

19 November 2025

Dear Parents and Carers

Re: GCSE Technology

I am very pleased that your child has opted to take GCSE Technology and I look forward to working together over the next two years. As explained in the options booklet and presentation, the course is made up of a combination of practical and theory work designed to build on student knowledge. Students failing to meet deadlines during non-exam-assessments risk achieving lower grades as all tasks have set timings and extensions are not permitted.

Materials

You will all be familiar with the voluntary contribution system for KS3 Technology that we have successfully run since the beginning of Stour Valley. It has provided excellent value for money for parents and carers and has always ensured that students have the correct materials for their practical lessons/projects. In the past while the Technology department provided all the basic materials that KS4 students needed to produce their projects in both Year 10 and for their GCSE projects; students have then been expected to supply their own specialist materials, components and finishes. In recent years this has often led to parents and carers paying more than necessary for materials and components as not having the ability to buy in bulk or at trade prices. It has also meant that students have not always had their materials available when they were needed, this often led to increased stress on students and on occasions projects not being fully realised.

In an effort to ensure that students always have access to any material, components and finishes that they may require, the Technology department runs a voluntary contribution scheme for KS4 Technology. Parents and carers may choose to opt in and pay a **one-off contribution of £22** via **ParentPay**. This will cover the cost of the materials, components and finishes their child will require throughout Years 10 and 11. I believe that this scheme will offer parents, carers and students excellent value for money, as well as ensure that all materials and components are available to your child when needed. I fully appreciate this is an additional cost at a busy time of the year, particularly with households being affected by rising costs for goods and services. Should you wish to take part in the voluntary contribution system but find difficulty in making the payment, please contact the Finance Office finance@stourvalley.org to discuss further.



Textbooks

The course is supported by a number of different publications depending on your child's chosen specialism. They would not have to bring these into school as we have a set of each available for use in the classroom. However, I believe they will prove to be extremely helpful for completing homework, research and planning controlled assessments.

For RM – AQA Design & Technology: Timber, Metal Based Materials and Polymers; published by Hodder Education ISBN 9781510401129.

For Graphics – AQA Design & Technology: Paper & Boards; published by Hodder Education ISBN 9781510401099.

Both the above books are exceptionally detailed and provide information both on the GCSE course's exam content as well as information on how to approach the non-exam-assessment element of the course. They are however relatively expensive at over £20. A far more affordable option (at under £6) might be the following:

GCSE AQA Design and Technology for the Grade 9-1 Course, The Revision Guide, published CGP. ISBN 9781782947523. This book covers the theory for the exam paper in a very accessible format.

Protective Clothing

Protective clothing is provided however, all students are expected to wear flat shoes that completely cover the top of the foot and offer protection in a workshop or studio environment.

Homework

This will be set weekly and it will be a requirement for all students to complete in order to achieve their potential grades as quite often it will involve working on their GCSE NEA.

I look forward to working with your child and if there are any questions about the course please do not hesitate to contact via email at: acoe@stourvalley.org

Yours faithfully



Mr A Coe, Head of Faculty – Technology and Art

