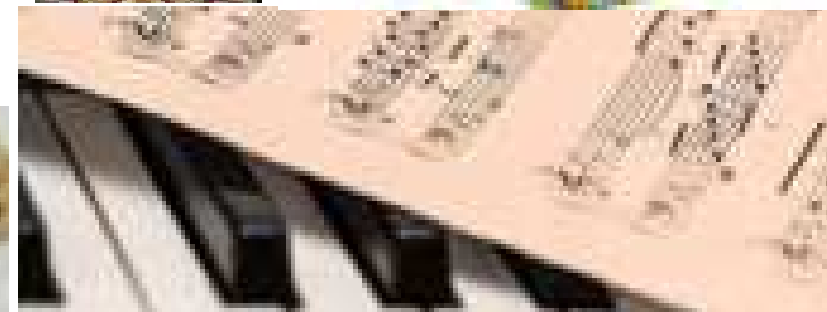
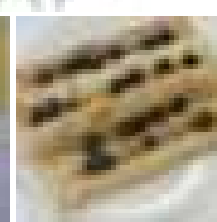
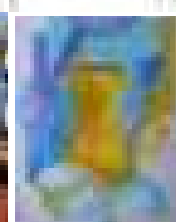
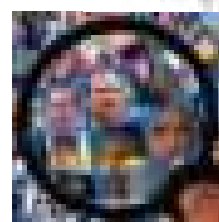
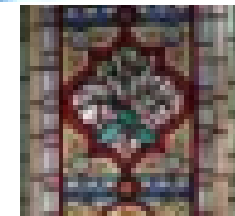
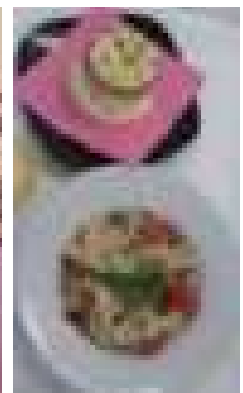
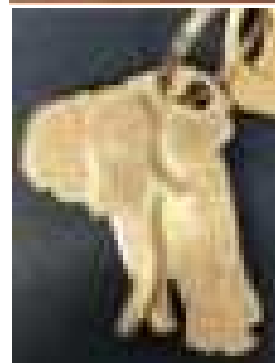
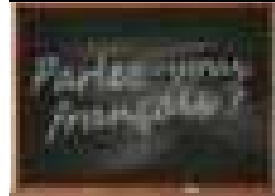




Your Future, Your Options

Year 8 Options 2026



1. Introduction

Welcome to the Year 8 Options Booklet.

This booklet aims to provide information about the courses available at Sharnbrook Academy to students entering Year 9 in September 2026. All courses are of three years duration, continuing to the end of Year 11.



Students will follow the core subjects as well as making 4 subject choices as follows:

Guided Choice 1: Humanities subject
Geography, History or Religious Studies

Guided Choice 2: Creative or Modern Foreign Language subject

Dance, Drama, Fine Art, Graphic Communication, Music, French or Spanish

Free Choice 3: All subjects

Free Choice 4: All subjects

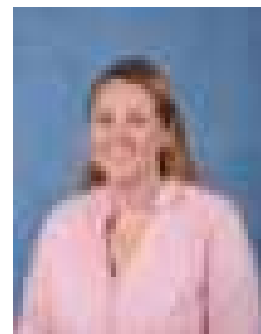
Further details regarding each subject can be found on the school website <https://sharnbrook.academy/options-subjects-information/>

Sharnbrook Academy offers a range of GCSE and Cambridge Nationals (Vocational) courses. For an explanation about each type of qualification please see an 'Explanation of Qualifications' on page 8 of this book and make use of the Government's National Careers Service: (nationalcareers.service.gov.uk).



A number of staff will be involved in supporting students as they make their subject choices. If you have any queries concerning the course selection process, please contact your form tutor in the first instance.

Mrs L Watt
Interim Vice Principal -
Academic



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**Find out as much as you can
about all the courses you are
interested in.**

2. Choosing Your Courses

Choosing subjects and qualifications to study in Years 9, 10 and 11 can seem daunting. Don't panic! There is a lot of information and advice available to help you choose what is right for you.

We believe that breadth of study remains important for all students, whilst also allowing the freedom to specialise where appropriate.

All students will choose one humanities subject, a creative or MFL subject, plus 2 free choices. Within these free choice slots, students may select additional humanities, creative or MFL subjects if they wish. Please note, only one Art subject (Fine Art or Graphic Communication) and one Sports course (Outdoor Education or PE) can be taken. Departments will guide you to choose the most appropriate course for you.

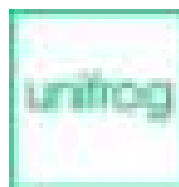


What sort of person are you?

To help you decide what to choose, start by asking yourself what you enjoy doing and what you are good at.

Think about:

- What you are interested in: it could be other cultures and languages, writing projects, helping people, being outdoors or designing things.
- What types of activity you enjoy most: working things out and thinking them through, practical activities or artistic options like painting, drawing or performing music.
- What you are like at home, as well as in school. What skills have you developed following outside interests?



Use your Unifrog account to explore your career ideas and work out which options will be best for you.

Good information is the key to making successful choices. Make sure that you allow yourself enough time to research your career ideas, option choices and possible progression routes.

What do I want to do when I finish my courses in 2029?

Do you know what you want to do after you leave school? Maybe you already have some ideas – or maybe not. When selecting your courses you should consider a number of questions.

Do you want to:

- stay on at Sharnbrook Sixth Form?



- go to College?
- get an Apprenticeship?
- plan to go to University to study a specific subject?
- not have to think about any of this at the moment.

These could all influence which options you choose now.



What qualifications do I need to get there?

If you have got a career in mind there may be some subject choices that are especially useful. If you know what you want to do later in life, such as become a doctor, a police officer, air cabin crew or zoologist, you should find out what qualifications you need to get there.

For more information about what qualifications you may need for any job you may be interested in, visit the explore careers section at www.nationalcareers.service.gov.uk

When researching your options do keep in mind what progression routes your option choices could lead to.

Will it help me in my future career?

A good deal of information, advice and guidance will be available before the final decision about course choices is reached. Students should be prepared to seek individual advice from appropriate staff (form tutors, subject staff, careers staff and head of house) as well as using Unifrog to explore career routes and subject combinations. It is hoped that considerable discussion, both at school and at home, will lead to the most appropriate choices being made.



What are the right options for me?

It is important to choose options that interest and motivate you.

- What interests you?
- What makes you work hard?

Do I like the subject?

The most important thing is that you choose courses that you think you will enjoy. Be careful that you do not choose a subject just because your friends are going to do it or because you like the teacher taking you this year (you may get a different teacher next year).

Am I good at it?

Obviously choosing a subject in which you can be successful will increase personal satisfaction and levels of motivation.

Will my course choices keep my future options open?

All students continue to study a strong core of subjects that provide an essential foundation for future learning. Alongside this, your option choices give you the opportunity to shape your pathway around the subjects you enjoy, and those in which you feel you can achieve highly. You do not need to choose a broad mix for the sake of it; instead you should select subjects that suit your interests, strengths and future plans. However, please keep in mind that some A-level or Level 3 vocational courses may need you to have studied specific subjects at Key Stage 4.

Do I know what the course will involve?

This booklet contains information on the courses available next year. Further details are shown on the Academy website. Students should actively seek further information, advice and guidance from subject teachers.

All departments will be providing information over the next few weeks, including subjects you may not have studied before.



The Careers Team

The school has a dedicated Careers Adviser who is in school two days a week offering interviews to help guide students through their career choices and future options. As students start to consider their future, we offer careers education and guidance via the curriculum and 1:1 meetings with the Careers Adviser, which all students will be invited to attend.



The landscape of education, training and employment opportunities that students and parents need to navigate is more complex and challenging than that faced by previous generations. In year 8 students have reached the first key decision making point in their career journey.

Help for Parents and Carers

As a parent or carer you will be keen to help your child make decisions about their future – without limiting their options? If you need to find out more we would suggest the following sites:

<https://www.gov.uk/browse/education>

This is the Government's site for education and learning. There are links to find out more about education, apprenticeships and training for 14-19 year olds.

<https://nationalcareersservice.gov.uk>

The National Careers Service has advisers to offer careers information. You can take an online skills assessment, answering questions about your interests, to see careers that may suit you. You can browse hundreds of job profiles to discover what different roles involve, including qualifications needed, possible salary, progression opportunities and a description of daily tasks.



Final Tips:

Remember:

- Think carefully about the subjects you are good at and consider taking the subjects that interest you most, as this may lead to your best results.
- Use all the information available to you to research the courses carefully, and talk to your subject teachers, form tutor and family about your choices.
- Think ahead to your future; if you have a career in mind, research the qualifications you need.
- Don't rush your decisions or leave them until the last minute.
- Don't choose a subject because you think it looks "EASY". There is no such thing as an easy subject as all courses will stretch and challenge you.



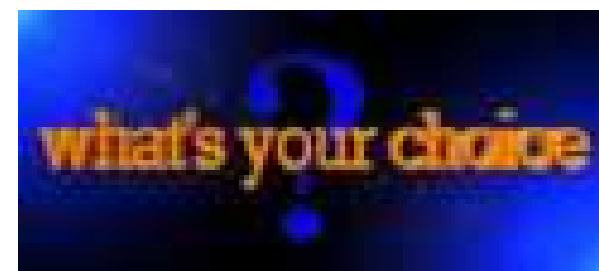
3. Key Dates 2026

Make sure you meet the deadlines for submitting your choices to avoid disappointment.

March 2026		Options process begins. Details provided to students in lessons.
Tuesday	24th March	Year 8 Parents' Consultation.
Week beg Monday	13th April	• Assembly with Mrs Watt. • Options booklet issued to students. • Unifrog activities completed in IT lessons.
Thursday	23rd April	Options information evening 5.00pm - 7.30pm.
Friday	24th April	Options choice form open for completion.
Wednesday	6th May	Option choices form deadline.

Throughout the above period there will be an on-going support programme including guidance from subject specialists and form tutors.

Week ending	5th June	Option subjects confirmed with timetable for launch lessons.
Weeks beg Monday	8th/22nd June	Option launch lessons begin (3 per subject).



4. Organisation of Curriculum

The course details outlined in this booklet are divided into two categories:

- Core subjects
- Optional subjects

Core subjects

These are subjects taken by ALL students and they consist of:

- English language and English literature
- Mathematics
- Science - Separate or Combined

These are full examination courses leading to GCSEs.

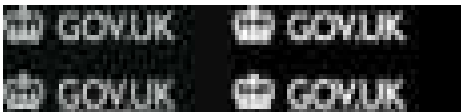
Students will also continue with Core PE lessons.

Optional subjects

The optional subjects available are listed alphabetically in this booklet with further details available online. Some subjects have a range of courses available to meet the learning preferences of the students.

Explanation of Qualifications

For more information about the different qualifications and to find out what the qualification levels mean please visit the GOV.UK website.



Qualifications available in GCSE and Cambridge Nationals

The table below outlines the comparative grades of GCSE and Vocational Cambridge Nationals. GCSE's are Level 2 qualifications and a grade 4 is termed a standard pass.

GCSE	Vocational Qualification
A*	Level 3 Distinction
A	Level 3 Distinction
B	Level 3 Distinction
C	Level 3 Distinction
D	Level 3 Merit
E	Level 3 Merit
F	Level 3 Pass
G	Level 3 Pass
H	Level 3 Pass
I	Level 3 Pass
J	Level 3 Pass
K	Level 3 Pass

To see examples of qualifications and how the different levels compare please visit the Ofqual website.



Entry to Sixth Form Please note that when applying to the sixth form there may be specific requirements for courses. Please see the sixth form courses and admissions sections on the school website for full details.



5. Subject Index

Core Subjects

- ENGLISH LANGUAGE
- ENGLISH LITERATURE
- MATHEMATICS
- SCIENCE
- CORE PHYSICAL EDUCATION



Guided and Optional Subjects:

Students can choose 1 humanities subject, 1 creative/MFL subject and 2 free choices.

ART AND DESIGN	10	HISTORY	19
BUSINESS	11	LANGUAGES	19
COMPUTER SCIENCE	12	MUSIC	20
CREATIVE iMEDIA	13	OUTDOOR EDUCATION	21
DANCE	14	PHYSICAL EDUCATION	22
DESIGN & TECHNOLOGY	14	RELIGIOUS STUDIES	23
DRAMA	15	SOCIOLOGY	24
FILM STUDIES	16		
FOOD PREPARATION AND NUTRITION	17		
GEOGRAPHY	18		



ART AND DESIGN

(Guided Choice 2 - Creative subject)

There are two different Art courses available at GCSE: (please note you can only take 1 art course)

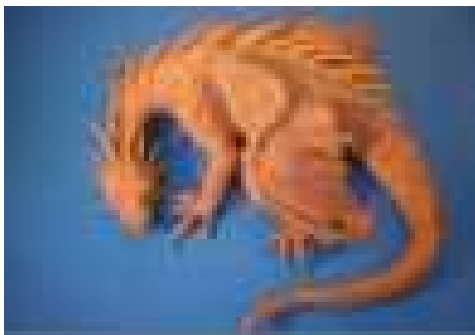
- Fine Art
- Graphic Communication

FINE ART

This course offers a broad range of skills which develop a competency in drawing and painting initially. With a foundation of skills learned in year 9 and the development of individual projects in years 10 and 11, students are able to evolve creative and diverse outcomes to a high standard. The range of work produced is also supported by referencing artists' approaches and techniques.

Students will have the opportunity to explore types of drawing, mixed media, 3D ceramics, printmaking and painting. Areas of study cover still life work, portraiture and a range of mixed themes. Students will need to purchase their own sketchbook and some drawing and painting equipment for the start of the course.

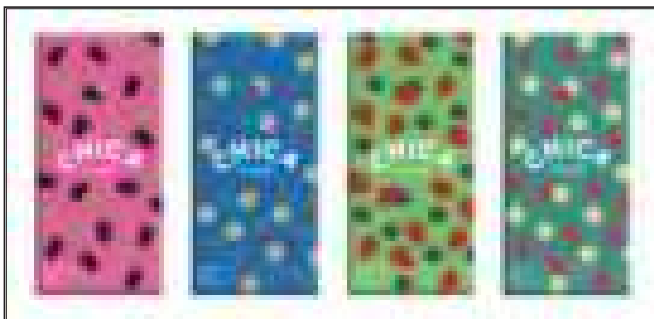
If you wish to work in any of the creative industries as an artist or designer, and plan to take A level art in the 6th form, you should choose one of these courses to progress to further art courses/training.



Assessment Method

All courses in art and design are externally moderated and are weighted:

- 60% Coursework (as a major independent project developed in year 10 and 11)
- 40% Exam (a 10 hour practical in April of year 11).



For further course details please see the school website

GRAPHIC COMMUNICATION

Graphic communication is the process of conveying information and ideas in visual form, using image and text. Its messages are displayed on posters, logos, packaging, book covers, apps and advertising.

This is a specialist course that combines artistic flair, design ideas and digital and traditional techniques. We aim to develop students' visual communication skills.

All projects will include visual research and drawing as starting points, but the main focus will be on digital skills in lettering, illustration and photography. Students will become proficient in the use of Adobe Illustrator and Photoshop.

Students will be expected to have a set of sketching pencils, colouring pencils, fine liner pens and access to a camera.

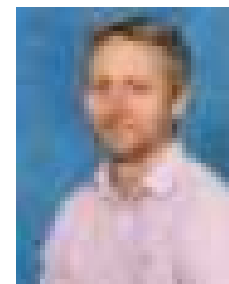
Assessment Method

All courses in art and design are externally moderated and are weighted:

- 60% Coursework Portfolio (developed across the 3 years)
- 40% Controlled Assignment (a 10 hour practical in April of year 11).

For further information see

Mr C Webb



BUSINESS

GCSE Business Studies - OCR

Business makes the world go round. It creates wealth, economies depend on it, and the profits that businesses make finance public services.

In business studies GCSE you will study topics in the following areas:

Business Activity - what is an entrepreneur and what makes them successful? You will learn about the different types of businesses and who owns them. Decisions re production, sales and pricing, and where products should be made.

Marketing - how do businesses find out who their customers and competitors are? What products are required? The life of a product from design, production, introduction and growth.

People (Human Resources) - how businesses recruit and train the right staff and keep them working well. Organisational structure and employment law.

Business Operations - production methods used to make everyday products you might buy. The importance of quality and efficiency, customer service and business location.

Finance - business set up funding, operational costs and making a profit. Financial statements.

Influences on Business - consideration of the environment and economic climate. You will also look at the ever increasing importance of ethics on the public image of the business.

Assessment Method

Assessment consists of 2 written exam papers completed at the end of Year 11:

Paper 1: Business Activity, Marketing and People. Worth 50% - 1hr 30 minutes.

Paper 2: Operations, Finance and Influences on Business. Worth 50% - 1hr 30 minutes.

Students who opt for business often wish to learn more about the world of work, are keen to pursue a career in management, or set up their own business.

You will use a variety of skills throughout the course including collecting and interpreting data, communicating your findings, and identifying and developing links between different parts of the subject. These skills are in great demand and are recognised and highly valued by employers, colleges and universities. There are a variety of higher education courses that are based around business studies.

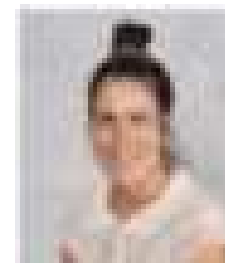


Business courses are an ideal qualification if you wish to go straight into employment because they give you an understanding of how businesses are organised and the importance of staff and customers. Some areas of employment have further learning opportunities within them, such as apprenticeships.



For further information see

Mrs T Lloyd



For further course details please see the school website

COMPUTER SCIENCE

GCSE Computer Science - OCR

Why choose Computer Science?

Computer Science is a dynamic and challenging subject that helps you understand the technology shaping the modern world. From smartphones and games to artificial intelligence and cybersecurity, Computer Science is about how computers work, how they communicate, and how we use programming to solve real world problems.

This GCSE is an excellent choice for students who enjoy problem solving, logical thinking and technology. You will learn how to think like a computer scientist, while developing valuable skills that are highly sought after by employers and universities.

Outline of course

The course combines theory with practical programming, giving a strong foundation in how digital systems work and how software is created.



Computer Systems:

You will explore what happens inside a computer and how devices connect and communicate, including:

- how hardware and software work together
- memory, storage and data representation
- computer networks and how the internet works
- cyber security and protecting data
- systems software ie operating systems
- ethical, legal, cultural and environmental impacts of digital technology

Computational Thinking, Algorithms and Programming:

This unit focuses on how problems are solved using code and logic. You will learn:

- how to design and analyse algorithms
- programming fundamentals using Python
- how to write efficient, robust programmes
- Boolean logic and design making
- how professional programmers use development tools and environments

Assessment Method

This is a linear course which means all assessments are taken at the end of Year 11.

Paper 1: Computer Systems

Written exam (non-calculator) - 1 hour 30 minutes
80 marks - worth 50% of the GCSE.

A mixture of multiple choice, short answer and extended response questions

Paper 2: Computational Thinking, Algorithms and Programming

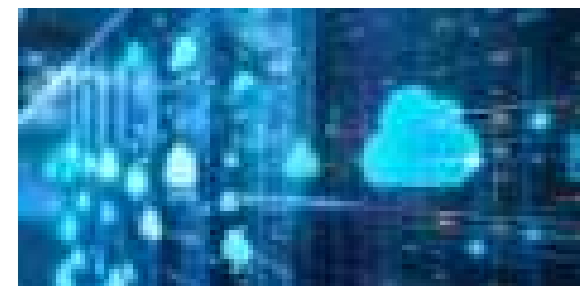
Written exam - 1 hour 30 minutes - 80 marks - worth 50% of the GCSE.

Includes questions where you will write or refine algorithms using Python or OCR'S reference language.

By studying Computer Science, you will develop:

- Logical and computational thinking skills
- Problem-solving and analytical skills
- Programming and debugging skills
- Resilience and independence
- An understanding of digital responsibility and online safety

These skills are useful in almost every career pathway, not just computing.



For further information see

Mr M Dunn



CREATIVE iMEDIA

Cambridge National Certificate in Creative Media level 1/2 - OCR

Creative iMedia offers an alternative (or companion) to Computer Science and is assessed through a combination of written examination and coursework.

You may be interested in this if you want an engaging qualification where you will use your learning in practical, real-life situations, such as:

- Developing visual identities for clients
- Planning and creating original digital graphics
- Planning, creating and reviewing original digital media products

The qualification will help you to develop learning and skills that can be used in other life and work situations, such as:

- Thinking about situations and deciding what is required to be successful
- Exploring different options and choosing the best way forward to solve a problem
- Exploring and generating original ideas to find imaginative solutions to problems
- Selecting the best tools and techniques to solve a problem
- Appropriate use of media to convey meaning
- Use of planning techniques to complete tasks in an organised and timely way

Outline of course

Unit R093: Creative iMedia in the media industry:
Exam - worth 40%

- the sectors, products and job roles that form the media industry
- the legal and ethical issues considered, and processes used to plan and create digital media products
- how media codes are used within the creation of media products to convey meaning, create impact and engage audiences
- how to choose the most appropriate format and properties for different media products

Completing this unit will provide you with the basic skills for further study or a range of creative job roles within the media industry.

Unit R094: Visual identity and digital graphics:
Coursework - worth 30%

- how to develop visual identities for clients.
- how to apply the concepts of graphic design to create original digital graphics which incorporate your visual identity to engage a target audience.

Completing this unit will introduce the foundations for further study or a wide range of job roles within the media industry.

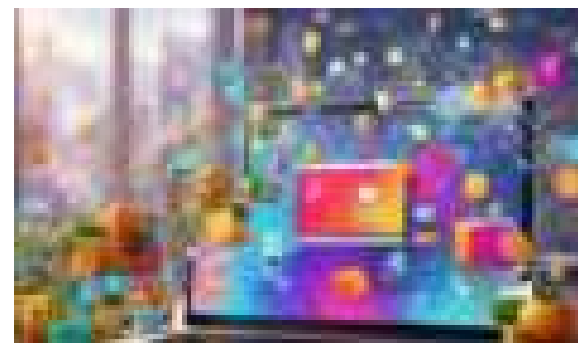


For further course details please see the school website

Unit R099: Digital Games: Coursework - worth 30%

- how to interpret client briefs to devise original digital game concepts.
- how to create, edit, test and export playable digital games you have designed
- how to plan digital games effectively and use a Game Design Document to create engagement among developers and clients.

Completing this unit will provide you with the basic skills for further study or a range of creative and technical job roles within the media industry.



For further information see

Mr M Dunn



DANCE

(Guided Choice 2 - Creative subject)

GCSE Dance - AQA

Outline of course

This course is intended to develop students' understanding and appreciation of a range of dance styles, through performing, choreographing and viewing dances. Students will have opportunities to learn new dance techniques, take part in choreography workshops and view professional dance works both on video and at the theatre. Dance is a performance art and students will be expected to take part in any performance opportunities that arise to prepare them for the practical examination at the end of the course.

Assessment method

Component 1: Performance and Choreography:
each worth 30% of GCSE and 40 marks

- 2 set phrases - solo performance approx 1 minute. Duet/trio performance - minimum 3 minutes
- Solo or group choreography. Solo - 2 to 2.5 minutes. Group - 2-5 dancers - 3 to 3.5 minutes

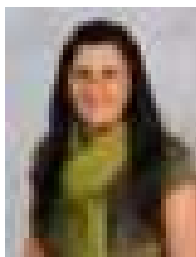
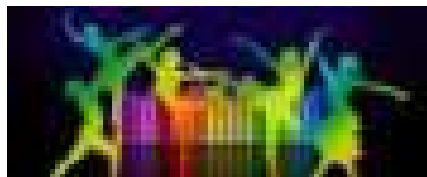
Component 2: Dance Appreciation:

Knowledge and understanding of processes and performing skills. Critical appreciation of own and 6 professional dance works in an anthology.

Written exam of 1hr 30 minutes - worth 40% of GCSE and 80 marks.

For further information see

Mrs T Falkner



DESIGN & TECHNOLOGY

What does a product designer do? How are products designed? How do you figure out what people need or want? What looks good, bad or ugly? What's inside your mobile or iPod? Or put simply everything and anything to do with designing the products that improve the quality of all our lives.

This course will allow candidates to learn about a range of materials, manufacturing processes, techniques and technologies and be able to use them as appropriate to the design and make process.

Candidates will work with a mixture of materials including: paper and card, wood, metal and plastics. Students will develop their design skills through freehand sketching, technical drawing and computer aided design (CAD).

GCSE design and technology prepares students to present ideas graphically, which can be very useful for careers such as web design, management and innovation.

Assessment Method

Written paper - 2 hours - worth 50%

Core technical principles, specialist technical principles, designing and making principles.

Non-exam assessment - 30-35 hours - worth 50%

Substantial design and make task covering investigation of context, designing, making, analysis and evaluation.

Students will produce a working prototype and a portfolio of evidence (max 20 pages) based on a range of exam board set tasks.

For further course details please see the school website

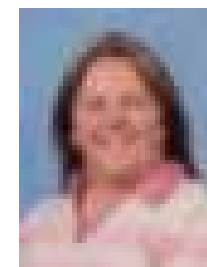
Additional costs

The course involves a lot of practical skill and use of materials. There is a cost of approximately £5 in years 9 and 10 towards the materials used. In year 11, students are required to fund the materials used to create their exam project.



For further information see

Miss R Keen



DRAMA

(Guided Choice 2 - Creative subject)

GCSE Drama - AQA

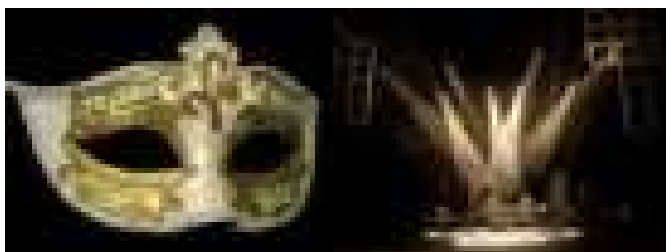
There are 2 pathways for completing GCSE Drama:

- Acting
- Design

Design routes offered are: costume (including hair and make up), lighting (including projections), set and props (including projections), sound and puppetry.

This course offers students the opportunity to explore drama as a practical art form. Students will create and perform/design drama using their theoretical knowledge. They will be encouraged to become confident performers and designers, gaining skills that are transferable to all walks of life. Students will analyse and deconstruct texts to find meaning, themes and contexts. It is important that students are able to work with others and be generous with their time (there will be times when rehearsals take place after school).

The types of styles explored in GCSE are: tension & suspense, gothic horror/grand guignol, psychological thrillers, non-naturalism, and naturalism.



Outline of course

The course is divided into 3 components:

- **Understanding drama** - knowledge and understanding of how drama and theatre is developed and performed. Ability to review and analyse a set text (Noughts and Crosses) from a designer, performer and director's perspective. Evaluation of the success of live theatre.
- **Devising drama (practical)** - students will create a piece of drama based on a set style (gothic horror/grand guignol) for an audience. Students can opt for design in this module if they wish. Practical work is accompanied with a podcast to document progress.
- **Texts in practice (practical)** - students will bring 2 extracts from one play to life* (in the style of naturalism), which they have to rehearse, in a group or independently, and then perform to an external examiner. Students can opt for design in this module if they wish.

* Examples of past scripts used: 1984, A Christmas Carol, Woman in Black, Two, The Wasp, The Pillowman, Network, Ghost Stories.

Assessment Method

1. Understanding drama - written exam - 1 hour 45 minutes - worth 80 marks and 40% of the GCSE.

- Understanding of drama and theatre
- Study of set text
- Live theatre production

For further course details please see the school website

2. Devising drama - practical and written elements. Worth 60 marks and 40% of the GCSE.

- Process of creating devised drama
- Performance of devised drama (as a performer or designer)
- Analysis and evaluation of own work

This component is marked by teachers and moderated by the AQA.

3. Texts in practice - this is a practical component where students are assessed on a live performance. This section is worth 40 marks and 20% of the GCSE.

Marked by an AQA assessor.

It is important that students get the opportunity to see live theatre for inspiration and ideas. Recent visits have been to Woman in Black, The 39 Steps, Ocean at the end of the Lane, Yule Lads, Hound of the Baskervilles and The Play that Goes Wrong.



For further information see

Mr M Walker

FILM STUDIES

EDUQAS GCSE Film Studies

Outline of course

Film is an important part of many people's lives. Those who choose to study it characteristically bring with them a huge enthusiasm and excitement for film which constantly motivates them in their studies. They are drawn into characters, their narratives and the issues films raise. It is not surprising that many consider film to be the major art form of the last hundred years, and feel it is important to study a medium which has such a significant influence on the way people think and feel.

The films learners' study are designed to exploit that enthusiasm and motivate them to broaden their knowledge of film and film technology, from the first moving images introduced to audiences in 1895, to the digital environment of contemporary film.

Production work is a central part of this specification. Learners will therefore be given the opportunity to create their own film or screenplay through producing genre-based extracts. This will enable them to apply all they have learnt about film to filmmaking or screenwriting, as well as provide them with a fresh, filmmaking perspective on the films studied.



Assessment Method

There are three components within the course; one is a non-exam assessment and two are external exam units.

Component 1 - Key developments in US Film - Written exam - 1 hour 30 minutes worth 70 marks - 35% of total GCSE mark.

This component assesses knowledge and understanding of 3 US films chosen from a range of options. Assessment consists of 4 questions on one pair of US mainstream films and one US independent film.

Component 2 - Global Film: Narrative, Representation and Film Style - Written exam - 1 hour 30 minutes worth 70 marks - 35% of total GCSE mark.

This component assesses knowledge and understanding of 3 global films produced outside the US, chosen from a range of options.

Component 3 - Non-exam assessment - 25-30 hours, worth 60 marks - 30% of total GCSE mark.

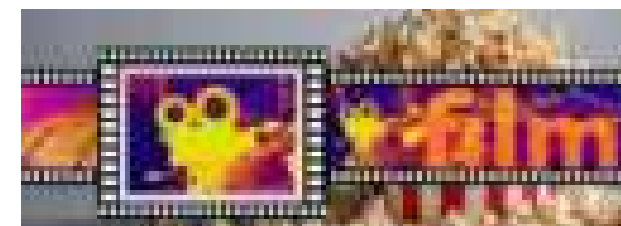
This component is internally marked and externally assessed. This is an individual practical genre-based film making project.

Throughout the course we integrate several small practical projects to help students develop the skills needed to achieve well on the NEA assessment. These include film trailer production, introducing characters and continuity film making.

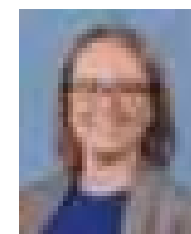


This course will suit students who:

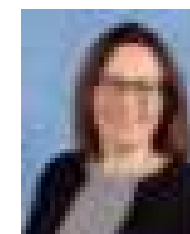
- enjoy engaging in challenging topics.
- enjoy practical and creative work.
- would like to create their own films.
- enjoy deconstructing stories, characters and themes in film and looking deeper at the meaning behind them.



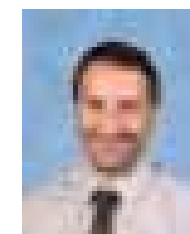
For further information see



Mrs E Gauntlett



Ms R Moore



Mr A Case

For further course details please see the school website

FOOD PREPARATION AND NUTRITION

GCSE Food Preparation and Nutrition - OCR

Outline of course

The food industry is one of the biggest employers in the world. This course is for students who have a love of food and has both theory and practical elements. Studying this course will give you the opportunity to learn, extend and apply skills and gain knowledge of food preparation, nutrition and healthy eating. You will learn about what is in our food, how we make it safe to eat and what happens when we cook and eat it. Students will gain knowledge and skills to be able to feed themselves and others better. In addition to this, learners will understand the huge challenges that we face globally to supply the world with nutritious and safe food. This course has a high emphasis on nutrition, food science and practical skills.

The areas studied for examination will be:

1. Food commodities
2. Principles of nutrition
3. Diet and good health
4. The science of food
5. Where food comes from
6. Cooking and food preparation

Additional costs

There will be an expectation that students will supply ingredients for practical work most weeks, plus an annual contribution of £10 per year towards materials used.

Assessment Method

Paper 1: Food Preparation and Nutrition:

Theoretical knowledge of food preparation and nutrition.

Written exam - 1 hour 45 minutes - 150 marks - 50% of GCSE.

Section A - one visual stimulus question with a number of sub questions (15 marks)

Section B - 7/8 questions, each with a number of sub questions (85 marks)

Non-exam assessments (NEA): 2 tasks.
Completed in year 11.

Task 1: Food Investigation - 15%

Understanding of the working characteristics, functional and chemical properties of ingredients. Written report, 2000 word limit, including photographic evidence of the practical investigation (8 hours allocated).

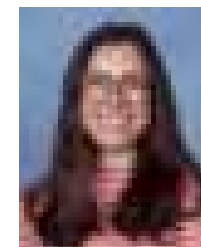
Task 2: Food Preparation Assessment - 35%

Knowledge, skills and understanding of planning, preparation, cooking and presentation of food. A final menu of 3 dishes prepared within a 3 hour timescale and a portfolio displaying understanding. Maximum 15 pages (30 sides), to include photographic evidence of the final 3 dishes. (12 hours allocated)



For further information see

Miss C Turner



For further course details please see the school website

GEOGRAPHY

(Guided Choice 1 - Humanities subject)

GCSE Geography - AQA

Outline of course

Throughout the course students have the opportunity to consider a variety of geographical issues and, in doing so, become knowledgeable and critical geographers. There is a strong emphasis on the understanding of physical processes in the environment, as well as the management and mismanagement of resources by people. Students will also have the opportunity to develop their fieldwork skills.

The course is divided into three main themes:

Paper 1: Living with the physical environment

- the challenge of natural hazards including volcanoes, earthquakes and tropical storms. Weather and climate change, physical landscapes of the UK, including coasts and rivers. Finally, ecosystems such as tropical rain forests and hot deserts or cold environments.

Paper 2: Challenges in the human environment

- population, urban growth, the changing economic world, internationally and within the UK, and global development. Resource management including the global distribution of food, water and energy, and in particular, the demand for energy resources globally, is a focus.

Paper 3: Geographical applications and skills

This section involves the undertaking of 2 different fieldwork enquiries (Cambridge and Hunstanton) that will be assessed in the final examinations at the end of Year 11. There is also a pre-released booklet presenting a geographical issue where students come to their own opinion, and are questioned about this in their Paper 3 examination.

Assessment Method

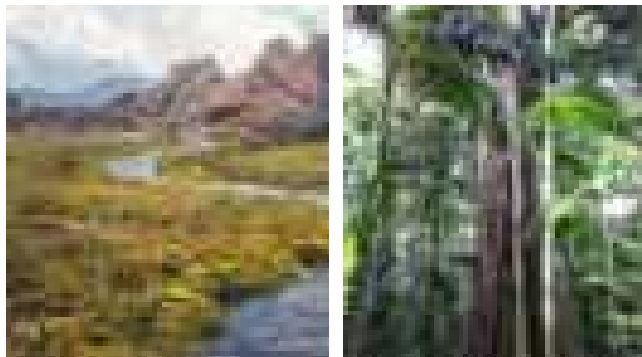
There are three exam papers at the end of Year 11:

Paper 1: Physical Environment - 1 hour 30 minutes - worth 88 marks and 35% of GCSE.

Paper 2: Human Environment - 1 hour 30 minutes - worth 88 marks and 35% of GCSE.

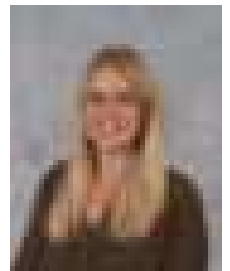
Paper 3: Application and Skills - 1 hour 30 minutes - worth 76 marks and 30% of GCSE.

A GCSE in geography is a stepping-stone to a whole range of future opportunities. Geographers have great enquiry skills, they are good at observing changes in the environment and are knowledgeable about places near and far.



For further information see

Mrs M Anderton



For further course details please see the school website

HISTORY

(Guided Choice 1 - Humanities subject)

LANGUAGES

(Guided Choice 2 - MFL subject)

GCSE History- Edexcel

Modern History

History is seen as one of the most important academic studies and for good reason. Studying history gives you an insight into the affairs of the modern world, gives us a sense of purpose and understanding of who we are, develops important skills, all whilst allowing people to grow their own intrinsic interest. Ultimately, the past influences all aspects of our lives. This course aims to help students develop a better understanding of this complex world, by studying the relatively recent past and tracing the roots of the conflicts and problems that still afflict us. Whilst there is a need to know about significant events and personalities, a much greater emphasis is placed on students' ability to develop their own opinions and interpretations by evaluating evidence for themselves.

Outline of course

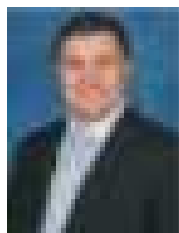
- Medicine through Time c1250-present
- Superpower relations and the Cold War 1941-91
- Henry VIII and his ministers 1509-40
- Weimar and Nazi Germany 1918-39

Assessment

Students will sit three exams at the end of year 11.

For further information see

Mr S Seaman



GCSE FRENCH OR SPANISH - AQA

Modern Languages are a core skill, useful with any combination of subjects. There are 2 different languages you can choose from, French and/ or Spanish. Language qualifications are a huge asset to have and people who can speak another language are highly valued in the job market.

A qualification in languages enables people to travel abroad more easily and appreciate other cultures, as well as improving job prospects in today's competitive global workplace. It is a myth that everyone speaks English. People with language skills are highly sought after.

Outline of the course

There will be a range of GCSE teaching styles and materials that will aim at a high, accurate standard of language in listening, reading, speaking and writing. The work will concentrate on useful language in realistic contexts.

You will ideally need enthusiasm, perseverance and organisation. You will need to listen carefully and participate positively. You will be asked to learn things by heart, which requires effort and concentration. You will have lots of time to practise speaking your language and you may be offered the opportunity of a visit abroad.

By choosing a language at GCSE, you will be keeping valuable study options open and will also increase your employability.

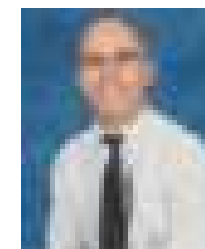
Assessment Method

Students will have final examinations at the end of year 11 in each of the four skills: listening, reading speaking and writing. These skills are all weighted equally at 25% of the final grade.



For further information see

Mr G Draper



For further course details please see the school website

MUSIC

(Guided Choice 2 - Creative subject)

There are two course options to choose from when considering music at GCSE:

- **Music - traditional route - OCR**
- **Music - via sound recording and studio production (music technology) - OCR**

MUSIC TRADITIONAL - you **need** to be able to play an instrument or sing to take the traditional route

What's involved?

- Performing a solo on an instrument or voice
- Performing in an ensemble
- Composing two pieces of music
- Studying a range of music including Western Classical music, popular music, film music and music from around the world

Course Outline and Content

Coursework

Area of study 1 – integrated portfolios

- A solo performance
- An ensemble performance
- A composition to a brief set by the student
- A composition to a brief set by OCR related to the Areas of study

Listening examination

Area of study 2 – The concerto through time

Area of study 3 – Rhythms of the World

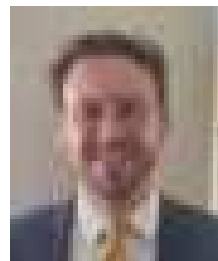
Area of study 4 – Film music

Area of study 5 – Conventions of pop



For further information see

Mr R Wainwright-Meekins



MUSIC TECHNOLOGY - you **do not** need to be able to play an instrument or sing to take this course

What's involved?

- Producing performances using studio production and sound recording
- Composing two pieces of music using studio production and sound recording
- Studying a range of music including Western Classical music, popular music, film music and music from around the world

Course Outline and Content

Coursework

Area of study 1 – integrated portfolios

- Two performances using studio production and sound recording
- A composition to a brief set by the student using studio production and sound recording
- A composition to a brief set by OCR related to the Areas of study using studio production and sound recording.

Listening examination

Area of study 2 – The concerto through time

Area of study 3 – Rhythms of the World

Area of study 4 – Film music

Area of study 5 – Conventions of pop

OUTDOOR EDUCATION

Cambridge Nationals Certificate in Sports Studies (Outdoor Education)

This course is ideal for students who:

- are looking for a career in teaching or coaching PE and Outdoor Education
- are interested in outdoor and adventurous activities such as rock climbing, orienteering and kayaking
- take part in at least one sport outside of school
- want to take on responsibility and leadership opportunities
- enjoy completing coursework and are good at meeting deadlines

The course is designed to give an insight into the world of sport and outdoor education. With focuses on leadership, sport in the UK and health and wellbeing, it gives you the tools to pursue a career in a wide variety of roles within sport. Our unique application of the course through outdoor education is perfect for students who have interests outside of the traditional sporting activities and wish to develop and improve their skill in challenging environments.

Outline of course

There are **3 units** to complete within the course:

Core Units - exam and coursework

Unit R184: Contemporary Issues in Sport (external exam - 40%) - sat in year 11.

R185: Performance and leadership in sports activities (coursework and practical assessment - 40%)

Specialist Unit

Unit R187: Increasing awareness of Outdoor and Adventurous Activities (coursework and practical assessment - 20%)

Assessment Method

On successful completion of the Cambridge Nationals Certificate, students will be awarded a GCSE qualification in OCR Cambridge Nationals Sports Studies Level 1/2.

The course consists of:

- 1 externally assessed exam sat in year 11.
- 2 coursework units assessed using several designated assignments. Observations of performance and presentations are examples of assessment methods, however, there is a large component of written work required.

The combined score of each unit is collated to work out the final grade awarded.

We ask for an annual contribution of £30 - £40 to contribute towards the cost of external instructors and travel costs for a day's organised Outdoor Activity.



Extra qualifications

In addition to the Cambridge Nationals Certificate, students would be expected to want to work towards improving their personal skills to gain many of the following proficiency awards by the end of year 11:

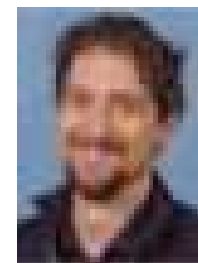
- British Canoeing Paddle Awards in Kayak and Canoe
- National Indoor Climbing Award Levels 1 and 2
- Young First Aider

This is a useful course if you are looking to go into employment in the coaching and instructing sectors.



For further information see

Mr S Carter



For further course details please see the school website

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

There are two course options to choose from when considering PE for the KS4 pathway:

GCSE in Physical Education - AQA

Cambridge Nationals in Sports Studies - OCR

Students can select their preferred option but will be placed on the best course for them to maximise their chance of success.

Outline of course - GCSE in Physical Education

The GCSE syllabus is divided into three parts:

- **Paper 1:** The Human Body and Movement in Physical Activity and Sport - 30%
- **Paper 2:** Socio-cultural Influences and Well-Being in Physical Activity and Sport - 30%

Practical performance in physical activity and sport
- practical assessment - 40%

Assessment Method

Paper 1: Written exam - 1 hour 15 minutes - 78 marks
- 30% of GCSE.

- Applied anatomy and **physiology**
- Movement analysis
- Physical training
- Use of data

Paper 2: Written exam - 1 hour 15 minutes - 78 marks
- 30% of GCSE.

- Sports psychology
- Socio-cultural influences
- Health, fitness and wellbeing
- Use of data

Practical assessment

Internal assessment and external moderation - 100 marks - 40%.

Students are assessed on their skills and also in a competitive situation, in 3 different physical activities, in the role of player/performer. In one activity, students are assessed on the analysis and evaluation of performance to bring about personal improvement in physical activity and sport.

Outline of course - Cambridge Nationals in Sports Studies

This course will encourage you to think for yourself about the study of sport and the application to real life practical sport, leadership and the evaluation of the skills required. There are a range of internally and externally assessed units that include both coursework based tasks and theoretical exams.

You will cover:

- how technology is used in sport
- how to develop as a team player and a leader
- how to plan, deliver and evaluate your own sports activity session
- how to perform in front of an audience
- the connection between sport and media and the different ways that sport is represented
- how to prepare and benefit from local and national outdoor activities

This is a great opportunity for students who wish to pursue a qualification in PE and Sport with the benefit of submitting ongoing work for assessment, instead of 'exam assessed' weighted units required in the AQA GCSE PE course.

For further course details please see the school website

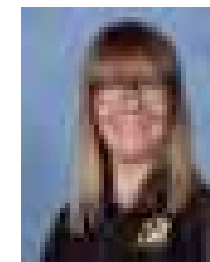


You will develop a range of skills to help you succeed not only in the workplace but in other subjects too. Employment opportunities where your skills will be valued include the leisure industry, sports coaching and analysis, teaching and some professional health industries.



For further information see

Mrs L Reynolds



RELIGIOUS STUDIES

(Guided Choice 1 - Humanities subject)

GCSE Religious Studies - AQA

The AQA GCSE Religious Studies course is an unflinching descent into belief and doubt. Students confront suffering, evil and moral conflict, through traditions such as Christianity and Islam. Scripture is dissected, arguments tested and assumptions stripped bare. The course focuses on two religions: Christianity and Islam, studying both beliefs and practices.

Outline of course

Christianity: Beliefs

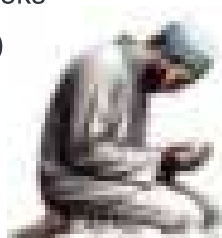
- The nature of God and the Trinity
- Creation and humanity
- Jesus as the Son of God
- Salvation and life after death

Christianity: Practices

- Forms of worship and prayer
- Sacraments e.g baptism and Holy Communion
- Key festivals such as Christmas and Easter
- The role of the Church locally and globally.

Islam: Beliefs

- Angels, prophets and holy books
- Tawhid (the oneness of Allah)
- The Day of Judgement and the afterlife
- Divine predestination



Islam: Practices

- The Five Pillars of Islam
- Shahadah (declaration of faith)
- Salah (daily prayer)
- Zakah (charity)
- Sawm (fasting during Ramadan)
- Hajj (pilgrimage to Makkah)

Students explore how these beliefs influence daily life, identity and decision making.

Alongside religious beliefs, students examine four key contemporary themes:

- **Relationships and Families** - explores marriage, divorce, gender roles, family structures and sexual ethics.
- **Religion and Life** - examines creation and evolution, abortion and euthanasia, animal rights and environmental responsibility.
- **Religion, Peace and Conflict** - considers Just War Theory, pacifism, terrorism and extremism, forgiveness and reconciliation.
- **Religion, Crime and Punishment** - focuses on law and justice, forgiveness, aims of punishment and the death penalty.

Through studying these topics, students develop a broader world view, learning to understand diverse beliefs and perspectives. Students learn not what to think, but how to think. It is a course that opens minds, deepens understanding and prepares young people for a life in a complex and diverse society.

Assessment Method

The GCSE is assessed by two written examinations, both taken at the end of the course (no coursework).

Paper 1: The Study of Religions: covers Christianity and Islam (beliefs and practices)

Paper 2: Thematic Studies: covers the 4 ethics units

Each paper is 1 hour 45 minutes in length. Questions include, multiple-choice, short-answer and extended evaluation questions.

Students are required to use religious teachings and sources of authority to support answers. This structure assesses knowledge, understanding, and the ability to analyse and evaluate religious and ethical issues. It strengthens critical thinking and analytical writing skills, and encourages students to evaluate different viewpoints thoughtfully.

For further information see

Dr D M Bennett



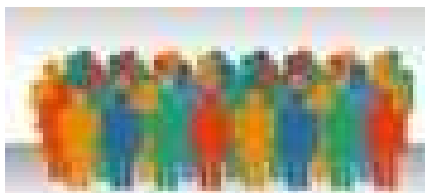
GCSE Sociology - AQA

Sociology involves studying human social life, groups and societies. Sociologists investigate and explain the social world and our behaviour in it. They are particularly interested in understanding the ways in which society influences us and shapes our lives. Sociology can be thought provoking and challenging because it encourages us to think carefully about our views and assumptions.

Outline of Course

Paper 1: Education and Family

- How is the education system organised in contemporary Britain?
- How can parental attitudes affect achievement?
- How might the school affect achievement?
- What is the role of the school in class, gender and ethnicity and underachievement?
- How might an individual's family and household settings change over the course of their life?
- What were gender roles and relationships between adult partners like in the past?
- How have relationships between parents and their children changed over time?
- What are the consequences of divorce?



Paper 2: Crime and deviance/Social Stratification (inequality)

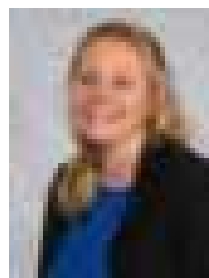
- What are the differences between formal and informal control?
- How do sociologists explain criminal and deviant behaviour?
- How far do official statistics on recorded crime measure the extent of crime?
- Why is youth crime viewed as a social problem?
- How are wealth and income distributed in Britain?
- How much social mobility is there in Britain?
- How do we explain poverty?
- Does social class still matter?
- What gender inequalities still exist?
- Do ethnic minorities face barriers?

Assessment Method

- Two written exams of 1 hour 45 minutes covering the modules shown for Paper 1 and Paper 2 above. Each exam paper is worth 100 marks and 50% of GCSE.

For further information see

Mrs K Rose



For further course details please see the school website

Presentation in the Activity Area

(Lower Ground Floor)

There will be 3 presentations during the evening (all the same content) of approximately 20 minutes each to explain the Curriculum structure, the options process and an overview of the courses available in Year 9 for September, 2026.

Presentations will take place at:

- 5.00pm
- 5.45pm
- 6.30pm

Places for your chosen session should be booked through our online booking system prior to Options Evening. A maximum of 3 places per student can be booked (student plus parents/carers). Please follow the link and password shown in the letter issued to Year 8 parents, to book your chosen presentation. The booking system will close on Thursday 23rd April at 2pm.

Please collect a map on arrival to the Science Centre which will show the location of the various subjects and subject staff.

Room	Courses	Choice
Activity Area - (Lower Ground Floor)	Presentations at 5.00pm, 5.45pm & 6.30pm	
S1	Geography	Humanities
S2	History	Humanities
S3	Religious Studies	Humanities
S4	Dance	Creative/MFL
S5	Drama	Creative/MFL
S6	Fine Art Graphic Communication	Creative/MFL
S7	Music	Creative/MFL
S8 (First Floor)	Modern Foreign Languages	Creative/MFL
S9 (First Floor)	Business	Free Choice
S10 (First Floor)	Computer Science Creative iMedia	Free Choice
S11 (First Floor)	Design Technology	Free Choice
S12 (First Floor)	Film Studies	Free Choice
S13 (First Floor)	Food and Nutrition	Free Choice
S15 (First Floor)	Sociology	Free Choice
S16 (First Floor)	Sports Studies (PE) Sports Studies (Outdoor Education)	Free Choice
S17 (First Floor)	PE (GCSE)	Free Choice

