



DURHAM JOHNSTON  
COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL  
— DARE TO BE WISE —

# Key Stage 4

# Options

# *Subject*

# *Choices*

# 2024-26

Dear Students,

This is a very important term for you as you make your subject choices for next year and is the start of a very important stage in your education. As a school, we are pleased to be able to offer a wide range of subjects, including both GCSEs and Equivalent Qualifications. We think the combination of subjects available offers tremendous opportunities, whatever your interests and abilities.

Choosing the right courses at Key Stage 4 is very important. The choices that you make now will start to define the pathways for your future. At Durham Johnston we want to make sure that every single Year 9 student is matched to the right courses.

### **How to choose**

You need to understand what the best range of choices are for you. Your Form Tutor, Mr Blake, Mr Humberstone and senior teachers will be able to advise you. Make sure you talk with your parents and teachers before you make any choices. The majority of students will take between 8 and 10 GCSEs or equivalent subjects.

Before selecting your options you should:

- **Read this booklet carefully to understand the courses**
- **Read the FAQ on the website for all the subjects you are interested in**
- **Think about your recent report and your own skills**
- **Talk to individual subject teachers at the Parents Consultation Evening or in school**

### **We want you to get it right**

We are committed to making sure young people at Durham Johnston have the very best preparation for adult life. We have many years' experience of advising and supporting pupils to make successful choices and achieve good Key Stage 4 results. We believe that our curriculum is strong and sensible, and that the core subjects and the options you choose will set you on the road to getting the best results you can in 2026.

Mrs McFadden  
Deputy Headteacher

# Option Subjects



A full list of the subjects available to students is given in the table.

Click on the name of a subject to be taken directly to that page.

<a href="#"><u>Art, Craft &amp; Design GCSE</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Engineering GCSE</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Mandarin GCSE</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>Business GCSE</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Food Preparation and Nutrition GCSE</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Music GCSE</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>Computer Science GCSE</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>French GCSE</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Photography GCSE</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>Construction Vocational (Pathway 2 only)</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Geography GCSE</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Physical Education GCSE</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>Creative iMedia Cam. Nat. (Pathway 2 only)</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>German GCSE</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Spanish GCSE</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>Design Technology GCSE</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Health &amp; Social Care Vocational (Pathway 2 only)</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Sport Vocational (Pathway 2 only)</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>Drama GCSE</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>History GCSE</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Textiles GCSE</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>Engineering Vocational (Pathway 2 only)</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Latin GCSE</u></a>	

Please understand that the information in this booklet is correct as of January 2024 but may be subject to change. Courses attracting very small numbers of pupils will not run for financial and timetabling reasons. We also have limited physical resources which may limit the number of students able to choose popular subjects. Syllabus and Assessment details for subjects may also change due to national review.

# Art, Craft & Design (GCSE)



<b>Exam Board</b>	<b>Edexcel</b>
<b>Specification</b>	<a href="https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/edexcel-gcses/art-and-design-2016.html">https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/edexcel-gcses/art-and-design-2016.html</a>

## Content

We will provide you with a range of creative, exciting and stimulating opportunities to develop and explore your personal interests in art and design. You will be encouraged to be independent and creative in developing your own ideas. There is no one approach to making art and you will be encouraged to find your own creative path within your own personal project. By tailoring the course to suit your preferred method of working, at the same time, challenging and encouraging you to be ambitious and a risk taker, we aim to facilitate the creation of highly personal and independent student responses.

This title promotes learning across a variety of experiences and through various processes, tools, techniques, materials and resources. The context of practice, rather than the breadth of activities and/or range of media employed, determines whether a student's work can be described as art-based, craft-based and/or design-based. The context of the work is determined by the student's work and line of investigation.

Students work in a variety of ways and the Art, Craft & Design title covers the broadest option for portfolio work and the starting points for the externally set assignment also contain opportunities for responses in any of the other titles. In creating an art, craft & design portfolio, students will need to explore and create work associated with areas of study from at least two of the titles listed.

- Fine Art
- Graphic Communication
- Textile Design
- Three-Dimensional Design
- Photography

## Assessment

### Component 1: Portfolio

Two years to create a portfolio, with everything you make potentially going towards your final grade. **60%** of final mark

### Component 2: Externally set assignment

10 weeks to respond to the exam question, investigating and developing idea. Resulting in a 10 hour exam, where one or more outcomes will be made. **40%** of final mark.

## What our Year 11 students say about Art

### What do you enjoy about the subject?

*I love being able to create my own projects and use the lesson time how I'd like. As I do graphic design, I usually plan out story boards or make characters for my comics in this time so I can carry on with it outside of lessons. The atmosphere of the class is always very calming and the teachers are very supportive. I also like that the subject as a whole includes not just realism, but all types of art. So no matter what style of art you work in you will still be awarded highly for your efforts.*

*Art gives you more freedom than a lot of other subjects because everybody ends up doing something they find interesting - there's more independent work and that means you get to work at your own pace.*

### What have you found challenging at times?

*Filling up your sketchbook and doing artist research can be very time consuming and it's hard to not talk about the obvious when it comes to analysing other people's art. It can become stressful at times when you are unsure of what to do or how to carry on with your sketchbook but I've always managed to find a way to make it work.*

*As there's more independent work it is sometimes hard to keep on top of everything. While it being a less structured course gives you more freedom it also gives you more responsibility to get everything done - the workload isn't normally too much but it is easy to fall behind.*

### What do you wish you had known about the subject when you were making your option choices in Year 9?

*AQA recently changed the course a bit so the massive coursework load a lot of people in past years have had to do is gone - this means it's more concentrated around fewer bits of art at a higher quality. It's a lot less stressful than I thought it would be because I could focus on quality over quantity.*

*I wish I had known that there is a lot of work for this subject and it can get a bit stressful at times but the teachers are there to help you out with everything. There isn't much homework as your sketchbook is an ongoing process and you have to work on it outside of school as well.*

# Business (GCSE)



**Exam Board**

**OCR**

**Specification** <https://www.ocr.org.uk/qualifications/gcse/business-j204-from-2017/>

## Content

During the course students will work through 6 content areas:

- Business Activity (planning, ownership, objectives, stakeholders)
- Marketing (promotion, pricing, product, distribution)
- Human Resources (managing people)
- Finance (managing money)
- Operations (making the product, running the business to provide a quality service, legislation)
- Influences on Business (ethics, environment, economic climate)

Students will gain knowledge and understanding through practical activities set in realistic business contexts. Students are encouraged to research and make use of business resources in the community and beyond. Team tasks and individual challenges will be used to develop interpersonal and communication skills. Where appropriate, information communication technology will be used throughout the course.

To take this course you need to be prepared to:

- Take an interest in how businesses operate.
- Carry out research to help you make decisions about a business situation.
- Work as part of a team to arrive at solutions to a business problem.
- Develop your written, verbal and ICT skills.

## Assessment

Business is a linear course and students will sit two external papers at the end of Year 11.

Paper 1 (50%) Business Activity, Marketing and People (80 marks 1hr 30)

Paper 2 (50%) Operations, Finance and Influences on Business (80 marks 1hr 30)

## What our Year 11 students say about Business

### What do you enjoy about the subject?

*Business studies gives you so many opportunities to learn things not only about business but also the real world and I think that from doing business I've learnt things that would help*

me even if in the future I didn't choose to go down the business route. The activities that we do in class aren't just like your other lessons where you do questions over and over again, but you do activities that keep you excited wondering what you're going to do next lesson but you're still learning at the same time which is the most important thing.

Business offers the chance for you to be creative and think of new innovative products that you could then advertise etc. whilst still learning and this creative aspect helps to make the subject more engaging. Another thing that makes business such a good subject is the transferability of the things you learn from concepts involving money to the organisation required in a business to working in groups with people you don't talk to often.

### **What have you found challenging at times?**

There have been certain parts of business that I think all students find difficult at the start such as long answer questions, break even and finance which at the start you wouldn't have a clue how to answer but your teachers make sure that you're confident and know everything to the best of your ability. There's been moments where I thought I'd never be able to get to the top grade or understand it but our teachers practise and practise it over again with us and eventually you will understand it and be able to pass with flying colours.

Although straight forward there are aspects of business which can be quite challenging. One of the hardest parts of business for me was and sometimes still is the organisation needed to keep all of your work in order and in the right place however, if you make a priority of organising your work well it becomes a habit and becomes easy to do. There are also parts of finance that are sometimes hard to complete because of the fact that you have to memorise some formulas for this topic but i would say that is as hard as business gets.

### **What do you wish you had known about the subject when you were making your option choices in Year 9?**

You don't realise how quick the next few years pass over so from the second you enter the classroom just try and be as focused as you can, keep every paper you've ever done all the work because in the years to come they will be your saviour. I also remember being in Year 9 and worrying I won't know anything but a lot of business is general knowledge and common sense, so you do know more than you think. I would 100% recommend business to anyone that is considering it or is stuck on what to choose. The content is so good to learn and the teachers are amazing.

I wish I had known that I would have to work on my organisational skills because I would have sorted them out before I began year ten however this will be the case with every subject (just slightly more with business). Apart from that I believe that business as an option is a pretty straight forward choice with no hidden surprises that are thrown at you halfway through the course.

# Computer Science (GCSE)



<b>Exam Board</b>	<b>OCR</b>
<b>Specification</b>	<a href="https://www.ocr.org.uk/qualifications/gcse/computer-science-j277-from-2020/">https://www.ocr.org.uk/qualifications/gcse/computer-science-j277-from-2020/</a>

## Content

Students will be taught how to understand and apply the fundamental principles and concepts of Computer Science, including abstraction, decomposition, logic, algorithms, and data representation. We will expect them to be able to analyse problems in computational terms through practical experience, including designing, writing and debugging programs.

A good computer scientist will be able to:

- Think independently, creatively, innovatively, analytically, logically, critically and use self-study as a means to success.
- Understand the components that make up digital systems, and how they communicate with one another and with other systems.
- Understand the impacts of digital technology to the individual and to wider society.
- Apply mathematical skills relevant to computer science.

Computer Science is a challenging GCSE, to succeed you need to be self-motivated, have a real passion for computing and a desire to learn, experiment and succeed. If you enjoy problem-solving and finding errors, then this subject is for you.

## Assessment

Content Overview	Assessment Overview	
<b>Computer systems</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Systems Architecture</li><li>• Memory</li><li>• Computer networks, connections and protocols</li><li>• Network security</li><li>• Systems software</li><li>• Ethical, legal, cultural and environmental concerns</li></ul>	Computer systems (01) 80 marks 1 hour and 30 minutes Written paper. (No calculators allowed)	<b>50%</b> of total GCSE
<b>Computational thinking, algorithms and programming</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Algorithms</li><li>• Programming techniques</li><li>• Producing robust programs</li><li>• Computational logic</li><li>• Translators and facilities of languages</li></ul>	Computational thinking, algorithms and programming (02) 80 marks 1 hour and 30 minutes Written paper. (No calculators allowed)	<b>50%</b> of total GCSE



## **What our Year 11 students say about Computer Science**

### **What do you enjoy about the subject?**

*I can learn how to code which is interesting and fun to do. You can create lots of cool things when you know how to code.*

### **What have you found challenging at times?**

*Learning all the content for it- there's quite a lot of confusing theory work so if you don't already have some knowledge on it either as a hobby or reading your textbook, it can be quite difficult to understand the first time around.*

### **What do you wish you had known about the subject when you were making your option choices in Year 9?**

*Not everything is about computers, for example you can learn about how you access websites and the process behind it.*

# Construction (Vocational)



Pathway 2 only

<b>Exam Board</b>	<b>EDUQAS</b>
<b>Specification</b>	<u><a href="http://eduqas.co.uk">Level 1/2 Vocational Award in Construction and the Built Environment (eduqas.co.uk)</a></u>

## Content

This qualification is for learners aged 14-16 who wish to develop their knowledge and understanding of the construction industry and gain experience of planning and developing construction projects.

**Coursework** – Selected making tasks/units of practical work.

**Assessment** – On-going throughout the course. Unit 2 is internally assessed.

**Examinations** – Units 1 externally assessed.

**Post 16 Education** – Progression onto a Post 16 Level NVQ in trade or professional based apprenticeship.

**Careers** – Construction and Manufacturing apprenticeships (eg Electrician, Joiner and Plumber), Site manager, Surveyor.

## Skills and Attributes

- Good practical skills
- The ability to meet coursework deadlines
- Awareness of health and safety issues
- Good attendance to lessons
- Safe behaviour in a workshop

Good attendance is essential in this subject due to the ongoing assessment and NEA.

## Assessment

<b>Unit 1 Exam (40%)</b>	<b>Unit 2 Coursework (60%)</b>
In the exam unit, you will learn about: the sector, the built environment life cycle, types of building and structure, technologies and materials, building structures and forms, sustainable construction methods, trades, employment and careers and health and safety	<b>Practical construction skills</b>  Practical unit with an introduction to the following trades: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Carpentry/Joinery</li><li>• Electrical</li><li>• Plumbing</li></ul>

## **What our Year 11 students say about Construction**

### **What do you enjoy about the subject?**

*I enjoy building in the workshop. Learning about different trades and how they work when coming onto the sites. Learning all the different tools that you use in the workshop. Learning all the safety regulations that you may not have heard about. Learning all fire extinguishers and which ones to use on what kind of fire, also the different categories of fires.*

### **What have you found challenging at times?**

*When you first start off with the topic you may find it hard to remember the different types of fire extinguishers, or which tools you need to use and what they are called. As you go through the year you will remember them better*

### **What do you wish you had known about the subject when you were making your option choices in Year 9?**

*I wish I had known about the construction option as I never knew you could take it, I found out from a friend, and it was the best option I have taken. I have really enjoyed the course.*



<b>Exam Board</b>	OCR
<b>Specification</b>	<a href="https://www.ocr.org.uk/qualifications/cambridge-nationals/creative-imedia-level-1-2-j834/">https://www.ocr.org.uk/qualifications/cambridge-nationals/creative-imedia-level-1-2-j834/</a>

## Content

### Topics Studied:

- Exam: Creative iMedia in the media industry
- Visual identity and digital graphics
- Animation with audio

### What will learners' study?

Digital media will feature heavily – Animation, video and sound editing and image manipulation are all part of the syllabus requirements. Learners taking this qualification will study 3 digital literacy-based units. They will also study the theory and skills required to produce and refine their creations in greater depth. Learning will take place through a mixture of case studies, practical tasks and a study of theoretical concepts, enabling learners to develop their digital literacy (& IT) knowledge, understanding and skills. The topic areas have been chosen based around industry research showing current shortages of skilled people within the creative sector. This qualification aims to enhance our students' employability!

### In the R093 Exam (Creative iMedia in the media industry) students will look at the following:

Identity is a vital component of any business, product or brand. A visual identity communicates values and core principles to the consumer, user or customer. In this unit students will learn how to develop visual identities for clients. They will also learn to apply the concepts of graphic design to create original digital graphics which incorporate visual identity to engage a target audience. Completing this unit will introduce the foundations for further study or a wide range of job roles within the media industry.

### In R094 (Visual Identity and Digital Graphics) students will look at the following:

The aim of this unit is for learners to understand the basics of digital graphics editing for the creative and digital media sector. They will learn where and why digital graphics are used and what techniques are involved in their creation. This unit will develop learners' understanding of the client brief, time frames, deadlines and preparation techniques as part of the planning and creation process. On completion of this unit, learners will understand the purpose and properties of digital graphics, and know where and how they are used.

## **In R096 (Animation with Audio) students will look at the following:**

Animation is used in a wide range of applications in the media industry. Gaming technologies, mobile phones, film making, interactive media and websites all use digital animation to enhance applications, entertain and inform the viewer. In this unit students will learn to plan animations with soundtracks based on client briefs. They will learn to use a range of tools and techniques to create, edit and combine audio and animated content and export and review completed animation with audio products. Completing this unit will provide students with the basic skills for further study or a range of creative and technical job roles within the media industry.

## **Assessment**

### **Methods of assessment** (Level 2 Award)

Creating digital graphics	(50 UMS)
Animation with Audio	(70 UMS)
Exam – Creative iMedia in the media industry 1 ½ hours	(70 UMS)

**Note:** Good attendance is essential in this subject due to the ongoing assessments and NEA.

## **What our Year 11 students say about Creative iMedia**

### **What do you enjoy about the subject?**

*The thing I enjoy the most about Creative iMedia is the animation and script writing.*

### **What have you found challenging at times?**

*Some of the essay work can be challenging at times.*

### **What do you wish you had known about the subject when you were making your option choices in Year 9?**

*Time keeping with deadlines is important.*

# Design Technology (GCSE)



<b>Exam Board</b>	<b>AQA</b>
<b>Specification</b>	<a href="https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/design-and-technology/gcse/design-and-technology-8552/">https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/design-and-technology/gcse/design-and-technology-8552/</a>

## Content

**GCSE Design & Technology** allows students to design and make quality products which demonstrate their individual levels of creativity and originality whilst working in a variety of woods, metals & plastics and employing a wide range of manufacturing skills and techniques.

This new qualification is modern and relevant, so students can learn about contemporary technologies, materials and processes, as well as established practices.

GCSE places greater emphasis on understanding and applying iterative design processes. Students will use their creativity and imagination to design and make prototypes that solve real and relevant problems, considering their own and others' needs, wants and values.

The course is also designed to foster awareness amongst students of the need for designers to consider sustainability and environmental impact on their work.

## Course Structure

Students are given credit for what they can do as well as what they know and will be enthused and challenged by the range of practical opportunities this specification offers.

## Progression

This GCSE helps to prepare students for the world and is a recognised part of the National Qualifications framework. It also provides an appropriate foundation for further study of A Level Design and Technology or other related subjects.

## Assessment

**Unit 1 Examination (50%)** A single 2 hour exam taken at the end of Year 11 and focusing on student's knowledge of the subject content;

- Core technical principles
- Specialist technical principles
- Designing and making principles

**Unit 2 Coursework (50%)** A single substantial design and make task is produced in response to a Contextual Challenge set by the AQA Examination Board for example a 'Chess Box / Games Storage Unit'.

Students enjoy working on this 'extended project' in addition to a number of 'practice tasks' which run throughout the course giving plenty of opportunity to design and make their own products in a practical workshop environment. Assessment criteria:

- Investigation
- Designing
- Making
- Analysing and Evaluating

## **What our Year 11 students say about Design Technology**

### **What do you enjoy about the subject?**

*I have enjoyed mainly the practical elements of working the workshop. However, I have also found the theory rather interesting.*

*The creativity that it gives you.*

### **What have you found challenging at times?**

*I have found it challenging to remember a lot of the key words such as the materials and processes that you need to know about in the course.*

### **What do you wish you had known about the subject when you were making your option choices in Year 9?**

*I wish I had known how much impact the coursework had upon my final grade, allowing me to have a lot more control on what I achieve. Meaning the more work that you put into it the better your grade will be.*

*There is a lot of product analysis and finding things to say about the stuff you make.*

# Drama (GCSE)



<b>Exam Board</b>	<b>AQA</b>
<b>Specification</b>	<a href="https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/drama/gcse/drama-8261">https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/drama/gcse/drama-8261</a>

## Content

The aim of this GCSE is to engage and encourage students to become confident performers and designers. Students can choose to develop as a:

- Performer
- Designer (lighting, sound, set, costume, puppets)
- Performer and designer.

Whichever option they choose, students can be sure to gather many invaluable skills, both theatrical and transferable, to expand their horizons. Students learn to collaborate with others, think analytically and evaluate effectively. They gain the confidence to pursue their own ideas, reflect and refine their efforts

## Assessment

<b>Component 1</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Knowledge and understanding of drama and theatre</li><li>• Study of one set play from a choice of six</li><li>• Analysis and evaluation of the work of live theatre makers</li></ul>	<b>How it's assessed</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Written exam: 1 hour and 45 minutes</li><li>• 80 marks</li><li>• 40% of GCSE</li></ul>
<b>Component 2</b> <p>Process of creating devised drama</p> <p>Performance of devised drama (students may contribute as performer or designer)</p> <p>Analysis and evaluation of own work</p>	<b>How it's assessed</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Devising log (60 marks)</li><li>• Devised performance (20 marks)</li><li>• 80 marks in total</li><li>• 40% of GCSE</li></ul> <p>This component is marked by teachers and moderated by AQA.</p>



<p><b>Component 3</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Performance of two extracts from one play (students may contribute as performer or designer)</li> </ul> <p>Free choice of play but it must contrast with the set play chosen for Component 1</p>	<p><b>How it's assessed</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Performance of Extract 1 (20 marks) <b>and</b> Extract 2 (20 marks)</li> <li>• 40 marks in total</li> <li>• 20% of GCSE</li> </ul> <p>This component is marked by AQA by a visiting examiner.</p>
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## What our Year 11 students say about Drama

### What do you enjoy about the subject?

*What I like most about drama is that it is mainly a practical subject, and this helps to balance out the other subjects that I take. I also like the acting side of the module. We are given a lot of freedom to make decisions about the scripts that we create ourselves and how we perform things. I enjoy this way of working a lot.*

*I enjoy the creative freedoms we get when writing the scripts and that we can be lots of different characters. I also like that the class is smaller than other options, so you become close with the people in your class and have a comfortable atmosphere to work in.*

### What have you found challenging at times?

*It is sometimes challenging in classes when classmates don't agree on the way to perform a script. However, you quickly learn to listen to other people's views, to negotiate and to make compromises. Although it can be a challenge, it can be insightful to hear ideas that you have never thought of before. Another challenge is that drama pushes you beyond your comfort zone. You sometimes need to take on roles that are often very different from your own personality. This can be tough, but you learn a lot of new skills and it gets easier through practice.*

*I have found it challenging to stay consistent with some parts of the acting and the devising parts of the course are quite difficult as it requires a lot of creative energy.*

### What do you wish you had known about the subject when you were making your option choices in Year 9?

*I wish I had known that the classes would feel so comforting and welcoming, that my teacher would be so supportive and that it is a really good balance of practical and academic work.*

*I wish I knew that there would be a lot of written parts and coursework required and that it would take a lot of time to develop and improve each piece of work before you can move on to the next.*

# Vocational Engineering



Pathway 2 only

<b>Exam Board</b>	<b>Eduqas</b>
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<b>Specification</b>	<a href="https://www.eduqas.co.uk/umbraco/surface/blobstorage/download?node">https://www.eduqas.co.uk/umbraco/surface/blobstorage/download?node</a>
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## Content

Engineering is a driving force in the UK's economy, accounting for 21.4% (£1.2 trillion) of the UK's £5.7 trillion turnover in 2018. However, there is a considerable shortage of appropriately skilled workers in the engineering sector. One of the reasons for this is due to a lack of awareness among young people of the educational routes into engineering occupations, even though pursuing STEM subjects remains a priority for many young people, and, according to Engineering UK, the proportion of young people aged 11 to 14 who said they would consider a career in engineering was 54.7% in 2019.

The Vocational Award in Engineering has been designed to support learners in schools and colleges who want to learn about this vocational sector and the potential it can offer them for their careers or further study. It is most suitable as a foundation for further study. This further study would provide learners with the opportunity to develop a range of specialist and general skills that would support their progression to employment

### Coursework 60% : Throughout year 10 & 11

**Unit 1** provides learners with the opportunity to interpret different types of engineering information to plan how to manufacture engineering products. Learners will develop knowledge, understanding and skills in using a range of engineering tools and equipment to manufacture and test a product.

**Unit 2** allows learners to explore how an engineered product is adapted and improved over time, and it offers learners the opportunity to apply their knowledge and understanding to adapt an existing component, element, or part of the engineering outcome that they manufactured for Unit 1 .

### Exam 40% End of year 11

**Unit 3** introduces learners to a range of considerations that impact on engineering design and how modern engineering has had an impact on modern day life at home, work and in society in general.

**Post 16 Education** – progression onto a level 3 Diploma, A level, T Level or Apprenticeship.

**Careers** – Various engineering apprenticeships, full time courses and employment opportunities

**Skills and Attributes** –

- Good practical skills
- The ability to meet coursework deadlines
- Awareness of health and safety issues
- Good attendance to lessons
- Safe behaviour in a workshop

Good attendance is essential in this subject due to the ongoing assessments and NEA.

## **What our Year 11 students say about Vocational Engineering**

**What do you enjoy about the subject?**

*Learning how to draw isometric drawings and doing practicals in the workshop.*

**What have you found challenging at times?**

*Remembering all the alloys and ferrous metals and how they react with different metals.  
Remembering how to do the maths equations for the angles, pi, etc.*

**What do you wish you had known about the subject when you were making your option choices in Year 9?**

*I wish I knew that I would have to know all the alloys and ferrous metals so I could learn it before starting the subject, so the work wasn't as hard.*

# Engineering (GCSE)



<b>Exam Board</b>	<b>AQA</b>
<b>Specification</b>	<a href="https://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/engineering/specifications/AQA-8852-SP-2017.PDF">https://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/engineering/specifications/AQA-8852-SP-2017.PDF</a>

## Content

Engineering is an increasingly innovative and exciting area to work in. It affects every aspect of modern life – from skyscrapers to smart phones, cars to carrier bags. GCSE Engineering introduces students to a host of new technologies, helping them to gain practical skills and understanding to inspire a lifelong interest in engineering. It will particularly appeal to those who enjoy being creative, with an affinity for design, maths and problem-solving. CAD/CAM is used extensively throughout the course. In this course students will be taught how to apply mechanical and electrical theory to engineer innovative products. Mathematical calculations and scientific formula are used to overcome problems.

## Course Structure

Students are given credit for what they can do as well as what they know and will be enthused and challenged by the range of practical opportunities this specification offers.

## Core content

- Engineering materials.
- Engineering manufacturing processes.
- Systems (Electrical & Mechanical control)
- Testing and investigation.
- The impact of modern technologies.
- Practical engineering skills.

## Progression

This course is intended as an introduction to Engineering and allows students to develop skills and understanding which will be of use generally and as part of a progressive career path leading to further technical or academic engineering qualifications.

GCSE Engineering also provides an appropriate foundation for further study of A Level Design and Technology and other related subjects.

## Assessment

### Unit 1: - Written Paper – 2 hours – 60% Overall

- Multiple choice questions assessing breadth of knowledge.

- Short answer questions assessing in depth knowledge, including calculations.
- Mathematical calculations & Scientific formula accounts for approximately 25% of this paper.
- Multiple choice questions related to the application of practical engineering skills.
- Extended response questions drawing together elements of the specification.

## **Unit 2: Coursework – NEA (Non-Examined Assessment) – 40% Overall**

- A brief set by AQA released on 1 June in the first year of study.
- Knowledge and understanding of engineering principles.
- Application of skills, knowledge and understanding in a practical context.
- Analysis and evaluation of evidence
- Engineer and Mechanical and Electrical prototype

### **Students produce**

- Engineering Portfolio to communicate a solution to the brief.
- Engineer and Mechanical and Electrical prototype to the brief.

## **What our Year 11 students say about GCSE Engineering**

### **What do you enjoy about the subject?**

*I enjoy the practical factors of the subject, such as designing products and actually making them in the workshop. As well as this, I also enjoy learning about how things work and function.*

*Independence involved with coursework but also the creativity for projects.*

### **What have you found challenging at times?**

*I have found getting all the information into my head hard at sometimes, there is a lot to know and it is a fact that this subject pushes students to be their best. It is one of the hardest GCSE's I have, but one of the one's I enjoy the most.*

*Remembering processes with engineering terminology*

### **What do you wish you had known about the subject when you were making your option choices in Year 9?**

*Just how much coursework there actually is was the only thing I did not know.*

*There is a lot to learn for each topic in a short amount of time so you should try to work out of class too.*

# Food Preparation and Nutrition (GCSE)



**Exam Board** | EDUQAS

**Specification** | <https://www.eduqas.co.uk/media/4zjdq104/eduqas-gcse-food-preparation-nutrition-spec-from-2016.pdf>

## Content

The course has been developed to include more scientific principles behind food preparation whilst maintaining a strong emphasis on nutrition and practical cookery skills. The GCSE also looks into food provenance and helps pupils to be more aware of the impact of food choice on their diet and the environment.

The food preparation skills covered by the new specification are grouped into five core topics:

- Food, nutrition and health
- Food science
- Food safety
- Food choice
- Food provenance

This is the course for you if you have a passion for food, if you aren't afraid to try cooking with and tasting new ingredients and recipes. The addition of food science to the curriculum makes this a very demanding course and will require a high degree of independent learning.

## Further Progression

Well known local institutions offer further progression in this industry/subject with many students considering diploma level 1,2 & 3 in Professional Cookery.

## Assessment

Pupils will sit one exam at the end of Yr11 which will be worth 50% of the final GCSE grade. The course will help pupils to apply scientific principles in a practical environment and will equip students to go on to further study in addition to option to enter an apprenticeship or begin a career in the catering industry, which as part of the hospitality industry, is one of the biggest employment sectors in the country.

Good attendance is essential in this subject due to the ongoing assessments and NEA.

## **Non-exam Assessment (NEA)**

Students will undertake two pieces of internally assessed work in Yr11.

**Task 1** is a food science investigation worth 15% of the final GCSE grade. Students will investigate the working characteristics, functional and chemical properties of a specific commodity, chosen by the exam board. The report will be between 1,500-2,000 words in length and include photographic evidence.

**Task 2** is a food preparation assessment and is worth 35% of the final GCSE grade. Students will apply their knowledge of planning, preparing, cooking and presenting food taught throughout Yr10 to prepare, cook and present three dishes in a context chosen by the exam board.

## **What our Year 11 students say about Food and Nutrition**

### **What do you enjoy about the subject?**

*I enjoy the practical lessons because when cooking it allows you to learn new techniques each time and it is also a life skill you most likely would need to have.*

### **What have you found challenging at times?**

*Though I would not say food & nutrition is a challenging subject or hard to study but it can be a bit difficult for those who don't have much interest in Science.*

*The most challenging thing about food tech for me is memorising the vitamins, minerals and nutrients because there are quite a few to go through.*

### **What do you wish you had known about the subject when you were making your option choices in Year 9?**

*I had done research and checked with senior students who had already taken food & nutrition as their subject to get the full information before picking it as my optional subject. So I don't think there was anything I regret about after choosing it as one of my options.*

*I mainly expected most of what was there but what changes in year 10 is that you become more independent in your practical and written lessons, especially in year 11 when you begin your NEA.*

# French, German, Mandarin, Spanish (GCSEs)



<b>Exam Board</b>	<b>AQA</b>
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<b>Specification</b>	<a href="https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/languages">https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/languages</a>
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## Content

GCSE courses in French/ German/ Spanish/ Mandarin aim to develop the ability to understand and use the languages effectively as a means of practical communication and imaginative expression. Emphasis is placed on the development of an understanding of the grammar, structure and vocabulary of the language. Combined with study of the culture and civilisation of French/ German/ Spanish/ Mandarin speaking countries.

Throughout the course, equal importance is given to the four language skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing) and students are exposed to a wide range of authentic language materials.

## Assessment

Students will be entered for the AQA GCSE in French/ German/ Spanish/ Mandarin. There are 4 components – Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing. All papers are set and marked by AQA. Each paper is equally weighted at 25%. There are two tiers of entry: Foundation and Higher Tier. Students must sit either Foundation or Higher Tier in all four skills. There is a new grading system of 1 (the lowest) to 9 (the highest). Foundation level is grades 1 – 5 and Higher level is grades 4 – 9.

The course requires enthusiasm and a readiness to participate actively in the four skill areas. It offers a good basis for future language learning and teaches a wide range of study skills. Students will be assessed by final examination. There will be separate examinations in Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing.

## What our Year 11 students say about French

### What do you enjoy about the subject?

*Learning a second language for school, (even if it's not a field you want to go into) broadens your future even outside of an academic context! It opens up a whole new world of culture, and things you can enjoy even in your free time such as a whole new world of music and film. I really enjoy having this new skill which helps me to communicate with new people and enjoy new things and ideas.*

*I enjoy the fact that you get to learn about another country and culture, and I love that you have the opportunity to learn a different language. Also, you get to put your French into practice as you are paired up with a French pen-pal, who you can keep in contact*



with and you help each other to consolidate your language skills, which is something I have found particularly useful.

### **What have you found challenging at times?**

*It's challenging to try and learn certain vocabulary, grammar points or tenses, but once you understand it, you get a sense of fulfilment and learn an entire new way to get your message across.*

*I find it quite difficult to remember all of the vocabulary because there is a lot to learn, but if you keep working on it and recapping, then it does become easier to memorise, particularly if you use online apps. I also find speaking challenging to master because French has different pronunciation to English, but again, practice helps with this, and you get the opportunity to speak French in every lesson.*

### **What do you wish you had known about the subject when you were making your option choices in Year 9?**

*When I took French in Year Nine, I didn't know that I would want to take it further for A-Level, so I'd say, I wish I'd known sooner just how much I would enjoy it, and so to not anticipate the challenges learning a new language includes as much as I did because now those challenges are what I enjoy most about French! Bonne chance!*

*I wish I'd known that once you've learnt the basics of French and how to form tenses etc. then it is easy to improve your language skills. I thought that it would be completely different to the French you learn in KS3, when in reality, you just add to your knowledge and attempt more advanced constructions.*

## **What our Year 11 students say about German**

### **What do you enjoy about the subject?**

*I enjoy learning a foreign language which is commonly spoken in many countries as it allows me to be respectful when visiting German-speaking countries. I also love learning about the culture and choosing German allowed me to also experience the culture as school trips are offered as part of the GCSE course.*

*I find German enjoyable, as you learn about how languages change and develop, the culture and attitudes of Germany towards certain topics and finally the challenge of learning a foreign language.*

### **What have you found challenging at times?**

*The grammar involved is quite challenging at times however, taking time to thoroughly understand it makes it much easier. Also, the amount of vocabulary learning which is required can be quite overwhelming however, frequently revising it helps a lot.*

*I find the sheer amount of content that is needed difficult to keep a hold of, as small breaks of a week can seriously affect the build-up of knowledge that you had previously. I find the speaking activities difficult, as I think in English, then try to translate into German, which makes it difficult if you don't know the words that you're thinking of.*

**What do you wish you had known about the subject when you were making your option choices in Year 9?**

*The amount of regular revision needed in order to stay on top of the work is a lot but helps a lot when it comes to assessments and homework.*

## **What our Year 11 students say about Spanish**

**What do you enjoy about the subject?**

*I enjoy learning new languages, as I think it an important life skill.*

**What have you found challenging at times?**

*I found speaking difficult as you are often put on the spot and pronunciation isn't always intuitive.*

**What do you wish you had known about the subject when you were making your option choices in Year 9?**

*Nothing, teachers told me everything I wanted to know.*

## **What our Year 11 students say about Mandarin**

**What do you enjoy about the subject?**

*It's really interesting because you learn about the language and Chinese culture. Learning a language can also be useful later in life and you can get more job opportunities if you know Mandarin. There is also not much content overall because most words use the same characters so there is less content than other languages. This means you will have more time in lessons to learn about the culture. The class sizes are usually small so you can learn more quickly. Learning Mandarin is better than another language because it is such a large language that most people know, whereas less people know other languages. (Also the teacher is really good).*

**What have you found challenging at times?**

*It can be difficult to remember both, the pinyin and character, for a word. The pronunciation can also be hard sometimes.*

**What do you wish you had known about the subject when you were making your option choices in Year 9?**

*I wish I had known that there is not as much vocabulary that you have to learn, although you still have to learn quite a bit. In my opinion, it can be easier than the other language I did in Year 9. So for example, on the writing paper you have to write 125 characters on one question which seems like a lot but most words are more than one character and some can be 3-5 characters so it's not actually that much.*

# Geography (GCSE)



**Exam Board**

**AQA**

**Specification** <https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/geography/gcse/geography-8035>

"You can travel the seas, poles, and deserts and see nothing. To really understand the world you need to get under the skin of the people and places. In other words, learn about geography. I can't imagine a subject more relevant in schools. We'd all be lost without it."

Michael Palin

## Content

### Brief Description of the course

The main aim of this qualification is that learners should develop the ability to think 'like a geographer'. That is to say, learners will develop the skills necessary to conduct enquiries in the classroom and in the field in order to develop their understanding of specialised geographical concepts and current geographical issues. By following this specification, learners will achieve the following objectives. They will develop the ability to think:

**Creatively** by posing questions that relate to geographical processes and concepts.

**Scientifically** by collecting, recording and assessing appropriate evidence from a range of sources, including fieldwork.

**Independently** by applying geographical knowledge, understanding, skills and approaches appropriately and creatively to real world contexts.

### Fieldwork

This is an essential aspect of geography and a compulsory component of all the new GCSE specifications. Students will carry out both physical and human fieldwork during Year 10 and 11.

### Beyond GCSE

Many of our geographers go on to study the subject at A Level and beyond and a *background* in geography is excellent preparation for a range of careers. For example, employers value the wide-ranging computer, research, and analytical skills that geography students bring to work as employees. There are also currently lots of opportunities that require specific skills and knowledge acquired in geography e.g. urban planning and regeneration, hazard management and sustainable development.

# Assessment

## Course Content

### Component 1: Living with the Physical Environment (35%)

- The Challenge of Natural Hazards
- The Living World
- Physical Landscapes in the UK
- Geographical Skills

### Component 2: Challenges in the Human Environment (35%)

- Urban Issues and Challenges
- The Changing Economic World
- The Challenge of Resource Management
- Geographical Skills

### Component 3: Geographical Applications (30%)

- Issue Evaluation
- Fieldwork
- Geographical Skills

## What our Year 11 students say about Geography

### What do you enjoy about the subject?

*I find it extremely interesting because it really helps us to understand the world we live in and to explain why things we take for granted occur in the ways that they do. In addition, the balance between human and physical aspects is incredibly fascinating because it provides us with the knowledge of how we as humans are impacted by our surroundings.*

*For me, I find physical geography the most interesting. Learning about how the earth functions on a day-to-day basis has been an eye-opener. My favourite topic is learning about natural hazards like earthquakes and how tectonic plates work. If you enjoy learning about a variety of cultures, then geography is definitely for you!*

### What have you found challenging at times?

*I have sometimes found the volume of content slightly intimidating when it comes to key terms and case studies which we are expected to know very well by the end of Year 11.*

*The most challenging side of the subject is probably the number of case studies. However, each one is unique so fun to learn about.*

### What do you wish you had known about the subject when you were making your option choices in Year 9?

*I think a better understanding of the range of topics covered in the subject would have been beneficial.*

*I would have like to have known more about the various field trips.*

# Health & Social Care Vocational



Pathway 2 only

**Exam Board**

**EDUQAS**

**Specification**

[https://www.eduqas.co.uk/qualifications/level-1-2-vocational-award-in-health-and-social-care/#tab\\_keydocuments](https://www.eduqas.co.uk/qualifications/level-1-2-vocational-award-in-health-and-social-care/#tab_keydocuments)

## Content

Offering an effective introduction to the health and social care sector, this qualification looks at the role the sector plays in the health, well-being and care of individuals across all age ranges. It also introduces students to the specialist knowledge and skills needed to work in various care settings.

Underpinning the qualification is a focus on core values and communicating with individuals to maintain their dignity and sense of being valued.

If you are considering a career in social care, nursing, teaching or health care this is course for you. As part of the course you will learn about factors that affect your growth and development. You will learn about different areas of health and social care and can visit primary schools, nurseries or care homes to gain real life experience of these sectors. Throughout the course, you will gain experience to help you become a good communicator, a self-motivator amongst many other attributes to get the most out of this course.

### Course progression:

Learners who generally achieve at Level 2 across their Key Stage 4 learning might consider progression to:

- A Levels as preparation for entry into higher education in a range of subjects
- Study of a vocational qualification at Level 3 in Health & Social Care, which prepares learners to enter employment or apprenticeships, or to move on to higher education by studying a degree in aspects of health or social care.

### Additional Information

To be successful within this course you will need to take part in discussions, make presentations and work collaboratively with others in the class as well as preparing your own portfolio of work.

## Assessment

**Unit 1:** Health, well-being and development throughout the lifespan  
Written examination:  
1 hour 20 minutes 40% of qualification 80 marks

**Unit 2:** Outcome-focused and person-centred practice in health and social care  
Controlled assessment: 16 hours 60% of qualification 120 marks

Two assignments will be provided by WJEC which will include: Assignment 1: a case study and several tasks  
Assignment 2: a scenario and several tasks  
These will be available via the WJEC Secure Website

## What our Year 11 students say about Health & Social Care

### What do you enjoy about the subject?

*I like how you get to learn about other people's experiences in life and how things can affect people but also how you can help people deal with problems. It can also be quite fun and interesting as a lot of the work we do is not too difficult.*

*You can just get on with the assignments when you get them*

### What have you found challenging at times?

*Doing 2 components at once, they got confusing and I got mixed up a bit*

*Sometimes there is coursework/ assignments to do but some have quite interesting themes which make them more fun to do.*

### What do you wish you had known about the subject when you were making your option choices in Year 9?

*I don't have any regrets about taking it as overall it is a fun and interesting but maybe that's there is a lot of content.*

# History (GCSE)



<b>Exam Board</b>	<b>AQA</b>
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<b>Specification</b>	<a href="https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/history/gcse/history-8145">https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/history/gcse/history-8145</a>
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## Content

GCSE History students have the opportunity to build on areas of study from Key Stage 3, expanding and developing both their historical knowledge and skills. The course requires students to be comfortable with reading and interpreting a range of source material, essay writing and active participation in the classroom. We encourage students to consider History as a GCSE option choice if they enjoy the subject and the challenges associated with studying a knowledge-laden, traditional, literary subject.

We want enthusiastic and hard-working historians who love the subject and enjoy a challenge!

## Topics

The course covers four topics over two years, all of which are worth 25% of the final grade.

	Topic	Students will study...
Paper 1	<i>Conflict &amp; Tension, 1894-1918</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The causes of the First World War, both long and short term</li><li>• The outbreak of war in 1914 and reasons for the stalemate which developed, including case studies of key battles</li><li>• The reasons for Germany seeking an armistice in 1918.</li></ul>
	<i>Democracy &amp; Dictatorship: Germany, 1890-1945</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Germany under Kaiser Wilhelm II, including the effects of WWI on the German people</li><li>• The establishment of the Weimar democracy and the challenges this presented</li><li>• The rise of Hitler and the Nazi Party</li><li>• Life in Germany under the Nazis, including the persecution of minorities and the effects of WWII on the population.</li></ul>
Paper 2	<i>Power and the People, c.1170 to the present day</i>	This is a thematic module which studies the ways in which the people of England (and later, Britain) tried to gain power and a say in how the country was ruled. Case studies range from Magna Carta to the Tolpuddle Martyrs and the Pilgrimage of Grace to the Windrush Generation.



Elizabethan England,  
1568-1603

- Elizabethan government and control; the key issues of marriage, religion, succession and gender in ruling a country in the 16<sup>th</sup> Century
- Challenges faced by Elizabeth, including threats to her throne from Spain and Mary Queen of Scots
- The Elizabethan 'Golden Age' of theatre, exploration, fashion and architecture

## Assessment

The AQA course is examined at the end of two years, via two exam papers. Students are expected to demonstrate a range of skills, including source and interpretation analysis as well as longer essay-style questions in which they must respond to an argument. Classwork includes regular chances to practice, develop and perfect these skills.

## What our Year 11 students say about History

### What do you enjoy about the subject?

*I enjoy learning about the past and what people in generations before us had to face within their lifetime. History is one of my favourite subjects as it provides interesting information about the world we live in: how societies and communities have changed since those times.*

*I love the content that we are taught, and the way in which we are taught it. It is extremely useful for when we have exams as we always get lots of time to practice different question types and see which ones are our strengths and weaknesses so we know what to improve on.*

### What have you found challenging at times?

*I sometimes find it challenging to find motivation to complete the exam questions as on top of the other subjects, it can be a lot of work and understanding and a lot of writing.*

*I have found some content can be challenging sometimes but with the support of teachers, it becomes easier to understand and remember as there are always different methods you can use to remember key dates, events and information.*

### What do you wish you had known about the subject when you were making your option choices in Year 9?

*I wish I had known more about the amount of content we have to learn and how much of it needs to be nailed down heading into exams.*

*The amount of content there is; however, over the two year period, it is spread out nicely.*

# Latin (GCSE)



<b>Exam Board</b>	<b>EDUQAS</b>
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<b>Specification</b>	<a href="https://www.eduqas.co.uk/qualifications/latin-gcse/#tab_overview">https://www.eduqas.co.uk/qualifications/latin-gcse/#tab_overview</a>
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## Content

### You will study:

Latin language: continuing with the Cambridge Latin Course to build your skills to the point where you can read un-adapted Latin texts.

Latin Literature & Sources: studying a selection of artefacts and prose and verse texts relating to the theme "Love and Marriage". Texts include works by Catullus, Ovid, Martial, Horace, Cicero, Seneca and Pliny.

Roman Civilisation: You will cover a wide range of topics during the course, but the exam will focus on Roman Family Life.

### You will learn:

- How to develop a sensitive and analytical approach to language generally, including an awareness of the relationship between Latin and the languages of today;
- How to approach different cultures;
- How to read and appreciate Latin literature in its cultural context and in its original language;
- How to use ancient primary sources to learn about Roman life;
- How to communicate clearly and effectively.

### Why study Latin?

This subject gives you the opportunity to study the language and literature of ancient Rome, discovering the works of authors who have been studied and admired for over two thousand years. You will experience at first hand elements of the culture, language and social and political life of the Romans, which are a key part of our cultural heritage. As well as being fascinating and challenging, this course will help you develop analytical skills and intellectual flexibility which will be useful in a wide range of jobs or in further study.

**Students will need to have studied Latin at KS3 in order to take this course.**

## Assessment

Candidates sit 3 papers

Latin Language	1 hour 30 minutes	(50%)
Latin Literature	1 hour 15 minutes	(30%)
Roman Civilisation	1 hour	(20%)

## What our Year 11 students say about Latin

### What do you enjoy about the subject?

*The fact that for a language, it is not solely based on the language. I enjoy mostly the aspects not related to the language like the literature parts and the Roman life parts.*

*I find this subject highly interesting as well as enjoyable because it is both a language and a study of Roman society. This means that the subject covers a wide range of ideas.*

### What have you found challenging at times?

*As with most languages, learning vocabulary is hard but there is comparatively a lot less in Latin than other languages.*

*I find the grammar quite challenging because of how many different sets of endings need to be internalised.*

### What do you wish you had known about the subject when you were making your option choices in Year 9?

*I think it would have been good to know about how different the set texts are to anything previously studied in Latin.*

# Music (GCSE)



<b>Exam Board</b>	<b>EDEXCEL</b>
<b>Specification</b>	<a href="https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/edexcel-gcses/music-2016.html">https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/edexcel-gcses/music-2016.html</a>

## Content

In GCSE music you will learn how to improve your performing skills and through work in composition you will gain an insight into how music is constructed from initial ideas to the finished product. You will also learn how to analyse music in a variety of styles, through both score analysis and listening, and discover the social context in which music has been composed over the last 400 years.

GCSE Music is available as an option within the main option choices, however it is also offered, by application, as an extra full GCSE in a pre-school option. In the pre-school option, lessons are on a Tuesday and Wednesday morning, starting at 7.40, and if students select this option they will only receive two lessons per week, rather than the three offered in the main option block. This is therefore a sensible choice for the student who already has a secure grounding in music theory (to about grade 3) and is about grade 4 standard on their instrument/ voice at the start of the course.

If you have any questions about taking music as an extra pre-school option, please email Mr Holmes via [school@durhamjohnston.org.uk](mailto:school@durhamjohnston.org.uk).

## Assessment

### Component 1: Performing (30%)

Students produce at least one solo and at least one ensemble performance. Performances may be on any instrument and in any style, but both combined must be in excess of 4 minutes and the standard of performance needed to achieve a secure mark in this component is between grade 3 and 4. This part of the course is marked by the teacher and moderated by Edexcel.

### Component 2: Composing (30%)

Students produce two compositions, one which responds to a brief set by the exam board and a second that is 'free' i.e. does not respond to an external brief. The combined length of the two pieces of music is a minimum of three minutes and each piece must be at least one minute long. In year 10, students will explore various approaches to composition and the composition briefs, which will be based on audience and/ or occasion, will be released at the start of year 11. This part of the course is marked by the teacher and moderated by Edexcel.

### Component 3: Appraising (40%)

At the end of the course students will take a 1 hour 45 minutes examination which will assess their understanding of music from four areas of study, each of which has two set works, in a variety of ways. The examination will contain short listening questions, extended prose answers and students will also be expected to respond to unfamiliar music.

Area of study	Set works
Instrumental Music 1700–1820	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• J S Bach: 3rd Movement from Brandenburg Concerto no. 5 in D major</li><li>• L van Beethoven: 1st Movement from Piano Sonata no. 8 in C minor 'Pathétique'</li></ul>
Vocal Music	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• H Purcell: Music for a While</li><li>• Queen: Killer Queen (from the album 'Sheer Heart Attack')</li></ul>
Music for Stage and Screen	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• S Schwartz: Defying Gravity (from the album of the cast recording of Wicked)</li><li>• J Williams: Main title/rebel blockade runner (from the soundtrack to Star Wars Episode IV: A New Hope)</li></ul>
Fusions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Afro Celt Sound System: Release (from the album 'Volume 2: Release')</li><li>• Esperanza Spalding: Samba Em Preludio (from the album 'Esperanza')</li></ul>

## What our Year 11 students say about Music

### What do you enjoy about the subject?

*I enjoy the set works that you study because they cover a wide range of styles and periods, so it gives you the opportunity to expand your knowledge in many areas of music. I also enjoy the composition aspect of the course as it gives you the chance to be creative instead of just studying pieces.*

*I personally enjoy the wide range of music that we study of the length of the course- everything from Bach and Beethoven to John Williams and even Queen. It's incredibly interesting to listen to such a wide range and gain such a broad appreciation for all types of music. The composition element of the course has also been a great experience, and I think it is well tailored for all levels of experience from people who may have tried it before to people who are trying it out for the first time on the course. Furthermore, as someone who enjoys playing my instrument greatly, I found preparing a grade 5 level piece for my GCSE performance to be a nice break from the ABRSM exam repertoire that I had been studying and a great chance to show off the level of performance I have reached on my instrument.*

## **What have you found challenging at times?**

*It is quite challenging that there is so much specific terminology to remember for each of the set works and you need to know what all of those terms actually mean. You also need to remember the structure of each piece, which isn't easy, but is something you get more comfortable with over time. If you choose to take the option of music lessons before school, you should be prepared to be disciplined to make sure you arrive in school for an early start throughout the year.*

*The three different elements of the course are quite different in nature: studying the set works, working on our compositions and practicing for our individual performance. Keeping all three of those areas consistent to the same standard can sometimes be challenging, especially in the composition element where, although I personally have experimented with composition before, for many it was their first attempt at it. However, like I said, I think that element of the course is tailored for everyone and, regardless of previous experience, you can expect to have a finished composition that you can be proud of by the time you have completed the course in Year 11, whilst having enjoyed the process of making it along the way.*

## **What do you wish you had known about the subject when you were making your option choices in Year 9?**

*I wish I'd known how different the lessons and the content are to the music you study in KS3, because you study each piece you do in much greater depth, but it's more interesting and enjoyable at GCSE. I also worried about falling behind because I chose breakfast music (2 hours a week) instead of doing music 3 hours a week in school time, but in reality, you are still able to learn the content in the same amount of detail and you do the same amount of work outside of class as you would do for your other subjects.*

*In Year 9 I didn't quite expect just how different the 8 set works that we study would be, and I certainly would have wanted to listen to some more music in each style in order to get my ears accustomed to the genres, from both an academic and enjoyment perspective. Of course, it would have been nice to have been somehow warned about the pandemic which has thrown a spanner in the works for the whole school, but I think it is a testament to the high teaching standards of the music department that even through such adverse events both me and my classmates have still enjoyed the full music GCSE experience and are fully prepared and confident regardless of however they decide to assess our ability in the end.*

*I decided to take the full course since I plan to go on at A-level but, for anyone wavering over which option to take, I think having that extra hour a week helped me and would certainly help others by going through everything and giving yourself a little more time to digest the content, making it useful for those who might feel they need a little more time to develop a good understanding of the music, and equally to those who wish to go on to do A-level*

# Physical Education (GCSE)



<b>Exam Board</b>	<b>AQA</b>
<b>Specification</b>	<a href="https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/physical-education/gcse/physical-education-8582">https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/physical-education/gcse/physical-education-8582</a>

## Content and Assessment

<p><b>Component 1:</b></p> <p>The human body and movement in physical activity and sport</p> <p><b>Written Paper</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 hour 15 minutes written paper</li> <li>• 78 marks</li> <li>• Combination of multiple choice, short answer and extended writing questions</li> </ul> <p>Applied anatomy and physiology, movement analysis, physical training and use of data</p>	30%
<p><b>Component 2:</b></p> <p>Socio-cultural influences and well-being in physical activity and sport</p> <p><b>Written Paper</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 hour 15 minutes written paper</li> <li>• 78 marks</li> <li>• Combination of multiple choice, short answer and extended writing questions</li> </ul> <p>Sports psychology, socio-cultural influences, health. Fitness and well-being and use of data</p>	30%
<p><b>Component 3:</b></p> <p>Practical performance in physical activity and sport</p> <p><b>NEA Coursework</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 100 marks</li> <li>• Internal assessment, external moderation</li> <li>• 3 Sports REQUIRED from the list below</li> </ul> <p>1 team, 1 individual &amp; 1 other</p>	40%

Team activities			Individual activities		
Association football	Badminton	Basketball	Amateur boxing	Athletics	Badminton
Camogie	Cricket	Dance	Canoeing	Cycling	Dance
Gaelic football	Handball	Hockey	Diving	Golf	Gymnastics
Hurling	Lacrosse	Netball	Equestrian	Kayaking	Rock climbing
Rowing	Rugby League	Rugby Union	Rowing	Sculling	Skiing
Squash	Table tennis	Tennis	Snowboarding	Squash	Swimming
Volleyball	Ice Hockey	Water polo	Table tennis	Tennis	Trampolining
Specialist team activities			Specialist individual activities		
Blind cricket	Goal ball	Powerchair football	Boccia	Polybat	
Table cricket	Wheelchair basketball	Wheelchair rugby			

## **What our Year 11 students say about GCSE PE**

### **What do you enjoy about the subject?**

*PE is my favourite subject, both inside and outside of school and that is because sport plays a huge part in my life. Not only is PE a great way to learn new skills in your sport and other sports but it's a great and interesting subject to learn about your body, muscles, joints, different systems, as well as the whole psychological, physical, cultural and mechanical aspects of the topic.*

*I have mostly enjoyed learning about the physiology of the body and have found a lot of the topics in the course really interesting and insightful.*

### **What have you found challenging at times?**

*I have found it challenging sometimes to revise in an effective way throughout my learning so that I don't forget areas of the course. I would definitely recommend continuously going over topics you find hard to remember.*

*I have found the coursework to be quite challenging as it involves a lot of writing and can be time consuming.*

### **What do you wish you had known about the subject when you were making your option choices in Year 9?**

*I wish I had known more about the practical side of PE and the lessons we do there.*

*I have found this course to be what I had expected it to be. I have enjoyed both the physical and the theory part of the course.*



# Photography (GCSE)



<b>Exam Board</b>	<b>Edexcel</b>
<b>Specification</b>	<a href="https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/edexcel-gcses/art-and-design-2016.html">https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/edexcel-gcses/art-and-design-2016.html</a>

## Content

Students opting for GCSE Photography will be introduced to a variety of experiences exploring a range of lens-based media, techniques and processes including both traditional and new technologies. They will learn how to produce images using digital cameras and enhance, manipulate and create images using computer software such as Photoshop. Electronic and paper-based sketchbooks are an integral element of the course and students will be expected to research and analyse the work of Photographers and designers and show connections with this work in their own practical outcomes.

## Assessment

### Component 1: Portfolio

The portfolio must include both:

1. Projects developed in response to a subject, theme, task or brief evidencing the journey from initial engagement with an idea(s) to the realisation of intentions. This will give students the opportunity to demonstrate, through an extended creative response, their ability to draw together different areas of knowledge, skills and/or understanding from across their course of study.
2. A selection of further work resulting from activities such as trials and experiments; skills-based workshops; mini and/or foundation projects and independent study.

The work submitted for this component will be marked as a whole. Students should carefully select, organise and present their portfolio and must ensure that it provides evidence of meeting all four assessment objectives.

**60% of final mark**

### Component 2: Externally set assignment

Edexcel will provide a separate externally set assignment for each title, each with seven different starting points. Students must select and respond to one starting point from their chosen title. The externally set assignment provides students with the opportunity to demonstrate, through an extended creative response, their ability to draw together different areas of knowledge, skills and/or understanding in response to their selected starting point. The extended creative response must explicitly evidence students' ability to

draw together different areas of knowledge, skill and/or understanding from initial engagement with their selected starting point through to their realisation of intentions in the 10 hours of supervised time.

**40% of final mark**

## **What our Year 11 students say about Photography**

### **What do you enjoy about the subject?**

*I enjoy how creative it is and how the diversity of the subject matter keeps it interesting and fun throughout the course. I also really like how you have more independence in the subject making it very fun.*

### **What have you found challenging at times?**

*Sometimes coming up with new and different ideas can be hard but that is easily resolved with research and photo shoots.*

### **What do you wish you had known about the subject when you were making your option choices in Year 9?**

*Nothing*

# Sport Vocational



Pathway 2 only

<b>Exam Board</b>	<b>EDUQAS</b>
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<b>Specification</b>	<a href="https://www.wjec.co.uk/media/152fjpbq/112award-in-sport-coaching-principles-spec-from-2018-e.pdf">https://www.wjec.co.uk/media/152fjpbq/112award-in-sport-coaching-principles-spec-from-2018-e.pdf</a>
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## Content

We are now following the Sport and Coaching principles course from Wjec Eduqas

The qualification is made up of three units and taught over the 2 years. Pupils have 3 lessons a week for the 2 year period, complete assignments and sit a written exam which is externally assessed.

The units we study are:

Unit 1: Fitness for sport (examination 40% of total mark)

Unit 2: Improving Sporting Performance (controlled assessment 25% of total mark)

Unit 3: Coaching principles (controlled assessment 35% of total mark)

Unit 1 covers all of the information students need for the written exam and it includes information on writing training programmes and changes that take place in the body following exercise.

Unit 2 gives the pupils the opportunity to develop the knowledge and understand skills needed to improve sporting performance. They also learn about the physiological, psychological and technical factors that can improve sporting performance.

Unit 3 looks at planning, leading and evaluating a coaching session and the principles involved in coaching.

## Assessment

You will carry out tasks/assignments throughout the course which are marked internally and also an externally assessed exam.

Good attendance is essential in this subject due to the ongoing assessments and NEA.

## **What our Year 11 students say about Sport**

### **What do you enjoy about the subject?**

*I enjoy Vocational sport as it allows me to build skills in a wide variety of sports and I also get to help others do the same while teaching them what I already know.*

*How you get to do theory lessons and practical lessons. The content you learn through the units is enjoyable. The leadership side of the course is good because you get to interact with other people and use the skills you have covered, to teach them.*

### **What have you found challenging at times?**

*Sometimes I feel like the definitions are hard to understand but throughout year 10 and 11 you get to grips with them as you link them to the sports you love.*

### **What do you wish you had known about the subject when you were making your option choices in Year 9?**

*That it is so fun and enjoyable with the chance to teach and guide some incredible kids at the sports you are good at.*

*Nothing, as this subject is really enjoyable and something I recommend to take.*

# Textiles (GCSE)



<b>Exam Board</b>	<b>EDUQAS</b>
<b>Specification</b>	<a href="https://www.eduqas.co.uk/qualifications/design-and-technology-gcse/#tab_keydocuments">https://www.eduqas.co.uk/qualifications/design-and-technology-gcse/#tab_keydocuments</a>

## Content

### Core knowledge and understanding

Students will study all the areas below through a range of practical and theoretical tasks, building on knowledge already obtained in KS3 Design and Technology as a whole.

- Design and technology and our world
- Smart materials
- Electronic systems and programmable components
- Mechanical components and devices
- Materials

Students then go on to focus in on a specific area of Design and Technology for this course its 'Fibres and Textiles' covering the following topics:

- understanding design and technology practice
- understanding user needs
- writing a design brief and specifications
- investigating challenges
- developing ideas
- investigating the work of others
- using design strategies
- communicating ideas
- developing a prototype
- making decisions

In addition, students must have in-depth working knowledge of the following 5 areas within the specialism they have chosen in this case 'Fibres and Textiles'

- selecting and working with materials and components
- marking out
- using tools and equipment
- using specialist techniques
- using surface treatments and finishes

## **Progression**

This GCSE helps to prepare students for the world and is a recognised part of the National Qualifications framework. It also provides an appropriate foundation for further study of A Level Design and Technology as well as progression into Fashion and Textiles qualifications.

## **Assessment**

**Component 1:** Design and Technology in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century- a 2 hour exam (weighting – 100 marks 50% of qualification)

**Component 2:** Design and Make Task NEA (weighting 100 mark 50% of qualification)  
Contextual Challenge set by the Examination Board.

## **What our Year 11 students say about Textiles**

### **What do you enjoy about the subject?**

*I love the creative freedom we have in class to design our own products for our own clientele. It's really nice to have a break from the structure of a normal lesson to just be creative and work at your own pace on something you've picked out and are passionate about.*

### **What have you found challenging at times?**

*Sometimes the practical work can be a little confusing, but the teachers are super helpful and I've never felt afraid to ask for help from them or a fellow classmate.*

### **What do you wish you had known about the subject when you were making your option choices in Year 9?**

*I wish I had known about having to learn the basics about other parts of Design Technology and not just textiles like I had chosen. However, nothing has been too difficult, and the teachers are great at helping you understand any content you're stuck on.*