

The Thomas Alleyne Academy



Key Stage 4 Options Booklet for September 2026

A guide for parents and students

Founded 1558

Key Stage 4 Curriculum

Years 10 and 11

2026-2028

How to use this booklet

- This booklet provides information about the curriculum for students from September 2026.
- In order to help our students to make the right decisions in selecting their preferred courses, we offer some guidance on how best to make a choice. Specific details of the courses offered are also provided.
- Information on the options process and the subjects available can also be found on the school website.

Key Dates 2026

- Thursday 8th January: Y9 Options information evening for parents
- Friday 9th January: student assembly, options booklet sent home to parents
- Week of 12th January: Options booklet given to students & form time activities exploring subjects
- Monday 19th January - Thursday 12th February: Year 9 student 1-1 interviews (dates and times will be confirmed with students)
- Wednesday 25th February: Deadline for any amendments to the subjects selected
- July 2026: Options finalised and letter sent home to parents

Introduction

This booklet has been written to aid the selection of the most appropriate courses in Years 10 and 11 for your child.

In Key Stage 4, our curriculum aims are that:

- every student is entitled to follow a challenging and balanced curriculum, appropriate to his or her abilities and needs;
- we provide good progression routes from Key Stage 4 to post-16 education and training.

Guidance and Support

The key to success is by making the right choices. We would suggest that the key questions to ask when choosing a subject are:

- Will I enjoy it?
- Will I be successful at it?
- Will it support my future career plans?

Students will be supported and helped in their search to answer these questions and choose subjects wisely. We will be working closely with parents and students to get the best possible curriculum for every student.

Who can help?

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact the Options Team at the school who will be happy to help. Please use the following email address if you would like to contact the OptionsTeam: options@tas.herts.sch.uk

Which staff are part of the Options team?

Name	Role
Mrs M Cook	Headteacher
Mr R Candlin	Assistant Headteacher (Year 9)
Mr B Newport	Head of Year 9
Mr A. Whittle	Pastoral Support for Year 9
Mr S Backhouse	SENCo
Mrs J Cooke	Options Administrator

Alternatively, you can contact the Options team by using the Options Query form on the school website: <https://tas.herts.sch.uk/academic-life/year-9-options/>

Summary of the Curriculum

The Core Curriculum

More than half of the curriculum will consist of those subjects which are compulsory for all students.
The core subjects will take up 60% of the curriculum time.

Subject	% of curriculum time	Qualification	Grades available
English Language and English Literature	16	2 x GCSEs	1-9
Maths	14	1 x GCSE	1-9
Science* *Students will have the option to enhance their studies by taking an extra science course as an option choice	20	2 x GCSEs	1-9
PSHE	2	n/a	
PE	8	n/a	
Total	60		

Option Subjects

The remaining 40% of the timetable is for subjects additional to the core subjects. While we try to give as much choice as possible we cannot guarantee that everyone will get all of the preferences they would like. We will check the choices made and talk to students if we are concerned that they may be taking on an unsuitable course of study.

Most students in Year 9 do not have a clear idea about careers, therefore we advise students to take a balanced range of subjects in order to keep their options open for the future.

What subjects can I choose?

- Students will select 6 subjects in total, including at least one subject from list A.
- Students will be allocated 4 of the subjects they select.
- All subjects are GCSE qualifications unless otherwise indicated. Other qualifications: BTEC, Cambridge Nationals and Eduqas certificate are all equivalent to a GCSE qualification.

List A Choose <u>at least 1 subject</u> from this list:	List B Choose the remainder of subjects from this list:
Computer Science	Art & Design
Geography	Business Enterprise (BTEC)
History	Creative iMedia (Cambridge National)
Triple Science	Design & Technology
Spanish	Digital Information technology (BTEC)
	Drama
	Health & Social Care (BTEC)
	Hospitality and Catering (Eduqas certificate)
	Music (BTEC)
	Sport Studies (Cambridge National)
	Religious Studies

Making Your Choices

Good reasons for students to choose subjects



Build on success:

- Choose subjects in which you feel you will do well.
- Use feedback from your teachers to help you make an informed choice.
- Talk to teachers in your lessons.



Go for motivation:

- Consider the balance of workload and skills needed across your subject choices.
- Choose subjects which interest you so that you are likely to work hard and do well.



Think about your future career:

- Students' ideas about future careers will probably change; employment opportunities and entry requirements certainly will. This is why we offer a broad curriculum which keeps options for the future open. We want to make sure that your education enables you to adapt to changes during your working lives and respond to future opportunities.
- If you do have an idea about the specific career you want to follow, check out the qualifications you need. Looking online will provide lots of useful information.
- If you would like more advice and guidance, please speak to Mr Candlin, Mr Newport or Mr Whittle.



Plan for 16 and beyond:

- You will be expected to stay in some form of education or training beyond the age of 16.
- Some students will stay in school and enter the sixth form where the courses cater for a range of abilities and interests.
- Some students will continue their education and training at college or with an employer through an apprenticeship.
- **Plan now to make the best of your future!**

For Parents: Frequently Asked Questions

1. How much choice of subjects will my child have in Key Stage 4?

All students are able to choose subjects covering 40% of their curriculum time.

2. What are the core subjects?

All students study the common core subjects of English and English Literature, Maths, Science, PSHE and PE.

3. What information and guidance is being given to students to help them make their subject choices?

- All students will attend an assembly which explains the process of choosing their subject options. The slides from his assembly will also be available on the school website.
- Form time activities will give additional information to students.
- All parents will be sent a copy of the options booklet which contains information on all subjects. The school website has an information video for every subject, including core subjects, which explains what is studied in the subject and how the assessment takes place. Form tutors are available each morning in form time to answer any questions and will discuss subject choices and the options process in form time.
- All students will attend an Options interview with a member of the Options Team, during which, option subjects will be discussed and subjects will be selected. Parents will be sent details of the subjects selected and be able to confirm the subject choices or indicate that a further discussion is needed.

4. What should I do now?

- Read through the information provided in this booklet, look at the information on the school website and discuss your child's choices with them.
- Your child will be given a date and time for their Options interview. Before this time, your child should have made some initial subject selections to discuss in their interview.
- If you have any queries, please complete the form on the website, explaining your query and a member of school staff will be in touch to answer your question.

5. When will my child know if they have got their choice of options?

After students have submitted their options forms we will work hard organising the timetable for next year. Final options will be confirmed in July 2026.

6. Will all students be able to take the subjects they have chosen?

We hope so but cannot guarantee it as staffing and timetable constraints influence these decisions. However in recent years we have been able to give almost all of our students 4 of the 6 options they selected.

7. Does my son/daughter need to know what job or career they want?

It is always helpful to have a goal to aim for but not essential. We have considered progression routes for all our students to keep their options open. The core curriculum covers most choices of courses or careers at post 16.

8. Where can I seek further guidance?

For further information, the U EXPLORE website contains lots of useful information. Please use this link:

<https://careers.startprofile.com/page/gcse-options-choosing-your-pathway-an-overview-of-your-options>

Key Stage 4 Option Choices

Summary of Information

Core GCSEs

All students take GCSEs in: English Language, English Literature, Maths, and Science.

List A Students must choose at least one subject from this list	List B Students choose the remainder of subjects from this list
Computer Science	Art & Design
Geography	Business Enterprise (BTEC)
History	Creative iMedia (Cambridge National)
Triple Science	Design & Technology
Spanish	Digital Information technology (BTEC)
	Drama
	Health & Social Care (BTEC)
	Hospitality and Catering (Eduqas certificate)
	Music (BTEC)
	Sport Studies (Cambridge National)
	Religious Studies

Students must select 6 subject choices and will be allocated 4 of these subjects.

Students must select their options in order of preference from choice 1 to choice 6



KS4 Course Information

More details about each subject can be found on the following pages.

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English Literature	18
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Health & Social Care	20
History	21
Hospitality and Catering	22
Maths	23
Music	24
Religious Studies	25
Science	26
Spanish	30
Sport Studies	31

Art & Design

What is the title of this course?

Fine Art

What level of qualification will I gain at the end of the course?

GCSE 1-9

What are the main topics I will be taught?

Developing ideas with intent through artist research and media exploration, presenting work and understanding art as a visual language.

What type of learning activities will I undertake?

Your Art and Design GCSE course has been designed to encourage an adventurous and enquiring approach to art and design over the course of Year 10 and 11. There will be many ways for you to develop, refine, record and present your ideas. This may take the form of painting, drawing, print design, photography and sculpture where you will be encouraged to experiment and review your artwork. GCSE Art & Design involves students developing a Personal Portfolio of artwork.

How will I be assessed?

There are four areas you are assessed in. Each of these areas is referred to as an assessment objective – we refer to them as AO1, AO2, AO3, and AO4. Class learning and Independent Learning will be assessed by your Art teacher using these assessment objectives.

The assessment objectives focus on developing contextual understanding, refine use of media, drawing and recording from observation, and presenting final intentions. Your Externally Set Assignment is a 10 hour sustained focus timed test. It has a weighting of 40%. Your art teachers will assess your portfolio of artwork before it is externally moderated.

What are the possible progression routes once I have this qualification?

Art enhances fine motor skills, hand-eye coordination, problem solving skills, lateral thinking, complex analysis and critical thinking skills. No matter what career you choose, those who can arrange, present and display material in a way that is aesthetically pleasing have an advantage.

The training in Fine Art is, by its nature, flexible. It is an essential foundation for any student wishing to take A level Art and for those wishing to continue further education at art school. Skills in the visual arts can lead to employment in many areas, e.g. fine art, graphics, film and video photography, model making, interior design, fashion, ceramics, printmaking, book illustration, jewellery design and architecture.

Business Enterprise

What is the title of this course?

BTEC Tech Award Level 1/ 2 in Enterprise

What level of qualification will I gain at the end of the course?

BTEC Level 1 or level 2 tech award

What are the main topics I will be taught?

- Sizes of businesses and the market they operate in
- Aims and objectives
- Market research
- Producing a plan for a micro-enterprise
- Segmenting the market
- Marketing mix
- Financial documents
- Budgeting
- Cash flow
- Breakeven
- Sources of finance

What type of learning activities will I undertake?

You will be taught the theory to apply to real business situations, enabling you to learn through practical experiences using activities such as research, quizzes and case studies. This course will involve a great deal of decision making and problem solving. You will need to plan time and work independently as well as be highly organised in order to be successful in this course.

How will I be assessed?

- Component 1 – Non-exam Internal assessment set by the exam board worth 30% of overall grade
- Component 2 – Non-exam Internal assessment set by the exam board worth 30% of overall grade
- Component 3 – External exam worth 60 marks and 40% of overall grade

What are the possible progression routes once I have this qualification?

This course will enable you to explore many areas of business, from business management to accountancy/ finance, marketing to name a few. Further qualifications can be studied to help you move into areas such as: A Level Business, Apprenticeship in Business or any level 3 qualification.

Computer Science

What is the title of this course?

GCSE Computer Science AQA

How will I be assessed?

100% of your final mark will be based on an exam that looks at computational thinking, algorithms and programming techniques.

Paper 1: Computational Thinking and Programming Skills

Paper 2: Computing concepts

What level of qualification will I gain at the end of the course?

GCSE Level 1-9

What are the main topics I will be taught?

The course is a mixture of Computer Science theory and practical programming and computational thinking.

During the course of Years 10 and 11 students will study; the fundamentals of algorithms, computational thinking and programming techniques, aspects of software development, data representation, computer systems, computer networks, databases, cyber security, ethical, legal and environmental impacts of digital technology on wider society, including issues of privacy.

What are the possible progression routes once I have this qualification?

The majority of all new jobs are created out of developing technologies. As such, Computer Science is hugely relevant to a wide range of career paths. Students might typically progress to A-Level Computer Science or a wide range of vocational computing and ICT courses at level 3.

Careers may include: Programmer, Games Developer, Application Developer, Web Designer, Database Administrator, Network Manager, Data Scientist, Cyber Security Analyst.

What type of learning activities will I undertake?

This course offers you the opportunity to focus on developing higher-level problem solving skills and to complete a wide range of practical programming tasks based on real-world scenarios. You will also learn how data is stored and represented in computers and how different computer systems operate.

Creative iMedia

What is the title of this course?

Cambridge Nationals in Creative iMedia

How will I be assessed?

There are three units covered across Y10 and Y11:

- Creative iMedia in the media industry (Exam - 40%)
- Visual identity and digital graphics (Coursework - 25%)
- Digital Gaming (Coursework - 35%)

Coursework is completed in lesson time and the exam is completed at the end of Y11. Grades are then based on assessment across all three units.

What level of qualification will I gain at the end of the course?

- The course is assessed at the end of the qualification and is equivalent to GCSE grading.
- Students will be awarded a grade from Pass at Level 1 through to Distinction* at level 2
- Colleges and universities accept this qualification and grading.

What are the main topics I will be taught?

The following topics will also be studied in detail through the completion of practical projects.

- **Digital Gaming (Coursework unit)** – Develop an understanding of digital games and eventually plan and create a game using software such as GDevelop
- **Visual identity and digital graphics (Coursework unit)** - develop brands and visual identities for clients. You will learn a range of design skills using various image editing software (such as Photopea, Inkscape and Canva)
- **Creative iMedia in the media industry (Exam unit)** - learn about the sectors, products and job roles that form the media industry. You will learn how media codes are used within the creation of media products to convey meaning, create impact and engage audiences.

What are the possible progression routes once I have this qualification?

- Huge demand for a skilled and digitally literate workforce
- Digital media products used in almost every business
- A key part of many areas of our everyday lives
- Vital to the UK economy that the workforce is equipped with creative people
- Roles that involve designing or developing media such as video games, graphic design, video production etc

What type of learning activities will I undertake?

Most tasks will be completed digitally and offers you the opportunity to complete practical projects based on real-world scenarios. You will learn how to interpret client requirements and effectively generate ideas, design and create creative digital products for their needs.

Design and Technology

What is the title of this course?

Design and Technology

What level of qualification will I gain at the end of the course?

GCSE 1-9

What are the main topics I will be taught?

- The working characteristics of paper, card, technical textiles, electronic components and resistant materials – wood, metal and plastics, including new materials such as precious metal, clays, smart materials and shape memory alloys.
- Manufacturing techniques and processes.
- Quality control and other industrial practices will be applied to workshop situations.
- Pupils will have the opportunity to increase their knowledge and understanding in the field of CAD/CAM (Computer Aided Design/Computer Aided Manufacture).

Our world is full of products which have been designed to meet the needs and wants of different groups of people. In Product Design, you will learn how designers have to make compromises with regard to styling, materials and manufacturing processes as well as taking account of moral, ethical and sustainability issues, and be prepared to sustain a project for a prolonged period of time.

What type of learning activities will I undertake?

This course offers you the opportunity to design, make and evaluate solutions to needs arising from real life situations. The products produced may be one-off or batched produced. The main aim of this course is to involve you in designing and making good quality products or prototypes. During the course you will develop your understanding of materials, sustainability, industrial applications, and systems and control. The project style of work undertaken at Key Stage 3 is continued with a specialisation in paper, card and textiles or resistant materials. This course will involve you in a great deal of decision making and hard work. You will need to plan ahead and be highly organised.

How will I be assessed?

The course will be assessed internally and externally. In Year 11 all students will undertake a project (NEA) covering all aspects of designing and making which should result in a product designed to meet a particular need. This will be in the format of an A3 Portfolio. 50% of the marks are allocated for this project. The remaining 50% of the marks are allocated for a written paper taken in the summer term of Year 11 which covers 7 modules

What are the possible progression routes once I have this qualification?

It is a suitable qualification for those who want a broad background in designing and manufacturing and for those who wish to progress to further education and/or employment with training. The course is a requirement for most engineering-based apprenticeship programs. You will acquire a wide range of knowledge, skills and understanding which will help you to become a better-informed consumer in the real world, as well as a successful designer of products which you can be proud of.

Digital Information Technology

What is the title of this course?

Pearson BTEC Level 1/Level 2 Tech Award in Digital Information Technology

What level of qualification will I gain at the end of the course?

Level 1 or Level 2: Pass, Merit, Distinction

What are the main topics I will be taught?

This course will give you the opportunity to develop knowledge and technical skills in a practical learning environment. You will also develop key skills, such as user interface (UI) design and development and learn how to develop a project plan for your own UI designs.

● User Interface and User Experience (UI/UX)

Understanding UI and Introducing you to concepts of human/computer interactions (HCI), human psychology, and marketing and design principles.

By Developing an understanding of:

- User interfaces, Audience needs, Design principles, Designing an efficient user interface, Creating a project proposal and plan, Creating an initial design and Developing a user interface

● IT project management

Understanding how projects are structured is of vital importance. This qualification will enable you to use project-planning tools, models and techniques within a digital context.

By developing an understanding of:

- Characteristics of data and information, Representing information, Ensuring data is suitable for processing, Data collection, Assessing quality of information, Dangers in data management and storage, Data processing methods, Present and draw conclusions based on findings in the data

● Cloud Computing

Understand how computers are networked online and use web based services to improve data security and manage the costs of handling large volumes of data.

By developing an understanding of:

- Impact of modern technologies, Cyber security, Prevention and management of threats to data, Legal and ethical use of systems, Forms of notation used with modern systems.

How will I be assessed?

- Exam worth 40%

External assessment set and marked by Pearson, completed under supervised conditions.

- 1 hour 30 minutes (60 marks) assessment

- Internal Synoptic Projects (coursework) 60%

Non-exam internal assessment set by Pearson, marked internally and moderated by Pearson.

You will be assessed by:

- Writing reports on the topics covered by the course
- Creating excel spreadsheets demonstrating your ability to; collate, analyse and present data
- Presenting your projects in a portfolio

What are the possible progression routes once I have this qualification?

- A Levels as preparation for entry to higher education in a range of subjects
- Study of a vocational qualification at Level 3, such as a BTEC National in IT, which prepares learners to enter employment, or apprenticeships.

Drama

What is the title of this course?

Drama

What level of qualification will I gain at the end of the course?

GCSE 1-9

What are the main topics I will be taught?

You will be taught to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- different genres and performance styles.
- the ways in which meaning is communicated through drama.
- a range of staging and performance conventions.
- drama terminology and how to use it appropriately.
- how plays are constructed and realised through the study of a published play.
- how to create, interpret and communicate a role or character.
- drama within its social, cultural and historical context.
- seeing and analysing live theatre. It is a **compulsory** part of the course that all students see live theatre in order to pass the written exam. We aim to see at least two productions over the two years and please be aware that there will be a cost element involved.
- How to **write effectively** using evaluation, analysis and drama specific terminology

What type of learning activities will I undertake?

GCSE Drama follows on from drama work at Key Stage 3 and will develop your improvisation and acting skills to a higher level. You will look at plays in more detail and look at different ways of bringing a script alive on stage. You will also see live performances of professional plays. You will be expected to take part in both theory and practical lessons to enhance your learning journey with an emphasis on writing for exams.

Component 1: Understanding Drama 40%. This is your written exam which is split into 3 sections. Section A: 4 multiple choice questions about **theatre roles and responsibilities and Drama terminology**. Section B: Set text in detail, This is Blood Brothers by Willy Russell questions will include **design and practical response**. Section C: Live Theatre Review. This is an in depth exploration of a performance you have seen, you will be expected to **describe, analyse and evaluate** the performance either from a design perspective or performer. The exam is marked out of 80.

Component 2: Devising Drama 40% You will be assessed on either acting or design. Learners will work in groups using a stimulus provided by your teacher. You will be expected to research, document and create a performance to be **performed to an audience**. There will be a devising log that accompanies the performance which is made up of **2,500 words** split into 3 sections.

Component 3: Texts in Practice 20% You will be assessed on either acting or design. Learners will work in small groups to study a text which they will break down into 2 extracts which will then be performed to an **external examiner**.

What are the possible progression routes once I have this qualification?

Possible progression within education could include: AS or A level in Drama and Theatre Studies, A level Performing Arts or a BTEC in Performing Arts or Performance Design and Technology.

The skills developed during this course are useful in fields such as: Performing Arts, Hospitality, Tourism, Media, Business, Law, Advertising or any career that requires confidence and public speaking

English Language

What is the title of this course?

English Language

What level of qualification will I gain at the end of the course?

GCSE 1-9

What are the main topics I will be taught?

GCSE English Language is an exciting and diverse course. You will cover three main areas of study: reading, writing and speaking and listening. Each is further broken down into specific areas to provide you with the best possible skills and knowledge.

What type of learning activities will I undertake?

Students analyse a range of fiction and non-fiction texts in preparation for examination at the end of year 11. Students develop writing skills for a variety of purposes and audiences, from creative to practical tasks.

How will I be assessed?

100% of the marks are awarded for 2 written exam papers
A separate speaking and listening component must be completed

Speaking and Listening

Students will be asked to give an individual presentation, in front of an audience, and then answer questions. The presentation is required to be audio and visually recorded. These are marked internally. The marks do not count towards the final GCSE English Language grade, but instead will be reported as a separate award.

Written examinations

There are two written examinations:
Paper 1: Explorations in Creative Reading and Writing
Paper 2: Writers' Viewpoints and Perspectives

What are the possible progression routes once I have this qualification?

This is one of the core GCSE subjects and all sixth forms, colleges, universities and employers will look for a good pass in English as an indication of good communication skills.

Most sixth forms and colleges will require a GCSE grade 5 or above to access level 3 courses.

English Literature

What is the title of this course?

English Literature

What level of qualification will I gain at the end of the course?

GCSE 1-9

What are the main topics I will be taught?

GCSE English Literature is closely linked to GCSE English Language, but further tests and rewards students who enjoy reading and analysing texts. GCSE English Literature will be studied alongside English Language during English lessons and students will receive two separate grades as a result.

How will I be assessed?

Written Examinations

Students will complete two examinations. The questions in both papers are based on a wide range of literary texts studied over the two year course, including a pre-twentieth century text and modern text, an anthology and unseen poetry. Students have the opportunity to study a Shakespeare play and if possible see a production.

Paper 1: Shakespeare and the 19th-century novel – worth 40% of the final award.

Paper 2: Modern texts and poetry - worth 60% of final award.

What are the possible progression routes once I have this qualification?

English Literature is a firm favourite of people with aspirations towards further studies, since a high level of attainment demonstrates a keen mind and inquisitive nature. Due to the combination of analysis and imagination, this is suitable for people who want to progress into more creative subjects.

What type of learning activities will I undertake?

GCSE English Literature involves analysing texts and developing interpretations of prose, plays and poetry, giving students the opportunity to speculate about the writers' intentions. Students also develop their understanding of the historical and social influences surrounding each text studied and many classroom activities revolve around listening to peers' ideas and writing succinct explanations.

Geography

What is the title of this course?

GCSE Geography: Pearson Edexcel B

What level of qualification will I gain at the end of the course?

GCSE 1-9

What are the main topics I will be taught?

Component 1: Global Geographical Issues

Topics include Hazardous Earth, studying tropical storms and tectonic hazards; Development Dynamics and Challenges of an Urbanising World.

Component 2: UK Geographical Issues.

Topics include the UK's evolving physical landscape and the UK's evolving human landscape; there is a fieldwork element for both aspects of this component.

Component 3: People and environment issue, focusing on:

- People and the Biosphere
- Forests under Threat
- Consuming Energy Resources
- Decision Making Exercise (DME)

How will I be assessed?

Component 1: a single examination lasting 1 hour 30 minutes, total 37.5% of the qualification.

Component 2: a single examination lasting 1 hour 45 minutes, total 37.5% of the qualification.

Component 3: a single examination lasting 1 hour 30 minutes, total 25% of the qualification.

What are the possible progression routes once I have this qualification?

You will be able to extend your studies to A level Geography; all employers and universities value the broad range of skills provided by Geography and Geography students are some of the most employable graduates. GCSE Geography provides an excellent preparation for careers in:

- town planning, water and countryside management;
- tourism and recreation;
- ecology and marine biology and conservation;
- disaster management;
- aviation, armed forces/ military
- climate change analyst and other environment related careers
- Sustainability and green technology

What types of learning activities will I undertake?

You will experience a wide and varied range of learning opportunities, including practical tasks. You will undertake independent research, decision-making exercises and develop your knowledge of places and processes around the world. You will study the interactions between people and processes. You will make links between past and future legislation and how this has influenced global decisions.

You will also attend 2 compulsory fieldtrips in order to prepare and develop your understanding of human and physical geography within the UK. There is a small cost attached to this.

Health & Social Care

What is the title of this course?

Pearson BTEC Level 1/Level 2 Tech Award in Health and Social Care

What level of qualification will I gain at the end of the course?

Vocational award graded Pass, Merit or Distinction * at Level 2.

What are the main topics I will be taught?

- The life stages and key characteristics in the physical, intellectual, emotional and social development and factors that can affect an individual's growth and development.
- Different life events and how individuals can adapt or be supported through changes caused by life events.
- Health and social care conditions, how they can be managed by the individual and the different health and social care services that are available.
- The barriers and obstacles an individual may encounter and how these can be overcome.
- The skills, attributes and values required to give care and how these benefit the individual.
- How factors can affect an individual's current health and wellbeing.
- How physiological indicators and an individual's lifestyle choices determine physical health.
- The use of the person-centred approach.
- Recommendations and actions to improving health and wellbeing and the barriers individuals may face when following recommendations and the support available to overcome.

What type of learning activities will I undertake?

The course is designed to demonstrate application of the conceptual knowledge underpinning the sector through realistic tasks and activities. This style of assessment promotes deep learning through ensuring the connection between knowledge and practice. Most tasks will be completed digitally and offer you the opportunity to work on practical real-world scenarios.

How will I be assessed?

Component 1- Human Lifespan Development – non-exam internal assessment -30%

Component 2 - Health and Social Care Services and Values - non-exam internal assessment –30%

Tasks for C1 and C2 are set by the exam board.

Component 3 - Health and Wellbeing – exam -40%

What are the possible progression routes once I have this qualification?

Learners who achieve Level 2 might consider progression to A Level as preparation for entry to higher education in a range of subjects or study of a vocational qualification at Level 3, such as a new BTEC National Level 3 Alternative Academic Qualification (AAQ) in Health and Social Care (Extended Certificate) offered at TAA Sixth Form. The course prepares learners to enter employment or apprenticeships, or to move on to higher education by studying a degree in the health or social care sector.

Learners who achieve at Level 1 across their Key Stage 4 learning might consider progression to Level 2 post-16 in a range of technical routes designed to lead to work, employment, apprenticeships or further study at Level 3.

History

What is the title of this course?

History

What level of qualification will I gain at the end of the course?

GCSE 1-9

What are the main topics I will be taught?

The course requires students to cover four individual units.

Unit/Paper 1: Thematic study and historic environment: crime and punishment in Britain 1000 to the present, and Whitechapel (1870-1900).

Unit/Paper 2 (Part 1): Period study, The American West, 1835-1895.

Unit/Paper 2 (Part 2): British depth study, Anglo-Saxon and Norman England, 1060-1088. Unit/Paper 3: Modern Depth Study, Weimar and Nazis Germany, 1918-39.

How will I be assessed?

Unit 1: a single examination lasting 1 hour 15 minutes, worth 30% of the qualification.

Unit 2: a single examination lasting 1 hour 45 minutes, worth 40% of the qualification.

Unit 3: a single examination lasting 1 hour 20 minutes, total 30% of the qualification.

What are the possible progression routes once I have this qualification?

Students opting for this subject will have the opportunity to develop many of the valuable life skills demanded by employers. Should students wish to extend their learning, these skills are equally valued by schools and colleges and could provide a stepping stone to university.

What type of learning activities will I undertake?

The four units studied are designed to develop key historical/everyday life skills. You will need to demonstrate knowledge of key individuals and events. You will have to analyse and interpret evidence, events and outcomes. You will be required to show a balanced understanding of these events and make informed judgments.

Hospitality and Catering

What is the title of this course?

Hospitality and Catering

What level of qualification will I gain at the end of the course?

A vocational award: Level 1 or Level 2 in Hospitality and Catering

What are the main topics I will be taught?

This course is split into two units. Unit 1 concentrates on the hospitality and catering industry. You will develop the knowledge and understanding related to a range of hospitality and catering providers; how they operate and what they must consider to be successful, resulting in a written exam. Unit 2 gives you the opportunity to learn about issues related to nutrition, food safety and how they affect successful hospitality and catering operations. In this unit, you will also develop food preparation and cooking skills, as well as transferable skills of problem solving, organisation and time management. At the end of this unit, you will complete a piece of written coursework (9 hours) and 3 hour practical based assessment.

What are the possible progression routes once I have this qualification?

This qualification will help you develop the essential skills to move into employment, training and further education. You could move onto NVQs, BTEC Hospitality and Catering courses, as well as a vast range of employment opportunities

How will I be assessed?

Unit 1: The Hospitality and Catering Industry will be externally assessed with a written examination that lasts 90 minutes. You will be graded as follows:

- Level 1 Pass, Merit, Distinction, distinction*
- Level 2 Pass, Merit, Distinction, distinction*

Unit 2: Hospitality and Catering in Action is internally assessed.

This involves you completing a piece of coursework in school under examination conditions. You will be set a task and will have to safely plan, prepare, **cook** and present nutritional dishes. You will have 9 hours to write up the assessment and an additional 3 hours of cooking time

What type of learning activities will I undertake?

Lessons will be theory and practical-based to ensure students acquire the necessary skills, knowledge and understanding they need to succeed with the hospitality and catering industry as well as understanding the nutritional needs of customers. There must be a commitment required to purchase ingredients for practical tasks. Students will complete a range of practical tasks as well as looking at case studies of the industry.

Mathematics

What is the title of this course?

GCSE Mathematics

What level of qualification will I gain at the end of the course?

GCSE 1-9

What are the main topics I will be taught?

The curriculum will cover the following:

- Number
- Algebra
- Ratio, proportion and rates of change
- Geometry and measures
- Probability
- Statistics

What type of learning activities will I undertake?

- Exam technique
- Developing fluency in key mathematical topics
- Organising and presenting structured and logical argument
- Confidence in mastering challenging ideas and overcoming difficulties
- Thinking in an abstract and symbolic way

How will I be assessed?

Students will sit three exam papers at either Foundation or Higher level.

- Higher level covers grades 4-9
- Foundation level covers grades 1-5

What are the possible progression routes once I have this qualification?

Maths is a key qualification and will be looked at by all employers, colleges and universities. The skills are particularly useful for careers and courses in science, engineering, surveying, actuarial work & accountancy, to name but a few. In addition, there are many practical applications of the mathematics taught, for example in building, hairdressing and sports.

Most sixth forms and colleges will require a GCSE grade 4 or above to access level 3 courses.

Music

What is the title of this course?

BTEC Tech Award in Music Practice

<https://qualifications.pearson.com/content/dam/pdf/btec-tec-awards/music-practice/2022/Guide/B0746j%20BTEC%20Tech%20Awards%20Music%20Mini%20Guide%20A4P%20PRF2.pdf>

What level of qualification will I gain at the end of the course?

BTEC Level 1 or Level Tech Award (Level 2 is equivalent to GCSE)

What are the main topics I will be taught?

Component 1: Exploring Music Products and Styles (60 Marks)

Learners will explore the techniques used in the creation of different musical products and investigate the key features of different musical styles.

Component 2: Music Skills Development (60 Marks)

Learners will have the opportunity to develop two musical disciplines through engagement in practical tasks, while documenting their progress and planning for further improvement.

Component 3: Responding to a Musical Brief (60 Marks)

Learners will be given the opportunity to develop and present music in response to a given music brief. This component starts in January of Year 11. There is no written exam in this course.

What type of learning activities will I undertake?

In class:

Performing, composing and listening & appraising activities following on from KS3 Music

Outside the classroom:

One-to-one lessons with a specialist tutor on your chosen instrument or voice. We offer a generous subsidy for lessons booked through Hertfordshire Music Service.

Practice your instrument/singing every day. This is vital for your progress and success.

Join an extra-curricular music group such as a choir or band either in or outside of school

How will I be assessed?

Component 1, 30% of final grade, Coursework Unit (teacher assessed & exam board moderated)

Component 2, 30% of final grade, Coursework Unit (teacher assessed & exam board moderated)

Component 3, 40% of final grade, Exam Unit (marked by exam board)

What are the possible progression routes once I have this qualification?

Further Music studies could include BTEC Level 3, AS and A Level courses in Music, Music Technology and Performing Arts

Religious Studies

What is the title of this course?

AQA GCSE Religious Studies A (8062)

What level of qualification will I gain at the end of the course?

GCSE 1-9

What are the main topics I will be taught?

Component 1: Component 1: Beliefs, teachings and practices of **Christianity and Islam**.

Component 2: Of the six study themes that are offered, we will focus on the following four study themes:

Theme A - Relationships and families.

Theme B - Religion and life.

Theme C - The existence of God and revelation.

Theme E - Religion, crime and punishment.

What type of learning activities will I undertake?

The components are designed to increase and develop awareness of diversity both within and between the studied religions, In addition , you will develop an understanding between faith and different aspects of ethics. Other opportunities include: hearing Holocaust survivor testimony, visiting a local mosque and church.

What are the possible progression routes once I have this qualification?

Studying GCSE Religious Studies will help you develop your awareness and understanding about a number of relevant, controversial issues that are often a cause of conflicting opinions. It will help you develop your enquiry skills, express your opinions and learn to accept the views of others if contradictory to your own. All these are valuable life skills that are sought after by employers, schools or colleges, or for students who wish to extend their education.

How will I be assessed?

- Component 1: a single exam, lasting 1 hour and 45 minutes, total 50% of the qualification.
- Component 2: a single exam, lasting 1 hour and 45 minutes, total 50% of the qualification.

Science - Combined

What is the title of this course?

AQA GCSE Combined Science

*All students who do not choose Triple Science will take the combined science course.
It is still possible to study A-level sciences post-16 with this qualification.*

What level of qualification will I gain at the end of the course?

2 GCSE Grades in Combined Science. These are calculated from an average grade across **all six papers** sat at the end of year 11. We offer both Higher and Foundation tier to students, based on their working grade, which may change during year 10 and/or year 11. This tier will be the same for all six papers.

What are the main topics I will be taught?

Below is an overview of the topics that will be taught in biology, chemistry and physics. If you would like examples of where there is additional content in Triple science, please ask your class teacher for specific topic differences.

Biology

- Cell Biology
- Organisation
- Infection and response
- Bioenergetics
- Homeostasis and response
- Inheritance, variation and evolution
- Ecology

Chemistry

- Atomic Structure and the periodic table
- Bonding, structure and the properties of matter
- Quantitative chemistry
- Chemical changes
- Energy changes
- The rate and extent of chemical change
- Organic chemistry
- Chemical analysis
- Chemistry of the atmosphere
- Using Resources

Physics

- Energy
- Electricity
- Particle model of matter
- Atomic structure
- Forces
- Waves
- Magnetism and electromagnetism

What type of learning activities will I undertake?

All science courses involve practical work; written tasks; research and use of ICT; discussion and debate; problem solving; investigation and numeracy skills. The practical elements of science are all assessed through the completion of required practicals which are tested across each exam paper at the end of year 11. We embed these skills throughout the curriculum, with other practical tasks, throughout our curriculum.

How will I be assessed?

The Combined Science course consists of two biology, two chemistry and two physics papers which assess the course content across year 9 to year 11. Each exam is worth 70 marks, and lasts 1 hour and 15 minutes.

Across year 10 and year 11, we will ensure there are opportunities for smaller assessment to ensure learning is regularly assessed to highlight areas of development and to build up your exam technique/stamina so you have the skills needed for the exams at the end of year 11. This includes mock examinations in June of year 10, and November and March of year 11.

What are the possible progression routes once I have this qualification?

Good GCSE grades in science are needed for a number of careers, including many that are not necessarily scientific. This is due to the problem solving and analysis skills the course will teach you across the next two years.

Having a successful two years and good grades in science shows the ability to apply knowledge to different contexts and how you can demonstrate good mathematical and communication skills in specialist areas.

Students who are successful at GCSE are able to go onto study sciences at A-Level and beyond. This can lead into careers in a range of fields, including: medicine, veterinary science, sports science, physiotherapy, forensic science, environmental science, astronomy/astrophysics, and many branches of engineering.

Science - Triple

What is the title of this course?

AQA GCSE Biology
AQA GCSE Chemistry
AQA GCSE Physics

This option may be more beneficial (but not necessary) to study A-level sciences after year 11 due to the additional topics that are studied that link to the A-level specifications.

What level of qualification will I gain at the end of the course?

3 separate GCSE Grades in Biology, Chemistry and Physics. Each science grade is calculated using paper 1 and paper 2 for each subject. We offer both Higher and Foundation tier to students, based on their working grade, which may change during year 10 and/or year 11. It is possible to be on different tiers for different science disciplines.

What are the main topics I will be taught?

Below is an overview of the topics that will be taught in biology, chemistry and physics. If you would like examples of where there is additional content in Triple science, please ask your class teacher for specific topic differences.

Biology

- Cell Biology
- Organisation
- Infection and response
- Bioenergetics
- Homeostasis and response
- Inheritance, variation and evolution
- Ecology

Chemistry

- Atomic Structure and the periodic table
- Bonding, structure and the properties of matter
- Quantitative chemistry
- Chemical changes
- Energy changes
- The rate and extent of chemical change
- Organic chemistry
- Chemical analysis
- Chemistry of the atmosphere
- Using Resources

Physics

- Energy
- Electricity
- Particle model of matter
- Atomic structure
- Forces
- Waves
- Magnetism and electromagnetism
- Space physics (Triple Physics Only)

What type of learning activities will I undertake?

All science courses involve practical work; written tasks; research and use of ICT; discussion and debate; problem solving; investigation and numeracy skills. The practical elements of science are all assessed through the completion of required practicals which are tested across each exam paper at the end of year 11. We embed these skills throughout the curriculum, with other practical tasks, throughout our curriculum.

How will I be assessed?

Each separate science course has two papers which assess the course content across year 9 to year 11. Each exam is worth 100 marks, and lasts 1 hour and 45 minutes.

Across year 10 and year 11, we will ensure there are opportunities for smaller assessment to ensure learning is regularly assessed to highlight areas of development and to build up your exam technique/stamina so you have the skills needed for the exams at the end of year 11. This includes mock examinations in June of year 10, and November and March of year 11.

What are the possible progression routes once I have this qualification?

Good GCSE grades in science are needed for a number of careers, including many that are not necessarily scientific. This is due to the problem solving and analysis skills the course will teach you across the next two years.

Having a successful two years and good grades in science shows the ability to apply knowledge to different contexts and how you can demonstrate good mathematical and communication skills in specialist areas.

Students who are successful at GCSE are able to go onto study sciences at A-Level and beyond. This can lead into careers in a range of fields, including: medicine, veterinary science, sports science, physiotherapy, forensic science, environmental science, astronomy/astrophysics, and many branches of engineering.

Spanish

What is the title of this course?

GCSE Spanish (AQA exam board)

What level of qualification will I gain at the end of the course?

GCSE 1-9

What are the main themes I will be taught?

- Theme 1: People and lifestyle
- Theme 2: Popular culture
- Theme 3: Communication and the world around us

What types of learning activities will I undertake?

Our key stage 4 course builds on and revisits the knowledge which pupils have gained in key stage 3. In years 10 and 11 students develop their ability to communicate in Spanish in both speech and writing. They will study language within a variety of thematic contexts relevant to their age and interests and will develop a greater awareness of the culture of Spanish-speaking communities and countries. Students will develop and use their knowledge and understanding of Spanish vocabulary and grammar progressively through their course of study.

In this course, you will not only explore Spain and the diverse countries where Spanish is spoken, but also gain valuable skills that will serve you throughout your career. From enhancing your ability to communicate effectively and speak confidently in public, to developing essential problem-solving strategies—Spanish provides a solid foundation for success in a wide range of fields.

You'll develop all four core language skills—reading, writing, listening, and speaking—ensuring you're prepared for real-life conversations and global career opportunities. A language is a life skill, therefore as well as learning Spanish— we want you to experience it, live it, and make it your gateway to the world!

How will I be assessed?

4 units based on the skills of: Listening, speaking, reading and writing. Each is worth 25% of the final grade.

Listening - Understanding and responding to spoken Spanish. Dictation of short, spoken extracts.

Speaking - Undertake a Role-play. Carry out a Reading aloud task. Talk about a photograph.

Reading - Understanding and responding to written texts. Translating from Spanish into English.

Writing - Writing texts in Spanish. Translating from English into Spanish.

What are the possible progression routes once I have this qualification?

Learning Spanish opens doors to a world of opportunities, both academically and professionally. You will make yourself stand out when applying for colleges and universities. Your GCSE will add an extra dimension to your personal skills. You will be in a stronger position to get a job in companies with international links or improve your employability if you would like to work abroad. And of course, it will help you tremendously if you are planning to travel in the future!

Sports Studies

What is the title of this course?

OCR Level 1/2 Cambridge National Certificate in Sport Studies

What level of qualification will I gain at the end of the course?

OCR qualification/GCSE equivalent

What are the main topics I will be taught?

R184: Contemporary Issues in Sport - 40%

R185: Performance and Leadership in Sports Activities - 40%

R186: Sport and the Media - 20%

What type of learning activities will I undertake?

A mixture of **practical** and **theory** lessons. **Practical** work will equate to *approximately 30%*, with **theory** equating to *approximately 70%*. Practical work will look at developing skills as a sports performer in two sports of your choice, and assessing your ability in those sports. Also, you will get the opportunity to plan and lead a sports session of your choice. Theory work will look at a wide range of engaging content, with **one** exam and a variety of coursework units.

How will I be assessed?

Assessment is through a range of assignments in three different coursework units and an exam:

- R184 - Contemporary Issues in Sport - 1.15 Hour **Exam** (70 marks)
- R185 - Performance and Leadership in Sports Activities - 2 practical assessments and 3 written assignments (80 marks)
- R186 - Sport and the Media – 3 written assignments (40 marks)

All assignments are controlled coursework based and students must pass all the assignments and the exam in order to pass the whole course. All assignments are marked using a Pass, Merit or Distinction criteria.

What are the possible progression routes once I have this qualification?

- Cambridge Technical in Sport Level 3
- BTEC Nationals in Sport Level 3
- A levels
- Vocational Qualifications

Can lead to careers in fields such as:

PE Apprenticeships, The Sports and Leisure Industry, Sports Administration and Management, Coaching, Physiotherapy, Sport Science, Sports Analyst, Personal Training, Teaching or Police, Fire Service and Armed Forces.