



Key Stage 4

A Guide for Year 8 to courses in Years 9,10 & 11
2026 - 2029

Dear Parents/Carers,

Year 8 GCSE Options Process

Year 8 students are now ready to choose their subjects for Key Stage 4. This booklet gives information for both students and parents. It is best to read it together and make choices carefully. The advice in this booklet is designed to help students keep as many future options open as possible. This way, if plans change, students can still take the subjects they want in the Sixth Form.

All Year 8 students have already had a presentation about the options process. They also spent time in smaller groups looking at the options form and the booklet. There will be an Options Evening on **Thursday 26 February from 5.00pm to 7.00pm**. At this event, students and parents can talk to staff about the Key Stage 4 courses. The presentation will also be on the school website and explains the process students will follow during the Spring term.

After school on Thursday 27 February from 3.15pm to 4.15pm, there will be a drop-in session for anyone with further questions. The **Year 8 Parents' Evening on Wednesday 5 or Thursday 6 March** is another chance to talk to teachers about possible choices.

We will give as much help as possible, but it is important to remember that not every student will get all their first choices. Students should carefully choose reserve options in case their first choices are not available.

If you have any questions, please get in touch as soon as possible so we can help. The completed options form must be returned to form tutors by **Thursday 13 March 2026**.

Yours faithfully,



Mr S Catt
Deputy Headteacher

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Students: Making Your Choices

Introduction

You need to make important choices about your subjects for Years 9, 10, and 11. This booklet is here to help you. It introduces new subjects and gives information about subjects you may already know. GCSEs are different from what you've done before, so don't reject a subject just because it seems hard or you don't like it now. Read about all the options first, then you can ask the teachers more questions if you need to. The more you know, the easier it will be to make the right choices.

You might already be thinking about your future career, college, or university. Most Year 8 students do not know exactly what they want to do later, and even those who think they do may change their minds. It's important to keep your options open because you could change your mind in the next few years.

The advice you will get in your RHPD lessons after Christmas will help you make choices. We recommend that you follow a broad curriculum. This usually includes, besides the core subjects, a humanities subject, a language and a creative subject. **You must pick at least two subjects from two different categories below (A, B or C) to give you a broad range of subjects.**

Category A: Humanities: History or Geography

Category B: Creative subjects: Art, Ceramics, Textiles, Music, Drama, Dance or Design and Technology,

Category C: Languages: French, German or Spanish

Important

When choosing subjects, pick them in the order you want most. If a subject is very popular, students who put it lower on their list may be given one of their reserve choices instead. Make sure your reserve choices are good alternatives. All subjects offered are full GCSEs or equivalent qualifications.

Your Form and Choices

You must fill in the "Key Stage 4: Year 8 Options Form" and return it to your form tutor by **Thursday 13 March 2026**. Remember, you are choosing your subjects for the next three years until the end of Year 11.

Ask yourself questions when choosing:

- Do you enjoy the subject?
- Are you willing to spend time studying it?
- Are you good at it?
- Will it help you with other subjects?
- Have you listened to advice from teachers and parents/carers?
- Are you choosing (or dismissing) a subject because of a teacher or a friend? Chances are you will not be with that teacher OR friend in your Year 9 class.
- Will not taking a subject limit your future study or career options? Unifrog and the careers library can help you find out.

If you are unsure, you can ask your teachers, form tutor, or our Careers Manager for advice. You can also check the school website for more information about careers linked to subjects.

Year 8 Reporting

In Year 8, there will be three progress reports to parents. Parents can also speak to subject teachers at Parents' Evening.

Types of Qualification

Most subjects are GCSEs, but some are BTEC or Cambridge National courses. These are also at the same level as GCSEs and are often more practical or project-based. All GCSEs use the new 9-1 grading system.

Three-Year Key Stage 4

At The Weald, Key Stage 4 lasts three years instead of the usual two. This gives students more time to study the new, more difficult GCSEs. Religious Studies is the only subject studied over two years.

Communication is important throughout this process. If you have any questions, contact Mr Catt.

During Key Stage 4, most students should aim to study a wide range of subjects. Usually, this includes a technology subject, a humanities subject, an art subject, and a language. Studying different types of subjects helps you learn a variety of skills and gain knowledge that will be useful for further study or work in the future.

Most students will take about ten GCSEs, but some may take more depending on the courses they choose. The school also offers different courses for students who find a full GCSE workload too difficult. These students can choose a mix of GCSE and vocational courses that suit their needs. Key Stage 4 is divided into two sections: core subject and optional subjects. Students must study the core subject and can choose their optional subjects.

CORE Subjects are:

English Language, English Literature, Mathematics, Science (2 GCSEs), Religious Studies, RHPD & Games.



Optional Subjects are:

Art, Ceramics, Textiles, Business, Computer Science, Creative iMedia, Dance, Design & Technology, Drama, Food preparation & Nutrition, Geography, Health & Social Care, History, Languages - French, German or Spanish, Media Studies, Music, Music Technology, Physical Education, Travel & Tourism.



Every subject lists some jobs associated with it. Students can explore more careers in any subject using Unifrog.

English

All students take both GCSE English Language and GCSE English Literature, earning two separate qualifications.



GCSE English Language

Exam Board

OCR (J351)

What You'll Learn

- How people use language to communicate ideas.
- How to read different types of texts, including stories, articles, and older writing.
- How to write for different purposes, like describing, explaining, or arguing.
- How to think for yourself and understand how writers use language to create effects.

Assessments

- Two exams, each 2 hours long.
 - Exam 1: Non-fiction texts and practical/real-life writing tasks.
 - Exam 2: Literary and creative texts, plus imaginative writing tasks.
You will read unseen texts from the 19th to 21st centuries.
- Speaking and listening is assessed separately (Pass, Merit, or Distinction). It does not count towards your final grade.

Skills You'll Gain

- Strong reading and writing skills.
- Better communication and confidence in speaking.
- Understanding of how writers create meaning.
- Ability to plan and structure your own writing for different audiences.

Future Careers and Opportunities

Good English Language grades help you move on to most courses and jobs. English skills are valued in careers like journalism, publishing, teaching, writing, and many more.

GCSE English Literature

Exam Board

OCR (J352)

What You'll Learn

- How to study and understand a range of books, plays and poems.
- You will read modern texts, poetry from different cultures, and older literature from the 19th century.
- You will learn to compare a text you have studied with an unseen text.
- Texts studied include 'An Inspector Calls', 'Macbeth', poems from the Conflict cluster in the OCR Poetry Anthology, and 'The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll & Mr Hyde'.

Assessments

- Two exams, each 2 hours long.
 - Exam 1: a comparison of an extract from the modern text you have studied (usually 'An Inspector Calls' and an extract from an unseen text; an essay about another moment of your choice from the modern text; an essay about the 19th century prose text you have studied (usually 'The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde').
 - Exam 2: a comparison of a poem you have studied to an unseen poem; an essay about another poem of your choice from the cluster you have studied; an essay about the Shakespeare play you have studied (usually 'Macbeth')

- You will also explore the social and historical background of texts to help you understand them better.

Skills You'll Gain

- Strong analytical and critical thinking skills.
- Ability to explain your ideas clearly in writing.
- Confidence in understanding complex stories, poems and plays.
- A wider knowledge of different cultures, time periods and viewpoints.

Future Careers and Opportunities

A good English Literature grade can help you access college courses, university, and a wide range of careers. It is especially useful for jobs such as:

- Author
- Publisher
- Librarian
- Editor
- Journalist
- Screenwriter

You can explore more English-related careers using Unifrog.

Overall Assessment

You will take four exams in total:

- Two for English Language
- Two for English Literature

Spoken language is reported separately and does not affect your GCSE grade.

Mrs J Readman

Acting Subject Leader of English

Mathematics - GCSE



Exam Board

AQA (8300)

What You'll Learn

In GCSE Maths, you will learn how to:

- Think clearly and explain your ideas using maths.
- Solve different types of problems and show your working clearly.
- Enjoy maths and understand why it is useful in real life.
- Work on your own and with others.
- Use maths skills in other school subjects and everyday situations.
- Build a strong base for future study.

You will study these main areas:

Topic Area	Foundation Tier	Higher Tier
Number	25%	15%
Algebra	20%	30%
Ratio & Proportion	25%	20%
Geometry	15%	20%

Assessments

- GCSE Maths is graded from 1 to 9 (9 is the highest grade).
- There are two levels of exams: Foundation and Higher. You will be entered for the level that suits you best.
- You will take three exam papers at the end of Year 11.
- Each paper:
 - is 90 minutes long
 - has the same value
 - includes multiple-choice and longer problem-solving questions
- There is no coursework – everything is tested in the exams.

Skills You'll Gain

By studying GCSE Maths, you will develop:

- Problem-solving skills
- Clear communication
- Logical thinking
- Confidence working with numbers
- Teamwork and independent learning
- Strong foundations for further study

Future Careers and Opportunities

A grade 4 or above in GCSE Maths is needed for many college courses, apprenticeships, university courses, and jobs.

Jobs that link directly to maths include:

- Engineer
- Mechanic
- Accountant
- Astronomer
- Data Analyst
- Actuary

Maths is also useful in many other careers because employers value problem-solving and number skills. You can explore more maths-related jobs using tools like Unifrog.

Mrs L Gamble

Subject Leader Maths

Science - GCSE

Exam Board

AQA



What You'll Learn

Combined Science

- All students study Combined Science in Year 9.
- It includes Biology, Chemistry, and Physics in equal amounts.
- At the end of Year 11, students receive 2 GCSEs.

Some students may be offered Triple Science for Years 10 and 11.

- This decision is made at the end of Year 9 by the Science Department.

- It is based on your effort and test results.
- Only a limited number of places are available.

Triple Science

- Students study three separate GCSEs: Biology, Chemistry and Physics.

Aims of the Science Course

You will:

- Learn practical skills and how to carry out experiments.
- Learn to think carefully about scientific evidence.
- Understand how science works in the world around you.
- Build confidence and enjoy learning science.
- Prepare for A-levels in Biology, Chemistry or Physics if you choose to continue.

Assessments

- All exams are taken at the end of Year 11.
- You will be entered for either Foundation or Higher tier depending on your ability.

Combined Science

- You will receive a double grade (for example 9-9 down to 1-1).
- There are six exam papers (Biology, Chemistry and Physics).
- Each paper is 1 hour 15 minutes.

Triple Science

- You get three separate grades (one for each science).
- There are six exam papers in total – two for each subject.
- Each paper is 1 hour 45 minutes.

Practicals

- Combined Science: 21 required practicals
- Triple Science: 10 practicals for each subject
- At least 15% of exam marks come from questions about practicals.

Maths in Science

- Biology: 10% of marks
 - Chemistry: 20%
 - Physics: 30%
- You will use skills like calculations, reading graphs, and using decimals.

Skills You'll Gain

Studying science will help you:

- Understand the world around you
- Think clearly and solve problems
- Work safely in a lab
- Use evidence to make decisions
- Build confidence in maths and practical work
- Prepare for further study in science subjects

Future Careers and Opportunities

GCSE Science (grade 4 or above) is important for many jobs, college courses and apprenticeships.

Jobs linked to science include:

- Doctor
- Paramedic
- Vet
- Pharmacist
- Electrician
- Engineer
- Dentist

Many STEM careers (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths) need strong science knowledge. Some college or university courses may require good grades in Combined or Triple Science, so it is important to check entry requirements.

Mr L Hearnden
Subject Leader for Science

Religious Studies - GCSE



Exam Board

AQA - Specification A

What You'll Learn

In this course, you will build on what you learned in Key Stage 3. You will study:

Component 1: Religions

- Christian beliefs, teachings, and practices
- Islamic beliefs, teachings, and practices

Component 2: Themes

You will explore big questions about:

- Life and the universe
- Peace and conflict
- Crime and punishment
- Human rights

What You Will Do in Lessons

- Take part in discussions
- Learn how to build arguments and explain your views
- Explore different viewpoints
- Think about questions such as:
 - Why do people suffer?
 - Does life have meaning?
 - Does God exist?

This course helps you understand modern life and supports learning in other GCSE subjects. You will complete this GCSE by the end of Year 10.

Assessments

- Two written exams
- Each exam is 1 hour 45 minutes
- All exams are taken at the end of the course in Year 10

Skills You'll Gain

Studying Religious Studies will help you develop:

- Critical thinking
- Reasoning and problem-solving
- Better communication skills
- Understanding of different cultures and religions
- Confidence in discussing ideas and listening to others

Future Careers and Opportunities

A GCSE in Religious Studies can help with many careers, especially those involving communication and working with people. Jobs linked to Religious Studies include:

- Journalist
- Human Resources worker
- Charity fundraiser
- Lawyer

These skills are useful in everyday life and in many future jobs, even if they are not directly linked to religion. If you want to study humanities or social sciences at college or sixth form, having GCSE Religious Studies at grade 4 or above can be helpful. Always check the entry requirements of each course.

Miss B Johnson

Subject Leader for Religious Studies

Relationships, Health & Personal Development (RHPD)



Exam Board

This is a non-exam subject, but it is compulsory for all students in Key Stage 4.

What You'll Learn

RHPD helps you understand real-life issues that affect you, your friends, and your community. It teaches you how to stay:

- Healthy (mentally and physically)
- Safe (online and offline)
- Ready for future relationships and careers

You will learn how to become:

- A successful learner who enjoys school and makes progress
- A confident individual who can stay safe and live a healthy life
- A responsible citizen who makes a positive difference in society

Topics You Will Study

The RHPD programme includes:

- Relationships and Sex Education
- Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education
- Health education
- Economic well-being
- Drug education
- Citizenship
- Work-related learning

Year 9 Topics

In Year 9, you will learn about:

- Feelings and how to manage them
- Mental well-being
- Physical health
- Staying safe
- Drug education
- Relationships and sex education

These lessons help you develop your spiritual, moral, emotional, cultural and physical understanding. They also support you in building positive relationships with teachers and others.

Assessments

There are no exams in RHPD.

Your learning happens through class activities, discussions and reflection.

Skills You'll Gain

RHPD helps you build important life skills, including:

- Confidence
- Communication skills
- Decision-making
- Understanding your emotions
- Staying safe online and offline

- Respecting others
- Preparing for adult life and work

These skills support your personal development and help you succeed in school and beyond.

Future Careers and Opportunities

The skills you learn in RHPD are useful for all careers. They help you understand:

- The future jobs market
- How to apply for courses, apprenticeships or jobs
- Your interests and what careers may suit you
- How to challenge stereotypes in the workplace

Good communication, teamwork and self-awareness are skills employers value highly.

Students can learn more about careers through The Weald's Careers Programme, which includes dedicated lessons on job skills, applications and future opportunities.

Mr N Everest

Subject Leader for Personal Development

Games - KS4

Exam Board

This is a non-exam subject, but some students may choose to study GCSE Physical Education later.



What You'll Learn

In Games lessons, you will:

- Continue to improve key skills from Years 7-8, such as teamwork, participation, and self-management
- Take part in a wide range of sports and activities, including:
 - Athletics, Badminton, Basketball, Climbing, Cricket, Dance, Disc Golf, Football, Gymnastics, Handball, Netball, Rounders, Stoolball, Orienteering, Team Building Activities, Table Tennis, Tennis, Trampolining, Ultimate Frisbee, Volleyball, Weights and Resistance Training

Assessments

- Games is non-examined
- Progress is measured through participation, effort, and skill development in lessons

Skills You'll Gain

By taking part in Games, you will develop:

- Teamwork and cooperation
- Communication skills
- Self-management and discipline
- Fitness, strength, and coordination
- Leadership and problem-solving

These skills help in school, in sports, and in daily life.

Future Careers and Opportunities

Playing sports and being active can help you:

- Stay physically and mentally healthy
- Succeed in school and other areas of life
- Build skills that employers value, such as teamwork and problem-solving

Jobs related to Physical Education include:

- Sports coach
- Personal trainer
- Physiotherapist
- PE teacher

- Professional athlete

Mr P Lewis
Subject Leader for PE

Art - GCSE



Exam Board

Edexcel

What You'll Learn

GCSE Art helps you be creative and imaginative. You will:

- Explore different materials and techniques like painting, printing, collage, mixed media, and graphics
- Learn about past and modern artists, designers, and craftspeople
- Visit a London gallery to see art in real life
- Work on projects using a theme or idea as a starting point
- Use a sketchbook regularly to plan and develop your ideas

You will develop your own style and personal approach to art over the three years.

Assessments

Your final grade is made up of:

- Coursework (60%) - your portfolio of projects and sketchbooks
- Exam (40%) - a two-day practical exam where you create a personal response after a preparation period

Note: You cannot take Art and Ceramics or Textiles together as they are considered the same qualification.

Skills You'll Gain

Studying Art helps you develop:

- Creativity and imagination
- Planning and organisation skills
- Problem-solving and experimentation
- Artistic techniques and confidence in expressing ideas
- Ability to research and analyse other artists' work

These skills are useful in both creative jobs and other areas of work.

Future Careers and Opportunities

A GCSE in Art is useful for careers in creative fields. Jobs include:

- Animator
- Fashion designer
- VFX artist
- Interior designer
- Art therapist

Art skills, such as planning, organisation, and creative thinking, can also help in many other jobs.

If you want to study a creative subject at college, sixth form, or university, GCSE Art may be required. Check entry requirements for each course.

Ms S Beck
Subject Leader for Art

Ceramics - GCSE



Exam Board

Edexcel

What You'll Learn

GCSE Ceramics is a practical and creative course. You will:

- Explore a wide range of materials including different clays, mixed media, and printing
- Learn to translate 2D designs into 3D pieces
- Develop skills in surface textures, clay construction, glazing and decoration
- Study other artists and cultures through projects and gallery/museum visits
- Build a personal style through experimentation and exploration in a range of different projects

Note: You cannot take Ceramics with Art or Textiles as they are considered the same qualification.

Assessments

Your final grade is based on:

- Coursework (60%) - your projects and practical work
- Exam (40%) - a practical piece completed after preparation
- Both are submitted for exhibition

Skills You'll Gain

Studying Ceramics helps you develop:

- Creativity and imagination
- Practical and technical skills in 3D design
- Planning and organisation
- Problem-solving and experimentation
- Confidence in expressing ideas visually
- Resilience

Many of these skills are transferable and will be useful in creative careers and many other roles.

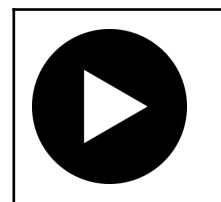
Future Careers and Opportunities

GCSE Ceramics can help you work in creative or design fields. Jobs include:

- Architect
- Prop or set designer
- VFX artist
- Interior designer
- Art therapist

Ceramics skills, like planning, organisation, resilience and creativity, can also be used in many other careers. If you want to study a creative subject at college, sixth form, or university, GCSE Ceramics may be needed. Check the entry requirements.

Click on the play button to watch a short video.



Mrs C Tester

Subject Leader for Ceramics

Textiles - GCSE



Exam Board

AQA

What You'll Learn

GCSE Textile Art is a practical and creative course. You will:

- Work with fabrics and fibres
- Learn techniques such as printing, embroidery, felting, embellishment, and sewing
- Explore textile design, wearable art, and costume
- Turn 2D ideas into 3D outcomes
- Develop your own creative projects over three years
- Study other artists and designers to inspire your work

Note: You cannot take Textiles with Art or Ceramics as they count as the same qualification.

Assessments

Your final grade comes from:

- Coursework (60%) - your projects and practical work from Years 10-11
- Exam (40%) - a practical project done over one term, ending in a two day practical exam
- Both coursework and the exam are submitted for exhibition.

Skills You'll Gain

Studying Textile Art helps you develop:

- Creativity and imagination
- Practical textile and craft skills
- Planning and organisation
- Problem-solving and experimenting with materials
- Confidence in completing your own personal projects

These skills can be used in many creative and professional careers.

Future Careers and Opportunities

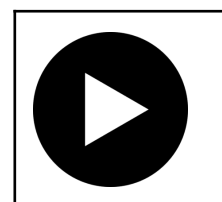
GCSE Textile Art is useful if you want a career in creative, design, or fashion-related fields. Jobs include:

- Interior designer
- Fashion designer or stylist
- Theatre/Film/TV costume or set designer
- Fashion journalist or marketing
- Art therapist
- Freelance artist

Skills from Textile Art, like planning and organisation, can also be used in other careers. Many Universities value the imaginative thinking and practical skills you will gain in Textiles, even if it is an academic subject you are applying for.

If you want to study a creative subject at college, sixth form, or university, GCSE Textile Art may be needed. Check the entry requirements.

Click on the play button to watch a short video.



Business - GCSE



Exam Board

AQA

What You'll Learn

In GCSE Business, you will:

- Learn how businesses work and what affects them
- Study different types of businesses, from small shops to big international companies
- Explore key topics like:
 - Business in the real world
 - Influences on business
 - Business operations
 - Human resources
 - Marketing
 - Finance
- Use real business examples to understand ideas and make decisions

Assessments

Your final grade comes from two written exams, each worth 50%:

- Paper 1: Business in the real world, Influences on Business, Operations and Human Resources - 1 hour 45 minutes
- Paper 2: Business in the real world, Influences on Business, Marketing and Finance - 1 hour 45 minutes

Exams include questions with words and numbers, and you will need to analyse information and make decisions. About 15% of your marks are from calculations.

Skills You'll Gain

Studying Business helps you develop:

- Problem-solving and decision-making
- Using business ideas and vocabulary
- Analysing information and data
- Planning and organising
- Numeracy and written skills

These skills can be used in many school subjects and in the workplace.

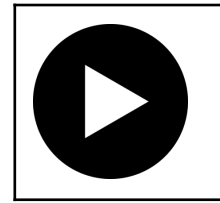
Future Careers and Opportunities

A GCSE in Business is useful for lots of jobs. It also helps if you want to start your own business. Jobs directly related to Business include:

- Sales representative
- Marketing officer
- Project manager
- Accounting technician
- Business analyst
- Business advisor
- Business development manager

It also gives a strong foundation for studying A-Level Business or Economics.

Click on the play button to watch a short video.



Mrs K Charman
KS4 Subject Leader for Business

Computer Science - GCSE



Exam Board
AQA

What You'll Learn

In GCSE Computer Science, you will:

- Learn how computers work “behind the scenes”
- Study computer programming using Python
- Understand Algorithms, Data Representation, Computer Systems, Databases, SQL and Networks.
- Learn about Cyber Security and the Ethical, Legal, and Environmental effects of digital technology
- Develop skills in critical thinking, problem-solving, and analysis

Assessments

Your final grade comes from two exams, each worth 50%:

- Paper 1: Computational Thinking and Problem Solving
 - Focus on Programming Techniques and Designing Algorithms
 - Includes writing code, testing, and refining programs
- Paper 2: Theoretical Knowledge
 - Computer Systems, Data Representation, Networks, Cyber Security, Databases and SQL and Digital Technology issues
 - Includes multiple choice, short answer, and extended questions

Skills You'll Gain

Studying Computer Science helps you develop:

- Programming skills
- Problem-solving and logical thinking
- Analytical skills
- Critical thinking
- Understanding of how digital technology works

These skills can be used in school, further education, and many jobs.

Future Careers and Opportunities

A GCSE in Computer Science is useful for many careers, especially in technology and digital industries. Jobs directly related include:

- Software development
- Cyber Security
- Artificial Intelligence
- Data Science
- Game Design
- Engineering
- And many other high-demand careers

It also helps if you want to study A-Level Computer Science or go on to college or university.

Mrs J Milliner
Subject Leader for Computer Science and Creative iMedia

Creative iMedia - Cambridge National



Exam Board

OCR

What You'll Learn

In this course, you will:

- Learn how the digital media and creative industry works
- Develop skills to plan, create, and review multimedia products
- Learn about graphic design, digital graphics, and interactive media
- Work with industry software eg Adobe Photoshop and Illustrator
- Gain skills in planning and producing websites and other digital media products
- Become independent, creative, and ready for digital media work

Assessments

Your final grade comes from a mix of exams and coursework:

- R093 - Creative iMedia in the Media Industry (Exam) - 40% (End of Year 11)
 - Learn about media companies, product planning, and media codes
 - Topics: Media industry, Product design, Pre-production, Distribution
- R094 - Visual Identity and Digital Graphics (Coursework) - 25% (Start end of Year 9)
 - Create graphics and visual identities for clients using Adobe Photoshop
 - Topics: Develop visual identity, Plan graphics, Create digital graphics
- R097 - Interactive Digital Media (Coursework) - 35% (Start end of Year 10)
 - Plan, create, and review interactive digital products like websites using Adobe Dreamweaver
 - Topics: Plan interactive media, Create it, Review it

Skills You'll Gain

Studying Creative iMedia helps you:

- Use digital media software confidently
- Plan and design creative projects
- Solve problems and think critically
- Work independently and creatively
- Develop organisation and project management skills

These skills can be used in school, college, and many future jobs.

Future Careers and Opportunities

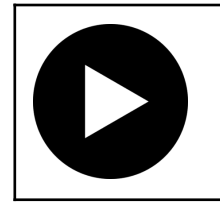
This course is useful if you want to work in the digital media or creative industry. Jobs directly related include:

- Graphic Design
- Marketing
- Film and TV
- Games Development
- Web and App Design
- Advertising
- Social Media Content Creation

It gives a taste of what these careers involve.

It also helps with further study in Creative iMedia, Digital Design, or Computing courses.

Click on the play button to watch a short video.



Mrs J Milliner
Subject Leader for Computer Science and Creative iMedia

Design and Technology - GCSE



Exam Board
AQA

What You'll Learn

- How everyday products are made, the materials used, and why they are chosen
- How to design and make products that solve real problems
- Learn about design processes, materials, techniques, and equipment
- Work with metals, wood, plastics, electronics, textiles, and paper
- Study Product Design, Systems & Control, Graphics, and Resistant & Compliant Materials
- Connect your ideas to designers from history
- Develop creativity and problem-solving skills

Assessments

Your grade comes from two main parts:

- Written Exam (50%) - 2 hours, covering design knowledge and theory
- Design & Making Practice (50%) - A project where you design and make a product, supported by a design folder
 - Include photos or videos of your product
 - Example projects: lighting, amplifiers, children's toys

Enrichment projects in Year 9 help you practice skills for the GCSE but are not examined.

Skills You'll Gain

- Creativity and imagination
- Planning and organisation
- Problem solving and critical thinking
- Practical skills in using materials and tools including laser cutters and 3D printers
- Technical knowledge for designing and making products including use of computer modelling software
- Ability to evaluate and improve your own designs

These skills are useful in school, college, and many jobs.

Future Careers and Opportunities

This course helps if you want a career in design, engineering, or technical fields. Jobs include:

- Product designer
- Architect
- Graphic designer
- Furniture maker
- CAD technician

It also helps you prepare for A-level Design and Technology or college courses in engineering, design, or related subjects.

Mr R Simmonite
Subject Leader for Technology

Drama - GCSE



Exam Board

AQA

What You'll Learn

- Perform in scripted plays and create your own original work
- Learn theatre techniques like acting, lighting, sound, and set design
- Analyse plays and theatre productions
- Develop written skills for exams and coursework
- Work as part of a team and improve confidence, problem-solving, and independent thinking
- Attend professional theatre productions and possibly work with theatre professionals

Assessments

Your grade comes from two parts:

- Practical/Written Work (60%)
 - Devised performance (40%) - your own original work with written notes
 - Scripted performance (20%) - perform a play, externally examined
- Written Exam (40%)
 - Questions on performing roles, designing for plays, and reviewing a theatre production you have seen

Skills You'll Gain

- Acting and theatre performance skills
- Theatre design (lighting, sound, set)
- Confidence and teamwork
- Problem-solving and independent thinking
- Public speaking and presentation skills

Future Careers and Opportunities

A GCSE in Drama helps if you want a career in performing arts. Jobs include:

- Theatre director
- Stagehand
- Production runner
- Actor/Actress
- Dramatherapist

It also develops transferable skills useful in any job, like teamwork, confidence, and communication.

Ms K Harbron

Subject Leader for Drama

Food Preparation and Nutrition - GCSE



Exam Board

AQA

What You'll Learn

- Food preparation skills: Knife skills, using kitchen equipment, cooking methods
- Nutrition and health: Making healthy food choices, understanding energy and nutrients
- Food science: How food changes when cooked, food spoilage, heat transfer
- Food provenance: Where food comes from, sustainability, processing and production

- Food choice: Factors affecting what people eat, British and international cuisine, food labelling, sensory testing

Assessments

Your grade comes from two parts:

- Unit 1 Written Exam (50%)
 - 1 hour 45 minutes
 - Tests your knowledge of food theory, nutrition, and preparation
- Unit 2 Non-Exam Assessment (50%) -
 - Food Investigation Task (15%)
 - Practical experiments and a 2000-word report
 - Shows understanding of the science behind cooking
 - Completed under controlled conditions within 10 hours.
 - Food Preparation Task (35%)
 - Plan, cook, and present three dishes in a 3 hour exam (18% of coursework)
 - Produce a 20-page portfolio with sensory, costing and nutritional analysis.
 - Completed under controlled conditions within 20 hours.

Students also practice practical, research, and experimental work during the course to prepare for assessments.

Skills You'll Gain

- Cooking and food preparation
- Planning and time management
- Research, analysis, and evaluation
- Communication and independent working
- Creativity and problem-solving

Future Careers and Opportunities

A GCSE in Food Preparation and Nutrition can help in careers that involve food, cooking, or health. Jobs include:

- Caterer
- Food Nutritionist
- Food Product Developer
- Dietitian
- Environmental health officer

It also gives skills useful in any job, like teamwork, planning, and communication.

Mrs L Mitchell

Subject Leader for Food Preparation and Nutrition

Geography - GCSE



Exam Board

AQA

What You'll Learn

- How the natural world works and how people interact with it
- Physical geography: earthquakes, volcanoes, weather hazards, climate change, rivers, coasts, deserts, rainforests
- Human geography: cities, population, development, resources, sustainability
- How to study real places using fieldwork (2 x compulsory day trips) and geographical skills
- How people and environments affect each other in different locations and over time

Assessments

The course is 100% exam, split into three papers:

- Paper 1: Living with the physical environment (35%) - 1 hour 30 minutes
 - Physical processes and natural landscapes
 - How people interact with the environment
- Paper 2: Challenges in the human environment (35%) - 1 hour 30 minutes
 - Cities, population, development, resources
 - Differences between richer and poorer countries
- Paper 3: Geographical applications (30%) - 1 hour 13 minutes
 - Combines knowledge from the course and fieldwork
 - Problem-solving and interpreting geographical data

Exams test:

- Knowledge of places and processes
- Understanding of concepts and how things are connected
- Using information to analyse and make judgements
- Using skills to investigate questions and communicate findings

Skills You'll Gain

- Map reading, graphing, and fieldwork skills
- Research and data analysis
- Critical thinking and problem-solving
- Understanding of global and local issues
- Communication and presentation skills

Future Careers and Opportunities

Geography can lead to many jobs and further study options because it teaches broad knowledge and useful skills. Careers include:

- Urban planner
- Environmental consultant
- Geologist
- Cartographer (map maker)
- Meteorologist
- Surveyor

Studying geography also helps if you want to continue learning in college, sixth form, or university.

Miss C Power

Subject Leader for Geography

Health & Social Care - Cambridge National (OCR J835)



Exam Board

OCR

Level: Cambridge National Certificate (Level 2, equivalent to a GCSE)

This course teaches students key skills and knowledge for working in health, social care. It focuses on caring for others, understanding people's needs, and promoting health and wellbeing.

What You'll Learn

- The rights of individuals and how to protect them
- Person-centred care and effective communication
- How life events affect people and how to support them
- How to plan and run creative activities or health campaigns

Assessment

- 1 written exam (40%)

- Principles of care - includes rights, values, communication and protection in care settings
- 2 coursework units (30% each), choose from:
 - Supporting individuals through life events
 - Creative and therapeutic activities
 - Health promotion campaigns

Skills You'll Gain

- Confidence and independence
- Creative and critical thinking
- Real-world knowledge of work in care settings

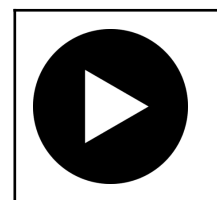
Future Careers and Opportunities

This course is a great foundation for careers such as:

- Care worker
- Nurse
- Healthcare assistant
- Midwife
- Emergency care assistant

Health and social care roles are in high demand in the UK, and this course can help you move into further training, college, or a job in the care sector.

Click on the play button to watch a short video.



Miss S Goacher
KS4 Lead for Health & Social Care

History - GCSE



Exam Board

Edexcel

What You'll Learn

- How medicine has changed in Britain in the Medicine through Time course 1250 to today, including key people like Edward Jenner and Florence Nightingale. As well as life and medicine on the Western Front in World War One, including injuries, treatments, and trench life
- Early Elizabethan England (1558-88): Elizabeth I, religion, Mary Queen of Scots, the Spanish Armada, and exploration
- The Cold War (1941-91): conflicts between the USA and USSR, Berlin, and nuclear tension
- Weimar and Nazi Germany (1918-39): Germany after World War One, the Great Depression, Hitler, and Nazi rule

Assessments

The course is 100% exam, split into three papers:

- Paper 1 - Medicine in Britain & the Western Front (30%) - 1 hour 20 minutes
- Paper 2 - Early Elizabethan England & Cold War (40%) - 1 hour 50 minutes
- Paper 3 - Weimar and Nazi Germany (30%) - 1 hour 30 minutes

Exams test: knowledge of events, understanding causes and effects, and using sources like a historian.

Skills You'll Gain

- Researching and analysing historical sources
- Writing clearly and explaining ideas
- Critical thinking and making judgements
- Understanding connections between events and times
- Planning and organising information

Future Careers and Opportunities

History skills are useful in many jobs and further education. Careers include:

- Archivist or museum curator
- Teacher or lecturer
- Lawyer
- Director (film, theatre, or media)
- Historian

Studying history helps with problem-solving, research, and communication, which are valuable in lots of careers.

Mrs S Beard

Subject Leader for History

Media Studies - GCSE



Exam Board

EDUQAS

What You'll Learn

- The study of newspapers, magazines, TV, radio, film marketing, websites, music videos, and video games
- Learn how media communicates ideas and messages (Media Language)
- Learn how media is made and controlled (Industries)
- Learn how media represents people, places, and events (Representation)
- Learn how media reaches and influences audiences (Audience)
- Develop practical skills using cameras and design & editing software to create media products

Assessments

- 2 written exams (70%)
 - Paper 1 - Exploring the Media: Test understanding of the 4 media ideas and apply them analytically to studied and unseen texts (e.g., newspapers, adverts, video games)
 - Paper 2 - Media Forms and Contexts: Test deeper understanding of three studied texts, like music videos and TV programmes
- NEA Coursework (30%): Make a media product for a chosen audience, such as a music video, film poster, magazine cover, or marketing campaign. Include a written 'statement of aims' explaining your ideas

Skills You'll Gain

- How to analyse and compare media texts
- To think critically and make judgements about media - Media literacy
- Create your own media products using software and cameras
- Apply knowledge to real-world media situations

Future Careers and Opportunities

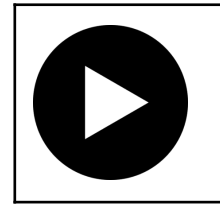
Media Studies skills can lead to careers in:

- Broadcast journalist
- Director or filmmaker
- Magazine/newspaper editor
- Marketing (PR) or online content manager

- Sports commentator

Skills from media studies are also useful in marketing, public relations, and the Civil Service.

Click on the play button to watch a short video.



Mrs J Duncan
Subject Leader for Media Studies

Languages - GCSE

French, German, Spanish

You can choose one or more languages you studied in Key Stage 3.



Exam Board

Edexcel

What You'll Learn

- Speak, listen, read, and write in your chosen language(s)
- Learn about life in countries where the language is spoken
- Improve grammar and sentence structure
- Talk about topics such as:
 - Family, friends, and relationships
 - Lifestyle, wellbeing, and equality
 - Your neighbourhood, town, and environment
 - Media, social media, music, TV, and film
 - School, work, and future opportunities
 - Travel and tourism

Assessments

- Speaking - 25%
- Listening - 25%
- Reading - 25%
- Writing - 25%

All assessments are exams at the end of the course.

Skills You'll Gain

- Communicate confidently in another language
- Understand other cultures and ways of life
- Express opinions and ideas clearly
- Improve listening, reading, writing, and speaking skills
- Work independently and with others

Future Careers and Opportunities

Studying a language can help with jobs and life skills, especially as international work becomes more common. It teaches you how to communicate with people from other countries.

Jobs directly related to languages include:

- International sales/marketing and business
- Hotels, travel and holiday industry
- Journalism
- Market research
- Translator/interpreter

- Languages teacher
- Foreign office
- Car industry
- Project Management

Knowing a second language is useful in many careers. Employers often value employees who can speak another language. A language is a strong addition to your CV and shows that you can think on your feet and have strong communication skills.

Mrs V Duffield
Subject Leader for Languages

Music - GCSE



Exam Board
Eduqas

What you'll need to do

- To take Music GCSE you need to have lessons on an instrument or voice.
- If you don't have lessons but you play an instrument or sing regularly outside of school music lessons you may be able to take the course. Please speak to your music teacher.

What You'll Learn

- Play an instrument or sing solo and in groups
- Compose your own music using your ideas or given themes
- Study music from 1700 to today
- Learn performing, composing, and listening skills
- Develop technical skills to create music live or using computer software

Assessments

- Performing Music - 4-6 minutes, 2+ pieces (one must be with a group)
- Composing Music - 2 pieces: one free choice, one set by the exam board
- Listening and Appraising - written exam covering:
 - Musical forms and devices
 - Music for groups and ensembles
 - Film music
 - Popular music

Skills You'll Gain

- Perform confidently alone and with others
- Compose music and develop creative ideas
- Analyse and understand different types of music
- Use technology to produce music

Future Careers and Opportunities

- A-level Music
- BTEC Level 3 Music Technology
- Jobs related to music:
 - Sound technician
 - Session musician
 - Professional singer
 - Music therapist
 - DJ
- Music skills also help with creativity, coordination, and problem-solving

Mr I Gardner
Subject Leader for Music

Music Technology - NCFE



Exam Board

NCFE

Level: NCFE - Level 1/2 Technical Award

What You'll Learn

- How the music industry works and how artists promote themselves
- Use hardware and software to create and produce music (Digital Audio Workstation - DAW)
- Learn musical elements: structure, melody, harmony, and style
- Create music for films, adverts, and other media
- Record, mix, and produce multitrack music in a studio

Assessments

- 60% NEA (coursework) - creating and producing your own music
- 40% Written Exam - testing knowledge of music and the music industry

Skills You'll Gain

- Produce and mix music using technology
- Compose music and explore different styles
- Research and analyse music professionally
- Work in a studio and understand the music business

Future Careers and Opportunities

- Jobs directly related to music and music technology:
 - Sound technician
 - Session musician
 - Professional singer
 - Music therapist
 - DJ
- Skills in music and music technology also help with creativity, pattern recognition, and technical coordination
- Students can progress to BTEC Level 3 Music Technology in sixth form

Mr I Gardner

Subject Leader for Music

Physical Education - GCSE



Exam Board

AQA

What You'll Learn

- Take part in team and individual sports, such as football, basketball, gymnastics, and athletics
- Learn about fitness, diet, exercise, training, and injury prevention
- Study how the body works, including muscles, bones, and body systems
- Understand how technology, media, and sponsorship affect sport
- Improve your practical skills, strategies, and knowledge of rules and techniques

Assessments

- Practical performance - assessed in three activities and an analysis of your performance (40%)
- Theory exams - two written papers (60%):
 - Paper 1: The Human Body and Movement in Sport - 1 hour 15 minutes

- Paper 2: Socio-Cultural Influences and Wellbeing in Sport - 1 hour 15 minutes

Skills You'll Gain

- Improve your fitness, coordination, and physical skills
- Analyse performance and create training plans
- Work as part of a team and communicate effectively
- Learn about anatomy, physiology, and health
- Understand strategies and rules in different sports

Future Careers and Opportunities

- A-level Physical Education
- BTEC National in Sport
- University degrees in Sports Science or Sports Studies
- Jobs related to PE and sport:
 - Fitness instructor
 - Physiotherapist
 - Sports professional
 - Lifeguard
 - Sports scientist
- PE also helps improve mental wellbeing, teamwork, and overall health

Mr P Lewis

Subject Leader for PE

Dance - GCSE



Exam Board

AQA

What You'll Learn

- Learn contemporary dance as a way to express ideas and emotions
- Create and interpret movements, images, and concepts
- Understand the basics of dance while staying fit and healthy
- Develop confidence, creativity, discipline, and teamwork
- Learn to organise, lead, and solve problems through dance

Assessments

- Performance - 30%
 - Solo performance (1 minute)
 - Duet or trio performance (3-5 minutes)
- Choreography - 30%
 - Solo choreography (2-2.5 minutes)
 - Group choreography (3-3.5 minutes)
- Dance Appreciation - 40%
 - Written exam (1.5 hours)
 - Analyse your own work and professional dance works

All practical assessments are marked internally and externally.

Skills You'll Gain

- Performance skills and confidence
- Physical fitness and discipline
- Creativity and problem-solving
- Leadership and teamwork
- Time management and organisation
- Critical thinking about dance

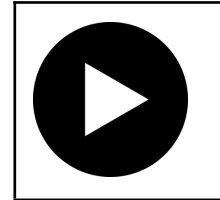
Future Careers and Opportunities

After GCSE, students can study A-level Dance or BTEC Level 3 Dance. Careers in dance include:

- Professional dancer
- Dance teacher
- Choreographer
- Dance therapist
- Physiotherapist

Dance lessons also help improve mental well-being, fitness, creativity, and self-esteem.

Click on the play button to watch a short video.



Mr P Lewis
Subject Leader for PE

Travel & Tourism GCSE



Exam Board

Pearson

Qualification: BTEC Level 1/Level 2 Technical Award in Travel and Tourism

What You'll Learn

- How travel and tourism businesses work and their goals
- Features of different tourist destinations
- How businesses meet customer needs
- How global events and trends affect travel and tourism
- How to develop tourism while respecting the environment and local communities
- Skills in researching and presenting travel information

Assessments

The course has three main parts:

1. Travel and Tourism Organisations and Destinations - assignments done in school, checked to meet external standards.
2. Influences on Global Travel and Tourism - a set task done under supervision and graded by Pearson (counts for 40% of the course). Students can resit this once if needed.
3. Customer Needs in Travel and Tourism - assignments that show you can use your knowledge and skills from the other parts in a practical way.

Skills You'll Gain

- Researching and presenting information
- Planning and organisation
- Understanding customer needs
- Awareness of environmental and social responsibilities
- Communication and teamwork

Future Careers and Opportunities

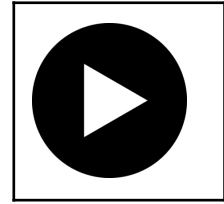
After this course, students can work in the travel and tourism industry or continue studying the subject in college. Jobs include:

- Cabin crew
- Hotel manager

- Resort representative
- Tourist guide
- Travel agent

The skills you gain like planning, organising, and working with others, are useful in many other jobs too.

Click on the play button to watch a short video.



Mr G Keller
Subject Leader for Travel & Tourism