



# CHOICES AT 14+

Year 9  
Blue Pathway  
2026 - 2028

High Standards | High Achievement



**Nova Hreod Academy**

The best in everyone™

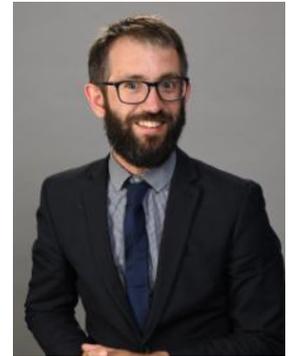
Part of United Learning

## Letter from Mr Harding-Mbogo – Headteacher

Dear students and parents/carers,

For the first time, you are about to have an important say over the subjects you will be studying for the next two years. The option process is a significant and exciting time. It is an opportunity to shape a curriculum which will suit your future career needs and which matches your interests.

The purpose of this guide is to help you and your parents/carers to make informed decisions about your Key Stage 4 studies. These options will affect how you spend your time during Years 10 and 11 and are likely to influence the courses you take at sixth form or college. We will support you in making these choices through the process explained by Mrs Unwin in this booklet.



Please use this guide alongside the information from our Options Assembly to help you to make good choices, balancing your desire to follow your current passions with your need to learn a rigorous and high-profile set of subjects.

At Nova Hreod, we really want to bring out the best in everyone, so at this time, make the choices that will be right for you and make the most of those selections.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "J Harding-Mbogo". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

**James Harding-Mbogo**  
*Headteacher*

## Letter from Mrs Unwin – Senior Vice Principal

Dear students and parents/carers,

I am pleased to introduce you to this year's Key Stage 4 Options Booklet, which outlines details of the courses offered at Nova in Years 10 and 11. It will help inform students' choices.

We are driven to challenge our students so they can compete against the best students in the country, at the end of Year 11 and beyond. This means balancing the demand to master a range of academic courses with the desires of students to follow their current interests and aspirations. We want students to be students and show the attributes of students; part of that is learning the academic core of subjects up to age 16.

For some of our students, it can be hard to make a choice of subjects. We suggest that they read this booklet thoroughly; talk to as many of their teachers as possible, attend our options evening on Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> March and discuss their intended choices with their parents/carers and other adults in the family. They can also use the websites which are suggested in this booklet. When making choices, it is important to think about where studying those subjects can lead in terms of courses at sixth form or college, in higher education and in the world of work. Having an aptitude and interest in those subjects is also a consideration.

Accordingly, students need to think very carefully about the courses which are on offer before making decisions. This will ensure that what they study in the next two years suits their needs and aspirations.

We will be working closely with parents/carers and students to arrive at the best possible programmes of study for every student. You can find the key dates in this process outlined in the following pages. We hope that all students are able to find a suitable combination of subjects and that their Key Stage 4 studies will engage and motivate them, in order to allow them to achieve the success in the future.

Yours faithfully,

**Mrs Sonja Unwin**  
*Senior Vice Principal*



## OPTIONS TIMELINE



### What is the English Baccalaureate?

On the Blue Pathway you study the English Baccalaureate (EBacc for short). The subjects that make up the EBacc are English, Mathematics, at least two Sciences, French and a Humanities subject - either History or Geography.

The EBacc was introduced by the Department for Education as a marker that students have followed a properly rounded academic curriculum. It recognises the set of qualifications that top colleges, universities and employers see as a route into joining them and is a means of ensuring that doors are not closed to students at the age of 14.

At Nova Hreod, students are placed on this pathway according to prior attainment on tests they have taken so far, in Key Stage 2 and 3.

Students are on this pathway because they have shown great ability and strong potential in the subjects which form the EBacc. We want to ensure they keep all options open for the future. Many people change their minds about the subjects they want to pursue when it comes to post-16 and beyond, which is why it is wise to study a broad range of subjects now.

**Our Blue Pathway curriculum is designed to allow students to combine a core of EBacc subjects with 2 further, carefully selected subject to ensure they keep their future options open.**



# Structure of the Blue Pathway Curriculum

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The structure of the curriculum for Year 10 and 11 Blue Pathway students has three distinct parts:

## Part 1: Core Curriculum for Blue Pathway Students

The core curriculum is compulsory for all students.

- ✓ **GCSE English Language**
- ✓ **GCSE English Literature**
- ✓ **GCSE Mathematics**
- ✓ **GCSE Science (Combined Science is worth 2 GCSEs; if you choose 'Triple Science' you'll get 3 science GCSEs instead)**
- ✓ **GCSE French**
- ✓ **Core PE**

## Part 2: Core Option

- ✓ You will study one of **GCSE Geography** or **GCSE History**. You must choose at least one of them, though you can certainly choose to study them both if you wish.

## Part 3: Specialist Option - another 2 choices from these subject options

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| ✓ <b>GCSE Art</b>   | ✓ <b>GCSE History</b> (if you haven't already chosen it!) |
| ✓ <b>GCSE Business</b>                                      | ✓ <b>GCSE Music</b>                                       |
| ✓ <b>GCSE Citizenship</b>                                   | ✓ <b>GCSE Philosophy and Ethics</b>                       |
| ✓ <b>GCSE Computer Science</b>                              | ✓ <b>GCSE Photography</b>                                 |
| ✓ <b>GCSE Drama</b>   | ✓ <b>GCSE Triple Science</b>                              |
| ✓ <b>GCSE Film Studies</b>                                  | ✓ <b>Voc. Creative iMedia</b>                             |
| ✓ <b>GCSE Geography</b> (if you haven't already chosen it!) | ✓ <b>Voc. Hospitality and Catering</b>                    |
|   | ✓ <b>Voc. Sport Studies</b>                               |

## How to Choose Your Options

On your options form, which will be online, first you'll choose either Geography or History.

Then you have two 'specialist choices.' You'll show your choice by picking your top *four* subjects, using numbers to put them in order of preference. We will try to give everyone their top choices. This may not always be possible (see box below). In this case, we'll look at 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> preferences.

You might not get your first choice because:

- Too many students choose a particular course, and we are unable to have more classes in the subject.
- Too few students choose a particular course.
- We wish to advise students to choose a set of subjects more suitable for their strengths.
- You have chosen a selection of courses that does not fit into a timetable.



## Further Guidance

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Some of the subjects will be new to you, so you'll find more information about them in this booklet. You will also find out more from the subject teachers through the assemblies and videos in tutor time.

### Do consider:

- ✓ Your areas of strength in school. While you shouldn't necessarily choose the subjects you are best at, it should be a consideration.
- ✓ Your future goals. If you have no idea about goals for post-16 study or your career, it is best to choose a good range of subjects, so you don't close any doors for yourself.
- ✓ Your areas of interest. You are going to be studying these courses for a further two years. You need to be able to commit to them.
- ✓ The advice of teachers, parents and your tutor. They will each have an important perspective.

### Don't consider:

- ⊗ Choosing subjects just because they are what your friends have chosen. Your friends will remain your friends whether you study the same subjects or not. Furthermore, choosing the same subject as a friend doesn't guarantee you'll be in the same class.
- ⊗ Choosing a subject because you get on well with your current teacher. You may well have a different teacher in Years 10 and 11.

### Helpful websites

These may help you/your child. If you have any further questions regarding careers, please speak to your tutor.

**Unifrog** - <https://www.unifrog.org/>

Students have used this website in PSHE to look at further education and careers information.

**Careersbox** – <http://www.careersbox.co.uk>

These websites have numerous video clips of real people talking about real jobs.

**Careers Service** - <https://nationalcareers.service.gov.uk>

This is the Government's own careers website for all ages – it is very informative on careers, courses and CV writing.

# Blue Pathway Core Subjects



## GCSE ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND ENGLISH LITERATURE

*How much sooner one tires of anything than of a book!*

– Jane Austen, *Pride and Prejudice*

Teaching in English aims to inspire and motivate students to achieve success in this core area of the curriculum, whilst developing a genuine interest and enjoyment of the subject. Through lively and dynamic lessons, students are given the opportunity to engage with fantastic fiction and non-fiction from Britain and beyond, including the classics, and develop their own ability to express themselves clearly and creatively. At the heart of English is the ability to communicate clearly and confidently; not only in writing, but also how students use and respond to spoken language. There are plenty of opportunities for debate in response to the texts read, allowing pupils to give their own thoughts and opinions on a range of social, political and moral issues. All students will complete a non-examination assessment of spoken language by giving a presentation which is then separately endorsed by the exam board.

### GCSE English Language

The texts explored in English bring the outside world inside the classroom. Well-crafted, engaging fiction and non-fiction texts from Britain and beyond allow students to consider writers' ideas and perspectives on our world, past and present. Once they start identifying the different methods writers use to convey these ideas, they will begin thinking as a writer – the first step to becoming one. There is something for everyone, as students read and respond to texts from writers of 19th Century fiction, such as Charles Dickens, to 21st Century journalists, like Charlie Brooker.

As for writing, students are given plenty of opportunities to develop their creative and technical writing ability. As well as developing understanding of how to communicate clearly and accurately, they are practising writing in a range of different genres and styles. From non-fiction discursive writing to imaginative descriptive writing, students will be able to develop their own style and confidence over the two years.

## GCSE English Literature

Studying English Literature provides students with the opportunity to read widely and write creatively in response to well-crafted, thought-provoking novels, plays and poetry. Alongside reading and analysing a range of texts, they are learning how to maintain a critical style of essay writing and develop an informed personal response, using textual references to support interpretations.

They are not only developing their ability to analyse how writers use language to create meaning, but also learning about the contexts in which the texts were written, and considering the texts in light of this background information. There are many fantastic titles on offer for study, from Charles Dickens' *A Christmas Carol* to Shakespeare's *Macbeth* and Power and Conflict poetry.

## Assessment of your English GCSEs

All students in Years 10 and 11 study for the AQA GCSE English Language and English Literature examinations graded 9-1. There are two examination papers for each GCSE completed in the summer of Year 11.

For Language, there are two papers with equal weighting:

- Paper 1 Explorations in Creative Reading and Writing
- Paper 2 Writers' Viewpoints and Perspectives.

For Literature, students study for two papers too:

- Paper 1: Shakespeare and the 19th Century Novel
- Paper 2: Modern Texts and Poetry.

Through studying these courses, students are developing the skills they need to read, understand and analyse a wide range of different texts and write clearly: skills which are central to success in all of their GCSE subjects, as well as in a wide range of contexts outside of the classroom.



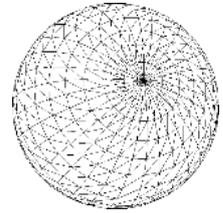


## MATHEMATICS

“Without mathematics, there’s nothing you can do. Everything around you is mathematics. Everything around you is numbers.” – *Shakuntala Devi*

### Subject Content

Not only is a GCSE in mathematics a requirement for all Key Stage 4 pathways but it is transferable to many other subjects at GCSE and beyond, has many real-life applications and is fascinating and enjoyable.



Students will study a broad GCSE curriculum which will build on their learning from Key Stage 3 and will cover various topics including algebra, number, ratio and proportion, statistics and geometry. The demands on the new GCSE specification require students to develop a deep understanding of the subject content and to apply this to a range of question styles from fluency testing to applied problems, requiring students to draw on a range of skills and work methodically to a solution. A strong GCSE grade will support students in all applications for college and employment and is a requirement for all courses in further education.

### Assessments

Students will be entered for either higher tier which awards grades 9 – 4 or foundation tier which awards grades 5 – 1. For both tiers, students are required to sit three papers which are all 1 hour 30 minutes in duration. The first paper is non-calculator and for the subsequent two papers a calculator is required.

## GCSE COMBINED SCIENCE

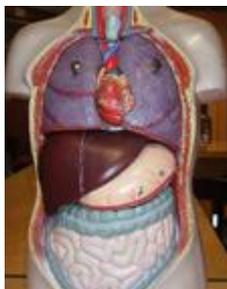


“The important thing is to never stop questioning” - *Albert Einstein*

The history of science is the history of people striving to understand the universe. In GCSE science you will learn about the most important findings and theories that explain the world, along with further developing your skills in investigating scientific questions through practical work.

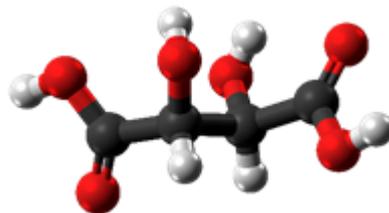
All students will study the AQA GCSE Combined Science course, unless they have chosen to study Triple Science. At the end of the Combined Science course students will be awarded two GCSEs. Combined Science provides an excellent foundation in key scientific knowledge and skills for a variety of careers and courses post GCSE. It enables students to question the science of the world around them and to understand the importance of science in our society.

### What will I learn?

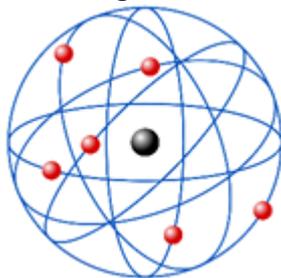


**Biology Topics:** cell biology, organisation, infection and response, bioenergetics, homeostasis and response, inheritance, ecology and variation and evolution.

**Chemistry Topics:** atomic structure and the periodic table, bonding, structure, and the properties of matter, quantitative chemistry, chemical changes, energy changes, the rate and extent of chemical change, organic chemistry, chemical analysis, chemistry of the atmosphere



and using resources.



**Physics Topics:** energy, electricity, particle model of matter, atomic structure, forces, waves, magnetism and electromagnetism.

**Practical Work:** throughout the two-year Combined Science course, students will carry out a wide variety of practical work including, but not limited to, 21 required practical tasks.

### How will I be assessed?

In the summer of Year 11 there will be six 1 hour 15-minute examination papers: two Biology, two Chemistry and two Physics exams. Knowledge and understanding of the required practical tasks will be assessed in the exams along with the theoretical knowledge and skills. The exams can either be foundation tier (grades 5-5 to 1-1) or higher tier (grades 9-9 to 4-4). There is no controlled assessment or coursework component to this course.





## GCSE FRENCH

“One language sets you in a corridor for life. Two languages open every door along the way.” – Frank Smith

### Why study a language?

The benefits of learning a language are numerous. From the obvious – being able to communicate with a much wider range of people – to the beneficial by developing a stronger memory. It helps us build problem solving and listening skills. More than half of the world’s population speak two languages or more, so it’s a huge advantage when competing at an international level. By the end of year 9, students here will have already developed a solid foundation of high-frequency vocabulary, phonics and grammar to help give them a confident start in their studies at GCSE. Year 10 and 11 will be spent focusing on specific vocabulary, learning how to use the language for travelling purposes, but most importantly developing fluency.

### What will I learn?

Lessons will include a mix of the four main skills: listening, reading, writing and speaking and will cover the following topics:

- My Personal World
- Lifestyle & Wellbeing
- Media & Technology
- Travel & Tourism
- Studying & My Future
- My Neighbourhood

Some language is practical for travelling such as ordering in a restaurant, buying tickets for a concert, visiting the doctor.

### How will I be assessed?

Students sit a listening exam, a reading exam and a writing exam at the end of Year 11. The papers are all equally weighted (25% each). The speaking exam is conducted with the class teacher, usually at the end of April or beginning of May. Other exams fit in with the usual May-June GCSE exams.



# Blue Pathway Core Option

## GCSE GEOGRAPHY

“Geography is central to the survival of humanity.”

– Nicholas Crane



This exciting and in-depth course is based on both physical and human geography. It allows students to investigate the link between the two themes, and examine the battles between the man-made and natural worlds. The subject content is split into four units: 3.1 Living with the physical environment, 3.2 Challenges in the human environment, 3.3 Geographical applications and 3.4 Geographical skills.

### Unit 1: Living with the Physical Environment

This unit is concerned with the dynamic nature of physical processes and systems, and human interaction with them in a variety of places and at a range of scales. The aims of this unit are to develop an understanding of the tectonic, geomorphological, biological and meteorological processes and features in different environments, and the need for management strategies governed by sustainability.

- Section A: The Challenge of Natural Hazards: Natural Hazards, Tectonic Hazards
- Section B: The living world: Ecosystems, Tropical Rainforest, Hot Deserts
- Section C: Physical Landscapes in the UK: River and Coastal Landscapes

### Unit 2: Challenges in the Human Environment

This unit is concerned with human processes, systems and outcomes and how these change, across places and over time. They are studied in a variety of locations and at a range of scales and include places in various states of development, such as higher income countries (HICs), lower income countries (LICs) and newly emerging economies (NEEs)

- Section A: Urban Issues and Challenges
- Section B: The Changing Economic World
- Section C:
- The Challenge of Resource Management: Food, Water, Energy in UK and Water around the world

### Unit 3: Geographical Applications

The Geographical Applications unit is designed to be synoptic in that students will be required to draw together knowledge, understanding and skills from the full course.

- Section A: Issue Evaluation
- Section B: Fieldwork: two geographical enquiries which include collecting primary data
- Section C: Geographical Skills – cartographic skills, graphical skills, literacy and numeracy.



## GCSE HISTORY

“We are the hero of our own story” - Mary McCarthy

We want students to discover that History is a fascinating and incredible journey through different periods and events that have shaped the world as we know it today.



### Paper 1: Understanding the Modern World

#### 1. America, 1840–1895: Expansion and Consolidation:

This period study focuses on the development of America during a turbulent half century of change. It was a period of expansion and consolidation – the expansion to the west and consolidation of the United States as a nation. Students will have the opportunity to look at the Native Americans’ way of life and how their culture differed to that of the Americans. Alongside this we will also study different groups of people that travelled West and the reasons why this was. There will also be an area of study that will focus on the causes of the Civil War and how the USA tried to reconstruct itself in the aftermath of this.

#### 2. Conflict and Tension in Asia, 1950–1975 (Korea and Vietnam):

This unit focuses on the causes and events of the Cold War in Asia and seeks to show how and why conflict occurred and why it proved difficult to resolve the tensions which arose. Korea and Vietnam were proxy wars of the Cold War period which highlighted significant international tensions that existed in this time between the USA, who wanted to contain communism, and the USSR, who were emerging as an equal superpower to the USA.

### How will I be assessed?

In Year 10 students will study *Britain: Health and the People* and *Elizabethan England* (Paper 2). In Year 11 students will then study *America: Expansion and Consolidation* and *Conflict and Tension in Asia* (Paper 1). All students will sit **two exam papers** at the end of Year 11. Both papers are 2 hours long.

### Paper 2: Shaping the Nation

#### 3. Britain: Health and the People: c.1000 to the Present Day:

This topic looks at medicine and public health developed in Britain over a significant period of time. Students will look at the development of medicine from c.1000 and how it ‘progressed’ throughout time to how we know it to be today – albeit slow progress! The primary focus will be on the development of medicine in Britain and this course provides an exciting opportunity to look at how medicine was perceived, the different treatments that used to exist, how people thought illness occurred, the demise and rise of public health and how surgery developed from c.1000 through to the modern day.

#### 4. Elizabethan England, c1568–1603:

This unit will have some familiarity to it, as students will have studied the Tudors and Elizabethan England in year 8. However, this unit goes into Elizabethan England in more depth. Students will explore the challenges which Elizabeth faced in her government and the threats she faced throughout her reign. Students will also look at the development of different areas of life and culture in Elizabethan England, including the creation of Elizabethan theatre and exploration during the Elizabethan era.

# Blue Pathway Specialist Options

## GCSE ART

“Art is not what you see, but what you make others see.” - Edgar Degas



### What will I be doing in GCSE Art?

- Learning and writing about famous artists
- Experimenting with different materials and types of art, such as clay, textiles, paint and sculpture
- Developing skills to make artwork of your choice
- Visiting galleries and museums on a trip to London or Bristol
- Using photography, digital programmes and Adobe Photoshop to make artwork.

### Unit 1: Coursework

You will have a chance to create a portfolio (a range of artwork) that looks at the themes of ‘Under The Sea’ and ‘Identity’. You will make artwork in response to the themes and take your ideas from research and trips, to design final ideas and make your artwork. You will draw in art, but there are also so many other kinds of art that we make. You are encouraged to develop your strengths and work using the materials you enjoy, as well as learning others.

The coursework makes up 60% of the GCSE marks and is therefore a vital part of the course, but this also means that much of your marks are ‘banked’ before you come to the exam, which can be very reassuring for students who do better in class than in exams. Students can expect to spend at least an hour each week outside of school, working towards presenting their portfolio. We offer after school support every week to help students keep up to date with their projects and stay organised.



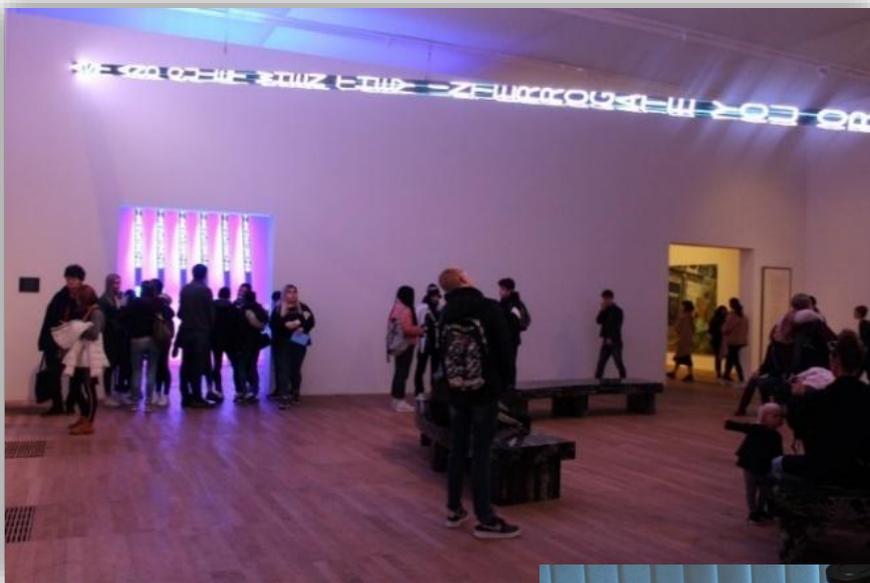
As part of the course, students are expected to respond to cultural influences. This gives us the opportunity to go on an art trip to a city with well-known galleries. Previous KS4 groups have visited London and Bristol, as well as having visits from artists and photographers. Students gather inspiration from all around them, drawing first-hand from observation. Students will also use photography to record their ideas.

## Unit 2: Externally Set Assignment

For the externally set assignment (exam project) students are given 7 themes to choose from. Students respond to their chosen starting point, showing evidence of all four assessment objectives. Students are encouraged to be independent and make their own choices about their projects. We encourage freedom within the projects but offer a clear structure of support too.

The externally set assignment ends with a 10-hour exam over 2 school days where students will create work that showcases their talent and skill. Many students worry about this, but find they feel like extra-long art lessons and that they are very enjoyable too. Everyone finishes their exam feeling so proud of the work they have made. It also helps some students to know that the actual art exam days are worth only 10% of the whole GCSE.

Students will have the opportunity to showcase their artwork in an exhibition at Nova, and their work will be entered for competitions both locally and nationally. You may even get the chance to see your artwork exhibited in galleries. We have had students enter competitions and have their work displayed in an exhibition in Japan.



# GCSE BUSINESS



“The value of an idea lies in the using of it.” — Thomas Edison, co-founder of General Electric

In Business, you will develop the skills necessary to thrive in a variety of business contexts, as well as helping you to understand the economically driven society we live in. A recurring theme throughout the course is entrepreneurship, with a significant part of the course looking to catalyse creativity, innovation and ambition. Students in Business learn about how companies make money, and the variety of factors that impact this. You will learn how to identify a gap in the market, and how a company can try to utilise this gap to create a successful business. It covers important areas such as managerial hierarchy, sources of income, marketing and much more. Business is definitely the course for any student looking to start their own business or make a career in business-oriented roles such as marketing or sales.

## Assessments

The GCSE Business course is taught in a series of units, based around 2 central themes:

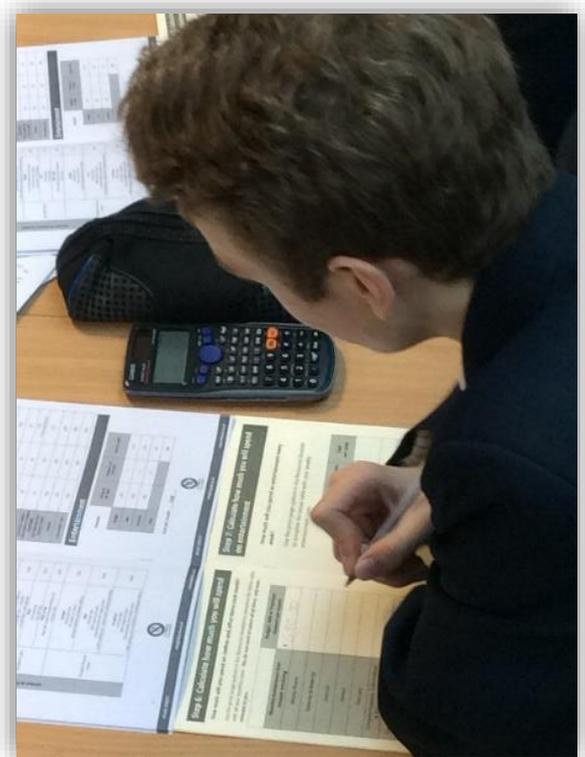
### Theme 1: Investigating Small Business

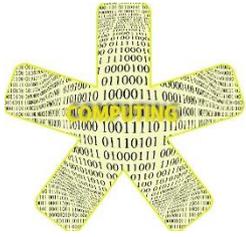
- Topic 1.1 Enterprise and entrepreneurship
- Topic 1.2 Spotting a business opportunity
- Topic 1.3 Putting a business idea into practice
- Topic 1.4 Making the business effective
- Topic 1.5 Understanding external influences on business

### Theme 2: Building a Business

- 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

Assessment in Business takes place through 2 written exam papers, 1 for each of these themes. Each paper is 1 hour 45 minutes long.





## GCSE COMPUTER SCIENCE

“Never before in history has innovation offered promise of so much to so many in so short a time” - *Bill Gates*

In our modern world, understanding computers, and being able to use them is vital. Computer Science is about so much more than this. In Computer Science, students will develop their problem-solving skills whilst obtaining a deep understanding of how computers think and what makes them think that way. They will improve their abilities of decomposition, abstraction and analysis: skills vital to succeed in the real world. Being able to not only understand computers, but program them to do whatever they want will set students up with an exceptional advantage in the real world.

Students will be introduced to the concepts of programming through pseudocode and flowcharts. They will then learn about object-oriented programming and will become fluent in the Python coding language: an industry standard. Supplementary to the practical programming skills, students will also learn all about how a computer system works, covering topics such as hardware and networks. Students will also study SQL Databases and learn how to write commands to control data, a skill used by data analysts around the world.

Computer Science is a challenging and rigorous subject, heavily favoured by colleges, universities and employers alike. A strong mathematical background will set candidates up in good stead, and a strong ability to articulate and express themselves will also be essential. The learning combines a strong base of technical knowledge, mixed in with mathematical skills, computer programming and essay style writing. Students will spend approximately half of their learning time using computers and spend most of this time writing computer code.

With the prominence of technology in so many work sectors, a computer scientist has an almost limitless selection of paths to take. Technology giants such as Microsoft, Apple or Samsung would be obvious employers, but many innovative start-ups require talented programmers and problem solvers for their cutting-edge apps or world changing new hardware. Careers within the social media, gaming or app industry are also possibilities, along with roles in the engineering or financial sectors.

### Assessments

100% Written Assessment – students will complete two written papers for Computer Science. The first 2 hour paper assesses their computational thinking, programming and problem-solving ability. The second 1 hour and 45 minute paper assesses students’ understanding of the computer system, networks, cyber security, SQL databases and the impact of computing in the wider world.

Students spend a significant amount of time learning how to write computer code and this is formally assessed in paper 1, where students will write in a combination of Python code and AQA pseudocode.

# GCSE DRAMA

"All the world's a stage" — William Shakespeare

## What will I be doing in GCSE Drama?

- Performing scripts
- Devising plays
- Studying plays and their contexts
- Writing live theatre reviews
- Theatre trips
- Learning about technical aspects of theatre and design choices
- Building performance skills and confidence
- Learning about a range of drama practitioners and their ideas



Comp 1 Devising Theatre	Performing from a Text 2	Comp 3 Interpreting Theatre
<b>40%</b>	<b>20 %</b>	<b>40%</b>
<p>Creation and performance of a devised piece in response to a stimulus.</p> <p>900 words coursework</p> <p>Evaluation</p> <p>You can be assessed as either an actor or technician ( lighting, sound, costume and set design)</p>	<p>Selection, rehearsal and performance of a section of a scripted performance. This is done to an external examiner.</p> <p>You can be assessed as either an actor or technician (lighting, sound, costume and set design)</p>	<p>Written exam – 1hr and 30mins</p> <p>Section A – Set questions on the text The IT by Vivienne Franzmann 45 marks</p> <p>Section B – Live theatre review essay 15 marks</p>

In GCSE drama , you will build on your existing devising, performance and evaluative skills gained during KS3. You will work independently, in small groups and as a whole class to explore different genres, styles and practitioners of drama. You will regularly share work and ideas and will reflect on performances that you've created. You will complete component 1 before the end of year 10 , completing components 2 and 3 in year 11.



## GCSE Music

“Music can change the world because it can change people.” - Bono, U2

### What will I be doing in Music lessons?

- ✓ Performing as a soloist
- ✓ Performing as part of a group
- ✓ Composing music
- ✓ Appraising music

The course consists of 3 components.

Component 1: Performing (30%), Component 2: Composition (30%),  
Component 3: Appraising (40%)



**Component 1** involves learning two pieces lasting a total of 4 minutes, recorded at two points during Year 11. One piece must be an ensemble lasting at least one minute and one piece must be linked to an Area of Study. You can learn other pieces in order to further your musical skillset before learning your assessed piece. Regular practice on an instrument or voice is expected and students in Years 10 and 11 have priority booking of practice rooms in the lead up to recording days.

In **component 2** you will compose two pieces.

One will be in response to a brief set by the exam board and one will be a free composition from a genre of your choosing. Compositions will be completed using Soundtrap software and/or Musescore. Students will have the chance to develop their composition skills throughout the course.

In **component 3** you will learn about 4 different Areas of Study:

AoS 1 Musical Forms and Devices (including a set work)

AoS 2 Music for Ensemble

AoS 3 Film Music

AoS 4 Popular Music (including a set work)

These will be assessed in a listening paper featuring 8 questions, 2 on each area of study. The two set works that you will study in depth are; Badinerie for Flute, String Orchestra and Harpsichord by J.S.Bach and Africa by Toto

Through studying Music, you can gain a greater understanding of Musical genres and the world of composition and performance. It will also develop your analytical skills through analysing pieces, your literacy skills through writing about music and your team working skills through group performance. It will raise your self-confidence through sharing your performances and compositions with others and help you develop social skills, essential for almost any career. Research shows that if you continue to study music during Key Stage 4, it enhances cognitive abilities, improves focus and strengthens skills in other lessons such as problem solving, memory and analytical thinking. Music helps you become a critical thinker and as your creativity is developed, it becomes easier to think outside the box. This is an essential tool for many other subjects you will be studying.



## GCSE PHOTOGRAPHY

*“Photography is an art of observation. It’s about finding something interesting in an ordinary place...I’ve found it has little to do with the things you see and everything to do with the way you see them.”*

*-Elliott Erwitt*

### What will I be doing in GCSE Photography?

- Learning practical photography skills on DSLRs and phones
- Learning about photo editing through Lightroom, Photoshop, and other platforms
- Visiting galleries and museums
- Exploring, researching, and analysing the works of different artists/photographers/art movements
- 

### Unit 1: Coursework

Using Canva, you will create three projects through the course of your GCSE. Two coursework projects and one Externally Set Assignment (ESA). Surrealism and Life Around Me will be the theme for your year 10 project, then Abstract: Circles, Patterns, and Textures is the theme for project two. For all three projects, you will journey through our four assessment outcomes: Develop, Refine, Record, and Present. You will start by looking through and choosing from a list of photographers who you will then write research and photographic analyses pages for. Then, you will plan your own photoshoots related to your artists, and work towards creating a final piece of work showing your understanding of your artists.

As part of the course, you are expected to respond to cultural influences. This provides the opportunity to go on trips to various places. You will also complete homework photoshoots based on fun themes that will help you build up a library of photos that you can use in your projects. Students will also have access to our school cameras and our photography studio.

The coursework makes up 60% of the GCSE mark and is a vital part of the course, but it also means that before the exam comes many of the marks are ‘banked’ which can be reassuring for some students to know, if they feel they do better in lessons than in exams. You can expect to spend at least an hour each week outside of school, working towards presenting your portfolio and taking photographs to work with in school. This program is coursework heavy, but if you like taking photographs, working on computers, being creative, editing photos, writing and researching, then it is likely that you will enjoy this course!

You do not need to own your own camera for this course, as you can do much of the photography project using your own phone or our school cameras. We also have some amazing equipment, including lighting booths, ring lights, and lots of props in our studio.

### Unit 2: Externally Set Assignment

For the externally set assignment, students are given 7 themes to choose from; students have the freedom to choose their own projects and are supported to create evidence of all four assessment objectives. The process for the ESA is exactly the same process as for your previous two coursework

projects, so by the time you get to January of year 11, the idea is that you will be very close to fully independent in your development and research for your exam project.

The ESA ends with a 10-hour exam over 2 school days, where students will organise their own photoshoots, take photos and then edit them to create final pieces which are then used as evidence of your understanding of your theme and your researched artists. It is a fun and busy 2 days and students are often surprised at how much they enjoyed the exam! The exam is worth roughly 40% of the whole GCSE.

Photography is increasingly popular as a GCSE choice. It encourages the exploration of taking photos as an artistic and creative outlet. Alfred Stieglitz was once asked, "How does a photographer learn?" "By looking," he replied. The best way to learn photography is by taking intentional time to really see, to really look deeply at the world around you.



## GCSE Religion, Philosophy and Ethics (Religious Studies)

"The well-being of mankind, its peace and security are only attainable when its unity is firmly established" - *Bah'u'llah, founder of the Baha'i faith*

Students will follow two areas of study, which will be assessed through two external examinations. Each area of study focuses on a different major world religion: Christianity or Islam.

**Area of Study 1:** Religion and Ethics with the focus on Christianity. This area of study comprises in depth at Christianity as a lived religion within the UK and throughout the world, and its beliefs and teachings on life, specifically within families, and with regard to matters of life and death. Non-religious perspectives such as Atheism and Humanism are also considered in detail in this area of study.

Topics such as abortion and euthanasia have already been introduced in Year 9 as a way of preparing students to develop their critical thinking and to build the foundations for some great habits of discussion!

There are four sections: Christian Beliefs, Marriage and Family, Living the Christian Life and Matters of Life and Death.

This area of study will be assessed through a written external examination which will last 1

hour 45 minutes and will hold 50% of the qualification.

**Area of Study 2:** Religion, Philosophy and Social Justice with the focus on Islam. This area of study looks in depth at Islam as a lived religion within the UK and throughout the world, and its beliefs and teachings on life, specifically about the issues of equality and evil and suffering as well as Muslim approaches to Big Questions such as "Is there a God" and discovering philosophical arguments such as the Design Argument. Atheist and Humanist views are also considered greatly in this unit.

There are four sections: Crime and Punishment, Islamic Beliefs, Philosophy of Religion, Living the Muslim Life and Equality.

This will be assessed through a written external examination which will last 1 hour 45 minutes and will hold 50% of the qualification.





## GCSE TRIPLE SCIENCE: BIOLOGY, CHEMISTRY AND PHYSICS

*"If I have seen further it is by standing on the shoulders of giants." – Isaac Newton*

This course provides an excellent pathway for students considering studying science at A-level and possibly into university, as well as those with a keen interest in the subject. AQA Triple Science results in three separate GCSEs being awarded: one in Biology, one in Chemistry and one in Physics. With more lesson time, content can be covered in greater breadth and depth, with additional topics compared to Combined Science. This gives students a greater understanding of important scientific concepts and discoveries and the people who made them. Those students who study Triple Science will have three science lessons in addition to their five core science lessons. Students taking triple science must be capable of taking the higher tier paper. Therefore the entry criteria is that students must have achieved above 60% in science, 55% in maths and 50% in English for their BiE1 scores.



### What will I learn?

#### Biology Topics

Cell biology, organisation, infection and response, bioenergetics, homeostasis and response, inheritance, ecology and variation and evolution.

#### Chemistry Topics

Atomic structure and the periodic table, bonding, structure, and the properties of matter, quantitative chemistry, chemical changes, energy changes, the rate and extent of chemical change, organic chemistry, chemical analysis, chemistry of the atmosphere and using resources.



### Physics Topics

Energy, electricity, particle model of matter, atomic structure, forces, waves, magnetism and electromagnetism and space physics.

### Practical Work

Throughout the two-year Triple Science course students will carry out a wide variety of practical work, including but not limited to 28 required practical tasks.

### How will I be assessed?

In the summer of year 11 there will be six 1 hour 45-minute examination papers: two Biology, two Chemistry and two Physics. Knowledge and understanding of the required practical tasks will be assessed in the exams. Any student not meeting the requirements for the higher tier paper (grade 5+) will not be eligible to continue on this course. There is no controlled assessment or coursework component to this course.





## OCR CAMBRIDGE NATIONALS CREATIVE iMEDIA

“Data is a precious thing and will last longer than the systems themselves.” – *Tim Berners-Lee*

### Overview

Many modern industries are dominated by the use of technology. Careers such as graphics design, music production and web development rely on computers for their day-to-day work. Creative iMedia is all about equipping students with the skills they need to succeed in careers which utilise computers, as varied and widespread as this is.

In Creative iMedia, students learn how to use key software which underpins entire industries, and apply this to each of the 2 projects they complete. Programs such as Adobe Photoshop, the undisputed leader in photo and graphics editing, will be used by students in both of their projects. They will create a visual identity and an advertisement product, and students will also create digital comics through the use of graphics design software Comic-Life. In addition, students will learn about Creative iMedia in the media industry in their theory module.

### What will I learn about?

- The use of Adobe Photoshop in photo editing and graphic design
- How to create digital comics using Comic Life



- How to develop an interactive multi-media project using Microsoft PowerPoint
- The tools and techniques used to plan projects at a pre-production stage
- How Creative iMedia is used in the media industry

### Assessments

Unlike GCSE options, the Cambridge Nationals Creative iMedia Level 1/2 Award is assessed predominantly through in-classroom coursework projects, heavily reducing the amount of written exams to be taken in May/June. However, students are required to manage their own time and motivate themselves in order to complete two large scale projects. These projects are worth 60% of their grade. The final 40% is obtained through a 90 minute written paper focused on the creative iMedia industry.

To be successful in Creative iMedia you will need to have excellent attendance, and self-motivation.



## EDUQAS AWARD IN HOSPITALITY AND CATERING

“Cooking requires confident guesswork and improvisation -- experimentation and substitution, dealing with failure and uncertainty in a creative way.” - Paul Theroux

### What will I learn?

This course concentrates on the Hospitality and Catering industry. You will develop the knowledge and understanding related to a range of Hospitality and Catering providers: how they operate and what they must consider to be successful. You will have the opportunity to learn about issues related to nutrition and food safety and how they affect successful Hospitality and Catering operations. In this qualification, you will also develop food preparation and cooking skills as well as transferable skills of problem solving, organisation and time management, planning and communication.

### How will I learn?

You will learn about the Hospitality and Catering industry by:

- Undertaking practical work to learn new skills with weekly practical lessons. Therefore, it is essential that you are prepared to bring ingredients once a week.
- Practical competitions (when/where relevant)
- Visiting/Podcast speakers and/or case studies.



### How will I be assessed?

**Unit 1: The Hospitality and Catering Industry** will be externally assessed with an online examination that lasts 90 minutes. You will be graded as follows: Level 1 Pass to Level 2 Distinction\*.

**Unit 2: Hospitality and Catering in Action** is internally assessed: This involves your completing a piece of controlled assessment in school under examination conditions. You will be set a task by EDUQAS and will have to safely plan, prepare, cook and present a range of nutritional dishes.

### What can I do with this qualification?

This qualification will help you develop the essential skills to move into employment, training and further education. You could move onto NVQs or BTEC Hospitality and Catering courses.

Employment in Hospitality and Catering can range from waiting staff, receptionists and catering assistants to chefs, hotel and bar managers and food technologists in food manufacturing. All these roles require further education and training either through apprenticeships or further and higher education. Businesses that provide food, beverages, and/or accommodation services include: restaurants; hotels; pubs and bars. It also includes airlines, tourist attractions, hospitals and sports venues and more.



It's also widely recognised that regular participation in sport and physical activity is highly beneficial both to individuals and to society as a whole. With life expectancy on the increase, there will be continuing focus by government in collaboration with other bodies to promote sport's benefits and encourage wider take up. Cambridge Nationals in Sport offer students the solid foundation required for further study or progression into industry. Students will develop a wide range of highly desirable, transferable skills such as communication, problem solving, team working and performing under pressure.





## GCSE Film Studies

“Where does the light come from? The same place as the music.”

- *Andrew Lesnie, cinematographer for The Lord of The Rings*

### What will I be doing in GCSE Film Studies?

The most important skill you will be practicing in GCSE Film Studies is the same one you will be practicing in GCSE English: how to see what a text is really saying and present your ideas on that text in a formal way. The difference is that in English your texts are novels, plays, poems, articles and speeches; the texts here will be films. Instead of considering the impact of this adjective or that metaphor, you will need to explain what the impact of the costume and props are, why the scene is coloured blue instead of orange, and where that music is actually coming from. While the subject is mainly training you to see how films communicate their meaning, you will also have the opportunity to script, produce and edit your own films: LIGHTS! CAMERA! ACTION!



## Components 1 and 2: Written Exams

### Component 1: Key Developments in US Film

Written examination: 1 hour 30 minutes

35% of qualification

This component assesses knowledge and understanding of **three** US films chosen from a range of options.

Assessment consists of **four** questions on **one** pair of US mainstream films and **one** US independent film:

#### Section A: US film comparative study

- **one** stepped question on the **first** of the chosen pair of films (produced between 1930 and 1960)
- **one** stepped question on the **second** of the chosen pair of films (produced between 1961 and 1990)
- **one** question requiring a comparison of the chosen pair of films

#### Section B: Key developments in film and film technology

- **one** multi-part question on developments in film and film technology

#### Section C: US independent film

- **one** question on one US independent film.

### Component 2: Global Film: Narrative, Representation and Film Style

Written examination: 1 hour 30 minutes

35% of qualification

This component assesses knowledge and understanding of **three** global films produced outside the US chosen from a range of options.

Assessment consists of **three** questions in three sections:

- **Section A:** **one** stepped question on one global English language film
- **Section B:** **one** stepped question on one global non-English language film
- **Section C:** **one** stepped question on one contemporary UK film.

## Component 3: Coursework

### Component 3: Production

Non-exam assessment

30% of qualification

This component assesses the ability to apply knowledge and understanding of film to a production and its accompanying evaluative analysis. Learners produce:

- **one** genre-based film extract (**either** from a film **or** from a screenplay and accompanying shooting script)
- **one** evaluative analysis of the production, where learners analyse and evaluate their production in relation to comparable, professionally-produced films or screenplays.



## GCSE Citizenship

“No one is born a good citizen; no nation is born a democracy. Rather both are processes that continue to evolve over a lifetime.” **Kofi Annan, former General Secretary of the United Nations.**

“One person can make a difference, and everyone should try.” **John Fitzgerald Kennedy, President of the United States of America 1961-1963**

This exciting new course will teach you the skills needed to change the world! The **AQA GCSE Citizenship Studies** course helps students understand how society, politics and the law work in the UK. It explores how citizens participate in democracy and how people can make a difference in their communities. The course combines knowledge about political systems with practical skills such as debating, research, analysis and active participation.

### Knowledge students will learn

Students study key topics about life as a citizen in the UK. These include:

- **Life in Modern Britain** – what are British values, how identities are created, and the role and responsibilities of the media.
- **Rights, responsibilities and the law** – how laws are made, the justice system and the role of courts.
- **Politics and participation** – how Parliament works, elections and the role of political parties; how citizens influence decision-making through campaigns, pressure groups and voting.
- **Citizenship in action** – students plan and carry out an active citizenship project to address a real community issue.

Through these topics, students gain a strong understanding of how democracy functions and how individuals can engage with political and social issues.

### Skills students will develop

The course develops a wide range of transferable skills including:

- Critical thinking and evaluation of political arguments
- Research and investigation skills
- Communication, discussion and debate
- Problem solving and decision making
- Planning and teamwork through active citizenship projects
- Analysing sources and constructing balanced arguments

These skills are valuable for further education and many career paths.

Both papers combine knowledge recall with analysis and evaluation, encouraging students to apply their understanding to real political and social issues.

## Careers linked to Citizenship Studies

The subject can support careers in areas such as:

- Law (solicitor, barrister, legal assistant)
- Politics or government roles
- Journalism and media
- Social work or community development
- Public services (police, civil service)
- Teaching or education policy

It also provides a strong foundation for further study in subjects such as Politics, Sociology, Law or Criminology.

## GCSE assessment structure

Paper	Topic Focus	Marks	Time	Question Types
Paper 1	Active Citizenship & Politics and Participation	80	1 hour 45 minutes	Multiple choice, short answer, source analysis, extended 12-mark questions Students will be examined on their Citizenship action project
Paper 2	Life in Modern Britain & Rights and Responsibilities	80	1 hour 45 minutes	Multiple choice, short answer, source analysis, extended 12-mark questions