



2026

Year 9 KS4 Options Guide



This guide is also available to view on our Academy website
bushfield.co.uk/curriculum

You can find full details of all of our subjects, for all Key Stages at
bushfield.co.uk/curriculum

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Welcome

Introduction from Miss Rebecca Rhodes,
Assistant Principal

Dear Year 9 Student,

The National Curriculum until KS3 is made up of subjects that ensure students develop a wide range of knowledge and skills.

As you move into KS4, your curriculum becomes more specialised and you are part of the decision in choosing which subjects you wish to continue to study. This options process is a very important time in your education and you need to consider a number of points whilst making these decisions. You must remember that in making the decision about what subjects you will study, you are also by default choosing which subjects you will no longer study.

Certain careers and higher education courses have entry requirements that are subject specific; if you have not studied that subject you may find it difficult to enter a potential career. Therefore, it is important that you really consider what you would like to do in the future and ensure the options you choose will help you achieve that ambition.

With this in mind, we know that it can be a difficult time and can cause anxiety as there will be a number of questions that you may need answering: *What subject is right for me? What if I don't know what I want to do as a career? What if I want to study more subjects?* Rest assured that we will help you to make choices about future learning that are right for you.

This booklet and the options process are designed to make this time less worrying for you and your parents/carers. We will help you make decisions about your learning and choose subjects that suit your aspirations, skills and needs.



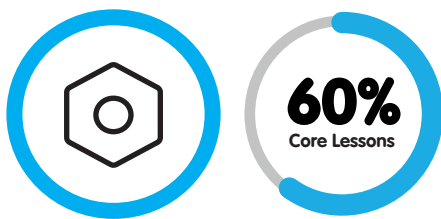
A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Rebecca Rhodes'.

Miss Rebecca Rhodes
Assistant Principal

Choosing your subjects

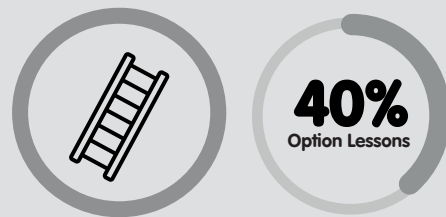
Compulsory Subjects

- English Language, English Literature, Mathematics and Combined Science (two GCSEs) are all Compulsory Subjects in Key Stage 4, totalling five GCSEs. Students also study two non-examinable subjects: Physical Education and PSHE.



Option Subjects

- To fill the remaining curriculum time, students study four Option Subjects. Each student will select a number of subject choices ranked in order of preference, with each student being allocated four of their chosen options.



Types of Qualifications

- A number of different qualifications are available to study here at Ormiston Bushfield Academy. These include GCSE, BTEC, OCR, Cambridge National and Vocational Awards and are all equivalent to GCSE level.



Academic Breadth

- The Department for Education encourage students to take subjects which demonstrate a broad and balanced curriculum at GCSE.

At OBA we champion students taking subjects which they enjoy. To ensure all students do access a broad and balanced curriculum, we expect ALL students to study one option subject from [History](#), [Geography](#), [French](#) or [Separate Sciences](#).

Academic Breadth

The Department for Education recommends that students study a set of key subjects known in the Academy as **Academic Breadth**, which helps keep future pathways and opportunities open for young people. Academic Breadth includes **Separate Sciences, History, Geography, and French**.

At least one of your child's option choices must come from the Academic Breadth subjects.*

GCSE

Separate Sciences

GCSE

History

GCSE

Geography

GCSE

French



Department
for Education

Future proof your child's prospects



Although your child may not yet know what career they wish to pursue, choosing a broad range of GCSEs is crucial. A varied curriculum ensures they have access to the widest range of future employment and study options, and provides the rounded knowledge that employers increasingly value.

What about non-Academic Breadth subjects?



While many subjects sit outside the Academic Breadth category, we firmly believe that every child should experience a high-quality arts and cultural education as part of a balanced curriculum. Your child will study nine GCSEs in total, giving them **three additional option choices**. These can be selected according to their wider interests—such as Art, Music, Sport, or Technology—allowing them to explore and develop their strengths beyond the core academic subjects.

*Remember, you can choose more than one.

How parents can help

Selecting Key Stage 4 options is an important step in your child's education, and they need to select subjects that they are likely to be **successful** in and **enjoy**.



1. Understand & communicate

Take time to talk through the options with your child and help them select their strongest subjects. Submission of options is completed through an online portal which is explained later in this guide.



2. Research

Each course that we offer has different attributes. Some may be more suited to your child's needs than others. You'll find them on the course pages in this guide. They'll help you identify the most appropriate options for them.



3. Show support

It makes a real difference when parents continue to show their support. Ask your child about their studies and the topics they are learning about. Remind them about homework and coursework and help them to ensure it is handed in on time.



4. Consider all options & routes

Evaluate whether the option choices will be suitable for your child's further education or potential career path.



5. Be present

Offer your child a calm, safe space to talk when they need to, as this stage can seem daunting.

Skills Builder Partnership



There's a growing consensus that essential skills are vital for almost anything in learning, work and wider life. They are a talking point among employers, who want candidates to demonstrate transferable skills like speaking and problem solving – especially in the face of an uncertain future jobs market where workers will need to move agilely between occupations. They underpin the development of literacy and numeracy, technical skills, and digital skills. The Skills Builder Flagship Award is achieved by modelling best practice in high quality essential skills education, and by working with other professionals and organisations outside of OBA. The Skills Builder Principles are fully embedded, with all teachers confident educators of essential skills which are integrated into daily practice in our curriculum.



Listening

The receiving, retaining and processing of information and ideas.



Speaking

The oral transmission of information and ideas.



Problem Solving

The ability to find a solution to a situation or challenge.



Creativity

The use of imagination and the generation of new ideas.



Staying Positive

The ability to use tactics and strategies to overcome setbacks and achieve goals.



Aiming High

The ability to set clear, tangible goals and devise a robust route to achieve them.



Leadership

Supporting, encouraging and developing others to achieve a shared goal.



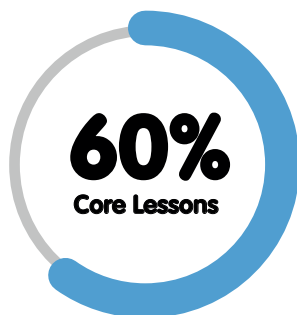
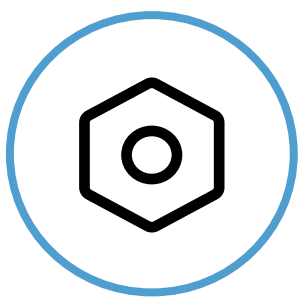
Teamwork

Working cooperatively with others towards a shared goal.

Compulsory Subjects

All students are taught a programme of study which we refer to in this booklet as **Core**.

These are the subjects and skills that are statutory for all children aged 14-16 years, with the addition of English Literature which we feel is important and therefore is studied by everyone.



Core courses

GCSE
Combined Science

GCSE
English Language

GCSE
English Literature

GCSE
Mathematics

CORE
Physical Education


CORE
PSHE



GCSE

COMBINED SCIENCE

CORE

Award
GCSEDuration
2 Years
 Examination Board
 [AQA GCSE Combined Science Trilogy](#)

Studying Combined Science

A science GCSE will ensure that you are well equipped for further studies and your future career. You will develop strong reasoning and analytical skills, which are vital regardless of where your studies take you. Students studying the combined science GCSE will cover the core three science disciplines - biology, chemistry and physics - over two years. You will have the opportunity to do some fun and interesting practical work too. The course covers a broad range of topics, all of which relate to various aspects of the world around us.



How will I be assessed?

There are six 75 minute exam papers at the end of Year 11 - all of which are equally weighted. You won't have any coursework but you will carry out a minimum of sixteen engaging practicals that will be assessed within the exam papers at the end of the course.

What will I study?

You will develop the knowledge and understanding you need to pose scientific questions, and you will become confident in planning and carrying out investigative activities. You will learn how to collect, process, and analyse data, and develop communication skills in a scientific context.


You will study a wide range of topics including cell biology and ecology, atoms and the environment, forces, and electromagnetism. You will be encouraged to think about the world around you and the impact that our actions have on it. You will become an independent thinker, with the ability to evaluate information and its reliability.

A GCSE in combined science is valuable in all careers, but if you enjoy the subjects there are many potential job opportunities. You will find scientists in research, engineering, industry, government, transport, the armed forces, universities, teaching, and medical roles.

GCSE

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

CORE

Award
GCSEDuration
2 YearsExamination Board
 [Edexcel GCSE English Language](#)

Studying English Language

GCSE English Language gives students the opportunity to look at writing in a different way, studying the use of text in both fictional and non-fictional contexts. Students will study and analyse texts, learning about the ways in which they are written and how they are effective. They are then able to develop these skills by applying them to their own creative writing tasks. Students will also learn functional English skills, such as writing letters and reviews.



What will I study?

Overview of Unit 1:

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

Overview of assessment:

- Section A - Reading: Questions on an unseen 19th-century fiction extract.
- Section B - Writing: A choice of two writing tasks. The tasks are linked by a theme to the reading extract.

How will I be assessed?

Component 1: Fiction and Imaginative Writing

- 40% of the total GCSE.
- The total number of marks available is 64.
- Assessment duration: 1hr 45m.

Component 2: Non-fiction and Transactional Writing

- 60% of the total GCSE.
- The total number of marks available is 96.
- Assessment duration: 2hr 5m.

Overview of Unit 2:

- Students study a range of 20th and 21st-century non-fiction texts (including literary non-fiction).
- Develop skills to analyse, evaluate and compare non-fiction extracts, develop transactional writing skills for a variety of forms, purpose and audiences and use spelling, punctuation and grammar accurately.

Overview of assessment:

- Section A - Reading: Questions on two thematically linked, unseen non-fiction extracts.
- Section B - Writing: A choice of two writing tasks. The tasks are linked by a theme to the reading extracts.

GCSE

ENGLISH LITERATURE

CORE

Award
GCSEDuration
2 YearsExamination Board
 [Edexcel GCSE English Literature](#)

Studying English Literature

GCSE English Literature gives students the opportunity to study interesting and impactful texts in more depth. Students will read texts from a variety of genres and forms, including plays and poetry. The course develops the key analytical, evaluative and writing skills that students have learnt so far, supported by the writing of essays to explore the historical context, allegorical content and linguistic devices used by their authors.



What will I study?

Overview of Component 1:

- Students study a Shakespeare play and a post-19th British play or novel.
- Develop skills to analyse how the language, form, structure and context of texts can create meanings and effects. Students will develop skills to maintain a critical style and informed personal response.

Overview of assessment:

- Section A – Shakespeare: a two-part question, with the first task focused on an extract. The second task is focused on how a theme reflected in the extract is explored elsewhere in the play.
- Section B – Post-1914 British play or novel: One essay question.

How will I be assessed?

Component 1: Shakespeare and Post-1914 Literature

- 50% of the total GCSE.
- The total number of marks available is 80.
- Assessment duration: 1hr 45m.

Component 2: 19th-century Novel and Poetry

- 50% of the total GCSE.
- The total number of marks available is 80.
- Assessment duration: 2hr 15m.
- Section A – 19th-century novel: First part focuses on an extract. Second part is an essay question exploring the whole text.
- Section B – Part 1: One question comparing a named poem from the Pearson Poetry Anthology to another poem from the Anthology.
- Part 2: One question comparing two unseen contemporary poems.

Overview of Component 2:

- Study a 19th-century novel and a poetry collection from the Pearson Poetry Anthology.
- Develop skills to analyse how the language, form, structure and context of texts can create meanings and effects. Students will develop skills to maintain a critical style and informed personal response. Students will develop the ability to compare and contrast.

GCSE

MATHEMATICS

CORE

Award
GCSEDuration
2 YearsExamination Board
 [AQA GCSE Mathematics](https://www.aqa.org.uk/qualifications/gcse/mathematics)

Studying Mathematics

A GCSE in mathematics will give you vital skills for your future - both in your studies and your future career. It demonstrates to employers that you have acquired good reasoning and analytical skills - essential in every walk of life. The qualification can lead onto A Level and further study in maths, and can eventually lead to a career in one of its associated fields.



How will I be assessed?

There are two tiers of entry for this qualification:

- **Foundation (Grades 1-5)**
- **Higher (Grades 4-9)**

The course is assessed by a written examination, consisting of three papers, each 90 minutes long. The assessment of all three units is at the end of the programme of study in Year 11.

What will I study?

The course is a two year programme of study based on prior Key Stage 3 learning. There will be assessments for all students. The specification aims to ensure that all students are familiar with numbers, algebra, ratio, proportion and rates of change, geometry and measures, probability and statistics.

The more practice you get in applying your maths, the better. There are a number of useful websites that will help including:

- 🌐 www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize
- 🌐 www.coolmaths4kids.com
- 🌐 www.corbettmaths.com

Careers for those with good maths skills and qualifications are well paid, interesting and rewarding. Mathematical processes enable you to formulate reasoned arguments, give you excellent numeracy skills and the ability to interpret data. These skills are central to many roles in all kinds of organisations. There are lots of career opportunities for mathematicians in business, engineering, science, construction, astronomy and the government.

CORE

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

CORE



Duration
2 Years

Studying Physical Education

At Ormiston Bushfield Academy, Key Stage 4 PE is structured to allow students to experience a broad curriculum. This focuses on continuing to instil the core values of teamwork, enjoyment, appreciation and improvement of performance.



What will I study?

These lessons will allow students to work with peers in competitive team games that will develop their skills and gain an appreciation of tactics and strategies to outwit opponents.

Students will also participate in a range of individual sports. Here, students will be encouraged to develop skills to improve performance and will experience increased competition so that these skills can be applied appropriately.

How will I be assessed?

Students will be taught a range of the following sports including: football, netball, basketball, handball, volleyball, badminton, table tennis, indoor cricket, rounders, trampolining, athletics and heath related exercises.

There are no formal examinations or assessments.

The Key Stage 4 Curriculum is designed to engage all students. Students who aren't competitive will also be able to enjoy participating in sport and improving skills in a less pressurised environment, as the students are grouped according to their ability and interests.

PSHE

PHYSICAL, SOCIAL, HEALTH & ECONOMIC EDUCATION

CORE


Duration
2 Years

Studying PSHE

PSHE is an important and necessary part of all students' education. These are lessons designed to help students cope with life in and out of school, as well as for their future. PSHE aims to provide students with knowledge, skills and the confidence to prepare them to play a full and active part in society.



How will I be assessed?

There is no terminal assessment in this subject, but there are regular review tasks to complete every half term to check in on students' understanding of what has been covered. This creates an arena for students, in tandem with their teacher, to reflect and develop their understanding and capabilities across the range of topics. Pupils will develop their skills to be able to use a range of research strategies, weigh up evidence, share opinions, put forward persuasive arguments and substantiate their conclusions. They will experience and evaluate different ways that citizens can act together to solve problems and contribute to society.

What will I study?

Weekly lessons provide students with opportunities to get to grips with relevant issues and ideas for their age group. This includes time for discussion and questions in small groups and as a whole class, and reflective written tasks.

PSHE includes:

- Personal reflection and goal setting
- Revision techniques and exam preparation
- Basic First Aid skills, including CPR and defibrillator use
- Equality and Diversity and seeking active ways of promoting these
- Personal safety (on and offline)
- British Values - including democracy, parliament and government processes
- Employability skills and preparing for work experience, interviews and first jobs, CV writing and developing understanding of career choices
- Finance in the real world - including understanding debit and credit, household bills and outgoings, salaries and taxes, mortgages and renting and learning how to budget
- Relationship and Sexual Education
- Physical Health
- Mental Health

Option subjects

We want our students to be committed to their subjects, so we allow them to choose the four subjects that make up their additional learning (option subjects).



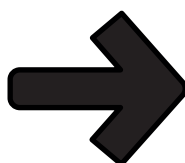
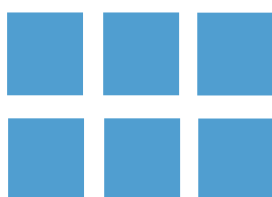
All students will choose one subject from each option block. At least one choice must be an Academic Breadth subject. This way, it helps every student experience a broad and balanced curriculum.

We will make every effort to ensure that students study the subjects they opt for. However, we are constrained to constructing a timetable, staffing and group sizes. This is why we request that you also select two reserve options. Rest assured, that any student who is not allocated their top four choices will be offered a reserve. If there is a significant problem with their choice combination, they will be seen by Miss Rhodes or Mrs Buckingham.



Core subjects

All students will participate in the six Core subjects.



Option subjects

All students will participate in one subject from each block*, totalling four option subjects in their timetable.



1st reserve choice

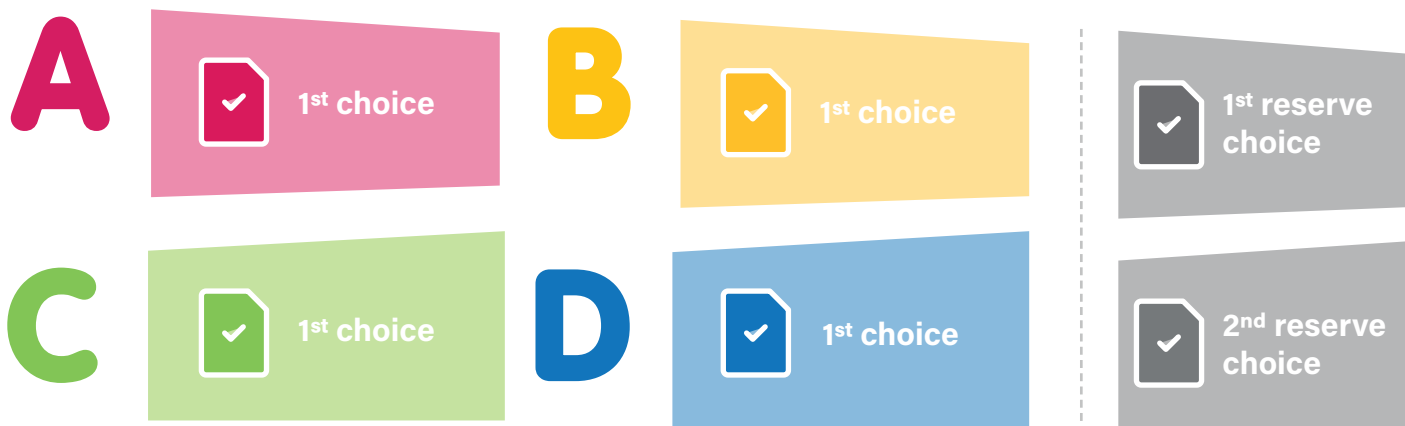


2nd reserve choice

Option blocks and subjects

Blocks are designed to make it clear and transparent what options are available. Blocks allow us to construct a timetable that works. Students will have to choose two reserve choices from any block.

⚠ **Students cannot choose their top four choice subjects from the same block.**





GCSE Business

GCSE Art, Craft & Design

**Cambridge National
Health & Social Care**

GCSE History

GCSE Separate Sciences

**Cambridge National
Sport Studies**



GCSE Art, Craft & Design

GCSE Business

**Cambridge National
Creative iMedia**

GCSE Dance

GCSE French

GCSE Geography

GCSE History

GCSE Statistics

BTEC Travel & Tourism



GCSE Business

GCSE Drama

GCSE Design & Technology

GCSE Film Studies

GCSE French

GCSE Geography

GCSE History

GCSE Religious Studies

**Cambridge National
Sport Studies**



GCSE Business

**Cambridge National
Creative iMedia**

GCSE Computer Science*

GCSE Design & Technology

NCFE Food & Cookery

GCSE Geography

**Cambridge National
Health & Social Care**

GCSE History

GCSE Music*

BTEC Travel & Tourism

*Owing to the specialist knowledge required in these subjects, acceptance onto the course will require students to pass an assessment to ensure it is suitable for them.

GCSE

ART, CRAFT & DESIGN

OPTION

Award

GCSE

Duration

2 Years

Examination Board
[AQA Art, Craft & Design](#)

Why study Art, Craft & Design?

GCSE Art is a creative and exciting course that allows you to explore a wide range of artistic techniques and develop your own style. Throughout the course, you will study drawing, painting and printmaking experimenting with different materials and processes. You will also learn about the work of artists, drawing inspiration from their styles and techniques. Your projects will be based on the following starting points, beginning with Food before moving on to your mock exam project. You will be assessed through a portfolio of your work, including your sketchbook and final pieces, as well as a timed exam where you will create a final project in response to an external brief. This course is perfect for anyone who loves to express themselves creatively and wants to build a strong foundation in visual arts.



How will I be assessed?

You are marked using four assessment objectives:

Develop, Refine, Record and Present.

- Each assessment objective is marked out of 24 with total marks out of 96.
- The coursework element is worth 60% and the externally set exam is worth 40%.
- The exam that you complete in Year 11 is a 10 hour practical exam completed over two school days.

What will I study?

Initially, you will develop and refine your skills by thinking carefully about the four assessment objectives. You will learn new skills and techniques you may not have experienced before, as well as learning how to analyse the work of different artists. As the course continues, you will be able to choose your own artists that relate to your chosen theme and then respond to these artists to demonstrate your understanding of their art work, culminating in a final piece.

GCSE Art, Craft & Design can lead to many exciting opportunities with the skills you have learnt and developed. You can study A Level Fine Art or Photography which can then progress to a range of degrees, with students completing courses in architecture, fine art, illustration and interior design to name a few.

GCSE

BUSINESS

OPTION



Award

GCSE

Duration

2 Years

Examination Board

✶ [Edexcel GCSE Business](#)

Why study Business

Delve into the intricate world of business, exploring small-scale operations to global juggernauts. You will explore how key business concepts such as operations, finance, marketing and human resources form the backbone of business decision-making. Learn the language of business and apply concepts to real-world scenarios, and navigate through the challenges and opportunities faced by modern businesses. You will learn how to scrutinise business opportunities and how to interpret, analyse and evaluate data sources to make business decisions.



What will I study?

You will develop knowledge and skills through the following topic areas:

- **Theme 1: Enterprise & Entrepreneurship** - Spotting a business opportunity, putting an idea into place, making the business effective and external influences.
- **Theme 2: Growth, marketing, operational decisions, financial decisions and HR.**

How will I be assessed?

The course is assessed through two written exams taken at the end of Year 11. The papers include both multiple choice and case study-based questions. Each exam is 1 hour 45 minutes and is worth 50% of your grade.

- **Paper 1:** Investigating a Small Business
- **Paper 2:** Building a Business

These topics are designed to give students a broad understanding of how businesses operate, the challenges they face and the decisions they need to make. Ultimately, studying GCSE Business equips students with a range of skills and knowledge that can be valuable in navigating the complexities of the business world and making informed decisions in both personal and professional contexts.

GCSE

COMPUTER SCIENCE *

OPTION



Award

GCSE

Duration

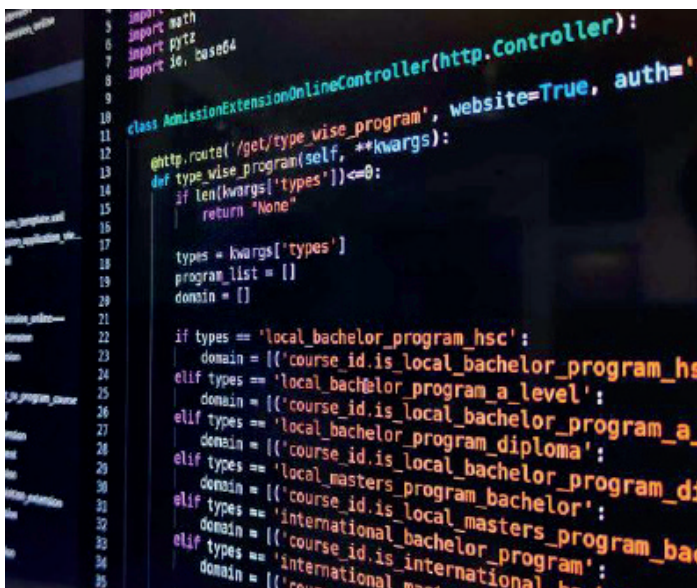
2 Years

Examination Board

[AQA GCSE Computer Science](#)

Why study Computer Science?

Have you ever seen the inside of a computer? Are you good at solving logic problems? Do you enjoy learning languages? Perhaps you already do some coding in your spare time because you enjoy the challenge and find it fun? If this sounds like you, then Computer Science could be a good choice.



What will I study?

Computer Science is not about creating graphics, animations or games and you won't be making snazzy presentations or spreadsheets. It is a technical and highly academic course for students who are really interested in how computers work.

- **Paper 1:** You will learn about computational thinking, code tracing, problem-solving and programming concepts including the design of effective algorithms and the planning, writing, testing and refining of code.
- **Paper 2:** You will develop your knowledge of wider computing theory, including data representation and binary arithmetic, computer hardware and software, networks; cyber security and privacy, database and Structured Query Language (SQL) and ethical, legal and environmental impacts of digital technology.

How will I be assessed?

Students are assessed through the following:

- **Paper 1** (50%) - 2hr - written paper focusing on computational thinking and programming.
- **Paper 2** (50%) - 1hr 45m - written examination focusing on wider computing theory.

The course will equip you with the logical and computational skills necessary for progression onto Level 3 IT courses such as A-level Computer Science, the AQA in Computing and other computer related studies.

*Acceptance onto the course will require students to pass an assessment to ensure it is suitable for them.

CAMBRIDGE NATIONAL

CREATIVE iMEDIA

OPTION



Award

Cambridge
National

Duration

2 Years
Level 1/2

Examination Board

✶ [OCR Creative iMedia](#)

Why study Creative iMedia?

This course offers you an exciting journey into the world of media, combining hands-on experience with industry-relevant skills. Through practical projects, you will explore a wide range of disciplines, including graphic design, moving image production, and photography. Using professional tools like Adobe Creative Suite, you will learn essential techniques such as layout design, typography, and colour theory, enabling them to create compelling visual content. This course emphasises creativity and critical thinking, empowering you to develop original ideas, from designing logos to producing moving image sequences. Every project is tailored to enhance technical proficiency and build a professional portfolio.



How will I be assessed?

- Unit R093: Creative iMedia in the Media Industry – Exam 35%
- Unit R094: Visual Identity and Digital Graphics – Coursework 30%
- Unit R098: Visual Imaging – Coursework 35%
- Unit R093: Creative iMedia in the Media Industry - In this unit you will learn about the media industry, digital media products, how they are planned and the media codes which are used to convey meaning, create impact and engage audiences.
- Unit R094: Visual Identity and Digital Graphics - In this unit you will learn how to develop visual brands for clients. You will also learn to apply the concepts of graphic design to create original digital graphics which incorporate your visual identity to engage a target audience.
- Unit R098: Visual Imaging - In this unit you will learn how to plan, create and review portfolios of visual imagery. You will plan and capture photographs and moving images using a digital camera and learn to edit and process photographs and video sequences to create meaningful products in response to client briefs.

GCSE

DANCE

OPTION



Award

GCSE

Duration

2 Years

Examination Board



AQA GCSE Dance

Why study Dance?

GCSE Dance is an exciting course that offers students the opportunity to develop their performance and choreography skills, alongside developing their understanding of professional dance through critical analysis. Dance is a powerful and expressive subject which encourages students to develop their creative, physical, emotional and intellectual capability; skills that are essential in GCSE Dance, but also for becoming confident and independent learners in all subjects.



How will I be assessed?

Component 1: Performance & Choreography (60% practical assessment)

- One duet/trio piece and two set solos from the exam board.
- One choreography based on a stimulus.

Component 2: Critical Analysis of Dance (40% written examination)

- Understanding of performance and choreography skills and techniques.
- Analysis of six professional works from a range of dance styles.

What will I study?

This course will develop your practical skills in dance alongside your ability to analyse professional dance. Throughout the two years you will:

- Improve your physical and expressive skills in dance through technique lessons.
- Become more confident when performing, both as a soloist and in groups.
- Enhance your ability to choreograph dances based on a stimulus.
- Critically analyse professional dances in order to understand the choreographic processes.

This course is ideal for anyone who is passionate about dance and is interested in furthering their training. It is an essential stepping stone for those who wish to study dance in higher education and pursue a career within the Performing Arts. GCSE Dance also supports students gain further key life skills such as communication, problem solving, confidence, analytical skills and interpersonal skills.

GCSE

DESIGN & TECHNOLOGY

OPTION



Award

GCSE

Duration

2 Years
Level 1/2

Examination Board

**Edexcel**
Design & Technology

Why study Design & Technology?

GCSE Design and Technology will develop your knowledge and understanding of how products are designed and manufactured. Throughout the course you will also examine material properties, manufacturing processes and explore your problem solving skills to illustrate your understanding of designing for a specific target market.



What will I study?

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

How will I be assessed?

The course is assessed through non-exam assessment and a written exam assessed in the second year of study. Each is worth 50% of the total grade.

GCSE Design and Technology complements study in many subjects such as art, business studies, media and ICT. This course is ideal for students wishing to design in the future. A career in design crosses many industries, from new technologies and modern products, to traditional hand skilled areas.

GCSE

DRAMA

OPTION



Award

GCSE

Duration

2 Years

Examination Board

☆ [Edexcel GCSE Drama](#)

Why study Drama?

GCSE Drama is a creative and exciting exploration into acting, devising and analysing performance skills. Drama is an empowering subject that encourages students to explore work physically and intellectually alongside the study of professional work.



What will I study?

- You improve your vocal, physical and performance skills through devising and performing.
- You study a complete text practically to support your analytical skills.
- You develop a performance of an extract from another text.
- You devise your own performance pieces based on a stimulus.
- You gain a fuller understanding of drama and the value of drama.

How will I be assessed?

Component 1 - Devising (40%, worth 60 marks)

- Starting from a stimulus, students create a devised piece of theatre and perform it to an audience. Students then analyse and evaluate this devising process and performance.

Component 2 - Performance from Text (20%, worth 48 marks)

- Students will perform two key extracts from a performance text to an audience and a visiting examiner. Component 2 is externally assessed.

Component 3 *Inspector Calls* - Theatre Makers in Practice (40%, 60 marks)

- Written examination of 1hr 45m
- Students practically explore and study one complete performance text chosen from a list supplied by Edexcel. They also watch a live theatre performance by a professional company.

This course can lead on to the BTEC National Extended Certificate in Performing Arts in Sixth Form, where students develop the skills needed to go to drama school or university. Therefore, GCSE Drama is of great interest to students planning a career in performing arts.

In addition, it offers key skills for any employment; a practical and dynamic response to spoken and written language, the ability to communicate with dynamism and impact, verbally and physically, and the confidence and ability to hold an audience.

GCSE

FILM STUDIES

OPTION

Award

GCSE

Duration

2 Years

Examination Board
 **Eduqas GCSE Film Studies**

Why study Film?

There is so much more to Film Studies than simply watching films. The in-depth study of film involves gaining an appreciation of film as an art form in terms of its visual storytelling. Studying film can enhance your understanding of the world, by exploring competing values, attitudes and beliefs. The course also incorporates a creative production element where you will be able to put what you have learnt into practice by making a short film or writing a screenplay.



What will I study?

You will study the following areas:

- US Film 1930-1960
- US Film 1961-1990
- US Independent film
- Global Film
- Contemporary UK Film

You will study the following concepts:

- Film Technology
- Narrative & Genre
- Representation
- Film Style
- Film Criticism

You will study the key elements of film form including cinematography, mise en scene, editing and sound. You will also study the contexts of your chosen films and what was happening when the film was made.

How will I be assessed?

- **Component 1: Key Developments in US Film**
-35% Exam
- **Component 2: Global Film – Narrative, Representation & Film Style** -35% Exam

Creative Production: There is a creative production element which allows you to showcase the film-making or screenwriting skills you have developed during the course by producing a film extract (video) or film extract screenplay (with storyboard). 30% coursework.

NCFE TECHNICAL AWARD

FOOD & COOKERY

OPTION



Award

V Cert

Duration

2 Years
Level 1/2

Examination Board

✱ [NCFE Level 1/2 Technical Award in Food & Cookery](#)

Why study Food & Cookery?

The Level 1/2 Technical Award in Food and Cookery is designed for students who have a passion for cooking and want to build on practical skills learnt in KS3. Food and Cookery is a varied subject to ensure students understand the importance of healthy eating and how to cook for themselves and others. This course aims to instil a love of cooking that leads to self-sufficiency and independence. This is an interesting course that could lead students to explore careers in the food industry, health promotion or dietetics.



What will I study?

Students will apply the principles of nutrition and health, ensure food is safe to eat, explore reasons people choose certain foods, and discover where our food comes from. Cooking each week furthers independence and knowledge of a wide range of ingredients whilst also learning about diet related health conditions, nutrition in each life stage and dietary choices.

Students will have an opportunity in this course to gain a range of transferrable skills such as time management, resilience, problem solving, patience, multitasking and organisational skills.

How will I be assessed?

This qualification has two assessments externally set by NCFE:

- One project based, non-examined assessment worth 60% of the award.
- The written exam is a mixture of multiple choice, short-answer and extended response questions, and is 40% of the award.

If you enjoy cooking and baking at home, have an interest in nutrition and/or sports, you will find this course insightful and rewarding.

GCSE

FRENCH

OPTION

Award

GCSE

Duration

2 Years

Examination Board

[AQA GCSE French](#)

Why study French?

Whilst studying French at GCSE level, students will be encouraged to develop their understanding of spoken and written forms of French. You will gain the ability to communicate effectively in French using a range of vocabulary, sentence structures and grammar, along with the knowledge of how to apply it.



What will I study?

Students will apply their knowledge and understanding in a variety of relevant contexts which reflect their previous learning and maturity. They will develop knowledge and understanding of countries and communities where French is spoken, and develop positive attitudes to French learning whilst being provided a suitable foundation for further study and/or practical use of French.

In GCSE French, a variety of teaching techniques cover the four skills: reading, writing, speaking and listening. Students take their examination in all four skills in Year 11. The 3 main themes are People and Lifestyle, Popular Culture and Communication and the World Around Us.

Continuing their studies to A Level, students can embrace a wider variety of careers including business, tourism, teaching and translation.

How will I be assessed?

There are four assessment objectives:

- **Writing 25%**
- **Speaking 25%**
- **Listening 25%**
- **Reading 25%**

All four skills are assessed at the end of the two year course.

GCSE

GEOGRAPHY

OPTION

Award

GCSE

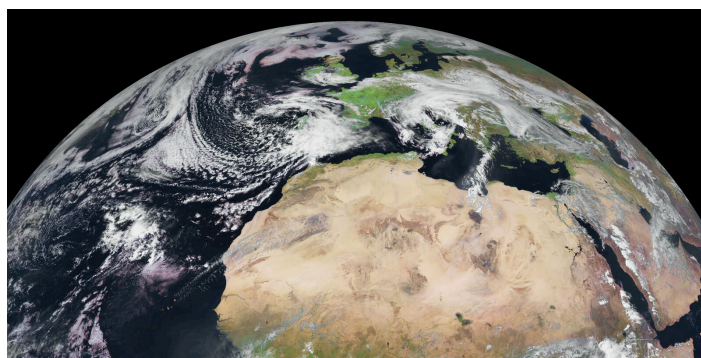
Duration

2 Years

Examination Board
[AQA GCSE Geography](#)

Why study Geography?

Geography empowers you to become an informed and active global citizen. You'll develop a crucial understanding of the intricate links between people and the planet, giving you the skills to interpret and interact with the world around you. Explore the dynamic physical landscapes and the complex patterns of human life, both in the UK and across the globe.



What will I study?

Living with the Physical Environment

This paper covers The Challenge of Natural Hazards, The Physical Environment of the UK, and The Living World topics. This gives a thorough understanding of the natural world and its processes, including tectonics, hurricanes, rainforests and our coasts and river and how climate change affects them all.

Challenges in the Human Environment

This paper covers Urban Issues and Challenges, The Changing Economic World, and The Challenge of Resource Management. These topics help to create 21st-century learners who understands urbanisation, development and the challenges regarding resources in both the UK, Low Income Countries and Newly Emerging Economies around the world.

Geographical Investigations

This is where you become a real Geographer! During two compulsory pieces of fieldwork, you will use investigation techniques, including enquiry, graphical skills, analysing charts, sources and maps. You'll also learn to evaluate complex issues through realistic decision-making exercises. This is your chance to apply all your knowledge and prove your skills in the real world.

How will I be assessed?

Paper 1: Living with the physical environment (1hr 30m) 35%

- Section A: Natural Hazards
- Section B: The Living World
- Section C: Physical Landscapes

Paper 2: Challenges in the human environment (1hr 30m) 35%

- Section A: Urban Issues
- Section B: The Changing Economic World
- Section C: Resource Management

Paper 3: Geographical Applications (1hr 15m) 30%

- Section A: Issue Evaluation based on a pre released information booklet
- Section B: Fieldwork based on your and example fieldwork data and investigations

CAMBRIDGE NATIONAL

HEALTH & SOCIAL CARE

OPTION



Award

Cambridge
National

Duration

2 Years
Level 1/2

Examination Board



**OCR Level 1/2 Cambridge
National in Health & Social Care**

Why study Health & Social Care?

To work in a health or social care setting, it is essential to understand the rights of individuals, person-centred values and how they can be applied. This qualification will help you to develop this knowledge and to understand the importance of effective communication skills when working in these settings. You will also develop the skills needed to ensure a safe and hygienic environment.



What will I study?

You will study the key aspects of health and social care, and have the opportunity to apply what you learn through a number of practical experiences. This will involve the studying of two mandatory units and one optional unit.

The three units are:

- **R032: Principles of care in health and social care settings**
- **R033: Supporting individuals through life events**
- **R034: Creative and therapeutic activities**

The course offers an excellent foundation for those students wishing to progress into health related fields or continue with Post-16 Health and Social Care Level 3 study.

How will I be assessed?

The course contains a mixture of examination (40%) and set assignments (60%).

1. **R032: Examination**
2. **R033: Set assignment**
3. **R034: Set assignment**

GCSE

HISTORY

OPTION



Award

GCSE

Duration

2 Years

Examination Board

[Edexcel GCSE History](#)

Why study History?

...it's great news for your future! History will help you understand how the world was shaped and make you consider today's society in a different way. People who study history are fearless explorers of the past. They investigate past societies, politics, cultures, conflicts and much more. Are you interested in the way that the world has developed through the ages? Do you enjoy investigation, research and discovery? Are you keen to improve your skills? Then this is the course for you. It might be about the past, but there are plenty of careers in history that you can pursue.



What will I study?

This course will help sharpen your critical thinking abilities. Students will be using some of the following skills: **analysis, research, communication, problem solving and judgement.** We will seek to analyse a range of evidence, organise this and then develop conclusions. Some of the topics we study are **Life in Weimar and Nazi Germany, The British Sector on the Western Front during WWI and Medicine from the Medieval Period through to present day.** The Russell Group recommends history as an excellent subject for keeping your options open when choosing a degree at university level.

How will I be assessed?

- **Paper 1:** Medicine in Britain 1250-present and The British Sector of the Western Front 1914-18, written examination 1hr 20mins worth 30%.
- **Paper 2:** Anglo-Saxon and Norman England 1060-88 and American West 1835-1895, written examination 1hr 50mins worth 40%.
- **Paper 3:** Weimar and Nazi Germany 1918-1939, written examination 1hr 20mins worth 30%.

History is so diverse that it helps students to develop important transferable skills. It is well respected by many employers and is therefore suited to a vast number of different careers. With your analytical, writing, debate and detective skills you'll be primed for a huge range of careers. Areas you could pursue are; law, politics, business, economics, journalism, TV, marketing, archaeology and teaching.

GCSE

MUSIC *

OPTION



Award

GCSE

Duration

2 Years

Examination Board

[Eduqas GCSE Music](#)

Why study Music?

Music is a challenging and rewarding creative experience centred around music performance, composition, and appraisal. If you already play an instrument or sing, you can develop your skills and get a GCSE qualification out of it! If you do not already play an instrument or sing, you can take the opportunity to learn new skills which could stay with you for life.



What will I study?

In GCSE Music you will focus on the three main elements of musical education, **performing, composing, and appraising**. You will develop instrumental skills in the instrument of your choice and have access to subsidised peripatetic lessons to aid your development. You will be introduced to the technical skills needed to compose your own pieces of music using industry-standard software. Finally, you will study the process of analysing musical pieces in detail and be able to explore how great pieces of music were put together.

How will I be assessed?

The course is assessed through both coursework and an externally assessed examination in Year 11.

- **Performance** consists of a solo and ensemble (group) performance – 30%.
- **Composing** consists of one free composition and a composition to brief – 30%.
- **The Appraising exam** - 40%.

Within your lessons alongside performance practice and composition, you will cover four areas of study, which include:

- **Pop Music**
- **Film Music**
- **Music for Ensemble**
- **Musical Forms and Devices.**

Studying music opens the doors to many careers as musicians can demonstrate a wide range of transferable skills including analytical skills, aural awareness, mathematical skills, teamwork and leadership.

*Acceptance onto the course will require students to pass an assessment to ensure it is suitable for them.

GCSE

RELIGIOUS STUDIES

OPTION



Award

GCSE

Duration

2 Years

Examination Board

[AQA GCSE Religious Studies](#)

Why study Religion?

If you have a curious mind, like debate and enjoy developing an argument, this is the course for you. You will be challenged with 'ultimate questions' about belief, values, meaning, purpose and truth, enabling students to develop their own opinions whilst gaining an appreciation of how religion, philosophy and ethics form the basis of our culture. You will develop analytical, leadership and research skills. All these transferable skills make this a superb choice. This subject will certainly improve knowledge of the wider world and promote awareness of modern world issues.



What will I study?

The course seeks to answer some of the fundamental questions of life, with a particular focus on the debate of ethical issues. Some of our more popular topics are: **War, Peace and Religion, Life after Death, Crime and Punishment and Human Rights.** Students will develop a critical mind, whilst enhancing their own views and opinions. It is an excellent subject to broaden your understanding of the world. The skills this course helps to develop are extremely useful in any type of employment. Some students choose further education studying sociology, philosophy, marketing, TV and media and journalism. This is a great qualification leading to employment in complementary areas such as teaching, social work, law, the travel industry, and numerous others.

How will I be assessed?

The assessment comprises 100% external written papers.

- **Examination 1:** Christianity and Islam 1hr 45m
- **Examination 2:** Thematic Studies 1hr 45m

Religious Studies is highly valued by Russell Group Universities, colleges, and employers. Students of all abilities will be challenged and inspired, whilst developing valuable skills sought after by higher education institutions and employers.

GCSE

SEPARATE SCIENCES

OPTION



Award

GCSE

Duration

2 Years

Examination Board

☆ [AQA GCSE Separate Sciences](#)
[Biology, Chemistry & Physics](#)

Why study Separate Sciences?

While the combined science qualification is compulsory, with this option students gain three GCSE Science qualifications rather than two.



How will I be assessed?

Students take two exam papers per subject at the end of the course.

- Each paper is equally weighted at 50%.
- Each subject has eight required practicals that will be examined in these papers.

What will I study?

Students on the separate sciences course cover more content than GCSE Combined Science, which provides a greater preparation for those interested in studying science at A Level. Students gain separate GCSEs in biology, chemistry and physics.

- **Biology:** The content is based on key biological concepts and principles such as cell division, respiration and photosynthesis.
- **Chemistry:** Important principles in chemistry are studied, such as atomic structure and the periodic table, bonding, structure and the properties of matter, as well as quantitative chemistry, are also included.
- **Physics:** The key areas of physics include energy, particles and forces. Students will also explore the physical key concepts of the atom and space.

Studying the sciences separately gives students the confidence to select individual sciences for further study at A Level, whether they wish to choose one particular direction or continue to study all three sciences. Options are virtually endless and provide a vast range of fascinating and influential vocations from medicine to space travel.

CAMBRIDGE NATIONAL SPORT STUDIES

OPTION



Award

Cambridge
National

Duration

2 Years
Level 1/2

Examination Board

✶ [OCR Level 1/2 Cambridge National
in Sport Studies](#)

Why study Sport?

The Cambridge Nationals Sports Studies course is an exciting course that allows you to develop your knowledge and understanding of the wider concepts of sport. You will develop a range of skills through involvement in sport in different contexts and roles. You will apply your theoretical knowledge to practical situations.



How will I be assessed?

You will be assessed in a number of different ways:

1. Contemporary Issues in Sport – 60 minute exam.
2. Developing Sports Skills & Sports Leadership – Practical performance in officiating, playing a team sport and playing individual sport.
3. Written coursework and leading a practical session.

What will I study?

This course is made up of three different units that you will complete over the duration of the course.

Unit 1 - Contemporary Issues in Sport (exam)

- In this unit, you will explore a range of topical and contemporary issues in sport.

Unit 2 - Developing Sports Skills & Sports Leadership (practical/coaching)

- By completing this unit, you will develop your skills, techniques and use of tactics/strategies, compositional ideas and the understanding and practical skills required to be an effective sport leader and to plan, deliver and review safe and effective sporting activity sessions.

Unit 3 - Outdoor and Adventurous Activity

- You will explore a range of OAA and the clothing, technologies and safety requirements of them.
- You will be assessed on your performance in kayaking.

Students who have been successful on this course can go on to study a range of different sport related Level 3 courses at college or Sixth Form. This course also prepares students who want to pursue sports coaching careers or careers in sports development.

GCSE

STATISTICS

OPTION

Award

GCSE

Duration

2 Years

Examination Board
Edexcel in GCSE Statistics

Why study Statistics?

GCSE Statistics is a great option for all students. Not only is it a well-respected academic qualification, it can also help students to achieve a higher grade in mathematics. GCSE statistics complements a wide range of other subjects at both GCSE and A-level. Studying GCSE statistics opens a door to a variety of vocations, from weather forecasting to biological sciences or manufacturing engineering. It can transform interests into careers. Statistics isn't just a subject; it's a strategic advantage, a life skill, and a stepping stone to boundless opportunities.



What will I study?

The following areas will be covered within the course:

- Collecting, recording and processing data
- Data collection principles
- Representing data
- Comparing data
- Interpretation and evaluation of data

The course contains specific emphasis on 'The Statistical Enquiry Cycle' (SEC). The set of stages through which Statistical investigations pass:

- Setting hypotheses and the strategy for the investigation.
- Deciding on sampling and data collection methods and then collecting the data.
- Diagrammatic representations of results interpreted.
- Suitable measures found and interpreted.
- Findings interpreted in the context of the investigation.

How will I be assessed?

This course is 100% exam based. There will be two exams at the end of the year, each worth 50% of your overall grade.

GCSE Statistics has a Foundation tier (grades 1 – 5) and a Higher tier (grades 4 – 9). Learners must take two question papers at the same tier.

Both papers include short, medium and open response questions. All the content will be assessed on both papers.

BTEC

TRAVEL & TOURISM

OPTION



Award

BTEC

Duration

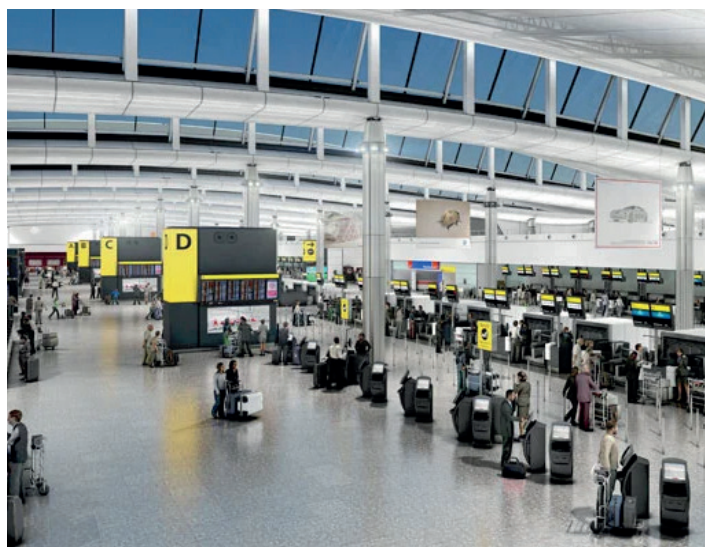
2 Years
Level 1/2

Examination Board

 **Pearson BTEC Award in
Travel & Tourism**

Why study Travel & Tourism?

This subject is a fascinating and popular vocational study of the travel and tourism industry. Ideal for anyone interested in pursuing a future career in this exciting sector, hoping to work abroad or for students who wish to develop important employability skills such as organisation and communication, marketing, event management, planning and customer service. You will delve into the workings of contemporary travel organisations, explore various countries and investigate the operational procedures of the travel and tourism businesses.



What will I study?

You will explore the UK travel and tourism sector, the business background of the industry and investigate how leading organisations train staff and adapt to survive during global changes. You will investigate how people buy their holidays and plan them accordingly, develop an understanding of where and why people holiday within the UK, what attracts tourists and what makes them successful.

Through this course, you will gain knowledge about the marketing process and why certain types of customers choose specific holidays and both role-play and master scenarios in which you may find yourself in future employment situations.

You will also look at the factors affecting worldwide travel and tourism, and how different factors can affect travel trends around the globe. Over the two years you will build up a portfolio of project work and sit an exam.

How will I be assessed?

1. **The UK Travel & Tourism Organisations Destinations** - Internal 36GLH (guided learning hours)
2. **Customer Needs in Travel & Tourism**- Internal portfolio- 36GLH
3. **Influences on Global Travel & Tourism** External written exam - 48GHL

Some advice for students

Who decides what I study?

Basically, **YOU** do.

We want you to choose subjects that you want to do. Everyone is happier that way. But you need to think things through carefully and remember all of these points:

1.



Communicate

Firstly, you must consult with your parents/ carers, teachers, form tutor and Head of Year.

2.



Goals & Future

Secondly, should you have a determined career goal, then choose the option subjects that support this. You may be undecided at this point, so try to focus on subjects that you have an interest in.

3.



Research

Thirdly, you must check any particular requirements of the subject. You may not be allowed to begin an option subject if your previous attitude to learning hasn't been positive.

Top Tips

Dos' and don'ts for choosing options

Dos' 

 **Don'ts**

Do choose subjects which you like and are excited about



Do choose subjects which you are successful in



Do choose subjects which you may need for further education or potential career choice



Do find out everything that you can about the subject before choosing it. Once you have started, we expect you to stick with it for two years



Do talk to people who know you



Do listen to any advice your subject teachers give you



Don't choose a subject just because your friend has chosen it



Don't choose a subject just because you like or dislike a particular teacher, they may not end up teaching you



Don't miss the submission deadline! **Wednesday 25th March 2026**

What happens next?

All options have to be submitted online by **Wednesday 25th March 2026**. You will meet with Miss Rhodes or Mrs Buckingham if there is a significant problem with your choices. Option choices will not be given to students on a first come, first served basis. In the Summer Term, you will get a letter confirming your options.

ⓘ **Students who miss the deadline are at high risk of not securing their first choices.**

Options online

User guide

Students benefit from the convenience of being able to select choices online through a simple, user-friendly portal.

Once you have reviewed your login details, you can access information about the option subjects. To make things even easier, once you have submitted your choices, they are instantly available for the Academy to see.

Step 1.

Log in

Students will be given an individual username and password.

Step 2.

Choose & submit

Students will be able to login and select their option subjects following the instructions and guidance available on the portal.

25
MARCH

Final deadline for option choices to be submitted

Important dates & events

Date	Event
Wednesday 28 th January	Year 9 Options Evening. Doors open from 6pm
Wednesday 12 th February	Taster session deadline
Week commencing 16 th March	Taster Day 1 and Taster Day 2
Wednesday 25 th March	Final deadline for pathway forms to be submitted

ⓘ If there is something at school that is worrying you or your child, please ensure that they speak to a member of staff about it, or you can telephone and speak to us directly.

Important dates

Wednesday 28th January 2026

Year 9 Options Evening

Friday 6th February 2026

Taster Session Deadline

Week commencing 16th March 2026

Taster Day 1 and Taster Day 2

Wednesday 25th March 2026

Options Submission Deadline




Disclaimer: Every effort has been made to ensure the information in this guide is accurate at the time of printing. However, due to updates and changes from examination boards, some details may be subject to change.



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