

Orchard Park High School

KS4 Options Booklet

Class of 2025-27



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Dear Year 9,

We are delighted to share with you information regarding the Key Stage 4 options process for 2025. This is an exciting and important time in your life, and we are looking forward to supporting you in making educated and informed choices that will give you the very best chances in life.

We firmly believe that giving students choice in deciding their options will prove motivating and will ultimately help you to be successful. Our option structure is broad and relevant, offering exciting routes to further study at post-16, higher education and into employment.

It's important that when selecting your options, you are fully informed about the choices available and how they will impact your future. As the image below outlines, your GCSE options will lead on to your post 16 choices, which will further lead you to the career you wish to enter. Narrowing your options too soon may leave you unable to progress into a field you later realise you would like to enter. This booklet aims to support you in making a decision that you will be happy with over the next two years, and will support you in the years to come when you look to make post 16 choices about further study and your career.



We believe strongly in offering a broad range of subjects to match your interests and prepare you for future study. **You will take 9 GCSEs in Key Stage 4: six compulsory subjects (five core subjects and a humanity, either History or Geography), plus three options subjects.**

We know that sixth forms and universities look favourably on students who achieve GCSEs in the English Baccalaureate subjects and therefore we encourage you to pursue the rigour of these. This involves choosing a language in addition to the compulsory subjects. Students will also study three further compulsory subjects which are not assessed but are integral to maintaining a broad and balanced curriculum.

Compulsory Core Subjects	Compulsory Humanities (select one)	Options subjects (select 3)
English Language English Literature Mathematics Combined Science (2 GCSEs) <i>Core PE*</i> <i>Core Religious Education*</i> <i>PSHE*</i>	Geography OR History	Art Business Studies Computer Science Dance (BTEC) Drama French Geography History Music PE (NCFE) Religious Education Separate Science Spanish

I hope you will find this booklet and the support in place helpful and informative. Please do not hesitate to contact the school if you have any questions.

Mr I Clarke

Deputy Head Teacher
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How to choose your subjects:

It's important that when choosing your options subjects, you take your time and consider a range of factors. This decision will have consequences for your future, so you don't want to make a hasty, ill-informed choice.

You must consider:

- Which subjects you enjoy
- Which subjects you are good at
- The advice from your teachers and the Head of Departments
- What possible careers you are interested in and the skills you want to develop for employment
- What post 16 courses you are interested in (find out what the course entry requirements are at 6th form/ college/ apprenticeships)

What not to consider when making your choices:

- What subjects your friends are doing
- Making a decision because you couldn't think of anything else

How does the choice system work?

Every student selects either History or Geography. You then select a first choice subject, which should be the option you really want to do. You then select two further subjects and one reserve choice; we will try to ensure you get both your options but where this is not possible you will be given your reserve choice.

Will you get your first choice?

We will work towards you getting your first choice and then two of your three other choices. However, there are three main reasons why some students may not get their first choice:

1. *The courses chosen are not appropriate for you and professional advice is that it would not provide you with outcomes or options for the future that you yourselves would like.*
2. *Some courses have limits on the number of students that can be enrolled. We will then have to close those classes once the limits have been reached*
3. *Subjects may not run due to low numbers of students choosing them for their options.*

In all cases, a conversation will be had with you in the first instance (and with parent/carer where necessary). The likely outcome is that the next choice which you have put down on your original form will take its place.

Can I take both History and Geography?

Yes! It is compulsory to take at least one of these subjects, but you can pick the other as part of your remaining three choices.

What should I do if I'm not sure what I want to do post 16?

We recommend that you choose a language. There are many reasons for this but one of the most important is that your choices will be compliant with the English Baccalaureate (Ebacc). The EBacc is made up of the subjects which are considered essential to going on to study at university, so choosing them will ensure that you keep your options open. You have to choose English, Maths, Science and History or Geography. You just need to make sure one of your choices is a language.

A study by the UCL Institute of Education shows that studying subjects included in the EBacc provides students with greater opportunities in further education and increases the likelihood that a pupil will stay on in full-time education. Sutton Trust research reveals that studying the EBacc can help improve a young person's performance in English and maths.

How the courses run:

1. Most courses run a linear learning model where all assessment (examinations) are sat at the end of the course
2. Some courses (such as BTEC) have high level controlled assessments
3. If you do not achieve a pass grade (grade 4) or higher in English or Maths you are required to continue to study for these GCSEs in Key Stage 5 until you secure a pass grade.

How do I submit my preferences?

A form will be emailed to you at your school account. You must log in through your school email and electronically submit the form. Please note, you can only submit the form once, so make sure you have considered everything fully before doing so.

Key dates:

Wednesday 23rd April	Students receive the options booklet and attend the options assembly. Students should read the information and prepare questions in advance of the options fair for the teachers of subjects they are interested in.
Tuesday 22nd April - Wednesday 7th May	Taster lessons in Options subjects
Thursday 1st May	Options Fair Options form emailed to students
Thursday 8th May	Deadline for students to submit options
Friday 4th July	A letter will be sent home confirming students options

KS4 Compulsory Subjects

Compulsory Core Subjects

English Language
English Literature
Mathematics
Combined Science (2
GCSEs)

Non-Assessed Subjects

*Core PE**
*Core Religious Education**
*PSHE**

English Language

Exam board	AQA
Qualification	GCSE
Head of Key Stage 4	Mr Gardner
Summary of key content	In English Language, students will develop into critical readers and masterful writers. They will read journals, short stories, newspaper articles, letters and so on from across the 19th-21st century. There is a strong focus on analysis of language and structure, as well as the skill of evaluation and comparison. Writing lessons will focus on creativity and writing for specific purposes, for instance writing mature, thoughtful letters to their local MP. The development of their vocabulary is a key focus.
Assessment methods	2 exams English Language Paper 1: Explorations in Creative Reading and Writing English Language Paper 2: Writers' Viewpoints and Perspectives
Careers	English Language is a cornerstone subject and success in the subject will open all kinds of doors for young people in the future. Diverse careers such as those in finance, tech, publishing, law, media, nursing or medicine rely on people with a great English Language GCSE.
Course specification link	https://://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/english/gcse/english-language-8700&ved=2ahUKewjuwfxhpMn9AhXFmFwKHZwQAAYQFnoECAoQAQ&usg=AOvVaw23lcbK_Hw7OinFH3q775Aj

English Literature

Exam board	AQA
Qualification	GCSE
Head of Key Stage 4	Mr Gardner
Summary of key content	In Literature, students will encounter plays, poems and novels written by some of Britain's most famous writers. They will study three canonical texts: A Christmas Carol, An Inspector Calls and Macbeth, as well as a collection of poetry on the theme of power and conflict. Writing is essay based where students will be asked a single question and expected to explore in detail, across several pages, how the writer constructs the text.
Assessment methods	2 exams Paper 1 - A Christmas Carol and Romeo and Juliet Paper 2 - An Inspector Calls, Power and Conflict Poetry, Unseen Poetry
Careers	English Literature is a cornerstone subject that enables students to enter a wide range of careers, from journalism to law, finance to government. English Literature will make you an articulate, well read individual, desirable to any employer.
Course specification link	http://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/english/specifications/AQA-8702-SP-2015.PDF

Mathematics

Exam board	Edexcel
Qualification	GCSE
Head of Department	Mr Baksh
Summary of key content	<p>The mathematical content tested at GCSE, which students have been developing knowledge of throughout their time at Orchard Park, breaks down into 6 strands:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Number - the fundamentals of mathematics 2. Algebra - working with unknown numbers 3. Ratio and proportion - the relationships between variables 4. Geometry - shapes and space 5. Statistics - data handling 6. Probability - calculating likelihoods
Assessment methods	<p>3 exams, each lasting 90 minutes and worth 80 marks. Any of the above topics could appear in each exam.</p> <p>Paper 1 - non-calculator Paper 2 - calculator Paper 3 - calculator</p>
Careers	<p>A fluent understanding of the universal language that is mathematics is of benefit to any career. Below is a list of some of the many careers where a strong GCSE qualification in maths is a requirement for entry:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Software engineer ● Sports analyst ● Investment banker ● Video game designer ● Robotics engineer ● National security analyst ● Astronaut ● Data scientist ● Architect ● Chartered accountant ● Jet fighter pilot
Course specification link	<p>https://qualifications.pearson.com/content/dam/pdf/GCSE/mathematics/2015/specification-and-sample-assesment/gcse-maths-2015-specification.pdf</p>

Combined Science

Exam board	Edexcel
Qualification	GCSE Combined Science
Head of Department	Ms Agboola
Summary of key content	<p>Combined science will be compulsory for students who have not chosen Separate science. Combined science will cover all of the three sciences (biology, chemistry and physics) but with less content coverage. Students will be doing 18 core practical's in Combined science whilst Separate science students will be covering 24 core practical's.</p> <p><i>NB: if students select separate science as an option, they will sit the separate science exams rather than combined.</i></p>
Assessment methods	<p>Students will sit 6 exams as follows:</p> <p><i>Biology paper 1</i> (60 marks, 1h10 minutes written paper) <i>Biology paper 2</i>(60 marks, 1h10 minutes written paper) <i>Chemistry paper 1</i>(60 marks, 1h10 minutes written paper) <i>Chemistry paper 2</i>(60 marks, 1h10 minutes written paper) <i>Physics paper 1</i>(60 marks, 1h10 minutes written paper) <i>Physics paper 2</i>(60 marks, 1h10 minutes written paper)</p>
Careers	<p>There is a vast array of science, engineering, medical and pharmaceutical jobs on offer and they could see you working in diverse settings such as hospitals, factories, laboratories, offices or within the community. You could work in areas such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Drug formulation and development ● Chemical or forensic analysis ● Toxicology
Course specification link	<p>https://qualifications.pearson.com/content/dam/pdf/GCSE/Science/2016/Specification/GCSE_CombinedScience_Spec.pdf</p>

Core, non-assessed subjects

Whilst education at KS4 is largely in preparation for a set of assessments at the end of two years of study, there are a few subjects that are considered important for a broad and balanced education, which the government considers integral to being a well-rounded citizen. As such, they are compulsory to continue to study right through to the end of KS4, however, they are not assessed and take up less curriculum time than the 9 assessed subjects taken.

Physical Education

Number of lessons a fortnight	Two (1 lesson per week)
Summary of curriculum	Physical Education lessons remain compulsory for all students in KS4, this is in addition to those students who have opted for an examination PE course. During this time all students will develop the sporting skills introduced in years 7 to 9, understand the impact of physical activity to live a healthy lifestyle and build an interest of lifelong participation in sport. Students will have the opportunity to participate in additional activities, for example, handball, football, volleyball and participate through the roles of a leader or official.

Religious Education

Number of lessons a fortnight	One
Summary of curriculum	Religious Education continues to be compulsory at KS4 for all students. In addition to continuing studies from KS3 of the Dharmic and Abrahamic faiths, students also turn towards looking at philosophical and ethical approaches to the religions they have studied, religious belief and atheism and humanism. They look at how thought and meaning has been constructed across time and the impact of this on their own world view.

PSHE

Number of lessons a fortnight	One
Summary of curriculum	Personal, social, health and economic education helps students to develop the skills they will require to thrive in the future, helping them to deal with critical issues they face such as friendships, emotional wellbeing and change, giving them a solid foundation for whatever challenging opportunities that lie ahead. Topics such as sex and relationships, wellbeing and finance are covered to support students to face the world with hope and confidence.

Options Subjects

Compulsory Humanities (select one)	Options subjects (select 3)
Geography* OR History*	Art Business Studies Computer Science Dance (BTEC) Drama French Geography History Music PE (NCFE) Religious Education Separate Science Spanish

**Please note, you must select to study at least one humanity, but if you would like to study both, then you are more than welcome to as part of your other three options.*

Art

Exam board	EDUQAS
Qualification	GCSE
Head of Department	Ms Maddocks
Summary of key content	In Art students will learn to understand, research, experiment and put into practice all their learned technical abilities to create unique pieces of Artwork. As a coursework-based subject, students will be expected to work independently to explore and develop their own ideas. Students will work with a variety of media (including paint, graphite, charcoal, collage and clay) to record different sources and respond to Artists and their work. Students will also be required to research and know the work of artists through research pages and using styles in their own work. Students will then need to refine and build upon prior work in order to develop a strong, unique and creative response.
Assessment methods	<p>2 Assessed Components</p> <p>Unit 1: Reflections Students will respond to the theme Reflections by gathering sources, researching Artists and experimenting with techniques to create their own unique responses.</p> <p>Unit 2: Externally Set Assessment Students choose a theme from a set list given by the exam board; students will repeat the same steps as in Unit 1 that will culminate in a 10 hour exam to produce a Final Response.</p>
Careers	Artist, Teacher, Designer, Architect, Illustrator, Fashion, Museums, Animation, Graphic design, Product design, Game design, Props and Set design for Film and TV.
Course specification link	https://www.eduqas.co.uk/qualifications/art-and-design-gcse/#tab_keydocuments

Business

Exam board	Pearson (Edexcel)
Qualification	GCSE
Head of Department	Mrs Baatjies
Summary of key content	Business studies introduces students to business concepts and skills needed to start and run a new business. Students are then further extended to understand how business decisions are used to grow a business, with emphasis on aspects of marketing, operations, finance and human resources. In business we learn how external factors, for example inflation and interest rate, impact a business.
Assessment methods	2 exams (1 hour 45 mins each)
Careers	Investment banking, Accounting, Law, Recruitment, Sales, Procurement, Logistics, Marketing, Government, Economist, Teacher, Entrepreneur.
Course specification link	https://qualifications.pearson.com/content/dam/pdf/GCSE/Business/2017/specification-and-sample-assessments/gcse-business-spec-2017.pdf

Computer Science

Exam board	OCR
Qualification	GCSE
Head of Department	Ms King
Entry Requirements	You can only choose Computer Science if you are currently working towards Higher Maths. That means that you must be in the top 3 Maths sets.
Summary of key content	<p>Students will understand and apply the fundamental principles and concepts of Computer Science, including Computational Thinking, algorithms, Computer components, ethical and cultural considerations and networking as well as learning practical programming skills.</p> <p>Students will also gain experience of solving such problems, including designing, writing and debugging programs using a high level programming language.</p>
Assessment methods	<p>Paper1 = Computer Systems (1 hour 30m)</p> <p>Paper2 = Computational thinking, algorithms and programming (1 hour 30m)</p>
Careers	Software Developer, Web Developer, Mobile App Developer, IT Project Manager, AI Engineer, Applications developer, Cyber security analyst, Data analyst, Forensic computer analyst, Game designer, Games developer, Machine learning engineer, Penetration tester
Course specification link	https://www.ocr.org.uk/Images/558027-specification-gcse-computer-science-j277.pdf

Dance

Exam board	Pearson
Qualification	BTEC Level 1/Level 2 Tech Award in Performing Arts (Dance)
Head of Arts	Ms Maddocks
Summary of key content	<p>This course will give you the opportunity to develop knowledge and technical skills in a practical dance learning environment.</p> <p>You will also develop key skills, such as creating performance for a real vocational scenario.</p>
Assessment methods	<p>3 Assessed components:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Exploring the Performing Arts Developing an understanding of the performing arts including practitioners' work and the processes used to create performance. 2. Developing Skills and Techniques Development of dance skills and techniques through the reproduction of dance repertoire as performers or designers. 3. Responding to a Brief Contributing to a workshop performance as either a performer or designer in response to a given brief and stimulus.
Careers	<p>The performing arts are a major part of the creative and cultural industries in the UK, growing at over five times the rate of the wider UK economy, contributing £111 billion a year to the UK economy. There were over 9,000 enterprises in the performing arts industry in 2018, and more than 82,000 people working in a wide range of roles from performers, to designers and directors.</p>
Course specification link	https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/btec-tech-awards/performing-arts-2022.html

Drama

Exam board	AQA
Qualification	GCSE Drama
Head of Arts	Ms Maddocks
Summary of key content	GCSE Drama will help you to develop practical and evaluative skills - whilst gaining an appreciation of drama through performance, devising and critical deconstruction of live theatre. You will demonstrate your own abilities through practical elements of the course as well as your theory and understanding in the written paper.
Assessment methods	<p>Component 1: Understanding Drama (40% of GCSE) How it's assessed: Written exam: 1 hour and 45 minutes</p> <p>Questions - Section A: multiple choice (4 marks) Section B: four questions on a given extract from the set play chosen: 'Blood Brothers' by Willy Russell (44 marks) Section C: one question (from a choice) on the work of theatre makers in a single live theatre production (32 marks)</p> <p>Component 2: Devising drama (Internal Assessment) (40% of GCSE) How it's assessed: Devising log (60 marks) Devised performance (20 marks)</p> <p>Component 3: Texts in practice (External Assessment) (20% of GCSE) How it's assessed: Performance of Script Extract 1 (20 marks) and Script Extract 2 (20 marks)</p>
Careers	<p>GCSE Drama is not simply about 'becoming an actor'. The course has many transferable skills which can be applied to other areas of study and future careers. This course provides a strong foundation for courses in Drama, Media, Education, Law and the Performing Arts.</p> <p>Career opportunities: Actor/Presenter/Voice Over/Drama therapist/Television/Theatre Crew/Teacher/Researcher/Playwright/Director/Producer/Lighting/Sound/Costume Designer/Lawyer</p>
Course specification link	https://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/drama/specifications/AQA-8261-SP-2016.PDF

French

Exam board	Edexcel
Qualification	GCSE
Head of Department	Mr Facey
Summary of key content	<p>Completing the GCSE course will help you to develop your language skills, enabling you to speak and write about a variety of different topics pertaining to modern life. Examples of topics include equality and environmental concerns, as well as everyday life and how to navigate common scenarios abroad (e.g. ordering in a restaurant, buying tickets at a train station). At the end of the course you will be able to produce language about a wide variety of topics and themes.</p> <p>Students will also study other cultures, and learn about life in different contexts.</p> <p>There has been a recent change to the GCSE, to make the course generally more accessible.</p>
Assessment methods	<p>The 4 skills of reading, writing, listening and speaking will be assessed through 4 equally weighted separate exams.</p> <p>Students will either sit a Foundation or Higher tier paper, depending on their progress throughout the course.</p>
Careers	<p>Learning a foreign language is highly regarded by both educational institutions and employers. It shows you are able to communicate, listen to others, develop your ideas, and it shows a level of commitment and determination. It also demonstrates that you are open-minded and curious.</p> <p>Careers: Advertising, Marketing and Public Relations, Content Writing, Journalism, Interpreting, Translation, Diplomacy, Hospitality, Tourism, Tutoring, Foreign Office, Civil Servant</p>
Course specification link	<p>https://qualifications.pearson.com/content/dam/pdf/GCSE/French/2024/specification-and-sample-assessments/gq000023-gcse-french-specification-2024-issue-1-1.pdf</p>

Geography

Exam board	AQA
Qualification	GCSE
Head of Department	Ms Feist
Summary of key content	<p>Geography GCSE students study a range of human geography and physical geography topics including natural hazards, physical landscapes in the UK and urban issues and challenges. Students explore key concepts using case-studies in the United Kingdom as well as around the world.</p> <p>There is one physical (rivers) and one human (regeneration - Olympic Park) fieldwork opportunity.</p> <p>There is a mathematical aspect to the course as students are expected to develop and demonstrate numerical and graphical skills across the 3 geography papers. Students will be using and analysing different types of statistical data.</p> <p>Geography GCSE homework will be set every week. The weekly homework will involve both case-study fact quizzes and practice exam questions.</p>
Assessment methods	<p>The examination involves three papers. For Paper 3, two occasions of geographical fieldwork must be completed by students in physical and human landscapes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Paper 1 (35%) <i>Living with the physical environment</i> - Written paper, 1 hour 30 minutes, 88 marks ● Paper 2 (35%) <i>Challenges in the human environment</i> - Written paper, 1 hour 30 minutes, 88 marks ● Paper 3 (30%) <i>Geographical applications</i> - Written paper, 1 hour 15 minutes, 76 marks <p>All three papers contain a range of different questions from 2-mark questions to 12 mark essay-style questions. 10% of students' final grade is assessed through skills-type questions such as maps, graphs and mathematical skills.</p>
Careers	<p>In our ever-changing world the knowledge and skills employers are looking for are found in Geography. It is vital to understand the challenges our planet faces and how we can manage the future.</p> <p>Potential career pathways include: Urban or Transport Planning; Environmental/Sustainability Consultancy; Hazard/Emergency Management; Community Development; International Aid; Climatologist; Teaching; Architecture; Geographical Information Systems (GIS); Data Analysis; Social Research; Pilot/airline jobs</p>
Course specification link	https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/geography/gcse/geography-8035/specification-at-a-glance

History

Exam board	Pearson/Edexcel
Qualification	GCSE
Head of Department	Ms Montebello
Summary of key content	<p>GCSE History involves the study of fascinating and challenging topics across a wide breadth of British and world history. We start by studying change and continuity in British crime and punishment from the 11th century and end by examining the intense Cold War rivalry between the United States and the USSR in the second half of the 20th century.</p> <p>There are four units of study:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crime and Punishment in Britain, c1000-Present and Whitechapel, c1870-1900 • Early Elizabethan England, 1558-1588 • Weimar and Nazi Germany, 1918-1939 • Superpower Relations and the Cold War, 1943-1991
Assessment methods	<p>Three exams:</p> <p>Paper 1 (Crime) - 1hr 20 minutes</p> <p>Paper 2 (Superpowers and Elizabeth) - 1hr 50 minutes</p> <p>Paper 3 (Germany) - 1hr 30 minutes</p> <p>Each paper contains questions that include up to 2 essay length responses that assess you on your historical knowledge as well as your ability to analyse complex contemporary sources and historical interpretations.</p>
Careers	Legal professions, research, journalism, politics, historian, teaching and lecturing
Course specification link	https://qualifications.pearson.com/content/dam/pdf/GCSE/History/2016/specification-and-sample-assessments/gcse-9-1-history-specification.pdf

Music

Exam board	Eduqas
Qualification	GCSE
Head of Department	Mr Sahl-Taylor
Summary of key content	<p>Eduqas GCSE in Music offers a broad course of study which encourages learners to engage in the process of music study. Students will develop performing skills, both solo and ensemble and composition skills through their own 'free' composition and through a composition to a brief set by the exam board. They will also learn four areas of study:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Area of Study 1: Musical Forms & devices (Classical Music); • Area of Study 2: Music for Ensemble (Jazz, Blues, Musicals) • Area of Study 3: Film Music • Area of Study 4: Popular Music
Assessment methods	<p>Component 1: Performing (30%) Two pieces - 1 solo* and 1 ensemble *you are allowed to work with another student or work to a backing track as well as solo.</p> <p>Component 2: Composing (30%) Two compositions - 1 'free' composition, 1 in response to a brief set by the exam board</p> <p>Component 3: Appraising (40%) This component is assessed via a listening exam. There are eight questions, two on each area of study.</p>
Careers	<p>The music industry is a vibrant, exciting and highly competitive industry that contributed £7.6 billion to the UK economy in 2023 and generated a further £4.6 billion in export revenue. The music industry is constantly evolving and offers many different and exciting new work opportunities. In 2023, the music industry supported more than 216,000 full-time jobs in the UK. Careers include: session musician, resident musician (musicals, cruise liners), singer, songwriter, musician, podcaster, film composer, media composer (games, adverts), publisher, DJ, peripatetic teacher (schools), private instrument/voice teacher, school music teacher.</p>
Course specification link	https://www.eduqas.co.uk/qualifications/music-gcse/#tab_keydocuments

PE (NCFE)

Exam board	NCFE
Qualification	Level 2 Technical Award in Health and Fitness
Head of Department	Ms Hansford
Summary of key content	The study of health and fitness involves understanding the structure & functions of the body systems, understanding the principles of training, knowing how the body reacts in the short and long-term to fitness activities, how to create and apply lifestyle analysis tools and how to create a fitness programme for a person with specific goals.
Assessment methods	Exam (worth 40% of the final grade) Synoptic Project (worth 60% of the final grade)
Careers	Health and Fitness is a course that could lead into careers such as physical education teaching, sports coaching, physiotherapy, leisure administrator and personal trainer just to name a few.
Course specification link	https://www.qualhub.co.uk/qualification-search/qualification-detail/ncfe-level-12-technical-award-in-health-and-fitness-5159

Religious Studies

Exam board	AQA
Qualification	GCSE
Head of Department	Mr Olson
Summary of key content	Students study the core beliefs and practices of Christians and Muslims around the world and in Britain, comparing and contrasting the founding of the religions to the modern day and looking at significant changes in the religions in the modern and postmodern era. Students will also look through themes of religion and life, human rights, crime and punishment and relationships. We'll examine different approaches to these themes in 21st century Britain through a religious and non-religious lens.
Assessment methods	Two exams Component 1: Christianity and Islam Component 2: Thematic Studies: Religion and Life, Relationships and Families, Religion, crime and punishment, Religion, human rights and social justice
Careers	Social Work, Government, Civil Service, Diplomacy, Counselling, Media and Journalism,
Course specification link	https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/religious-studies/gcse/religious-studies-a-8062/specification-at-a-glance

Separate Science

Exam board	Edexcel
Qualification	GCSE Biology GCSE Chemistry GCSE Physics
Head of Department	Ms Agboola
Entry Requirements	You can only choose Separate Science if you are currently working towards Higher Maths. That means that you must be in the top 3 Maths sets.
Summary of key content	<p>Separate science is worth 3 GCSE's. Students on this course will be doing additional units of work when compared with Combined science students. Some of the content is more challenging than the content in Combined science. The course has 24 compulsory core practicals that must be completed within the two year period of the course. Each of the three sciences test students' knowledge of key mathematical skills.</p> <p><i>NB: entrance into the separate science course will be determined by KS3 progress. The science department can advise if this course is suitable for you.</i></p>
Assessment methods	<p>Students will sit 6 exams as follows:</p> <p><i>Biology paper 1</i> (100 marks, 1h45 minutes written paper) <i>Biology paper 2</i>(100 marks, 1h45 minutes written paper) <i>Chemistry paper 1</i>(100 marks, 1h45 minutes written paper) <i>Chemistry paper 2</i>(100 marks, 1h45 minutes written paper) <i>Physics paper 1</i>(100 marks, 1h45 minutes written paper) <i>Physics paper 2</i>(100 marks, 1h45 minutes written paper)</p>
Careers	Graduates may pursue careers in accounting, insurance, education, biostatistics, medical research, cryptology, computing, banking and finance or professional studies in health science, law and engineering.
Course specification link	<p>Biology link: https://qualifications.pearson.com/content/dam/pdf/GCSE/Science/2016/Specification/GCSE_Biology_Spec.pdf Chemistry link: https://qualifications.pearson.com/content/dam/pdf/GCSE/Science/2016/Specification/GCSE_Chemistry_Spec.pdf Physics link: https://qualifications.pearson.com/content/dam/pdf/GCSE/Science/2016/Specification/GCSE_Physics_Spec.pdf</p>

Spanish

Exam board	Edexcel
Qualification	GCSE
Head of Department	Mr Facey
Summary of key content	<p>Completing the GCSE course will help you to develop your language skills, enabling you to speak and write about a variety of different topics pertaining to modern life. Examples of topics include equality and environmental concerns, as well as everyday life and how to navigate common scenarios abroad (e.g. ordering in a restaurant, buying tickets at a train station). At the end of the course you will be able to produce language about a wide variety of topics and themes.</p> <p>Students will also study other cultures, and learn about life in different contexts.</p> <p>There has been a recent change to the GCSE, to make the course generally more accessible.</p>
Assessment methods	<p>The 4 skills of reading, writing, listening and speaking will be assessed through 4 equally weighted separate exams.</p> <p>Students will either sit a Foundation or Higher tier paper, depending on their progress throughout the course.</p>
Careers	<p>Learning a foreign language is highly regarded by both educational institutions and employers. It shows you are able to communicate, listen to others, develop your ideas, and it shows a level of commitment and determination. It also demonstrates that you are open-minded and curious.</p> <p>Careers: Advertising, Marketing and Public Relations, Content Writing, Journalism, Interpreting, Translation, Diplomacy, Hospitality, Tourism, Tutoring, Foreign Office, Civil Servant</p>
Course specification link	<p>https://qualifications.pearson.com/content/dam/pdf/GCSE/Spanish/2024/specification-and-sample-assessments/gq000027-gcse-spanish-specification-2024-issue-1.pdf</p>