



Year 9 Options

2025 - 2026

The GCSE Curriculum

Throughout the first three years of their secondary education, your child has received a broad and balanced curriculum following the National Curriculum guidelines. It is now time to prepare for new courses in Years 10 and 11 which will lead to public examinations called GCSEs.

Each student will study a 'common core', encompassing English, Maths, Science, and a humanity. They will also have the flexibility to explore a variety of other subjects chosen from the open bucket list.



Common questions and answers

Should I choose my GCSE options based on what I am good at?

Thinking of your strengths when making your GCSE choices is an important factor to consider. Opting for subjects which you are good at is likely to make you enjoy the subject more and may help you to manage your workload more efficiently, leading to better results.

Should I choose a subject because I like the teacher?

It is a tricky decision as an exceptional teacher can ignite your passion for a subject. However, the likability of a teacher shouldn't be a primary factor in GCSE option selection. You may not have this teacher in Year 10 and/or 11 or the teacher may leave. Also, don't choose a subject based on what your friends are choosing. It should be your decision.

Will my A Levels be limited by what I choose for my GCSEs?

Certain A Level subjects, such as Psychology, Economics, Philosophy, Religion and Ethics, Media or Sociology may not necessitate prior GCSE study. However, for other subjects, it's advisable to confirm GCSE prerequisites on the Presdales Sixth Form website.

What grades will I be awarded?

GCSE grades are awarded on a scale from 9 to 1, with 9 being the highest grade and 1 being the lowest. A grade 4 is equivalent to an old Grade C.

What is the difference between Exams and Non-Examined Assessment (NEA)?

Non-Exam Assessment (NEA) provides an alternative way to assess you in a particular subject. NEA tasks are generally set by the exam board and conducted in school, however, they are often marked and assessed by exam boards.

Do universities care about my GCSE results?

Many universities typically require a good pass in English Language and Mathematics GCSE of a grade 4. For certain degrees, subject requirements are flexible. However, specific A Levels and GCSEs may be necessary for certain university courses, especially in disciplines like the sciences, history, or foreign languages.

What is EBacc?

The English Baccalaureate is a performance measure used by schools. It encourages students to study a broad and balanced curriculum, including core academic subjects. To achieve the EBacc, a student typically needs to secure GCSE qualifications in the following subjects: English Language and Literature, Mathematics, Science (Combined Science or three separate sciences), History or Geography and a modern foreign language (e.g. French, Spanish, German, Italian or Russian).

Welcome from Mrs Julie Stephenson

In the spring term, you will be asked to specify which GCSE subjects your child would definitely like to study at Key Stage 4, in addition to the Core Curriculum. Details of all the subjects studied in the Core Curriculum, as well as those offered as Option Choices, are given in the Year 9 Options Booklet.

As outlined in the booklet, all students will study the Core GCSE Curriculum and your child is additionally being asked to choose four other subjects, which should comprise of one humanity option and three free options which totals to nine GCSEs.

Core curriculum:

- GCSE English Language
- GCSE English Literature
- GCSE Mathematics
- GCSE Combined Science
- Physical Education (not examined)

We encourage students to select a modern foreign language as one of these options as part of a broad and balanced curriculum but this is no longer compulsory. A small number of students will also be advised by letter that they are eligible to select two free options and attend three supervised study lessons. These students will still achieve eight GCSEs but may benefit from a less intensive programme of study.

In order to structure the option blocks in a way that will allow as many students as possible to select their preferred subjects from the four blocks, we are asking you to indicate your child's preferred GCSE option choices following the GCSE Options Evening on Tuesday 25th November 2025. These free choices should be inputted in order of preference, together with a free option reserve choice, from the list of subjects given in the dropdown.

The deadline for all option indications is Friday 12th December, 2025.

Once all these option indications have been received, the subjects will be allocated to four option blocks for timetabling purposes. Your child is able to take separate sciences (three Science GCSEs) if they are selected based on attainment. The final decision will be made after the Year 9 end-of-year examinations. All other students will take the combined science GCSE. Students may only take one of the two technology subjects (Product Design or Textiles). They may only choose German, Italian, Russian, or Spanish as a Modern Foreign Language Option if they have studied it previously in Year 9.

In addition, one or more of these subjects may not be available in the blocks if insufficient demand exists for the subject. There is also a class size limit in some subjects, such as Food Preparation and Nutrition, but we may put on an extra class if demand and staffing allow.

The electronic application form will be emailed home following the GCSE Options Evening, where you will be able to discuss their choices and core curriculum with subject staff.

Yours sincerely,

Julie Stephenson

Deputy Headteacher, Curriculum

Making Choices

Our two-stage GCSE option process involves indicating preferences to structure option blocks, allowing flexibility. Final choices may differ, and some subjects might be unavailable due to demand or class size. You will be asked to complete the electronic option Google form.

Core curriculum:

- GCSE English Language
- GCSE English Literature
- GCSE Mathematics
- GCSE Combined Science (or 3 separate GCSEs in Biology, Chemistry and Physics)
- Physical Education (not examined)



Humanity Option

- GCSE Geography
- GCSE History



Three Free Options

- | | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|---------------------------|
| • GCSE Business | • GCSE German | • GCSE Physical Education |
| • GCSE Textiles | • BTEC Health & Social Care | • GCSE Product Design |
| • GCSE Drama | • GCSE Italian | • GCSE Russian |
| • GCSE Fine art | • GCSE Media Studies | • GCSE Sociology |
| • GCSE Food Preparation and Nutrition | • GCSE Music | • GCSE Spanish |
| • GCSE French | • GCSE Philosophy, Religion and Ethics | |

Core Curriculum

At Presdales, a commitment to providing a well-rounded education is at the heart of our academic approach. To achieve this, we ensure that all students embark on a shared educational journey by studying the core curriculum. This foundation of subjects forms the basis of your child's academic experience, ensuring they receive a comprehensive and balanced education.

GCSE English Language	6
GCSE English Literature	7
GCSE Mathematics	8
GCSE Combined Science	9
GCSE Separate Science	10

GCSE English Language

The English Language GCSE has been designed to inspire and motivate students, providing appropriate stretch and challenge whilst ensuring, as far as possible, that the assessment and texts are accessible to the full range of students. The specification enables students of all abilities to develop the skills they need to read, understand and analyse a wide range of different texts covering the 19th, 20th and 21st century time periods as well as to write clearly, coherently and accurately using a range of vocabulary and sentence structures.

Specification:

AQA 8700

Assessment:

100% Exam

Contact:

Mr Samways

What is this course about?

GCSE English Language covers the following reading areas: analysing fiction, analysing non-fiction, comparing texts. In addition students will be asked to write for different audiences and purposes; always with correct spelling, punctuation and grammar.

What skills will this course help me develop?

GCSE English Language should ensure students can read fluently and write effectively. They will be asked to demonstrate a confident control of Standard English and they should be able to write grammatically correct sentences, deploy figurative language and analyse texts.

How is this course assessed?

In GCSE English Language there are two papers:

Explorations in creative reading and writing (50%)

In this paper, you will read a range of fiction extras from a range of genres and then be asked to write your own creative piece based on either an image or text prompt.

Writer's viewpoints and perspectives (50%)

In this paper, you will read a range of non-fiction extracts from the 19th to the 21st century and compare how writers convey their viewpoints and perspectives.

In addition, students must complete a non-exam Spoken Language Endorsement (0%).



GCSE English Literature

The GCSE English Literature course is designed to inspire, challenge and motivate every student, no matter what their level of ability. The assessment strategies that support students' achievement is an untiered, closed book context with the use of extract-based questions in the assessment of the 19th-century novel and the Shakespeare plays.

Specification:

AQA 8702

Assessment:

100% Exam

Contact:

Mr Samways

What is this course about?

During the course the students all study the following texts: *Romeo and Juliet*, *A Christmas Carol*, *Love and Relationships* poetry anthology, *An Inspector Calls*. In addition, students also complete a unit on analysing unseen poetry.

What skills will this course help me develop?

GCSE specifications in English Literature should develop knowledge and skills in reading, writing and critical thinking. Through literature, students have a chance to develop culturally and acquire knowledge of the best that has been thought and written.

How is this course assessed?

In GCSE English Literature there are two papers:

Shakespeare and 19th Century Novel (40%)

In this paper, you will study a Shakespearean play (*Romeo and Juliet*) and a nineteenth-century prose (*A Christmas Carol*).

Modern texts and Poetry (60%)

In this paper, you will study a collection of poetry linked by the common theme of 'Love and Relationships', understand how to appreciate unseen poetry, and study a fascinating play about the changing values of Edwardian Britain in the 20th century called '*An Inspector Calls*' by J.B. Priestley.



GCSE Mathematics

Students will continue to work in sets based on current attainment in mathematics and movement may take place between sets as a result of tests and teacher assessment. The purpose of the qualification is to provide a strong foundation for further academic and vocational study and for employment, to give students the appropriate mathematical skills, knowledge and understanding to help them progress to a full range of courses in further and higher education.

Specification:

Edexcel 1MA1

Assessment:

100% Exam

Contact:

Mrs Inpanathan

What is this course about?

The content of the course is divided between the topics of number, algebra, ratio, proportion and rates of change, geometry and measures, statistics and probability.

What skills will this course help me develop?

The aims of the Mathematics GCSE are to enable students to:

- Develop fluent knowledge, skills and understanding of mathematical methods and concepts
- Acquire, select and apply mathematical techniques to solve problems
- Reason mathematically, make deductions and inferences and draw conclusions
- Comprehend, interpret and communicate mathematical information in a variety of forms appropriate to the information and context.

How is this course assessed?

The GCSE qualification is assessed by three equally weighted written examination papers (one non-calculator and two calculator).

The Foundation Tier targets grades 1 to 5 and the Higher Tier targets grades 4 to 9, with 50% of the marks at Higher Tier addressing grade 7 and above.

Final decisions on tier of entry will be made during Year 11.



GCSE Combined Science

The majority of students will study combined science which covers elements of the three core Sciences; Biology, Chemistry and Physics that culminate in the award of a double GCSE certification. Students will either be entered for foundation tier or higher based on their academic performance. The content builds on prior learning and ensures that all students will leave school with a sufficient level of scientific understanding to make decisions that affect them and the world around them.

Specification:

AQA Trilogy 8464

Assessment:

100% Exam

Contact:

Mr Reading

What is this course about?

Science is a set of ideas about the material world. We develop your scientific knowledge through investigation, observation, experimental work and testing out ideas and thinking about them. The development of scientific ideas will support you in building a deep understanding of science that governs the world around you. You will learn about Science through practical work as well as representing science in its many forms both mathematically and visually through models.

What skills will this course help me develop?

You will use your Science to critically evaluate the vast amount of information which is available to you to make informed decision based on the scientific knowledge you gain. To achieve this you will develop a good standard of scientific literacy, the ability to look at and understand data in many forms and decide whether the data is biased based on how it was collected.

How is this course assessed?

Students will sit six papers (two Biology, two Chemistry and two Physics) all of equal value. In Year 11 we will decide whether you sit these assessments at either foundation or higher tier.



GCSE Separate Sciences

At the end of Year 9 we will identify students who are suitable for the study of the three Sciences as three separate GCSEs. This is delivered in the same amount of time as the combined science award but material is covered at a faster pace and is not suitable for all students. If you are interested in Scientific careers like medicine, engineering or forensic science then this may be the best route for you.

Specification:

Biology 8461
Chemistry 8462
Physics 8463

Assessment:

100% Exam

Contact:

Miss Gregory
Mrs Richard
Mr Reading

What is this course about?

GCSE Biology covers cell biology, organisation, infection and response, bioenergetics, homeostasis and response, inheritance, variation and evolution and ecology.

GCSE Chemistry covers atomic structure and the periodic table, bonding, structure, and the properties of matter, quantitative chemistry, chemical changes, energy changes, rate and extent of chemical change, organic chemistry, chemical analysis and chemistry of the atmosphere.

GCSE Physics cover the particle model of matter, energy, electricity, atomic structure and radioactivity, waves, forces and motion, electromagnetism and space physics.

What skills will this course help me develop?

You will use your Science to critically evaluate the vast amount of information which is available to you to make informed decision based on the scientific knowledge you gain. To achieve this you will develop a good standard of scientific literacy, the ability to look at and understand data in many forms and decide whether the data is biased based on how it was collected.

How is this course assessed?

Each GCSE is assessed by two external assessments at the end of Year 11. You will be told in your Science lessons what content is covered in each assessment.



Humanity Option

Students have the opportunity to explore the fascinating realm of humanity through two subjects: history and geography. While they must choose one as their core humanity option, they also have the flexibility to select the other as one of their ‘free options’.

This allows students to tailor their academic journey to their interests and aspirations, ensuring a well-rounded and engaging education.

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GCSE Geography

The world in which we live is likely to change more in the next 50 years than it has ever done before. Geography explains why this is and helps to prepare you for these changes. There has never been a more relevant time to study Geography. The world needs more geographers.

Specification:

AQA 8035

Assessment:

100% Exam

Contact:

Mrs Collingwood

What is this course about?

The course studied is AQA 1-9 GCSE Geography. It brings in current geographical concerns, as well as a sound grounding in key ideas. It will allow students to deepen their knowledge of a range of contemporary topics drawing from physical, human and environmental aspects of the discipline.

Some of the material builds on topics and skills taught during Key Stage 3.

The topics we study include:

- Tectonic hazards
- Tropical storms
- Extreme weather in the UK
- Climate change
- Coastal landscapes in the UK
- River landscapes in the UK
- Ecosystems
- Tropical rainforests
- Cold environments
- Urban issues and challenges
- The changing economic world
- The challenge of energy resource management

What skills will this course help me develop?

This course not only equips students with a wide range of geographical skills, but also many generic skills that will be useful in other subjects. Students consider various viewpoints and learn how they can help create a positive geographical future. Issue evaluation and decision making exercises help students develop critical thinking and problem solving skills.

How is this course assessed?

Three examinations:

1. Paper 1 - Physical Geography
2. Paper 2 - Human Geography
3. Paper 3 Issue evaluation and fieldwork - there will be two compulsory days of fieldwork.



GCSE History

History is, at its heart, the study of human experience. The Edexcel History GCSE specification builds on students' knowledge and skills from Key Stage 3. The course covers a range of periods of history, and blends overview and depth to strengthen students' knowledge and understanding of key themes and developments from the Middle Ages to the present day. Knowledge and understanding of the past enables students of History to understand the world as it is today.

Specification:

Edexcel 1HI0FR

Assessment:

100% Exam

Contact:

Miss Workman

What is this course about?

The course is composed of four units:

1. British Depth Study: Early Elizabethan England, 1558-1588
2. Thematic Study and Historic Environment: Medicine in Britain c1250 to the present, with the British sector of the Western Front, 1914 – 1918: injuries, treatment and the trenches.
3. Modern Depth Study: Weimar and Nazi Germany, 1918-1939
4. Period Study: Superpower relations and the Cold War, 1941 – 1991

What skills will this course help me develop?

Studying History at GCSE builds on the knowledge and skills students have already been developing in History since Year 7, including: oral and written explanation and analysis; identifying and deploying relevant evidence; constructing an argument in response to a question; researching and using sources critically; making sense of the experiences and cultures of other people, other countries and other periods of time.

The knowledge and skills developed in the study of History GCSE are an invaluable basis for A level courses in humanities, social sciences such as sociology and politics, languages, arts, and even sciences. Employers regard History GCSE highly and the skills are therefore seen as essential in the workplace.

How is this course assessed?

The course is assessed through three examinations at the end of Year 11.

Thematic Paper

- Study of a topic over time
- Medicine in Britain & the British Sector on the Western Front
- 1 hour 15 mins
- 30% of GCSE

British Depth Study

- Early Elizabethan England & Period Study of Superpower Relations & the Cold War, 1941-199
- 1 hour 45 mins
- 40% of GCSE

Germany: 1918-1939

- 1 hour 20 mins
- 30% of GCSE



Free Options

Students will be able to select three “free option” subjects to complement their studies. This exciting opportunity allows students to personalise their academic path, exploring areas of interest beyond the core curriculum. These free options open doors to new knowledge, skills, and passions, enriching their educational experience and preparing them for a diverse array of future endeavors.

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GCSE Fine art	19
GCSE Food Preparation and Nutrition	20
GCSE French	21
GCSE German	22
BTEC Tech Award in Health and Social Care	23
GCSE Italian	24
GCSE Media Studies	25
GCSE Music	26
GCSE Philosophy, Religion and Ethics	27
GCSE Physical Education	28
GCSE Russian	29
GCSE Sociology	30
GCSE Spanish	31

GCSE Business

Students will study businesses ranging from small enterprises to large multinationals operating in local, national and global contexts. Students will have the opportunity to investigate how these contexts impact business behaviour and the consumers that they serve.

Specification:

Edexcel 1BSO

Assessment:

100% Exam

Contact:

Mrs Lawrence

What is this course about?

Theme 1 concentrates on the key business concepts, issues and skills involved in starting and running a small business. It provides a framework for students to explore core concepts through the lens of an entrepreneur setting up a business.

Theme 2 examines how a business develops beyond the start-up phase. It focuses on the key business concepts, issues and decisions used to grow a business, with emphasis on aspects of marketing, operations, finance and human resources. Theme 2 also considers the impact of the wider world on the decisions a business makes as it grows.

What skills will this course help me develop?

GCSE Business is delivered in a way that develops a students' understanding of the interdependent nature of business activity, business operations, finance, marketing and human resources as well as external influences within a business context. There are a variety of quantitative skills that students will learn as part of the course, such as calculating revenue, profit, break-even, cash flow forecasts and working with market data.

How is this course assessed?

The course is assessed through:

- Paper 1 – Theme 1: Investigating Small Business (90 marks), 1h 45 mins
- Paper 2 – Theme 2: Building a Business (90 marks), 1h 45 mins



Design and Technology: Product Design

The aim of this course is to prepare young people to participate in the rapidly changing technology of the future. It develops different ways of thinking which enable people to be adaptable, autonomous and creative problem solvers. GCSE Design and Technology prepares students to participate confidently and successfully in an increasingly technological world.

Specification:

AQA 8552

Assessment:

50% Exam and 50% NEA

Contact:

Mrs Schillaci-Rowland

What is this course about?

Year 10 Design and Technology

In Year 10 students undertake several mini projects (using either Graphic Products or Textiles as the leading material) during which they will acquire knowledge and develop a range of practical skills. They will also explore the theory of Design and Technology to prepare them for the written GCSE exam in Year 11.

Year 11 Non-Examination Assessment (NEA)

The controlled assessed project consists of a detailed design and make project and should demonstrate 35 hours work. Candidates are expected to develop a prototype for a commercially viable product. This involves researching a target group and design need, generating design ideas, making and testing a practical outcome and finally considering the market potential for their product. It is expected that students will have an awareness of the impact technology has on society and the environment.

What skills will this course help me develop?

Students will:

- Gain awareness and learn from wider influences on Design and Technology including historical, social, cultural, environmental and economic factors
- Have the opportunity to work creatively when designing and making and apply technical and practical expertise
- Study core technical and designing and making principles, including a broad range of design processes, materials techniques and equipment
- Have the opportunity to study specialist technical principles in greater depth taught by a specialist Product Design teacher.

How is this course assessed?

The Topics and themes will include the following:

- Core Technical Principles: New and Emerging Technologies, Energy Generation & Storage, Development in New Materials, Understanding a Systems Approach
- Specialist Technical Principles: Materials (Graphics and Textiles), Forces and Stresses, Ecological and Social Footprint, Specialist Techniques and Processes
- Covers specialist technical principles where students will go into greater depth in their selected material area – Graphics or Textiles
- Designing and Making Principles: Mini-projects and a final NEA coursework folder (Year 11)

Students must also demonstrate mathematical and scientific knowledge and understanding, in relation to Design and Technology in their written assessment, which accounts for 25%.

The course is assessed through:

- Non-exam assessment 50% of the total marks (100 marks)
- Written Examination Two hours 50% of the total marks (100 marks)



Design & Technology: Textiles

The aim of this course is to prepare young people to participate in the rapidly changing technology of the future, with an emphasis on the Fashion and Textiles Industry. It develops different ways of thinking which enable learners to be adaptable, innovative and creative problem solvers. Students will develop a range of design and manufacture skills using a range of materials and processes.

Specification:

AQA 8552

Assessment:

50% Exam and 50% NEA

Contact:

Mrs Finch & Mrs Hayhurst

What is this course about?

GCSE Design and Technology prepares students to participate confidently and successfully in an increasingly technological world. Students will:

- Gain awareness and learn from wider influences on Design and Technology including historical, social, cultural, environmental and economic factors
- Have the opportunity to work creatively when designing, making and applying technical and practical expertise
- Study core technical, designing and making principles, including a broad range of design processes, materials techniques and equipment
- Have the opportunity to study specialist technical principles in greater depth taught by a specialist teacher of Textiles
- The course will be delivered through a mix of theory and practical application of knowledge and understanding of Design and Technology.

Students must also demonstrate mathematical and scientific knowledge and understanding, in relation to Design and Technology in their written assessment, which accounts for 25%.

What skills will this course help me develop?

In Year 10, students will complete a range of skill development projects to further develop their understanding of design and manufacture processes.

Alongside this, students will work through the following topics:

- Core Technical Principles: New and Emerging Technologies, Energy Generation & Storage, Development in New Materials, Understanding a Systems Approach
- Specialist Technical Principles: Materials, Forces and Stresses, Ecological and Social Footprint, Textiles Specialist Techniques and Processes

In Year 11, students will complete their Design and Manufacture NEA task and work through the remaining Specialist Technical Principles topics.

How is this course assessed?

The course is assessed through:

- Non-exam assessment 50% of the total marks (100 marks)
- Written Examination Two hours 50% of the total marks (100 marks)



GCSE Drama

GCSE Drama is a highly appealing course due to the diverse range of activities, combining both practical and theoretical approaches to learning. Students are assessed as Performers, Directors, Designers and Theatre Critics giving them a broad experience of theatre as an art form.

Specification:
AQA 8261
Assessment:
40% Exam and 60% NEA
Contact:
Miss Mack

What is this course about?

The GCSE drama course focuses on understanding and participating in drama as a performer, designer, and audience member. Skills developed include performance techniques, creative thinking, technical knowledge in aspects like lighting and sound, teamwork, reflective analysis, and communication. Assessment is through a written exam, practical performances, and a portfolio, combining theoretical knowledge with practical abilities in drama.

What skills will this course help me develop?

By studying Drama, students will develop:

- Performance Skills: applying vocal and physical skills to character.
- Creative Thinking: Exploring beyond text and dramatic stimulus to create.
- Technical Knowledge: Engaging and communicating through lighting, set, costume, lighting and sound.
- Teamwork and Collaboration: Working effectively in groups.
- Study of set text: Analysis of playwrights intentions informing Performers, Directors and Designers.
- Reflective Analysis: Evaluating performances and providing constructive feedback.
- Communication Skills: Expressing ideas clearly in both spoken and written forms.

How is this course assessed?

The AQA GCSE Drama course is assessed through three components:

1. Understanding Drama (40%): A written exam covering the theoretical aspects of drama applied to a set text study and Live Theatre Experience.
2. Devising Drama (40%): Practical performance and a written portfolio based on students' own work.
3. Texts in Practice (20%): Performance of two extracts from one play.



GCSE Fine art

The AQA two-year fine art course inspires students with diverse materials and topics, fostering self-direction through research and problem-solving. It emphasises the living and evolving nature of art, drawing inspiration from contemporary artists to nurture students' talents and create personal artworks in various mediums.

Specification:

AQA Fine art 8202

Assessment:

Portfolio 60%
Externally Set Assignment 40%

Contact:

Mrs Harmer

What is this course about?

Fine art is a canvas for your skills, creativity, and imagination. You'll craft responses to project themes and various inspirational beginnings, each leading to your unique explorations. Success in GCSE Fine art hinges on your ability to gather primary research, connecting with artists across time, places, and cultures who share similar ideas. This process involves gallery visits, and investigating traditional practices like drawing and painting, as well as experimental approaches like 3D art, digital media, photography, printmaking, and mixed media.

Your accumulated work culminates in a final piece that encapsulates your project, assessing your ability to synthesize your thoughts and express your ideas in response to the initial theme or starting point.

What skills will this course help me develop?

Areas covered in the specification are:

- Observational studies
- Painting/Drawing
- Printing
- Mixed media experimentation
- Composition skills
- Art History/analysis and evaluation of artworks
- Modifying/reviewing works
- Evaluation skills

How is this course assessed?

The course is assessed through two components:

Component 1: Coursework 60%

Throughout the course, you will create a curated portfolio featuring in-depth projects based on specific themes. Your portfolio will showcase sketchbooks, development pages, and test pieces, culminating in a larger-scale final artwork. You have the flexibility to explore various media, including painting, drawing, photography, printmaking, digital media, and 3D art.

Component 2: Exam 40%

In Year 11, after Christmas, you will select one question from an AQA externally set assignment and have a limited time to research and develop your ideas in a sketchbook. This includes primary research, artist connections, and exploration studies. Then, during a ten-hour practical exam, you will create a final drawing, painting or artwork to complete your project.

Final assessment takes place through the marking of all work produced. Deadlines and checklists are issued at the start of each project.



GCSE Food Preparation and Nutrition

The GCSE Food Preparation and Nutrition course is designed to be both engaging and creative, emphasising practical cooking skills. This focus helps students gain a deep understanding of nutrition, the origins of food, and how different food materials behave. A significant aspect of the course is enhancing students' abilities in practical cooking, thereby solidifying their knowledge of nutritional principles.

Specification:

AQA 8585

Assessment:

50% Exam and 50% NEA

Contact:

Mrs Garcia

What is this course about?

The AQA GCSE Food Preparation and Nutrition course covers practical cooking skills integrated with theoretical knowledge. It includes food, nutrition and health, food science, food safety, food choice, and food provenance. The course aims to develop understanding of the working characteristics and properties of food.

What skills will this course help me develop?

The AQA GCSE Food Preparation and Nutrition course helps develop various skills, including:

- Preparing and cooking a variety of dishes.
- Knowledge about balanced diets and nutritional needs.
- Understanding the chemical and physical properties of food.
- Awareness of hygiene and safety in food preparation.
- Evaluating the sensory qualities of food.

Knowing how to prepare food can be a significant source of personal pride and self-esteem. Students have the opportunity to learn an important life skill and connect socially with peers. The development of good food skills can help decrease grocery bills by reducing dependence on more costly, ready-to-eat foods.

How is this course assessed?

The course is assessed through both a written exam and Non-Examined Assessment (NEA):

- Written Exam: Covering theoretical knowledge of food preparation and nutrition.
- Non-Examined Assessment: This includes a Food Investigation Task 15% (scientific food experiment) and a Food Preparation Task 35% (preparing, cooking, and presenting a menu).



GCSE French

GCSE French delves into a globally significant language, essential in international communication and culture. Its prominence in diplomacy and business, especially in the EU and international organisations, opens diverse career pathways. This course enhances understanding of France's global role, emphasising its cultural and professional importance beyond academic learning.

Specification:
AQA 8652
Assessment:
100% Exam
Contact:
Ms Ainge and Ms Rowe

What is this course about?

The course is based on the linked language skills of listening, reading, speaking and writing and these are built on as learners progress through their studies. It also offers insights into the culture and civilisation of countries where French is spoken, thus encouraging positive attitudes towards language learning and towards speakers of foreign languages. The topics range from holidays to health, school to shopping, food to family and many more.

The content is summarised in the following broad themes.

Theme 1: People and lifestyle

Identity and relationships with others
Healthy living and lifestyle
Education and work

Theme 2: Popular culture

Free time activities
Customs, festivals and celebrations
Celebrity culture

Theme 3: Communication and the world around us

Travel and tourism, including places of interest
Media and technology
The environment and where people live

What skills will this course help me develop?

The GCSE course builds on KS3 skills. In Years 10 and 11, you will strengthen grammar, translation, and expand vocabulary. Speaking skills for everyday situations are emphasised, valuable for your future and oral exams. A GCSE in French is highly esteemed by universities, benefiting careers in journalism, politics, law, science, engineering, business, and tourism. French speakers are in high demand by employers.

How is this course assessed?

Students may be entered for either Foundation Tier or Higher Tier but they must enter at the same tier for all four skills.

Paper 1: Listening to and understanding spoken extracts and a short dictation in both tiers

Foundation - 35 minutes and Higher - 45 minutes.

Paper 2: Speaking includes a role-play, a reading aloud task and a conversation about a picture stimulus in both tiers

Foundation - 7-9 minutes and Higher tier 10-12 minutes.

Paper 3: Reading and understanding written extracts and translation of short sentences from French into English in both tiers

Foundation - 45 minutes and Higher - 1 hour.

Paper 4: Writing in French in response to simple and familiar stimuli and a translation of a short passage from English into French

Foundation tier - 1 hour 10 minutes and Higher - 1 hour 15 minutes.

GCSE German

Opting for German means more than learning the language: it also encourages an understanding and appreciation of the people and the German Speaking countries. German is spoken by 120 million people in Europe as their mother tongue, is the 2nd most commonly used language in the internet and is the 2nd most important language for scientists. We provide our students with as many opportunities as possible to understand the importance of German outside of the classroom context.

Specification:
AQA 8662
Assessment:
100% Exam
Contact:
Mrs Yates

What is this course about?

The course is based on the linked language skills of listening, reading, speaking and writing and these are built on as learners progress through their studies. You will also embrace the geography, history, customs and traditions of German-speaking countries, thus encouraging positive attitudes towards language learning and towards speakers of foreign languages.

The content is summarised in the following broad themes.

Theme 1: People and lifestyle

Identity and relationships with others
Healthy living and lifestyle
Education and work

Theme 2: Popular culture

Free time activities
Customs, festivals and celebrations
Celebrity culture

Theme 3: Communication and the world around us

Travel and tourism, including places of interest
Media and technology
The environment and where people live

What skills will this course help me develop?

The GCSE course builds upon KS3 skills. In Year 10 and 11, you'll strengthen grammatical knowledge and translation competencies. You'll also enhance your ability to respond spontaneously in everyday situations, crucial for your future and oral exams. A GCSE in German is esteemed by universities, benefiting careers in journalism, politics, law, science, engineering, business, and tourism. German speakers are in high demand by employers.

How is this course assessed?

Students may be entered for either Foundation Tier or Higher Tier but they must enter at the same tier for all four skills.

Paper 1: Listening to and understanding spoken extracts and a short dictation in both tiers

Foundation - 35 minutes and Higher - 45 minutes.

Paper 2: Speaking includes a role-play, a reading aloud task and a conversation about a picture stimulus in both tiers

Foundation - 7-9 minutes and Higher 10 - 12 minutes.

Paper 3: Reading and understanding written extracts and translation of short sentences from German into English in both tiers

Foundation - 45 minutes and Higher - 1 hour.

Paper 4: Writing in German in response to simple and familiar stimuli and a translation of a short passage from English into German

Foundation - 1 hour 10 minutes and Higher - 1 hour 15 minutes.

BTEC Health and Social Care

Health and Social Care is an engaging and practical subject that explores how to care for and support people of all ages in society. This course will give you an understanding of key topics such as human development, effective communication, and the importance of health and well-being.

Specification:

Edexcel BHSO

Assessment:

40% Exam and 60% NEA

Contact:

Mrs Miller

What is this course about?

The BTEC Tech Award in Health and Social Care is designed to provide learners with a practical introduction to the health and social care sector.

Course Structure:

- **Human Lifespan Development:** This component explores how individuals grow and develop across different life stages, considering factors that may influence development and how people adapt to life events.
- **Health and Social Care Services and Values:** Learners investigate various health and social care services, the barriers individuals may face in accessing them, and the skills, attributes, and values required to provide effective care.
- **Health and Wellbeing:** This component focuses on factors affecting health and wellbeing, including physiological indicators and lifestyle choices. Learners will also develop health and wellbeing improvement plans tailored to individual needs.

What skills will this course help me develop?

You'll learn effective communication, teamwork, and empathy, as well as practical skills like monitoring health indicators and creating health improvement plans. The course enhances your understanding of human development, health services, and professional values. substantiated judgements and drawing reasoned conclusions.

How is this course assessed?

The BTEC Tech Award in Health and Social Care is assessed through a combination of internal and external assessments.

Internal assessments make up 60% of the final grade and involve assignments for two components: Human Lifespan Development and Health and Social Care.

Services and Values. These are marked by teachers and moderated by Pearson.

The remaining 40% is assessed externally through a synoptic examination for the Health and Wellbeing component. This approach allows you to demonstrate knowledge, understanding, and practical skills in real-world contexts.



GCSE Italian

Choosing GCSE Italian is not just about learning a new language; it is an immersive experience into the rich Italian culture and the lifestyle of its people. Italian is a key language in Europe, spoken by millions and pivotal in various fields including art, music, design, and cuisine. Students are encouraged to explore Italian beyond the classroom, appreciating its global impact and historical importance, thereby gaining a comprehensive perspective of the language and its heritage.

Specification:
AQA 8633
Assessment:
100% Exam
Contact:
Mrs Evenden

What is this course about?

The Italian course is focused on developing language skills in speaking, listening, reading, and writing Italian. It aims to enhance students' understanding and appreciation of Italian culture and society. The course also includes learning about Italy's influence in various fields and promotes a comprehensive understanding of the Italian language in different contexts.

The content is summarised in the following broad themes.

Theme 1: Identity and culture

Me, my family and friends
Free-time activities

Theme 2: Local, national, international and global areas

Home, town, neighbourhood and region
Social issues
Global issues
Travel and tourism

Theme 3: Current and future study and employment

My studies
Life at school
Education post-16
Jobs, career choices and ambitions

How is this course assessed?

Students may be entered for either Foundation Tier or Higher Tier but they must enter at the same tier for all four skills.

Paper 1: Listening to and understanding spoken extracts

Foundation - 35 minutes and Higher - 45 minutes.

Paper 2: Speaking includes a role-play, a photo card and a conversation on two topics

Foundation - 7-9 minutes and Higher 10 - 12 minutes.

Paper 3: Reading and understanding written extracts and translation from Italian into English in both tiers

Foundation - 45 minutes and Higher - 1 hour.

Paper 4: Writing in Italian in response to stimuli based on the three broad themes detailed above

Foundation - 1 hour and Higher 1 hour 15 minutes.

What skills will this course help me develop?

The GCSE course builds upon KS3 skills. In Year 10 and 11, you'll strengthen grammatical knowledge and translation competencies. You will also enhance your ability to respond spontaneously in everyday situations, crucial for your future and oral exams. A GCSE in Italian is esteemed by universities, benefiting careers in journalism, politics, law, science, engineering, business, and tourism. Italian speakers are in high demand by employers.

GCSE Media Studies

Media Studies offers an exciting opportunity to explore the world of media in all its forms – from film, television and magazines to social media and advertising. In this course, you will learn how the media shapes the way we see the world, influences our opinions and creates powerful messages.

Specification:

OCR J200

Assessment:

70% Exam and 30% NEA

Contact:

Mr Soltysik

What is this course about?

Media surrounds us daily, from television and films to social media, video games, advertising, and music videos. This course delves into how media texts are created, who they target, and how they shape perceptions of the world.

You will explore a wide range of media texts, analysing how they are created and how they shape our understanding of the world through the theoretical framework of media studies.

You will compare media from different eras, like the BBC drama *Vigil* and the 1965 classic *The Avengers*, to examine how the representation of women has evolved over the last 60 years. You'll also dive into the world of advertising and marketing by studying *The Lego Movie*, focusing on how it was promoted using traditional advertising and a video game.

You'll also delve into music videos like Harry Styles' *Adore You* and Arlo Parks' *Hope*, exploring how representations are constructed in music videos. You'll also analyse how newspapers have adapted from print to digital, discover how Radio 1's *Live Lounge* appeals to a younger audience, and explore the unique appeal of *MOJO* magazine.

What skills will this course help me develop?

This course develops valuable skills such as analytical thinking, creativity, communication, and research skills. You'll learn to critically analyse media texts and understand the media's impact on society. Practical coursework lets you design and produce your own media products, boosting your creativity and technical skills.

It's excellent preparation for A Level Media Studies at Presdales, where you'll study media at a more advanced level. Many students continue to university, specialising in either media production or the analytical and critical aspects of the subject.

How is this course assessed?

Paper 1: Television and Promoting Media

This is a 1 hour and 45 minute written paper. You will begin by spending 30 minutes watching an extract from one of two television dramas, followed by a series of questions based on the extract. The second section of the paper focuses on *The Lego Movie* and explores broader concepts of audience and industry.

Paper 2: Music and News

This is a 1 hour and 15 minute written paper. The first section focuses on the broad theme of 'music', covering music videos, *MOJO* magazine, and Radio 1 *Live Lounge*. It includes both short-answer questions and one essay question. The second section focuses on news, where you will analyse unseen newspaper texts (either print or digital). This section features a mix of short-answer questions, an extended response, and an essay question.

NEA: Creating Media

This is your coursework unit. You will create either a magazine or a music video in response to a brief set by the exam board. Using industry-standard equipment and editing software, this project requires an understanding of genre, audience, and broader creative and technical skills.



GCSE Music

GCSE Music offers a diverse exploration of global musical genres across time, including traditional, classical, pop, and rock styles. You'll discover new sounds and musical techniques, analyse others' music, and compose your own structured pieces. This course also provides opportunities for solo and group performances, fostering confidence in playing an instrument of your choice and collaborative music-making.

Specification:

OCR J536

Assessment:

40% Exam and 60% NEA

Contact:

Mrs Cooper

What is this course about?

There are five areas of study:

1. My Music
2. The Concerto Through Time
3. Rhythms of the World
4. Film Music and
5. Conventions of Pop

Within each area of study, you will listen to and learn about different pieces of music, the musical devices that characterise each type of music, then experiment with performing and composing in these styles.

Composition is broken down initially into smaller, bitesize tasks and then as your skills develop these compositional techniques can be combined to create a longer piece of music. You will receive free one-to-one tuition in performing on an instrument of your choice for 15 minutes a week or benefit from remission of fees from a longer lesson.

An interest in listening to and performing music is essential. A determination and patience to practice and improve on your instrument of choice is important as well a commitment to being open to learning new ways to create and understand music.

What skills will this course help me develop?

Studying GCSE Music allows you to learn read, understand and interpret music notation. You will gain an understanding of different periods of history and the different purposes music served during these eras. Your cultural understanding will expand as you acquire a global perspective of music and how different cultures learn, perform, and use music within everyday life. Developing an understanding of musical concepts and the vocabulary to describe them will enhance your literacy skills, you will gain confidence in front of others through performing activities and learn to collaborate and plan for events. Music is a balance of academic and practical skills.

How is this course assessed?

- Listening and Appraising Exam 40%
- Integrated Portfolio 30% (coursework) own choice composition and a solo performance,
- Practical Component 30% (coursework) ensemble performance and a composition to a brief set by the exam board.



GCSE Philosophy, Religion and Ethics

This course will help students learn about and reflect on fundamental questions about human existence, and consider some of the most important questions about how people should behave and why. In doing so, this subject is not only academically rigorous, but also one that is relevant to the students' lives and encourages them to see nuance in some of the divisive issues in the modern world.

Specification:

Eduqas C120P1

Assessment:

100% Exam

Contact:

Ms Straw

What is this course about?

The course is divided into three components:

Component 1 - Religious, Philosophical and Ethical Studies in the Modern World (50%)

1. Issues of human relationships - marriage; divorce; sexual relationships and contraception; same sex relationships; gender equality
2. Issues of life and death - origin of the world; environmental responsibility; evolution; value of human life; abortion; euthanasia; death and the afterlife
3. Issues of good and evil - free will; evil and suffering; crime and punishment; the death penalty; forgiveness
4. Issues of human rights - social justice; censorship and freedom of religious expression; prejudice and discrimination; racial discrimination; wealth and poverty.

Component 2 - Study of Christianity (25%)

1. Beliefs and teachings - the nature of God; creation; the person of Jesus Christ; salvation; the afterlife, heaven and hell
2. Practices - forms of worship; sacraments; pilgrimage and celebrations; Christianity in Britain; the worldwide Church; the work of the Church in the world.

Component 3 - Study of Buddhism (25%)

1. Beliefs and teachings - the life of the Buddha; the Dharma; the Four Noble Truths; human personality; human destiny and ethical teaching
2. Practices - places of worship in Britain and elsewhere; meditation; devotional practices; death and mourning; festivals and retreats.

What skills will this course help me develop?

Students will deepen their understanding of diverse responses, both religious and non-religious, to philosophical and ethical issues. They will hone critical evaluation skills to determine the most compelling viewpoints.

Throughout the course, students will develop a comprehensive knowledge of religions, including Christianity and Buddhism, as well as non-religious beliefs like atheism and humanism. They will also enhance their ability to construct well-structured written arguments and engage with questions surrounding belief, value, meaning, and truth. This journey will encourage reflection on personal values, beliefs, and attitudes, preparing students for life in a global community.

How is this course assessed?

- Component 1: Two hour exam
- Component 2: One hour exam
- Component 3: One hour exam

GCSE Physical Education

GCSE PE provides students with engaging knowledge about a range of topics, ranging from understanding how your physiological and psychological state affects performance in sport to understanding the contribution that physical activity makes to our health, fitness and well-being.

Specification:

AQA 8582

Assessment:

60% Exam and 40% NEA

Contact:

Mrs Foster

What is this course about?

Paper 1: Students will learn about the key body systems and how they impact on health, fitness and performance in physical activity and sport; the basic principles of movement and their effect on performance in physical activity and sport. In addition, students will learn the principles of training and different training methods in order to plan, carry out, monitor and evaluate personal exercise and training programmes.

Paper 2: Students will learn about the psychological factors that can affect performers in physical activity and sport; the socio-cultural factors that impact on physical activity and sport, and the impact of sport on society. In addition, students will learn about the benefits of participating in physical activity and sport to health, fitness and well-being.

GCSE PE students are expected to attend a minimum of one extra-curricular club and represent the school in a sports team, showing commitment and enthusiasm. We also advise that students should be competing in at least one activity outside of school to support their NEA assessments.

What skills will this course help me develop?

GCSE PE will develop knowledge, understanding, skills and values to develop and maintain your own performance in physical activities and understand the benefits to health, fitness and well-being.

You will develop the ability to perform effectively in different physical activities by developing skills/ techniques and selecting and using tactics, strategies and/or compositional ideas.

Also you will develop the ability to analyse and evaluate to improve your performance in sport.

How is this course assessed?

Two written exams

Paper 1 and Paper 2 - 1 hour 15 minutes each.
78 marks per paper. Worth 60% of GCSE.

Non-Exam Assessment (NEA)

- Worth 40% of GCSE.
- Practical performance in three different physical activities (one in a team activity, one in an individual activity and a one in either a team or in an individual activity) (30%).
- Analysis and evaluation of performance (coursework) (10%).



GCSE Russian

Choosing GCSE Russian unlocks an understanding of a language used by over 380 million globally. The Russian language plays a crucial role international politics, science, and the world of classical literature. Having mastered the Cyrillic script and 3 tenses at key stage 3, students are perfectly positioned to achieve excellent grades at this unique GCSE offering. In addition to Russian, the foundations are in place to pursue other Slavonic languages in the future. A GCSE in Russian is not only marker of academic prowess but also opens career paths in diplomacy, and international relations.

Specification:
Edexcel 1RU0
Assessment:
100% Exam
Contact:
Mrs Willett

What is this course about?

The course links language skills and builds upon them in a logical fashion as learners progress through their studies. You will also explore the geography, history, customs and traditions of Russian-speaking countries, thus encouraging positive attitudes towards language learning and towards speakers of foreign languages.

The content is summarised below:

Theme 1: Identity and culture

Who am I?
Daily life
Cultural life

Theme 2: Local area, holiday and travel

Holidays
Travel and tourist transaction
Town, region and country

Theme 3: School

What school is like
School activities

Theme 4: Future aspirations, study and work

Using languages beyond the classroom
Ambitions
Work

Theme 5: International and global dimension

Bringing the world together
Environmental issues

situations, crucial for your future and oral exams.

A GCSE in Russian is esteemed by universities, benefiting careers in journalism, politics, law, science, engineering, business, and tourism. Russian speakers are in high demand by employers.

How is this course assessed?

Students may be entered for either Foundation Tier or Higher Tier but they must enter at the same tier for all four skills.

Paper 1: Listening to and understanding spoken extracts

Foundation - 35 minutes and Higher - 45 minutes.

Paper 2: Speaking includes a role-play, a photo card and a conversation on two topics

Foundation - 7-9 minutes and Higher 10 - 12 minutes.

Paper 3: Reading and understanding written extracts and translation from Russian into English in both tiers

Foundation - 50 minutes and Higher - 1 hour and 5 minutes.

Paper 4: Writing in Russian in response to stimuli based on the three broad themes detailed above

Foundation - 1 hour 20 minutes and Higher - 1 hour 25 minutes.

What skills will this course help me develop?

The GCSE course builds upon KS3 skills. In Year 10 and 11, you will strengthen grammatical knowledge and translation competencies. You will also enhance your ability to respond spontaneously in everyday

GCSE Sociology

GCSE Sociology fosters a deep understanding of society, its structures, and sociological research methods. It encourages students to view the world from different and thought-provoking perspectives. This engaging subject, relevant to students' lives, intersects with various disciplines and is valuable for careers in teaching, medicine, healthcare, media, politics, law enforcement, and more.

Specification:

AQA 8192

Assessment:

100% Exam

Contact:

Mrs Worthy

What is this course about?

The topics we study are:

- The Sociological Approach – Different sociological perspectives such as Feminism, Functionalism, Interactionism and Marxism, how to use sociological research methods and how they apply in particular contexts. Contemporary debates and social issues within Sociology.
- Families – Function of the family, Changing family forms, Conjugal role relationships, Divorce.
- Education – Roles and functions, Link to capitalism, Educational achievement, Internal processes.
- Crime and Deviance – Social construction, Social control, Criminal and deviant behaviour, Statistics.
- Social Stratification – Functionalism, Socio-economic class, Life chances, Poverty, Power/authority.

What skills will this course help me develop?

By studying Sociology, students will develop transferable skills including how to:

- investigate facts and make deductions
- develop opinions and new ideas on social issues
- analyse and better understand the social world.

Students will also develop their analytical and communication skills by comparing and contrasting perspectives on a variety of social issues, constructing reasoned arguments, making substantiated judgements and drawing reasoned conclusions.

How is this course assessed?

There are two papers examined at the end of the course in Year 11. Both papers make up 50% of the total marks. Each exam is 1 hour and 45 mins long. They consist of multiple choice questions, followed by a range of short and extended responses.

- Paper 1: The Sociology of families and education
- Paper 2: The Sociology of Crime and Deviance and Social Stratification.



GCSE Spanish

Spanish is globally significant, with nearly 500 million speakers, making it the second most spoken language after Mandarin Chinese. It is also the second most studied language and widely used in international communication. With its growing importance in business, marketing, tourism, banking, and civil service, learning Spanish opens doors to diverse career opportunities. We ensure our students grasp the broader significance of Spanish beyond the classroom.

Specification:
AQA 8692
Assessment:
100% Exam
Contact:
Ms Price

What is this course about?

The course is based on the linked language skills of listening, reading, speaking and writing and these are built on as learners progress through their studies. You will also embrace the geography, history, customs and traditions of Spanish-speaking countries, thus encouraging positive attitudes towards language learning and towards speakers of foreign languages.

The content is summarised in the following broad themes.

Theme 1: People and lifestyle

Identity and relationships with others
Healthy living and lifestyle
Education and work

Theme 2: Popular culture

Free time activities
Customs, festivals and celebrations
Celebrity culture

Theme 3: Communication and the world around us

Travel and tourism, including places of interest
Media and technology
The environment and where people live

What skills will this course help me develop?

The GCSE course builds on KS3 skills. In Years 10 and 11, you will strengthen grammar, translation, and expand vocabulary. Speaking skills for everyday situations are emphasized, valuable for your future and oral exams. A GCSE in Spanish is highly esteemed by universities, benefiting careers in journalism, politics, law, science, engineering, business, and tourism. Spanish speakers are in high demand by employers.

How is this course assessed?

Students may be entered for either Foundation Tier or Higher Tier but they must enter at the same tier for all four skills.

Paper 1: Listening to and understanding spoken extracts and a short dictation in both tiers

Foundation - 35 minutes and Higher - 45 minutes.

Paper 2: Speaking includes a role-play, a reading aloud task and a conversation about a picture stimulus in both tiers

Foundation - 7-9 minutes and Higher tier 10-12 minutes.

Paper 3: Reading and understanding written extracts and translation of short sentences from Spanish into English in both tiers

Foundation - 45 minutes and Higher - 1 hour.

Paper 4: Writing in Spanish in response to simple and familiar stimuli and a translation of a short passage from English into Spanish

Foundation tier - 1 hour 10 minutes and Higher - 1 hour 15 minutes.



*'Achievement
for All'*

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