

GCSE OPTIONS BOOKLET

2026-2028



**THE
PALMER
CATHOLIC ACADEMY**

FINDING YOUR WAY AROUND

In this booklet you will find information on all of the subjects available to you.

Key diary dates and how we will support every student with their option choices.

The Key Stage 4 Option Pathways that are available.

THE CORE CURRICULUM

(You *have to* study these subjects)

GCSE RE

GCSE English Language

GCSE English Literature

GCSE Mathematics

GCSE Science [combined or separate]

PE [non examined]

Helping you make your choices.

The graphic below highlights the various skills and types of activity likely to be used in subjects. Use it to match your preferred ways of learning to different subjects.

OPTIONS

GCSE Geography

GCSE History

GCSE Arabic

GCSE French

GCSE Spanish

GCSE Art—Fine Art

GCSE Business Studies

GCSE Computer Science

GCSE Design and Technology

BTEC Digital Information Technology

GCSE Drama

GCSE Economics

GCSE Food Preparation & Nutrition

GCSE Media Studies

GCSE Music

GCSE Physical Education

GCSE Psychology

GCSE Sociology

GCSE Sociology



Extended Writing



Working with my Hands



Using Numbers



Performing Activities



Design & Create Projects



Using ICT (Not Gaming)



Short Written Tasks



Speaking in front of Others

**Year 9 Options
Selection Deadline
Friday 8th May
2026**

CHOOSING YOUR KS4 OPTIONS

Key Dates:

Spring Term 2025:	Impartial Careers Advice (30 minutes)
Options Evening:	22nd April 2026
Parents' Evening:	6th May 2026
Deadline for Choices :	8th May 2026

Over the course of the spring term you will receive guidance and help from a number of sources to help you make your selection of GCSE and BTEC qualifications. This is the first time you will take responsibility for your subject choices, making decisions that will influence the next stage of your education and your future career. Therefore, you need to think *carefully* about what you want to do.

This booklet should be your **starting point** for information; it provides you with an outline of all the subjects that are on offer, the aims of the course, examination requirements and coursework [if applicable].

Every student has to take the compulsory GCSE subjects: English Language, English Literature, Mathematics, Science [Separate or Combined] and RE. They then choose **three** optional subjects. All students in Year 10 and Year 11 also study compulsory non-GCSE courses in Physical Education.

The key to choosing your options is to select subjects that *play to your strengths* and that you are *inspired by* and will *enjoy*. Also consider your future *career* when choosing. This is the best guarantee that you will be prepared to apply yourself fully and thus succeed.

You should not be choosing a subject because you like the teacher, or your friends are doing it, or indeed because it worked well for a member of your family. As you can imagine, there is no guarantee that the same teacher will actually teach you for GCSE or that you will enjoy the subject if you do not have a genuine interest in it.

We try to accommodate your choice and rewrite the timetable each year in order to do this, therefore the vast majority of you will be able to take the options you select. However, classes will run according to demand and if only a very small number choose a particular option it might not be viable. **For these reasons we ask you to choose a reserve subject in case the preferred option is not available, being fully aware that this reserve choice may be given.**

SCHOOL PERFORMANCE

Progress 8 measure

Schools and academies are now measured on how much progress students make from when they start in Year 7 to when they complete their exams at the end of Year 11. This is known as Progress 8.

Facilitating Subjects

Some A-Level subjects have greater importance if applying to a Russell Group University and to study these at A-Level, there is an expectation that students have studied these at GCSE level. These are known as **facilitating subjects**. The Russell Group represents 24 research-intensive universities located in every region and nation of the UK.

Most of these facilitating subjects are within our core curriculum:

- **Mathematics,**
- **Further Mathematics,**
- **English Literature,**
- **Physics,**
- **Biology,**
- **Chemistry**

**RUSSELL
GROUP**

The other facilitating subjects are option subjects:

- **Geography,**
- **History, and**
- **Modern Languages**

While these are not strict prerequisites for all Russell Group University courses, having at least two of these subjects often strengthens applications to these 24 research-intensive institutions.

To find out more information about Russell Group Universities please use the link below:

<https://www.russellgroup.ac.uk/our-universities/for-students>

OPTION PATHWAYS

Option Pathways

The option pathways have been designed to ensure that all students follow a curriculum that is ambitious, inclusive, and closely aligned to their individual starting points. The model supports high expectations for all learners, enabling students to build secure knowledge, skills, and qualifications that prepare them effectively for the next stage of education, training, or employment. Through a carefully structured options process, students are supported to make informed choices that sustain breadth, promote progression, and lead to positive post-16 destinations.

Pathway 1 – Humanities and Modern Foreign Languages (MFL)

Students following this pathway study the full range of core subjects: **Mathematics, English Language, English Literature, Separate Sciences or Combined Science and Religious Education**. In addition, students study one modern foreign language (**Arabic, French or Spanish**) and one humanities subject (**History or Geography**). Students also select one further option subject. This pathway is designed to support progression to A-level study and, where appropriate, entry to highly selective universities, including Russell Group institutions. The curriculum provides a strong academic foundation and ensures that students retain access to subjects that are valued for progression at post-16 and beyond.

Pathway 2 – Humanities or Modern Foreign Languages (MFL)

Students on this pathway also follow the core curriculum: **Mathematics, English Language, English Literature, Combined Science, and Religious Education**. In addition, students select three further option subjects, with the expectation that at least one is drawn from **History, Geography, Arabic, French, or Spanish**. This pathway supports a range of ambitious progression routes, including A-levels, V Levels, T Levels, and apprenticeships, and ensures that students continue to study subjects that support strong literacy, numeracy, and cultural capital.

The Supported Study Pathway 3

Students on Pathway 3 will study the core subjects (Mathematics, English Language and English Literature, Combined Science and Religious Education). In addition, students studying on this pathway will receive additional time allocation in English and Mathematics to ensure that they can successfully access their Level 2 courses and be adequately prepared for opportunities that are available Post-16. Students will then have the opportunity to select **two** further options.

GCSE's & CAREERS SUPPORT

Online Resources to help choose the right GCSE's

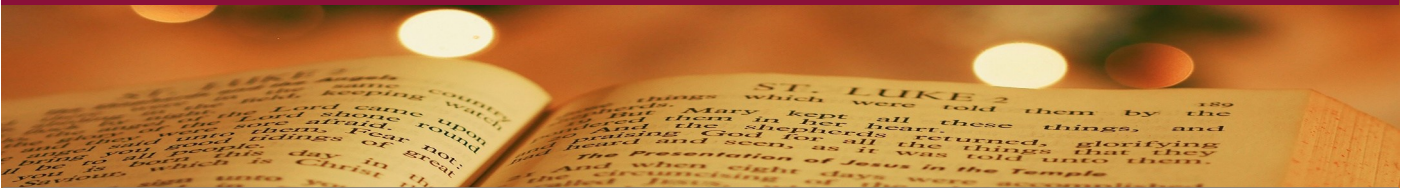
All students have a Career Pilot account that gives a wide range of support.

<https://www.careerpilot.org.uk/>

<https://www.careerpilot.org.uk/job-sectors/subjects>

BBC Bitesize has details of a wide range of careers

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/articles/zdqnxyc#zqggvwx>



HEAD OF DEPARTMENT: MRS EGHAN

Outline of the course

There are eight main sections to GCSE Religious Education:

- (1) **Catholic Beliefs and (2) Practices.** Students analysis Catholic beliefs, explore rituals and ceremonies, considering how they differ to other Christian beliefs.
- (3) **Religious Sources.** Students will critically examine sacred text and comments from religious leaders.
- (4) **Forms of Expression.** Students will analysis the ways in which belief is reflected in art, drama, architecture and more.
- (5) **Jewish Beliefs and (6) Practice.** Students investigate the divergent traditional and liberal beliefs, rituals and ceremonies within Judaism.
- (7) **Philosophy.** Students critique the various arguments for the existence of God, evaluating atheist and religious views.
- (8) **Ethics.** Students evaluate a range of ethical situations assessing atheist and religious views.

GCSE	CORE
HOW WILL I BE ASSESSED? Grade 9-1	
The course is examined in 2023 with three separate papers.	
Paper 1: Catholic Christianity [1 hour 45 minutes. 102 Marks. 50% of qualification]	
There are four questions, each containing four sub-questions; assessing knowledge, understanding and evaluative skills in Catholic beliefs, practices and expression.	
Paper 2: Judaism [50 minutes. 51 Marks. 25% of qualification]	
There are two questions, each containing four sub-questions; assessing knowledge, understanding and evaluative skills in Jewish beliefs and practices.	
Paper 3: Philosophy & Ethics [50 minutes. 51 Marks. 25% of qualification]	
There are two questions, each containing four sub-questions; assessing knowledge, understanding and evaluative skills in philosophical and ethical areas.	

SKILLS INVOLVED



CAREERS

GCSE RE can be a pathway to many careers.

Each section could be a potential career ranging from medicine to law, politics, social work and education.

An average salary for politicians is £80,000, whereas in education the national average is £35,000.

Post-16 pathways can include GCE Philosophy and Ethics.

GCSE ENGLISH LANGUAGE (9-1) AQA (8701)



HEAD OF DEPARTMENT: MR MUKHERJEE

Outline of the course

There are 3 sections to GCSE English Language.

Explorations in creative reading and writing.

Students will refine their skills needed to analyse an *unseen* fictional extract and be able to express themselves critically. Students will explore how to write successful and effective fictional prose.

Writers' viewpoints and perspectives.

Students will refine their analytical skills to be able to analyse two unseen non-fiction extracts and express themselves critically. Students will explore how to write successful and effective non-fiction tasks.

Speaking and Listening:

Students will also prepare and perform their own speech on a chosen topic.

GCSE	CORE/EBacc
HOW WILL I BE ASSESSED? Grade 9 - 1	
The course is examined with two papers, both 1 hour 45 minutes.	
English Language Paper 1 – [80 marks]	
<u>Explorations in creative reading and writing</u>	
Section A: Analysis of an unseen prose extract (40 marks).	
Four questions: extracting information, exploring language and structure, responding critically to a statement.	
Section B: Descriptive and narrative writing (40 marks)	
English Language Paper 2 – [80 marks]	
<u>Writers' viewpoints and perspectives</u>	
Section A: Analysis of two unseen non-fiction extracts. (40 marks)	
Four questions: inference skills, summarising information, analysis of language, comparison of language.	
Section B: Transactional (non-fiction) writing. [40 marks]	

SKILLS INVOLVED



CAREERS

GCSE English Language is a pathway to a wide variety of careers. Ranging from online digital media, journalism, publishing, advertising, marketing, teaching and law. English is a respected qualification owing to the numerous transferable skills it demonstrates.

Publishers and Journalists have a starting salary of £23,000, while a Law graduate can earn between £22,000 to £45,000.

Post-16 pathways include GCE English Literature at The Palmer Catholic Academy.

GCSE ENGLISH LITERATURE (9-1) AQA (8702)



HEAD OF DEPARTMENT: MR MUKHERJEE

Outline of the course

There are 5 sections to GCSE English Literature.

All texts are studied with a focus on essay writing skills, the analysis of language and influencing contextual factors.

Shakespeare: Students will study Romeo and Juliet.

19th Century Novel: Students will study The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde by Robert Louis Stevenson.

Modern Drama: Students will study An Inspector Calls by J.B. Priestley.

Poetry: Students will study the Power and Conflict Cluster.

Unseen Poetry: Students will study the skills required to analyse a poem and write a critical analysis in response to a question.

GCSE	CORE/EBacc
HOW WILL I BE ASSESSED? Grade 9 - 1	
The course is examined with two separate papers, both closed book exams (no copies of the texts)	
English Literature Paper 1: 1 hour 45 minutes [64 marks]	
<u>Section A:</u> Shakespeare	
<u>Section B:</u> 19th Century Novel	
Both sections students will be assessed on one essay question, responding to an extract.	
English Literature Paper 2: 2 hours 15 minutes [96 marks]	
<u>Section A:</u> Modern drama, students have a choice of two questions.	
<u>Section B:</u> Poetry, one question	
<u>Section C:</u> Unseen Poetry, two questions, both must be answered.	

SKILLS INVOLVED



CAREERS

GCSE English Literature is a pathway to a wide variety of careers. Ranging from online digital media, journalism, publishing, advertising, marketing, teaching and law. English is a respected qualification owing to the numerous transferable skills it demonstrates.

The average salary for Digital Media jobs is £52,500.

Post-16 pathways include GCE English Literature.

GCSE MATHEMATICS: Pearson Edexcel (1MA1)



HEAD OF DEPARTMENT: MRS SHARMA

Outline of the course

The specification will cover the following topics:

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

GCSE	CORE/EBacc
HOW WILL I BE ASSESSED? Grade 9 - 1	
Paper 1 (80 marks):	
Written examination papers with a range of question types from all topics.	
<i>No calculator is allowed</i>	
1 hour and 30 minutes (both Foundation and Higher tier papers)	
Paper 2 (80 marks):	
Written examination papers with a range of question types from all topics.	
Calculator allowed	
1 hour and 30 minutes (both Foundation and Higher tier papers)	
Paper 3 (80 marks):	
Written examination papers with a range of question types from all topics.	
Calculator allowed	
1 hour and 30 minutes (both Foundation and Higher tier papers)	

SKILLS INVOLVED



CAREERS

Studying math's helps you develop skills in logical thinking, problem-solving and decision-making, which are valued by employers across many job sectors.

Careers can include: Actuarial (risk) analyst, Chartered accountant, Chartered certified accountant, Data analyst, Data scientist, Investment analyst or a Research scientist.

A professional actuary can expect to earn an average of £52,000 plus bonuses.



HEAD OF DEPARTMENT: MR BEHAN

Outline of the course

This specification encourages the development of knowledge and understanding in science through opportunities for working scientifically.

Students will cover Biology, Chemistry and Physics over a 2 year course.

This course is aimed at developing students understanding and explanation of everyday and technological applications of science, appreciate the power and limitations of science and consider any ethical issues which may arise and evaluate risks both in practical science and the wider societal context.

GCSE	CORE/EBacc
HOW WILL I BE ASSESSED?	
Double Grade (99 - 11)	
<p>Combined: Trilogy is a double award and worth <u>two</u> GCSEs.</p>	
<p>It is assessed by six, 1 hour and 15 minute exams.</p>	
<p>Each paper holds a maximum of 70 marks which is worth 16.7% of GCSE.</p>	
<p>Students are assessed through multiple choice, structured, closed short answer, and open response questions.</p>	

SKILLS INVOLVED

- Extended Writing
- Using Numbers
- Design & Create Projects
- Short Written Tasks
- Working with my Hands
- Performing Activities
- Using ICT (Not Gaming)
- Speaking in front of Others

CAREERS

Combined: Trilogy can be a pathway to many different careers. Some career opportunities include Health related careers including Nursing, Physiotherapy, Speech Therapy, Doctor, Dentist, Midwife, Paramedic, Operating Department Technician and Pharmacist Careers related to animals and the environment, including Conservation, Farming, Gardening, Vet, Veterinary Nursing, Engineering, Teaching, Laboratory Technician, Forensic Scientist and Research Scientist.

**GCSE SEPARATE SCIENCE: AQA Biology (8461),
Chemistry (8462) & Physics (8463)**



HEAD OF DEPARTMENT: MR BEHAN

Outline of the course

This specification encourages the development of knowledge and understanding in science through opportunities for working scientifically.

Students will cover:

- **Biology,**
- **Chemistry and**
- **Physics.**

This course is aimed at developing students understanding and explanation of everyday and technological applications of science, appreciate the power and limitations of science and consider any ethical issues which may arise and evaluate risks both in practical science and the wider societal context.

GCSE	CORE/EBacc
HOW WILL I BE ASSESSED? Grade 9 - 1	
Studying Separate Sciences results in three Separate GCSE grades in Biology, Chemistry and Physics.	
Each of the three GCSEs is assessed by two, 1 hour and 45 minute exams. (Six exams in total).	
Each paper counts toward 50% of the grade for that Science.	
Each paper holds a maximum of 100 marks.	
Students are assessed through multiple choice, structured, closed short answer, and open response questions.	

SKILLS INVOLVED

CAREERS

GCSE Separate Sciences can be a pathway to many different careers. Some career opportunities include Health related careers including Nursing, Physiotherapy, Speech Therapy, Doctor, Dentist, Midwife, Paramedic, Operating Department Technician and Pharmacist Careers related to animals and the environment, including Conservation, Farming, Gardening, Vet, Veterinary Nursing, Engineering, Teaching, Laboratory Technician, Forensic Scientist and Research Scientist.

GCSE Geography (9-1) Pearson Edexcel (Geography B 1GBO)



HEAD OF DEPARTMENT: MR ALLITT

Outline of the course

There are 3 main components to GCSE Geography:

1. **Global Geographical Issues.** Students will study global geographical issues such as Hurricanes, earthquakes and volcanoes as well as considering how and why India has become a global power.
2. **UK Geographical Issues.** Students will study geographical issues for the UK such as how climate change will impact the UK as well as regional inequalities. Students will visit Walton-on-the-Naze and investigate the impacts of coastal management.
3. **People and Environment Issues.** Students will study global biomes such as the rainforest and will learn how people must find a balance between making money and exploiting nature. They will make their own justified decision based upon the evidence.

GCSE	OPTION/EBacc
HOW WILL I BE ASSESSED? Grade 9 - 1	
Geography (01) Global Geographical Issues. (94 marks, 37.5% of qualification)	
The exam includes multiple-choice questions, short open, open response and extended writing questions, calculations and 8-mark extended writing questions.	
Geography (02) UK Geographical Issues. (94 marks, 37.5% of qualification)	
The exam includes multiple-choice questions, short open, open response and extended writing questions, calculations and 8-mark extended writing questions.	
Geography (03) People and Environment Issues (64 marks, 25% of qualification)	
The exam includes multiple-choice questions, short open, open response and extended writing questions. Section C will include 8-mark extended writing questions and Section D will offer a choice of one from three decisions assessed through a 12-mark extended writing question.	

SKILLS INVOLVED



CAREERS

Geography is a pathway to many careers. Some examples are an architect who can on average earn £60,000. A civil engineer who earns on average £45,000 or an Archaeologist who can earn on average £25,000. Other jobs include Environmental Science, Financial adviser, Geologist, Meteorologist, Town Planner, Surveying, Teaching, Tourism, Travel and Urban Studies.

We offer A-Level Geography at The Palmer Catholic Academy.

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GCSE HISTORY: OCR (11HI0)

OPTIONS BOOKLET



HEAD OF DEPARTMENT: MR CHAN

Outline of the course

Paper 1: Thematic study and historic environment

Section A: Historic Environment – Whitechapel, 1870-1900.

Section B: Thematic study – Crime & Punishment, 1000-present day.

Paper 2: Period study and British depth study

Section A: Period study – Superpower Relations and the Cold War, 1941-1991

Section B: British depth study – Early Elizabethan England, 1558-88

Paper 3: Modern depth study – Weimar and Nazi Germany, 1918-1939

Section A: Students answer a question based on a provided source.

Section B: Students answer a single four-part question, based on two provided sources.

GCSE	OPTION/EBacc
HOW WILL I BE ASSESSED? Grade 9 - 1	
Paper 1: Crime and Punishment. 52 marks. 30% of total marks. 1 hr 15 minutes.	
Paper 2: Early Elizabethan England and 26/27 - Superpower relations and the Cold War. 64 marks. 40% of total marks. 1 hr 45 minutes.	
Paper 3: Weimar and Nazi Germany, 1918-1939. 52 marks. 30% of total marks. 1 hr 20 minutes	

SKILLS INVOLVED



Extended Writing



Using Numbers



Design & Create Projects



Short Written Tasks

CAREERS

Employers value the research, analytical, teamwork and communication skills that history students develop throughout their education.

Careers can include; Archaeologist, Broadcast journalist, Civil Service administrator, Editorial assistant, Human resources officer, solicitor or an Information officer. Starting salaries for qualified solicitors range from around £25,000 to £40,000.



LEAD TEACHER: MRS BENZIDANE

Outline of the course

In Paper 1 students are assessed on their understanding of standard spoken Arabic by one or more speakers in a range of public and social settings.

In Paper 2 students are assessed on their ability to communicate and interact effectively through speaking in Arabic for different purposes and in different settings.

In Paper 3 students are assessed on their understanding of written Arabic across a range of different types of texts, including advertisements, emails, letters, articles and literary texts.

In Paper 4 students are assessed on their ability to communicate effectively through writing in Arabic for different purposes and audiences. Students are required to produce responses of varying lengths and types to express ideas and opinions in Arabic. The instructions to students are in Arabic.

GCSE	OPTION/EBacc
HOW WILL I BE ASSESSED? Grade 9 - 1	
Paper 1: Listening & understanding in Arabic	
Written examination - 25% of the qualification	
Foundation tier: 35 minutes, 50 marks	
Higher tier: 45 minutes, 50 marks	
Paper 2: Speaking in Arabic	
25% of the total qualification	
Foundation tier: 7–9 minutes, 70 marks	
Higher tier: 10–12 minutes, 70 marks	
Paper 3: Reading & understanding in Arabic	
Written examination - 25% of the qualification	
Foundation tier: 50 minutes; 50 marks.	
Higher tier: 1 hour 5 minutes; 50 marks	
Paper 4: Writing in Arabic	
Written examination - 25% of the qualification	
Foundation tier: 1 hour 20 minutes; 60 marks	
Higher tier: 1 hour 25 minutes; 60 marks	

SKILLS INVOLVED

CAREERS

If you study Arabic at degree level, you'll develop independence and self-confidence during your residence abroad, and your intercultural communication skills will make you a strong contender for **media, journalism and PR roles**.

Many graduates go straight into business services, marketing, advertising, management, banking or communications. The average salary for an Arabic Translator is £38,727 *per year* in United Kingdom.



HEAD OF DEPARTMENT: MRS LOURENCO

Outline of the course

This qualification is linear. Linear means that students will sit all their exams at the end of the course.

Subject content

Assessment is set in the context of these three themes:

- **Theme 1:** People and lifestyle
- **Theme 2:** Popular culture
- **Theme 3:** Communication and the world around us

GCSE French has a Foundation tier (grades 1–5) and a Higher tier (grades 4–9).

Students must take all four question papers at the same tier. All question papers must be taken in the same series.

GCSE	OPTION/EBacc
HOW WILL I BE ASSESSED? Grades 9 - 1	
Listening: Written exam - 25% of GCSE: 35 minutes (Foundation), 45 minutes (Higher) 40 marks (Foundation), 50 marks (Higher)	
Speaking: - 25% of GCSE 7–9 minutes (Foundation) + 15 minutes 10–12 minutes (Higher) + 15 minutes	
Reading: - 25% of GCSE Written exam: 45 minutes (Foundation) and 1 hour (Higher) 50 marks for both Foundation and Higher tier	
Writing: - 25% of GCSE Written exam: 1 hour 10 minutes (Foundation), 1 hour 15 minutes (Higher) 50 marks for both Foundation and Higher tier	

SKILLS INVOLVED

- Extended Writing
- Using Numbers
- Design & Create Projects
- Short Written Tasks
- Working with my Hands
- Performing Activities
- Using ICT (not Gaming)
- Speaking in front of Others

CAREERS

Being able to offer a Modern foreign language is an invaluable asset in many fields of employment.

French will allow students to play a full part in the job market of tomorrow and enjoy the world of leisure. Language graduates are employed by a wide variety of employers and sectors, including: business services, charity work, engineering, media, public administration, teaching, tourism, transport and logistics. The average salary for Language jobs is £37,500.



HEAD OF DEPARTMENT: MRS LOURENCO

Outline of the course

There are four skills in Spanish GCSE in which students are expected to be able to do:

Listening: identify the overall message, key points, details and opinions in a variety of short and longer spoken passages.

Speaking: communicate and interact effectively in speech for a variety of purposes across a range of specified contexts.

Reading: identify the overall message, key points, details and opinions in a variety of short and longer written passages.

Writing: Communicate effectively in writing for a variety of purposes across a range of specified contexts.

GCSE	OPTION/EBacc
HOW WILL I BE ASSESSED? Grade 9 - 1	
This qualification is linear which means that students will sit all their exams in 2023.	
Listening Exam (25% of GCSE):	
35 minutes (Foundation Tier) 40 marks	
45 minutes (Higher Tier) 50 marks	
Speaking Exam (25% of GCSE):	
7–9 minutes (Foundation Tier) + 15 minutes preparation time.	
10–12 minutes (Higher Tier) + 15 minutes preparation time.	
Reading Exam (25% of GCSE) 50 marks:	
45 minutes (Foundation Tier),	
1 hour (Higher Tier)	
Writing Exam (25% of GCSE) 50 marks:	
1 hour 10 minutes (Foundation Tier),	
1 hour 15 minutes (Higher Tier)	

SKILLS INVOLVED



Extended Writing



Working with my Hands



Using Numbers



Performing Activities



Design & Create Projects



Using ICT (not Gaming)



Short Written Tasks



Speaking in front of Others

CAREERS

Spanish is a natural choice to allow students to play a full part in the job market of tomorrow and enjoy the world of leisure. Language graduates are employed by a wide variety of employers and sectors, including: business services, charity work, engineering, media, public administration, teaching, tourism, transport and logistics.

The average salary for Language jobs is £37,500.

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GCSE ART & DESIGN - FINE ART: Pearson Edexcel (1FA0)



LEAD TEACHER: MS BOURNE

OPTIONS BOOKLET

Outline of the course

Art and Design equips students with the skills to enjoy, produce and engage with the visual arts throughout their lives.

Art and Design provides the opportunity for students to explore both contemporary and historical sources of art and design first hand through their surroundings and environments and experiencing audio visual productions, including still and moving imagery.

Students take an individual approach to their art by developing the skill of selecting their best and most appropriate work for presentation.

Students will be experimenting in various media including: drawing, painting, photography, printmaking, charcoal, pastel, ceramics, sculpture, installation and collage.

GCSE	OPTION/OPEN
HOW WILL I BE ASSESSED? Grade 9 - 1	
GCSE Art and Design covers a range of activities and in-depth assignments. Pupils have the opportunity to experiment with different media and techniques in order to explore the subject.	
Unit 1 – Personal Portfolio in Art and Design. This unit will be split into two separate assignments and themes. (internally set and marked)	
Unit 2 – Externally Set Assignment in Art and Design. This unit theme will be externally set by the exam board and internally marked.	
Both Unit 1 and 2 are externally moderated.	
Unit 1 is worth 60% of the overall GCSE grade and Unit 2 is worth 40%.	

SKILLS INVOLVED

CAREERS

The UK's creative industries contribute £92billion to the economy. The growth of the sector is expected to continue, predicting a worth of £128.4billion to the UK economy by 2025.

A Fine Artist, including a Painter, Sculptor, or Illustrator on average gets paid between £40,000 - £60,000 based on their experience. Fine Artists will usually earn a pay level of £53,200 per year.

Post-16 pathways can include GCE Art.



HEAD OF DEPARTMENT: MR WATERHOUSE

Outline of the course

There are six main sections to GCSE

Business:

1. **Business Activities.** Students analyse entrepreneurship, business planning, business ownership and objectives.
2. **Marketing Methods.** The role of market research and methods to embed a marketing plan are analysed.
3. **People.** Students will investigate recruitment, employee motivation employment law.
4. **Operations.** Students will analyse methods of production and working with suppliers.
5. **Finance.** Calculations and analysis of revenue, costs, profit and cash flow.
6. **Influences.** Students will analyse business ethics and the impact of globalisation.

GCSE	OPTION/OPEN
<p>HOW WILL I BE ASSESSED? Grade 9 - 1</p>	
<p>Business (01): Business activity, marketing and people.</p> <p>[80 Marks. 50% of qualification]</p> <p>There are 15 multiple choice questions and then, using three separate case studies, context based questions ranging from 1 mark identify questions to extended 9 mark questioning.</p>	
<p>Business (02): Operations, finance and influences on business.</p> <p>[80 Marks. 50% of qualification]</p> <p>There are 15 multiple choice questions and then, using three separate case studies, context based questions ranging from 1 mark identify questions to extended 9 mark questioning.</p>	

SKILLS INVOLVED

- Extended Writing
- Using Numbers
- Design & Create Projects
- Short Written Tasks
- Working with my Hands
- Performing Activities
- Using ICT (not Gaming)
- Speaking in front of Others

CAREERS

GCSE Business studies is a pathway to many careers. Each section could be a potential career ranging from starting your own business, to working in marketing, human resources, operations, finance/accounting or logistics (importing and exporting). Accountants earn an average salary of £62,000, whereas a logistics job has an average annual salary of £32,000.

Post-16 pathways can include GCE Applied Business and GCE Economics.



HEAD OF DEPARTMENT: MR WATERHOUSE

Outline of the course

In GCSE Computer Science you will be studying:

Computer systems—Paper 1:

[Systems Architecture, Memory, Storage, Wired and wireless networks, Network topologies, System security, System software, Ethical, legal, cultural and environmental concerns.

Computational thinking—Paper 2:

Students will study algorithms, Programming fundamentals, Produce robust programs, examine Boolean logic and develop Programming languages and Integrated Development Environments.

GCSE	OPTION
HOW WILL I BE ASSESSED? Grade 9 - 1	
<u>Computer Systems J277(01)</u>	
Written paper (80 Marks): 1 hour and 30 minutes 50% of total GCSE	
This paper consists of multiple choice questions, short response questions and extended response questions.	
<u>Computational thinking (J277(02))</u>	
Written paper (80 Marks): 1 hour and 30 minutes 50% of total GCSE.	
All questions are mandatory. In Section B, questions assessing students' ability to write or refine algorithms must be answered using either the OCR Exam Reference Language or the high-level programming language they are familiar with.	

SKILLS INVOLVED

- Extended Writing
- Using Numbers
- Design & Create Projects
- Short Written Tasks
- Working with my Hands
- Performing Activities
- Using ICT (Not Gaming)
- Speaking in front of Others

CAREERS

There are a range of careers that can be followed with GCSE Computer Science. This can include, animation design, website design, software development, network manager, computer engineer, artificial intelligence, game developer, database administrator, IT consultant, system analyst, IT sales and training. A website designer earns an average salary of £25,304 compared to a computer engineer earning £24,108.

We offer A-Level Computer Science at The Palmer Catholic Academy.

**BTEC Tech Award in Digital Information Technology
- Edexcel**



HEAD OF DEPARTMENT: MR WATERHOUSE

Outline of the course

There are three separate components.

Component 1 investigates the use of User Interfaces [UI] using a range of devices such as mobile phones and entertainment systems. Students will also plan, create and assess their own UI.

Component 2 investigates the characteristics of data and information in decision making. Students will use data manipulation methods to create a dashboard to present and draw conclusions.

Component 3 explores how recent developments in technology enable organisations to communicate and collaborate. It explores how digital regulation, ethics and security concerns influence the way in which organisations operate.

BTEC LEVEL 1/2

OPTION/OPEN

HOW WILL I BE ASSESSED? Level 1/2 (Distinction* - Pass)

The course is equivalent to a GCSE but is graded as; Level 2 Pass, Merit, Distinction or Distinction*. If a Level 2 Pass is not achieved, then either a Level 1 Pass, Merit or Distinction is awarded.

Component 1 [Exploring User Interface Design Principles and Project Planning Techniques].

Internally Assessed Project [30%]. Six hour assessment.

Component 2 [Collecting, Presenting and Interpreting Data].

Internally Assessed Project [30%]. Six hour assessment.

Component 3 [Effective Digital Working Practices].

Examination [40%].

SKILLS INVOLVED



Extended Writing



Working with my Hands



Using Numbers



Performing Activities



Design & Create Projects



Using ICT (Not Gaming)



Short Written Tasks



Speaking in front of Others

CAREERS

The growth in User Interfaces [UI] by businesses can lead to a wide range of careers within the digital sector such as a UI designer for e-commerce, mobile technology, game design and entertainment systems earning an average salary of £36,451.

Businesses are increasingly using data and with the skills you will acquire you could become a dashboard developer, earning an average salary of £45,000.

GCSE DRAMA: Pearson Edexcel (1DR0)



HEAD OF DEPARTMENT: MS ENVER-YUSUF

Outline of the course

Component 1: Devising

This unit focuses on the creation of original theatre. Group work from a stimulus, e.g. a photo, provided by the teacher. **Practical Work:** Students perform a devised piece or realise a design (lighting, sound, set, or costume). **Portfolio:** A written or recorded portfolio of evidence documenting the creation process and evaluating the final performance.

Component 2: Performance from Text

Students perform or design two key extracts from the same performance text. (monologue, duologue, or group performance).

Component 3: Theatre Makers in Practice

A written examination lasting 1 hour and 45 minutes, divided into two sections.

Section A: Questions on an unseen extract from a set play they have studied. Written from the perspective of a performer, director, or designer.

Section B (Live Theatre Evaluation): Students write an evaluation of a professional live theatre performance. 500 words of notes are allowed into the exam.

GCSE	OPTION/OPEN
HOW WILL I BE ASSESSED? Grade 9 - 1	
Component 1:	
Devising (*Component code: 1DR0/01)	
Non-examination assessment	
40% of the qualification – 60 marks	
Component 2:	
Performance from Text (*Component code: 1DR0/02)	
Non-examination assessment	
20% of the qualification – 48 marks	
Component 3:	
Theatre Makers in Practice (*Paper code: 1DR0/03)	
Written examination: 1 hour 30 minutes	
40% of the qualification – 60 marks	

SKILLS INVOLVED



CAREERS

There are a wide range of careers within Drama, including:

- Actor
- Teacher.
- Media researcher.
- Music producer.
- Television floor manager.
- Theatre manager.

Average salary in the Arts: £33,108



HEAD OF DEPARTMENT: MR WATERHOUSE

Outline of the course

Paper 1: How markets work

The central aspect will be the determination of prices through supply and demand, intermarket relationships and price elasticity.

Students investigate the significance of costs, revenue and profit for producers, leading to an understanding of the concepts of production, productivity and economies of scale. Students explore the importance of competition in relation to resource allocation, leading to an investigation of the factors that lead to market failure.

Paper 2: How the economy works

Students are introduced to the wider main economic groups: consumers, producers and government. Students explore the significance of interest rates including their impact on saving, borrowing and spending.

The core of this unit will focus on government objectives and their role in managing the economy and its conflicts. Students also examine why countries trade, and will explore the role of money and the significance of the financial markets in modern economies.

GCSE	OPTION/OPEN
HOW WILL I BE ASSESSED? Grade 9 - 1	
<u>Paper 1: How markets work</u>	
How it's assessed: Written exam: 1 hour 45 minutes - 80 marks (50% of GCSE)	
Section A: 10 multiple choice questions followed by a range of calculation, short and extended response questions.	
Section B: five questions involving a mix of calculations, short and extended responses.	
<u>Paper 2: How the economy works</u>	
How it's assessed: Written exam: 1 hour 45 minutes - 80 marks (50% of GCSE)	
Questions	
Section A: 10 multiple choice questions followed by a range of calculation, short and extended response questions.	
Section B: five questions involving a mix of calculations, short and extended responses.	

SKILLS INVOLVED

CAREERS

Studying economics teaches you about social policy and financial markets which are useful for careers in finance, accountancy and government.

Post-16 choices include A-Level Economics, Level 3 Apprenticeships in the above sectors working for companies such as JP Morgan and HSBC.

The average salary for banking analysts in London, 2023 for JP Morgan was £128,000 and for HSBC was £111,000.



Outline of the course

Component 1

1 – Core content and one from the following material categories:
Metals / Papers and boards / Polymers / Systems / Textiles or Timbers

Component 2

Students will undertake a project based on a contextual challenge released a year before certification.

There are four parts to the assessment:

- 1: Investigate: An investigation of needs and research.
- 2: Design: Producing different design ideas, review, development & communication of design ideas
- 3: Make: Manufacture, quality and accuracy
- 4: Evaluate: Testing and evaluation.

GCSE	OPTION/OPEN
HOW WILL I BE ASSESSED? Grade 9 - 1	
Component 1:	
Written examination: 1 hour and 45 minutes	
50% of the qualification [100 marks]	
Section A: Core This section is 40 marks and contains a mixture of different question styles, including open-response, graphical, calculation and extended-open-response questions.	
Section B: Material categories This section is 60 marks and contains a mixture of different question styles, including open-response, graphical, calculation and extended-open-response questions. There will be 5 marks of calculation questions in Section B.	
Component 2:	
Non-examined assessment 50% of the qualification 100 marks	
Tasks will be internally assessed and externally moderated. Marks are awarded for each part as follows.	
1 – Investigate (16 marks)	
2 – Design (42 marks)	
3 – Make (36 marks)	
4 – Evaluate (6 marks)	

SKILLS INVOLVED



CAREERS

A career in Technology and Design often involves developing creative, solutions to existing problems. This may mean anything from designing video games to creating indoor living spaces.

As technology advances, the range of careers in design and technology will also expand.

Job roles include:

Interior Designer, Design Engineer, Product Designer, CAD engineer, Video Game Design, Electrical Engineer or Architect.

**GCSE FOOD PREPARATION & NUTRITION: AQA
(8585)**



LEAD TEACHER: MS GALLAGHER

Outline of the course

The course focuses on practical cooking skills to ensure students develop a thorough understanding of nutrition, food provenance and the working characteristics of food materials.

At its heart, this qualification focuses on nurturing students' practical cookery skills to give them a strong understanding of nutrition.

Food preparation skills are integrated into five core topics:

1. Food, nutrition and health
2. Food science
3. Food safety
4. Food choice
5. Food provenance.

GCSE	OPTION/OPEN
HOW WILL I BE ASSESSED? Grade 9 -1	
Paper 1: Food preparation and nutrition	
What's assessed: Theoretical knowledge of food preparation and nutrition from Sections 1 to 5.	
How it's assessed: Written exam: 1 hour 45 minutes (100 marks). 50% of GCSE.	
Multiple choice questions (20 marks). Five questions each with a number of sub questions (80 marks).	
Non-exam assessment (NEA)	
What's assessed: <u>Task 1:</u> Food investigation (30 marks). <u>Task 2:</u> Food preparation assessment (70 marks) Students will prepare, cook and present a final menu of three dishes within three hours.	
How it's assessed: <u>Task 1:</u> Written or electronic report (1,500–2,000 words) including photographic evidence of the practical investigation. <u>Task 2:</u> Written or electronic portfolio including photographic evidence.	

SKILLS INVOLVED

CAREERS

A passion for Food and Catering can lead to a wide range of career opportunities in agriculture, catering and hospitality, environmental health, leisure and tourism, retail sales and customer service, as well as Food Production Scientist and manufacturing, Food Labelling specialist, Hygiene Manager, Food Psychologist and Lecturer or Teacher.

Average salary - £12,000 to £100,000

GCSE MEDIA STUDIES (9-1) Eduqas (A680QS)



HEAD OF DEPARTMENT: MR MUKHERJEE

Outline of the course

There are 3 components in Media Studies:

Exploring the Media:

Section A: Exploring Media Language & Representation:

Print forms: magazines, newspapers, advertising (film posters), print advertisements

Section B: Exploring Media Industries & Audiences, Film, newspapers, radio, video games

Understanding Media Forms & Products

Section A: Television; (Studying Luther & The Sweeney)

Section B: Music; Music videos & online media (Pharrell Williams or Katy Perry)

17 set texts (eg magazine front cover, film poster, music video, Luther TV programme)

Creating Media Products: NEA coursework

Creating a media product from a brief; e.g. film marketing (DVD cover & film poster; magazines, front cover, contents page, feature page)

GCSE	OPTION/OPEN
HOW WILL I BE ASSESSED? Grade 9 - 1	
<u>Paper 1: 80 marks (90 minutes)</u>	
<u>A: Media Language & Representation; Two questions (45 marks)</u>	
1. Analysis of one of the set texts (short response)	
2. Analysis of representation & context	
<u>B: Industries & Audiences; Two questions (35 marks)</u>	
<u>Paper 2: 60 Marks (90 minutes)</u>	
<u>A: Television (a short excerpt from the TV programme will be played) (30 marks)</u>	
Two questions	
<u>B: Music (Videos & Online media) (30 marks)</u>	
Two questions	
<u>NEA (Non-Exam Assessment) (60 marks)</u>	
10 marks - written statement of aims	
20 marks - meeting the brief	
30 marks - creative & technical use of media language	

SKILLS INVOLVED



CAREERS

Media Studies can lead to a variety of interesting and exciting careers. Creativity and critical thinking combine to open up pathways to the media industries; film, television, radio, newspapers, publishing, advertising, marketing; in roles such as producers, directors, editors, journalists, copywriters and art directors.

A production manager in a creative agency can earn an annual salary £30,000 by 25 years of age.



Outline of the course

Students will be studying a variety of different musical styles and features including:

- Musical forms and devices,
- Music for ensemble,
- Film Music,
- Popular Music.

Students will also be developing their skills as composers and performers.

The specification has three components based on the three skills of performing, composing and appraising.

An integrated approach to the three skills is developed through each area of study and serves to highlight the importance of the relationship between composer, performer and audience.

GCSE	OPTION/OPEN
HOW WILL I BE ASSESSED? Grade 9 - 1	
The exam has three components:	
1 Performing (30%)	
Total duration of performances: 4-6 minutes Non-exam assessment: internally assessed, externally moderated.	
2 Composing (30%)	
Total duration of compositions: 3-6 minutes Non-exam assessment: internally assessed, externally moderated.	
3 Listening and Appraising (40%)	
This component is assessed via a listening examination (1hr 15mins)	
Eight questions in total, two on each of the four areas of study. Area of study 1: Musical Forms and Devices Area of study 2: Music for Ensemble Area of study 3: Film Music Area of study 4: Popular Music Two of the eight questions are based on extracts set by the examination board.	

SKILLS INVOLVED



CAREERS

Studying GCSE Music can lead to a variety of different prospects including: music therapy, musician, school teacher, sound technician, broadcasting (film/TV), events manager, radio producer, theatre stage manager. The average pay for a Sound Engineer in London is £25,920 per year.

Following on from GCSEs, students can expect to move to A levels and then degree level.

GCSE PHYSICAL EDUCATION (9-1): EDEXCEL (1PE0)



Outline of the course

Component 1: Fitness and Body Systems

Applied Anatomy and Physiology: Skeletal, muscular, cardiovascular, respiratory systems, and effects of exercise. Movement Analysis: Lever systems, planes, and axes of movement. Physical Training: Components of fitness, principles of training (FITT), and training methods. Use of Data: Interpreting data related to health and fitness.

Component 2: Health and Performance

Health, Fitness, and Well-being: Diet, nutrition, and consequences of a sedentary lifestyle. Sport Psychology: Classification of skills, goal setting (SMART), guidance, and feedback. Socio-cultural Influences: Commercialization, ethics, and engagement patterns in sport.

Component 3: Practical Performance

Assessment in three different physical activities (one team, one individual, and one chosen from either).

Component 4: Personal Exercise Programme

Design, implement, and evaluate a six-week personal fitness program.

GCSE	OPTION/OPEN
HOW WILL I BE ASSESSED? Grade 9 -1	
Component 1: Fitness and Body Systems (36% - 1 hr 30 mins)	
Component 2: Health and Performance (24% - 1 hr 15 mins)	
Component 3: Practical Performance (30% - NEA)	
Component 4: Personal Exercise Programme/ PEP (10% - NEA)	
Assessment Style: Multiple-choice, short & longer answer questions.	
Extended Writing: Papers includes a 9-mark essay question assessing in-depth knowledge and analysis.	
Subject Focus: Strong emphasis on applying theoretical knowledge to practical sporting examples (AO2) and analyzing performance (AO3).	

SKILLS INVOLVED



CAREERS

Some careers that you could consider doing with PE include: sports science, PE teacher, physiotherapist, Professional sportsperson, sports coach/consultant, sports policy at local and national level, diet and fitness instructor or as a personal trainer.

Starting salaries for qualified physiotherapists range from £23,023 to £29,608. Senior physiotherapists can earn between £28,050 and £36,644.



HEAD OF DEPARTMENT: MS OSO

Outline of the course

Unit 1:

Criminal psychology: Definitions of crime, theories on what makes a criminal and how to reduce offending.

Development: Early brain formation, Piaget's theory of cognitive development and the theories on how we learn.

Psychological problems: How mental health changes over time, theories of schizophrenia and depression

Research methods: Hypotheses, variables, sampling methods and research design. This will involve planning an investigation.

Unit 2:

Social influence: Explanations and studies of conformity, obedience and bystander behaviour

Memory: Models of memory and processes including encoding, storage and retrieval.

Sleep and dreaming: Stages of sleep, Theories on why we dream and dream analysis. Research methods: Hypotheses, variables, sampling methods and research design. This will be applied to a novel source.

GCSE	OPTION/OPEN
HOW WILL I BE ASSESSED? Grades 9 - 1	
There are two exam papers.	
Each lasts 1 hour 30 minutes and each exam is worth 50% of the total GCSE grade.	
Each paper is set out as follows:	
Section A: multiple choice, short answer and extended writing (24 marks)	
Section B: multiple choice, short answer and extended writing (24marks)	
Section C: multiple choice, short answer and extended writing (24 marks)	
Section D: multiple choice, short answer and extended writing (18 marks)	

SKILLS INVOLVED



CAREERS

Jobs directly related to Psychology include:
 Clinical psychologist,
 Counselling psychologist,
 Educational psychologist,
 Forensic psychologist, Further education teacher, Health psychologist, High intensity therapist or an Occupational psychologist.

The average salary for a Clinical Psychologist in United Kingdom is £40,020.

GCSE SOCIOLOGY: WJEC Eduqas (8464)



HEAD OF DEPARTMENT: MS OSO

Outline of the course

The WJEC Eduqas GCSE in Sociology is designed to foster in learners an understanding and critical awareness of the social world around them. The GCSE focuses on the importance of social structure in explaining social issues.

Students will be encouraged to explore and debate contemporary social issues to enable them to challenge taken-for-granted assumptions and to question their everyday understanding of social phenomena.

By following this course, learners will develop their own sociological awareness through active engagement with the contemporary social world.

GCSE	OPTION/OPEN
HOW WILL I BE ASSESSED? Grade 9 –1	
<p>Component 1: Understanding Social Processes Written examination: 1 hour 45 minutes 50% of qualification (100 marks)</p> <p>Written assessment with a mix of short answer, structured questions and extended response questions, all compulsory.</p> <p>This component focuses on the themes of socialisation, identity and culture. Learners study the key concepts and processes of cultural transmission, including socialisation and the acquisition of identity, and develop these through detailed study of families and education.</p>	
<p>Component 2: Understanding Social Structures Written examination: 1 hour 45 minutes 50% of qualification (100 marks)</p> <p>Written assessment with a mix of short answer, structured questions and extended response questions, all compulsory</p> <p>The focus in this component is on social differentiation, power and stratification. This includes the theme of power, issues of social order and social control, studied through crime and deviance. Learners also study applied methods of sociological enquiry.</p>	

SKILLS INVOLVED



CAREERS

Many sociologists go into social work – community projects, charity work, welfare advisors and other areas of social services. Other careers are civil service, prison officers, journalists, police and teaching. A qualification in sociology will provide you with many key skills, including logical thinking, planning, research and negotiation .