



St Benedict's Catholic School

*Developing Wisdom, Compassion and Resilience
through Prayer and Work*



GCSE Options

January 2025

Your guide to choosing your
GCSEs at St Benedict's.

Contents

Contents

Contents	1
Letter from Mr Tatum, Deputy Headteacher	2
Option Columns.....	4
Key Dates & Locations	4
Contact Details for Key Staff	5
GCSE English Language.....	6
GCSE English Literature	7
GCSE Mathematics.....	8
GCSE Combined Science &.....	12
Biology, Chemistry and Physics	12
GCSE Religious Education.....	14
GCSE Art & Design: Fine Art.....	16
GCSE Business Studies.....	18
GCSE Computer Science.....	20
GCSE Classical Civilisation.....	22
GCSE Food Nutrition	24
GCSE French and Spanish.....	26
GCSE Geography	28
GCSE History	30
GCSE Music	32
GCSE Physical Education	34
GCSE Product Design.....	36
GCSE Art & Design: Textiles	38

Letter from Mr Tatum, Deputy Headteacher

January 2025

Dear Parents/Carers and Year 9 Students,

Welcome to the Year 9 Options Evening 2025 here at St. Benedict's. This evening marks the beginning of your first real opportunity for you students to forge an education that is unique to you and the path you wish to tread as you make your way towards adulthood. The process of making your choices can be difficult and you should take time to settle into your decisions, balancing any competing factors, before submitting your final choices. This evening, this booklet and your upcoming Year 9 Parents Evening are all intended to provide you with useful information, not only on the content of each of the courses we have on offer but also how you, students, will likely get on in each particular subject. We hope that you find this information useful and it allows you to make informed decisions when selecting your options for Year 10.

As a year group, you have worked hard during the first two and a half years of being at St Benedict's. This will place you in a good position as you enter Key Stage 4 and will provide you with a solid foundation of knowledge and skill that you will be able to build upon as you start Year 10. Be under no illusions, studying subjects at Key Stage 4 is demanding and you will be required by your teachers to work continually, improving your ability in each subject as you progress towards your exams at the end of Year 11.

Although each of you will make their own choices, the curriculum you study here at St Benedict's is built to develop within you the school's Gospel values of Compassion, Wisdom and Resilience, and teachers are focused on developing each of these in all of your lessons. The subjects you choose will allow you to show what you know, what you understand and what you can do, with the intention of fulfilling the potential God has given each of you. There is a long tradition of success and service here at St. Benedict's and you, Year 9, will be following in the footsteps of talented individuals who have gone on to achieve remarkable feats in their adult lives serving others as a result. You are all full of potential and brimming with talent and we expect you will show the dedication and hard work required over the next two years to turn that potential into reality.

Parents, much has changed nationally over the last decade and therefore I hope this booklet is helpful for you to understand those changes. In 2017 the government began reforming the content and assessment style for the GCSEs schools can offer. In many subjects the result of this has been an increase in the volume of material students must learn and master as well as the removal of coursework elements of assessment. As a consequence, students are expected to take fewer qualifications, around 9, but will be able to study each subject at a deeper level than in the past. The grading for GCSEs is numeric with grades ranging from 9-1, with 9 being the best and 4 considered a pass.

At St. Benedict's all students study the core subjects of Religious Education, Mathematics, English Language, English Literature, Separate or Combined Science, PE (non-exam) and PSHE/Citizenship in Years 10 and 11. The three options choices you study sit alongside the core subjects to make up your tailored curriculum. For the majority of students, the English Baccalaureate will be important: this is the Government's recognition of pupils who achieve top grades in English, Mathematics, two Sciences, a Language, and either History or Geography. Increasingly, Sixth Forms, employers, Universities, Colleges and apprenticeships are requiring students to have a broad range of academic qualifications at GCSE and although for many students there is a temptation to begin specialising in a particular area of the curriculum, the aim of this options process is to finish building the foundational knowledge you will possess as adults.

The following pages outline the subjects on offer and what each course entails. There is much to find out about before making your choices and you should ask questions not only about what the course covers and what careers the subject supports but also, how students will be assessed over the two years and what resources are available to support each student with their learning. Wherever possible students should choose subjects that they enjoy, and subjects in which they can find success. Your teachers and your academic reports from Christmas, will help provide you with some of the information to help you with this. Students, if you have a particular career in mind after you leave school, you must choose the subjects

that will help you turn this into reality. Consider how each course is assessed and whether this plays to your strengths. However, you must be aware that it may not be possible to offer some combinations on the timetable: there are limits to the number of rooms and teachers available at any one time.

Above all, partnership between students, parents and teachers will be the key factor in future successes. We will expect students to work hard. There will be times when you find the work difficult but always remember that your teachers are there to help and guide you. Listen to their advice. By working together, you will achieve the success that we all want for you.

Finally, remember that Key Stage 4 is not the final obstacle to be negotiated. At St. Benedict's we believe that all our students will benefit from further study and our Sixth Form is where our students achieve best after their GCSEs. We have a huge range of courses to cater for all abilities and these GCSEs will, I hope, be the start of your next 4 years at St. Benedict's.

I wish you, students, every success in your studies.

Mr Tatum

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Mr Tatum', with a stylized, flowing script.

Deputy Headteacher
St. Benedict's Catholic School

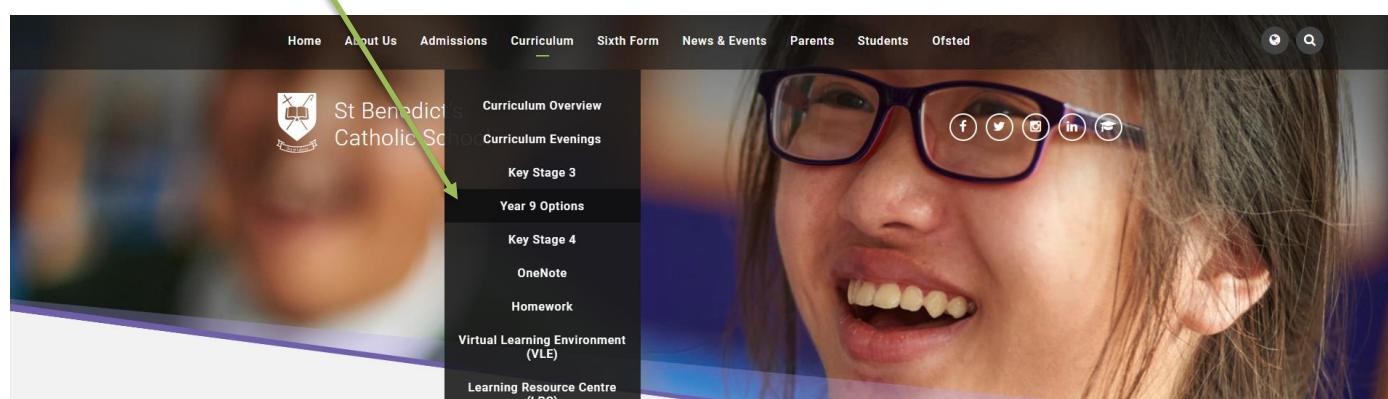
Option Columns

All students are required to make 3 guided choices and should select one subject from each of the columns below. All students are expected to select a Humanity GCSE and those students that currently study both French and Spanish are expected to select a Language GCSE.

Option Column A	Option Column B	Option Column C
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> History Geography French Art Business Studies D&T: Food Nutrition D&T: Product Design Physical Education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> History Geography French Spanish Classical Civilisation D&T: Product Design D&T: Textiles Physical Education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> History Geography Spanish Art Business Studies Computer Science Music

*Invite only.

Parents and carers can submit the option choices for their son/daughters using the school website. The link to the options form can be found on the Year 9 Options page in the curriculum section.



Key Dates & Locations

- Year 9 Parents Evening Tuesday 11th February 2025
- Options submitted online by Friday 28th March 2025
- School letters confirming option choices Monday 2nd June 2025
- Deadline for subject moves Friday 19th September 2025

Subject Presentation – Rooming List

History	K6	Business Studies	D3
Geography	K5	Classical Civilisation	H1
French & Spanish	E5	D&T: Product Design	E7
Computer Science	F1	Music	G1
Art & Textiles	D7	Physical Education	E2

Contact Details for Key Staff

Name	Role	E-Mail Address
Mr S Tatum	Deputy Headteacher responsible for Curriculum	statum@st-benedicts.suffolk.sch.uk
Mrs Cornforth	Senior Progress Leader of Year 9	mcornforth@st-benedicts.suffolk.sch.uk
Mrs C Chacksfield	Head of Art & Design	cchacksfield@st-benedicts.suffolk.sch.uk
Mrs V Kennedy	Head of Business & Economics	vkennedy@st-benedicts.suffolk.sch.uk
Mr Foreman	Head of Computing	mforeman@st-benedicts.suffolk.sch.uk
Mrs H Oakes	Head of English	hoakes@st-benedicts.suffolk.sch.uk
Mr J Sayer	Head of Geography	jsayer@st-benedicts.suffolk.sch.uk
Mr K Murphy	Head of Humanities	kmurphy@st-benedicts.suffolk.sch.uk
Mr H Jogee	Head of Mathematics	hjogee@st-benedicts.suffolk.sch.uk
Mrs M Dalby	Head of Modern Foreign Languages	mdalby@st-benedicts.suffolk.sch.uk
Mrs T Roughley	Head of Performing Arts	troughley@st-benedicts.suffolk.sch.uk
Mrs S Wright	Head of P.E.	swright@st-benedicts.suffolk.sch.uk
Mrs T Kellett	Product Design Teacher	tkellett@st-benedicts.suffolk.sch.uk
Mr D Wallace	Head of Religious Education	dwallace@st-benedicts.suffolk.sch.uk
Mr W Stafford	Head of Science	wstafford@st-benedicts.suffolk.sch.uk
Mrs K Ashcroft	Textiles Teacher	kashcroft@st-benedicts.suffolk.sch.uk



GCSE English Language

Exam Board: AQA 8700

Course Content:

Students will develop the skills they need to read, understand and analyse a wide range of different texts covering the 19th, 20th and 21st century time periods. The specification offers a skills-based approach to the study of English Language in an un-tiered context. Questions are designed to take students on an assessment journey through lower tariff tasks to more extended responses. They will develop their ability to write clearly, coherently and accurately using a range of vocabulary and sentence structures. The reading sources act as stimuli for writing tasks, providing a clear route through each paper. Students will also undertake a spoken language assessment (previously speaking and listening) which will emphasise the importance of the wider benefits that speaking and listening skills have for students.

Assessment

Paper	Content	Length	Weighting
1	Explorations in Creative Reading and Writing	1 hour 45	50%
2	Writers' Viewpoints and Perspectives	1 hour 45	50%
NEA	Spoken Language Endorsement	10 mins	0%

Teaching and Learning

Students will explore a range of texts from a variety of sources and develop their ability to analyse and engage with these texts. Paper 1 requires them to read an extract from literary fiction, analyse it and then write their own creative text, inspired by the extract, demonstrating descriptive and/or narrative skills. Lessons will reflect this with skills for Language being developed during Literature lessons. Students will engage in a wide range of activities to foster independent thought and critical approaches to analysis. Paper 2 requires analysis of two linked non-fiction sources from different time periods and genres in order to consider how each presents a perspective or viewpoint to influence the reader. They will then use these to inform their own piece of writing which will be in a specific form, for a specific audience and purpose. They will have the opportunity in lesson to explore relevant texts in a variety of ways using a range of media. They will then use these to inform their own writing.

The focus of the non-examinable spoken language component is presentation and listening skills. Students will carry out research projects at home and then use these to deliver a presentation and respond to questions in class. They will be building on skills they began developing in Year 9 and will be using the critical thinking they need for their analysis in the written papers.

What can I do with GCSE English Language?

English is seen as one of the key areas of the curriculum by employers, colleges and universities. It also develops your ability to express yourself effectively and enables full access to the world.



GCSE English Literature

Exam Board: AQA: 8702

Course Content:

- Shakespeare: *Macbeth*
- 19th Century novel: *A Christmas Carol* by Charles Dickens (studied in Year 9)
- Modern text: *An Inspector Calls* by J B Priestley
- Poetry: 'Worlds and Lives', a cluster of poems that are thematically linked and were written between 1789 and the present day

Reading comprehension and reading critically

- **literal and inferential comprehension:** understanding language in context; exploring aspects of plot, characterisation, events and settings; distinguishing between what is stated explicitly and what is implied; explaining motivation, sequence of events, and the relationship between actions or events
- **critical reading:** identifying the theme and distinguishing between themes; supporting a point of view by referring to evidence in the text; recognising the possibility of and evaluating different responses to a text; using understanding of writers' social, historical and cultural contexts to inform evaluation; making an informed personal response that derives from analysis and evaluation
- **evaluation of a writer's choice of vocabulary, grammatical and structural features:** analysing and evaluating how language, structure, form and presentation contribute to quality and impact; using terminology
- **comparing texts:** comparing and contrasting poems studied, referring where relevant to theme, characterisation, context (where known), style and literary quality; comparing two texts critically with respect to the above

Writing

- *producing clear and coherent text: writing effectively about literature for a range of purposes such as: to describe, explain, summarise, argue, analyse and evaluate; discussing and maintaining a point of view; selecting and emphasising key points; using relevant quotes and detailed textual references*

Assessment

Paper	Content	Length	Weighting
1	Shakespeare and the 19 th -Century novel	1 hour 45	40%
2	Modern texts and poetry	2 hours 15	60%

Teaching and Learning

Lessons will consist of a range of activities including class reading, performing, presenting analysing and annotating. Students will also watch and discuss adaptations of texts and where possible, will have the opportunity to watch live performances.

What can I do with GCSE Literature?

An English Literature GCSE demonstrates a critical and analytical mind so opens many doors for future studies.

GCSE Mathematics

Exam Board: Edexcel 1MA1

Course Content:

Number:

Structure and Calculations

- Properties of number such as factors, multiples, prime numbers, square numbers.
- Numeracy. Using the four operations, indices working with brackets (BIDMAS).
- Standard form.

Fractions, Decimals and percentages

- Converting between fractions, decimals and percentages.
- Percentage increase and decrease.

Measures and accuracy

- Rounding answers to a given degree of accuracy and estimating answers to check accuracy of calculations.
- Using units of measure for length, mass, time, money and other measures.
- Upper and Lower bounds for limits of accuracy.

Algebra:

Notation, Vocabulary and Manipulation

- Working with expressions (collect like terms, expanding brackets, factorising).
- Substitution into algebraic expressions and formulae.
- Solving equations and inequalities (linear and quadratic).

Graphs

- Working with co-ordinates
- Straight line graphs ($y = mx + c$). Working with the gradient to find parallel and perpendicular lines.
- Graphs of quadratic functions (roots and turning point from completing the square).
- Reciprocal graphs and real life graphs.
- Graphs of trigonometric functions. □ Transformations of graphs.

Sequences

- Generate terms of a sequence and identify the n th term for both linear and quadratic sequences.
- Recognise and work with Arithmetic and simple geometric progressions.

Ratio, Proportion & Rates of Change:

- Using ratio in real life context, simplifying ratios and relating them to fractions.
- Solve problems involving direct and inverse proportion.
- Compound units of measure such as speed, density, pressure and others.
- Compound Interest calculations. □ Exponential growth and decay.

Geometry and Measures:

Properties and Constructions

- Use a ruler and compass to perform standard constructions of triangles and loci.
- Angle properties (angles on a line, about a point and for parallel lines).
- Congruent triangles (SSS, SAS, ASA, RHS).
- Properties of polygons including transformations (enlargement, translation, reflection and rotation).
- Plans and elevations of 3D solids. □ Circle theorems.

Mensuration and Calculation

- Use standard units of measure for length, area and volume.
- Use circle formulae (circumference and area).
- Pythagoras's Theorem ($a^2 + b^2 = c^2$)
- Using trigonometry to find missing lengths and angles (SOHCAHTOA)

Vectors

- Addition & subtraction of vectors; multiply vectors by a scalar & represent them diagrammatically.
- Use vectors to construct arguments and proof.

Probability:

- Use appropriate language. Know that the total probability of all possible outcomes is 1 and use a probability scale.
- Use and draw Venn Diagrams (including set notation), Probability trees and two way tables. Link these to conditional probability.
- Calculate the probability of combined independent & dependent events.
- Risk (probability used in real life contexts).
- Listing outcomes systematically and use a sample space diagram for two combined events.

Statistics:

- Sampling techniques and types of data (discrete and continuous).
- Interpret and construct statistical tables, charts & diagrams (pie charts, bar charts, pictograms, times series).
- Measures of central tendency (mean, median, mode and modal class) and measures of spread (range, quartiles, inter-quartile range & also consider outliers).
 - Use and interpret scatter graphs (causations, interpolation, extrapolation and drawing lines of best fit).

Assessment Objectives

Assessment Objectives		Weighting	
		Higher	Foundation
AO1	Use and apply standard techniques Students should be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• accurately recall facts, terminology and definitions• use and interpret notation correctly• accurately carry out routine procedures or set tasks requiring multi-step solutions	40%	50%

AO2	<p>Reason, interpret and communicate mathematically Students should be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • make deductions, inferences and draw conclusions from mathematical information • construct chains of reasoning to achieve a given result • interpret and communicate information accurately • present arguments and proofs • assess the validity of an argument and critically evaluate a given way of presenting information <p>Where problems require candidates to 'use and apply standard techniques' or to independently 'solve problems' a proportion of those marks should be attributed to the corresponding Assessment Objective</p>	30%	25%
AO3	<p>Solve problems within mathematics and in other contexts Students should be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • translate problems in mathematical or nonmathematical contexts into a process or a series of mathematical processes • make and use connections between different parts of mathematics • interpret results in the context of the given problem • evaluate methods used and results obtained • evaluate solutions to identify how they may have been affected by assumptions made <p>Where problems require candidates to 'use and apply standard techniques' or to 'reason, interpret and communicate mathematically' a proportion of those marks should be attributed to the corresponding Assessment Objective</p>	30%	25%

Assessment

Paper	Content	Length	Weighting
1	All 6 areas are tested (Number, Algebra, Ratio, proportion and rates of change, Geometry and measures, Probability, Statistics. No calculator allowed (80 marks)	1 hour 30	33.3%
2	All 6 areas are tested (Number, Algebra, Ratio, proportion and rates of change, Geometry and measures, Probability, Statistics. Calculator allowed (80 marks)	1 hour 30	33.3%
3	All 6 areas are tested (Number, Algebra, Ratio, proportion and rates of change, Geometry and measures, Probability, Statistics. Calculator allowed (80 marks)	1 hour 30	33.3%

Teaching and Learning

Pupils are taught using a variety of teaching styles. Problem solving is one of the key aspects of teaching where pupils learn to develop strategies required to solve a given problem. This also allows them the opportunity to reflect on their findings and deepen their understanding of the structure of the mathematics. Collaborative learning is encouraged in class with group work and discussions. Technology, such as graphing software, is incorporated in teaching to help pupils by giving a visual representation of algebraic problems. Students can use a calculator for two out of the three papers and we use them in class regularly in order to develop the most efficient strategies to allow the technology to support the thinking. Mathematics has very much to do with finding patterns and this is developed particularly in lessons by doing investigations.

What can I do with GCSE Mathematics?

Studying GCSE Maths provides a strong foundation for further academic and vocational study and for employment, to give students the appropriate mathematical skills, knowledge and understanding to help them progress to a full range of courses in further and higher education. This includes Level 3 mathematics courses as well as Level 3 and undergraduate courses in other disciplines such as Biology, Geography and Psychology, where the understanding and application of mathematics is crucial. It is also crucial in helping pupils to become more financially aware in an ever demanding society. With a very difficult financial climate Maths is the key skill that should see students develop the skills and money sense to keep them financially safe in their adult years.

What's the best thing about Mathematics?

Mathematics helps us make sense of the universe around us. It describes the underlying structure of both the manmade and natural world. Maths allows us to both understand and predict. It is truly both the Queen and servant of subjects.

GCSE Combined Science & Biology, Chemistry and Physics

GCSE Science provides students with a broad and detailed foundation in each of the 3 Science subjects. From Year 10, students will either follow the Combined Science course, resulting in 2 Science GCSEs, or the Separate Sciences (Biology, Chemistry and Physics) resulting in a GCSE in each subject. In the Summer term of Year 9, students will sit an internal exam, which will help us to determine which course we feel is most suitable to follow from Year 10. A final decision will be made on exam entry at the end of Year 10 allowing further opportunity for students to develop their scientific skills.

Exam Board: Comb Sci OCT A J250, Bio J247, Chem J248, Phy J249

Course Content:

Biology

- B1 – Cell Structures: Cell composition, enzymes, respiration and photosynthesis.
- B2 – Scaling Up: Cell division, diffusion, osmosis and transport systems in animals and plants.
- B3 – Coordination and Control: The nervous system, endocrine system and homeostasis.
- B4 – Ecosystems: Carbon cycle, Predator-Prey and Trophic levels.
- B5 – Genes, inheritance and selection: DNA and genetic crosses, inheritance of characteristics, natural selection and evolution.
- B6 – Global Challenges: Biodiversity, global warming, GMOs, disease and the immune system.

Chemistry

- C1 – Particles: Atomic and particle models.
- C2 – Elements, compounds and mixtures: Separation techniques, periodic table, ionic and covalent bonding, properties of materials.
- C3 – Chemical reactions: Symbol and ionic equations, mole equations, energy changes in reactions, types of chemical reaction, electrolysis.
- C4 – Predicting and identifying chemical reactions: Groups 1, 7 and 0 of the periodic table, order of reactivity.
- C5 – Monitoring and controlling chemical reactions: Changing rate of reaction, equilibria.
- C6 – Global challenges: Extraction of metals, recycling, crude oil and hydrocarbons, the atmosphere.

Physics (For combined science, P3-4 & P5-6 units are merged)

- P1 – Particle Model: Atomic Structure, density, changes of state, pressure.
- P2 – Forces: Speed, acceleration, Newton's laws, potential energy.
- P3 – Electricity: Statics, circuits, power.
- P4 – Magnetism: Magnetic fields, generators, motors, transformers
- P5 – Waves: Transverse and longitudinal waves, EM spectrum, reflection, refraction and diffraction.
- P6 – Radioactivity: Radioactive decay, half-life, uses of radiation, fission and fusion.
- P7 – Energy: Work, energy transfer and efficiency.
- P8 – Global challenges: Powering the earth, sun and stars, solar system.

Assessment

Combined Science (Students will sit 6 papers with the total mark giving 2 GCSEs)

Paper	Content	Length	Weighting
1	Biology Topics B1-3	1h10	16.67%
2	Biology Topics B4-6	1h10	16.67%
3	Chemistry Topics C1-3	1h10	16.67%
4	Chemistry Topics C4-6	1h10	16.67%
5	Physics Topics P1-3	1h10	16.67%
6	Physics Topics P4-6	1h10	16.67%

Separate Sciences (Students will sit 2 papers for each Science GCSE)

Paper	Content	Length	Weighting
1	Biology Topics B1-3	1h45	50%
2	Biology Topics B4-6	1h45	50%
3	Chemistry Topics C1-3	1h45	50%
4	Chemistry Topics C4-6	1h45	50%
5	Physics Topics P1-4	1h45	50%
6	Physics Topics P5-8	1h45	50%

Teaching and Learning

Students are taught in distinct biology, chemistry and physics lessons. Lessons include a variety of activities, which aim to develop interest and enthusiasm for science and student understanding of scientific theory, so that they can apply this knowledge to a range of practical and written tasks. This comes from listening and debating with their teacher, reading textbooks, websites and completing practical activities.

Students will then be expected to be able to apply their understanding of the scientific concepts to new theoretical and practical situations, as well as analyse and evaluate experimental methods.

Students will complete a number of "Required Practicals" as part of the course which will allow students to develop skills when working scientifically, as well as apply mathematical ideas to scientific contexts.

What can I do with Science GCSEs?

Science is a very well-regarded subject and is highly sought after by further education providers and employers. Both separate & combined courses allow students to gain a good understanding of ourselves and the world around us, as well as developing a wide range of transferable skills including; an ability to devise and think critically about experiments, analyse and evaluate evidence, and apply scientific ideas and mathematics to real life situations.

Strong science grades will allow access to a large variety of careers and further education opportunities. These include medicine and health care, agriculture, industry and consumer goods, engineering, accountancy and finance, health and fitness, emergency services and the energy sector to name put a few. Separate science GCSEs are designed to prepare students for further study of the Sciences at A level, which are required for a number of science specific careers in the laboratory or healthcare.

What's the best thing about Science?

The wide variety of topics and contexts for Science makes it an extremely interesting and very important subject to learn about. From the tiniest particles to the largest celestial bodies, science allows us to understand how we and the world around us work, and provides us with the tools with which to understand how our lives may change in the future.



GCSE Religious Education

Exam Board: AQA Religious Studies B/8063A

Course Content:

Component 1: Catholic Christianity:

- Creation
- Incarnation
- The Triune God
- Redemption
- Church and the Kingdom of God
- Eschatology

Within each of these topics, the following themes are explored:

- Beliefs and teachings
- Practices
- Sources of authority
- Forms of expression

Component 2: Perspectives on Faith:

Judaism:

- Beliefs and teachings
- Practices

3 Philosophical and ethical studies:

- Relationships and families
- Peace and conflict
- Human rights and social justice

The aim of studying these units is to enable students to discover and understand the teaching and practice of Catholicism. It will help them to develop their interest and enthusiasm for the study of religion and relate it to the world. The students will study Judaism which will also allow them to understand more about the other religions which exist and help them to create links between this and Christianity. In studying the ethics units, they will increase their awareness of social and community cohesion and be more fully equipped to lead constructive lives in the modern world.

Assessment

Paper	Content	Length	Weighting
1	Component 1: Catholic Christianity	1 hour 45	50%

2	Component 2: Perspectives on Faith: Judaism and Ethics	1 hour 45	50%
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The final grade which each student will achieve will be decided based on their performance in two written exams at the end of Year 11. Throughout their time studying the course, students will be regularly tested in class at the end of each of module, using exam style questions and in timed conditions. This will include in a longer mock paper in both Year 10 and 11.

Teaching and Learning

During lessons students will work in a variety of ways for example taking part in debates, completing creative tasks, reading written resources and answering questions. There will be tasks where students will be required to work independently and others when they should do so as part of a group.

Students will be encouraged to develop an enquiring, critical and reflective approach to the study of religion. They will reflect on fundamental questions and engage with them intellectually. They will be encouraged to develop their own values, opinions and attitudes in response to the topics discussed.

To succeed in RE, students need to have high subject knowledge and be able to explain, not just describe, what they know. In addition they must be capable of evaluating and assessing. They need to be able to weigh up different arguments, finding their strengths and weaknesses and reach an overall conclusion as to its validity.

There is a lot of content to cover within the course and time is tight so students need to work hard to learn all the information studied and skills practiced and remember it across the two years. They then need to be able to apply this under timed conditions to multiple sets of 5 exam questions.

What can I do with GCSE RE?

RE is a popular and successful subject which many go on to choose for A Level at St Benedict's. Achieving well at RE GCSE also allows entry into many other subjects, particularly those which are Humanities based, at A Level.

We have had a good number of students who choose to go on to University to study related subjects e.g. Philosophy, with some combining it with another subject.

RE is involved in many careers, particularly those which involve ethics such as health professionals, the armed forces, the law or social work. It requires you to be able to communicate well and so is favoured by employees in areas such as journalism and education. It involves considering beliefs and values which influence actions and choices and is therefore invaluable to any job that involves working with other people.

What's the best thing about RE?

We undoubtedly think that RE is a vital subject for young people to study today. It is a topic which evokes opinions, bombards the news and is capable of causing much controversy. We therefore think it is vital to keep our students informed about it so that they will be well prepared to live successfully in the world now and when they leave school.

The Ethics topics also allow students to learn more about key issues such as money, prejudice and relationships which are practical and useful for everyday life. For some, it will help them to develop further what their own beliefs but there is no pre-requisite of faith to complete the course. We love that RE gives opportunities for students to learn key skills such as evaluating, asking questions, interpreting and comparing which they can use across all aspects of their lives, now and in the future. It is therefore a subject which is capable of having a great impact.



GCSE Art & Design: Fine Art

Exam Board: AQA 8202

Course Content:

Students learn observational drawing techniques and explore how materials can function and mix cohesively. Analysis of mark making through painting challenges the students to work expressively whilst demonstrating a command of both tone and colour. Oils, Acrylic and watercolour are all used and specific technical skills are learned. Students will explore Printmaking methods through lino, monoprint and collograph printing. Students will experiment briefly with ceramics within their 3D investigation and will have the potential to use wire/plaster and recycled materials.

Specific projects are set that require an understanding of the design process. The use of image manipulation software and digital photography are encouraged; recording with a camera is a key way for students to explore their ideas. Each project will involve the use and study of art and artist's work relevant to the particular area of study. All stages of the creative process will be documented in a sketchbook.

Assessment

Component	Content	Length	Weighting
1. Portfolio	A portfolio that in total shows explicit coverage of the four assessment objectives. It must include a sustained project evidencing the journey from initial engagement to the realisation of intentions and a selection of further work undertaken during the student's course of study.	The portfolio will be developed throughout Years 10 and 11.	60%
2. Externally Set Assignment	Students respond to their chosen starting point from an externally set assignment paper relating to their subject title, evidencing coverage of all four assessment objectives.	Preparatory period followed by 10 hours of supervised time	40%

The Portfolio and ESA components will measure how students have achieved the following assessment objectives:

- AO1: Develop ideas through investigations, demonstrating critical understanding of sources.
- AO2: Refine work by exploring ideas, selecting and experimenting with appropriate media, materials, techniques and processes.
- AO3: Record ideas, observations and insights relevant to intentions as work progresses.
- AO4: Present a personal and meaningful response that realises intentions and demonstrates understanding of visual language.

Teaching and Learning

Students will learn in a variety of ways throughout the course. Students will learn through focused research activities as well as practical experimentation. They will experience formal, workshop-style sessions alongside independent, self-directed periods of exploration. Teaching strategies will include whole-class teaching as well as more focused one-to-one mentoring. Students will be guided through the following stages of each project:

- **Investigate** the project theme focusing on relevant subject matter / images / artefacts and other artists' work. **Research** sources such as the internet, books, magazines, photos. **Record** your own ideas, observations and insights through drawing, photography and written annotations / diagrams.
- **Experiment** with materials and processes, making technical notes along the way. Make decisions and judgements based on your **practical exploration**.
- **Analyse** the work of other artists in more depth to enable you to **develop** your own ideas further. The development of your work will be directed by your own practical investigations as well as the work of other artists you have studied. Include written annotations and analysis to support your ideas.
- Make an informed **final outcome(s)** that realises the intentions of your project and demonstrates the skills you have acquired.

What can I do with GCSE Art & Design?

The study of Art & Design develops a wide range of transferable personal and academic skills, which are incredibly useful, both in higher education as well as in the work place. Such skills include the ability to:

- independently research information from a variety of sources
- observe, record and make sense of the world around you
- reflect, analyse and evaluate a range of critical sources
- self-reflect and develop ideas and outcomes
- exchange ideas, form judgements and contribute to discussion
- think creatively and problem-solve
- express your thoughts and feelings in visual form

Art and Design GCSE provides students with a powerful creative tool and a wealth of opportunity both at education level and beyond. The creative sector is growing four times as fast as any other; The UK's creative industries continue to outgrow the rest of the economy. The subject offers over 350 degree titles.

Careers within the arts are incredibly wide-ranging and can include: Freelance artist / craftsperson, Curator, Architect, Illustrator / Cartoonist, Designer (textiles / product / graphic / fashion / interior / digital / website / gaming), Art therapist, Community Artist, Advertising Creative, Media / publishing consultant, Photographer, Arts administrator / Manager, Teacher, Theatre designer (props / costumes / sets / make-up), furniture design & restoration, Hair & Beauty, to name but a few!

What's the best thing about Art & Design?

Art & Design is a practical, hands-on subject. As well as developing the afore-mentioned academic and personal skills it allows you the time and space to develop your own sense of 'self'. You will experiment with a wide range of media in both 2D and 3D and develop a range of creative skills. We are confident that students will share the same excitement and enthusiasm for the subject that our teachers do.



Exam Board:

Course Content

Business is like learning a foreign language as students are required to build a rich vocabulary of business terms and use them to demonstrate their understanding around concepts.

Theme 1 concentrates on the key business concepts, issues and skills involved in starting and running a small business. It provides a framework for students to explore core concepts through the lens of an entrepreneur setting up a business.

Theme 2 examines how a business develops beyond the start-up phase. It focuses on the key business concepts, issues and decisions used to grow a business, with an emphasis on aspects of marketing, operations, finance and human resources. It also considers the impact of the wider world on the decisions a business makes as it grows.

Assessment

Theme 1 = 50% of the overall grade

Examination consisting of a mixture of multiple choice, short and extended questions. The paper has 3 sections to complete.

Theme 2 = 50% of the overall grade

Examination paper containing a mixture of short and extended questions.

Each paper is 1 hour and 45 minutes long and both papers will be taken at the end of year 11 in the summer term.

Teaching and Learning

The Business department makes considerable use of the interactive whiteboard which provides students with the opportunity to see and focus on a full range of images – pictures, DVD clips, text, diagrams, website material and more. We are constantly reviewing the resources available to us to try to ensure that the students have an up to date experience.

What can I do with Business Studies GCSE?

Business is at the heart of our economy. From major corporations to small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and sole traders, business provides a vital contribution to communities, creates income, provides wealth and leads innovation and creativity across all sectors.

The GCSE in Business Studies offers students a broad foundation of knowledge required for further study in business, including the different ways in which businesses are owned and operated, effective recruitment and employment, and the key elements of successful business and enterprise activities.

What's the best thing about Business Studies?

This qualification uses practical and enterprising content to engage and is designed for learners who want an introduction to business that is engaging. It has been developed to enthuse and inspire learners about a career in business. The qualification will appeal to learners who wish to either set up their own business, move into employment or progress onto further study.

Studying Business keeps you up to date with what's going on in the world and allows you to be a step ahead at all times.” It also gives students insight on how to start and grow a business. A vast majority of students go on to study Business at University given its broad nature. Business is the right subject for you if you enjoy:

- Ability to learn new vocabulary.
- Communicating and explaining your ideas using vocabulary in a concise manner
- Exploring and presenting alternative courses of action
- Thinking strategically and making decisions
- Working with numbers to solve business problems



GCSE Computer Science

OCR J277

Exam Board: OCR J277

Course Content:

01 – Computer systems

- Computer architecture
- Computer memory and storage
- Data representation (etc. binary, hexadecimal, sound, images)
- Wired and wireless networks
- System security
- System software
- Ethical, legal, cultural and environmental issues

02 – Computational thinking, algorithms and programming

- Computational thinking
- Algorithm design
- Programming techniques
- Robust and defensive program design
- System software
- Computational / Boolean logic
- Programming languages and translators

Practical Programming

There is no longer a specific piece of practical programming coursework

Students will be given at least 20 hours across both Years 10 and 11 to develop their practical programming skills

Assessment

Paper	Content	Length	Weighting
1	Computer systems (01)	1 hour 30	50%
2	Computational thinking, algorithms and programming (02)	1 hour 30	50%

Teaching and Learning

Lessons will be delivered in different styles to best suit the topic:

Details: lecture style with built in questioning and discussion

Theory: worksheet tasks on OneNote

Practical: demonstrations with mini whiteboard practice exercises

Programming: self-guided activities, mini assessments and recap exercises

Progress: Recap booklets are used to give students 5 minutes at the start of every lesson to review previously covered content.

A short paper is sat at the end of each topic to review understanding, highlight areas students need to prioritise for revision and address any misconception.

What can I do with GCSE Computer Science?

Computers and technology figure in all our lives; in science, technology, manufacturing, research, medicine, advertising, social media, design just to name even a few areas!

It is already difficult to imagine a job or hobby that has not been influenced by technology or doesn't use it in some shape or form

I don't want a career in technology

Not a problem!

Whatever career you end up going into, a solid grounding in how technology works will be incredibly useful and will set you apart from others with the otherwise same skillset as you

I'm thinking of a career in technology

Here are just a few of the hundreds of possible careers that come directly from Computer Science

Use this website to see just how many there are! <https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/groups/cvpqdx04v3t>

• Games developer	• Network engineer
• Programmer	• Systems analyst
• Cyber security analyst	• Web designer
• Business analyst	• Web developer
• App developer	• Nanotechnologist
• Professional gamer	• Systems engineer
• Games designer	• Software developer
• Multimedia programmer	

What's the best thing about Computer Science?

Technology has its roots in almost every aspect of our lives – why wouldn't you want to know more about how it works?

Computer Science sets you apart from the crowd. It gives you the knowledge and the understanding of devices that everybody else simply uses and takes for granted.

When others are moaning and grumbling and getting stressed, Computer Science gives you the experience to answer the questions, correct the misconceptions and fix the problems.

The best thing is that you know how the technology you use every day actually works!



GCSE Classical Civilisation

Exam Board: OCR J199

Course Content:

There are two units in the GCSE.

The first is a thematic study of myth and religion (J199/11). This unit compares ancient Greece and Rome and combines literary and visual/ material sources. Students study Greek and Roman stories of their gods, their religion including temples, festivals and practices as well as death and burial and stories of the underworld in ancient Greece and Rome. Students also study the significance of the myths of Heracles/ Hercules, the foundation myths of the cities of Rome and Athens, and how myth was used in symbols of power. This unit provides a clear framework and context for ancient Greece and Rome and links elements of everyday life with myth as depicted in artefacts, buildings and literature.

The second unit considers the Homeric World (J199/21). This explores the historical context of the writings of Homer and considers the archaeological evidence and artefacts of the Mycenaean age. Students then study the writings of Homer by looking in detail at books 9, 10, 19, 21, 22 of *The Odyssey*. This focuses on key themes and characters and explores these in detail.

Assessment

Classical Civilisation is assessed through two one hour and 30-minute (90 mins) exams. Students must complete one component from group 1 and one component from group 2.

Component	Marks	Duration	Weighting
Group 1 – Thematic Study. Myth and religion	90	1 hour 30 mins	50%
Group 2 – Literature and Culture The Homeric World	90	1 hour 30 mins	50%

Teaching and Learning

Classical Civilisation by its nature covers lots of different approaches and content and students will engage with source material in the form of artefacts, literature and imagery. Students will be encouraged to express their ideas verbally in class discussions and to consider different interpretations and views. Classics uses similar skills and knowledge to those developed in English Literature, history, RE and art and draws on a range of different types of resource and material to think about the classical world.

What can I do with GCSE Classical Civilisation?

It can be argued that in the Western world the foundation of all academic study is based on the approaches of ancient Rome and Greece. There are clear links between classics and many other academic disciplines and careers. Classics can support further study in any art or humanities subject and the subject specific knowledge can inform across many areas including languages and the sciences. Classics all levels is a desirable discipline for many careers and professions.

What's the best thing about Classical Civilisation?

The stories! Classics delves into some of the weirdest, wildest and most engaging stories. These stories have stood the test of time and by studying Classics you not only get to study these incredible tales, you also get to understand the culture and context in which they were written and learn about the lives of those who first told them.



GCSE Food Nutrition

Exam Board: WJEC 356OP1

Course Content:

Food preparation skills
Food preparation and cooking techniques

Topics and themes:

Food, nutrition and health Food Science	Food safety Food choice	Food Provenance
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Students will build upon prior learning and in particular the subject content of **cooking and nutrition**.

You will enhance your knowledge and understanding of what constitutes a healthy balanced diet and good nutrition. This includes the Eat well guide, energy balance and the role of nutrients in a balanced diet. You should already have developed a range of different practical skills and made a repertoire of predominantly savoury products which meet current guidelines for healthy eating prior to the course. Food hygiene and safety is to be taught as an integral part of every practical lesson when preparing, cooking and serving

Food groups include:

- bread, cereals, flour, oats, rice, potatoes and pasta
- fruit and vegetables (fresh, frozen, dried, canned and juiced)
- milk, cheese and yoghurt
- meat, fish, eggs, soya, tofu, beans, nuts and seeds • butter, oil, margarine, sugar and syrup.

The food preparation skills developed:

- General practical skills including: weighing, measuring, preparing ingredients and equipment, correct cooking times, testing for readiness and sensory testing.
- Knife skills including: fruit, vegetables, meat fish or alternatives.
- Preparing fruit and vegetables.
- Using the cooker including: the hob, grill and oven.
- Use of equipment including: blenders, food processors, mixers, pasta machines and microwave ovens.
- Cooking methods including: steaming, boiling, simmering, blanching, poaching and frying.
- Techniques to prepare cook and combine different ingredients.
- Sauce making including: starch based, reduction and emulsions.
- Tenderising and marinating different ingredients.
- Making dough including: bread, pastry and pasta.
- Use of raising agents including: eggs, chemical, steam and biological.
- Setting of mixtures through use of heat and egg protein.

These skills will be integrated throughout the course and linked where appropriate to the subject content. Students will be taught how and when to use different food preparation skills to achieve a range of different outcomes.

Assessment

Combined Science (Students will sit 6 papers with the total mark giving 2 GCSEs)

Assessment	Content	Length	Weighting
Theory Paper	The final examination	1 hour 45	50%
2	The Food Investigation	10 hours	15%
	The Food preparation Task	20 hrs (including - 3hour practical exam)	35%

Teaching and Learning

Where possible, you will cook at least once a week. Initially they will undertake focussed tasks where either a specified recipe will be used, or you may be given a choice from a selection of recipes in order to achieve a range of practical outcomes. Gradually you will be encouraged to choose your own recipes that will demonstrate complex, creative and challenging ways of answering a given brief. Most activities can be adapted to cater for different dietary needs and to help to work within a reasonable budget.

There will be opportunities for paired work and small group work, when appropriate. Demonstrations will be given to introduce complex skills, or to focus on practical aspects students find challenging. In theory lessons you will focus on building up your subject knowledge using books, video clips computer analysis programs or carrying out scientific investigation of different foods (such as making butter, or finding out what flour is the best for making bread etc). This will help prepare you for the NEA 1 Food science investigation in year 11.

The NEA 2 task also completed in year 11 will require you to plan, prepare, cook and present a 3 course menu. This task will provide you with an opportunity to cook up a storm and showcase your creativity and cooking skills. You might make a street food menu, create delicious tapas dishes or cook up a menu for a student on a budget. Students who cook at home or who are inquisitive about food will find this a rewarding course.

What can I do with GCSE Food Preparation & Nutrition?

Everyone loves food so as well as being extremely interesting the skills you develop will support your study of a wide range of other subjects. In terms of subject knowledge, the nutrition and health may particularly complement the study of **biology** and **physical education**.

Food preparation and nutrition also helps you to learn how to work independently and manage your time – skills valued by both higher education institutions and employer's alike and those going to university will have a head start when cooking up your student grub.

Some career opportunities: Dietician / Nutritionist, Food Sales and Promotion, Product Development, Consumer Technologist (Sensory Analysis and Product Tasting), Chef / Baker / Caterer, Food Journalist / Food Critic, Environmental Health Officer, Health & Safety Inspector, Food Service Management, Delicatessen / Restaurateur, Food Wholesaler, Production & Manufacturing, Quality Assurance / Purchaser (buys and sells food from around the world), Store Manager – Supermarket or Fast Food Chains, Teacher

What's the best thing about Food Preparation & Nutrition?

You will thoroughly enjoy the experience of being creative and making dishes to take home, whilst learning about food from around the world at the same time. You might even feel inspired to enter into a culinary competition like some of our previous students, or take your new found food skills to work in other countries!

GCSE French and Spanish

Exam Board: AQA French 8658 and Spanish 8698

Course Content:

The specification covers three distinct themes. These themes apply to all four question papers.

Students are expected to understand and provide information and opinions about these themes relating to their own experiences and those of other people, including people in countries/communities where the language is spoken.

- Theme 1: People and lifestyle
- Theme 2: Popular culture
- Theme 3: Communication and the world around us

Theme 1: People and lifestyle	Theme 2: Popular culture	Theme 3: Communication with the world around us
Identity and relationships with others (family, friends etc) Healthy living and lifestyle Education and work	Free-time activities Customs, festivals and celebrations Celebrity culture	Travel and tourism, places of interest Media and technology The environment where people live

Assessment

Students can be entered for either Foundation or Higher but they must be entered at the same tier for all 4 skills.

Paper	Content		Length	Weighting
1	Listening	Foundation Higher	35 mins 50 mins	25%
2	Speaking	Foundation Higher	7-9mins 10-12 mins	25%
3	Reading (including translation from the target language)	Foundation Higher	45 mins 1 hour	25%

4	Writing (including translation into the target language)	Foundation Higher	1 hour 1 hour 15	25%
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Teaching and Learning

The course aims to build confidence and fluency through a range of activities including role play and conversation, carrying out interviews and surveys, listening to different authentic sources, reading a wide range of texts, developing independent learning, writing letters, messages, leaflets etc. Various means of presentation are used including videos, film and IT activities will be incorporated where appropriate. There are online French and Spanish digital books on the VLE which will enable pupils to practice their skills at home or independently.

Regular homework will be set consisting of learning, reading and communicative written and speaking tasks. Creativity and pupil independence will be encouraged and fostered.

What can I do with GCSE French and/or Spanish?

Language learning provides students with a range of transferable skills such as communication, team work, creativity and independence. When you can speak another language, the world is your oyster and you can work in several different areas and travel at the same time. Having languages is a pathway into teaching, engineering, business, journalism, and a host of other sectors. In fact, an applicant with a Language qualification is highly sought after in all job sectors and at University.

What's the best thing about French and Spanish?

You are constantly learning about how people live and think in French and Spanish speaking countries and it makes you inquisitive and very multicultural. Language lessons are dynamic and fun and you develop your communication skills at a fast pace. It's wonderful to be able to travel the world and speak to people in their own language. When you learn a language, the world opens up a myriad of opportunities to you.



GCSE Geography

Exam Board: Edexcel Spec A:1GA0

Course Content:

The Physical Environment

You will study a broad range of topics with a focus on the natural world including:

- Changing landscapes of the UK
- Coastal landscapes and processes
- River landscapes and processes
- Weather hazards and climate change
- Ecosystems, biodiversity and management

The Human Environment

You will also study a broad range of topics with a focus on human geography including:

- Changing cities and urban environments
- Global development
- Resource management

Geographical investigations: Fieldwork and UK Challenges

Students will undertake two fieldwork experiences, one physical enquiry focusing on coasts and another human investigation on urban settlements. The field work will involve students creating an enquiry question, a methodology, collecting a range of primary data, presenting, analysing and evaluating this data and making conclusions. UK challenges will present a problem that the students will have to solve by using their knowledge and understanding from the rest of the course.

Assessment

Paper	Content	Length	Weighting
1	The Physical Environment	1 hour 30	37.5%
2	The Human Environment	1 hour 30	37.5%
3	Geographical Investigations: Fieldwork and UK Challenges	1 hour 30	25%

Teaching and Learning

Students will use a range of resources and lesson activities to learn about the various topics. Much of the content involves contemporary issues and students will be expected to watch the news and have an interest in current affairs.

Pupils will gain geographical knowledge of locations, places, environments and processes, and of different scales, including global; and of social, political and cultural contexts. They will learn how to think like a geographer by gaining an understanding of the interactions between people and environments, change in places and processes over space and time.

They will learn how to study like a geographer through developing and extending their competence in a range of skills including those used in fieldwork, in using maps and Geographical Information Systems (GIS) and in researching secondary evidence, including digital sources; and develop their competence in applying sound enquiry and investigative approaches to questions and hypotheses.

They will be able to apply geographical knowledge, understanding, skills and approaches appropriately and creatively to real world contexts, including fieldwork, and to contemporary situations and issues; and develop well-evidenced arguments drawing on their geographical knowledge and understanding.

What can I do with GCSE Geography?

As well as being extremely interesting and helping us to better understand the world we live in, Geography is a very well-regarded subject that is highly sought after by both top universities and employers. Geography develops a wide range of transferable skills, which are incredibly useful, both in higher education as well as in the workplace. Such skills include:

- The ability to collect, analyse and draw conclusions from primary and secondary data.
- To develop geographical skills such as using grid references and interpreting features on a range of maps.
- To develop fieldwork skills and the use of Geographical Information Systems (GIS) to both collect and present information.
- Extended writing and math skills which have become a key component of the new GCSE.

As a result of these skills many students who have studied Geography and wish to continue geographical study typically go on to study Geography, Environmental Science and International Development among other subjects at university. Students that have studied geography have gone on to work in the energy sector, in government and policy, non-governmental organisations and in journalism to name just a few.

What's the best thing about Geography?

"Geography is not only up-to-date and relevant, it is one of the most exciting, adventurous and valuable subjects to study today. So many of the world's current problems boil down to geography and need the geographers of the future to help us understand them." Michael Palin



GCSE History

Exam Board: OCR J410

Course Content:

Medicine in Britain, c1250 - present

- c1250-c1500: Medicine in medieval England
- c1500-c1700: The Medical Renaissance in England
- c1700-c1900: Medicine in eighteenth- and nineteenth century Britain
- c1900-present: Medicine in Modern Britain
- The British sector of the Western Front, 1914-18: injuries, treatment and the trenches

Anglo-Saxon and Norman England, c1060-88

- Anglo-Saxon England and the Norman Conquest, 1060-66
- William I in power: securing the kingdom, 1066-1087
- Norman England, 1066-88

Superpower relations and the Cold War, 1941-91

- The origins of the Cold War, 1941-58
- The Cold War crises, 1958-70
- The end of the Cold War, 1970-91

Weimar and Nazi Germany, 1918-39

- The Weimar Republic 1918-29
- Hitler's Rise to power, 1919-33
- Nazi control and dictatorship, 1933-39
- Life in Nazi Germany, 1933-39

Assessment

Paper	Content	Length	Weighting
1	Medicine in Britain, c1250 – present and the British sector of the Western Front, 1914-18: injuries, treatment and the trenches	1 hour 15	30%
2	Anglo-Saxon and Norman England, c1060-88 and Superpower relations and the Cold War, 1941-91	1 hour 45	40%
3	Weimar and Nazi Germany, 1918-39	1 hour 20	30%

Teaching and Learning

Students will focus on answering key questions about the past through building up excellent subject knowledge. This comes from listening and debating with their teacher and peers, through reading textbooks, library resources, newspapers, websites and primary sources, as well as watching documentaries. Students will be required to take detailed notes and write extended answers.

From building up their subject knowledge, students will be expected to be able to identify and explain the causes and consequences of key historical events, as well as be able to make judgments on what was the key cause or consequence of an event, through evaluating the various factors and outcomes. They will also be expected to compare and contrast key events and individuals and evaluate their significance. Additionally, they will judge the amount of change and continuity over time. Students will also have to work closely with primary sources, where they will be expected to judge various sources' worth through comparing them against their own subject knowledge as well as each other. They will also be expected to make inferences from the sources and evaluate their reliability.

It is therefore extremely important that students gather and retain extensive subject knowledge and are able to apply it under timed conditions to a range of questions.

What can I do with GCSE History?

As well as being extremely interesting and helping us to better understand the world we live in, History is a very well regarded subject that is highly sought after by both top universities and employers. History develops a wide range of transferable skills, which are incredibly useful, both in higher education as well as in the work place. Such skills include:

- The ability to independently research information from a variety of sources
- The ability to recognise, explain and evaluate different interpretations
- The ability to make inferences from a variety of sources and make judgments on how useful they are
- The ability to cross-reference information
- The ability to construct arguments based on evidence

As a result of acquiring these skills many students who have studied History work in journalism, the media, publishing, politics, law, administration, management, education, sales, accountancy and marketing to name but a few. There are many successful famous people with History degrees including: Joe Biden, Gordon Brown, Jeremy Bowen, Sacha Baron Cohen, Jonathan Ross, QC Michael Mansfield.

What's the best thing about History?

Though there is a lot of content to learn in History, you really couldn't ask for more interesting material! We learn about fantastic stories from the past and study fascinating individuals and events, many of which have been turned into multi-million dollar Hollywood movies or engrossing television dramas. We are confident that students will share the same excitement and enthusiasm for the subject that our teachers do.

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GCSE Music

Exam Board:

Course Content:

Performing Music

- How to perform as a soloist and part of an ensemble.
- Improving accuracy, fluency, interpretation and ensemble skills.

Composing Music

- Common composition techniques in instrumental and vocal music.
- Writing melodies with accompaniment, using chords, rhythmic patterns, instrument-specific techniques, structure and texture.

Understanding and Appraising Music

- Music theory and key music terminology, notation analysis and aural skills.
- Western Classical Music, Popular Music, Music for Stage and Screen and Fusions, including 8 set works: J S Bach: *Brandenburg Concerto no.5* / Beethoven: *Sonata Pathétique* / Purcell: *Music for a While* / Queen: *Killer Queen* / Schwartz: *Wicked - Defying Gravity* / Williams: *Star Wars IV – A New Hope* / Afro Celt Sound System: *Release* / Esperanza Spalding: *Samba Em Preludio*

Assessment

Paper	Content	Length	Weighting
1Mu0 /1	Performance: One solo and one ensemble performance of at least 4 minutes combined duration. These performances are recorded and marked in Year 11, and then sent to the exam board for moderation. (As a guide, Edexcel now class a Grade 4 level of difficulty as 'standard', up to Grade 3 as 'less difficult' and Grade 5(+) as 'more difficult'. Pupils do not have to have done Grades on an instrument or voice, but the level of difficulty of the pieces a pupil performs in Year 11 is taken into account in this way when marked for this component.)	Controlled assessment during Year 10/11 lesson time (approx. 10 hours)	30%
1Mu0 /02	Composition: One 'free choice' composition and one following a brief (choice of 4 options) from the exam board. Both compositions must be at least 3 minutes combined duration. Recordings and scores of both compositions are recorded and marked in Year 11, and then sent to the exam board for moderation.	Controlled assessment during Year 10/11 lesson time (approx. 10 hours per composition)	30%

1Mu0 /03	Listening and Appraising Exam: Pupils hear extracts of music and answer questions, based on the 8 set works and unfamiliar pieces, and also aural tests such as melodic and rhythmic dictation.	1 hour 45	40%
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Teaching and Learning

One of the weekly lessons is dedicated to increasing subject knowledge, theory and listening skills. We will investigate different music genres, with a focus on the 8 set works. This includes examining and analysing the music score in detail, critically listening to a range of excerpts, learning to aurally identify key features, and using musical vocabulary to describe and compare pieces of music. Pupils will need to become familiar with the sounds and typical characteristics of different genres, for example Baroque and Romantic Music, and Film Scores. In the exam, pupils will be expected to apply music terminology to questions on both familiar and unfamiliar music. It is therefore extremely important that students gather and retain extensive subject knowledge and listen regularly to music across a wide range of genres, so that they are able to apply it under timed conditions to a range of questions in the exam. They need to have an interest in the finer details of how music is constructed, and the development of musical styles throughout history.

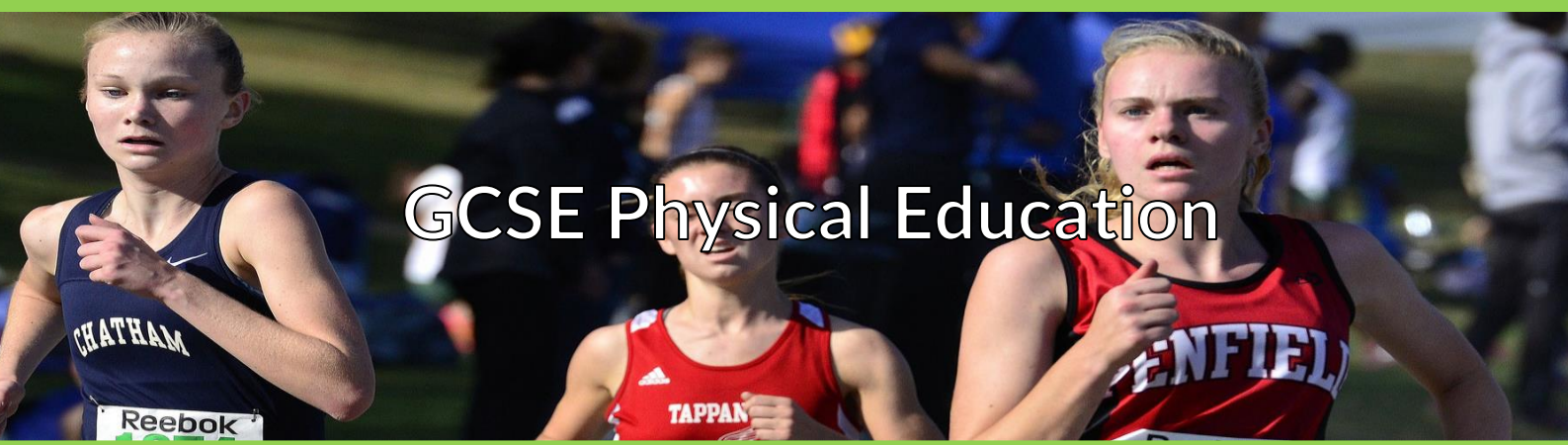
The other lesson is used for controlled assessment – composing and performing. Pupils will regularly be asked to demonstrate their performing progress. It is highly recommended that pupils are having an individual music lesson to support their progress, and they are also required to join an extra-curricular group. Pupils also learn key composition techniques and then apply these to their own compositions. They spend time in class on their instruments and Sibelius notation software creating two compositions. It is therefore extremely important that students have the perseverance and dedication for such a skills based GCSE, where they will be expected to practise regularly, and experiment with ideas, refine and improve their work across the creative process of composing music.

What can I do with GCSE Music?

This GCSE is an excellent course for any pupil keen to develop into a well-rounded musician who can perform, compose their own music, and deepen their knowledge on different musical genres. The course provides a great opportunity for pupils to focus on their individual interests (for example their solo performance and free composition), as well as equipping them with the skills to be a well-rounded musician with a broad understanding of the subject. GCSE is also an essential requirement for A Level Music, which itself is a highly-regarded qualification for university entrance. After A Level, Music can be studied as an academic degree, and is offered at almost all Russell Group universities. Alternatively, some pupils might go on to more performance-based routes at a specialist music conservatoire or college. Music is a very well-regarded subject that is highly sought after by both top universities and employers. Music develops a wide range of transferable skills, which are incredibly useful, both in higher education as well as in the work place. Such skills include the ability to:

- show dedication, perseverance and attention to detail.
- listen critically, evaluate, research and write analytically.
- work independently and creatively.
- perform confidently in front of others.

As a result of these skills many students who have studied Music work in journalism, the media, arts administration, management, education, performing, composing, broadcasting, producing, music therapy and advertising to name a few.



GCSE Physical Education

Exam Board: OCR J587

Course Content & Assessment Overview:

Content Overview	Assessment Overview
<p>J587/01 Physical factors affecting performance This component will assess:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1.1 Applied anatomy and physiology 1.2 Physical training 	<p>Written paper: 1 hour 30% of total GCSE (9–1) 60 marks</p> <p>This paper consists of a mixture of objective response and multiple-choice questions, short answers and extended response items.</p>
<p>J587/02 Socio-cultural issues and sports psychology This component will assess:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2.1 Socio-cultural influences 2.2 Sports psychology 2.3 Health, fitness and well-being. 	<p>Written paper: 1 hour 30% of total GCSE (9–1) 60 marks</p> <p>This paper consists of a mixture of objective response and multiple-choice questions, short answers and extended response items.</p>
<p>J587/04 Practical Performances This component will assess:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Core and advanced skills in three activities taken from the approved lists: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> one from the 'individual' list one from the 'team' list one other from either list. 	<p>Non-exam assessment (NEA) 30% of total GCSE (9–1) 60 marks</p> <p>This NEA will consist of three activities, including at least one 'team' and at least one 'individual' sport from the approved activity lists, all performed in competitive situations.</p>
<p>J587/05 Analysis and Evaluation of Performance This component draws upon the knowledge, understanding and skills a student has learnt and enables them to analyse and evaluate their own or a peer's performance in one activity.</p>	<p>Non-exam assessment (NEA) 10% of total GCSE (9–1) 20 marks</p> <p>This NEA will consist of a written task that must be produced under controlled conditions.</p>

Teaching and Learning

Five lessons, over the two week timetable. This will consist of three theory lessons and two practical lessons. Students will focus on answering key questions in the different units. They will develop their subject knowledge by teacher presentations, discussions, active learning tasks. They will be expected to complete all additional work set via homework which is focused on securing knowledge of the content covered in lessons. Practical lessons will develop students' abilities in the sports that we can deliver in St Benedict's sporting facilities. All students will be expected to fully participate even if it is not their chosen sport as there is always a focus on fitness and key skills.

Students suited to this course need to be enthusiastic towards sports and their fitness. Participating in sports inside school, lunchtime clubs and fixtures is expected to help develop skills which will be essential in performing well. In addition to this, participating in a sports club/clubs outside of school is essential in gaining a good practical score. There is a high level of theory within this course and so it is important that students have a keen interest in the physiology, biomechanics and psychology that is involved in sport.

What can I do with GCSE Physical Education?

PE provides an excellent basis for A Level PE and Btec Level 3 in sport. Also, due to its wide variety of topics it provides an excellent background to various A Levels and Btecs. Future careers include working in the sports industry, sports science, physiotherapy, health & social work, medicine and leisure. Also this is an essential starting point for a career in coaching or becoming a PE teacher.

Students also need to regularly complete homework and revise for theory tests. This course requires a large amount of filmed footage of students' performances. Therefore, to take the course you will need photo permission. If you are performing sports not delivered by school or sports at a higher standard you will need to be prepared to film the practical yourselves. Filming equipment can be booked out from the PE department.

What's the best thing about Physical Education?

There is a wide variety of topics from anatomy to psychology, the course is challenging but very interesting. Developing your knowledge of the effects of exercise/sport on the body and wellbeing is really interesting. You will also develop your knowledge of how to plan and run a successful personal exercise program and the skills to evaluate its impact on performance is something that you will value throughout your life. The content does move quickly which keeps the course engaging and interesting for students. Also, the opportunity to develop and showcase your performances in favored sports which contributes to your overall grade is a real feature of the course. You will be challenged and tested and your commitment and effort on all fronts is required in this course.



GCSE Product Design

Exam Board: WJEC 3603QS

Course Content:

Throughout Year 10 students are involved in a variety of design and make projects and focused practical tasks to further develop their subject knowledge and design and make capability. A key focus is to develop their knowledge of the assessment criteria and how to evidence this in their portfolios and practical tasks. Alongside the practical element, theoretical knowledge is developed and applied in both practical and exam contexts. This is a key aspect of the course.

Typical project work in Year 10:

Individual projects

- A design and make task - a prototype model of a toy/model (timber)
- A hand and power tool skills project
- A design and make task – house door number (pewter casting)

Throughout the course we consider and apply the needs, wants and values of our target market; and a central topic which is at the core of what we do is the ever-growing consideration of the impact products and consumers have on the environment (Sustainability).

We investigate existing products (Product Analysis) to help us understand how we can improve future design ideas. Ergonomics and Anthropometrics feature in developing products which make the interaction between the user and object safer, more comfortable, and easier to use.

Throughout the course students are provided with opportunities to develop products using CAD/CAM facilities and various modelling exercises.

The course will enable candidates to design and make products related to industrial practices and the application of systems and control within the designing and making of these products. As well as traditional design and make projects students further develop their understanding of design theory and concepts within personal, local, national and international contexts.

In depth knowledge of Product Design

- The impact of new and emerging technologies
- Social, cultural, economic and environmental responsibilities in designing and making products.
- How energy is generated and stored in order to choose and use appropriate sources to make products
- Developments in modern and smart materials
- The ecological and social footprint of materials and components
- Investigation and analysis of past and present professionals, engineers, and designers

- Material selection, categories, types, properties & characteristics, working and manufacturing processes.

Core Skills

- Understanding that all design and technological practice takes place within contexts which inform outcomes.
- Identifying and understanding client and user needs, wants, and values.
- Demonstrate an ability to write design briefs and detailed specifications.
- Investigate factors, such as environmental, social, moral, and economic challenges.
- The importance of testing and evaluating ideas (analyse, decision, justification)
- Use different design strategies, such as collaboration, user-centred design and systems thinking.
- Formal and informal 2D and 3D drawing.
- Design and develop prototypes
- Respond to feedback from others or clients and suggest improvements/modifications of their prototype.

Assessment

Paper	Content	Length	Weighting
1	N.E.A (non exam assessment)	Approx. 35 hours	50%
2	Written examination	2 hours	50 %

Teaching and Learning

Designing and making can take place in a range of contexts using a variety of materials; and opportunities to analyse, make, test and evaluate will be an integral part of lessons. Students will be encouraged to experience the variety of roles involved in design and technology; client, designer, maker, manager, consumer and user.

At the same time students will gain a greater appreciation of the relationship between technology and society with an emphasis on student's ability to be creative and consider the impact of relevant issues such as sustainability and future environmental issues. Students will take part in extended design and make tasks, product analysis exercises and focused practical tasks.

All project work will follow selected parts of the design process; design brief, research and analysis, product specifications, generation of ideas, development of ideas, model making, planning to make, making, testing and evaluation.

What can I do with GCSE Product Design?

- A useful foundation for design based A levels and GNVQ courses. A GCSE qualification in Product Design can lead to careers in construction, civil, mechanical, and electrical engineering, graphic design, fashion design, textile construction, interior design, furniture design, musical instrument design, architecture, materials development and systems control.
- Students develop key problem-solving skills and a greater insight into the man-made world. They enhance their communication skills learning how to produce and present detailed reports on a wide variety of design-based topics. A key ethos of the course is developing excellent skills in communication.



GCSE Art & Design: Textiles

Exam Board: AQA 8204

Course Content:

Specific projects are set for students that require an understanding of the design process. In Component 1 and Component 2 students are required to work in **one or more** area(s) of textile design, such as; art textiles, fashion design and illustration. costume design, constructed textiles, printed and dyed textiles, surface pattern, stitched and/or embellished textiles, soft furnishings and/or textiles for interiors. Students may explore overlapping areas and combinations of areas.

Within the context of textile design, students must demonstrate the ability to use textile design techniques and processes, appropriate to students' personal intentions, for example: weaving, felting, stitching, appliqué, construction methods, printing. Students will explore the use of media and materials, as appropriate to students' personal intentions, for example: Inks, yarns, threads, fibres, fabrics, textile materials, digital imagery.

Assessment

Component	Content	Length	Weighting
1. Portfolio	A portfolio that in total shows explicit coverage of the four assessment objectives. It must include a sustained project evidencing the journey from initial engagement to the realisation of intentions and a selection of further work undertaken during the student's course of study.	The portfolio will be developed throughout Years 10 and 11.	60%
2. Externally Set Assignment	Students respond to their chosen starting point from an externally set assignment paper relating to their subject title, evidencing coverage of all four assessment objectives.	Preparatory period followed by 10 hours of supervised time	40%

The Portfolio and ESA components will measure how students have achieved the following assessment objectives:

- AO1: Develop ideas through investigations, demonstrating critical understanding of sources.
- AO2: Refine work by exploring ideas, selecting and experimenting with appropriate media, materials, techniques and processes.
- AO3: Record ideas, observations and insights relevant to intentions as work progresses.
- AO4: Present a personal and meaningful response that realises intentions and demonstrates understanding of visual language.

Teaching and Learning

Students will learn in a variety of ways throughout the course. Students will learn through focused research activities as well as practical experimentation. They will experience formal, workshop-style sessions alongside independent, self-directed periods of exploration. Teaching strategies will include whole-class teaching as well as more focused one-to-one mentoring. Students will be guided through the following stages of each project:

- **Investigate** the project theme focusing on relevant subject matter / images / artefacts and other artists' work. **Research** sources such as the internet, books, magazines, photos. **Record** your own ideas, observations and insights through drawing, photography and written annotations / diagrams.
- **Experiment** with materials and processes, making technical notes along the way. Make decisions and judgements based on your **practical exploration**.
- **Analyse** the work of other artists in more depth to enable you to **develop** your own ideas further. The development of your work will be directed by your own practical investigations as well as the work of other artists you have studied. Include written annotations and analysis to support your ideas.
- Make an informed **final outcome(s)** that realises the intentions of your project and demonstrates the skills you have acquired.

What can I do with GCSE Textiles?

The study of Art & Design Textiles develops a wide range of transferable personal and academic skills, which are incredibly useful, both in higher education as well as in the work place. Such skills include the ability to:

- independently research information from a variety of sources
- observe, record and make sense of the world around you
- reflect, analyse and evaluate a range of critical sources
- self-reflect and develop ideas and outcomes
- exchange ideas, form judgements and contribute to discussion
- think creatively and problem-solve
- express your thoughts and feelings in visual form

Textiles GCSE provides students with a powerful creative tool and a wealth of opportunity both at education level and beyond. The creative sector is growing four times as fast as any other; The UK's creative industries continue to outgrow the rest of the economy. The subject offers over 350 degree titles.

Careers within the arts and textiles industry are incredibly wide-ranging and can include:

What's the best thing about Textiles GCSE?

Textiles is a practical, hands-on subject which teaches you how to transfer ideas from 2D into 3D. Studying Textile Design as GCSE offers an opportunity to extend experience and create your own personal responses, as well as developing imagination and critical and reflective thinking skills. You will have the opportunity to use a broad range of materials, develop your skills and have fun.



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