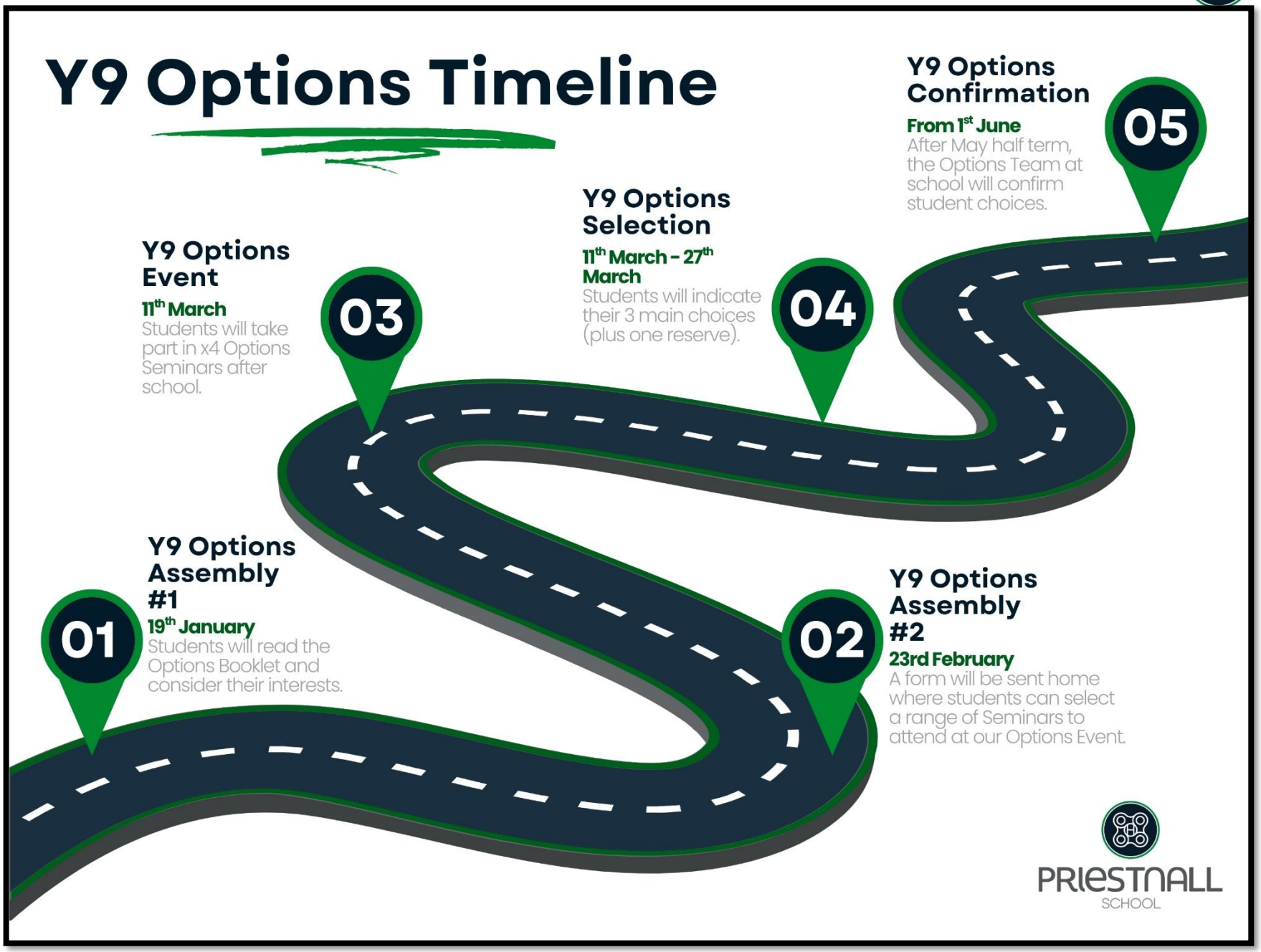
Y9 Options Booklet

for Key Stage 4 study

2026-28

PRIESTNALL SCHOOL

INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE


Y9 Options Timeline
01
Y9 Options Assembly #1
19th January
Students will read the Options Booklet and consider their interests.
02
Y9 Options Assembly #2
23rd February
A form will be sent home where students can select a range of Seminars to attend at our Options Event.
03
Y9 Options Event
11th March
Students will take part in x4 Options Seminars after school.
04
Y9 Options Selection
11th March - 27th March
Students will indicate their 3 main choices (plus one reserve).
05
Y9 Options Confirmation
From 1st June
After May half term, the Options Team at school will confirm student choices.
PRIESTNALL SCHOOL

Key Stage 4 at Priestnall School – The Curriculum

Part 1: Core Curriculum

There is a curriculum that is essential learning for all students and is **compulsory** as per below**:**

- English Language and Literature
- Mathematics
- Science
- Physical Education
- Beliefs and Values

Part 2: Further Options Subjects

You will have **THREE** options subjects to add to your core curriculum**. Important conditions and considerations:**

- Students must indicate **four preferences** via MCAS (My Child at School); from this, you will be allocated three.
- Students must choose **one** option from Pool A, **three** from Pool B. Subject pools will be indicated on the form.
- It rarely happens that we cannot make subject preferences work, but if it does, we will consult closely with Subject Leaders to ensure that the right decisions are made and discuss with parents/carers and students in a timely manner.
- Depending on numbers, in some cases, subjects may be withdrawn from our offer after students have made their choices.
- Some combinations of subjects are not allowed. This is usually where the content and assessment procedures are too similar.

The English Baccalaureate (EBacc)

This is a combination of subjects which offer an important range of knowledge and skills and keep options open to young people. It is **recommended** that most students follow this curriculum:

- English Language and Literature
- Mathematics
- Science

Plus…

- History or Geography
- Spanish or French (as a second language qualification)

TAKE ME TO THE OPTIONS SUBJECT LIST

Making your choices

In the days following the launch of the Year 9 Options booklet, you should spend some time exploring the subject information which includes links to the exam board subject sites for each subject. You should also sign up for the Options Information Seminars which will take place on **Wednesday 11th March**. Booking for these will be via a Microsoft Form link which will be e-mailed home on **Monday 23rd February.** The link will also be on SharePoint.

It is important that you discuss your thoughts with your parents/carers and come to a decision about which subjects will make up your **four selected subjects** (remember: you will study three).

Mrs Clifton has overall responsibility for the Options process.

Please direct any enquiries via the school e-mail address - enquiries@priestnallschool.org.uk. Please mark the subject of your email “Options”.

Important points to remember:

- We will endeavour to create a timetable that allows students to study their preferred subjects. This may not be possible in all cases.
- You must select **four** preferences.
- When an insufficient number of students select a subject, the course may be withdrawn. We will contact you about this as soon as this becomes a possibility. We will withdraw a course when we are satisfied that we have exhausted what we see as the alternative curriculum options.

Which subjects can I choose from?

Pool A

Select **one:**

- French **(as a second language GCSE)**
- Geography
- History
- Media
- Separate Sciences (Biology/Chemistry/ Physics)
- Spanish (as a second language GCSE)
- Sport (BTEC)

Pool B

Select **three:**

All options are GCSEs unless otherwise noted:

- Art and Design
- Art: Graphic Communication
- Art: Textile Design
- Business
- Drama
- Engineering Design (C.Nat)
- Engineering Manufacture (C.Nat)
- Food Preparation and Nutrition
- French
- Geography
- Health and Social Care (BTEC)
- History
- Media
- Music
- Physical Education
- Religious Studies
- Separate Sciences (Biology/Chemistry/ Physics)
- Spanish
- Sport (BTEC)

When your choices have been agreed, you will be informed via MCAS after May half-term and your choices will be entered into the database in Option blocks to create your Year 10 timetable.

Of your four chosen subjects, you will be allocated three to study at Key Stage 4.

Option Choices - Qualification Types

GCSE and Technical Qualifications

We offer a wide range of GCSE subjects and, in nearly all cases, you will have to sit a number of final examinations. How much each element counts towards the final qualification depends on the subject. Please read the course details to find out. GCSEs are graded 9–1 (9 being the highest).

It is our aim for each and every one of you to achieve the best grades possible in a balanced range of subjects.

To succeed in GCSEs you will need to:

- Be able to perform well in examinations;
- Be able to revise effectively;
- Be able to recall information and use it effectively to solve problems;
- Be well organised;

When considering your GCSE courses, you must listen carefully to your teacher's advice. Some subjects require particular skills, for example PE GCSE requires not only a good level of practical ability in a number of activity areas, but also a solid grounding in Science to be able to cope with well with the theory exam paper. History, Geography and Religious studies require good literacy skills whilst Media, Engineering Design and Graphic Communications use a lot of IT.

In all courses, you will be expected to work very hard and be responsible for all the work in your books and folders, which will have to be maintained very carefully so that you can revise for examinations.

BTEC and equivalent courses

Our BTEC and Cambridge National courses are also offered at **Level 2**. This means that they are the equivalent of one GCSE qualification. BTECs and equivalents are graded distinction*, distinction, merit, or pass.

These courses differ from GCSE courses in that they do not have as many examinations. Assessment is largely based on set-assignments (Non-Examined Assessments, NEAs) which are released at specific 'windows' during Years 10 and 11. However, these courses do still have a final external examination element.

All the work done in these courses takes place in what we call a 'vocational context'. That means that you are expected to put yourself in the place of a person who is actually working in a job in the type of industry your work is connected to. For example, in Sport as a Fitness Centre Assistant.

To succeed in these courses the most important thing is to ensure that all lessons are attended and that you keep up to date with your work, especially whilst completing the NEAs. Each course usually involves doing a number of separate units of work and if you are absent from school a lot you will therefore find it hard to keep up. These qualifications are awarded at Level 1 or Level 2 and some of you will work towards a Pass level whilst others will push on to Merit and even Distinction.

IMPORTANT: Please note that all courses outlined are correct at the time of going to press, but all course content is subject to alteration by individual exam boards and final approval by Ofqual

Options Information Seminars

Several of the subjects available as option choices will be new to you and you will not have studied them previously.

In order to ensure that appropriate and informed choices are made, there will be seminars held by the departments/teachers who run these courses. These will explain about the course, both in terms of content and also what type of study and assessment is required for success.

For unfamiliar courses, such as BTEC Engineering Design/Manufacture or Health and Social Care, attendance at the seminars will be vital to add to your own knowledge and also to indicate to school that you are taking your choices seriously.

There will be **four** Options Information Seminars for you to sign up for. These will take place **from 2:30pm on Wednesday 11th March** and each be 20 minutes long. The seminars will be held in the room(s) where that subject is taught and so 5 minutes travel time is planned to get between the rooms.

Signing up for these seminars will be via a Microsoft Form. The link will be sent via MCAS to your parents/carers. You do not have to attend this event, but if you do, you will need to choose **four** seminars to attend.
You cannot just choose one, two or three.

Remember, it is our priority to help you make informed and well thought out choices for your future. The more information and the more opportunities to ask questions of the teachers who deliver the course you have, the better your choices are likely to be.

Thinking about the future

You should be aware that your options choices may have a direct impact on your future choices; for example, what you are able to choose if you go to a Sixth Form college.

What if my aim is to go to a 'top' university?

These universities have made it clear that they will be looking for high grade A-Level passes in some of what they consider to be the most challenging subjects. These subjects include:

- Maths and Further Maths
- English Literature
- Physics, Chemistry and Biology
- History
- Geography
- French and Spanish
- Economics

If you think you might want to go on to do A-Levels in any of these subjects, then you should think very carefully about taking some of them at GCSE. Maths, English and Science are compulsory and it would be a good idea to take some of the other EBacc subjects too.

What if I want to do A-Levels but not in these subjects?

That is fine. There are hundreds of universities and thousands of degree courses to choose from, and if the traditional academic subjects listed above are not what you are interested in then you can go on to do A-Levels and degrees in a wide variety of subjects. A balanced base of strong GCSEs leaves your options open to choose a range of A-Levels

Thinking about the future (continued)

What if I want to do vocational courses?

Then you can; this will still allow you to go on to university in the future if that is what you want. BTEC at Level 2 can lead on to Level 3 qualifications and T-Levels/V-Levels and then on to university degrees and equivalent. There are also a host of other vocational qualifications related to specific employment sectors. It is about what is right for you.

What if I don't want to do any more qualifications after leaving school at 16?

All students are required to participate in a form of training or education until the age of 18. The most common route into direct employment for 16-year-olds is through apprenticeships, and you will need at least **five** good GCSE grades including Maths and English to access most of them.

For all the above possible routes it is essential that you do as well as you possibly can at KS4, because you will then have a wider range of choices of what you might do when you are 16.

Ms Threader is the Post-16/Careers Advisor at Priestnall School and will be very happy to discuss what opportunities there are when you leave Priestnall School.

What should you think about when making your choices?

We advise you to think of the following:

- Does it help me in my future choices?
- Am I interested in the subject and will I enjoy it?
- Will the type of assessment will suit me?
- Will I be able to succeed in it?

It is very important that you are able to **achieve** in your chosen course. We want you to leave school with a set of results that provide the widest choice and range of opportunities Post-16 and beyond.

Next, consider the **assessment requirements** of your choices – are you better at class and coursework or examinations? Which suit your strengths?

Finally, do not do subjects that are too **similar in nature**: look for a balanced range of subjects at this point. Post-16 is the time for specialism.

If at any stage, you are unsure about what choices to make, please speak to a member of staff who will listen to your thoughts about your choices and give you some advice.

What should you <u>not</u> think about?

Whether your **friends** are choosing them. These choices must be based on what is best for **you**.

What **former students** have done – courses and teachers change very quickly!

Whether choosing a course means that you have to follow that pathway to **employment**. For example, a BTEC in Creative Media Production does not mean that you have to follow a career in Media. A good grade in a BTEC says that you have managed your workload, have shown skill and judgement and that you are capable of organising your work to meet deadlines to reach a certain standard.

Gender stereotypes. For example, you may think that only boys do Engineering or girls take Health and Social Care. That is certainly not the case and there are many opportunities for both men and women in all sorts of employment across the different sectors.

Complementary courses. You do not need to choose courses that complement or seem to go well together.

Lastly, you will not be allowed to choose subjects that are **virtually the same, for example** PE GCSE and BTEC Sport

What happens when there is a small number of students choosing a subject?

We will consider the implications of very small classes for the school. Too many small classes are not viable in terms of resources or available rooms. If we decide not to run a course, then we will speak with you and ask you to make another choice. You will be given plenty of time to think about this and talk to your parents/carers and subject teachers.

What happens when too many students choose a subject?

This very rarely happens, but if it does then we will consult closely with subject leaders to ensure that the right decisions are made. Decisions will never be made without speaking directly with students and parents/carers.

A note about Languages

A GCSE in French or Spanish contributes towards the English Baccalaureate. Together with Geography or History, this provides a very solid and academic background for further study at sixth forms and colleges. However, no one will have to choose a language at Key Stage 4.

Home, Heritage and Community Languages

If you can speak another language and you are interested in gaining a GCSE qualification in it, please let us know. There are currently eighteen different languages that can be taken for GCSE:

- Arabic
- Bengali
- Chinese (Cantonese or Mandarin)
- French
- German
- Greek
- Gujarati
- Modern Hebrew
- Italian
- Japanese
- Persian/Farsi
- Polish
- Portuguese
- Punjabi
- Spanish
- Russian
- Spanish
- Urdu
- Turkish

A note about Science

As a core subject, everyone will study Combined Science over the next two years and this will result in an award of two GCSEs. However, some of you may wish to study each of the three separate sciences – Biology, Chemistry and Physics – in greater depth and sit a GCSE in each, resulting in the award of three GCSEs. **If you do this, it will take up one of your Options.**

You do **not** need to have taken the Separate Sciences to gain access to A-Level courses in the Laurus Trust or other sixth forms, but it is an advantage.

We are very keen to ensure that all students choose subjects that are right for them and will result in their best opportunities for success. Entry to the Separate Sciences course may be limited and you could be asked to discuss your choice with the Science Department, whose job it is to make sure that you have made an appropriate choice.

What next?

Please spend some time engaging with all of the options information and speak to the relevant teachers at school if needed. Ms Threader, our Post-16/Careers advisor will also be a useful person to speak to about futures.

PRIESTNALL SCHOOL

CORE SUBJECTS

These subjects form part of the core offer and are <u>not</u> part of the options process

BELIEFS AND VALUES

(Including Core RS, PSHE, Citizenship)

(CORE)

Students continue to study Beliefs and Values into KS4. The curriculum enables them to meet the requirements of the Relationships, Sex and Health Education Statutory Guidance (DfE) and therefore helps them to be prepared for Life after Laurus.

They also cover topics such as test anxiety and mental health, so that students are supported with their wellbeing. Our curriculum is responsive and meets the needs of the students; we work closely with the students, our pastoral team and external agencies. The Beliefs and Values curriculum is augmented by work undertaken in form time and assemblies

Throughout the two years in Beliefs and Values, students will alternate between Health and Wellbeing, Living in the Wider World (including citizenship and religious studies) and Relationships, this is to ensure our students learn both the knowledge and skills that they need to thrive in the 21st Century.

GCSE COMBINED SCIENCE
(CORE)

Examination Board and Specification
Pearson Edexcel GCSE (9-1) Combined Science
Specification code: 1SC0

Form of Assessment
Foundation tier: Grades 1 - 5 Higher tier: Grades 4 - 9

Students will sit six examinations (worth 100% of the total grade)
2 x Biology 2 x Chemistry 2 x Physics
1 hour 10-minute written papers - all taken at the end of Year 11

In Years 10 and 11, students follow the GCSE Combined Science course of the Edexcel programme of study which is worth two GCSEs. This course is examined at the end of Year 11 and is based on six external examinations worth 100% of the course. Practical skills are assessed in the written examination and are worth 15% of the total marks.

This course is a blend of Science (Biology, Chemistry and Physics) with an emphasis on practical work and the relevance of science in our everyday lives. The following topics are studied in Combined Science:

Biology	Chemistry	Physics
1. Key concepts in Biology 2. Cells and control 3. Genetics 4. Natural selection and Genetics. 5. Health, disease and the development of medicines. 6. Plant structures and their functions. 7. Animal coordination, control and homeostasis 8. Exchange and transport in animals. 9. Ecosystems and material cycles.	1. Key concepts in Chemistry. 2. States of matter and mixtures. 3. Chemical changes 4. Extracting metals and equilibria. 5. Groups in the periodic table. 6. Rates of reaction and energy changes. 7. Fuels and Earth science.	1. Key concepts in physics. 2. Motion and forces. 3. Conservation of energy. 4. Waves. 5. Light and the electromagnetic spectrum. 6. Radioactivity 7. Energy – Forces doing work. 8. Forces and their effects. 9. Electricity and circuits. 10. Magnetism and the motor effect. 11. Electromagnetic inductio 12. Particle model. 13. Forces and matter.

Students will undertake 18 core practicals, based on the apparatus and techniques listed in the DofE criteria. The core practicals are designed to enhance students' investigative skills and are assessed through the written examination.

Futures

Science knowledge is important as it deepens and enriches how we experience the world. Students will also gain problem solving and critical thinking skills, which are increasingly important in an ever-changing world. Science is considered to be a very rigorous and challenging GCSE, which makes it highly valued in education and by employers.

This course will enable students to transition to A-level Science subjects and Science is considered to be a great facilitating subject which can open the doors to a very wide range of degree courses. Combined science can adequately prepare students for qualifications beyond GCSE, but the separate science option is recommended if students are passionate about science and have ambitions to pursue science based courses and careers.

All science GCSEs can lead to a range of apprenticeships, as well as employment opportunities. Careers in science include; archaeologist, astronaut, astronomer, audiologist, biochemist, biologist, biomedical scientist, chemical engineer, chemist, climate scientist, clinical engineer, clinical psychologist, data analyst-statistician, dentist, doctor, ecologist, economist, education technician, energy engineer, environmental consultant, food scientist, forensic scientist, geneticist, geoscientist, intelligence analyst, laboratory technician, marine engineer, land surveyor, materials engineer, medical physicist, meteorologist, metrologist, microbiologist, nanotechnologist, nuclear engineer, oceanographer, operational researcher, palaeontologist, pathologist, performance sports scientist, pharmacologist, physicist, psychiatrist, psychologist, quarry engineer, research scientist, robotics engineer, scenes of crime officer, seismologist, sport and exercise psychologist, textile dyeing technician, vet and zoologist.

Further Information

https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/edexcel-gcses/sciences-2016.html

GCSE ENGLISH LANGUAGE and ENGLISH LITERATURE (CORE)

Examination Board and Specification

AQA English Language 8700
AQA English Literature 8702

Form of Assessment – GCSE English Language

Module	Method of Assessment	Content
English Language Paper 1	Examination 1 hr 45 min	Unseen fiction text and creative writing.
English Language Paper 2	Examination 1 hr 45 min	Comparison of unseen non-fiction texts and transactional (opinion) writing.

Form of Assessment – GCSE English Literature

Module	Method of Assessment	Content
English Literature Paper 1	Examination 1 hr 45 min	Shakespeare (Romeo and Juliet) and the 19th Century Novel (A Christmas Carol)
English Literature Paper 2	Examination 2 hr 15 min	Modern drama (An Inspector Calls) Power and Conflict poetry Unseen poetry and poetry comparison

- There are no higher or foundation tiers in English Language or English Literature. All students will sit the same paper and be awarded grades 9-1.
- All students study the same texts in English Literature, and we encourage students to purchase their own copies of the text through our book bundles.
- We politely request that students do not read the texts prior to in class study in Year 10.

Skills and knowledge overview:

Reading	Writing
• Reading with the knowledge that texts are a conscious construct created by a writer. • Close reading and evidence selection. • Evaluative analysis of evidence from a selection of texts. • Empathy and recognition of writer's viewpoints. • Understanding of context and its impact on writers. • Exploration of universal and timeless themes and ideas.	• Writing with a personal voice and creating a purposeful critical argument. • Writing creatively. • Writing with accuracy and intention for purpose.

Futures

English is a foundational subject necessary for progression into most fields of academic and professional progression by teaching essential reading, writing and speaking skills transferable to all forms of employment. It complements a breadth of other taught subjects and has clear in-built progression into A-level (especially so into a Trust Sixth Form). Overt areas of employment include Law, Journalism, Politics, Marketing and Advertising, Writing, Publishing, Research, Education, Languages, Speech and Language Therapy, Psychology, Sociology, Entertainment, Performance and the Arts.

Further Information:

https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/english/gcse/english-8700/specification

https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/english/gcse/english-8702/specification

GCSE MATHEMATICS
(CORE)

Examination Board and Specification
OCR Specification GCSE Mathematics (J560) is used.

Form of Assessment
No coursework requirement
Foundation grades 1 - 5 Higher Level Grade 4- 9

The class teacher will decide on the most appropriate tier of entry for your child.

Students will sit three examinations to achieve a GCSE in Mathematics, one non- calculator paper and two calculator papers. Each paper is equally weighted and last 1 hour 30 minutes and will have a range of questions.

All examinations must be taken at the same tier and will take place at the end of Year 11.

Course Content

Students will be assessed on 3 key areas of Mathematics:

- Using and applying standard techniques
- Reasoning, interpreting and communicating mathematically
- Solving non-routine problems in mathematical and non-mathematical contexts

Skills and qualities required for success

- Rational thinking
- Appreciation of different methods and approaches
- Ability to solve problems in familiar and unfamiliar contexts
- Ability to make links, find connections and generalise

Futures

All careers involve problem solving and data analysis is also becoming much more prominent. More specifically, Maths careers could include: Computer Game Development, Actuary, Economist, Architecture, Engineering, Fighter Pilot and Roller Coaster Designer. These are just some of the exciting and rewarding careers you could have if you go onto studying Mathematics at college and university, See www.mathscareers.org.uk for further information about opportunities Maths can offer.

Further Information:
https://www.ocr.org.uk/qualifications/gcse/mathematics-j560-from-2015/

PHYSICAL EDUCATION
(CORE)

Every child will continue with their PE lessons throughout KS4 where we expect students to further develop their knowledge and understanding of a variety of sports and promote a healthy active lifestyle.

We aim at KS4 to encourage our students to adopt an active and healthy lifestyle. This is promoted in lessons and then through our extra-curricular provision.

Across KS4, students will take part in a wide variety of physical activities – football, rugby, netball, badminton, trampolining, table tennis, rounders, cricket, athletics, climbing and fitness.

During Year 10, students may choose to complete the Bronze Duke of Edinburgh Award and will spend time completing relevant training in preparation for the day walks and expeditions.

OPTION SUBJECTS

OVERVIEW OF SUBJECTS

- Art: Craft and Design (GCSE)
- Art: Graphic Communications (GCSE)
- Art: Textile Design (GCSE)
- Business (GCSE)
- Drama (GCSE)
- Engineering Design (Cambridge National)
- Engineering Manufacture (Cambridge National)
- Food Preparation and Nutrition (GCSE)
- French (GCSE)
- Geography (GCSE)
- Health and Social Care (BTEC)
- History (GCSE)
- Media (GCSE)
- Music (GCSE)
- Physical Education (GCSE)
- Religious Studies (GCSE)
- Separate Sciences (Biology, Chemistry, Physics GCSEs)
- Spanish (GCSE)
- Sport (BTEC)

GCSE ART: CRAFT AND DESIGN

Examination Board and Specification

AQA Art and Design **(**Art, Craft and Design) - 8201

Form of Assessment

Coursework 60% - completed in class across Year 10 and11.

Final Exam 40% - a practical submission of preparation work and final piece(s) at the end of Year 11

Course content

GCSE Art and Design is a successful course at Priestnall School. The Art Department is very clear in its objectives: ultimately, we want our students to achieve the best grades, but we also want them to develop as artists, craftspeople, and designers, both in the academic sense and in their practical abilities. The GCSE course is structured to allow each individual to flourish and find a way of working that suits their strengths and interests.

Students can choose to work in a wide range of materials, from drawing and painting to mixed media, digital photography, and paper cutting. They are led expertly through an exciting course that teaches them a wide range of processes. Students begin their journey by exploring media, techniques, and processes through the study of natural forms before progressing to the theme of the 'Human Condition.' Initially, projects are teacher-led to build confidence and skills. However, as students advance through the course, they take greater ownership of their creative outcomes, tailoring their work to reflect their personal strengths and interests. When the student arrives at the externally set task, they will know what their strengths are and will thoroughly enjoy working with independence.

There are extra-curricular opportunities to enable students to extend learning and begin to develop an opinion on ‘what is art?’ The study of art and design enables our students to really think about the world around them and how they engage with it creatively. Students write about their findings, influences and processes as part of the reformed GCSE, and this takes the form of short written annotations and creatively presented artist analysis. This is a practical subject, and written content is kept to a minimum.

Our broad syllabus is inclusive of traditional and contemporary practice, as well as each of our student’s ideas. Each year, we are tailoring course content as we respond to contemporary ideas, issues, and experiences. We support and develop links to prepare students for future studies and careers in the creative industries. We are proud of the consistently high grades our students are rewarded with for their artwork and would welcome as many new candidates as possible through this year’s options process.

In an ever-changing economic and social landscape, art and design remain constant and relevant and feed directly into careers in the design industry, as well as media and culture. Creativity, which is at the core of our curriculum, continues to be one of the most desirable characteristics employers look for in an employee. Taking Art at GCSE level allows students to continue to explore this valuable side of their skillset, whatever career path they choose.

Futures

Students who are considering university or professional careers in the future will find GCSE Art and Design particularly beneficial. Creativity is one of the most sought-after skills by universities and employers alike. Studying Art and Design demonstrates your ability to think critically, solve problems

visually, and communicate ideas effectively. These are essential skills in almost every field; from business and marketing to science and technology.

Art and Design is a gateway to an extensive range of exciting careers. Whether you dream of becoming an architect, graphic designer, animator, fashion designer or art therapist, GCSE Art provides a strong foundation. It also equips you with skills that are transferable to other industries, including advertising, media, and education. Creativity allows you to stand out from the crowd, and employers value the originality, innovation, and critical thinking that come with artistic practice.

However, Art is not just about future careers it's about understanding and interpreting the world around you. Through Art, you learn to see things from different perspectives, connect with diverse ideas, and express yourself visually. It's a subject that teaches resilience, independence, and confidence. Qualities that will serve you well in any career or personal endeavour.

As the world becomes increasingly focused on innovation, Art and Design remain at the heart of cultural, technological, and social development. Whatever you want to do in life, Art can give you the skills, confidence, and inspiration to achieve it.

Further Information

https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/art-and-design/gcse/art-and-design-8201-8206

BACK TO SUBJECT LIST

GCSE ART: GRAPHIC COMMUNICATION

Examination Board and Specification

AQA Art and Design (Graphic Communication) - 8203

Form of Assessment

Component 1	Component 2
No time limit	Preparatory period followed by 10 hours of supervised time
96 marks	96 marks
60% of GCSE	40% of GCSE

Graphic Communication GCSE is a qualification that focuses on visual communication through graphic design. It involves creating and presenting design solutions using various media, such as digital and traditional methods. Students typically explore areas like typography, illustration, layout design, and digital media as part of their NEA coursework. Students learn to use Adobe creative cloud software such as Photoshop, Illustrator and Dimensions as well as online platforms such as Canva.

Areas of study: Communication graphics; Design for print

Component 1: Portfolio

A sustained project developed in response to a subject, theme, task or brief evidencing the journey from initial engagement with an idea(s) to the realisation of intentions. Workshops, mini and/or foundation projects, responses to gallery, museum or site visits, independent study and evidence of the student's specific role in any group work undertaken.

Component 2: Externally-set assignment

AQA will provide a separate assignment with seven different starting points.

Students must demonstrate the ability to work with:

- Typography
- Illustration
- Digital working methods
- Pencil, pen and ink, pen and other graphic media
- Digital media
- Packaging design

Futures

Studying Graphic Design provides students with a wealth of creative future pathways. Students can progress to college courses such as Graphic communication, digital media, or visual arts. At university, degrees in graphic design, visual communication, or interactive media are common options. These qualifications open doors to careers in industries like advertising, branding, publishing, web design, and animation. Possible roles include; graphic designer, UX/UI designer, illustrator, art director or motion graphics artist. The combination of creativity, technical skills, and digital proficiency gained in graphic design is highly valued across many creative and digital industries.

Further Information

https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/art-and-design/gcse/art-and-design-8201-8206

BACK TO SUBJECT LIST

GCSE ART: TEXTILE DESIGN

Examination Board and Specification

AQA Art and Design **(**Textile Design) - 8204

Form of Assessment

Component 1	**Component 2**
No time limit	Preparatory period followed by 10 hours of supervised time
96 marks	96 marks
60% of GCSE	40% of GCSE

Textile Design is defined here as the creation of designs and products for woven, knitted, stitched, printed or decorative textiles that might have a functional or non-functional purpose.

Areas of study

- Fashion design and illustration
- Costume design
- Constructed textiles
- Printed and dyed textiles
- Surface pattern
- Stitched and/or embellished textiles

Skills

Students must demonstrate the ability to work with:

- threads/ fabrics
- appliqué
- stitching
- construction methods
- printing

Component 1: Portfolio

A sustained project developed in response to a subject, theme, task or brief evidencing the journey from initial engagement with an idea(s) to the realisation of intentions. Workshops, mini and/or foundation projects, responses to gallery, museum or site visits, independent study and evidence of the student's specific role in any group work undertaken.

Component 2: Externally-set assignment

AQA will provide a separate assignment with different starting points

Futures

Studying Textile Design opens up a range of creative and technical future pathways. Students can progress to college courses such as A level fashion and textiles. At university, students might pursue degrees in textile design, fashion design, interior textiles or sustainable textile innovation. These qualifications can lead to careers in industries such as fashion, interior design, or product development. Possible roles include textile designer, fabric technologist, fashion buyer, trend forecaster or print designer. With a focus on creativity, material innovation and sustainability, textiles design prepares students for dynamic roles in the creative industries.

Further Information

https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/art-and-design/gcse/art-and-design-8201-8206

BACK TO SUBJECT LIST

GCSE: BUSINESS

Examination Board and Specification

Pearson Edexcel: GCSE (9-1) Business (1BS0)

Form of Assessment

Two written examinations:

- Introduction to Small Business (1 hour and 45 minutes). 90 marks: 50% of final grade
- Building a Business (1 hour and 45 minutes). 90 marks: 50% of final grade

GCSE Business is a linear course consisting of 2 units. The units are designed to encourage candidates to consider the practical application of business and economic concepts. The units provide students with the opportunity to explore the theories and concepts in the context of events in the business and economic world.

The course consists of 2 units:

Theme 1

This is a compulsory unit which is externally assessed. The unit focuses on start-up businesses and includes looking at; spotting a business opportunity, showing enterprise, putting a business idea into practice, making the start-up effective and understanding the economic context.

Topics Assessed

Topic 1.1 Enterprise and entrepreneurship
Topic 1.2 Spotting a business opportunity
Topic 1.3 Putting a business idea into practice
Topic 1.4 Making the business effective
Topic 1.5 Understanding external influences on business

Theme 2

This is a compulsory unit which is externally assessed. The unit focuses on growing businesses and includes looking at; marketing, meeting customer needs, effective financial management, effective people management and the wider world affecting business.

Topics Assessed

Topic 2.1 Growing the business
Topic 2.2 Making marketing decisions
Topic 2.3 Making operational decisions
Topic 2.4 Making financial decisions
Topic 2.5 Making human resource decisions

Futures

This qualification in business will:

- Enable students to understand more about the business world
- Motivate and challenge students and prepare them to make informed decisions about further study and career pathways.

Students can progress from this qualification to a number of different academic and vocational qualifications at Level 3, including A Levels in Business, History, Geography, Economics and Psychology and BTEC Nationals in Business.

The knowledge and skills gained from GCSE Business support student's entry into employment or other training in specific aspects of business, such as apprenticeships and vocational qualifications which focus on more specialised business areas.

GCSE Business provides a strong foundation for employment, with students progressing, with further training, to a wide range of careers training such as banking, sales, product management and general management.

Further Information

Edexcel GCSE Business (2017) | Pearson qualifications

BACK TO SUBJECT LIST

GCSE: DRAMA

Examination Board and Specification

Pearson Edexcel GCSE Drama (2016): 1 DR0

Form of Assessment

Component 1:

Devising (40% of the qualification). Coursework: a portfolio covering the creating and developing process and analysis and evaluation of this process (45 marks). Practical assessment: a devised performance (15 marks) Teacher assessed, externally moderated (NEA).

Component 2:

Performance from Text (20% of the qualification). Students perform in two key extracts from a performance text (48 marks). Externally assessed by a visiting examiner.

Component 3:

Theatre Makers in Practice (40% of the qualification).
1 hour 45-minute written examination. Practical exploration and study of one complete text (45 marks) and one live theatre production (15 marks).

- Term 1: Revising drama techniques and collaborating as an ensemble.
  Component 3 practical exploration of the set text and response to live theatre.
- Term 2: Rehearsal for Component 1 practical assessment and preparation of portfolio.
  Component 3 preparation continues throughout the term.
- Term 3: Completion of Component 1 NEA performance and coursework portfolio. Component 3 preparation written application practice.
- Term 4: Preparation for the Component 2 examination.
  Component 3 written exam practice continues throughout the term.
- Term 5: Component 2 examination takes place.
  Component 3 exam revision.
- Term 6: Component 3 examination.

Skills and Qualities Required for Success:

- Good social skills and a willingness to mix with groups of people.
- Ability to write with analysis, justification and evaluative response.
- Bravery to try out new drama exercises in groups.
- Ability to articulate ideas in voice and movement skills.
- Desire to direct and encourage others to problem solve using drama strategies.
- Confidence to perform work to others and give positive feedback.
- Imagination to record drama work in written/diagrammatic form.
- Sensitivity to listen and focus attention on others.
- Ability to create imaginative drama without a given script.

Futures

Caring Professions; care work, teaching, law, medicine, police, social services, therapy, welfare and youth work.
Creative Industries; art administration, advertising, architecture, computer games, tourism, management, marketing, media, personnel, retail, acting and presenting.

Additional Requirements

Students should have demonstrated a clear interest in the subject to manage this demanding course. Students must also be prepared to write in detail about their drama work on a regular basis in preparation for their controlled assessments.

As part of this course students are expected to attend the arranged theatre visits which form part of their coursework. Therefore, there will be a small cost involved to cover the payment of tickets and transport.

There is an expectation that all GCSE Drama students are part of/support extra-curricular events within the Performing Arts department.

Further Information

https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/edexcel-gcses/drama-2016.html

BACK TO SUBJECT LIST

CAMBRIDGE NATIONALS: ENGINEERING DESIGN

Examination Board and Specification
OCR Cambridge National Engineering Design Level 1/Level 2 – J822

Form of Assessment

Unit R038 Exam 70 marks. (40%): 1 hour 15 minutes

Unit R039 NEA centre assessed:| OCR moderated 60 marks (30%)

Unit R040 NEA centre assessed | OCR moderated 60 marks (30%)

This is a technical drawing qualification where students learn how to free-hand sketch in a range of techniques and use computer aided design to model 3D objects. This subject should not be confused with practical engineering – see Engineering Manufacture- using tools and machines.

Students will study three units:

Unit R038 Principles of Engineering Design:

- Topic Area 1: Designing processes, stages of the iterative design process, and the activities carried out within each stage of this cyclic approach.
- Topic Area 2: Design requirements, types of criteria included in an engineering design specification, how manufacturing considerations affect design.
- Topic Area 3: Communicating design, types of drawing used in engineering, working drawings, using CAD drawing software.
- Topic Area 4: Evaluating design ideas, methods of evaluating design ideas, modelling methods, methods of evaluating a design outcome.

Unit R039 Communicating Designs:

- Topic Area 1: Manual production of freehand drawing, sketches for a design idea.
- Topic Area 2: Manual production of engineering drawings, produce an isometric sketch for a design proposal, engineering drawings for a design idea.
- Topic Area 3: Use of computer aided design (CAD), a 3D CAD model of a design proposal to include compound 3D shapes.

Unit R040 Design, Evaluation and Modelling:

- Topic Area 1: Product evaluation processes, product analysis, product disassembly.
- Topic Area 2: Modelling design ideas, methods of modelling and manufacture.

Futures

Studying Engineering Design opens a wide range of future pathways for students. This highly relevant course, relating to modern Engineering Design provides seamless progression to Level 3 Vocational Engineering, Design and Technology at A Level or a range of related apprenticeships in the sector. At university, degrees in fields like aerospace, civil, as well as industrial design, are popular options. These qualifications can lead to careers in industries such as automotive, construction, robotics or renewable energy. The skills gained in engineering design, such as problem-solving, creativity, and technical knowledge are highly sought after across many sectors.

Further Information

https://www.ocr.org.uk/qualifications/cambridge-nationals/engineering-design-level-1-2-j822/

BACK TO SUBJECT LIST

CAMBRIDGE NATIONALS: ENGINEERING MANUFACTURE

Examination Board and Specification
OCR Cambridge National Engineering Manufacture Level 1/Level 2 – J823

Form of Assessment

- Unit R014: OCR set, 70 marks (40%) written examination, 1 hour 15 minutes
- Unit R015: NEA centre assessed; OCR moderated 60 marks (30%)
- Unit R016: NEA centre assessed; OCR moderated 60 marks (30%)

Engineering Manufacture is a practical technical award that will develop knowledge, understanding and practical skills that would be used in the engineering manufacturing sector. You will learn about the process of engineering manufacture, and understand the different materials that can be used to manufacture products. You will develop the ability to plan the production of a one-off product using a range of hand-held pieces of equipment and machining methods. You will also learn how to use CNC equipment to manufacture.

R014: Principles of engineering manufacture:
This is assessed by an exam**.** In this unit you will learn about the different types of manufacturing processes, and the different materials that can be used within manufacturing. Topics include:

- Manufacturing processes and Engineering materials
- Manufacturing requirements and Developments in engineering manufacture.

R015: Manufacturing a one-off product:
This is assessed by a set assignment. In this unit you will learn how to safely plan and produce a one-off product by using appropriate processes, tools and equipment. Topics include:

- Planning the production of a one-off product and measuring and marking out
- Safely use processes, tools and equipment to make a product

R016: Manufacturing in quantity (this is assessed by a set assignment):
In this unit you will learn how to manufacture using simple jigs and templates to support manufacturing in volume using Computer Aided Design (CAD) software and Computer Numerical Control (CNC) equipment. Topics include:

- Preparing for manufacture, prepare CAD files to operate CNC equipment.
- Safely use processes and equipment to make products in quantity.

Futures
Studying engineering manufacture offers numerous future opportunities. Students can pursue college courses such as A Level, Cambridge Technical in Engineering, or an apprenticeship. At university, degrees in areas like industrial engineering, or materials science are popular choices. These qualifications lead to careers in industries such as aerospace, automotive or advanced manufacturing. Potential roles include manufacturing engineer, production manager, quality control specialist, or CNC machinist. With a focus on precision, problem-solving, and efficiency, engineering manufacture equips students with essential skills for a variety of technical and innovative careers.

Further Information:
https://www.ocr.org.uk/qualifications/cambridge-nationals/engineering-manufacture-level-1-2-j823/

BACK TO SUBJECT LIST

GCSE: FOOD PREPARATION and NUTRITION

Examination Board and Specification

Eduqas Level 1/Level 2 GCSE (9-1) in Food Preparation and Nutrition

Form of Assessment

Component 1:

Principles of Food Preparation and Nutrition: Written examination: 1 hr 45 mins - 50% of qualification

Component 2:

Food Preparation and Nutrition in Action - Non-examination assessment:

- Assessment 1: 8 hours,
- Assessment 2: 12 hours - 50% of qualification

The GCSE in Food Preparation and Nutrition develops skills and knowledge of food preparation and food science as well as enabling students to make informed decisions about food and nutrition.

By studying food preparation and nutrition learners will:

- Develop knowledge and understanding of the functional properties and chemical characteristics of food as well as a sound knowledge of the nutritional content of food and drinks.
- Be able to demonstrate effective and safe cooking skills by planning, preparing and cooking a variety of food commodities whilst using different cooking techniques and equipment.
- Understand the relationship between diet, nutrition and health, including the physiological and psychological effects of poor diet and health.
- Understand the economic, environmental, ethical and socio-cultural influences on food availability, production processes, diet and health choices.
- Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of functional and nutritional properties, sensory qualities and microbiological food safety considerations when preparing, processing, storing, cooking and serving food.

Futures

Studying food preparation and nutrition offers students a variety of future pathways in health, science, and the food industry. Students can progress to college courses such as A level, B-Tech and apprentices in food science, nutrition or hospitality and catering. At university, popular degrees include; nutrition and dietetics, food science and technology, or public health nutrition. These qualifications can lead to careers in areas like dietetics, food product development, health promotion, or quality control. Potential roles include dietitian, nutritionist, food technologist, chef, or food safety officer. With a focus on health, innovation, and sustainability, food and nutrition equips students with skills for impactful and in-demand careers.

Further Information

https://www.eduqas.co.uk/qualifications/food-preparation-and-nutrition-gcse/#tab_keydocuments

BACK TO SUBJECT LIST

GCSE: FRENCH

Examination Board and Specification

AQA GCSE French (8652)

Form of Assessment

All GCSE language courses are now linear, which means that you will be assessed on all four skills at the end of the course. There is a Higher and Foundation option for:

- Listening (25%) – you will need to demonstrate that you can understand and respond to different types of spoken language.
- Reading (25%) – you will need to demonstrate that you can understand and respond to different types of written language.
- Speaking (25%) – you will need to communicate and interact effectively in speech for a variety of purposes.
- Writing (25%) – you will need to communicate effectively in writing for a variety of purposes.

Course content:

The topic areas that are covered in the four parts of the examination are:

People and lifestyle: e.g., identity and relationships, healthy living, education and work.

Popular culture: e.g., free time activities, customs and festivals, celebrity culture.

Communication and the world around us: e.g., travel and tourism, media and technology, where people live and the environment.

The content will teach you all about French culture, customs and traditions in the French speaking world, and of course, French food and fashion. All topics and sub-topics are designed to build on previous work to lead to success in the GCSE exam.

The format of these exams and skills needed (detailed below) is made clear and practised as much as possible over the course. We use GCSE resources which include revision workbooks and exam past papers to give the students invaluable practice using correct examination techniques. Students are provided with key vocabulary lists at the start of the KS4 course and are encouraged to revisit regularly to check understanding and spelling. Students are assessed on this vocabulary through regular vocabulary and grammar testing, in addition to skills-based assessments which are used to support accessible and manageable learning for students.

Futures

Students who are hoping to pursue a university or professional career will particularly benefit from pursuing an additional language. Speaking multiple languages really stands out. Universities know that languages are demanding, academic subjects that improve your ability to speak and write in English. They deepen your knowledge of the English language and etymology. They help you recognise patterns and crack codes more quickly than others. Having a GCSE in a language can therefore mark you out as particularly talented, whatever course you may be applying for.

Being multilingual can create opportunities to travel, study or live and work abroad. Language skills can be transferred to all types of work, and employers will be looking for these key skills. As a scientist you may want to collaborate with universities around the world, as a journalist you might want to interview people in different countries or as an engineer you might get the chance to work on a major international project. Whatever job you are applying for, speaking more than one language could put you ahead of all the other candidates. Whatever you want to do in life, knowing more languages will grant you more opportunities.

However, it is not all about jobs and courses. Some of the biggest social problems we face today come from a lack of understanding and respect between people from different parts of the world. Learning languages helps you to understand people from other cultures, and to make yourself understood to them too so, by learning more of them, you could become part of the force that solves these problems for good.

Further Information

https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/french/gcse/french-8652/specification

BACK TO SUBJECT LIST

GCSE: GEOGRAPHY

Examination Board and Specification

AQA GCSE Geography 8035

Form of Assessment

Paper 1: Living with the Physical Environment. 1 hour 30 min: 35% of GCSE grade
Paper 2: Challenges in the Human Environment. 1 hour 30 min: 35% of GCSE grade
Paper 3: Geographical applications. 1 hour 30 min: 30% GCSE grade

Course content

Living with the physical environment:

- The challenge of natural hazards (tectonics, atmospheric, climate change)
- The living world (ecosystems, rainforests, deserts)
- Physical landscapes in the UK (coasts, rivers)

Challenges in the human environment:

- Urban issues and challenges (including two contrasting case studies of a city in a LIC/NEE compared to a major UK city)
- The changing economic world (development, development indicators, causes of uneven development, including a case study of a LIC or NEE)
- The challenge of resource management (water, energy or food)

Geographical applications:

- Issue evaluation (Decision making exercise based upon a pre-release document sent out 12 weeks before the exam)
- Geography fieldwork (Questions based around our human and physical geography fieldwork visits)
- Geographical skills (Graphical, Cartographic, Numerical and Statistical)

Additional Requirements

An enthusiasm for Geography, an inquisitive approach to the world around you, a desire to find out how the world is going to change in the future and how humans can deal with the challenges of the 21st century.

An interest in Maths and English is recommended as students are expected to develop and demonstrate a number of geographical skills, including numerical and graphical skills, as they use and analyse different types of data. In addition, Geography is an academic subject requiring competency in reading and writing ahead of three written exams.

Futures

Students who have studied geography are people who have many skills. Universities understand that geographers are able to handle data**,** analyse material, solve problems and think independently. Studying geography allows you to understand climate change, natural hazards, energy, food and water security. These are all interdisciplinary challenges, which is why geography brings together knowledge from all the other subjects you study. Learning about the geology that created our landscapes, the atmosphere, oceans, the physics, biology and chemistry behind erosional processes and how the engineering of our infrastructure effects our environments and ecosystems. We live in a world that needs informed passionate individuals to find solutions to the global challenges we face, geography offers the opportunity to be informed and be part of the solution for the future.

Geography is relevant to many different occupations:

Urban/Rural Planning, Environmental Consultancy, Risk assessor, Hazard/Emergency Management, Government policy advisor, Journalist, Oceanography, Teaching, Architecture, Geographical Information Systems (GIS), Travel consultant, Transport manager, Climatologist and Aid worker.

Further Information

https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/geography/gcse/geography-8035

BACK TO SUBJECT LIST

BTEC: HEALTH and SOCIAL CARE

Examination Board and Specification

Pearson Edexcel BTEC Tech Awards Heath and Social Care (2022)

Form of Assessment

- Assessment: 2 hr examination 40% of final grade
- Coursework: 60% of final grade

Health and Social Care is an exciting and challenging vocational subject for all students passionate about making a difference in the world. It will introduce learners to the important knowledge, understanding and skills that are needed for working in this sector. The Health and Social Care course is hands on course and gives students a taste of what the sector is like, as well as the skills and confidence to succeed in their next steps. Students get to know the core care values, develop valuable skills and explore potential careers.

Students will complete three mandatory units:

Component 1: Human Lifespan Development

- Students will explore different aspects of growth and development and the factors that can affect this across the life stages. They will explore the different events that can impact on individuals' physical, intellectual, emotional and social (PIES) development and how individuals cope with and are supported through changes caused by life events.

Component 2: Health and Social Care Services and Values

- Students will explore health and social care services and how they meet the needs of service users. They will also study the skills, attributes and values required when giving care.

Component 3: Health and Wellbeing

- Students will explore the factors that affect health and wellbeing, learning about physiological and lifestyle indicators, and person-centred approaches to make recommendations to improve an individual's health and wellbeing.

Components 1 and 2 are internally marked and graded by the teacher, while component 3 is an externally set and marked, synoptic, case study-based exam. The exam is based on the work studied in all three components. Coursework assignments will take a range of formats including report writing, information packs, writing reviews and demonstrating care values in a real situation then reviewing their own practice.

Skills and Qualities Required for Success

- Have an interest in people and the world around you
- Be open minded and able to see events from different points of view
- Ability to work independently and as part of a group
- Organisation as the coursework projects have strict deadlines

Futures

Students who generally achieve well at Level 2 might consider progression to A Levels or study a vocational qualification at Level 3, such as a BTEC National in Health and Social Care, which prepares students to enter employment, apprenticeships or to move on to higher education by studying a degree in the health or social care sector.

Health and social care is one of the fastest growing sectors in the UK with demand for both health and social care employees continuously rising. The adult social care sector contributes approximately £41.2 billion a year to the UK economy. Approximately 3 million people are currently employed in the sector. It is estimated that by 2035 approximately 2.17 million health and social care job vacancies will need to be filled. Study of this sector at BTEC level will give an opportunity for practical application alongside conceptual study. There are also strong opportunities for post-16 progression in this important sector. Social care employees, such as care assistants and social workers work with individuals to support them to be as independent as possible in their own homes, in care homes or nursing homes. Healthcare employees such as doctors, pharmacists, nurses, midwives, healthcare assistants and physiotherapists work with individuals to enhance their quality of life by improving their physical and mental health.

Further Information
https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/btec-tech-awards/health-and-social-care-2022.html

BACK TO SUBJECT LIST

GCSE: HISTORY

Examination Board and Specification

AQA GCSE History 8145

Form of Assessment
The course has two assessments completed at the end of Year 11:

Paper 1: Understanding the modern world: 2 hours, 50% of GCSE grade
Paper 2: Shaping the nation: 2 hours, 50% of GCSE grade

Course Content:

Paper 1
Section A: Period Study: Germany, 1890–1945. Democracy and Dictatorship

- Germany and the growth of democracy
- Germany and the Depression
- The experiences of Germans under the Nazis

Section B: Wider World Depth Study: Conflict and tension: the inter-war years 1918-1939

- Peace-making
- The League of Nations and international peace
- The origins and outbreak of the Second World War

Paper 2
Section A: Thematic Study: Britain: Migration, empires and the people: c790 to the present day

- Conquered and conquerors
- Looking west
- Expansion and empire
- Britain in the 20th century

Section B: British depth studies and historic environment Elizabethan England, c1568–1603

- Elizabeth's court and parliament
- Life in Elizabethan times
- Troubles at home and abroad
- The historic environment of Elizabethan England

Skills and Qualities Required for Success
There is no escaping the fact that GCSE History is a demanding course. A sound level of literacy is a must, given the dependence upon written communication in the assessment of the course. The course requires a continued commitment to developing as a historian, therefore, students need to respond positively to feedback and advice.

Futures
History is a universal qualification which increases the prospects of any students. The course is highly respected throughout colleges and higher education establishments. The study of History develops the ability to balance arguments, analyse evidence and add weight to any argument. GCSE History is valued for any post-16 course. Furthermore, the skills are transferable to careers that require analysis of situations and handling of information.

Further Information
https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/history

BACK TO SUBJECT LIST

GCSE: MEDIA

Examination Board and Specification
Eduqas GCSE Media Studies

Form of Assessment
70% Exam
30% Non-exam assessment

Component 1: Exploring the Media – 40%
Critical exploration into a range of media industries (newspapers, advertising, film, games and radio).

- **Set products include:** The James Bond franchise, Fortnite, The Sun and The Guardian newspapers, to name a few.

Component 2: Understanding Media Forms and Products – 30%
In-depth study of representation, media industry and audience from set study areas (television crime drama / music videos, magazine, online and social media).

- **Set products include:** Music video for 'Superheroes' by Stormzy and 'The Man' by Taylor Swift; as well as ITV Crime Drama 'Trigger Point.'

Component 3: Coursework project
An individual practical production for an intended audience. Past briefs include:

- Film: Create a marketing campaign for a new thriller film such as a DVD cover and poster
- Television: Create an Opening Sequence from a new TV crime series
- Music: Create a music video or a website to promote a new artist / band
- Magazines: Create a new print or online magazine for a teenage audience.

You will have access to industry-standard software, such as Adobe Photoshop and Canva. Using Digital SLR cameras, you will also develop your photography skills through practical workshops.

Skills and Qualities Required for Success
You need to have a keen interest in the media, be that film, music, the internet or photography to name but a few. You need to be keen to develop your interest and enjoyment of media communication in local and global contexts. You need to be willing to form your own opinions and become a critical reader of the media by investigating and researching topics independently. The ability to manage your own time and work to deadlines in this subject is also a must, just as it is in the media industry.

Futures
GCSE Media studies can lead onto A Level Media studies and BTEC Level 3 Media courses. It also complements other creative subjects as well as the study of people such as Sociology and Psychology. A strong knowledge of how the media works will also support other careers, such as social care, law and education.

Possible routes into employment may involve roles in the creative media industry such as journalism, film production, TV, radio, advertising, photography, game design, amongst many other roles that involve interacting with others and using digital technologies.

Further Information
https://www.eduqas.co.uk/qualifications/media-studies-gcse/

BACK TO SUBJECT LIST

GCSE: MUSIC

Examination Board and Specification

Pearson Edexcel GCSE Music (2016) 1MU0

Form of Assessment

Component 1: Performing Music - 30%

- Performance 1: Solo Performance
- Performance 2: Ensemble (group) Performance

Component 2: Composing Music - 30%

- Composition 1: Composition to a brief
- Composition 2: Free composition (students choose their own style and instrumentation)

Component 3: Appraising - 40% (Written exam - 1 hour 45 mins)

- Critically listening to, analysing and answering questions about musical extracts (8 set works and unfamiliar music).

Course content

Performing, composing and listening skills are integrated throughout the course in order to develop you as a musician. You will develop your knowledge and appreciation of music through these four areas of study:

- Instrumental Music 1700-1820
- Vocal Music
- Music for Stage and Screen
- Fusions

There are numerous performance opportunities throughout the course for you to perform as a soloist and as part of a group. It is important that you engage with a range of live music. There will be trips throughout the course to watch live music as well as masterclasses with professional musicians to develop and hone your skills.

Skills and Qualities Required for Success

Students must play a musical instrument (this includes the voice) that can be used for performances in both solo and ensemble performances.

A genuine passion for this subject is essential. This course is an opportunity to take creative risks, experience on-stage performances and explore independent thinking and group work in a close-knit setting.

Futures

This GCSE Music course provides a solid foundation for AS and A Level as well as preparation for a music related career. Even if music is not a career path, universities prefer students who are well rounded and have skills outside of the chosen subject and GCSE Music demonstrates this well. Aside from this, GCSE Music equips students with the skills that are preferable to employers such as teamwork, communication, presenting skills, confidence, perseverance and problem solving.

Other relevant information

Attendance at one extra-curricular activity during the course (per week) is compulsory as this supports performance and musical growth.

In order to succeed at GCSE Music, you must be having weekly lessons on your instrument or voice and practise regularly. In some cases, school can offer financial support to those struggling to fund instrumental lessons, depending on whether you are eligible.

Further Information

https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/edexcel-gcses/music-2016.html

BACK TO SUBJECT LIST

GCSE: PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Examination Board and Specification

Pearson GCSE Physical Education (2016) 1PE0

Form of Assessment

Component 1: Written exam,1 hour 30 minutes: 36% of GCSE grade

Component 2: Written exam, 1 hour 15 minutes: 24% of GCSE grade

Component 3: Practical: 30% of GCSE grade

Course content

This course covers both practical and theoretical aspects of PE.

Component 1 Fitness and Body Systems

Applied anatomy and physiology, Movement analysis, Physical training, Use of data.

Written exam - Assessment consists of multiple choice, short- and extended answer writing.

Component 2 Health and Performance

Health, fitness and well-being, Sports psychology, Socio-cultural influences, Use of data.

Written exam - Assessment consists of multiple choice, short and extended answer writing.

Component 3 Practical Performance

The three activities must be; one team sport, one individual and one of choice.

Component 4 Personal Exercise Programme (PEP)

Students will produce a Personal Exercise Programme (PEP), analyse and evaluate their performance. Assessment is both written and practical.

Futures

GCSE PE is an ideal preparation for the A Level Physical Education course. PE allows for progression to related vocational qualifications, such as BTEC, Firsts and Nationals in Sport or Sport and Exercise Sciences.

This course can lead on to other opportunities in physiotherapy, nutrition, analysis of sporting performance, recreational management, leisure activities, the fitness industry, coaching and officiating.

Further Information:

https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/edexcel-gcses/physical-education-2016.html

BACK TO SUBJECT LIST

GCSE: RELIGIOUS STUDIES

Examination Board and Specification

AQA GCSE Religious Studies, Option A – Christianity and Islam 8062

Form of Assessment

Assessment is 100% examination through 2 papers:

Paper 1: Christianity and Islam – Beliefs, Teachings and Practices, 1 hour 45 minutes, 50% of GCSE grade

In this paper, students will consider atheist, agnostic and theist approaches to belief and practice along with considering a range of ethical situations and philosophical ideas. Issues will be considered from a range of different faiths and secular perspectives, but will focus on Christianity, Islam and atheist approaches.

Paper 2: Thematic Studies, 1 hour 45 minutes, 50% of GCSE grade

This component consists of four of the following six themes. These will be approached from a Christian, Islamic and atheist perspective:

- Theme A: Relationships and families.
- Theme B: Religion and life.
- Theme C: The existence of God and revelation.
- Theme D: Religion, peace and conflict.
- Theme E: Religion, crime and punishment.
- Theme F: Religion, human rights and social justice.

Course Content

This exciting course offers a GCSE in Religious Studies. It will equip learners with the knowledge, understanding and skills required to apply knowledge of religion to modern ethical debates, evaluate religious traditions and beliefs and express a deep understanding of different beliefs and practices.

Following this qualification will encourage learners to engage with our diverse society and be knowledgeable of a wide range of religious beliefs and practices. There are many opportunities to debate ethical issues from a range of perspectives and appraise and evaluate the opinions held by religious groups and specific individuals. The thematic side of the course offers a modern and relevant look at many ethical debates which we approach from religious and non-religious points of view; students are encouraged to form their own opinions on controversial topics in an informed and respectful manner.

Skills and Qualities Required for Success

• Extended writing and English skills
• Respect for others
• Evaluation and open mindedness
• Ability to use independent research skills
• Ability to work independently

Futures

Successful completion of this qualification will allow access to the following career pathways:

- A career in Law/Police
- The Education Sector (e.g. teaching)
- Working in the Political sphere
- The Leisure and Tourism industry
- Journalism and Correspondence
- The Medical profession/Health and Social Care
- Childcare
- Food and Catering
- Mental Health services

Additional Requirements

- It is intended that students wishing to choose this course should be dedicated and self-motivated to independent research.
- Students should be able to demonstrate debate and evaluation skills.
- A good record of PP&R and in-class organisation.
- An enjoyment of participating in class discussion.

Further Information

AQA | Religious Studies | GCSE | GCSE Religious Studies

BACK TO SUBJECT LIST

GCSE: SEPARATE SCIENCES

(BIOLOGY, CHEMISTRY, PHYSICS)

Examination Board and Specification

Pearson Edexcel GCSE (9-1) Biology; Chemistry; Physics

Course codes: Biology: 1BI0, Chemistry: 1CH0, Physics: 1PH0

Form of Assessment

Six 1 hour 45 minute written examinations *(worth 100% of the total grade)* taken at the end of Year 11.

2 x Biology; 2 x Chemistry; 2 x Physics

Students can opt to study the Edexcel Separate Science Awards in Biology, Chemistry and Physics. This involves studying all three sciences (Biology, Chemistry and Physics) separately **to gain three distinct GCSE grades** by the end of Year 11.

Over the two years, this course covers a wider range of scientific concepts from the fields of Biology, Chemistry and Physics. Learners are given the opportunity to develop a critical approach to scientific methods and evidence, while applying their knowledge and understanding of how science works and its essential role in society.

Practical work is embedded throughout and a minimum of 8 core practicals will be completed per individual GCSE and assessed through the written examination (15% of the total marks per paper).

The course is ideally suited for students who have a keen interest in science and the work ethic and enthusiasm to commit to completing this course to the very best of their ability.

The following topics are studied in separate sciences:

Biology	Chemistry	Physics
1. Key concepts in biology 2. Cells and control 3. Genetics 4. Natural selection and Genetics. 5. Health, disease and the development of medicines 6. Plant structures and their functions. 7. Animal coordination, control and homeostasis 8. Exchange and transport in animals. 9. Ecosystems and material cycles.	1. Key concepts in chemistry 2. States of matter and 3. mixtures. 4. Chemical changes 5. Transition metals, alloys and corrosion. 6. Extracting metals and equilibria. 7. Groups in the periodic 8. table. 9. Rates of reaction and 10. energy changes. 11. Fuels and Earth science. 12. Qualitative chemical tests. 13. Organic chemistry. 14. Nanoparticles.	1. Key concepts in physics. 2. Motion and forces. 3. Conservation of energy. 4. Waves. 5. Light and the electromagnetic spectrum. 6. Radioactivity. 7. Astronomy. 8. Energy – Forces doing work. 9. Forces and their effects. 10. Electricity and circuits. 11. Static Electricity. 12. Magnetism and the motor effect. 13. Electromagnetic induction. 14. Particle model. 15. Forces and matter.

Futures

This course is an excellent foundation for those who are considering science related careers and/or those who have a real passion for science.

Science knowledge is important as it deepens and enriches how we experience the world. Students will also gain problem solving and critical thinking skills, which are increasingly important in an ever-changing world. Science is considered to be a very rigorous and challenging GCSE, which makes it highly valued in education and by employers.

Separate science courses will enable students to transition to A-level Science subjects and all three sciences are considered to be great facilitating subjects which can open the doors to a very wide range of degree courses. The separate science option is recommended if students are passionate about science and have ambitions to pursue science-based courses and careers.

All science GCSEs can lead to a range of apprenticeships, as well as employment opportunities. Careers in science include; archaeologist, astronaut, astronomer, audiologist, biochemist, biologist, biomedical scientist, chemical engineer, chemist, climate scientist, clinical engineer, clinical psychologist, data analyst-statistician, dentist, doctor, ecologist, economist, education technician, energy engineer, environmental consultant, food scientist, forensic scientist, geneticist, geoscientist, intelligence analyst, laboratory technician, marine engineer, land surveyor, materials engineer, medical physicist, meteorologist, metrologist, microbiologist, nanotechnologist, nuclear engineer, oceanographer, operational researcher, palaeontologist, pathologist, performance sports scientist, pharmacologist, physicist, psychiatrist, psychologist, quarry engineer, research scientist, robotics engineer, scenes of crime officer, seismologist, sport and exercise psychologist, textile dyeing technician, vet and zoologist.

Further Information

https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/edexcel-gcses/sciences-2016.html

(use the change specification drop-down to access Biology, Chemistry or Physics details)

BACK TO SUBJECT LIST

GCSE: SPANISH

Examination Board and Specification

AQA GCSE Spanish (8692)

Form of Assessment

All GCSE language courses are now linear, which means that you will be assessed on all four skills at the end of the course. There is a Higher and Foundation option for:

- Listening (25%) – you will need to demonstrate that you can understand and respond to different types of spoken language.
- Reading (25%) – you will need to demonstrate that you can understand and respond to different types of written language.
- Speaking (25%) – you will need to communicate and interact effectively in speech for a variety of purposes.
- Writing (25%) – you will need to communicate effectively in writing for a variety of purposes.

Course content

The topic areas that are covered in the four parts of the examination are:

- **People and lifestyle:** e.g. Identity and relationships, Healthy living, Education and work
- **Popular culture:** e.g. Free time activities, Customs and festivals, Celebrity Culture
- **Communication and the world around us:** e.g. Travel and Tourism, Media and Technology, Where People Live and The Environment

The content will teach you all about Spanish culture, customs and traditions in the Spanish speaking world, and of course, Spanish food and fashion.

All topics and sub-topics are designed to build on previous work to lead to success in the GCSE exam.

The format of these exams and skills needed (detailed below) is made clear and practised as much as possible over the course. We use GCSE resources which include revision workbooks and exam past papers to give the students invaluable practice using correct examination techniques. Students are provided with key vocabulary lists at the start of the KS4 course and are encouraged to revisit regularly to check understanding and spelling. Students are assessed on this vocabulary through regular vocabulary and grammar testing, in addition to skills-based assessments which are used to support accessible and manageable learning for students.

Futures

Students who are hoping to pursue a university or professional career will particularly benefit from pursuing an additional language. Speaking multiple languages really stands out. Universities know that languages are demanding, academic subjects that improve your ability to speak and write in English. They deepen your knowledge of the English language and etymology. They help you recognise patterns and crack codes more quickly than others. Having a GCSE in a language can therefore mark you out as particularly talented, whatever course you may be applying for.

Being multilingual can create opportunities to travel, study or live and work abroad. Language skills can be transferred to all types of work, and employers will be looking for these key skills. As a scientist, you may want to collaborate with universities around the world; as a journalist, you might want to interview people in different countries; or as an engineer, you might get the chance to work on a major international project. Whatever job you are applying for, speaking more than one language could put you ahead of all the other candidates. Whatever you want to do in life, knowing more languages will grant you more opportunities.

However, it is not all about jobs and courses. Some of the biggest social problems we face today come from a lack of understanding and respect between people from different parts of the world. Learning languages helps you to understand people from other cultures, and to make yourself understood to them too, so, by learning more of them, you could become part of the force that solves these problems for good.

Further Information

https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/spanish/gcse/spanish-8692/specification

BACK TO SUBJECT LIST

BTEC: SPORT

Examination Board and Specification

Pearson Edexcel BTEC Tech Awards: Sport (2022)

Form of Assessment
The course will be assessed through the following methods:

A written exam: 1 hr 30 mins, worth 60 marks

Typed Coursework: Practical performances *(both delivering a sport session and performing sporting skills)*

Course content

This course covers the following three Components:

Component 1 - Preparing participants to take part in sport and physical activity.

During classroom lessons, students will explore the different types and provision of sport and physical activity available for different types of participants. They will identify the barriers to participation and ways to overcome these barriers to increase participation in sport and physical activity. They will also research equipment and technological advances in a chosen sport or physical activity and how to prepare our bodies for participation in sport and physical activity.
During practical lessons, students will be tasked with planning and delivering a sporting warm up to their peers. This will reinforce the work covered in theory lessons.

Component 2 - Taking part and improving other participants.

Students will investigate the components of fitness and their effect on performance, take part in practical sport, explore the role of officials in sport and learn to apply methods and sporting drills to improve other participants sporting performance**.**

Component 3 - Developing fitness to improve other participants performance in sport and physical activity. This component is externally assessed.

Please note: There will only be ONE practical sport lesson a week which will vary from fitness testing to analysing practical performance – you will not be playing a sport every lesson.

Skills and Qualities Required for Success

- Evidence of attendance at one extra-curricular per week, either at lunch times or after school.
- A keen interest in all areas of sport, not just practical lessons.
- Application of information technology.
- A keen interest in how the body copes with sporting activities.
- Ability to lead others.
- Ability to work independently on a task over several lessons.
- The ability to produce presentations and perform them in front of others.
- Bringing your PE kit to every practical lesson.

Futures

BTEC Sport allows for progression to related vocational qualifications, such as BTEC Level 3, Firsts and Nationals in Sport or Sport and Exercise Sciences.

This course can lead on to other opportunities in, physiotherapy, nutrition, analysis of sporting performance, sports science, sports psychology, sports rehabilitation, sports massage, journalism, teaching / lecturing, recreational management, leisure activities, the fitness industry, strength and conditioning, biomechanics, physiology, coaching and officiating.

Further Information

https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/btec-tech-awards/sport-2022.html

BACK TO
SUBJECT LIST

PRIESTNALL
SCHOOL

Priestnall School
Priestnall Road
Heaton Mersey
Stockport
SK4 3HP

t: 0161 549 7300
e: enquiries@priestnallschool.org.uk
w: www.priestnallschool.org.uk