3D Design

AWARDING BODY	QUALIFICATION
AQA	GCSE Level 2

Course outline

3D Design enables students to understand and apply iterative design processes through which they explore and create within the fields of product design or design for the built environment (architecture or interior/set design). The qualification enables students to use creativity and imagination to design and make prototypes that solve real and relevant problems. Students will need to consider others' needs, wants and values to ensure their ideas are fit for purpose.

The aims of this course are to develop skills and produce realisations in the following areas:

- Architectural design
- Product design
- Jewellery and body adornment
- Interior design
- Environmental/landscape/garden design
- Exhibition design
- Designs for theatre, film and television

The option focuses on design for 3D outcomes from a broad spectrum of areas, so students can find an area they are most interested in. Students who opt for this GCSE enjoy devising innovative products and solutions, which might be in the realm of electronics, lighting, architectural solutions or architecture/interiors. They will immerse themselves in user-centred design. To become equipped for these challenges, students will learn CAD/CAM, with an emphasis on using 2D and 3D CNC machines to aid their realisations. Students will also learn elements of design history and gain a strong understanding of the work of others.

This course is most suitable for students who

- Enjoy practical work, being in the practical work environment, have a good grasp of ICT and have good drawing skills.
- Enjoy problem solving and enjoy devising innovative ideas.
- Are organised and committed to developing a substantial amount of project work over the two-year course.

Assessment method

This qualification comprises a coursework unit worth **60%** and a practical exam worth **40%**. The practical examination will be taken at the end of the course over 2 days or 10 hours.

Skills acquired

Depending on their personal intentions, students will develop skills in the following, and will use a selection of these materials:

- Drawing materials
- Model making
- Clay
- Constructing
- Wood
- Surface treatment
- Metal
- Assembling
- Plastic
- Found materials

Full specification: https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/art-and-design/gcse/art-and-design-8201-8206/specification/subject-content/three-dimensional-design

Art

AWARDING BODY	QUALIFICATION
AQA	GCSE

Course outline

Course intent

GCSE Fine Art is designed for students who are passionate about visual expression and wish to explore a wide range of creative techniques and processes. The course supports progression into further education and careers in the creative industries, while nurturing personal expression and critical understanding.

Skills and learning focus – students will:

- Build on and refine techniques learned at Key Stage 3
- Develop visual literacy and critical analysis through artist research and annotation
- Explore and experiment with a variety of media, materials and processes
- Investigate personal themes and produce original, meaningful outcomes

Course requirements

To fully engage with the course, students will need:

- An A3 sketchbook and basic drawing tools (pencils, pens, eraser, sharpener)
- A willingness to visit galleries and museums to support contextual understanding (school trips to London venues will be arranged)
- Access to basic art materials at home is beneficial (e.g. watercolours, oil pastels, glue, scissors, sketching pencils); these are also available in school

Assessment method

The course follows the AQA GCSE Art and Design: Fine Art specification and includes:

Component 1: Portfolio (60%)

A selection of work developed by the student over time, including:

- Sustained projects based on a theme or subject
- A range of experimental and developmental work
- Final outcomes showing refinement and personal response

Component 2: Externally set assignment (40%)

A project based on a theme set by AQA, culminating in a 10-hour supervised practical session.

The four assessment objectives, set by AQA and used for marking, are:

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

Skills acquired

- Experimental range of art materials and techniques including drawing, painting, printmaking and 3D materials, such as clay
- Development stages of creative design, using self-propelled ideas
- Effective research skills, to support the development of a piece of work or project
- Evaluative and analytical literacy skills, to annotate work
- Independence to plan, prepare and execute final projects
- Presentation skills, both verbally and in portfolios

Specification: http://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/art-and-design/specifications/AQA-ART-GCSE-SP-2016.PDF

Assessment: http://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/art-and-design/gcse/art-and-design-8201-8206

Biology

Separate Sciences · Biology A

AWARDING BODY	QUALIFICATION
OCR – Gateway	GCSE

Course outline

This route involves students studying for three Science GCSE qualifications, one in each of Biology, Chemistry and Physics. Students follow the same course as described in the combined Science course, with additional content studied in each of the units. Students find this route demanding and it is suitable for students who have a passion and proven ability for Science.

At the end of Year 9, students who have achieved the highest marks in tests throughout the year and on the end of year exam are placed in one of two Separate Award groups on their side of the year. Year 10 is used to monitor the progress of these pupils. In Year 11, 50% of these pupils are entered for the Separate Award exam while the rest continue with the Combined Double Science (Higher tier) course, which leads to a double grade, e.g. a grade 77. The number of pupils that we can enter for Separate Award is limited to one group for each side of the year group. This process ensures that pupils are entered for the most appropriate course according to the individual student's potential.

This course involves pupils developing their understanding of the following:

- The use of conceptual models and theories to make sense of the observed diversity of natural phenomena
- The assumption that every effect has one or more cause
- That science progresses through a cycle of hypothesis, practical experimentation, observation, theory development and review
- That quantitative analysis is a central element both of many theories and of scientific methods of inquiry

Biology topics

- B1: Cell level systems
- B2: Scaling up
- B3: Organism level systems
- B4: Community level systems
- B5: Genes, inheritance and selection
- B6: Global challenges

Assessment method

Terminal paper (100%): 2 papers sat at the end of Year 11. Each paper will last 1 hour and 45 minutes and each will be worth 90 marks, assessing students' knowledge and understanding of Biology.

Skills acquired

- To make informed personal decisions about issues and questions that involve Science
- To gain scientific knowledge, leading to a better understanding of the world
- To develop a range of practical skills
- To develop mathematical skills
- To develop investigatory and analytical skills
- To develop skills in the presentation of scientific data

Specification – Biology: http://www.ocr.org.uk/Images/234594-specification-accredited-gcse-gateway-science-suite-biology-a-j247.pdf

Assessment – Biology: http://www.ocr.org.uk/qualifications/gcse-gateway-science-suite-biology-a-j247-from-2016/

Business

AWARDING BODY	QUALIFICATION
AQA	GCSE

Course outline

The subject is most suitable for students who

- Are interested in running a successful business
- Want to learn how to be entrepreneurial
- Are interested in current events and the world around them
- Have a reasonable level of English and Maths

The course covers

- Business in the real world
- Influences on business
- Business operations
- Human resources
- Marketing
- Finance

Skills acquired

- Use business terminology to identify and explain business activity
- Apply business concepts to familiar and unfamiliar contexts
- Develop problem solving and decision making skills relevant to business
- Investigate, analyse and evaluate business opportunities and issues
- Make justified decisions using both qualitative and quantitative data, including its selection, interpretation, analysis and evaluation, and the application of appropriate quantitative skills

Assessment method

Paper 1: Influences of operations and HRM on business activity	Paper 2: Influences of marketing and finance on business activity
What's assessed	**What's assessed**
• Business in the real world • Influences on business • Business operations • Human resources	• Business in the real world • Influences on business • Marketing • Finance
How it's assessed	**How it's assessed**
• Written exam: 1 hour 45 minutes • 90 marks • 50% of GCSE	• Written exam: 1 hour 45 minutes • 90 marks • 50% of GCSE
Questions	**Questions**
• Section A has multiple choice questions and short answer questions worth 20 marks. • Section B has one case study/data response stimuli with questions worth approximately 34 marks. • Section C has one case study/data response stimuli with questions worth approximately 36 marks.	• Section A has multiple choice questions and short answer questions worth 20 marks. • Section B has one case study/data response stimuli with questions worth approximately 34 marks. • Section C has one case study/data response stimuli with questions worth approximately 36 marks.

Specification: http://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/business/specifications/AQA-8132-SP-2017.PDF

Assessment: http://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/business-subjects/gcse/business-8132/assessment-resources

Cambridge National in IT

AWARDING BODY	QUALIFICATION
OCR (J836)	Level 1/Level 2

Course outline

This vocational computing option will inspire and equip students with the confidence to use skills that are relevant to the IT sector and more widely within day-to-day life. It covers the use of IT in the digital world, the *Internet of Everything*, data manipulation, human-computer interface (HCI) and *augmented reality*. Its practical approach is good for encouraging a hands-on development of technical IT skills to solve real-world problems, using common and specialised software. Students will go on to develop a deep understanding in the use of IT in the digital world and how to apply design tools, principles of human computer interactions, the use of data and testing, cyber-security and legislation when creating an IT solution or product to meet the requirements appropriate for a defined target audience.

A Cambridge National in IT will encourage learners to:

- Understand and apply the fundamental principles and concepts of IT, including the use of IT in the digital world, Internet of Everything, data manipulation and Augmented Reality
- Understand, apply and use IT appropriately and effectively for the purpose and audience
- Develop learning and practical skills that can be applied to real-life contexts and work situations
- Think creatively, innovatively, analytically, logically and critically
- Develop independence and confidence in using skills that would be relevant to the IT sector and more widely
- Plan, design, create, test and evaluate/review IT solutions and products which are fit for purpose and meeting user/client requirements, and apply design and Human Computer Interface (HCI) considerations appropriate for a defined audience
- Understand the impacts of digital technologies on the individual, organisation and wider society

Choose this subject if:

- You want to improve your IT skills and understanding, and are keen to develop good technical skills in the use of IT
- You want to learn how to plan, design, create, test and evaluate/review IT solutions and Augmented Reality (AR) products
- You prefer doing practical assignments based on problem solving tasks
- You want to be career and business ready by being skilled in the use of spreadsheets, or the development and use of Augmented Reality
- You want to learn about the role IT will play in future careers and enjoy problem-solving activities

Assessment method

Component	Unit	Format
Exam (40%)	R050: IT in the digital world	Written paper: 70 marks – 1.5 hours
NEA 1 (30%)	R060: Data manipulation using spreadsheets	60 marks
NEA 2 (30%)	R070: Using Augmented Reality to present information	60 marks

Skills acquired

- Use of computer software, including spreadsheets and augmented reality
- Development of key skills in numeracy, communication and ICT
- Problem solving by applying ICT to real life situations

Specification: https://www.ocr.org.uk/qualifications/cambridge-nationals/it-level-1-2-j836/

Assessment: https://www.ocr.org.uk/qualifications/cambridge-nationals/it-level-1-2-j836/assessment/

Chemistry

Separate Sciences · Chemistry A

AWARDING BODY	QUALIFICATION
OCR – Gateway	GCSE

Course outline

This route involves students studying for three Science GCSE qualifications, one in each of Biology, Chemistry and Physics. Students follow the same course as described in the combined Science course, with additional content studied in each of the units. Students find this route demanding and it is suitable for students who have a passion and proven ability for Science.

At the end of Year 9, students who have achieved the highest marks in tests throughout the year and on the end of year exam are placed in one of two Separate Award groups on their side of the year. Year 10 is used to monitor the progress of these pupils. In Year 11, 50% of these pupils are entered for the Separate Award exam while the rest continue with the Combined Double Science (Higher tier) course, which leads to a double grade, e.g. a grade 77. The number of pupils that we can enter for Separate Award is limited to one group for each side of the year group. This process ensures that pupils are entered for the most appropriate course according to the individual student's potential.

This course involves pupils developing their understanding of the following:

- The use of conceptual models and theories to make sense of the observed diversity of natural phenomena
- The assumption that every effect has one or more cause
- That science progresses through a cycle of hypothesis, practical experimentation, observation, theory development and review
- That quantitative analysis is a central element both of many theories and of scientific methods of inquiry

Chemistry topics

- C1: Particles
- C2: Elements, compounds and mixtures
- C3: Chemical reactions
- C4: Predicting and identifying reactions and products
- C5: Monitoring and controlling chemical reactions
- C6: Global challenges

Assessment method

Terminal paper (100%): 2 papers sat at the end of Year 11. Each paper will last 1 hour and 45 minutes and each will be worth 90 marks, assessing students' knowledge and understanding of Chemistry.

Skills acquired

- To make informed personal decisions about issues and questions that involve Science
- To gain scientific knowledge, leading to a better understanding of the world
- To develop a range of practical skills
- To develop mathematical skills
- To develop investigatory and analytical skills
- To develop skills in the presentation of scientific data

Specification – Chemistry: http://www.ocr.org.uk/Images/234598-specification-accredited-gcse-gateway-science-suite-chemistry-a-j248.pdf

Assessment – Chemistry: http://www.ocr.org.uk/qualifications/gcse-gateway-science-suite-chemistry-a-j248-from-2016/

Computer Science

AWARDING BODY
OCR (J277)

QUALIFICATION
GCSE (9-1)

Course outline

This option introduces the scientific and technical side of working with IT and computers. The nature of this course means it is included in the **English Baccalaureate** as a "Science" subject and will be using binary and hexadecimal systems, so the ability to apply maths and science is important. Skills are developed using practical activities and a detailed technical examination of how computers work. It is aimed at the future "App" developers, problem solvers, programmers and computer scientists. Programming tasks use a high-level text-based programming language, and cover the areas of Design, Write, Test and Refine.

A GCSE in Computer Science will encourage learners to:

- Understand and apply the principles and concepts of Computer Science, including abstraction, decomposition, logic, algorithms, and data representation
- Analyse problems in computational terms through practical experience of problem solving, including designing, writing and debugging programs
- Think creatively, innovatively, analytically, logically and critically
- Understand the components that make up digital systems, and how they communicate with one another as well as with other systems
- Understand the impacts of digital technology to the individual and society

Choose this subject if:

- You want to improve your IT skills and understanding
- You have a keen interest in wanting to know **how** computers work and like the idea of **writing your own** programs
- You prefer doing practical programming assignments based on problem solving tasks
- You want to develop your computational thinking skills
- You want to be a creator and writer of 'apps' and not just a user of them
- You want to learn about the role IT will play in future careers and enjoy problem-solving activities

Areas of study

- Computer systems and the functions of system software
- Understanding the functions of internal components of a computer
- Computer memory and storage
- How data can represent numbers, characters, images and sound
- The study and understanding of "emerging technologies"
- Network communications, system security and the Internet
- Computer programming, computational logic and the creation of "apps"
- The ethical, legal, cultural and environmental concerns of using computers

Assessment method

Exam paper	Content	Format
Paper 1 (50%)	Computer systems	Written paper – 80 marks, 1.5 hours
Paper 2 (50%)	Computational thinking, algorithms and programming	Written paper – 80 marks, 1.5 hours

Skills acquired

- Use of computer software, including databases and programming, and the ability to identify and understand internal and external computer hardware
- Development of key skills in numeracy, communication and ICT
- Computational thinking, along with conceptual learning and understanding
- Problem solving by applying ICT to real life situations

Specification: https://www.ocr.org.uk/qualifications/gcse/computer-science-j277-from-2020/

Assessment: https://www.ocr.org.uk/qualifications/gcse/computer-science-j277-from-2020/assessment/

Drama

AWARDING BODY	QUALIFICATION
Eduqas	GCSE

Course outline

Drama GCSE trains students to become excellent communicators and superb team players. It enhances confidence and allows students to find their own voice. It teaches numerous skills that are transferable to almost any working environment. It provides a solid foundation for future study of Drama but is also chosen by students wanting to broaden their appeal to employers. Drama on your CV means you are a creative, outgoing communicator – very desirable qualities in an employee.

The course centres around the study of making plays. This involves practical and written work that explores scripts and professional performances, but also focuses on students creating their own work. It's a demanding course that challenges students to stand up and put into practice ideas that they have studied.

It's impossible to do this course without either a practical performance or a design portfolio for a practical performance, but the written components are where most of the marks are gained.

Assessment method

Component 1: Devising theatre – 40% (60 marks)

Devising a piece of theatre based on a practitioner of your choice, where you perform the piece in front of an audience and write a portfolio about how you arrived at the performance. This is internally assessed and moderated. You can work as an actor or as a designer for this component.

Component 2: Performing from text – 20% (60 marks)

Practical. This is acting from a script, in either groups or individual monologues, examined by an external marker.

Component 3: Interpreting theatre (written paper) – 40% (60 marks)

Marked by Eduqas. This written exam is a test of knowledge about theatre in general but mainly focuses on a set text that is studied in the course. The final section of the exam is a detailed review of a live professional performance.

Skills acquired

- Presentation and public speaking
- Teamwork and negotiation
- Acting and performance skills
- Written techniques and skills used in other subjects such as English, History and Media Studies
- Design skills: lighting, sound, costume

Economics

AWARDING BODY
AQA

QUALIFICATION
GCSE

Course outline

The subject is most suitable for students who

- Are reasonably competent in English, and will be expected to read around the subject
- Are interested in current affairs
- Want to tackle problems related to the economy, business, society and the environment and are ready to debate issues

The course

How markets work	How the economy works
Economic foundations	Introduction to the national economy
Resource allocation	Government objectives
How prices are determined	How the government manages the economy
Production, costs, revenue and profit	International trade and the global economy
Competitive and concentrated markets	The role of money and financial markets
Market failure	

Assessment method

Paper 1: How markets work	Paper 2: How the economy works
What's assessed	**What's assessed**
Content 1–6. Students will be expected to draw on knowledge and understanding of the entire course of study to show a deeper understanding of these topics.	Content 7–11. Students will be expected to draw on knowledge and understanding of the entire course of study to show a deeper understanding of these topics.
How it's assessed	**How it's assessed**
• Written exam: 1 hour 45 minutes • 80 marks • 50% of GCSE	• Written exam: 1 hour 45 minutes • 80 marks • 50% of GCSE
Questions	**Questions**
• Section A: 10 multiple choice questions followed by a range of calculation, short and extended response questions. • Section B: five questions involving a mix of calculations, short and extended responses.	• Section A: 10 multiple choice questions followed by a range of calculation, short and extended response questions. • Section B: five questions involving a mix of calculations, short and extended responses.

Skills acquired

- When students understand how markets and economies work, they will develop an economic awareness to benefit them personally and professionally for years to come
- There are lots of opportunities to talk about today's economic issues in lessons. Students can develop communication, critical thinking and analytical skills through tasks based on anything from ways to cut the budget deficit, to weighing up the pros and cons of inflation or being part of free-trade agreements

Specification: http://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/economics/specifications/AQA-8136-SP-2017.PDF

Assessment: http://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/economics/gcse/economics-8136/assessment-resources

Engineering

AWARDING BODY AQA (8852) | **QUALIFICATION** GCSE Level 2

Course outline

The AQA GCSE Engineering (8852) gives students a practical and theoretical understanding of how engineered products are developed, manufactured and evaluated. It covers six core areas: materials, manufacturing processes, systems, testing and investigation, modern technologies, and practical engineering skills. Assessment is split between a two-hour written exam (60%) testing knowledge and application across these areas, and a non-exam assessment (40%) involving a supervised design-and-make project set by AQA.

Through this balance of theory and practice, students gain transferable skills in maths, science, technical communication and evaluation, alongside awareness of sustainability and ethics, preparing them for progression into A-levels, vocational qualifications, apprenticeships, or engineering careers.

Related engineering roles

- **Mechanical Engineering Roles** – auto, aeronautical and within tool and/or maintenance roles
- **Electrical & Electronic Engineering Roles** – such as within electronic engineering and control systems (robotics/automation)
- **Civil & Structural Engineering Roles** – aiding architects and within construction
- **Civil Engineer** – planning and overseeing infrastructure projects such as roads and railways
- **Manufacturing & Production Engineering Roles** – such as maintaining and designing tooling for manufacturing systems

Who thrives on this course

Students who thrive in AQA GCSE Engineering are those motivated by innovation in production rather than original design, with a strong interest in determining how predetermined designs can be realised efficiently and accurately. They enjoy applying maths and science to practical contexts, working hands-on with materials, processes and systems, and solving problems around manufacturing methods, sustainability and safety. Detail-oriented and logical, they can interpret technical drawings, test materials and refine production techniques, showing resilience and precision in their work.

The course particularly suits learners who want to explore engineering as the optimisation of making, turning ideas into reliable products, and offers clear progression into apprenticeships, vocational pathways, or further study in mechanical, electrical, civil, or manufacturing engineering.

Assessment method

Component	Weighting	Details
Written exam	60% (120 marks)	Two hours. Tests knowledge and application across materials, manufacturing processes, systems, testing and modern technologies through multiple-choice, short-answer, calculation, application and extended-response questions.
Non-exam assessment	40% (80 marks)	Around 30 supervised hours. Students respond to an AQA-set project released annually.

Together, these components balance theoretical understanding with practical engineering skills, ensuring learners demonstrate recall, application, problem-solving and reflective evaluation.

Skills acquired

- Technical knowledge
- Analytical and problem-solving skills
- Practical and production skills
- Project and process management

Full specification: GCSE Engineering 8852 | Specification | AQA

English Language

AWARDING BODY	QUALIFICATION
AQA	GCSE

Course outline

- To experience a range of writing, reading and oral activities
- To develop a range of writing styles
- To use standard English and variations correctly
- To be able to analyse, compare and produce writing in all forms
- To understand how spoken language is used in a variety of contexts
- To develop use of voice and listening skills in a variety of different contexts
- Creative writing
- To read and write a range of fiction and non-fiction
- Extract analysis of 19th/20th and 21st century literary fiction and non-fiction texts

Assessment method

Paper	Weighting	Content
Paper 1: Explorations in Creative Reading and Writing	1 hr 45 mins – 50%	Reading and analysing an unseen literary fiction extract. Writing a piece of descriptive narrative writing.
Paper 2: Writers' Viewpoints and Perspectives	1 hr 45 mins – 50%	Comparing two non-fiction extracts (19th/20th/21st century texts). Writing an argument/persuasive piece.

Skills acquired

- To communicate clearly: structure, organise and adapt talk
- To read with insight, follow an argument, select material, evaluate
- To write for a range of purposes and audiences
- To organise ideas
- To express meaning clearly and with accuracy
- To investigate spoken forms of English

Specification – English Language: http://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/english/gcse/english-language-8700/subject-content

Assessment – English Language: https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/english/gcse/english-8700/assessment-resources

English Literature

AWARDING BODY	QUALIFICATION
AQA	GCSE

Course outline

- To read, understand and respond to a range of literature texts
- To develop an awareness of social and historical influences on literature
- To write clearly about literature
- To talk/explain clearly about literature

Texts studied

- A contemporary play, such as *An Inspector Calls*
- A selection of contemporary and literary heritage poems on Power and Conflict
- A Shakespeare play: *Macbeth*
- A 19th century novel: *A Christmas Carol*

Assessment method

Paper	Weighting	Content
Paper 1: Shakespeare and the 19th century fiction	1 hr 45 mins – 40%	Analysis of a Shakespeare play, 'Macbeth'. Analysis of a 19th century novel, 'A Christmas Carol'.
Paper 2: Modern texts and poetry	2 hrs 15 mins – 60%	Analysis of a drama, 'An Inspector Calls'. Analysis of a collection of poems from an anthology on Power and Conflict. Exploration of an unseen poem.

Skills acquired

- To respond to texts critically and in detail
- To explain language and structure of texts
- To explore relationships and comparisons of texts
- To show understanding of the literary tradition
- To understand the influence of social and historical contexts

Assessment – English Literature: http://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/english/gcse/english-literature-8702/assessment-resources

Specification – English Literature: https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/english/gcse/english-8702/specification

French

AWARDING BODY	QUALIFICATION
Edexcel	GCSE

Course outline

- To develop the four skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing, expanding on the topics studied at Key Stage 3
- To develop knowledge and understanding of French grammar
- To encourage positive attitudes to the way of life of French-speaking countries

Themes for listening, speaking, reading and writing

My personal world, lifestyle and wellbeing, my neighbourhood, media and technology, studying and my future, and travel and tourism.

This subject is most suitable for students who

- Enjoy communicating with people and learning about people from different cultures and enjoy travelling
- Wish to find out more about the French language and French-speaking countries
- Would like to work abroad and/or would like to be able to offer the skill of speaking a foreign language to a future employer
- Are considering working in business, banking, finance, medicine, engineering, law, journalism or travel

Assessment method

All 4 skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing are assessed in 4 separate examinations at the end of Year 11. Students are entered at either **Foundation** level (grades 1–5) or **Higher** level (grades 4–9). Students can **not** be entered for different levels for each skill.

Paper	Skill	Weighting	Foundation	Higher
Unit 1	Speaking	25%	7–9 mins	10–12 mins
Unit 2	Listening	25%	45 mins	1 hour
Unit 3	Reading	25%	45 mins	1 hour
Unit 4	Writing	25%	1 hour 15 mins	1 hour 20 mins

Skills acquired

- To acquire knowledge and understanding of French and to develop skills to learn languages
- To develop awareness of French-speaking countries
- To build communication skills

Specification: https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/edexcel-gcses/french-2024.html

Geography

AWARDING BODY	QUALIFICATION
Edexcel A	GCSE

Course outline

Geography department intent: To know about the world we live in; learn from the past to hold the key to the future.

A thematic approach to Geography is taken, with content organised by physical and human environments. It also enables students to explore the people–environment challenges we face in the UK and to undertake fieldwork (a compulsory requirement across exam boards).

The Physical Environment

- The changing landscapes of the UK – coastal and river landscapes
- Weather hazards and climate change – including two studies of tropical storms and drought
- Ecosystems, biodiversity and management – including two studies of tropical rainforests and temperate deciduous woodlands

The Human Environment

- Changing cities – two studies including a UK city and a city in a developing or emerging country
- Global development – a study of a developing or emerging country
- Resource management – a study of water

Geographical Investigations: fieldwork and UK challenges

- Fieldwork – one physical and one human investigation
- UK Challenges – a study drawing across the Physical Environment and the Human Environment. Students use geographical skills to investigate a contemporary challenge drawn from one or more of the key themes: resource consumption and environmental sustainability, settlement, population and economics, landscape and climate change

The subject is suitable for students who like to

- Find out and ask questions about the global issues, the world and places around them
- Keep up to date with current affairs and would like to make a difference to their world; are curious about how people and their cultures are shaped by places and the environment
- Develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills for careers in fields like consulting, urban planning and data analysis

Assessment method

Students are assessed at the end of Year 11:

Component	Exam	Marks	Weighting
The Physical Environment	1 hour 45 minutes	94	37.5%
The Human Environment	1 hour 30 minutes	94	37.5%
Geographical Investigations	1 hour 30 minutes	64	25%

Skills acquired

- To use, interpret and analyse geographical data (graphs, tables etc.)
- To learn about places, patterns and processes
- To develop a sense of place and an appreciation of the environment
- To develop skills in map work, Geographical Information Systems, numeracy, literacy and the application of geographical enquiry
- To use geographical terminology confidently in writing and to ask geographical questions

Specification: https://qualifications.pearson.com/content/dam/pdf/GCSE/Geography-A/2016/specification-and-sample-assessments/gcse-2016-l12-geography-a-spec.pdf

Assessment materials: https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/edexcel-gcses/geography-a-2016.coursematerials.html

German

AWARDING BODY Edexcel | **QUALIFICATION** GCSE

Course outline

- To develop the four skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing and to expand on the topics studied at Key Stage 3
- To develop knowledge and understanding of German grammar
- To develop skills for language learning
- To encourage positive attitudes to the way of life of German-speaking countries

Themes for listening, speaking, reading and writing

My personal world, lifestyle and wellbeing, my neighbourhood, media and technology, studying and my future, and travel and tourism.

This subject is most suitable for students who

- Enjoy communicating with people and learning about people from different cultures
- Wish to find out more about the German language and German-speaking countries
- Would like to work abroad and/or enjoy travelling
- Would like to be able to offer the skill of speaking a foreign language to a future employer
- Are considering working in business, banking, finance, medicine, engineering, law, journalism or travel

Assessment method

All 4 skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing are assessed in 4 separate examinations at the end of Year 11. Students are entered at either **Foundation** level (grades 1–5) or **Higher** level (grades 4–9). Students can **not** be entered for different levels for each skill.

Paper	Skill	Weighting	Foundation	Higher
Unit 1	Speaking	25%	7–9 mins	10–12 mins
Unit 2	Listening	25%	45 mins	1 hour
Unit 3	Reading	25%	45 mins	1 hour
Unit 4	Writing	25%	1 hour 15 mins	1 hour 20 mins

Skills acquired

- To acquire knowledge and understanding of German
- To develop skills to learn languages
- To develop awareness of German-speaking countries
- To develop all four language skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing
- To build communication skills

Specification: https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/edexcel-gcses/german-2024.html

History

AWARDING BODY	QUALIFICATION
Edexcel	GCSE

Course outline

At Beal High School, our GCSE History curriculum develops students' knowledge and understanding of significant events, individuals and developments across British, European and world history. Through studying key historical periods, students explore how societies have changed over time while developing skills in historical analysis, source evaluation and interpretation. Our curriculum aims to develop independent, critical thinkers who can form well-supported judgements, consider different perspectives and use their understanding of history to make sense of the world today.

Topics studied

- **Crime and Punishment in Britain, c1000–present:** Students explore how crime, punishment and law enforcement have changed over time, examining the influence of religion, government, technology and changing attitudes.
- **Early Elizabethan England, 1558–88:** Students investigate the challenges Elizabeth I faced, including religious conflict, threats to her authority, relations with Spain and exploration of the New World.
- **Superpower Relations and the Cold War, 1941–91:** Students examine the causes, key events and consequences of the Cold War, focusing on tensions between the USA and USSR and how the conflict eventually ended.
- **Weimar and Nazi Germany, 1918–39:** Students explore the challenges faced by the Weimar Republic, Hitler's rise to power and how the Nazis established a dictatorship and controlled German society.

Assessment method

Examinations – 100%

Paper	Weighting	Content
Paper 1	30%	Crime and punishment in Britain, c1000–present
Paper 2	40%	Early Elizabethan England, 1558–88 (British depth study) and Superpower relations and the Cold War, 1941–91 (period study)
Paper 3	30%	Weimar and Nazi Germany, 1918–39 (modern depth study)

Skills acquired

- Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of key features and characteristics of historical periods
- Explain and analyse historical events using concepts such as causation, consequence, change, continuity, similarity, difference and significance
- Analyse, evaluate and use contemporary historical sources to make substantiated judgements
- Analyse and evaluate historical interpretations, explaining how and why interpretations differ and reaching substantiated judgements

Specification: GCSE (9-1) History Specification Issue 6

Assessment: Edexcel GCSE History (2016) | Pearson qualifications

Mathematics

AWARDING BODY	QUALIFICATION
Edexcel	GCSE

Course outline

- To develop numeracy skills
- To encourage enjoyment of Mathematics
- Number and Algebra
- Shape, Space and Measures
- Proportional reasoning
- Statistics and probability
- Application of mathematics and problem solving

Further Mathematics

GCSE Further Mathematics (AQA) may be offered alongside the GCSE to support progression to A level. This course provides candidates with an introduction to the mathematics studied post-16, including AS and A Level Mathematics and Further Mathematics. It is offered to Set 1 students only.

Assessment method

GCSE examinations – 100%

Paper	Type	Length
Paper 1	Non-calculator	1 hour 30 minutes
Paper 2	Calculator	1 hour 30 minutes
Paper 3	Calculator	1 hour 30 minutes

Students are entered for one of two tiers

There are 5 sets in Years 10 and 11. Sets 1, 2 and 3 will be entered for Higher Tier; Sets 4 and 5 will be entered for Foundation Tier. Tier entry for borderline students will be determined by mock examination and other diagnostic assessment results at the end of Year 10 and the GCSE November mock exam of Year 11.

Further Mathematics examination – 100%

Paper	Type	Length
Paper 1	Non-calculator	1 hour 45 minutes
Paper 2	Calculator	1 hour 45 minutes

Skills acquired

- To problem-solve
- To develop logical thinking
- To apply mathematical methods to everyday situations
- To progress through a hierarchy of concepts

GCSE Maths specification: http://qualifications.pearson.com/content/dam/pdf/GCSE/mathematics/2015/specification-and-sample-assesment/gcse-maths-2015-specification.pdf

Assessment: http://qualifications.pearson.com/content/dam/pdf/GCSE/mathematics/2015/specification-and-sample-assesment/GCSE-Mathematics-2015-SAM.pdf

GCSE FM specification: Level 2 Further Mathematics Specification (first teaching in 2018)

Music

AWARDING BODY Eduqas | **QUALIFICATION** GCSE

Course outline

GCSE Music is a creative and practical course for students who enjoy performing, composing and listening to music. You will study a wide range of musical styles, from classical and film music to popular and world music, developing both your musical understanding and practical skills.

Students will have opportunities to perform individually and as part of an ensemble, create original compositions, and learn how music is organised and used across different genres and cultures.

Assessment method

The course consists of three components:

No.	Unit title	Moderation type	Weighting
1	Performance	Internal – externally moderated	30%
2	Composition	Internal – externally moderated	30%
3	Appraising	Public exam	40%

- **Performing** – two performances, one solo and one ensemble
- **Composing** – two compositions, including one set by the exam board
- **Appraising** – listening and written examination based on the Areas of Study

Skills acquired

GCSE Music provides an excellent foundation for further study at A Level and beyond. It also complements subjects such as Drama, Dance, English, Media Studies and Computer Science. The course helps students develop transferable skills that are valued in many careers, including the creative industries, education, media, technology and business.

Specification: https://www.eduqas.co.uk/media/akxduier/eduqas-gcse-music-spec-from-2016-e-050225.pdf

Assessment / course materials: Teacher led

Physical Education

AWARDING BODY
NCFE

QUALIFICATION
Level 1/2 Technical Award in Health and Fitness

Course outline

This course is NEA and exam based, allowing students to focus on the study of the health and fitness sector. Students will be able:

- To develop a broad understanding of the structure and function of the body systems
- To identify the effects of health and fitness activities on the body
- To understand health and fitness and the components of fitness
- To apply the principles of training
- To test and develop components of fitness
- To apply health and fitness analysis and set goals
- To plan, develop and take part in a health and fitness programme and understand how to prepare safely

Course requirements

An interest in sport, health and fitness is desirable. A good standard of writing skills is necessary to cope with the demands of the NEA.

Assessment method

Component	Weighting	Details
External exam	40%	One external 90-minute exam at the end of Year 11. The specification content covers the areas mentioned above.
Non-Examined Assessment (NEA)	60%	22 hours (plus 2 hours' preparation time), taking place in lesson time in the second half of Year 11. The NEA takes the form of a brief that is updated each year and involves a series of tasks based on the theory content learned throughout the course.

Skills acquired

This Level 1/2 qualification is appropriate for learners who are looking to develop a significant core of knowledge and understanding in health and fitness and apply that knowledge through a project. The knowledge and skills gained will provide a foundation for learners to progress into career opportunities in the health and fitness sector and provide a platform for further study.

Specification: Health and Fitness

Assessment: health-and-fitness-sample-nea.pdf

More information: NCFE Level 1/2 Technical Award in Health and Fitness | NCFE

Physics

Separate Sciences · Physics A

AWARDING BODY	QUALIFICATION
OCR – Gateway	GCSE

Course outline

This route involves students studying for three Science GCSE qualifications, one in each of Biology, Chemistry and Physics. Students follow the same course as described in the combined Science course, with additional content studied in each of the units. Students find this route demanding and it is suitable for students who have a passion and proven ability for Science.

At the end of Year 9, students who have achieved the highest marks in tests throughout the year and on the end of year exam are placed in one of two Separate Award groups on their side of the year. Year 10 is used to monitor the progress of these pupils. In Year 11, 50% of these pupils are entered for the Separate Award exam while the rest continue with the Combined Double Science (Higher tier) course, which leads to a double grade, e.g. a grade 77. The number of pupils that we can enter for Separate Award is limited to one group for each side of the year group. This process ensures that pupils are entered for the most appropriate course according to the individual student's potential.

This course involves pupils developing their understanding of the following:

- The use of conceptual models and theories to make sense of the observed diversity of natural phenomena
- The assumption that every effect has one or more cause
- That science progresses through a cycle of hypothesis, practical experimentation, observation, theory development and review
- That quantitative analysis is a central element both of many theories and of scientific methods of inquiry

Physics topics

- P1: Matter
- P2: Forces
- P3: Electricity
- P4: Magnetism and magnetic fields
- P5: Waves in matter
- P6: Radioactivity
- P7: Energy
- P8: Global challenges

Assessment method

Terminal paper (100%): 2 papers sat at the end of Year 11. Each paper will last 1 hour and 45 minutes and each will be worth 90 marks, assessing students' knowledge and understanding of Physics.

Skills acquired

- To make informed personal decisions about issues and questions that involve Science
- To gain scientific knowledge, leading to a better understanding of the world
- To develop a range of practical skills
- To develop mathematical skills
- To develop investigatory and analytical skills
- To develop skills in the presentation of scientific data

Specification – Physics: http://www.ocr.org.uk/Images/234600-specification-accredited-gcse-gateway-science-suite-physics-a-j249.pdf

Assessment – Physics: http://www.ocr.org.uk/qualifications/gcse-gateway-science-suite-physics-a-j249-from-2016/

Religious Studies

AWARDING BODY
AQA

QUALIFICATION
GCSE Religious Studies A (8062MA)

Course outline

- Develop knowledge and understanding of religions and non-religious beliefs
- Develop knowledge and understanding of religious beliefs, teachings and sources of wisdom and authority, including through reading of key religious texts, other texts and scriptures of the religions studied
- Develop ability to construct well-argued, well-informed, balanced and structured written arguments, demonstrating depth and breadth of understanding of the subject
- Reflect on and develop own values, beliefs, meaning, purpose, truth and influence on human life
- Reflect on and develop own values, beliefs and attitudes in the light of what is learnt and contribute to preparing for adult life in a pluralistic society and global community

This subject is most suitable for students who

- Are interested in and fascinated by religion
- Are interested in the world and the way people think
- Are strong at extended writing
- Enjoy exploring important philosophical and ethical issues
- Are from any religious or non-religious background

Assessment method

The Department of Philosophy and Theology is offering this course, which offers excellent progression opportunities through to A-Level and degree. It consists of 2 components, each worth 50%. Both are assessed by two 105-minute written examinations. There is no controlled assessment or coursework. This course is linear in line with all GCSEs, therefore all exams are at the end of Year 11.

Examinations – 100%

Component	Content
Component 1 Study of religions: beliefs, teachings and practices	Pupils to study the beliefs, teachings and practices of **2 religions**: • Christianity • Islam
Component 2 Thematic studies	Pupils to study **4 religious, philosophical and ethical themes**: • Theme A: Relationships and Families • Theme B: Religion and Life • Theme D: Religion, Peace and Conflict • Theme E: Crime and Punishment

Skills acquired

- Excellent preparation for many careers – medicine, law, politics, journalism, social work, media, teaching etc.
- Excellent preparation for understanding how people think and believe – essential in life as well as in every workplace
- Gain critical thinking skills so highly valued by employers and universities

Specification: https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/religious-studies/gcse/religious-studies-8062/specification

Science: Combined

Gateway Science A (worth 2 GCSEs)

AWARDING BODY	QUALIFICATION
OCR	GCSE

Course outline

This course involves students studying for two Science GCSEs. The specification is designed with a content-led approach. Students will:

- Develop scientific knowledge and understanding through the specific disciplines of biology, chemistry and physics
- Develop understanding of the nature, processes and methods of science, through different types of scientific enquiries
- Develop and learn to apply observational, practical, modelling, enquiry and problem-solving skills, both in the laboratory, in the field and in other learning environments
- Develop the ability to evaluate claims based on science through critical analysis of the methodology, evidence and conclusions

Course content

Biology	Chemistry	Physics
B1: Cell level systems	C1: Particles	P1: Matter
B2: Scaling up	C2: Elements, compounds and mixtures	P2: Forces
B3: Organism level systems	C3: Chemical reactions	P3: Electricity and magnetism
B4: Community level systems	C4: Predicting and identifying reactions and products	P4: Waves and radioactivity
B5: Genes, inheritance and selection	C5: Monitoring and controlling chemical reactions	P5: Energy
B6: Global challenges	C6: Global challenges	P6: Global challenges

Assessment method

Terminal paper at the end of Year 11 (100%): 6 papers sat in Year 11. Each paper will last 1 hour and 10 minutes and each will be worth 60 marks, assessing students' knowledge and understanding of Biology, Chemistry and Physics.

Students are entered for one of two tiers: **Higher** (grades 4–9) or **Foundation** (grades 1–5).

Skills acquired

- To make informed personal decisions about issues and questions that involve Science
- To gain scientific knowledge, leading to a better understanding of the world
- To develop a range of practical skills
- To develop mathematical skills
- To develop investigatory and analytical skills
- To develop skills in the presentation of scientific data

Specification: http://www.ocr.org.uk/Images/234596-specification-accredited-gcse-gateway-science-suite-combined-science-a-j250.pdf

Assessment: http://www.ocr.org.uk/qualifications/gcse-gateway-science-suite-combined-science-a-j250-from-2016/

Sociology

AWARDING BODY	QUALIFICATION
AQA	GCSE

Course outline

- To develop an understanding of the nature and significance of individual and social differences in our own and other societies
- To acquire, select and handle information, to analyse critically its nature and source and to base judgements and arguments on evidence
- To reflect on personal experience of the social world in which we live, acquire knowledge, and develop skills that will enable students to play informed roles within the community

Sociology has two mandatory, externally assessed units:

Unit 1: Sociology of Families and Education – 50%

This unit has two sections. Section A requires candidates to examine different forms of family in contemporary society. It investigates changing relationships in the family such as parenting, teenagers and adults, as well as opposing sociological views of the family. Section B encourages candidates to develop a critical understanding of the roles of education, as well as focus on the educational achievement of different social groups. In both sections, students look at the main theories, methods and strategies of sociological research.

Unit 2: Sociology of Crime and Deviance + Social Stratification – 50%

This unit also has two sections. Section A considers how crime and deviance are strongly influenced by the societies in which they occur. It examines how crime is controlled by various organisations in society and how it is explained and measured by sociologists. Section B explores the stratified nature of society into levels. How does this hierarchy affect the life chances and experiences of individuals and social groups living in modern Britain? In both sections of Unit 2, students will draw on knowledge and understanding of the entire course of study and show a deeper understanding of these topics.

This subject is most suitable for students who

- Are able to organise and present information, ideas and arguments clearly and logically
- Can think independently
- Enjoy writing essays
- Have an interest in the news and current issues
- Enjoy debating and balancing opposing views

Assessment method

Two exams that are 50% each of the assessment and last for **1 hour and 45 minutes**.

Skills acquired

- To demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the above social issues, including the causes and consequences of inequality
- To interpret information presented in different forms and evaluate its relevance and accuracy
- To use information to examine issues and construct and evaluate arguments and conclusions
- To organise and communicate students' knowledge and understanding in different and creative ways, and reach judgements based on evidence

Specification: http://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/sociology/specifications/AQA-8192-SP-2017.PDF

Assessment: http://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/sociology/gcse/sociology-8192/assessment-resources

Spanish

AWARDING BODY	QUALIFICATION
Edexcel	GCSE

Course outline

- To develop the four skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing and to expand on the topics studied at Key Stage 3
- To develop knowledge and understanding of Spanish grammar
- To develop skills for language learning
- To encourage positive attitudes to the way of life of Spanish-speaking countries

Themes for listening, speaking, reading and writing

My personal world, lifestyle and wellbeing, my neighbourhood, media and technology, studying and my future, and travel and tourism.

This subject is most suitable for students who

- Enjoy communicating with people and learning about people from different cultures
- Wish to find out more about the Spanish language and Spanish-speaking countries
- Would like to work abroad and/or enjoy travelling
- Would like to be able to offer the skill of speaking a foreign language to a future employer
- Are considering working in business, banking, finance, medicine, engineering, law, journalism or travel

Assessment method

All 4 skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing are assessed in 4 separate examinations at the end of Year 11. Students are entered at either **Foundation** level (grades 1–5) or **Higher** level (grades 4–9). Students can **not** be entered for different levels for each skill.

Paper	Skill	Weighting	Foundation	Higher
Unit 1	Speaking	25%	7–9 mins	10–12 mins
Unit 2	Listening	25%	45 mins	1 hour
Unit 3	Reading	25%	45 mins	1 hour
Unit 4	Writing	25%	1 hour 15 mins	1 hour 20 mins

Skills acquired

- To acquire knowledge and understanding of Spanish and to develop awareness of Spanish-speaking countries
- To develop skills to learn languages
- To develop all four language skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing
- To build communication skills

Specification: https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/edexcel-gcses/spanish-2024.html