



# MEDINA COLLEGE

## Year 9 Options

### 2025



Medina College  
ASPIRE AND ACHIEVE



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# Options Process

## Introduction

Dear students, parents and carers,

Alongside their options subjects, students will continue to study core curriculum subjects. The core subjects are: English, mathematics and science - course details can be found at the beginning of this booklet. In addition, physical education will also be studied. PSHE (Personal, Social and Health Education) is delivered via tutor time and whole day events throughout the year.

There will be a presentation on the options process at the Options Evening on Wednesday 5 March, as well as opportunities to talk to subject staff.

This booklet is designed to provide you with key information about the subjects available for study at Key Stage 4 (Years 10 and Year 11).

**Mr R Wiseman**  
**Director of Progress and Attainment**

## Key Dates

January and February	Assemblies and in class sessions introducing the subjects available.
Wednesday 5 March	Options evening for students and parents/carers to meet subject staff and discuss course content. Options selection form will be issued.
Friday 14 March	Deadline for return of options form.
Spring Term 2 and Summer Term 1	Discussions with students about options choices
Summer Term 2	Confirmation of options subjects

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# Information for Parents

Year 9 students will complete their Key Stage 3 courses in July and will move onto Key Stage 4 courses in September of Year 10. To help students prepare for this change, they will be making choices for their Key Stage 4 courses over the coming weeks.

Obviously, this is a very important decision which will impact on your child's future. We also recognise that it can be a difficult decision to make which is why we place emphasis on advice, support and guidance so that the process can be as straightforward as possible.

As well as this booklet, your child will:

- be able to talk to their tutor and subject teachers about the KS4 courses
- discuss their pathway choices in depth in a one-to-one meeting

You will have the opportunity to discuss the content of the courses available with subject staff at the Options Evening on Wednesday, 5 March.

This year, your child has a number of subject courses to choose from. The options selection form is enclosed with this booklet. This form needs to be returned to your form tutor by Friday 14th March.

Students will have a discussion with staff about their options choices, and will be contacted if their subject choices do not fit in with the curriculum blocking (for example if there are not enough students finally applying for the course, so it is unable to run).

They will be informed of their final subjects during Summer Term 2 and will begin studying them in September 2025.

During the first few weeks of the course, it is the students' responsibility to make us aware if they feel that the course is not suitable for them. Option changes will only be permitted early in the Autumn term, and will require a further discussion with the leadership team to ensure that the change is in the students' best interest.

We have based this booklet on the most up-to-date information available at the time of writing but we reserve the right to change as, and when, appropriate.

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# Information for Students

## How to choose a course

You are about to make one of the most important decisions in your school life so far. This is an opportunity for you to take control of your education and shape the way you want your future to be. You will still study and take examinations in English, mathematics and science and you can select four courses that you would like to study in Years 10 and 11.

PSHE will be delivered both during tutor time and in whole day events throughout the year and you will continue to study core PE. In order for you to make the best possible choices it is recommended that you talk to your form tutors, subject teachers and discuss your ideas with parents/carers.

## Pathway 1 (The English Baccalaureate)

Students taking this pathway

- may have a history of high academic scores from tests going back to primary school
- achieve well with academic challenges
- may have very high (6+) GCSE target grades and may be aspiring to go to a top university
- will be considering studying (academic) A levels post 16

Students taking this pathway will study English, maths, science, and four subjects, made up of a humanities subject (either geography or history) and a foreign language (French) and two other subjects .

Which subjects can you study at Medina that are included in the EBacc?

- English Language
- English Literature
- Maths
- Science
- Computer Science
- Geography
- History
- French

This combination of subjects provides a broad and balanced curriculum and ensures that no future pathway is closed to you, should you be successful. These subjects are highlighted as desirable from the best universities and the business community.

## Pathway 2

Students taking this pathway

- will be aiming for 5 and above in English, maths, sciences and in a range of other GCSEs
- may have high target grades (5+)
- will probably be thinking about A levels and/or Level 3 Tech qualifications/Apprenticeships post 16

Students on this pathway will study English, maths, science and four options, made up of a selection of GCSE qualifications.

## Pathway 3

Students taking this pathway

- may do best when more practical and 'hands-on' subjects are mixed with academic subjects
- will be required to complete more assessed work during the course, with less 'weighting' on the final summer exam season
- must ensure that they meet the interim exam board deadlines during the two year course

Vocational subjects can be mixed with other GCSE options

## Core PE

In years 10 and 11, you will continue with core PE lessons, as you have done throughout years 7-9. The lessons are also an opportunity to step away from exam courses and to be active for an hour at a time. This will help both your physical health and fitness as well as improving your mental health.



# General Rules

- Some courses have limited places - If there is insufficient interest in a course, then that course will not run
- You cannot choose more than one art based subject (art and design, graphics or photography)
- You cannot choose both Computer Science and Digital Information Technology

## Good reasons for choosing a subject.

### Do:

- choose courses you are interested in
- choose courses you know you will enjoy
- choose a course that will help you with your future when you leave Medina College
- choose a range of different courses, so that you have a broad base from which to choose your post-16 courses
- read the subject information on the next few pages very carefully
- ask the advice of your subject teachers, your tutor and our careers advisors
- discuss with your parents/carers
- **THINK VERY CAREFULLY** about the subjects you choose. It is very difficult to change courses once you have started

## Bad reasons for choosing a subject.

### Don't:

- choose a course simply because your friends have
- allow either like or dislike of particular teachers to influence your choice
- choose a course because you think it might be easy
- drop any subject you may want to study after year 11
- drop any subject you may require for entry to a particular occupation or course of further study





# English

(Core subject)

## EBacc



### INTENT

#### What does this course offer me?

English is a core subject and studied by everyone at GCSE. You will study both GCSE English Language and English Literature, which are two separate GCSEs, for which you will be awarded two separate grades. Our aim is to ensure you are able to read, understand and enjoy a wide range of texts and become excellent communicators through both the written and spoken word.

### IMPLEMENTATION

#### What does the course involve?

Course content: We have an integrated approach to delivering English Language and Literature, developing the skills taught in Key Stage 3. We begin with the novella *A Christmas Carol*, using the setting of London to develop our analysis and descriptive skills before moving on to *An Inspector Calls*. Here we work on our synthesis and viewpoint writing using the Birling's dining table for inspiration. We then move onto *Macbeth*, considering the idea of conflict for identifying viewpoints, alongside an exploration of poetry.

Assessment: Both English Language and English Literature are assessed by two exams.

English Language

Paper 1: Explorations in creative reading and writing  
1 hour 45 minutes

Paper 2: Writers' viewpoint and perspectives  
1 hour 45 minutes

English Literature

Shakespeare and the 19th Century novel  
1 hour 45 minutes

Modern texts and poetry  
2 hours 15 minutes

English Language also contains a separate speaking and listening component which is assessed and endorsed separately to GCSE English Language.

### IMPACT

English Language and English Literature are both core subjects in the National Curriculum. They can, therefore, be studied at a higher level as a subject in their own right. It also provides opportunities to study in the related fields of Media and Film Studies. These qualifications are highly valued by Higher education institutions and employers alike and skills acquired in these subjects can be put to positive use in most areas of employment.

**Student view:** *'What I find interesting in English is the topics and issues we explore through the texts that we study. We discuss poverty, ambition, responsibility and food waste and I am learning now to explore my opinions and argue my point both verbally and in writing. This is useful for other subjects too!'*

#### Link to exam board:

<https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/english/gcse/english-language-8700>

<https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/english/gcse/english-literature-8702>

# Mathematics

(Core subject)

## EBacc



### INTENT

#### What does this course offer me?

Mathematics is a beautiful subject. We believe that students deserve a creative and ambitious mathematics curriculum, rich in skills and knowledge, which ignites curiosity and prepares them well for everyday life and future employment. Our mathematics curriculum will give students the opportunity to become fluent in the fundamentals of mathematics; through varied and frequent practice with increasingly complex problems over time. Students will develop conceptual understanding and the ability to recall and apply knowledge rapidly and accurately.

Through mathematics teaching, students will develop their character by becoming resilient, confident and independent, thus contributing positively to the life of the school, their local community and the wider environment.

### IMPLEMENTATION

#### What does the course involve?

The Mathematics GCSE will cover the five main topic areas:

- Number
- Algebra
- Ratio, Proportion and Rates of Change
- Statistics and Probability
- Geometry and Measure

#### How will I be assessed?

All students will take their mathematics GCSE in May/ June of Year 11.

There are two tiers of entry available to students. GCSE Mathematics has a Foundation tier (grades 1

– 5) and a Higher tier (grades 3 – 9). Students must take three question papers at the same tier. Content from any part of the specification may be assessed on each paper. Paper 1 is non calculator whereas papers 2 and 3 are calculator papers. All papers are 1 hour and 30 minutes long and are worth 80 marks each.

### IMPACT

Students who choose A level Mathematics do so because they are good at it, enjoy it, and want to do it. At our VI Form (The Island VI Form), we expect you to have achieved at least a Grade 7 at GCSE with strong algebra skills and have a fondness for the subject. Mathematics complements most combinations of A Levels and is very attractive to employers and course providers.

A grade 4 or higher in mathematics is required for most further education institutions.

**Student view:** 'Mathematics at Medina College is enjoyable and engaging. All the teachers are kind and try their absolute best to help you learn about Maths. Mathematics is also helpful in every job you could apply for'

#### Link to exam board:

<https://qualifications.pearson.com/content/dam/pdf/GCSE/mathematics/2015/specification-and-sample-assesment/gcse-maths-2015-specification.pdf>

<https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/edexcel-gcses/mathematics-2015.coursematerials.html#filterQuery=Pearson-UK:Category%2FSpecification-and-sample-assessments>

# Science

(Core subject)

## EBacc



### INTENT

#### What does this course offer me?

The aim of our GCSE course is to build on your learning from Key Stage 3, by re-examining the key concepts and linking them to a much deeper understanding. You will be able to see the important links between Biology, Chemistry and Physics and to apply your knowledge to solve the problems posted within the different units that you study. We aim to teach the themes once, but to continue to build on them via retrieval practice and constant application in different real world applied settings.

### IMPLEMENTATION

#### What does the course involve?

We offer GCSE Combined Science Trilogy and GCSE Separate Sciences (leading to individual GCSE qualifications in Biology, Chemistry and Physics - see page 30 for more information on this option).

The key units of study are:

#### **Biology**

Cell Biology, Organisation, Infection and Response, Bioenergetics, Homeostasis and Control, Inheritance and Evolution, Ecology

#### **Chemistry**

Atomic Structure, Bonding and Structure, Quantitative Chemistry, Chemical Change, Energy Changes, Rate & Extent of chemical change, Organic Chemistry, Chemical Analysis, Chemistry of the Atmosphere, Using Resources

#### **Physics**

Energy, Electricity, Particle Model of Matter, Atomic Structure, Forces, Magnetism and Electromagnetism, Waves, Space Science

#### How will I be assessed?

Six 1 hr 15 min exams.

The exams will include a variety of types of questions such as multiple choice, structured, closed short answer and open responses.

#### IMPACT

An amazing number of careers require a firm grounding in Science. If you want to go on to train as a doctor, vet, physiotherapist, chemist, beautician, engineer, farmer or a sports trainer, a strong knowledge of at least one of the sciences will be needed.

The next step from GCSE is to progress to A-Level courses such as Biology, Chemistry, Physics and Geology; Level 3 BTEC courses such as Applied Science and Forensics and Industry based Apprenticeships. Successfully completing these courses can lead you to University undergraduate courses.

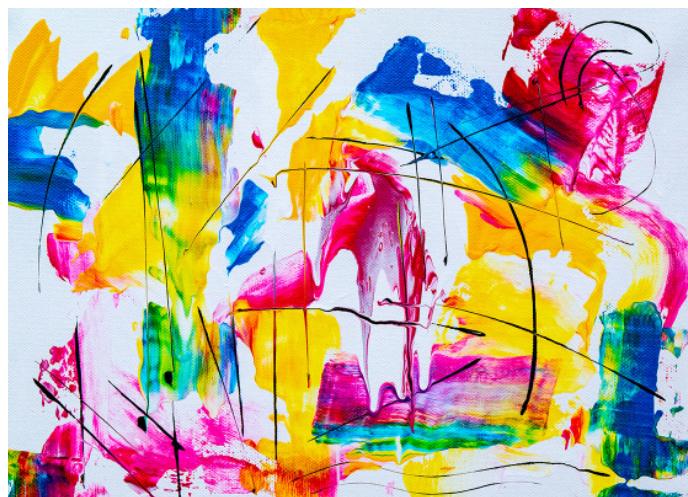
**Student views:** 'I love finding out why!'

'I really enjoy studying Biology and the body - amazing processes go on inside us everyday!'

#### Link to exam board: **Combined Science Trilogy**

<https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/science/gcse/combined-science-trilogy-8464>

# Fine Art\*



## INTENT

### What does the course offer me?

GCSE Fine Art offers students the opportunity to explore their creativity in a visual way. You are expected to produce work that displays your own observations, thoughts and feelings about the world around you; developing your practical skills as you progress through the course.

## IMPLEMENTATION

### What does the course involve?

Students will need to record the appearance of objects and images through the use of different mediums. Develop an understanding of artworks from the past as well as work that is current and deemed fashionable today. They will also need to show that they can express a range of their own personal ideas and move on to produce original responses. A portfolio will be supported by written information that analyses not only the work of relevant artists but also images produced throughout the course. This is a broad-based course allowing students to experience a wide range of practical activities and learn new skills.

### How will I be assessed?

#### Component 1, Coursework (60% of final mark):

This consists of one coursework portfolio unit to include preparatory work, sketchbooks and final pieces, written analyses, planning and evaluations.

#### Component 2, Externally set assignment (40% of final mark):

Students respond to their chosen starting point from an externally set assignment paper relating to their subject title, evidencing coverage of all four assessment objectives. Students will use their preparatory work to help inform their final response within a 10 hour exam.

## IMPACT

GCSE Art and Design students have progressed to A levels in Art and Design, Photography and Graphics, with many then going on to study the Arts at University.

Students interested in the following careers should study Fine Art GCSE: Animation, Architecture, Fashion, Careers in Museums and Art Galleries , Art Therapy, Floristry, Furniture and Product Design, Graphic Design, Make-up/Stage Design, Package Design, Painting and Decorating, Photography, Costume and Set Design, Teaching, Model Making, Jewellery Design, Web Design, Sign Writing, Film and Special Effects, Textile Design.

**Student view:** 'I chose art because it was important to me to do something I loved. I wanted to develop my skills and create something that I am proud of.'

### Link to exam board:

<https://ocr.org.uk/qualifications/gcse/art-and-design-j170-j176-from-2016/specification-at-a-glance/>

# Child Development

## Cache L1/2



### INTENT

#### What does this course offer me?

The Cache Level 1/2 qualification is of the highest possible standard thanks to unrivalled knowledge of this sector. Enabling you to gain experience in health, public services and care of children and young people. This range of topics means you will gain a varied set of transferable skills.

Both units of study open up the opportunity to work in a variety of ways, forming written and creative coursework that you can be proud of. This course is an invaluable stepping stone towards higher education at Level 3 and A level. The course takes two years of study and offers one GCSE on completion.

### IMPLEMENTATION

#### What does the course involve?

The CACHE Level 1/2 Child Development qualification focuses on all areas of physical growth and development, how children learn, the use of language and a child's needs for social and emotional support from birth to five years. Choosing this qualification enables learners to fully explore the knowledge, experiences and understanding required for a future career working alongside children in a wide variety of settings.

The course has been closely developed in conjunction with a range of experts from professional bodies within the child development sectors and is widely recognised by both higher education establishments and industry allowing an excellent pathway to either.

How will I be assessed?

This Level 1/2 Qualification is delivered across 9 Content Areas throughout the 2 years of GCSE study. This creates a portfolio of work that is graded and forms 50% of the overall qualification grade. The

remaining 50% of the grade is then achieved through the formal written examination.

Content Areas are broken into the following areas;

1. Child development
2. Factors that influence the child's development
3. Care routines, play and activities to support the child
4. Early years provision
5. Legislation, policies and procedures in the early years
6. Expectations of the early years practitioner
7. Roles and responsibilities within early years settings
8. The importance of observations in early years childcare
9. Planning in early years childcare

### IMPACT

This course enables learners to pursue further child development courses and progress to either Higher Education, Early Years Educator apprenticeships or full employment. Careers in Childhood studies, Primary Education, Early Years, Midwifery or Paediatric nursing are just a handful of opportunities opened up by this course.

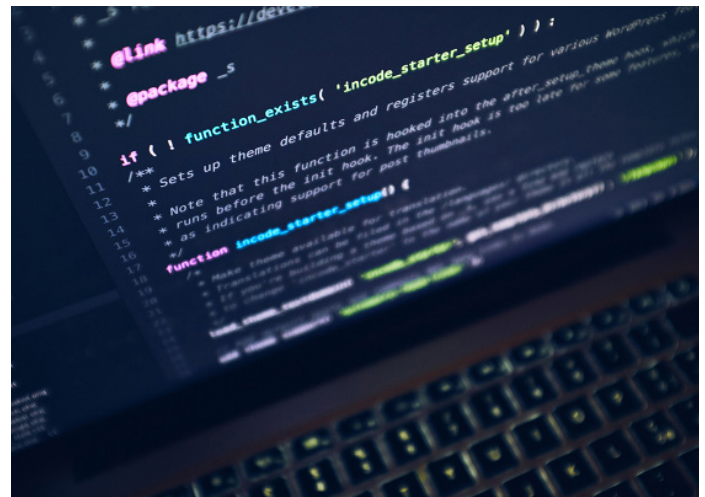
**Student views:** 'Understanding the developmental stages of babies through to 5 years olds has given me an insight into my own development and that of my younger siblings and family members.'  
'I enjoy the practical elements where we make things suitable for young children.'

#### Link to exam board:

<https://www.qualhub.co.uk/qualification-search/qualification-detail/ncfe-cache-level-2-technical-award-in-child-development-and-care-563>

# Computer Science \*\*

EBacc



## INTENT

### What does the course offer me?

Take a look at the world around you. How close to a computer are you? When was the last time you used one? When was the last time you were creative with one? Life without computers is almost unimaginable. There's nothing that doesn't involve computing in some way, computer science is not just about writing code for a computer, there is far more to it than that. Taking a GCSE in computer science will start you off on a career that knows no bounds. This course is for pupils who really like the difficult challenge of programming and the technical side of computers. If you prefer using computers, look at our new BTEC in Digital Information Technology.

## IMPLEMENTATION

### What does the course involve?

There are two components to the GCSE in Computer Science; Computer Systems and Computational thinking, programming and algorithms. Students will also learn to program using the Python programming language.

#### *Component 01: Computer systems*

This will introduce you to the central processing unit (CPU), computer memory and storage, data representation, wired and wireless networks, network topologies, system security and system software. It also looks at ethical, legal, cultural and environmental concerns associated with computer science.

#### *Component 02: Computational thinking, algorithms and programming*

You will develop skills and understanding in computational thinking, algorithms, programming techniques, producing robust programs, computational logic and translators.

### *Practical programming*

You will be given the opportunity to undertake a programming task (s) during your course of study which will help you to develop your skills to design, write, test and refine programs using a high-level programming language. You will be assessed on these skills during the written examinations, in particular component 02.

### How will I be assessed?

Two exams, 1.5 hours for each. One exam for each component of the specification.

## IMPACT

The devices we use to consume a wide range of media, whether it is an Android phone or an iPad, are at the heart of almost everything we do. Stop being a simple consumer of software and start designing your own. If you can spot a gap in the market, if you sometimes think, 'I wish I could find an app to ...' then maybe you could be the next Mark Zuckerberg. A GCSE in Computer Science will give you a fantastic set of skills to do just that.

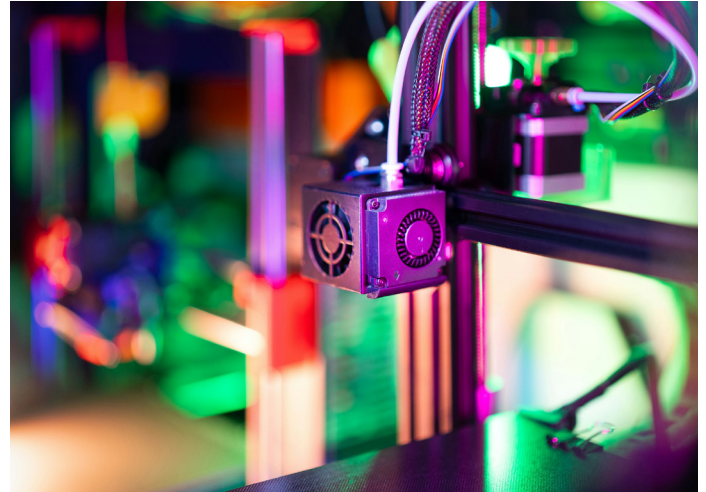
**Student view:** 'I really like the logic and reasoning behind the problems we are asked to solve, especially the programming. I have also enjoyed learning about how a computer works, how the CPU processes instructions to make things happen on the screen.'

### Link to exam board:

<https://ocr.org.uk/qualifications/gcse/computer-science-j277-from-2020/>

# Creative Design

## NCFE L1/2



### INTENT

#### What does the course offer me?

The Level 1/2 Technical Award in Creative Design and Production is designed for students who want an introduction to design and production that includes a vocational and project-based element, approached from a creative perspective with regular opportunities to experiment and create.

This qualification focuses on an applied study of design and production and students will gain a broad knowledge and understanding of working with materials such as woods, plastics, metals, textiles, paper and card and smart materials. It incorporates practical skills through hands-on experiences, alongside a wider understanding of employment/career opportunities and promotion skills that develops understanding of the world of design and production.

### IMPLEMENTATION

#### What does the course involve?

This qualification aims to focus on the study of creative design and production in the design and production industries. It offers breadth and depth of study, incorporating core knowledge of design and production as well as providing opportunities to acquire a number of practical and technical skills.

The aim is to offer students opportunities to:

- place design and production in context
- understand design materials and processes
- understand a design brief and production processes
- prepare for the presentation of a design solution
- undertake a review of processes and solutions
- explore working in the design production industries

#### How will I be assessed?

The Level 1/2 Technical Award in Creative Design

and Production complements GCSE qualifications. The qualification is graded at level 1 pass, merit, distinction and level 2 pass, merit, distinction and distinction\* (equivalent to GCSE grades 8.5 to 1).

There are 2 assessments externally-set by NCFE: one Non Exam Assessment and one written Examined Assessment. Only one attempt at each assessment is permitted.

- 60% of the qualification grade is awarded from the 'Non Exam Assessment' (or 'NEA'). An externally set project that is internally marked and externally moderated
- 40% of the qualification grade is awarded from a 1 hour 30 min written examination: a mixture of multiple-choice, short-answer and extended-response questions

### IMPACT

This qualification will appeal to students who wish to pursue a career in the design and production sector or progress to further study. Students who achieve at level 2 might consider progression to level 3 qualifications post-16, such as:

- A Level Design and Technology
- Level 3 Technical Level in Engineering: Design
- T Level in Design and Development for Engineering and Manufacturing

Students could also progress into employment or onto an apprenticeship within the industries such as interior designer, design studio assistant or furniture maker/carpentry.

#### Link to exam board:

<https://www.ncfe.org.uk/qualification-search/qualification-detail/ncfe-level-12-technical-award-in-creative-design-and-production-454>

# Design and Technology



## INTENT

### What does the course offer me?

The Design and Technology GCSE gives you opportunities to use skills and knowledge to creatively and independently design and make products. The skills you will develop are independence, discipline, time management, problem solving and creativity.

## IMPLEMENTATION

### What does the course involve?

**Year 10** - You will learn about the wide variety of theory-based topics which are broken into three sections:

Core technical principles - such as new and emerging technologies, mechanical devices, and materials and their working properties.

Specialist technical principles - such as using and working with materials, and specialist techniques and processes.

Designing and making principles - such as communication of design ideas, modelling, and prototype development.

In the second half of the summer, the examination board releases the Non-Exam Assessment (NEA) topics and you will begin your controlled assessment. This will allow you to create innovative designs which solve real world problems.

**Year 11** - You will complete the controlled assessment during the first two terms. This will involve completing a 20 page portfolio of work showing how you have followed the design process while making and testing your final product.

You will also work on practice exam questions which will prepare you for your summer exams.

Assessment criteria for NEA:

- Identifying and investigating design possibilities
- Producing a design brief and specification
- Generating design ideas
- Developing design ideas
- Realising design ideas
- Analysing & evaluation

### How will I be assessed?

AQA Design and Technology is a two-year linear course where you sit a written examination in the summer of the final year. This examination constitutes 50% of your GCSE award. The remaining 50% is from NEA (coursework) which is a design task with a portfolio of design work and prototype outcome(s).

## IMPACT

Design and Technology is a practical and valuable subject. It teaches you how to take risks and so become more resourceful, resilient, innovative, enterprising, and capable. You will develop a critical understanding of the impact of design and technology on daily life and the wider world. We aim to prepare students to thrive in careers with bright futures, such as architecture, interior design, product design, manufacturing, fashion design, interior design and mechanical engineering. These are just a few of the endless possible opportunities.

**Student view:** *'We get the opportunity to use a wide variety of tools and equipment to make our designs a reality'*

### Link to exam board:

<https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/design-and-technology/gcse/design-and-technology-8552>



# Digital Information Technology\*\*

BTEC



## INTENT

### What does the course offer me?

This qualification is for learners interested in taking a hands-on course alongside their GCSEs that will offer them an insight into what it is like to work the Digital sector. Digital skills span all industries, and almost all jobs in the UK today require employees to have a good level of digital literacy, putting it increasingly on a par with English and maths skills. Pupils should also consider this course if they want to work with computers but are not that interested in the technical and programming aspects of Computer Science.

## IMPLEMENTATION

### What does the course involve?

There are three components to the BTEC Tech Award in DIT; exploring user interfaces, collecting, presenting and interpreting data, and effective digital working practices.

*Component 01:* Exploring user interface design principles and project planning techniques. Learners will develop their understanding of what makes an effective user interface and how to effectively manage a project. They will use this understanding to plan, design and create a user interface.

*Component 02:* Collecting, Presenting and Interpreting Data

Learners will understand the characteristics of data and information and how they help organisations in decision making. They will use data manipulation methods to create a dashboard to present and draw conclusions from information.

### *Component 03:* Effective Digital Working Practices

Learners will explore how organisations use digital systems and the wider implications associated with their use.

### How will I be assessed?

There will be two internally assessed projects that will be completed in class time, these are for Components 01 and 02. They will each be worth 30% of your overall mark. Component 03 will be assessed with an external exam lasting 1hr and 30 minutes.

## IMPACT

The digital sector is a major source of employment in the UK. Despite a turbulent economy in 2020 the Digital sector in the UK advertised 90,000 jobs per week during. Digital skills span all industries, and almost all jobs in the UK today require employees to have a good level of digital literacy. The UK Tech industry as a whole employs over 2.93 million people and has seen 40% growth between 2017-2019. The UK has positioned itself to be the 'Digital capital of Europe' as it continues to invest billions every year in digital skills and commerce. The modern world expects digital skills to be as important as English and maths. Having both technical skills and business understanding is the key to success.

### Link to exam board:

<https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/btec-tech-awards/digital-information-technology-2022.html>

# Drama



## INTENT

### What does the course offer me?

The GCSE Drama course fosters students' creativity, self-confidence, communication and analytical skills. Students will be given the opportunities to follow their own interests whilst learning about key theatrical principles, practitioners and theory. The AQA specification requires students to learn about all aspects of theatre, it is challenging but hugely rewarding.

## IMPLEMENTATION

### What does the course involve?

Students will learn to work effectively with others in the class in order to make and perform exciting and engaging drama. They will learn to analyse and present scripts in order to communicate their ideas effectively to an audience. Throughout the course, students will learn about all aspects of the theatre including acting, stage combat, directing, set design, lighting, sound, puppetry and costume.

### How will I be assessed?

Areas of study will include:

- Studying stage configuration, roles and responsibilities.
- Exploring themes/issues and working from a stimulus to devise a piece of original theatre. You will be assessed on performance or sound or set design or lighting or costume or puppetry.
- Exploring and analysing two set texts, one for the written exam and one culminating in a practical performance.

Assessment:

- Component 1 - **Understanding drama. This is a written exam and is worth 40% of your grade**
- Component 2 - **Devising drama (practical).** This component is made up of two parts:

**Part A** - a final devised performance worth 10% of your grade.

**Part B** - a written devising log book worth 30% of your grade.

- Component 3 - **Texts in practice (practical) or a lighting design, sound design, set design, costume within the performance or the use of a puppet in the performance to a visiting examiner (20%)**

## IMPACT

GCSE drama offers students the opportunity to broaden their knowledge of dramatic theory by studying and analysing a range of plays and prominent theatre practitioners. They will work as an ensemble to create challenging and engaging theatre or using their design skills to support the performance whilst honing their practical performance and design skills.

**Student view:** *'So far I have loved learning about working with scripts and practically exploring physical theatre, it's been really fun. I always look forward to my drama lessons, i'm so happy I picked this subject.'*

### Link to exam board:

<https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/drama/gcse/drama-8261>

# Food and Nutrition



## INTENT

### What does this course offer me?

First and foremost, this course will provide you the vital life skills of how to cook, however, it offers more than just a standard home cooked meal. You will learn how to make breads, pastries and pasta from scratch, you will look to fillet fish and portion chickens. In Key Stage 3 Food, many of the recipes are basic which the whole class makes. At GCSE you will be very much involved in the dishes you make, showing your high level practical and presentation skills. The theory element will allow you to understand the functions of food, both what they do in our bodies and within recipes. You will be able to carry out experiments to enhance your knowledge and see the ingredients making changes before your eyes.

## IMPLEMENTATION

### What does the course involve?

The course will cover the following areas: food preparation skills, nutrition and health, food science, food safety, food choice, food provenance, preparation and cooking techniques. The core element will be taught through a mixture of practical sessions, experiments and theory lessons. You will need to be able to be organised and bring in your ingredients for the specific lessons.

### How will I be assessed?

The final assessment is made up of 50% written exam (100 marks)

50% is made up from Non-Examination Assessments (NEA)

- NEA1 (15%) This is a specific approach to Food. You will carry out research and experiments looking at the chemical and functional properties of ingredients. This is assessed in a 2000 word assignment and is clearly structured throughout.
- NEA2 (35%) You will be given a context where you then research and create a range of food to meet your context. You will then take part in a three hour practical exam where you showcase your high level practical and presentation skills.

## IMPACT

The Food industry is the largest single sector in the UK, therefore the job prospects are endless.

After taking the GCSE in Food and Nutrition, there are many courses to progress on to - Level 3 in Food Nutrition, Hospitality and Catering, Chef apprenticeships, Sports and Nutrition.

*Student views: 'My practical skills have developed over the two year course and I am now confident I can troubleshoot many recipes.'*

*'The food practical exam was a great achievement, seeing my three dishes laid out. It was a proud moment for me and many others in the class.'*

### Link to exam board:

<https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/food/gcse/food-preparation-and-nutrition-8585>

# French

## EBacc



### INTENT

#### What does the course offer me?

By the end of the course, you won't just have another GCSE grade to add to your collection, you will have a subject that shows universities and future employers that you are open-minded about other languages and cultures, that you have great independent study skills, that you have a great memory and that you have applied yourself consistently and resiliently to a subject that is highly prized in today's post-Brexit world.

French will offer you the opportunity to work with our foreign language assistant and take part in trips. This GCSE offers a full understanding of how French works and how it can be used to describe and explain situations, events and opinions. Culture in the countries where French is spoken will also be explored and discussed and these conversations will be supported by a raft of grammatical knowledge that you will acquire throughout the course.

### IMPLEMENTATION

#### What does the course involve?

There are three themes that are covered throughout the course and within these themes sit topics that you may have briefly covered already, including Identity and Culture (eg family, free-time), Local, National and Global Areas of Interest (eg technology, customs and festivals, health, where you live and travel and tourism) and current and future study and employment (eg school, post-16, jobs, work experience). You will cover these topics in detail with associated grammar topics and build up your skills alongside your knowledge, which will be regularly reinforced and monitored through vocabulary learning and independent work.

### How will I be assessed?

Each skill area is currently assessed equally, and you will sit four separate exams; Listening (25%), Reading (25%), Speaking (25%) and Writing (25%).

Your speaking test will be taken in the form of a discussion in French with your teacher, and regular practice for each of the four elements of the GCSE will take place in class so you will feel more than prepared by the time you take your final assessments - some even describe them as fun!

### IMPACT

Qualifications in any modern language are a real asset in today's world and will really enhance your CV, whether you choose to continue to A level or not. In the UK there is a massive shortage of linguists and having an additional language opens up many more doors than having only one. Whether you are considering going into business, advertising, engineering, science, architecture, fashion, IT, medicine, tourism, teaching or law, **'we have strong evidence today that studying a foreign language has a ripple effect, helping to improve student performance in other subjects'**. (Richard Riley)

***Student view:** 'I really enjoy my French lessons. You get to learn about the country as well as learning the language'*

### Link to exam board:

<https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/languages/gcse/french-8658>

# Geography

## EBacc



### INTENT

#### What does the course offer me?

Geography is a broad, academic subject which will open up options for you in the future. Employers and universities see geography as a robust subject which develops a variety of academic skills. Because of these transferable skills, it helps develop thinking in other subjects, both core and optional subjects.

### IMPLEMENTATION

#### What does the course involve?

Geography involves a variety of topics which cover many interests. There is an even balance between human and physical geography where we investigate contemporary issues. The topics we cover are as follows:

- Topic 1: Hazardous Earth
- Topic 2: Development dynamics
- Topic 3: Challenges of an urbanising world
- Topic 4: The UK's evolving physical landscape
- Topic 5: The UK's evolving human landscape
- Topic 6: Fieldwork
- Topic 7: People and the biosphere
- Topic 8: Forests under threat
- Topic 9: Consuming energy resources

#### How will I be assessed?

Three different exam papers

- Paper 1: Global geographical issues (94 marks)  
1 hour 30 mins - worth 37.5% of your grade.
- Paper 2: UK geographical issues (94 marks) 1  
hour 30 mins - worth 37.5% of your grade.
- Paper 3: People and the environment (64 marks)  
1 hour 30 minutes - worth 25% of your grade.

### IMPACT

The UK's official careers page states: 'No other subject can offer you such an extensive array of skills as geography can'. The wide variety of skills gained in geography will help toward any future career or further education you choose. Some geography specific careers include hazard management, environment conservation and town planning.

**Student view:** 'Geography teaches me about both physical landscapes and natural landscapes - it also shows us how man interacts with these positively and negatively. Geography is really relevant as the world is always changing and Geography shows us how and why.'

#### Link to exam board:

<https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/edexcel-gcses/geography-b-2016.html>

# Graphics\*



## INTENT

### What does the course offer me?

The Graphics course is aimed at those who are artistic and creative. The course is about expressing and communicating information through a range of mediums often to a specific brief. The use of computers is an integral and important part of the course.

## IMPLEMENTATION

### What does the course involve?

Students will learn to use graphics applications such as Adobe Illustrator and Photoshop. They will be encouraged to use traditional drawing and art skills to explore and develop ideas. Topics are interesting and varied from responding to the character design of contemporary artists, to creating corporate identity for a new company. The course will focus on building key skills such as researching and developing ideas, and producing personal and original responses.

### How will I be assessed?

Areas of study will include:

- Layout and composition
- Typography
- Desktop publishing using Adobe software
- Packaging
- Character design
- Animation
- Illustration

### Component 1, Coursework (60% of final mark):

This consists of one coursework portfolio unit to include preparatory work, sketchbooks and final pieces, written analyses, planning and evaluations.

**Component 2, Externally set assignment (40% of final mark):** Students respond to their chosen starting point from an externally set assignment paper relating to their subject title, evidencing coverage of all four assessment objectives. Students will use their preparatory work to help inform their final response within a 10 hour exam.

## IMPACT

GCSE Graphics students have progressed to A levels in Graphics, Art and Design and Photography, with many then going on to study the Arts at University. Students interested in the following careers should study GCSE Graphics: Animation, Architecture, Graphic Design, Stage design, Package Design, Photography, Set Design, Teaching, Model Making, Web Design, Sign Writing, Film and Special Effects

*Student view: 'Graphics gives me the opportunity to be creative and also develop my drawing skills through the use of a computer. Using Adobe Illustrator and Photoshop to complete tasks makes this lesson fun.'*

### Link to exam board:

<https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/art-and-design/gcse/art-and-design-8201/specification/subject-content/graphic-communication>

# Health and Social Care

BTEC



## INTENT

### What does this course offer me?

BTEC award in Health and Social Care - this is the equivalent to one GCSE. This course works perfectly alongside skills gained in English, science and food preparation and nutrition.

## IMPLEMENTATION

### What does the course involve?

This course provides a range of experiences, where you will gain a sound theoretical and practical knowledge and understanding of working within the Health and Social Care sector. You will develop your knowledge and understanding by applying learning skills in a work-related context. You will be guided to develop key sector skills and knowledge and understanding of specific areas of interest in the sector essential for the modern-day workplace.

### How will I be assessed?

You must complete three units over the duration of the two-year programme including three core components:

- Component 1: Human Lifespan Development which is assessed by written coursework.
- Component 2: Health and Social Care Services and Values, which is assessed by written coursework and role play.
- Component 3: Health and Wellbeing which is assessed by an external task set and marked by Pearson, the exam board, completed under supervised conditions. This component builds directly on components 1 and 2 and enables learning to be brought together to a real-life situation.

## IMPACT

There are endless professions in the Health and Social Care sector. This could be nursing, caring for children or the elderly, right through to working in the mental health sector. We offer a very successful Level 3 course at The VI Form which follows on perfectly from this, which, in turn, can lead to apprenticeships and a range of university courses.

**Student views:** *'The links to real life situations have really helped me develop my understanding of others.'*  
*'I believe this course has given me insight to a range of careers in the sector, I am looking forward to developing my knowledge at Level 3.'*

### Link to exam board:

<https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/btec-tech-awards/health-and-social-care-2022.html>

# History

## EBacc



### INTENT

#### What does this course offer me?

This GCSE History course enables you to study different periods, engage with key issues such as conflict, gain an understanding of what drives change, and how our past influences the present. Through studying this course you will learn how to analyse events and judge how they shaped the world then and now.

### IMPLEMENTATION

#### What does the course involve?

British history must form a minimum of 40% of the assessed content over the full course.

Students are required to study:

#### One thematic study:

This enables students to understand change and continuity across a long sweep of history.

#### One period study:

This allows students to focus on a substantial and coherent medium time span of at least 50 years.

#### Two depth studies:

One British and one European/wider world. Depth studies enable students to focus on a substantial and coherent short time span. The studies enable students to gain understanding of the complexities of a society or historical situation and the interplay of different aspects within it.

#### A study of the historic environment:

The study of the historic environment should focus on a particular site in its historical context and enable students to study the relationship between a place and historical events and developments. This site will

be connected to the Norman Conquest of England. At Medina we will study four units - Health and the People, the USA Opportunity and Inequality 1920-1972, Conflict and Tension in Asia, Norman England 1066-1100.

### How will I be assessed?

- Two exams, both consisting of two 1-hour papers.

### IMPACT

Studying history can lead on to some exciting career options, including:

- Journalism
- Law
- Business
- Politics
- Archaeology
- Marketing
- Teaching

**Student view:** 'History whilst focusing on key events in the past also teaches us how not to make the mistakes of the past into the future. History also gives me many study skills that are useful in other subjects.'

### Link to exam board:

<https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/history/gcse/history-8145/specification-at-a-glance>



# Music



## INTENT

### What does this course offer me?

The GCSE Music course aims to improve students' performance and composition skills, whilst introducing unfamiliar styles of music and improving theoretical knowledge. Students will learn how to analyse music through listening and score reading, and improve their understanding of the history of music.

## IMPLEMENTATION

### What does the course involve?

The GCSE Music course consists of three components:

1. **Performance** (30% of final mark) Perform both as an individual and as part of an ensemble on your chosen instrument, or voice.
2. **Composition** (30% of final mark) Compose two compositions, one free composition of your own choosing, and one to an exam board given brief.
3. **Listening and Appraising** (40% of final mark)

During the course students will study the following genres and set works:

#### Instrumental Music 1700 - 1820

- Bach: 'Brandenburg Concerto No.5', mov. III
- Beethoven: Piano Concerto no. 8 in C minor 'Pathetique', mov. I

#### Vocal Music

- Purcell: 'Music for a While'
- Queen: 'Killer Queen'

#### Music for Stage & Screen

- Schwartz: 'Defying Gravity' from Wicked
- Williams: 'Main Title/Rebel Blockade Runner' from Star Wars ep. IV

#### Fusions

- Afro Celt System: 'Release'
- Esperanza Spalding: 'Samba Em Preludio'

### How will I be assessed?

The lessons that take place in school will focus on developing knowledge and understanding of the set works, and music theory in preparation for the Listening and Appraising exam paper that will be taken at the end of Year 11. Composition tasks will be introduced and worked on throughout the course, with students expected to work on improving their instrumental skills in their own time.

## IMPACT

GCSE Music is a natural pathway to A level Music and Music Technology or a BTEC level 3 in Music. Students could study a degree in Music or Music Technology. They could specialise in Performing, Composing, Music Technology or Sound Production. They could secure jobs in Education, the Performing industry, the Music Technology industry, or become Music Therapists or Music Journalists.

***Student view:** 'I like learning about different styles of Music. The course is challenging, but I do like performing and making my own music.'*

### Link to exam board:

<https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/edexcel-gcses/music-2016.html>

# Photography\*



## INTENT

### What does the course offer me?

GCSE Photography gives students the opportunity and freedom to express themselves in a visual way through digital imagery. This course focuses on producing work that displays observations, thoughts and feelings about the world around us whilst developing practical skills throughout the course. The course can also involve an element of darkroom photography.

## IMPLEMENTATION

### What does the course involve?

In this GCSE students will record their thoughts, observations and ideas through photography. As part of the process they will be introduced to the work of photographers, both past and present. This will support their understanding about the development of the medium as a means to realise ideas in a historical and contemporary sense. Students will need to show that they can express a range of their own ideas and move on to produce their own original responses. They will learn new skills in the darkroom and Adobe Photoshop. Students will also need to show that they can write analytically about photographers and their works in detail.

Students following this course will need their own digital camera and will be expected to shoot photographs out of school in their own time.

### How will I be assessed?

Areas of study will include:

- Understanding the camera
- Composition and presentation

- Creating own negatives
- Basic darkroom processes
- Digital Photography using Adobe Photoshop
- Still and moving images

### Component 1, Coursework (60% of final mark):

This consists of one coursework portfolio unit to include preparatory work, sketchbooks and final pieces, written analyses, planning and evaluations.

Component 2, Externally set assignment (40% of final mark): Students respond to their chosen starting point from an externally set assignment paper relating to their subject title, evidencing coverage of all four assessment objectives. Students will use their preparatory work to help inform their final response within a 10 hour exam.

## IMPACT

GCSE Photography students have progressed to A levels in Photography, Art and Design, and Graphics, with many then going on to study the Arts at University.

***Student view:** 'I have always loved taking photographs as a hobby so I was really excited when I was able to explore this skill as GCSE. The teachers are really helpful and support you by making your creative ideas come to life.'*

### Link to exam board:

<https://ocr.org.uk/qualifications/gcse/art-and-design-j170-j176-from-2016/specification-at-a-glance/>

# RE, Philosophy and Ethics



## INTENT

### What does the course involve?

An opportunity to identify, explore and respond to some of the most fundamental and controversial questions in the world today, including questions about life and death, good and evil, love and hate. You will learn how to analyse and evaluate important worldviews and think about your own place in the world. This is a challenging subject with lots of opportunity to express your own opinion and to learn to appreciate other points of view.

## IMPLEMENTATION

### What does the course involve?

The course is divided into three sections:

- Religious, Philosophical and Ethical issues: exploring a diverse and eclectic range of beliefs and opinions on:

**Theme 1:** Relationships: questions relating to issues of relationships in the 21st century, including same sex relationships and gender roles.

**Theme 2:** Life and Death: religious and non-religious beliefs about the nature of life and death and the origins and value of the universe and human life.

**Theme 3:** Good and Evil: the origins of good and evil and attitudes towards the aims of punishment and treatment of criminals.

**Theme 4:** Human Rights: the study of wealth and poverty, racial prejudice and discrimination.

- **Study of Christianity:** Exploring the beliefs, teachings and practices of Christianity such as: What God is like, the importance of Jesus, expressing faith through worship and festivals.

- **Study of Buddhism:** exploring the beliefs, teachings and practices of Buddhism such as: The Life of Buddha, types of Buddhism, karma and rebirth, places of worship, festivals and pilgrimages.

## How will I be assessed?

Three exams on each section at the end of year 11.

## IMPACT

Your newly developed analytical and evaluative skills alongside your written and verbal communication skills will prepare you for study at A-Level - particularly in Humanities and other essay-based subjects.

Having a GCSE in an academic and challenging subject like RE can prepare you for the real world where you will encounter diversity in beliefs and opinions. Jobs that would benefit from a background in RS are teaching, journalism, social work, working for the police, jobs within medicine and any public facing role.

**Student view:** 'I chose RE GCSE because it is interesting to learn about religion.'

'It's very important to learn about other people's religions and beliefs.'

## Link to exam board:

[https://www.eduqas.co.uk/qualifications/religious-studies-gcse/#tab\\_overview](https://www.eduqas.co.uk/qualifications/religious-studies-gcse/#tab_overview)

# Sports

## BTEC



### INTENT

#### What does the course offer me?

BTEC Sport enables you to build on your previous understanding of sport from PE lessons and from the sport you play or watch at home. It gives you a broad understanding of the different areas of the sport sector such as coaching, personal fitness and analysing sports performances. We use a combination of theory lessons and practicals to teach you the key topics and by the end of the course, you will have the knowledge and understanding to move onto further education or work within the sports industry.

### IMPLEMENTATION

#### What does the course involve?

The course is made up of four units, over two years:

**Unit 1 - Training for Personal Fitness (Exam)** - This unit focuses on fitness and training including how to determine your strengths and to evaluate areas for development.

**Unit 2 - Practical Sports Performance** - Focuses on two chosen sports including, their rules and regulations, and the skills and tactics of how you play them. You will be recorded performing those sports and will analyse your sporting performance to identify a strength and an area for improvement.

**Unit 3 - Applying the Principles of Personal Training** - You design a six week training programme to improve your performance in a selected sport. You complete the programme, tracking your progress using a training diary and then evaluate your strengths and areas for improvement.

**Unit 6 - Leading Sports Activities** - You will look at what makes a good sports leader, before planning two sports coaching sessions. You then deliver one of those sessions to a group of students and evaluate how it went.

#### How will I be assessed?

The course is made up of 75% coursework and 25% exam. Unit 1 is the exam component. It is based on a 75 min online exam taken at the end of year 10. The remaining 3 units are assessed with coursework.

### IMPACT

Leads to further education courses, e.g level 3 courses, including single and double BTEC Nationals in Sport or A Level PE offered at The Island VI form. There are also a huge range of sports careers such as: coaches, sports analysts, sports managers, sports journalists, physiologists, physiotherapists, grounds staff, personal trainers, nutritionists, and PE teachers to name just a few. This course will also be useful in other career paths such as: medicine, child care, public services, armed forces, NHS, travel reps/ guides and hundreds of others.

**Student view:** 'BTEC Sport is good for students who find traditional exams a challenge. It gives you the skills and experience to pursue a career in sport. I have really enjoyed how the course can adapt to my personal needs.'

#### Link to exam board:

<https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/btec-firsts/sport-2012-nqf.html>

# Travel & Tourism

BTEC



## INTENT

### What does the course offer me?

This qualification is for learners interested in taking a hands-on course alongside their GCSEs that will offer them a practical introduction to life and work in the dynamic travel and tourism industry, allowing them to make an informed decision about their future learning and career.

This course will give learners the opportunity to develop sector-specific applied knowledge and technical skills in a practical learning environment. They will develop key transferable skills through vocational contexts, by exploring products and services offered by different travel and tourism organisations, the features of popular tourist destinations, how organisations use market research and trends to identify and meet customer needs requirements, and the factors that influence global travel and tourism. The qualification enables learners to develop their transferable skills, such as researching, planning, and making decisions and judgements.

## IMPLEMENTATION

### What does the course involve?

This course will cover three components which are as follows:

Component 1: Travel and Tourism Organisations and Destinations. Learners will investigate travel and tourism organisations in the UK, their ownership, aims, key products and services, and how they work together.

Component 2: Customer Needs in Travel and Tourism. Learners will investigate how organisations

use market research to identify travel and tourism trends and identify customer needs and preferences.

Component 3: Influences on Global Travel and Tourism. Learners will explore the different factors that may influence global travel and tourism, and how travel and tourism organisations and destinations respond to these factors.

### How will I be assessed?

- Component 1 is worth 30% and will be assessed through an internal assessment of 5 tasks, this will be externally moderated.
- Component 2 is worth 30% and will be assessed through an internal assessment of 4 tasks, this will be externally moderated.
- Component 3 is worth 40% and is assessed through an external exam.

## IMPACT

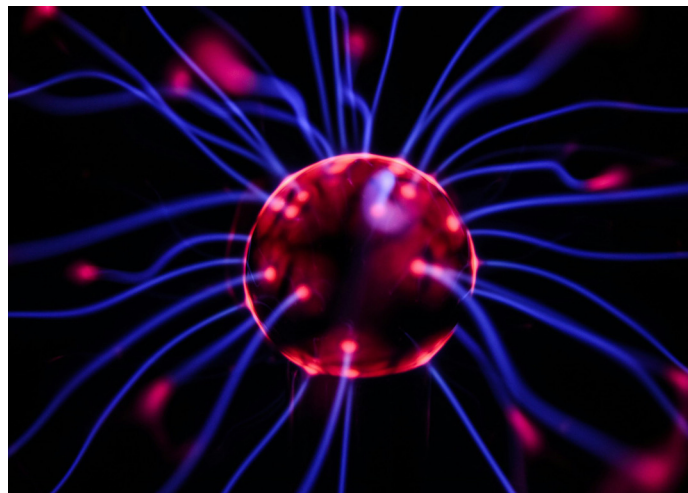
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### Link to exam board:

<https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/btec-tech-awards/travel-and-tourism-2022.html>

# Triple Science

## EBacc



### INTENT

#### What does the course offer me?

The course acts as an extension to the Combined Science content and focuses on topics that can be extended further at A-Level.

During the course you will follow the same basic content as the Combined Science students but in addition you will also cover additional topics which will include;

Biology: Culturing Bacteria, The Brain and the Eye, Genetics and Evolution

Chemistry: Nanoparticles, Cells & Fuels, Polymers and Composites

Physics: Radiation, Fusion, Fission, Astronomy / Space Sciences

The course will enable you to critically think about Science by unpicking how the world around you works, while considering how advances in Science have resulted in phenomenal innovations.

If you wish to take this option you should have a GCSE target of at least grade 6 in English, Maths, and Science.

### IMPLEMENTATION

#### What does the course involve?

The course will include structured lessons, Critical analysis of processes and data, applied tasks and additional Exam Board Required Practicals.

### How will I be assessed?

At the end of the course you will sit 6 exams, two for each subject. Exams are 1 hour and 45 minutes long. You will be awarded 3 separate GCSEs in Biology, Chemistry and Physics.

### IMPACT

Possible careers include Medicine, Pharmacy, Engineering, Law, Botanist, Ecologist, Financial Analyst or any career that requires critical thinking and data analysis.

**Student view:** "I enjoyed Triple Science. It was the same initial content as Combined, but some units have more content at the end, or there are extra triple only content topics. Also, rather than getting two grades that are equal parts Biology, Chemistry, Physics, you get a separate grade for each. That means if you are much better in one, the other scores don't pull your average down".

### Link to exam board:

<http://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/science/gcse/biology-8461>

<http://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/science/gcse/chemistry-8462>

<http://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/science/gcse/physics-8463>





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