

KEY STAGE 4

CURRICULUM

HANDBOOK 2026



Ada Lovelace
C of E
High School

Contents

3. Key Contacts and Key Dates
4. Introduction
5. The Grading System
6. Key Stage 4 Curriculum
7. Sixth Form Progression at Ada Lovelace (T-Level)
- 8/9. Sixth Form Progression at the Trust Schools (A-Level)
10. Specific Minimum Entry Requirements for Sixth Form Courses (Entry 2026)
11. Glossary

KS4 Course Guides

12. Core Subject Course Guide
13. English Language
14. English Literature
15. Mathematics
16. Science
17. Religious Education

Options Subjects Course Guides

18. Options Subject Course Guide
19. MFL
20. Art
21. Graphics
22. Computer Studies/ ICT
23. Drama
24. Further Maths
25. Physical Education
26. Geography
27. History
28. Music
29. Careers, information, advice and guidance

Key Contacts

Contact Details

Ada Lovelace CofE High School
Park View Road
London W5 2JX
Tel: 020 3540 0200
Email: office@adalovelace.org.uk

Please see a list of Year 9 contact details below:

Mr Stanton
Head of Year 9 gstanton@adalovelace.org.uk

Mr Willmot
Assistant Headteacher jwillmott@adalovelace.org.uk

Year 9 Tutors:

9 Archimedes	Mrs Kohli	skohli@adalovelace.org.uk
9 Descartes	Mr Munroe	munroe@adalovelace.org.uk
9 Lorenz	Mr Dittmar	sdittmar@adalovelace.org.uk
9 Omar Khayyam	Mrs Pilcher	mpilcher@adalovelace.org.uk
9 Vaughan	Miss Yusuf	syusuf@adalovelace.org.uk
9 Euler	Ms Margetts	jmargetts@adalovelace.org.uk
9 Curie	Miss Van Dorssen	EVanDorssen@adalovelace.org.uk

Key Dates

Thursday 26th Feb	Year 9 Parents' evening
Monday 2nd March	Q3 assessment week
Monday 9th March	Option form opens (emails to students)
Monday 13th April	Deadline for Options forms
Monday 11th May	Students' informed of GCSE offers during this week
Monday 15th June	Q4 exam week
Monday 13th July	Target review day: GCSE options confirmed



Year 9 is an important stage in your school career as you look forward to and start to think about your future. It is the first time that the whole year group will have made decisions about their own individual pathways and it is important to reflect on this seriously. You have already started GCSE level work in a number of subjects. From September the courses which you study and the grades which you get will influence and potentially even dictate your further choices post 16 in a Sixth Form, at college, in training or in the work place. It is therefore essential to get these choices right.

Our curriculum is designed to ensure breadth, balance and a good education for everyone. It is also designed to have a core of subjects, which allow students to achieve highly academically, develop as learners and therefore maximise their chances of future success. Students who take a very reliable academic core of subjects and do well at them will be able to diversify at post 16. However all students are different, start with different aptitudes and are motivated by different interests and the choice must ultimately work for the individual. Fundamental to this is the choice of a pathway which is appropriate to you and your abilities and interests.

Choosing options involves maturity. This process represents an early introduction to adult life as you learn to make choices, and be aware of the responsibility and commitment that this entails. We hope that by each student spending a proper amount of time at this stage, on knowing themselves and their current attainment, understanding the subjects and the work-ethic required for GCSE, the choices made will be good ones.

Our Key Stage 4 curriculum has a full and challenging range of subjects. Students are strongly encouraged to take a modern foreign language, unless their prior MFL experience makes it inappropriate for them to do so. We have been aware for some time that sixth forms, colleges, employers and universities have been using a good pass (now grade 5 or above) at GCSE in Languages and Humanities as a discriminating factor in the award of places. We have very consciously built up our curriculum model to promote the English Baccalaureate and we are glad that our offer positions students well in relation to this. However, our hope is that there is flexibility too for the highly artistic, creative and practical students to extend themselves also.

Please feel free to speak to us about our approach to the options process or any aspect of the curriculum model at Ada Lovelace or to your child's tutor, Mr Stanton or Mr Willmott about individual issues relating to your child.

Best Wishes,

Mr J Willmott
Assistant Headteacher

Mr Stanton
Head of Year 9

The GCSE Grading System

GCSE exams test all of the material studied over 2 or 3 years. Successful students will be able to remember information and express it concisely and accurately under the pressure of time. Students will need to be able to apply the principles or ideas which they have learnt within one context to an unfamiliar context. They will need to be confident of the skills they have learnt in order not to be put off by questions which seem less familiar.

GCSEs are graded using number grades (9, 8, 7, 6,...).

We use these grades as students progress through the school from Years 7-11.

Some brief detail:

- GCSE letter grades A*-G have been replaced by a number scale from 9 to 1
- 9 is the highest grade. 1 is the lowest.
- An approximate conversion in **Year 11** will be:

Grade 9	Grade 8	Grade 7	Grade 6	Grade 5	Grade 4	Grade 3	Grade 2	Grade 1
GCSE grades A* and A			GCSE grades B and C			GCSE grades D, E, F and G		

- As students move up through the school, we would expect their grades to increase. So, for example, a student may achieve a Grade 6- in Year 9, then a Grade 6+ in Year 10, and then a Grade 7 in Year 11.
- It is important to note that National Curriculum **levels** used previously (eg. ...,4A, 5C, 5B, 5A,...) and new GCSE number **grades** (eg. ..., 5+, 6-, 6, 6+, 7-,...) are not an equivalent. The standard of work required for a Level 6A, for example, is not the same as that required for a Grade 6+.
- Note that BTEC courses and Cambridge Nationals courses are graded as Level 2 Distinction*, Distinction, Merit and Pass, or Level 1 Distinction, Merit and Pass. A Level 2 pass is equivalent to a GCSE grade 4.

Although the grading system is relatively new, we know enough about how it will compare to older style letter grades to be confident that we can use it to inform our students about their progress through the school.

Progression from Year 9

Students enter Year 7 with results in national Key Stage 2 exams in English and Mathematics which are sat at the end of Year 6. We know the amount of progress that would generally be expected if your child works well from this starting point and as they move up through the school towards GCSE.

Entry tier	Yr 7	Yr 8	Yr 9	Yr 10	Yr 11	equivalence
Advanced +	6-	6+	7	8-	8+	A*
Advanced	5+	6	7-	7+	8	A*/A
	5-	5+	6	7-	7+	A
	4	5-	5+	6	7-	A
Higher	3+	4	5-	5+	6	B
	3-	3+	4	5-	5+	B
	2-	2+	3	4-	4+	C
Core	1+	2-	2+	3	4-	C/D
	1	2-	2	3-	3+	D
Nurture	1-	1+	2	2+	3	D/E
	1-	1	1+	2-	2	E/F

Key Stage 4 Curriculum

The Core Key Stage 4 Curriculum

At Ada Lovelace all students follow a core curriculum. This means studying a minimum of 6 GCSEs in the following areas:

- ◆ English Language and English Literature
- ◆ Mathematics
- ◆ Double Award Science (unless they are doing Triple Science)*
- ◆ Religious Education

This broad and balanced core curriculum offer must be the starting point for all students as it provides the best opportunity for transition onto post 16 courses within the Trust or at another college or school.

In **DOUBLE AWARD SCIENCE**, students study aspects of Biology, Chemistry and Physics. Exams are sat at the end of the course and a “combined Science” double grade is awarded (eg. 7/7 or 5/4).

***TRIPLE SCIENCE:** Students may be selected to complete the triple science award. They will be informed of this in the summer term of year 9. This leads to 3 separate GCSEs at the end of Year 11 in Biology, Chemistry and Physics.

The GCSE Options Pathways

We have designed a series of pathways that will provide all students with an appropriate offer in Year 10 and Year 11.

Very careful consideration has been given to each individual’s level of achievement in Year 9 to assist you in making choices that will provide the best chance of success at KS4. Heads of the GCSE subjects have also provided minimum entry requirements to make sure that you do not select GCSE subjects that are not appropriate for you based on your Year 9 achievement.

CORE Pathway: Students with a **2-** or above in English, Maths and Science.

HIGHER Pathway: Students with a **3** or above in English, Maths and Science.

ADVANCED Pathway: Students with a **5-** or above in English, Maths and Science.

Sixth Form Progression at Ada Lovelace

General entry requirements: 6 GCSE passes at grade 5 or above. This must include GCSE English and Maths. There are three T-Levels on offer at Ada Lovelace:

- Accountancy
- Digital Design
- Laboratory Sciences

Students would apply for one T-Level. It is equivalent to studying 3 A Levels.

The T-Levels include in-school study, as well as a significant work placement completed in Year 13.

Specific Minimum Entry Requirements for Sixth Form Courses (GCSE Grades), Entry 2026

Digital Design	Grade 6, or above, in Computer Science GCSE. If Computer Science GCSE is not studied, applicants will be required to present a portfolio of evidence including an assessment, demonstrating programming skills to support their application.
Laboratory Science	Grade 6/6, or above, in dual Science GCSE or two 6's, or above, in triple Science GCSE.
Accountancy	Grade 6, or above, in Maths GCSE.



Ada Lovelace
CofE
High School

Sixth Form Progression within the Trust

Below are a list of the A Level subjects on offer in the Sixth form at Trust schools. They are grouped to show which subjects would need to have been studied at GCSE to be able to access them.

Entrance to the sixth form at Trust Schools will require 8 passes (including Maths and English Language), which need to be at a grade 5 or better.

Courses requiring Maths and/or English at a 6 or better:

- Biology
- Business Studies
- Chemistry
- Computer Science
- Drama
- Economics
- English Literature
- Film studies
- Geography
- History
- Maths and Further Maths
- Politics
- RE
- Physics
- Psychology
- Sociology

Individual subject entrance requirements are on the opposite page.



William Perkin
C of E
High School



Twyford
C of E
High School

Specific A-level entry requirements: WP



William Perkin Sixth Form Entry Requirements for 2026/7

Subject	Entry Requirements
BIOLOGY	Grade 77 in Double Science or Grade 777 in Triple Science with a 7 in Biology Grade 6 in Maths is also required
BUSINESS STUDIES	Grade 6 in English (Literature or Language) and Grade 5 in Mathematics
CHEMISTRY	Grade 77 in Double Science or grade 777 in Triple Science with a 7 in Chemistry Grade 6 in Maths is also required
COMPUTER SCIENCE	Grade 7 in Computing and Grade 7 in maths. If you have not studied computing at GCSE, you should have a grade 7 in maths and either 76 in double science or 666 in triple. Must have programming experience.
ECONOMICS	77 in Mathematics and English (Literature or Language)
ENGLISH LANGUAGE	Grade 6 in either English Language or English Literature and 6 in another humanity (e.g. RE, History, Geography)
ENGLISH LITERATURE	Grade 76 in English Language and English Literature (the 7 can be in either language or literature)
FRENCH	Grade 7 in French
FURTHER MATHS	Grade 9 in GCSE Mathematics
GEOGRAPHY	Grade 7 in Geography and Grade 6 in English (Literature or Language)
GERMAN	Grade 7 in German
HISTORY	Grade 7 in History and Grade 6 in English (Literature or Language)
MATHEMATICS	Grade 7 in Mathematics
PHYSICAL EDUCATION	Grade 6 in PE or 66 in Science. Students should also play for an external sports team
PHYSICS	Grade 77 in Double Science or Grade 777 in Triple Science with a 7 in Physics Grade 6 in Mathematics also required
POLITICS	Grade 6 in English (Literature or Language) and a Grade 6 in Humanity (History, Geography, or RE).
PSYCHOLOGY	Grade 6 in English (Literature or Language) and 6 in Mathematics
RELIGION, PHILOSOPHY AND ETHICS	Grade 7 in RE and Grade 6 in English (Literature or Language)
SOCIOLOGY	6 in English (Literature or Language) and 6 in another humanity (e.g. RE, History, Geography or Sociology)

Specific A-level entry requirements: Twyford

To help you to make sensible GCSE option choices, you should consider how these may influence your future choices. This table shows the current entry requirements for A Level courses at the Twyford Sixth Form. These entry requirements are reviewed annually.

Specific Minimum Entry Requirements for Sixth Form Courses (GCSE Grades), Entry 2026

ART	Grade 6 in Art.
BIOLOGY	Grade 77 in Double Science or grade 777 in Triple Science. Grade 6 in Mathematics is also required.
BUSINESS STUDIES	6 in English (Literature or Language) and a 5 in Mathematics.
CHEMISTRY	Grade 77 in Double Science or grade 777 in Triple Science. Grade 6 in Mathematics is also required.
ECONOMICS	77 in Mathematics and English (Literature or Language).
ENGLISH LITERATURE	76 in English Language & English Literature (the 7 can be in either language or literature).
FILM STUDIES	6 in English (Literature or Language).
FRENCH	7 in French.
FURTHER MATHS	9 in GCSE Mathematics.
GEOGRAPHY	7 in Geography and 6 in English (Literature or Language).
GERMAN	7 in German.
GRAPHICS	6 in Art or Graphic Design.
HISTORY	7 in History and 6 in English (Literature or Language).
MATHS	7 in Mathematics.
MUSIC	6 in Music, Practical grade 5 and Theory grade 5.
MUSIC TECHNOLOGY	6 in Mathematics or RSL Level 2 Music Technology Merit.
PHOTOGRAPHY	No further specific requirements.
PHYSICS	Grade 77 in Double Science or grade 777 in Triple Science. Grade 6 in Mathematics is also required.
POLITICS	6 in English (Literature or Language) and a grade 6 in History, Geography, or RE.
PSYCHOLOGY	6 in English (Literature or Language) and 6 in Mathematics.
RELIGIOUS STUDIES	7 or A in R.E. and 6 in English (Literature or Language).
SOCIOLOGY	6 in English (Literature or Language) and 6 in another humanity (including RE, where you need a 6).
SPANISH	7 in Spanish.

Glossary

AQA	Academic Qualifications Alliance exam board www.aqa.org.uk
T-Level	Technical-Level qualification. Post-16 qualification (level 3) equivalent in size to 3 A-Levels
Cambridge Nationals	Vocational qualifications (provided by OCR) assessed through more coursework and less examined units compared to GCSE courses
EDEXCEL	Educational Excellence exam board (a Pearson company) - www.edexcel.com
FSMQ	Free Standing Maths Qualification - between GCSE and A Level standard
GCSE	General Certificate of Secondary Education
KS4	Key Stage 4 (Years 9, 10 and 11)
KS5	Key Stage 5 (the Sixth Form—Years 12 and 13)
OCR	Oxford Cambridge & RSA Exam Board www.ocr.org.uk
RSL	Rockschool Ltd - exam board providing music courses such as the Music Technology course offered at Twyford— www.rslawards.com
Tier	Level of entry for some GCSEs (typically Foundation and Higher tiers)
BTEC	Vocational qualifications (provided by the Business and Technician Education Council) assessed through more coursework and less examined units compared to GCSE courses

Key Stage 4

CORE SUBJECTS

COURSE GUIDES

English Language

1. WHO IS IT SUITABLE FOR?

All pupils take English Language at Key Stage 4. The examination board is AQA.

2. WHAT WILL I LEARN?

English Language GCSE assesses **reading** and **writing** skills.

3. HOW WILL I BE ASSESSED?

There are **two** examination papers, each worth 50 % and externally assessed at the end of the course (Year 11). They each last 1 hour 45 minutes and both examination papers will cover reading and writing skills.

- Paper 1 has questions to assess your reading of a 20th/21st century unseen extract. Another question asks you to write creatively and has a picture stimulus.
- Paper 2 has questions to assess your reading of non-fiction texts, one 19th century and one 20th/21st century. Another question asks you to write with a point of view. There are NO TIERS and all students will sit the same papers.

4. WHAT ARE THE CONTROLLED COURSEWORK & HOMEWORK EXPECTATIONS?

There is NO COURSEWORK of any kind.

Homework will be set to extend and consolidate the skills that are developed in the classroom.

5. WHAT SKILLS DO I NEED TO BE SUCCESSFUL IN THIS SUBJECT AT GCSE AND BEYOND?

In English Language, the following skills are important:

- Reading skills are to interpret information and ideas from different texts; to analyse how writers use language using relevant subject terminology; to compare two or more texts; to evaluate texts critically and support this with evidence.
- Writing skills are to communicate clearly, effectively and imaginatively for different purposes and audiences; to organise information and ideas; to use a range of vocabulary and sentence structures; to use accurate spelling and punctuation (which is worth 20% of the marks overall.)

6. SPEAKING AND LISTENING.

One task, a presentation, is assessed and is awarded separately.

Head of Department: Miss Gould egould@adalovelace.org.uk

GCSE Exam Board:
AQA

English Literature

1. WHO IS IT SUITABLE FOR?

All pupils take English Literature at Key Stage 4. The examination board is AQA.

2. WHAT WILL I LEARN?

English Literature GCSE assesses how you can **write effectively** about your **reading and understanding** of literature. This means having the skill to explain, argue, analyse and evaluate—to discuss and maintain a point of view:

3. HOW WILL I BE ASSESSED?

There are two examination papers, externally assessed at the end of the course (Yr. 11), the first worth 40% is 1 hour 45 minutes and the second worth 60% is 2 hours 15 minutes. They are *closed book examinations* (meaning = NO TEXTS ALLOWED).

- Paper 1 has a question on Macbeth, which is based on an extract but students will have to link this to the rest of the play. Then it has a question on a 19th century fiction text (The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde) which has the same format.
- Paper 2 has questions on 'Animal Farm' - this does not have an extract. Then there are questions on poetry: the first set of questions are on prepared poetry with one poem printed to be compared with one other poem of your choice remembered from an anthology. The second set of questions are on two unseen poems.

4. WHAT WILL BE THE CONTROLLED COURSEWORK & HOMEWORK EXPECTATIONS?

There is NO COURSEWORK of any kind.

Homework will be set to extend and consolidate the skills that are developed in the classroom. Pupils will be set tasks using questions from GCSE papers.

5. WHAT SKILLS DO I NEED TO BE SUCCESSFUL IN THIS SUBJECT AT GCSE AND BEYOND?

In English Literature, the following skills are important:

To understand and respond to texts, maintaining a critical style and using evidence.

To analyse the techniques used by a writer, using relevant subject terminology.

To understand the contexts in which texts were written.

To use a range of vocabulary and sentence structures, with accurate spelling and punctuation.

Students who enjoy reading, analysing and comparing texts excel. English Literature GCSE also enables pupils to develop their analytical and essay writing skills. It provides an excellent foundation for all essay based subjects at A level.

Head of Department: Miss Gould egould@adalovelace.org.uk

GCSE Exam Board:
AQA

Mathematics

GCSE Exam Board:
AQA

1. WHO IS IT SUITABLE FOR?

Mathematics is a Core subject, studied by all students.

2. WHAT WILL I LEARN?

Mathematics GCSE is a three year course and builds on the topics studied in KS3. Topics come from the areas of Number, Algebra, Shape, Data handling and Probability and Ratio and Proportion. You will learn how to be more mathematical in the way you work, and how to solve a wider range of real life problems, which Maths can be applied to. Mathematics is essential at all levels - from learning how to tackle everyday situations in the shops all the way up to using it as an essential part of the sciences, finance and engineering.

3. HOW WILL I BE ASSESSED?

All **GCSE Mathematics** exams will be sat at the end of Year 11. There is no coursework for GCSE Mathematics. There are three examinations, all 1½ hours in length. Paper 1 is a non-calculator paper, Paper 2 and 3 are calculator papers. There are two tiers of entry: **Foundation and Higher**. Foundation covers grades 1-5, and Higher covers grades 4-9. Your tier of entry will be decided before each exam based on your performance in internal school assessments throughout the year.

4. WHAT ARE THE CONTROLLED COURSEWORK & HOMEWORK EXPECTATIONS?

There is no coursework requirement for any of the Maths qualifications at this level. Lesson prep tasks will be set after each lesson. Most lesson preps will be based on the online platform called Sparx. Sparx Maths creates perfectly tailored practice homework for each student each week driven by our scheme of learning. The practice is challenging, to ensure students need to think and, crucially, achievable so that students can be successful.

5. WHAT SKILLS DO I NEED TO BE SUCCESSFUL IN THIS SUBJECT AT GCSE AND BEYOND?

A good Mathematician is able to think logically. They can use the techniques they know accurately and they know which techniques to use when they are given a problem to solve. They can also communicate clearly - using the correct mathematical words and symbols, as well as interpreting and checking the answers they find.

Head of Department: Mrs Williams

nwilliams@adalovelace.org.uk

Science

1. Who is IT suitable for?

- The majority of students will study combined GCSE 9-1 Science (Double Award), starting in Year 9 and examined at the end of Year 11. Exams in Biology, Chemistry and Physics lead to a double award GCSE in Combined Science with two GCSEs.
-
- At the beginning of Year 10, a group of very able science students will move onto the separate science pathway (Triple Award). They will study GCSE 9-1 Science, as well as some additional content. They will then complete three separate GCSEs in biology, chemistry and physics.

2. WHAT WILL I LEARN?

- In Year 9 – All students study three modules of biology: key concepts in biology, cells and control and exchange and transport in animals; three modules of chemistry: atomic structure, separating techniques and the atmosphere; and three modules in physics: energy, waves and forces.
- In Year 10 - All students study three modules of biology: genetics; natural selection and evolution; animal coordination and control and plant structure; three modules of chemistry: bonding and calculating masses, acids and electrolysis, metals and rates of reaction and three modules in physics: forces, electricity and magnetism.
- In Year 11 - All students study two modules of biology: health and disease and ecosystems, one module of chemistry: physical chemistry and one module in physics: radioactivity, as well as revision and synoptic application of biology, chemistry and physics.
- Separate Science (biology, chemistry and physics GCSE) will cover the same modules but in greater depth in year 10 and 11. In addition, chemistry will include qualitative analysis and organic chemistry modules and physics will include astronomy. All three sciences have the same amount of content covered.

3. How will i be assessed?

- There will be quarterly assessments in Year 9, 10 and 11.
- During the summer term of Year 11, students will complete their final exams. Double Award (combined) Science students will sit two 60 mark, 70 minute papers in each specialism (biology, chemistry and physics). Students receive two GCSE grades in Science overall. Triple Award (separate) Science students will sit two 100 mark, 145 minute papers in each specialism (biology, chemistry and physics). Students receive three GCSE grades overall.

4. What ARE the Controlled Coursework & homework expectations?

- In Year 9 students will complete 1-2 past paper style homework tasks per module.
- Past paper style questions will be set as homework fortnightly throughout Year 10 and 11.
- A range of prep tasks will be set each week.
- There is no coursework aspect of GCSE 9-1 Science.
- **5. What skills do I need to be successful in this subject at GCSE and BEYOND?**
- Science requires students to be organised, as there is a high volume of content to remember.
- Students must be able to investigate questions using planning skills and draw conclusions from data using their analytical skills.

Head of Science:

Ms Fernandez

gfernandez@adalovelace.org.uk

GCSE Exam Board:
Edexcel

Entry Requirement:
The triple science course will be allocated by selection. Students with a grade 6 or higher in Q4 science will be considered for the course.

Religious Education

GCSE Exam Board:
AQA

1. WHO IS IT SUITABLE FOR?

RE is a core subject, studied by all students, which prepares them very effectively with academic skills which will be valuable in their next stage of education or training.

2. WHAT WILL I LEARN?

- Students will learn the beliefs, teachings and practices of Islam and Christianity and apply these to a range of ethical and moral issues.
- Students will develop their knowledge and understanding of religious beliefs, teachings, and sources of wisdom and authority, including through their reading of key religious texts, other texts, and scriptures of the religions they are studying.
- Students will develop their ability to construct well-argued, well-informed, balanced and structured written arguments, demonstrating their depth and breadth of understanding of the subject.
- Students will be provided with opportunities to engage with questions of belief, value, meaning, purpose, truth, and their influence on human life.

3. HOW WILL I BE ASSESSED?

During the course of Year 10 & 11, there are four quarterly assessments, based upon the GCSE assessment criteria. These internal assessments are designed to prepare each student for their external examinations in the summer of Year 11.

The GCSE summer exam consists of two papers—paper 1 is on religious beliefs & practices while paper 2 is on the ethical themes. Both papers are 1hr and 45 mins long and consist of a range of different of shorter recall questions to longer essays, requiring students to identify, describe, explain and evaluate a range of beliefs and ideas.

4. WHAT ARE THE CONTROLLED COURSEWORK & HOMEWORK EXPECTATIONS?

There is no controlled coursework.

Homework/Prep Tasks

Homework and Prep tasks are an important part of the course. They allow students to build upon their knowledge and understanding of the topics covered in the lesson as well as providing opportunities for own research. Students are encouraged to watch news broadcasts and study daily papers to widen their awareness. Being aware of current affairs is vital for RE as it links in to all of the topics studied.

5. WHAT SKILLS DO I NEED TO BE SUCCESSFUL IN THIS SUBJECT AT GCSE AND BEYOND?

Students should be able to make their own reasoned decisions of religious and moral issues, empathise with people whose views are different to their own and communicate their own religious and moral views.

Head of Department: Ms Margetts jmargetts@adalovelace.org.uk

Key Stage 4
OPTIONS
COURSE GUIDE

MFL French/German

Who is this course suitable for?

This course builds upon the skills and knowledge already gained in Key Stage 3 and is suitable for all students currently studying languages in Year 9. If you are currently studying French and German, you can choose to study both, or you can choose between the two languages. If you currently study German only, you will continue with German into Years 10 and 11.

What will I learn?

Year 10 Modern Languages will continue a language-driven curriculum in preparation for the new GCSE specification first examined in 2026. Students will revisit and build upon the vocabulary, grammar and phonics encountered in Years 7-9. Students will regularly apply their learning to examination style tasks in skills-focused lessons. Their linguistic knowledge and understanding is applied to the 6 thematic contexts of the GCSE course: 1) My Personal World; 2) Lifestyle and Wellbeing; 3) My Neighbourhood; 4) Media and Technology; 5) Studying and My Future; 6) Travel and Tourism. Both French and German follow the same course structure and similar content, which means that pupils studying two languages often find that the two languages complement each other well.

How will I be assessed?

Students will be assessed in Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing. Each skill will be worth 25% of the GCSE, and all exams will take place in Year 11. There is no coursework or controlled assessments.

How does this prepare me for the future?

The GCSE course will prepare students for A-Level study, university and a variety of jobs which use the skills that learning languages develops, such as good communication, understanding and appreciation of other cultures, logic, memorisation, dedication and application of knowledge in a variety of situations. By gaining a qualification in a language, you are demonstrating to future employers and education providers that you have developed these transferable skills.

Who should I speak to?

Mr Lobo Lyon (Head of MFL) jlobo@adalovelace.org.uk

Mrs Berwick (Subject Lead French) kberwick@adalovelace.org.uk

GCSE Exam Board:
Edexcel

Entry Requirement:

Must be studying the language in Year 9. Students must achieve a 4+ to study either language at GCSE. The entry requirement is the same for students wishing to study 2 languages.

Sufficient numbers of students must select French in order to be able to run the course.. There will be 6 MFL classes running within the MFL pathway. Students will be selected to be part of the MFL pathway based on Year 9 Q4 outcomes in combination with learning habit grades. Students who do not complete the MFL pathway will receive additional lessons in English, Maths and science.

Art

Who is this course suitable for?

This course is suitable for students who wish to build creative skills through learning and doing and by developing imaginative and intuitive ways of working. Students will develop knowledge and understanding of Art and materials in historical and contemporary contexts. Art can take time and therefore students need to be willing to put in the time and effort. This subject requires a minimum of 1.5 hours a week of prep.

What will I learn?

Pupils will work in a broad range of materials and refine their skills. Art helps students become versatile thinkers – creative yet analytical, organised yet able to take imaginative leaps. As well as learning about the application of media, such as Acrylic painting, perspective drawing and print making, students will also be taught Art History as written analysis plays a significant role at GCSE level. Year 10 starts with a series of workshops to build great pupils' skills. The main coursework and exam units are then more open for pupils to use their own artist choices, ideas and materials.

How will I be assessed?

You will produce 2 coursework projects and 1 exam project over the 2 years. Each project is assessed on 4 objectives: Analysis, Experimentation, Drawing and Final Outcomes, each with equal weighting. The coursework projects make up 60% of the GCSE and the exam unit makes up 40% of the GCSE. Due to the course being 100% coursework, pupils must have excellent attendance to keep up with the workload.

How does this prepare me for the future?

Pupils studying Art may go onto further study in areas such as Architecture, Fashion Design, Fine Art, etc... Many employers want to recruit people who are lateral thinkers and creative problem-solvers - natural qualities of artists and designers. By working on projects that combine a number of varied steps students learn to be thorough and to think and plan effectively. Successful students will also learn patience and perseverance. Multi-stage projects, deadlines which cover several weeks of work at a time, and open ended outcomes all encourage students to act independently and take responsibility for their own progress – functional skills that are critical to a successful adult life.

Who should I speak to?

Miss Sullivan (Head of Art/Graphics) ksullivan@adalovelace.org.uk

GCSE Exam Board:
AQA

Entry Requirement:

Students should have studied Art in Year 9 and require a grade 3 by Q4.

Students should have a passion to be creative, enjoy improving their art skills, be dedicated to completing work and be willing to step outside their comfort zone.

Graphics

Who is this course suitable for?

This course is suitable for students who wish to build their digital creative skills. Pupils will be learning to work to a client brief and build confidence in using digital technologies. Graphics can take time and therefore students need to be willing to put in the time and effort. This subject requires a minimum of 1.5 hours a week of prep.

What will I learn?

Pupils will learn in greater depth digital software such as Photoshop and Illustrator. They will also learn about key design principles and how to apply them when creating their work. They will look at historic and contemporary designers in relation to the world of work within the Graphics spectrum. Year 10 starts with a series of workshops to great build pupils' skills. The main coursework and exam units are then more open for pupils to use their own artistic choices, ideas and materials.

How will I be assessed?

You will produce 2 coursework projects and 1 exam project over the 2 years. Each project is assessed on 4 objectives: Analysis, Experimentation, Drawing and Final Outcomes, each with equal weighting. The coursework projects make up 60% of the GCSE and the exam unit makes up 40% of the GCSE. Due to the course being 100% coursework, pupils must have excellent attendance to keep up with the workload.

How does this prepare me for the future?

Pupils studying Graphics may go onto further study in areas such as Graphic Design, Game Design, Editorial Design, Branding, Web Design, etc... By working on projects that combine a number of varied steps students learn to be thorough and to think and plan effectively. Successful students will also learn patience and perseverance. Multi-stage projects, deadlines which cover several weeks of work at a time, and open ended outcomes all encourage students to act independently and take responsibility for their own progress – functional skills that are critical to a successful adult life.

Who should I speak to?

Miss Sullivan (Head of Art/Graphics) ksullivan@adalovelace.org.uk

GCSE Exam Board: AQA

Entry Requirement:

Students should have ideally studied Graphics in Year 9 and require a grade 3.

Students should have a passion to be creative, enjoy improving their Graphics skills, be dedicated to completing work and be willing to step outside their comfort zone.

Computer Science

Who is this course suitable for?

The Computer Science GCSE enables students to work with real-world, practical programming techniques that give them a good understanding of what makes technology work. You should have a real passion for programming outside the classroom and the thought of independently researching, trialling and testing programming code should excite you! If you enjoy computing, mathematics and like solving logic problems, then this could be something you may enjoy.

What will I learn?

1. Fundamentals of algorithms
2. Programming
3. Fundamentals of data representation
4. Computer systems
5. Fundamentals of computer networks
6. Fundamentals of cyber security
7. Relational Databases & structured query language (SQL)
8. Ethical, legal and environmental impacts of digital technology on wider society, including issues of privacy

How will I be assessed?

You will sit two written papers at the end of Year 11.

Paper 1: Computational thinking and problem solving (2 hours)	50% of GCSE
Paper 2: Theoretical Knowledge (1hr 45mins)	50% of GCSE

ICT

Who is this course suitable for?

This course can support future job opportunities

- Graphic designer
- Database administrator
- Office manager
- Data clerk

What will I learn?

- Gain knowledge essential to practical use of ICT in the workplace
- Learn about emerging technologies like AI and Machine Learning
- Solve realistic business problems with professional grade software.

2 Components to GCSE Computer Science:

How will I be assessed?

Exam board – WJEC

Unit 1 – ICT in Society – on screen exam (40%)

Questions requiring objective responses, short and extended answers.

Unit 2 – ICT in Context – Controlled assessment(60%)

An assignment brief is provided by the exam board, which will involve a scenario and several tasks.

Who should I speak to?

Mrs Young (Head of Computing) suyoung@adalovelace.org.uk

GCSE Exam Board: AQA

Entry Requirement:

Achieve at least a grade 5 in the Q4 computing assessment

Have a genuine passion for computing, programming, coding and problem solving outside the classroom

Drama

Who is this course suitable for?

Drama is best suited to students who: work well both independently and in teams, feel comfortable performing in front of audiences, enjoy working creatively, are compassionate and enjoy seeing situations from other people's points of view, enjoy the creative side of English or are interested in working with people in the future

Why Choose Drama?

- Develop transferable skills such as: Collaboration, communication, public speaking time management and leadership
- To achieve a greater empathy and understanding of the world around us and its people through a diverse range of play texts.
- Boosts Confidence: Encourages self expression in a creative environment.
- Practical and Theatrical Learning: Combines performance, design and academic understanding of the different roles in theatre.

An excellent combination with English GCSE: Further depth and understanding of the evaluation, appreciation and analysis of the written word.

What will I learn?

The Drama GCSE is divided into 3 components:

Understanding drama — Students learn about all aspects of the Theatre through studying a set play. Students also experience and review a live performance.

Devising drama — Students work in groups to create their own performance from a stimuli.

Alongside this they create a portfolio which evaluates their creative process.

Texts in practice — Students perform two different scenes from a play of their choice.

How will I be assessed?

- **Understanding Drama (40%)**
Students sit a 1 hour 45 minute written exam in 3 sections:
Section A: Theatre roles and terminology
Section B: Set text
Section C: Review of live theatre production
- **Devising Drama (40%)**
Students perform their devised piece
Students complete a devising log
- **Texts in Practice (20%)**
Students perform their two scenes from a play of their choice.
- Exploring characters

How does this prepare me for the future?

Drama students go on to pursue careers in Performing Arts, the Entertainment Industry, Media, Politics, Teaching, Events Management, etc. While Universities view Drama A level in conjunction with other appropriate subjects as acceptable for study in Medicine and Law.

Who should I speak to?

Ms. Gannon Head of Drama

GCSE Exam Board:
Edexcel

Entry Requirement:

This is a minimum requirement of a grade 3 in English.

Further Maths

Who is this course suitable for?

The opportunity to learn Further Maths will be made available to those who frequently achieve strong marks in their Maths assessments and have demonstrated a keenness to learn more mathematical concepts. The course begins in January when pupils are in Year 10. Students who wish to be stretched and challenged will learn Further Maths content in preparation for sitting a GCSE in Further Maths at the end of Year 11. This course builds upon the skills and knowledge already gained in normal GCSE Maths. By studying this additional GCSE, it will prepare students well for studying Maths at A-Level.

Off-track students may be removed from the course at the discretion of the Head of Department and Head of Year.

What will I learn?

Students will have an opportunity to extend the Maths they learn in lessons, beyond the GCSE Maths specification. They will learn methods such as Calculus, Advanced Trigonometry and Matrices. The Further Maths GCSE will also build on the high level algebra that students have been learning in Maths and will prepare students well for A Level Maths.

How will I be assessed?

Students will sit external examinations in Year 11. This will consist of two papers which are 1hr 45mins in length. Paper 1 is non-calculator where as Paper 2 is calculator.

How does this prepare me for the future?

The GCSE course will prepare students for further academic study, university and a variety of jobs which use the skills that Maths develops, such as logical thinking, problem solving, memorisation and conceptual understanding

Who should I speak to?

Mrs Williams (Head of Maths) nwilliams@adalovelace.org.uk

GCSE Exam Board:
AQA

Entry Requirement:
Students should be achieving marks in the top 20% of their year group in order to be considered

Physical Education

Who is this course suitable for?

- Students who enjoy science and PE
- Students who are curious about careers in sport.
- Students who are curious about how the body works to produce movement and how we can sustain optimal health
- Students who are already playing 1 sport at club level.

What will I learn?

- Anatomy and physiology
- Physical training
- Movement analysis
- Sport Psychology
- The socio-cultural influences on sports and participation in sports'
- Health, well being in physical activity and sport.
- Diet and nutrition
- You will learn to analyse and evaluate performance to bring about improvement.
- You will also develop skills in some new sports to enable you to have more choice when selecting your sports to be assessed.

GCSE PE students have priority access to sport wider learning clubs, as well as national academy and national level coaches, and a variety of inter-trust GCSE masterclass sessions all as part of their 2-year programme.

How will I be assessed?

You will sit 2 exams which make up 60% of your GCSE, complete one piece of coursework which will make up 10% of your GCSE and be assessed in your performance in three sports, one team, one individual and one which is either team or individual. This will make up 30% of your grade.

How does this prepare me for the future?

You would be able to go on and study A Level PE and then go on to complete a sports related degree. With a degree you could go on to become a Physiotherapist, Sports Researcher, Strength and Conditioning Coach, PE Teacher, Sports reporter, Sports Analyst, Sport Psychologist or Nutritionist.

You could choose to go and study a different level 3 course in sports which would give you access to either university or some careers in sports such as coaching, becoming a sports coordinator, or a personal trainer. Due to the focus on the human body, GCSE PE prepares students will for careers in healthcare.

Who should I speak to?

Ms Moran (Head of PE) emoran@adalovelace.org.uk

GCSE Exam Board:
AQA

Entry Requirement:

No previous subject experience necessary (did not have to take Y9 sports Science). Students should achieve a minimum of 5 in science or sports science at the end of year 9 Q4.

Must have 1 sport which you are competing in outside of school i.e., for a football, hockey, netball club. Must be a member of at least one school sports team at Ada.

Geography

Who is this course suitable for?

Geography is best suited to students who:

- Are curious about how the world works (the climate, ecosystems, global development, physical processes).
- Want to use real-world data, e.g. maps or graphs, to make predictions or decisions and solve global issues such as poverty, inequality, environmental decline
- Have an interest in politics and current affairs e.g. migration, globalisation, climate change.
- Want to deepen their understanding about diverse places, people, resources and natural and human environments
- Are interested in our responsibility to be sustainable.

What will I learn?

Geography is split across human and physical topics:

- **Physical geography** includes climate, extreme weather hazards, ecosystems and biodiversity, coastal landforms and processes and river landforms and processes.
- **Human geography** includes global development, resource management (with a focus on sustainable energy) and changing urban environments both in the UK and in the wider world.

How will I be assessed?

There will be 3 exams, which are 1 hour 30 minutes each. One physical, one human and one on UK Challenges and fieldwork. You will answer a range of question types from 1 mark to 8 mark.

There is no coursework, however you will complete two fieldwork investigations.

How does this prepare me for the future?

Geography provides the skills needed in a range of professions: international development, sustainable energy, data analytics, journalism, environmental science, consultancy and business to name a few. Students interested in Environmental Science, Earth Science, Geology, Sociology, Politics, Biology, Urban Planning, Civil Engineering, International Development would all benefit from having studied Geography.

Who should I speak to?

Mr Doyle (Head of Geography) jdoyle@adalovelace.org.uk

GCSE Exam Board: Edexcel

This is a minimum requirement of a grade 3 in your Q4 exam to study Geography.

History

Who is this course suitable for?

History is best suited to students who:

- Are intrigued by the past and want to discover how the world evolved
- Ask questions, look beyond headlines, and express informed opinions
- Enjoy researching and locating and sifting through evidence to find out what is useful and reliable
- Are literary minded and enjoy reading around their subject
- Able to present ideas to the class and engage in debates and discussions.

What will I learn?

The GCSE History content comprises the following elements:

- one period study
- one thematic study
- one wider world depth study
- one British depth study including the historic environment.

The units the students will be studying are as follows:

Paper 1: Understanding the modern world

Section A: 1C America 1920-1973: Opportunity and Inequality

Section B: Conflict and tension between East and West, 1945–1972

Paper 2: Shaping the nation

Section A: 2A Britain: Health and the people: c1000 to the present day

Section B: Elizabethan England, c1568–1603

How will I be assessed?

This qualification is linear. Linear means that students will sit all their exams at the end of the course. GCSE History students must sit two exams:

Paper 1: Understanding the modern world

- Written exam: 2 hours
- 84 marks (including 4 marks for spelling, punctuation and grammar)
50% of GCSE

Paper 2: Shaping the nation

- Written exam: 2 hours
- 84 marks (including 4 marks for spelling, punctuation and grammar)
50% of GCSE

How does this prepare me for the future?

If you enjoy History, it can lead you to a great future and opens up broad career routes. History provides students with skills of analysis, evaluation, research, writing and enables a deeper understanding of society. These skills are suited to so many careers such as: Law, Medicine, Business, Finance, Marketing, Tourism, Town planning, Politics, Journalism, Research and academia, to name but a few.

Who should I speak to?

Mr Schmidt (Head of History) mschmidt@adalovelace.org.uk

GCSE Exam Board:
AQA

Entry Requirement:
At least a grade 3 in
your Q4 exam to study
History.

Music

Who is this course suitable for?

This course is for pupils who enjoy listening to, performing and composing music. If so, you will ideally be making the most of musical wider learning opportunities. If you are creative and expressive, like working with others and enjoy subjects with a practical component, you will be very well suited to the course. If you are already undertaking instrumental lessons, you will already have developed some of the skills necessary to succeed.

What will I learn?

The GCSE Music course enables students to become well-rounded musicians— to understand music well, to be able to perform confidently and to a high standard, and to write original music. More generally, the course facilitates pupils becoming more courageous through performance. It helps pupils to exercise leadership through team-work and rewards pupils who are organised and insightful. Finally, it exposes pupils to a wide range of music styles from across the world and through different eras of history— from a global repertoire of traditional music to the chart-topping successes of the modern era.

How will I be assessed?

Pupils are assessed through three strands: performance, composing and listening. For performance, you will have to complete a solo and ensemble performance of a minimum of 4 minutes in total. Pupils are also assessed as composers, writing two pieces totalling 3 minutes. The listening paper will be assessed in one exam at the end of the course.

How does this prepare me for the future?

Creative industries provide 1.7m jobs each year in the UK. Further education in music can open many doors into the industry, including careers in sound production, song-writing, composing music for film and TV, teaching, music therapy and performance (musicals, orchestras, bands etc.)

Successful students will practice discipline, perseverance, independent-thinking, courageousness and creativity, and be highly organised in order to meet the demands of the course. These are attributes that are sought by many employers and will stand students in good stead for their adult lives after school. Beyond the world of work, musicianship is a prized social commodity and is widely admired and respected.

Who should I speak to?

Ms Jackson (Head of Music) ljackson@adalovelace.org.uk

GCSE Exam Board:
AQA

Entry Requirement:
Students should have experience as an instrumentalist or singer and should be deemed sufficiently musical by the head of music. All pupils succeeding on the Year 9 course will be accepted. It is possible that capable musicians can succeed on the GCSE without having studied the year 9 course, but it will require application via the head of music.

Introduction:

Selecting GCSE options is an important decision for Year 9 students. Ensuring that students select appropriate and suitable GCSE options can lead to successful progress and progression on a pathway that is most suitable for each individual student. When making their choices students should consider; what subjects they enjoy, what subjects they are good at and which options will be most suited to their Post 16 (*T-Levels, A-Levels, BTECs, Apprenticeships*) and Post 18 (*Degree, Apprenticeship, Employment*) plans. Students will have had the opportunity to engage in different GCSE subjects in their Year 9 elective choices. They will have also explored different pathways and progression routes throughout the pastoral programme and in options evenings.

If you would like to talk about your GCSE options and discuss future pathways in more detail, then please speak to Mr Cahill or your child's tutor.

Useful Websites:

www.careerpilot.org.uk

This website gives you an overview of different options and Pathways at Post 14, Post 16 and Post 18

www.connexions-tw.co.uk

Impartial careers IAG for students between 13-19

www.beyond16.co.uk

Post 16 and Post 18 options specifically for students in West London

www.youthemployment.org.uk

This website contains simple tests that young people can do to give them some guidance about Careers Choices.

www.ucasprogress.com

This website will allow you to explore Post-16 Options including T-Levels, A Levels and vocational courses (Level 2 & 3). Find out what the entry requirements are for Sixth Form and college so that you can start planning ahead.

www.ucas.com

This site has every degree course in the country listed. You will find information on everything you need to know, from entry requirements to course content. The site also links to all the university websites.

www.university.which.co.uk

This is a great new free site which provides comprehensive and high-quality information about degree courses, universities, entry requirements and more.

<https://www.gov.uk/apprenticeships-guide>

The government apprenticeships site will be of interest to you if you might be looking for work after your GCSEs or T-Levels/ A levels.

This site has comprehensive information on the wide range of apprenticeships on offer, including current vacancies.



Executive Headteacher
Dame Alice Hudson

Headteacher
Mr Keir Smith

Ada Lovelace CofE High

t: (020) 3540 0200

W: www.adalovelace.org.uk

E: office@adalovelace.org.uk