Bedlington Academy

Key Stage 4 options guide

Dear parents and carers,

Following the Year 9 Options Evening, students are asked to make choices in relation to the curriculum they will study in Year 10 and 11.

The subjects studied in Year 7, 8 and 9 are currently very similar for all students. However, in Years 10 and 11 students have a degree of choice and can select the option subjects they wish to study. As a parent/carer, you have a key role in this process, as well as supporting your child as they enter the next phase of their education at Bedlington Academy.

All students are expected to follow examination courses in English, mathematics and science. In addition, all students will participate in physical education. These subjects are compulsory.

Students will then select from a range of courses offered. A brief outline of the courses is included in this brochure. The Options Evening will give parents, carers and students the opportunity to understand more about the process, talk to staff and discuss the content of the individual courses on offer.

Yours faithfully,

Jo Lamb
Head of School

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Curriculum

Although the majority of the Key Stage 4 curriculum is prescribed by the Department for Education, we still have some flexibility at Bedlington Academy. There have been significant changes made in recent years both in terms of the statutory curriculum offered and the way in which student performance is measured. However, we want to continue to offer
our students a curriculum that is appropriate to their individual needs, whilst ensuring it enables them to meet the expectations set out by the Department for Education.
With this in mind, students will follow a curriculum which reflects the recent changes and, wherever possible, this is tailored to suit your child's individual skills and abilities.
This brochure is about the courses your child will study over the next three years. Please read it carefully.

Next year we will be offering a range of courses including:
1. **GCSE** courses, some of which involve an element of controlled assessment and all of which have external examinations taken at the end of Year 11. Each subject will be graded from 9-1.
2. **BTEC and Technical** awards/courses, which relate to a particular vocational area. The courses are equivalent to a full GCSE but are largely portfolio based and have fewer external examinations. All assessment decisions are subject to internal and external verification. Each subject will be graded from Distinction*-Pass.

Please note: some courses are yet to receive final approval by the Department for Education, so the detail of courses may change before teaching in September 2023. However, any specification followed will be closely related to the course offered in the options brochure, and all qualifications will be either a full GCSE or equivalent.

Core subjects

Students will study a number of core subjects alongside their chosen options. These are:
English: Two GCSEs which include English language and English literature.
Mathematics: One GCSE.
Science: Two GCSEs following the combined Science Trilogy Award, or three separate GCSEs in Biology, Chemistry and Physics. The course which students take in science is determined using information from Key Stage 2 SATs and current teacher assessments.
Geography or History: One or both of these subjects will be studied. Students must choose either geography or history and if
they wish they may select both subjects, one as a compulsory subject and the other as one of their options.
Modern Foreign Language: One GCSE.
Core Physical Education: No qualification awarded.
Core Philosophy: No qualification awarded.

Options process

Options information will be shared with students during lessons in the weeks prior to the option evening.

Our Year 9 parents' and options evening will be taking place on ***Wednesday 4th March 2026*** *and will provide an opportunity to discuss progress and potential option choices with subject staff. Options forms will be sent to parents following the options evening.*

The return date for options forms will be ***Wednesday 11th March 2026****.*

Please note:

- *If your options reference form is handed in late, you are less likely to get your preferred options.*
- *Completed options preference forms will be checked to ensure that your child has chosen a broad and balanced range of subjects allowing them access to as wide a range of careers as possible in the future. 1:1 conversations with students will take place as required to help guide choices.*
- *We will do our very best to accommodate your child's choices, but it will be necessary for reserve choices to be made. Therefore, your child should choose their reserve choices carefully.*
- *We are offering a wide range of courses, but we may not be able to run them all if class sizes are not viable. If there is a problem with any of their choices, we will discuss this with your child*

GCSE English Language

Qualification type	GCSE
Examination board	AQA

The specification offers two equally balanced papers, relating reading sources to the topic and theme of writing tasks. Each paper has a distinct identity, looking at how writers use narrative and descriptive techniques to engage the interest of readers and how different writers present a similar topic over time.

What is the course like and what will be studied?

The English language course (AQA exam board) is comprised of three units:
Students will read and analyse a range of texts from the 19th, 20th and 21st Centuries.

Students will be able to:

• Read fluently, and with good understanding, a wide range of texts from the 19th, 20th and21st centuries, including literature and literary non-fiction as well as other writing such as reviews and journalism
• Read and evaluate texts critically and make comparisons between texts
• Summarise and synthesise information or ideas from texts
• Use knowledge gained from wide reading to inform and improve their own writing
• Write effectively and coherently using standard English appropriately
• Use grammar correctly and punctuate and spell accurately
• Acquire and apply a wide vocabulary, alongside a knowledge and understanding of grammatical terminology, and linguistic conventions for reading, writing and spoken language
• Listen to and understand spoken language and use spoken standard English effectively

For speaking and listening, students will be expected to present, ask and respond to questions and use Standard English.

How will the course be assessed?

Unit 1: Explorations in creative reading and writing (50%)
Examination 1 hour and 45 minutes.
Unit 2: Writers' viewpoints and perspectives (50%)
Examination 1 hour and 45 minutes.
Unit 3: Speaking and listening (0% but must be completed for the award of the qualification)
Internal assessment using a range of spoken language tasks. Externally moderated.

Future options

Sixth Form, students can take A level English Language and/or Literature.
Career opportunities are wide and varied. A higher level qualification in English Language could lead to a career in journalism, publishing, writing, editing, teaching, advertising, management, public relations or law.

GCSE English Literature

Qualification type	GCSE
Examination board	AQA

GCSE English Literature encourages students to develop knowledge and skills in reading, writing and critical thinking. Through the study of literature, students have a chance to develop culturally and
to acquire knowledge from some of the best thinkers and writers. Studying GCSE English Literature encourages students to read widely for pleasure, and is preparation for studying literature at a higher level.

What is the course like and what will be studied?

Students will study a range of poetry, prose and drama texts, including:

• A Shakespeare play
• Modern drama or novel
• 19th century novel
• Poetry: a cluster of 15 thematically linked poems associated with power and conflict or love and relationships and written between 1789 and the present day
• A selection of 'unseen' poems in preparation for the 'unseen' element of the Paper 2 examination

Students will learn to:

• Read a wide range of classic literature fluently and with good understanding, and make connections across their reading
• Read in-depth, with critical and evaluative processes, so that they are able to discuss and explain their understanding and ideas
• Develop the habit of reading widely and often
• Appreciate the depth and power of our English literary heritage
• Write accurately, effectively and analytically about their reading, using Standard English
• Acquire and use a wide of vocabulary, including the grammatical terminology and other literary and linguistic terms they need to criticise and analyse what they read.

How will the course be assessed?

Paper 1: Shakespeare and the 19th Century novel (50%)
Examination (closed book) 1 hour and 45 minutes.
Paper 2: Modern texts and poetry (50%)
Examination (closed book) 2 hour and 15 minutes.

Future options

Sixth Form, students can take A level English Language and/or Literature.
Career opportunities are wide and varied. A higher level qualification in English Literature could lead to a career in theatre, journalism, publishing, writing, editing, teaching, advertising, management, public relations or law.

GCSE Mathematics

Qualification type	GCSE
Examination board	OCR

Our GCSE (9-1) Mathematics qualification encourages students to develop a positive attitude towards the subject and recognise the importance of mathematics in daily life. Students build on a sound base of conceptual understanding to apply mathematical techniques in a variety of authentic contexts.

What is the course like and what will be studied?

There will be a mixture of formal, practical and investigation work in the key areas of:

- Number
- Algebra
- Ratio, proportion and rates of change
- Geometry and measures
- Probability
- Statistics

Through the study of mathematics it is expected that our students will be able to develop connections across mathematical ideas through the three aims of the curriculum

1. Fluency - Students will consolidate their numerical skills and recall of mathematical concepts. They will be able to select and use appropriate calculations and strategies as well as use mathematical language precisely.

2. Reasoning - Students will become more confident in making deductions in geometry, number and algebra. They will extend their ability to assess the validity and accuracy of a given way of presenting information.

3. Problem Solving - Students will make use of connections between different parts of the mathematics curriculum usually including multi-step problems.

How will the course be assessed?

Students are entered for examination at one of two overlapping tiers of entry. Foundation: Grades 1-5 and Higher: Grades 4-9.

Paper 1 Non calculator examination (33 1/3%)
1 hour and 30 minutes.

Paper 2 Calculator examination (33 1/3 %)
1 hour and 30 minutes.

Paper 3 Calculator examination (33 1/3 %)
1 hour and 30 minutes.

Future options

Sixth Form students can take A level mathematics.

GCSE mathematics is recognised as being extremely important by college, universities and employers. Success in mathematics is fundamental to careers in fields such as medicine, finance, engineering, architecture, primary education.

GCSE Science

Qualification type	GCSE (worth two or three GCSEs)
Examination board	AQA

The course places a strong emphasis on exploring the science that underpins day to day life and encourages students to think about what science can tell them about themselves, the environment and the universe. It provides the opportunity to acquire the scientific skills, knowledge and understanding necessary for life. There is a strong emphasis on explanations, theories and modelling in science along with the implications of science in society.

What is the course like and what will be studied?

The main themes covered within each subject are as follows:

Biology

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

Chemistry

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

Physics

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

Students complete a number of 'required practical activities', which are an essential component of the GCSE that builds essential investigative skills.

How will the course be assessed?

Students are entered for examination at one of two overlapping tiers of entry: Foundation (Grades 1-5) and Higher (Grades 4-9).

Biology - Two 1 hour 15 minute examinations worth 50% each.

Chemistry - Two 1 hour 15 minute examinations worth 50% each.

Physics - Two 1 hour 15 minute examinations worth 50% each.

GCSE triple award (biology, chemistry, physics)

Students who have shown an aptitude for science in Key Stage 3 will be selected to take this course. It allows students to experience a broader, more in-depth coverage of topics. At the end of the course they will achieve three separate qualifications in GCSE biology, GCSE chemistry and GCSE physics.

Future options

In Sixth Form students can take A Level Biology, A Level Chemistry, A Level Physics or BTEC Level 3 Science. All employers, colleges and Universities will expect students to have good grades in science and there are many careers which require specific science qualifications, from astronomy to zoology!

GCSE Modern Foreign Languages - Spanish

Qualification type	GCSE 9-1
Examination board	AQA

Knowledge of a foreign language is a highly valued skill in the world of work. Through the study of Spanish, students will develop not only their communication skills but also other essential skills such as problem solving, critical thinking or inference, to name just a few. They will also have the opportunity to experience, understand and appreciate different cultures, which will help them become the rounded, global citizens we aspire them to be.

What is the course like and what will be studied?

The GCSE course for Spanish builds on the skills taught at Key Stage 3 and the four key linguistic skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing are developed while covering the following themes:

Theme 1 - Identity and culture: Me, my family and friends, technology in everyday life, free-time activities, customs and festivals in French speaking countries.

Theme 2 - Local, national, international and global areas of interest: Home, town, neighbourhood and region, social issues, global issues, travel and tourism.

Theme 3 - Current and future study and employment: My studies, life at school/college, education post-16, Jobs, career choices and ambitions.

The skills acquired through the course will allow you:

- Apply grammatical rules to create language
- Translate short phrase and texts from and to the target language
- Understand and relate key information from written and spoken target language texts
- Give your opinion and point of view about a range of topics.

How will the course be assessed?

Students are entered for examination at one of two overlapping tiers of entry. Foundation: Grades 1-5 and Higher: Grades 4-9.

Paper 1 – Listening (25%)
Paper 2 – Speaking (25%)
Paper 3 – Reading (25%)
Paper 4 – Writing (25%)

Future options

In Sixth Form students can take A level Spanish and this can progress into further study of languages in the future.

A language qualification complements all further education subjects. Previous students have gone on to study languages at university but have also entered a wide variety of courses and employment including teaching, nursing, veterinary studies, social care, advertising and marketing.

OPTIONS YOU MAY CHOOSE

As well as the core curriculum, there are a wide range of GCSE and vocational subjects to choose from. Use the lists below to select the subjects you may be interested in studying and read the relevant pages in the options guide to find out more information and discuss with staff as you circulate the displays.
We are offering the following range of courses in September 2026:

GCSE Subjects

- GCSE Art
- GCSE Digital Art
- GCSE Drama
- GCSE Geography
- GCSE History
- GCSE Music
- GCSE PE
- GCSE Photography
- GCSE RE

OCR National and Technical award courses

- OCR National Creative iMedia
- OCR National Engineering Design
- BTEC Health and Social Care
- OCR National Sports Studies
- BTEC Travel and Tourism

ALL students in Year 9 should select **THREE** choices from the subjects listed. These must include:

- At least **ONE** of GCSE Geography or GCSE History (students may opt to study both).

ALL students will also be asked to indicate **THREE RESERVE** choices on the options preference form.

GCSE Art

Qualification type	GCSE
Examination board	AQA

This an excellent general introduction to the study of art, craft and design. You will look at different approaches to art and use lots of different media, techniques and materials.

What is the course like and what will be studied?

This is an exciting course where students will be introduced to a variety of experiences that explore a range of materials, techniques and processes. They will explore both 2D and 3D techniques, allowing pupils to develop knowledge and skills in a range of disciplines.
During the course, students will use sketchbooks to underpin their work and record their ideas. They will research artists and practitioners to inform their practice and will work towards production of a personal outcome for each project.
Drawing is an essential part of the course, so it is essential that students are confident and capable in this element. There is also an expectation that all work is clearly annotated and explained; therefore, you will be expected to write.

How will the course be assessed?

Students are required to create two units of work:
Unit 1 : Portfolio (60%)
Unit 2 : Externally Set Task/exam unit (40%)
Work for each unit is assessed using the four assessment objectives, each being worth 25%.
These are:-
• AO1- Researching - finding out about artists, movements and themes to inspire work
• AO2- Creating- developing ideas and experimenting with a range of materials and techniques
• AO3- Recording - drawing, photographing and annotating to inform work
• AO4- Presenting - producing an original outcome

Coursework is produced through projects completed during lessons, with the final exam project completed at the end of the course in Year 11.

Future options

Sixth Form, students can take A level Art and/or A Level Photography. Art is essential if you are considering any creative career such as; fashion design, illustration, graphic design, fine art, editorial photography, print making and animation. It is the means by which you create a portfolio of work to take to interview for college and/or a creative based degree at University.

Digital Art (Graphic Communications)

Qualification type	GCSE Graphic Communication
Examination board	Pearson Edexcel

Digital Art introduces students to a visual way of conveying information, ideas and emotions, using a range of graphic media, processes, techniques and elements such as colour, icons, images, typography and photographs.

What is the course like and what will be studied?

If you enjoy being creative and love using technology, GCSE Digital Art is the perfect course for you! You'll learn how to design stunning artwork using Adobe Photoshop, combine photography with digital drawing, experiment with effects like photomontage, and even paint digitally.

How will the course be assessed?

• **Personal Portfolio (60%)** – Coursework based on a chosen theme, demonstrating skills in digital design, typography, illustration, and layout.

• **Externally Set Assignment (40%)** – A timed project set by Edexcel, including a 10-hour final piece.

Skills Covered:
• Digital illustration and photo manipulation
• Graphic design principles (composition, color, typography)
• Use of industry-standard software (e.g., Adobe Photoshop, Illustrator)
• Experimentation with mixed media and traditional techniques

Assessment:
Work is marked on creativity, technical skill, development of ideas, and final outcomes, following Edexcel's assessment objectives.

Future options

Whether you dream of becoming a graphic designer or game artist, this course builds skills used in industries like gaming, film, fashion, and tech, giving you a great start in the creative world! The course lets you explore endless possibilities while having fun. Students may go on to 6th form, apprenticeships or creative careers in graphic design, gaming, digital marketing, and animation.

GCSE Drama

Qualification type	GCSE
Examination board	Eduqas

GCSE Drama allows time for both practical work and academic study, providing students with the opportunity to work in groups to prepare their own pieces of drama, as well as recreate well known plays. Students are encouraged to focus on their skills development and learn how to become independent, critical thinkers and effective decision-makers. These personal attributes make students stand out as they progress through their education and into employment.

What is the course like and what will be studied?

During Drama lessons, students will develop skills that are required to become an actor, director and designer through exploration of existing performance material. As well as acting, students have the option to explore design elements further, for example, operating stage lighting, creating set pieces and designing costumes for characters.
The units studied involve:
1. Devising theatre – Students will study various styles of theatre while working in groups to explore their own ideas for an original play. There is an option to be assessed as an actor or a designer (lighting or costume).
2. Performing from a text – Actors will perform (in class) two extracts from a play. Designers will create designs for either lighting or costume.
3. Interpreting theatre – Students will practically explore a play text and respond to questions as a director, designer and an actor. In this unit, students are required to visit the theatre in order to write a Theatre Review for a live production.

How will the course be assessed?

Unit 1 (40%) Internal assessment (performance or design and portfolio of evidence)
Unit 2 (20%) Non exam assessment (performance or realisation of design)
Unit 3 (40%) Externally assessed: 90 minute exam worth 60 marks. Non-exam assessment 60% of qualification
External assessment 40% of qualification.

Future options

In Sixth Form, students can progress onto the A Level Drama and Theatre or Performing Arts course.
Students who study Drama may go on to work within the professional industry and become an actor, director, designer or follow the PR career path and become a manager or a producer.
Others may go on to read a diverse range of subjects and work within an extremely broad range of careers, some of which may include teaching, law, journalism, politics, social work, science, occupational therapy.

Engineering Design

Qualification type	Cambridge National
Examination board	OCR

This is an excellent study programme for students wanting to develop **applied knowledge** and **design skills** in engineering design and, who want to progress onto other related study, such as qualifications in Engineering or Design and Technology.

What is the course like and what will be studied?

You may be interested in this if you want an engaging qualification where you will use what you learn in practical, real-life situations, such as:

• Using both 2D and 3D engineering design techniques
• Designing new products to meet a design brief
• Communicating engineering design ideas.

This will help you to develop independence and confidence in using skills that would be relevant to the
engineering design and development sector. The qualification will also help you to develop learning
and skills that can be used in other life and work situations, such as:

• Completing research to inform engineering design ideas
• Solving problems by exploring different engineering design options
• Finding imaginative solutions through creative thinking.

How will the course be assessed?
Students must complete three units:

• one externally assessed unit (exam 40%)
• two centre-assessed units (NEA 60%).

How will the course be assessed?

R038: Principles of engineering design (exam 40%). This is assessed by an exam.
In this unit you will learn about the design process, and all of the stages that are involved.
Topics include: Designing processes - Designing requirements - Communicating design outcomes - Evaluating design ideas

R039: Communicating designs (30%) This is assessed by a set assignment. In this unit you will learn how to use sketching and engineering drawings to communicate your ideas. Topics include:
Manual production of freehand sketches - Manual production of engineering drawings - Use of computer aided design (CAD).

R040: Design, evaluation and modelling (30%). This is assessed by a set assignment. In this unit you will learn how to create and test models of your design. Topics include: Product evaluation - Modelling design ideas.

Future options

These skills will help you progress onto further study in the engineering design and development sector. This may be Level 3 vocational qualifications, such as the Cambridge Technical in Engineering, A Levels, such as A Level Design and Technology, or one of the number of Design and Development Technician Apprenticeships. It is anticipated that these qualifications will also enable you to progress onto a T Level such as Design and Development for Engineering and Manufacturing, when they are available.

GCSE Geography

Qualification type	GCSE
Examination board	Eduqas

This exciting and highly varied course is based upon the challenges and opportunities that the world offers, explored through a range of topics. A blend of human and physical geography helps us to explore the world in which we live, and the connections people and places have.

What is the course like and what will be studied?

Geography is an ever changing, up to date, exciting and relevant subject. It helps students to make sense of the world in which we live as well as delivering a wide ranging set of skills which are
transferable not only to other subjects, but also to many aspects of life. This makes Geography one of the most sought out general subjects for progression into further education and employment.
In this course students will build upon the knowledge and skills developed in Key Stage 3. The course looks at how physical and human environments are linked and how people are affected by geography and continued global change, both in the United Kingdom and in other parts of the world.

Paper 1 – Living with the physical environment
Topics include tectonic hazards, weather hazards, ecosystems, hot deserts, tropical rainforests, the changing nature of rivers and coasts and the human interactions with all of the above.

Paper 2 – Challenges in the human environment
Topics include urban issues and challenges, the changing economic world and energy resources and issues.

Unit 3 - Geographical Applications
This unit aims to develop geographers as a whole. Fieldwork skills covering both human and physical geography are studied. Students are required to complete two compulsory local fieldwork days in preparation for this unit. The second part of this unit is application of knowledge of the course as a whole, which is demonstrated through an issue-based evaluation of a set of resources released 12 weeks before the exam.

How will the course be assessed?

Unit 1: Living with the physical environment (35%) 1 hour and 30 minute exam
Unit 2: Challenges in the human environment (35%) 1 hour and 30 minute exam
Unit 3: Geographical applications (30%) 1 hour and 15 minute exam

Future options

Geography is a very diverse and valued subject both in the world of work and education, at A-level it is a favoured facilitating subject to allow access onto degree courses, it is also statistically one of the most employable degrees.
The natural step from GCSE is to progress to A-level which you can study within our sixth form. Potential future careers are vast and may include cartographer, climatologist, environmental management, travel industry, teaching, journalism, law, economics, vulcanologist, hazard management, town planning and surveying.

BTEC Health and Social Care

Qualification type	BTEC
Examination board	Edexcel

Health and social care technical award gives students the knowledge and understanding of the health and social care system, the care values which underpin it and how human growth and development develops and changes over the life stages. Students will use this knowledge and apply to a range of case studies to demonstrate their understanding.

What is the course like and what will be studied?

Students explore the theory of human development from birth to death, types of health promotion activity as well as learning the skills needed to work in all care settings.
The course is made up of three components:

Component 1 - Human lifespan development

• explore how individuals develop physically, emotionally, socially and intellectually over the lifestages
• investigate how various factors, events and choices impact individuals' growth and development
• discover how people adapt to life events and cope with making changes

Component 2 - Health and social care services and values

• learn which health and social care services are available
• identify why people might need to use these services
• discover who's involved in providing these services
• explore what might stop people from accessing the services they need
• look at the care values the sector has in order to make sure people get the care and protection they need

Component 3 - Health and Wellbeing

• identify key health indicators and how to interpret them
• assess an individual's health using what you have learned
• create a health and wellbeing improvement plan for that person, which includes targets and recommendations of support services available
• consider obstacles individuals may have in being successful and suggest ways these can be overcome.

How will the course be assessed?

Component 1: Human lifespan development (30%) internal assessment
Component 2: Health and social care services and values (30%) internal assessment
Component 3: Health and well being (40%) examination 2 hours

Future options

In Sixth Form students can continue with a Level 3 health and social care course. This course is very useful for anyone considering further studies and employment in health care, social care and early year's services for example nurse, dietician, radiographer, health visitor, paramedic, teacher, nursery manager, midwife, childcare or occupational therapist.

GCSE History

Qualification type	GCSE
Examination board	Edexcel

GCSE history will be of interest to anyone who wants to learn more about the past and understand how the past enables us to understand the present day on a local, national and global scale.

What is the course like and what will be studied?

This course builds on Key Stage 3 work, developing transferable skills, such as analysing, interpreting and evaluating a variety of types of source evidence, and use of ICT. The skills developed during
the GCSE history course are highly adaptable and make it one of the most commonly sought-after general qualifications.

- Look beyond the headlines to ask questions and express views
- Written and verbal communication skills
- Interpretation and evaluation including research using ICT

All students are provided with homework and revision tasks. The tasks stress and reinforce the two main examination requirements - knowledge and skills.

Many varied and fascinating topics are studied through the course:

- A thematic study: Crime and punishment in Britain (environmental study of Whitechapel and Jack the Ripper)
- A period study: The American West 1835-1895
- A modern depth study: Weimar and Nazi Germany, 1918-1939
- A British depth study: Early Elizabethan England, 1558-1588

The course looks at these periods chronologically whilst also discussing key themes and developing knowledge and skills.

How will the course be assessed?

Paper 1: Crime and punishment in Britain (30%) 1 hour and 15 minute exam
Paper 2: Early Elizabethan England & The American West (40%) 1 hour and 45 minute exam
Paper 3: Weimar and Nazi Germany (30%) 1 hour and 20 minute exam

Future options

In Sixth Form students can take A level history which develops many transferable skills. History is an exciting, challenging and rewarding subject to study at GCSE and is recognised by universities and employers as a high-quality academic option. Future career pathways include teaching, media, politics, civil service, law, business and finance, editor, research and news broadcasting, journalist, archaeology, politics and public relations.

Cambridge National Creative iMedia

Qualification type	Cambridge National
Examination board	OCR

The UK is a world leader in the creative digital industries, such as in the creation of visual effects for films and computer games. However, there is growing recognition that there is a lack of young people with the necessary skills.
Creative iMedia gives learners the opportunity to develop sector-specific knowledge and skills in a practical learning environment. They use a combination of media theory and media production tasks to analyse, design and create media products across a range of clients. Using ICT to support the design, development and creation of these media aspects provides learners with an excellent knowledge of the creative media industry and its processes.

What is the course like and what will be studied?

The course is made up of three units - two mandatory plus one optional:

RO93 - Creative iMedia in the media industry (External- Written exam- 40%)
In this unit you will learn about the sectors, products and job roles that form the media industry. You will learn the legal and ethical issues considered and the processes used to plan and create digital media products. You will learn how media codes are used within the creation of media products to convey meaning, create impact and engage audiences. You will learn to choose the most appropriate format and properties for different media products.

RO94 - Visual identity and digital graphics (Internal coursework- 30%)
In this unit you will learn how to develop visual identities for clients. You will also learn to apply the concepts of graphic design to create original digital graphics which incorporate your visual identity to engage a target audience.

R097 - Interactive digital media (Internal coursework- 30%)
In this unit you will learn to design and create interactive digital media products for chosen platforms. You will learn to select, edit and repurpose multimedia content of different kinds and create the structure and interactive elements necessary for an effective user experience.

How will the course be assessed?

OCR Cambridge Nationals Creative iMedia Exam/ portfolio of work:

- 40% written exam
- 60% controlled assessment tasks (marked by your teacher) Pass, Merit, Distinction grading

This course is an equivalent qualification to a GCSE.

Future options

Level 3 Creative Media in Sixth Form. University Honours Degree in Information Communication Technology, Honours Degree in Creative Media Production, or specialist media strand.
A qualification in ICT is suitable for careers in software application development, web development, computer programming, graphics designer, ICT manager, web design and more.

GCSE Music

Qualification type	GCSE
Examination board	Eduqas

The course aims to provide students with the opportunity to engage actively in the process of music study, developing performing, composing and appraising skills.

What is the course like and what will be studied?

Students cover four areas of music ranging from the baroque period to the most current styles and everything in between.
Area of study 1: Musical forms and devices Area of study 2: Music for ensemble
Area of study 3: Film music Area of study 4: Popular music.
Learners will develop their performing skills both as part of an ensemble and as a solo performer, compose in a range of styles responding to different briefs and appraise both familiar and unfamiliar music applying knowledge of musical elements, context and language.

How will the course be assessed?

Component 1: Performing (30%) Internal assessment Total duration of performances: 4-6 minutes
All learners are required to perform at least 2 pieces, one of which must be part of an ensemble. The other can be a solo or ensemble piece. Learners need to be taking regular lessons on their chosen instrument/voice to access this course.
Component 2: Composing (30%) Internal assessment Total duration of compositions: 3-6 minutes
All learners are required to compose two pieces of music. Composition 1 is in response to a brief set by Eduqas related to the areas of study. Composition 2 is a free composition where learners compose in a style of their choice.
Component 3: Appraising (40%) Examination 1 hour and 15 minutes.

Future options

In Sixth Form, students can progress to A level music or performing arts.
Learners gain essential performing, composing and appraising skills essential for a career in the music industry. Further career options include lawyer, broadcaster, musician, business management, performer, journalism and music industry roles.

Performing Arts (Music)

Qualification type	Level 1/2 Vocational Award in Performing Arts (Technical Award)
Examination board	WJEC

They are primarily designed for learners aged 14-16 and offer an experience that focuses on applied learning, i.e., acquiring and applying knowledge, skills and understanding through purposeful tasks set in sector or subject contexts that have many of the characteristics of real work.

What is the course like and what will be studied?

Unit 1: Performing
Unit 1 enables learners to gain a holistic knowledge and understanding of the skills and techniques needed to reproduce an existing piece(s) of professional/published work. This unit can be completed through any one of the following disciplines:
• Music
• Music Technology
• Musical Theatre
Unit 2: Creating
Unit 2 enables learners to gain, develop and demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the skills and techniques needed to create and refine original work in the performing arts. This unit can be completed through any one of the following disciplines from either performance or production: Performance disciplines
• Composition
• Composition using technology.

How will the course be assessed?

These units will be completed across year 10 and 11
Unit 1: Performing (30%) Controlled assessment: 10 hours 30% of qualification
Unit 2: Creating (30%) Controlled assessment: 10 hours 30% of qualification
Unit 3: Performing arts in practice(40%) External controlled assessment: 20 hours 40% of qualification

Future options

In Sixth Form, students can progress to BTEC level 3 Music or Performing Arts.
Learners gain essential performing, composing, and devising skills and essential knowledge of the performing industry. Further career options include lawyer, musician, business management, performer, journalism, music industry roles, sound engineer, lightening engineer, musical theatre performer, actor.

GCSE Physical Education

Qualification type	GCSE
Examination board	AQA

GCSE PE gives students an in-depth understanding of factors that affect PE, sport, and performance. The course does this through challenging and inspiring students to develop their learning of key areas such as the human body and movement, socio-cultural influences and health and well-being. Students will also undertake practical lessons where they will have the opportunity to develop their individual skill level and demonstrate a commitment to improving their sporting performance.

What is the course like and what will be studied?

The course is made up of three units which cover several different topic areas:

Unit 1: The human body and movement in physical activity and sport

Students are introduced to content relating to the human body including:

• Applied Anatomy and Physiology e.g muscles, bones and body systems
• Movement Analysis e.g Lever systems and analysis of sporting actions
• Physical Training e.g components of fitness, principles of training and fitness testing

Unit 2: Socio-cultural influences and wellbeing in physical activity and sport

Students develop an understanding of the socio-cultural influences as well as the impact and benefits of health, fitness and well-being including:

• Sports Psychology e.g information processing, motivation and arousal
• Socio-cultural influences e.g engagement patterns, sponsorship and the conduct of performers
• Health Fitness and Well-being e.g consequences of a sedentary lifestyle, somatotypes and nutrition

Unit 3: Practical performance in physical activity and sport

Students will be assessed in three practical activities, one of which must be an individual activity or one of which must be a team activity. **Students MUST be performing one of these sports outside of school.** Students will also complete a controlled assessment where they will be required to identify the strengths and weaknesses of a sporting performance, then advise on how to improve upon it.

How will the course be assessed?

Paper 1: The human body and movement in physical activity and sport (30%)
Written exam - 1 hour 15 minutes - 78 marks.
Paper 2: Socio-cultural influences and well-being in physical activity and sport (30%)
Written exam - 1 hour 15 minutes - 78 marks.
Non-exam assessment: Practical performance in physical activity and sport (40%)

Future options

Students who study this course may go on to study Level 3 BTEC Sport Extended Certificate or A Level Physical Education at Sixth Form. They may also choose to study sport further at college. This could then progress on to undertaking a sports related degree at university for example sports coaching, sports development or other sports industry related course such as sports nutrition and physiotherapy.

GCSE Photography

Qualification type	GCSE
Examination board	Eduqas

If you enjoy capturing moments, being creative, and experimenting with visuals, GCSE Photography is the perfect course for you! You'll learn how to take stunning photos, edit them, and explore different styles—from portraits to landscapes to digital effects. Using cameras, lighting, and software like Photoshop, you'll develop real creative skills.
This is a course where there is freedom to be creative and develop ideas, where students are expected to develop their own ideas and manipulate their photographic knowledge to apply it.

What is the course like and what will be studied?

GCSE photography should encourage students to:

• Develop a critical understanding of sources by actively engaging in independent research to inform effective ideas and intentions.
• Experiment, develop and refine key techniques and processes as work progresses.

In component 1 students are required to complete a minimum of two themed projects from an initial concept or topic. These projects are designed to develop a range of creative skills and will include activities such as photography, experimentation with media and techniques, annotation using specialist vocabulary, and studying the work of photographers.
In component 2 students respond to a topic provided by AQA. This provides evidence of the students' ability to work independently within specified time constraints, realise intentions that are personal and meaningful and explicitly address the requirements of all four assessment objectives.

The assessment objectives focus on:

•A01 – Investigate
•A02 – Experiment & refine
•A03 – Record ideas
•A04 – Present a meaningful and personal outcome

How will the course be assessed?

Component 1 portfolio (60%)
Component 2 exam board task (40%)

Future options

In Sixth Form students can progress to A level photography. Students can use their skills and knowledge in further study of multimedia design, theatre set design, animation, computer game design, fashion, photography, furniture design, 3D design, graphics and curation.

GCSE Religious Studies

Qualification type	GCSE
Examination board	AQA

Religion permeates every aspect of our world and heavily influences current national and international debate. You only have to pick up a newspaper or switch on the TV to see how people's beliefs influence life and society in today's world. A good understanding of religion, philosophy and ethics will help appreciate the rapidly changing world in which we live. Students with an inquisitive mind who enjoy thinking about and debating topical moral and philosophical issues will find this subject particularly appealing.

What is the course like and what will be studied?

Students will develop their knowledge and understanding of religious beliefs and practices in the world around them. They will develop skills in analysis, application of beliefs and critical evaluation. The subject will develop students' ability to construct well-argued, informed and balanced arguments.

Unit 1: Students will gain an understanding of different beliefs and teachings in modern Britain focusing specifically on Christianity and Buddhism. Students will explore key teachings and how believers follow their faith in a modern 21st Century world.

Unit 2: Students will explore how religion can be applied to a number of ethical topics looking specifically at religion and life; relationships and families; peace and conflict; and crime and punishment. Key issues include abortion, animal experimentation, weapons of mass destruction, euthanasia, the death penalty, sexual ethics and terrorism.

How will the course be assessed?

Paper 1 (50%) Examination 1 hour and 45 minutes
Paper 2 (50%) Examination 1 hour and 45 minutes

Future options

In Sixth Form students can take A level philosophy and ethics

Universities are keen to accept students who have acquired philosophical skills. It is a popular A level choice and features in the subjects accepted by many departments at universities. The skills gained are highly transferable as the subject encompasses writing, communication, empathy, analysis and evaluation.

Philosophy and ethics is a subject accepted by employers, particularly those where contact with the public is common for example medicine, nursing, teaching, police, social work, law, armed forces.

BTEC Travel and Tourism

Qualification type	BTEC
Examination board	Pearson (Edexcel)

The Pearson BTEC Level 1/Level 2 Tech Award in Travel and Tourism is ideal for you if you would like to find out more about the travel and tourism sector. This course offers a practical introduction to life and work in the travel and tourism sector. The qualification is the same size and level as a GCSE.

What is the course like and what will be studied?

This course will give you the opportunity to develop knowledge and technical skills in a practical learning environment. You will explore the aims of different travel and tourism organisations, the features of tourist destinations, how organisations meet customer requirements, and the influences on global travel and tourism. The qualifications is composed of three components, covering the following content areas:

Component 1: Travel and Tourism Organisations and Destinations. In this component, you will investigate travel and tourism organisations, their aims and how they work together. You will explore types of travel and tourism, the features that make destinations appealing to visitors and different travel routes.

Component 2: Customer Needs in Travel and Tourism. In this component, you will investigate how organisations use market research to identify travel and tourism trends, and customer needs and preferences. You will apply your understanding by selecting products and services and planning a holiday to meet customer needs and preferences.

Component 3: Influences on Global Travel and Tourism. In this component, you will explore the different factors that may influence global travel and tourism, and how travel and tourism organisations and destinations respond to these factors. You will examine the potential impacts of tourism at global destinations and how destinations can manage the impacts of tourism, and control tourism development to achieve sustainable tourism.

How will the course be assessed?

Unit 1: Travel and Tourism Organisations and Destinations (30%)
Internal Assessment (controlled coursework tasks)
Unit 2: Customer Needs in Travel and Tourism (30%)
Internal Assessment (controlled coursework tasks)
Unit 3: Influences on global travel and tourism (40%)
External Assessment (written exam).

Future options

The travel and tourism sector is recognised globally as being fast-paced and dynamic, providing a range of employment opportunities both directly and indirectly across the world. Careers include cabin crew, travel agents, tour guides and tour operators, as well as a variety of digital and tech roles which support the travel industry. If you decide to go on to further study of travel and tourism, you could progress to a Level 2 programme or to a Level 3 programme, such as A Levels, a T Level or a BTEC National, either on its own or in combination with A levels.