



Year 9 GCSE Options Guide

March 2020

Information for Parents:

The options process in year 9 allows students to choose the courses they would like to study further at GCSE level.

At Key Stage 3, we provide students with the opportunity to experience a wide range of subjects to equip them with the knowledge and skills that will allow them to specialise in their chosen option subjects.

This booklet will provide information about the different subject choices and the expectations of the GCSE course. There will be time to cogitate the information before subject choices are made on the form, which is to be returned to the school by **Thursday 14th March**.

Questions for Students:

How should I choose my subjects?

The process is an exciting time for you, as you are given some independence to make informed choices and decisions, with guidance from your parents, carers and teachers. However, there are a couple of considerations that will need to be thought about when making your subject choices:

- Firstly, think about which subjects you enjoy – if you are engaged and invested in a subject, you are likely to achieve well.
- Secondly, think about which subjects will support your potential future plans. You might not be thinking as far ahead as college and further education at this stage, but it is always wise to consider the subjects that may be of benefit.

There is a temptation to choose a subject because your friend has chosen it, because you like the teacher or because you think the subject will be easy. Whilst they may seem like good reasons, students in the past have regretted their decision and

What subjects can I choose?

You will study **English Language, English Literature, Mathematics, Science** (Combined or Triple). In addition to these examined subjects, you will participate in **Core PE** (Physical Education) and **PSHE** (Personal, Social and Health Education) lessons, which are not examined.

You can choose 4 additional subjects, one from each of the option blocks. The subject choices are French, Spanish, History, Geography, Religious Studies, Art, Music, Drama, Design Technology, Food Preparation and Nutrition and Physical Education.

Information and details about each subject follow in the booklet.

Information about EBacc subjects:

The English Baccalaureate is a measure used by some colleges, universities and employers to judge student achievement. To attain the EBacc, students will need to have a GCSE in English Language and English Literature, Mathematics, Science, Geography **or** History and French **or** Spanish. If a student's end of year minimum target grades in year 9 are a 4 or above, we would expect them to choose a Language and either History or Geography in order to fulfil the EBacc requirements.



Name of the subject: GCSE English Language and Literature

ENGLISH LANGUAGE GCSE

PAPER 1: Exploration in Creative Reading and Writing: Examination

1 hour 45mins 50%

Section A: Reading: One literature fiction text

Section B: Writing: descriptive or narrative writing

PAPER 2: Writers' viewpoints and perspectives: Examination

1 hour 45mins 50%

Section A: Reading: one non-fiction text

One literary non-fiction text

Section B: Writing: writing to present a viewpoint

Assessment: Spoken Language: Non-examination

ENGLISH LITERATURE GCSE

PAPER 1: Shakespeare and the C19th novel: Examination

1 hour 45mins 40%

PAPER 2: Modern texts and poetry: Examination

2 hours 15mins 60%

How it is assessed

Two final examinations for each of the GCSEs. There will be one certificate for Speech and Language.

Contact person to talk to for more information

Miss Ling, Mrs Spence, or Mrs Rowe

Other information

Students will study both English Language and Literature (2 GCSEs)



Name of the subject: GCSE French

Summary of course

Students who have studied French at Key Stage 3 are well prepared to do a GCSE course in this language.

They will already know a lot of the vocabulary and grammar needed for GCSE. They know how to talk about themselves, their family and friends, their hobbies, where they live, school, holidays, food and drink. During the GCSE course, we will build on these topics as well as moving on to new topics.

Emphasis is placed on learners developing knowledge and understanding of the language and grammar so that they can use the 'Target Language' independently across a range of topic areas and in different contexts.

This GCSE course should offer a smooth and logical progression to A Level courses, should the student choose to do so. It should also inspire students who do not intend to study languages any further but wish to visit the countries where the language is spoken.

How it is assessed

The exam will consist of four externally examined papers based on the following skills: Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing

These exams will take place in the summer term of Year 11. The Speaking assessment will be in April/May 2022 and the other examinations will take place in May/June 2022.

25% of marks are allocated to each of the four skills (Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing).

Main themes covered in the course

- Identity and Culture
- Local area, holiday and travel
- School
- Future aspirations, study and work
- International and global dimension

Students will need to develop and use their knowledge and understanding of French grammar progressively over the two year GCSE course.

Other information

- People with language skills and knowledge are highly thought of in the modern world and a GCSE in French may put you in a stronger position in the job market and when applying for a university place.
- We use Edexcel examination board and resources, including student textbooks to help prepare for the exam.

Contact person to talk to for more information

Ms Vermorel or Mrs Spears



Name of the subject: GCSE Spanish

Summary of course

Students who have studied Spanish at Key Stage 3 are well prepared to do a GCSE course in this language.

They will already know a lot of the vocabulary and grammar needed for GCSE. They know how to talk about themselves, their family and friends, their hobbies, where they live, school, holidays, food and drink. During the GCSE course, we will build on these topics as well as moving on to new topics.

Emphasis is placed on learners developing knowledge and understanding of the language and grammar so that they can use the 'Target Language' independently across a range of topic areas and in different contexts.

This GCSE course should offer a smooth and logical progression to A Level courses, should the student choose to do so. It should also inspire students who do not intend to study languages any further but wish to visit the countries where the language is spoken.

How it is assessed

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25% of marks are allocated to each of the four skills (Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing).

Main themes covered in the course

- Identity and Culture
- Local area, holiday and travel
- School
- Future aspirations, study and work
- International and global dimension

Students will need to develop and use their knowledge and understanding of Spanish grammar progressively over the two year GCSE course.

Other information

- People with language skills and knowledge are highly thought of in the modern world and a GCSE in Spanish may put you in a stronger position in the job market and when applying for a university place.
- We use Edexcel examination board and resources, including student textbooks to help prepare for the exam.

Contact person to talk to for more information

Ms Vermorel or Mrs Spears



Name of the subject: GCSE History

Aims of the subject at GCSE

This course gives students opportunities to:

- acquire knowledge and understanding of selected periods and aspects of history
- explore the significance of historical events, people, changes and issues
- use historical sources critically in their context, recording significant information and reaching conclusions
- develop understanding of how the past has been represented and interpreted
- organise and communicate their knowledge and understanding of history
- draw conclusions and appreciate that historical judgements are liable to reassessment in the light of new or reinterpreted evidence.

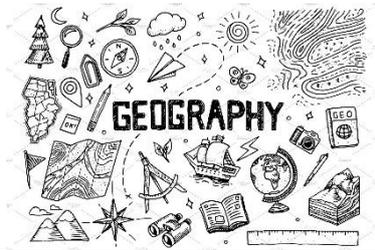
Main themes covered in the course:

The topics you will study over the 2 year course are:

- A period study: Superpower Relations and the Cold war 1941 – 1991
- A British depth study: Anglo-Saxon and Norman England c1060-1088
- A Thematic study: Medicine in Britain 1250- present day
- A historic environment: The British sector of the Western Front, 1914-1918: injuries treatment and trenches
- A modern depth study: the USA at Home and Abroad: 1954 - 1975 (Civil Rights and the Vietnam War)

How it is assessed: There are 3 examination papers of between 1hour 15 minutes and 1hour 45 minutes. Homework will be set on a weekly basis. It will usually be comprised of practice exam questions.

Contact person to talk to for more information: Ms Moss



Name of the subject: GCSE Geography

Summary of course

The GCSE Geography course follows the WJEC Eduqas 'B' Specification which combines the best traditional geography with the modern themes and issues that affect the world we live in today.

The exams are geared towards understanding the underlying issues and applying knowledge learned about one place to different locations and across the globe rather than focusing on a detailed knowledge of one particular place.

In Years 10 and 11 you will study the three themes outlined below and will also be preparing for the decision-making paper which will ask you to review some unfamiliar source material, respond to questions relating to it and finally come to some reasoned decisions.

During the course you will also have two opportunities to conduct fieldwork in both physical and human locations. You will then use the techniques learned during these opportunities to answer questions in the 'applied fieldwork' exam paper.

Main themes covered in the course

A variety of topics are taught within each theme:

Changing Places – Changing Economies covers expansion and development in global cities as well as the problems this can cause in both rich and poor countries. Processes of change are studied along with potential solutions. Those studying the course will be asked to decide what should be done and why.

Changing Environments focuses on the world's physical geography and covers river and coastal processes, why these landscapes look the way that they do and how they should be managed in the future. Weather and climate is the third aspect of this theme and will include assessing the impacts of climate change using data from Stradbroke's very own weather station!

Environmental Challenges looks at different ecosystems with particular focus on deserts and African grasslands. Issues surrounding human uses of water resources as well as the impact that misuse and poor management of these can have on different environments.

How it is assessed

3 Examinations:

40% Geographical Issues Paper (1 hour 45 minutes)

30% Decision-Making Paper (1 hour 30 minutes)

30% Applied Fieldwork Enquiry Paper (1 hour 30 minutes)

Contact person to talk to for more information: Mr Thomas

Other information

If you are motivated, like thinking independently and reflecting on the world around you then, will succeed and gain a highly regarded Geography GCSE.



Name of the subject: GCSE AQA Design and Technology

Combining: Graphics, Resistant Materials and other material areas

Summary of course

The new course aims to prepare students to participate confidently and successfully in an increasingly technological world. Students will understand the wider influences on Design and Technology including historical, social, cultural, environmental and economic factors. Students will get the opportunity to work creatively when designing and making and apply technical and practical expertise.

Students considering Design and Technology should have: Good personal management skills, a positive attitude towards solving problems and enjoy thinking creatively.

Along the way students will learn and apply the basic knowledge of all these core materials:

Papers and boards | Timber based materials | Metal based materials | Polymers |
Textile based materials | Electronic and mechanical systems.

Whilst at the same time specialising in one from this list:

Paper and Board | Timber materials | Metal materials | Textiles materials

How it is assessed: At the end of this linear course, students will:

- Submit a Non-Exam Assessment (NEA) – A practical piece with accompanying 20 page A3 folder based on a contextual challenge of 30 -35 hours – 50% *NEA contextual challenges to be released annually by AQA on 1 June in the year prior to the submission of the NEA (i.e. at the end of year 10)*
- Complete a 2 hour written exam – 50%

EXAM Questions will be structured as follows:

Section A – Core technical principles (20 marks) A mixture of multiple choice and short answer questions assessing a breadth of technical knowledge and understanding.

Section B – Specialist technical principles (30 marks) Several short answer questions (2–5 marks) and one extended response to assess a more in depth knowledge of technical principles.

Section C – Designing and making principles (50 marks) A mixture of short answers and extended response questions.

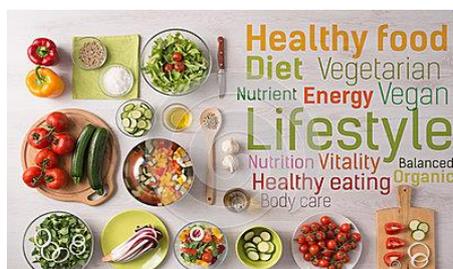
Contact person to talk to for more information: Mr Meeson

Other information: GCSE Design and technology is a highly creative subject harnessing problem solving skills and a general can-do attitude. It leads onto a number of valuable paths/professions:

Continue with Technical and Applied (vocational qualifications) such as: Building, Computing/IT, Construction, Design, Engineering, Fashion, Manufacturing, Textiles etc.

Continue with Apprenticeships (*earn as you learn*) such as: Building, CAD, Construction, Engineering, Fashion and Textiles, Graphic Design, ICT, Manufacturing, planning etc.

Continue with A level Design and technology – with: Engineering, Fashion and Textiles, Product Design.



Name of the subject: GCSE Food Preparation and Nutrition

Summary of course

This exciting brand new course offers a GCSE in Food Preparation and Nutrition. It will equip learners with the knowledge, understanding and skills required to cook and apply the principles of food science, food provenance, ethics and safety, nutrition and healthy eating. Following this qualification will encourage students to cook and make informed discussions about a wide range of further learning opportunities and career pathways, as well as develop life skills that enable learners to feed themselves and others affordably, now and in later life.

Main themes covered in the course

Students will be encouraged to:

- Demonstrate effective and safe cooking skills by planning, preparing and cooking using a variety of food commodities, cooking techniques and equipment.
- Develop knowledge and understanding of the functional properties and chemical processes as well as nutritional content of food and drinks
- Understanding the relationship between diet, nutrition and health, including the physiological and psychological effects of poor diet and health
- Understand the economic, environmental, ethical and socio-cultural influences on food availability, production processes and diet, and health choices
- Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of functional and nutritional properties, sensory qualities and micro-biological food safety considerations when preparing, processing, storing, cooking and serving food.
- Understand and explore a range of ingredients and processes from different culinary traditions (traditional British and international), to inspire or modify existing recipes

How it is Assessed

All assessment will take place during Year 11.

September – December – Food Investigation task = 45 marks

Non-examined assessment (A report of 1500 words will be produced) = 15% of total GCSE

December – March – Food Preparation task = 105 marks

Non-examined assessment (12 hours including 3 hours practical assessment plus report of 2000 words will be produced) = 35% of total GCSE

May –June - Final written examination = 100 marks

Exam is for 1 hour and 30 minutes = 50% of total GCSE

Contact person to talk to for more information: Mrs Gladwell

Other information

Students will enjoy this course if they enjoy hands on learning, experimenting and understanding how food scientifically works. They need to be organised in both cooking and getting theory work done within a set time scale. There will be a lot of cooking involved; consequently a weekly/fortnightly purchase of ingredients is essential. Students will also need to get through a lot of theory throughout the course and during their non-examined assessment.



Name of the subject: GCSE Music

Summary of course

The practical work comprises of a series of integrated tasks and a practical portfolio. Students have to perform a solo and an ensemble piece, as well as composing their own music. Areas of study are examined by a listening and appraising exam at the end of the course.

Main themes covered in the course

A variety of differing styles and genres are explored over the two years including a special focus on the concerto through time, rhythms of the world, film music and the conventions of pop.

How it is assessed

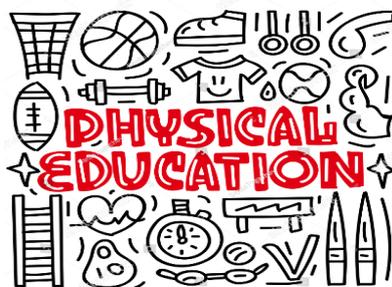
60% - Controlled assessment (Performance and Composition work)
40% - Written exam (listening and appraising)

Contact person to talk to for more information

Mr Williams

Other information

Students should be of a good standard on an instrument of their choice (ideally grade 2 or above).



Name of the subject: GCSE Physical Education

Summary of course

GCSE PE gives students a well-rounded and full introduction to the world of PE, Sport and Sport Science by developing an understanding of how the mind and body work in relation to performance in physical activity.

Main themes covered in the course

This course will enable students to develop theoretical knowledge and understanding of the factors that underpin physical activity and sport and use this knowledge and understanding to improve performance. They will understand how the physiological and psychological state affects performance in physical activity and sport. They will perform in different physical activities, developing skills and techniques and develop their ability to analyse and evaluate to improve their performance. They will gain an understanding of how physical activity can contribute to healthy, active lifestyle. They will also learn about the key socio-cultural influences that can affect people's involvement in physical activity and sport.

How it is assessed

- **Component 1:** Fitness and Body Systems:
 - Written examination: 1 hour and 45 minutes **36% = 90 marks**

- **Component 2:** Health and Performance:
 - Written examination: 1 hour and 15 minutes **24% = 70 marks**

- **Component 3:** Practical Performance
 - Three Non-examined assessment: internally marked **30% = 35 marks per activity**

- **Component 4:** Personal Exercise Programme (PEP)
 - Non- examined assessment: internally marked **10% = 20 marks**

Contact person to talk to for more information: Ms Beale and Mr Taylor

Other information

- Students will be required to purchase an additional polo shirt; this will help parents to cope with the additional demands for clean kit, and to distinguish them from non GCSE students for the benefit of the examiner. These polo shirts should be purchased from Birds website – www.schoolwear-uk.com
- GCSE PE must not be taken as an easy option; it is not just extra lessons playing games. It is an opportunity to develop student's knowledge and understanding of sport and exercise, leading to lifelong participation and possibly a career in the sports industry.
- The PE department expect that all students bring kit and participate in all activities. Homework and flipped learning will be set on a regular basis and students will undertake end of unit tests
- Students can continue with this subject at A Level or BTEC Level 3. Possible university courses include Sports Science, Physiotherapy, Sports Development, Sports Coaching and careers include teaching, physiotherapy, sports development, nutrition, and coaching and leisure management.

Year 9 Curriculum Choices for Year 10 and 11

Name _____

Tutor Group _____

The following subjects are compulsory and followed by all students:

- English (Language and Literature)
- Maths
- Science (either Triple or Combined)
- PE (core)
- PSHE

Please tick **one** subject from each option block below.

If your target grades are mostly 4 or above, we expect you to select **one language** and **either Geography or History**.

Option Block A		Option Block B		Option Block C		Option Block D	
Spanish		History		Art		French	
Design and Technology		Physical Education		History		Drama	
Music		Design and Technology		Geography		Food and Nutrition	
Religious Studies		Asdan*					
Enhanced Learning*							

* This choice can only be made following a discussion with Mrs Jones

Please return your completed sheet to your tutor by **Thursday 12th March** at the latest.

Student signature: _____

Parent/Carer signature: _____