achieve Entry level 3 qualifications.

Who do I need to see for more information? Mrs Chester – Special Needs Co-ordinator (by invitation only)

Psychology

What will I learn in this subject?

The **GCSE Psychology** course takes you to that most fascinating of places - the human mind! You will learn how to understand people's behaviour and predict how they are likely to behave in different situations. You will investigate areas such as:

* How exactly does my memory work?
* Why do I forget things?
* How can I read body language?
* How do visual cues influence our reality?
* How (and why) do Psychologists conduct research?
* Why are some people reluctant to help in emergencies?
* How do animals communicate?
* How do our thoughts influence our behaviour?
* What causes depression?
* Is addiction genetic?
* Which parts of the brain process speech, thinking and pain?

What will I do in lessons?

The course comprises eight units: Memory, Perception, Development, Research Methods, Social Influence, Language Thought and Communication, The Brain and Neuropsychology, and Psychological Problems. A typical lesson will involve learning about the science behind key topics, case studies and theories, through notetaking, discussions and worksheets – with some practical work too! You will learn to understand what is going on around you, how your brain works and how you can apply your learning to everyday life such as memory techniques to improve your study skills. Good writing skills and an understanding of basic maths concepts are extremely helpful.

How will this subject be of use in the future?

The course will build your analytical, evaluation and research skills. A good knowledge of Psychology can support many further education courses and is useful in many careers such as police work, neuroscience research, psychotherapy and counselling, journalism, teaching, medical professions, law, personnel work, childcare, social work, animal care, civil service, the armed forces, general management, occupational therapy, forensic psychology and probation work.

How will I be assessed?

You will sit 2 exams at the end of the course, both lasting for 1 hour and 45 minutes. The papers are a mixture of multiple-choice, short answer, and long answer questions. Each exam covers 4 separate units.

Exam board: AQA

Who do I need to see for more information? Mr Mussett and Mr Sims

Religious Studies

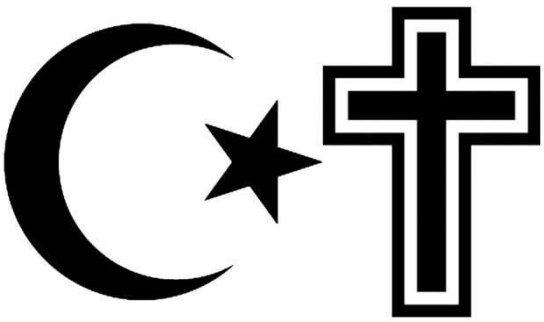
What will I learn in this subject?

Religious Studies at GCSE builds on the social and ethical issues covered in Year 9, students focus on two main Religions; Christianity and Islam, but also look at many topics from an Atheist and Humanist perspective. Students will develop their knowledge and understanding of these belief systems via an in-depth study into Religious Values and how Religious people live their lives. This enables students to gain an understanding about people from different walks of life. They will investigate Christian and Islamic teachings and show an understanding of how faith impacts on individuals and communities.

Students will study the following topics from two exam papers:

Paper one: Religion and Ethics – Christianity

- Christian Beliefs
- Marriage and the Family
- Living the Christian life
- Matters of Life and Death



Paper two: Religion, Peace and Conflict- Islam

- Muslim Beliefs
- Crime and Punishment
- Living the Muslim Life
- Peace and Conflict

What will I do in lessons?

Throughout the GCSE students will debate different issues and complete a great deal of group work. It is important to note that being able to form your own opinion and express your ideas is a key aspect of the course. Units will include issues such as abortion, sexual relationships, capital punishment, conflict in the world and life after death. These topics will help students to develop their own opinions and formulate arguments to create well-informed, structured written answers; a skill that is fundamental to many A Level courses.

How will this subject be of use in the future?
GCSE Religious Studies allows students to gain an understanding about people from different walks of life. It is valued by employers and particularly those dealing with members of the public, such as the police, emergency and rescue services, jobs with children and the medical profession. The ability to collaborate and discuss will further prepare them for further education and the world of work and it links well to the A Level study of Philosophy, Law, History, and Sociology.

How will I be assessed?
The exam consists of two written papers which are 1 hour 45 minutes each. Each exam paper accounts for 50% of the total marks.

Exam board: Edexcel

Who do I need to see for more information? Mrs Chester

Spanish

What will I learn in this subject?

The Spanish GCSE course builds upon vocabulary and structures we have been studying up to Year 9, exploring familiar topics in more depth. The aim of the course is to provide students with the skills to be able to interact in spoken Spanish with spontaneity and to write accurate, detailed Spanish. The course prepares students to speak and write in a range of tenses, and this means it is important to get to grips with the grammar of the language and to learn the GCSE vocabulary as we go along. We also develop comprehension skills in order to understand detailed information in spoken and written language. Some topics, such as environmental matters, are also included in order to reflect students' interests and to provide a bridge to the A Level course for our more able linguists.

What will I do in lessons?

Lessons involve practising new vocabulary and structures in pairs or groups, reviewing and learning more about the grammar of the language and completing reading and listening comprehension activities. By using songs, magazines and videos, we ensure lessons also include varied and authentic Spanish.

How will this subject be of use in the future?

Studying Spanish at GCSE opens the door to future opportunities, from moving on to A Level Spanish or other qualifications to a wide variety of careers, they can also help enrich your experiences while travelling abroad. The skills learnt in GCSE Spanish are transferrable when learning additional languages, as well as developing communication skills, an interest in other cultures and problem-solving, qualities which are highly desirable for future employers and academic institutions. A language qualification is frequently a requirement for the top universities.

How will I be assessed?

At the end of Year 11, the four skills: (listening, reading, speaking and writing) are assessed through a formal examination paper in each skill. Your teacher will conduct the speaking exam, and it takes place shortly before the written exams begin in Year 11.

Exam board: Edexcel

Who do I need to see for more information? Mrs Magowan

Statistics

What will I learn in this subject?

GCSE Statistics provides students with the opportunity to develop skills in the following areas:
· planning a statistical enquiry
· collecting data
· processing, analysing and representing data
· interpreting and evaluating results

What will I do in lessons?

Students will learn new methods and techniques under the following headings;
· Planning and data collection
· Processing, representing and analysing data
· Reasoning, interpreting and discussing results
· Probability

Much of the content supports the Mathematics GCSE, whereas other areas are solely in the Statistics curriculum.

How will this subject be of use in the future?

This qualification is useful in many areas, particularly those interested in running a business, or studying A Levels in Economics, Biology, Psychology, Business Studies and particularly Mathematics.

How will I be assessed?

Two Tiers; Foundation grades 5-1 and Higher grades 9-4

GCSE Statistics is assessed via two 1½ hour written papers, taken at the end of year 11, 80 marks per paper. There is no longer a controlled assessment element.

Exam board: Edexcel

Who do I need to see for more information? Mr Hayes

Technology

Students taking GCSE Technology will be grouped by the specialist area they wish to base their studies around with choices to be made from either a Resistant Materials or Graphics bias. Although students will be required to choose a specialist area, the new course content will allow students much greater creativity and freedom to how they design and produce their products. For example, a Resistant Materials student may choose to work with card and paper and a Graphics student may choose to work with electronics and fabrics.

It needs to be noted that the new specification does not allow students to take for example Graphics in one option block and Resistant Materials in another; they may only choose one Technology subject.

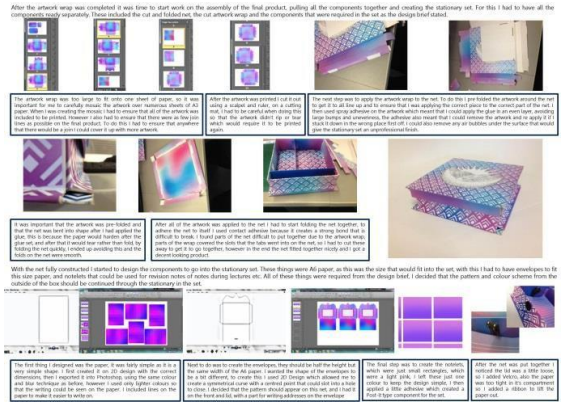
What will I learn in this subject?

Technology GCSE as a subject is both intellectual and practical in nature. Through testing, experimentation and manufacturing products students develop a practical knowledge of the working properties of materials as well as knowledge of both hand and computer aided manufacturing techniques; they develop both hand and computer aided design drawing and presentation skills; and use ICT to help research, communicate and realise their ideas. These skills are backed up by an intellectual understanding of the design process and design history, as well as imaginative problem solving, analytical and evaluative skills that will enable students to produce well-designed products that meet the needs of the target market. Students are also introduced to the possibilities presented by new and emerging technologies such as smart materials and they also consider the social, moral and environmental impact on society of design and future technological developments.

The specification has been designed to re-enforce the close links between Technology and Maths and Science, and students should note that the course requires application of mathematical and scientific knowledge (at end of KS3 level) during both the practical and exam elements of the course. This course would therefore suit not only creative students but could act as a complimentary subject for those students with an interest in the Sciences, Maths and Computer Science.

What will I do in lessons?

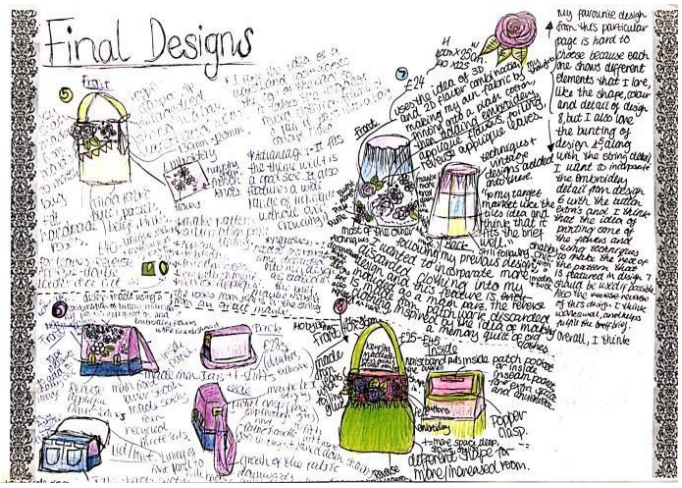
This course provides students with the opportunity to explore their creativity and build on previous skills and knowledge. It demands a high level of commitment and students will be expected to work independently to deadlines in both their portfolio and theory work, as well as show a high standard of presentation as designers are required to do in the real world.



How will this subject be of use in the future?

Studying Technology can lead to a wide range of careers including: engineering; product and industrial design; architecture; jewellery design; fashion and textiles design; film and theatre set design; self-employed craftspeople; graphic designer/artist; illustrator; cartoonist, animator; book and magazine design; web based design; and advertising.

How will I be assessed?



The Technology GCSE is composed of two parts.

Written exam Paper, 2 hours – Marked out of 100 and worth 50% of GCSE award. Taken at the end of Year 11 and marked externally.

- Section A – Core technical principles (20 marks). A mixture of multiple choice and short questions assessing general Technology knowledge.
- Section B – Specialist technical principles (30 marks). Questions based around students selected specialism, several short answer question and one extended response to assess more in depth knowledge.
- Section C – Designing and making principles (50 marks). A mix of short and long answer questions.

Non-exam assessment The 30-35 hours approx. Portfolio based design and make task, marked out of 100 and worth 50% of the GCSE award. Marked by teachers then externally moderated by exam board, started at the end of Year 10 and assessed as follows –

- Identifying and investigating design possibilities (10 marks).
- Producing a design brief and specification (10 marks).
- Generating design ideas (20 marks).
- Developing design ideas (20 marks).
- Realising design ideas (making) (20 marks).
- Analysing and evaluating (20 marks).

Exam board: AQA

Who do I need to see for more information?

Mr Coe and Mr Stephens

Cambridge National in Health & Social Care Level 1/2

What will I learn in this subject?

Students will develop knowledge and skills that are transferable across the health and social care industry. Key areas of focus include:

- Knowledge of life events and how to support individuals through them
- Understanding growth and development through the life stages
- Vital knowledge and understanding of how to protect individuals through infection prevention, safeguarding and safety and security measures
- An understanding of the rights of individuals and person-centred values and how to apply these when working with service users

What is a Cambridge National Award?
Cambridge National Awards are aimed at students developing real-world skills to prepare them for the future. They combine elements of internal assessments through coursework based units that can be resubmitted and improved as well as an exam unit. These skills will help you progress onto further study in the health and social care sector. This could be Level 3 vocational qualifications, A levels in psychology, biology or sociology or an apprenticeships.

This course will appeal to students who…
Students who may be interested in careers or further study in nursing, midwifery, pharmaceutical studies, psychology, counselling, special educational needs or early years support. This course is also suitable in developing specific skills that allow them to thrive in the health and social care sector, this includes an understanding of holistic health, with particular focus on the intrinsic link between physical and mental health and a thorough understanding of relevant legislation and its application in the sector.

How will I be assessed? The course is assessed over 3 components:

- Component 1 – Principles of care in health and social care settings. This is an external exam for 1 hour 15 minutes and makes up 40% of the final grade.
- Component 2 – Supporting individuals through life events submitted through Non-Examined Assessments which is coursework.
- Component 3 - Creative and therapeutic activities OR Health promotion campaigns. Only one of these units will be submitted through Non-Examined Assessments

Exam board: OCR

Who do I need to see for more information? Mrs Jamieson

STOUR VALLEY

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Options Booklet 2025