



Queen Elizabeth High School  
Ysgol Uwchradd y Frenhines Elisabeth

# Learning Pathways

2026 - 2028



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## PREPARING FOR YEAR 10

### Dear Student

You have come to a very important point in your school career. Up until now you have studied a wide range of subjects, but the time spent on each has been limited. From now on you will be preparing for external examinations and assessments and in order to achieve the necessary standard, you will spend more time studying some subjects. Consequently, you will be taking fewer courses.

You will continue to study a broad based programme in accordance with the requirements of the New Curriculum but you will have a measure of choice. This is explained fully in this booklet. Making choices is part of a wider process in preparing to leave school and taking up further training or employment. Making choices is difficult, and you will be guided by your teachers in this process. *They will help you to choose the most appropriate LEARNING PATHWAY for your career needs and future goals, but also help you to make personalised choices that suit your ability, skills and give you the best chances of being successful.*

You must remember that you will ultimately be judged, not only on your academic achievements, but also on your punctuality, your regularity of attendance, your appearance and attitudes and your contribution to the life of the school and community. New forms of assessment will mean that you can be given credit for your achievements in voluntary work and involvement in the community, even through sport and leisure and part-time jobs. These are the vital personal and learning skills that employers, colleges and universities value and which help to set you apart from the rest.

Society is rightly becoming increasingly selective in its choice of candidates for higher and further education and for worthwhile employment, so it is important that you maintain good standards in everything you do in school. So it is up to you to ensure that when you leave school, your record is a good one.

**THIS HANDBOOK IS ESSENTIAL READING. YOU CANNOT AFFORD TO NEGLECT IT FOR THE SAKE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT PERSON IN THE WORLD – YOU!**

**Dear Parent,**

Please take some time to read through this booklet with your child and discuss the various options with them to assist in making these important decisions. Our aim is to provide every pupil with a curriculum package that is personalised to their individual needs, aptitudes, skills and aspirations. This will give them the best possible chance of succeeding at age 16 and enable them to move on to the next stage of their education and training, whether this involves school sixth form, college, work-based provider or employment. We want every young person to leave our school fully equipped to meet the challenges of the adult world.

Help and advice is always available from the school so please do not hesitate to contact us if you require any further information on individual subjects, appropriate combinations or any aspect of the process. Students will be asked to choose three subjects plus a 'reserve' subject by the end of January. We will then analyse and discuss the choices made and there may need to be adjustments made to students' choices or to the structure of the options menu itself before a final confirmation of options is made. Again, please contact us if you have concerns at any stage.

The main people to contact for advice are:

Mr Kristian Coe, Head of Learning Year 9

Mr Gareth Roberts, Assistant Head (Curriculum, Assessment & Examinations)

D Williams (Headteacher)

***January 2026***

## THE NEW CURRICULUM

As a student in Year 9, you are currently following the New Curriculum, which is compulsory for all students in Welsh schools. Next year, as you move into Year 10, the New Curriculum will continue, but it will be slightly different from the present one.

You are entering a period of education and training which extends from 14 to 19, during which you will be able to develop a *Learning Pathway* which meets your own individual needs to help you achieve your potential as an adult and eventually enter the world of work. All 14 to 19 year olds are entitled to a package of learning experiences which includes a balance of formal learning and a Learning Core for everyone, but introduces much wider choice and flexibility to help you to follow courses which you are good at, find interesting and relate to your future career choices. You will also receive a great deal of impartial personal support and advice to help you plan the Learning Pathway that is best for you.

There are some courses that all pupils in Years 10 and 11 must study.

These are:

- English Language and Literature
- Mathematics and Numeracy
- Science
- Welsh
- Skills Challenge Certificate
- Religious Education
- Physical Education (Not examined)
- Personal, Social and Health Education (Not examined)

In addition, you will be able to study other subjects from an **Options Menu**, which you will choose, following a discussion with your parents, teachers and careers staff.

The number of examinations and the level at which you will study will depend upon your attainment in each subject. Most people will take GCSE courses, either by the traditional route of end of course examinations and controlled assessments or by the *vocational* route, which involves a more practical approach to working for qualifications. Vocational courses can be studied at GCSE and other levels. You can mix GCSEs and vocational qualifications.

You will be offered a range of General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) courses which involve written examinations in each subject, and possibly an element of **controlled assessment**, which is marked by your teacher over the two years of the course and contributes to the final grade. Some subjects are *vocational* or work-related and comprise a series of units

which are assessed by course teachers and sometimes by a series of external tests carried out over the two year course. These include BTEC courses.

You will also be offered a number of Vocational Qualifications which are much more specifically work-related courses. In some of these, you will spend part of your time studying away from school at a college. We will arrange transport to and from college but the teaching and assessment of your work will be carried out by the college staff.

The table below shows how the qualifications fit into the framework of qualifications that are available to you from year 10.

Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
<b>GCSE grades D – G</b>	<b>GCSE grades A* – C</b>	<b>A levels</b>
<b>NVQ level 1</b>	<b>NVQ level 2</b>	<b>NVQ level 3</b>
<b>BTEC Level 1</b>	<b>BTEC Level 2</b>	<b>BTEC Level 3</b>
<b>Skills Challenge Certificate</b>	<b>Skills Challenge Certificate</b>	<b>Welsh Baccalaureate</b>
<b>Foundation level</b>	<b>National Level</b>	<b>Advanced Level</b>

## WHAT WILL MY CURRICULUM LOOK LIKE?

### A. Core Subjects

- Mathematics (Numeracy and Mathematics)
- English (English Language and English Literature)
- The Sciences Double Award (unless you take separate Sciences, see page 6)
- Welsh
- National/Foundation Skills Challenge Certificate
- Religious Education
- Physical Education (not examined)

**B. Option Subjects** There is a wide range of subjects on offer at Queen Elizabeth High School, allowing you to learn in a variety of styles which suit you best and to help you begin to think about the type of career pathway you might want to follow. However, the advice at this stage is to choose from a range of different types of subject in order to keep your options open for the future and specialise further when you join the sixth form or move to the next stage in your education. Some subjects are more appropriate for pupils at particular levels of ability because of the degree of challenge and the type of assessment. Therefore certain options will

only be available to you in relation to your current GLOBAL GRADE. All option subjects are taught for five lessons per fortnight. The subjects in the options menu are as follows:

Art and Design	BTEC Business
Computer Science	BTEC Hospitality and Catering
Drama	BTEC IT
French	BTEC Preparation for Public Services
Geography	BTEC Certificate in Personal Growth & Wellbeing
Health and Social Care and Child Care	Engineering (Level 2)
History	Hair & Beauty Studies (Level 2)
Music	IT User Skills in Open Systems & Enterprise (Level 2)
Physical Education	Tourism (Level 2)
Religious Studies	Vehicle Component Fitting (VRQ Level 2)
Spanish	
Triple Science (Biology, Chemistry & Physics)	

Please Note: This is just a list of the various subjects available. These are **not the Option Block** choices. You will be asked to select **three** subjects on the options form that will be sent to you, plus a 'reserve' choice. Please note the following rules:

1. Everyone follows the Double Award GCSE course in Science, but there is an option to do **separate GCSEs** in Chemistry, Physics and Biology for those who are good at Science and know that they are likely to go on and study sciences at A Level. This option will normally only be suitable *if you are currently in sets 1 or 2 for Science and have a Global Grades in the range A-C.*
2. Pupils with Global Grades C or above should choose a maximum of **two** non-GCSE courses.

**Please note that some courses may not eventually be available, if numbers choosing them are too low.**

### **C. The National/Foundation Skills Challenge Certificate**

This is compulsory for all students in Years 10 and 11. It forms a qualification in its own right and combines personal development skills with existing qualifications like GCSEs to make one wider award that is valued by employers and universities. The Skills Challenge Certificate gives broader experiences than traditional learning programmes and enables you to gain credit for participating in community work and work experience. **The Skills Challenge Certificate is worth the equivalent of one full GCSE.** You will be given more information on this separately.

## D. Physical Education

This is a general PE course and is not examined, although you can choose to study GCSE PE in addition to this if you wish. Again, it is compulsory for all students in two lessons per fortnight.

### AT WHAT LEVEL WILL I BE STUDYING?

This will be decided by your own performance in each individual subject. It is the school's policy that as many pupils as possible take public examinations and we would tend to give individuals the benefit of the doubt if there is some difficulty in deciding between GCSE and other courses; nevertheless, it would not be right to place anyone on a course or level which is clearly too hard and which is likely to lead to failure.

If you have any doubts about your ability and potential in a particular subject, consult your subject teachers or discuss the matter with your Year 9 Head of Learning, **Mr Kristian Coe**, **Mr Gareth Roberts** (Assistant Head) or any other member of the senior staff. However, there are three important points you must remember:

- There are limits to the number of students that can take certain subjects. In such cases, pupils with the best record of success in each subject will be given the first priority. Excellent attendance is important for practical subjects. **Don't Assume** that you will automatically follow the courses you choose now. A low mark in the examinations or a poor attitude to the subject now may disqualify you, especially if some groups are too large. For some subjects where places are limited, such as Vehicle Component Fitting or Hair & Beauty Studies, priority will be given to pupils with global grades C, D and E and good attendance. Equally, some subjects will only be available to pupils with global grades of A and B.
- The school retains the right to refuse certain choices and levels if these are considered to be inappropriate. In such cases, we will always consult with your parents.
- Some subjects may need to be taken out of the options at a later stage because not enough people have chosen them and the groups would be too small. When this happens, you will be allocated your 'reserve' choice or be asked to choose another subject.
- It is highly likely that there will be clashes of options for a minority of pupils. The option blocks are constructed using computer software to help create a best fit of subjects for the vast majority of pupils. Unfortunately some subject combinations will not be possible as they will be in the same option block and will be taught at the same time.

## WHEN DO I MAKE MY CHOICES?

You will be expected to make **subject choices by Friday 30<sup>th</sup> January 2026**. We hope that by this time you will have a clear idea of the courses best suited to your needs. However, if you still have any doubts, you should see Mr Roberts or Mr Coe as soon as possible.

All students in Year 9 will have a one-to-one interview with a member of staff to discuss the choices they have made, before the choices are made final.

Please remember the following:

- ***Never select a subject simply because you like your teacher, or, on the other hand, never reject a course because you dislike a teacher. It is quite likely that you will be taken by a different teacher in Year 10.***
- ***Don't choose a course simply to be with your friends. This can create problems later on. Even if you do take the same options as your friends, it is likely that you will be in a different group. Choose what is best for YOU – it is your life!***
- ***Think of what you may want to do after you leave school and get the right advice to make sure that your choices fit your needs. Most people have yet to decide fully at your age, so don't worry if you haven't a clue about what you want to do. Remember to choose subjects you are good at or need for your future career.***

## CAN I WITHDRAW FROM ANY COURSE?

No. All the courses are designed to last for two years and pupils cannot be allowed to withdraw early. However, if there are difficulties, you should talk to your Head of Learning, **Mr Coe or Mr Roberts**. We may allow you to make any changes up to ***the end of September at the very latest*** if you feel that you have made a mistake in your choices, as long as there is room in the subject group that you wish to move into.

## IS IT TOO EARLY TO THINK OF THE SIXTH FORM?

No, because your choices now will determine to some extent the courses available to you after your examinations at the end of year eleven. You will need to achieve decent grades to follow courses in the sixth form and we would expect at the very least, that you achieve five grade Cs at GCSE to go onto A level studies. You would also be expected to get a C grade in any individual subject you want to go on to study at A level. However, for some subjects, like Mathematics or the Sciences, you will need to achieve at least a grade B.

All pupils staying on in school for further study beyond Year 11 automatically become sixth formers. In the sixth form you will have the chance of following a broad range of courses including Advanced Subsidiary level in Year 12 and Advanced Level in Year 13. Some courses have a strong vocational bias and involve more coursework and fewer end of year examinations. There are, of course, other options available to you such as full time college courses, apprenticeships or employment and you will need to gather as much information and advice as you can over the next two years. You will receive plenty of careers advice and support during years 10 and 11.

More details of sixth form courses and other options will be given to you during Year 11.

## WHAT KIND OF CAREERS ADVICE WILL I HAVE?

During Years 10 and 11 you will have lessons of Careers Education Guidance (CEG) and Work Related Experience (WRE). These will be delivered within the Skills Challenge Certificate and through PSE.

A variety of careers information and visits from local and National employers will be provided. Queen Elizabeth High School has a dedicated full time Careers Wales advisor, **Mrs Christie Squires** whose job it is to guide and advise you in this area. In addition to this you will be offered the opportunity to use “Careers Wales On-line” as part of the careers guidance and education as well as the library of Specific Job related resources.

In Year 11 we prepare you for the world of work. Emphasis is given to the use of application forms, letters of application, curriculum vitae and you will also have a personal interview with our Careers Wales advisor to explore the next steps along your *Learning Pathway*.

## WHAT IS CONTROLLED ASSESSMENT?

Most GCSE subjects contain an element of coursework, or **Controlled Assessment** which counts towards the final grade. This can vary between 20% in subjects like Geography and History to 100% in subjects like Art and Design. You should read the individual subject information later in this booklet for information on coursework in specific subjects. Some of the vocational and BTEC courses have a much greater element of coursework rather than exams.

**Controlled Assessment** in GCSE subjects has to be completed in school under direct supervision and cannot be taken home. Controlled assessment helps to test skills that cannot be tested through a traditional examination. In choosing your subjects, you may wish to think about whether you are the sort of person who performs well in exam conditions or better in coursework type activities.

## **WHAT ABOUT THE EXAMS?**

Some GCSE subjects have exams at the end of the course but some subjects now have a system where you are able to sit parts of the exam at the end of Year 10. This makes it vitally important that you work hard for the full 2 years and not rely on cramming everything in at the end of the course. Some exams sat at the end of Year 10 can be re-sat in Year 11 to improve grades. Some subjects, like the BTEC and NVQ courses have fewer exams as they are assessed continuously over the two years of the course.

## **WHAT IS A BTEC?**

BTECs are work related qualifications suitable for a wide range of students, built to accommodate the needs of employers and allow progression onto A Level courses. These courses will provide a practical, real-world approach to learning alongside a theoretical background. BTECs can be taken as well as, or in place of GCSEs. A BTEC level 2 qualification is equivalent to a full GCSE at A\* to C. Some BTEC subjects enable you to achieve the equivalent of 2 GCSEs if you are prepared to work hard. You must remember that BTECs are not easier, just different. They include a lot of coursework that has to be completed to deadlines and to GCSE standard, but there are fewer exams to do.

## **WHAT ARE NVQs?**

These are other work related qualifications which are more practical and 'hands-on'. They are geared towards specific types of work such as hair & beauty, engineering or vehicle component fitting. Some of these courses involve studying out of school in college.

## COMPULSORY SUBJECTS

The following section offers some brief details of the compulsory courses in the option scheme. Further information can be obtained from your subject teacher.

### **1. ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE (DOUBLE AWARD)**

The GCSE English Language and Literature Double Award enables you to appreciate how language connects you to the world around you, to engage with a rich range of texts from different periods and by diverse writers, and to develop and apply your own use of language, through written and verbal communication.

#### **WHAT WILL I STUDY?**

Unit 1 CONTEXT AND MEANING – in Unit 1, you will study a range of poetry from the WJEC anthology, engaging with the concept of Context and Meaning.

Unit 2 BELONGING – in Unit 2, you will study a prose text, engaging with the concept of Belonging and themes of community, cynefin and citizenship.

Unit 3 INFLUENCE AND POWER – in Unit 3, you will study a range of non-fiction texts, engaging with the Influence and Power of writers, and how writers and speakers exert power and attempt to influence others.

Unit 4b MOTIVATIONS – in Unit 4b, you will have a choice to study a play or a prose text, engaging with the concept of Motivations of writers and characters, exploring reasons for attitudes, behaviours and beliefs.

Unit 5 CONTINUITY AND CHANGE – in Unit 5, you will study a Shakespeare play and pre-20th LC poetry. You will consider the concept of Continuity and Change, and how attitudes, ideas and language have changed over time.

Unit 6 CONNECTIONS – in Unit 6, you will study nonfiction texts, focusing on the concept of Connections.

You will explore links between different texts, relating texts to time, place, language, and relationships.

#### **HOW WILL I BE ASSESSED?**

Units 1, 4b and 6 are examined units, together worth 60% of your qualification. Each exam lasts 90 minutes and will consist of low-tariff extract-based questions, an extended essay response and a piece of creative fiction or non-fiction writing.

Units 2, 3 and 5 are non-examined assessments, together worth 40% of your qualification. Each unit will consist of two tasks, one that will assess your written response to the relevant text(s) and one that will assess your oracy skills.

## WHAT SKILLS WILL I DEVELOP?

GCSE English Language and Literature is a core subject and as such helps to develop a wide range of skills for your future:

- Communication Skills – expressing yourself through clear and creative use of language
- Reading Skills – reading, listening to and researching a range of texts, analysing meaning and scrutinising reliability
- Contextual Analysis Skills – engaging with the significance of purpose, audience, and contexts of speaking, reading and writing
- Literacy Skills – developing and applying an understanding of grammar and uses of vocabulary.

## CAREERS USING ‘ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE’

GCSE English Language and Literature is designed to equip you with a rich variety of skills for your future in education and the workplace. It is a widely valued qualification that provides a strong foundation for further study of literature, language, and a wide range of other academic subjects at A level and beyond. It can open the door to an array of career paths such as law, journalism, media production, advertising, marketing, teaching, politics, public relations, and publishing.

## ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE (SINGLE AWARD)

A minority of pupils will study for the Single Award option. These candidates must sit Unit 1 (30%), Unit 2 (20%), Unit 3 (20%) and Unit 4a (30%).

*Who to talk to: Mrs C. Cluroe or your English teacher.*

## **2. MATHEMATICS AND NUMERACY (GCSE) – DOUBLE AWARD**

This qualification will:

- provide opportunities for learners to develop a conceptual understanding of mathematical concepts and ideas.
- provide opportunities for learners to develop an understanding of a wide range of mathematical language and to demonstrate this communication using symbols.
- allow learners to demonstrate the use and application of mathematical and numerical skills fluently and accurately.
- support learners to develop and apply logical reasoning when justifying and proving relationships between concepts.
- provide opportunities for learners to independently demonstrate strategic competence when using mathematical ideas to solve problems.

The qualification is made up of three units. All learners will need to complete all units.

Unit 1 – Financial Mathematics and Other Applications of Numeracy

This will be assessed through a written examination making up 30% of the qualification.

Unit 2 – Non-calculator Mathematics

This will be assessed through a written examination making up 30% of the qualification.

Unit 3 – Calculator Mathematics

This will be assessed through a written examination making up 40% of the qualification.

There will be two tiers of entry: Higher and Foundation.

The grades available in each tier are:

Higher tier: A\*-D

Foundation tier: C-G

Learners will be assigned to an appropriate tier of entry based on the results of regular classroom tests throughout Year 7, 8 and 9. They will also be tested regularly throughout Year 10 to monitor their progress in their assigned tier.

Standard mathematical equipment and a scientific calculator are needed for this course.

***Who to talk to: Mrs. D Roulston-Jones or your Mathematics teacher.***

### **3. SCIENCE (GCSE)**

If you want to follow the Separate Science course, you will need to choose it as one of your three option choices.

- **The Sciences (Double Award) GCSE:** This course is taught at higher and foundation tier level and pupils are awarded two science GCSEs. The course is awarded in Year 11 and is assessed in year 10 and 11. This is the main Science course and the compulsory elements that will be followed by pupils who have not opted for separate sciences. You will study Biology, Chemistry and Physics. Teacher assessments from Year 9 will determine the set and course you are allocated to. All pupils will require a calculator (scientific for GCSE higher tiers).
- **Separate Sciences (Biology, Chemistry & Physics) GCSEs:** This is an option choice and can be taken by pupils with a high ability and keen interest in science subjects. It is taught at higher tier level and is recommended for pupils in sets 1/2 or those who want to continue one or more of these subjects onto Advanced level.

If you wish to pursue a career in science, engineering, medicine, veterinary science or industry then separate sciences need to be a consideration. This course builds upon the double award curriculum and extends knowledge in new areas such as seismic waves, microbiology and its applications, industrial chemical process, and understanding starlight. STEM and MAT activities are focused within the separate science classes in year 10 /11.

#### **Assessment:**

Each Science GCSE has practical assessment tasks which comprise 10% of the qualification and exams in year 10 and 11 for Physics, Chemistry & Biology. We follow the WJEC specifications for all of our GCSE science courses.

*Who to talk to: Mr A. Humphries or your Science teacher.*

### **4. CYMRAEG (TGAU) / WELSH (GCSE)**

Welsh is a core subject which is taught to all pupils up to GCSE level. It is a statutory requirement that all pupils study the Welsh language up to 16 years old. The Welsh Department is very active in promoting the importance of learning Welsh. With all the exciting developments in Wales today, people are becoming more and more aware of the importance of the language. It can be of an enormous advantage in a wide range of careers and jobs. We attempt to nurture our pupils' positive attitudes towards their Welshness through dynamic teaching, the use of technology and also by arranging a variety of extra-curricular activities to promote the language

outside the classroom. Studying GCSE Welsh will encourage pupils to: Develop their confidence when communicating effectively in Welsh. Develop skills to make practical use of the language in order to communicate effectively, usefully and appropriately in the bilingual society.

Pupils from Welsh Medium Primary Schools who have followed the KS3 First Language course will be entered for Welsh Language & Literature GCSE Single Award (a new qualification replacing Welsh First Language GCSE).

## **4.1 WELSH LANGUAGE & LITERATURE GCSE [SINGLE AWARD]**

### **(REPLACING WELSH FIRST LANGUAGE GCSE)**

Pupils studying Welsh as a First Language will complete four units of study:-

Unit 1 (30%) – Unit 1: Narrative

Studying a Welsh novel - Written Examination (1.5 hrs)

Marked by WJEC

Unit 2 (20%) – Unit 2: Identity

Studying a Welsh film - Non-examination oral assessment (15 mins)

Marked by the centre, moderated by WJEC

Unit 3 (20%) – Unit 3: Attitudes

Studying Welsh poetry - Two non-examination assessment tasks.

Task 1 - Written task (10%) Task 2 - Individual Presentation (10%)

Marked by the centre, moderated by WJEC

Unit 4a (30%) - Linguistic Connections

Written Examination (1.5 hrs) - Reading and Writing tasks

Marked by WJEC

## **4.2 CORE WELSH GCSE SECOND LANGUAGE**

### **(REPLACING WELSH 2ND LANGUAGE GCSE)**

The Welsh department also offers a GCSE in Core Welsh. This GCSE is available for candidates who have followed the Welsh Second Language programme of study at Key Stage 3 or candidates who have started to study Welsh Second Language after Key Stage 3.

**Unit 1: Responding to a Visual Stimulus**

Non-examination assessment: Pair (6-8 minutes) or Group (8-10 minutes)

25% of qualification (50 marks)

This unit will be marked by the Centre, and moderated by WJEC

**Unit 2: Responding to Various Sources**

Non-examination assessment: Pair (6-8 minutes) or Group (8-10 minutes)

25% of qualification (50 marks)

This unit will be marked by the Centre, and moderated by WJEC.

**Unit 3: Preparing for the Future**

Written examination: 1 hour 30 minutes

25% of qualification (100 marks)

**Unit 4: Literature and Creative**

Written examination: 1 hour 30 minutes

25% of qualification (100 marks)

Set texts - poetry and short stories

This is a linear qualification. The qualification is not tiered. All non-examination assessments must take place during the final year of the course.

**Future Prospects**

In Wales, many sectors need employees who are bilingual or have a basic knowledge of Welsh. Even the basic phrases make a real difference – jobs from receptionists to top level management need language skills. Today, businesses in Wales are required to provide a bilingual service. A knowledge of Welsh is a great asset in careers such as Health Care, Teaching, Child Care, Tourism, Law, Media or Government. The courses provided are also a secure foundation for those pupils who wish to continue with their studies in Welsh at AS and A Level.

***Who to talk to: Mr S. Mason or your Welsh teacher.***

## **5. RELIGION, VALUES AND ETHICS (RVE)**

Religion, Values and Ethics (RVE) sits within the Humanities Area of Learning and Experience and is mandatory for all pupils from 3 -16. It has evolved to reflect the ambitions and four purposes of the Curriculum for Wales.

Pupils will also study Equality & Diversity in the community, society and the workplace. This will lead to a NCFE Level 2 qualification which can be equivalent to 2 GCSE B grades.

***Who to talk to: Miss R. Davies or Mrs S.O'Kelly***

## **6. NATIONAL/FOUNDATION SKILLS CHALLENGE CERTIFICATE**

The National/Foundation Skills Challenge Certificate (SCC), has been introduced to learners at ages 14 to 19. Its format has been designed to help learners develop the skills they will need for higher education, employment and life.

The SCC has been universally adopted by all educational establishments in Wales, at Key Stage 4 and Key Stage 5. The full GCSE qualification, will offer flexibility and inclusivity to all learners and will be studied alongside the learner's traditional choices at GCSE level, or Vocational Qualifications. Three (3) Challenges will be completed over the two year period at Key Stage 4 (Year 10 and Year 11). The Enterprise Challenge is compulsory (25% of final grade) in Year 10, along with the Individual Project (50% of final grade) in Year 11. Pupils will also complete the Global Challenge in the summer term of Year 10 (25% of final grade).

The Skills Challenge Certificate will be rigorously assessed internally and externally. It will be graded (in line with all other GCSEs), ensuring that a candidate's hard work, effort, commitment and high performance are better rewarded and recognised by higher education and employers. The National Award will be graded as GCSE A\*- C and the Foundation as a Level 1 Pass\* and Level 1 Pass.

The SCC is primarily about the development, improvement and assessment of essential skills, such as Literacy and Numeracy, Digital Literacy, Critical Thinking, Problem Solving, Planning and Organisation, Creativity and Innovation and Personal Effectiveness.

Specifications and delivery models, are constantly internally refined and adjusted, to improve student learning. Our school will continue to liaise closely with the Welsh Government, Regional Consortia and the WJEC, to ensure that the delivery of the National Skills Challenge is consistent with other schools throughout Wales.

**Year 10** - Learners will engage and complete the Enterprise and Employability Challenge and Global Citizenship Challenge.

**Year 11** – Learners will engage in the Individual Project (50% of the course) and Global Citizenship Challenge.

The Individual Project and Skills Challenges will all be graded, A\* - C at National (Level 2) and Pass\*- Pass at Foundation (Level 1), to strengthen the qualification and to reward learners who achieve high standards. Completion of these THREE (3) sections will result in completion and achievement of the National/Foundation Skills Challenge Certificate.



**Who to talk to: Mr R. Evans (WB Skills Challenge Certificate Co-ordinator)**

## OPTION SUBJECTS

The following section offers some brief details of the courses available in the option scheme. Further information can be obtained from your subject teacher.

### **ART AND DESIGN (GCSE)**

This course is designed to inspire and develop creative thinking and making. Learners will improve their skills with a wide variety of materials and processes, explore and analyse the work of artists from a range of contextual and cultural sources, and develop ideas for their own work based on their individual artistic interests.

The coursework element, the Candidate Portfolio, is worth 60% of the overall marks, and takes four terms to produce. It usually begins with a set theme, and pupils are expected to develop their own ideas in response to this theme. The Externally Set Assignment is issued in January of Year 11, and takes the form of a self-defined six week project, culminating in a ten hour practical exam, during which time a final outcome is produced.

Pupils will be given the opportunity to specialise, if they choose, in any of the following disciplines: drawing and painting, printmaking, sculpture, ceramics, photography, animation, photomanipulation, fashion design, jewellery and costume, mixed media, graphic design, surface pattern and design for architecture. This usually happens towards the end of Year 10, when teachers are confident that pupils are on track, and are ready to work more independently. The range of options underlines the diversity of skills within the department, and indeed, possible career paths post GCSE.

Studying the work of artists is an essential element of the course, and pupils' understanding is enhanced through gallery visits. Although there is no actual written examination in Art, pupils will be expected to document their own creative process clearly as their work develops, and also to analyse the work of their chosen artists, demonstrating an understanding of context.

Time management is the key if pupils are to keep up with the volume of work that we expect.

***Who to talk to: your Art teacher.***

## **FIRST AWARD IN BUSINESS (BTEC LEVEL 1/2)**

This course allows you to study the world of business, giving you the opportunity to develop knowledge and technical skills in a practical learning environment. You will examine the roles and responsibilities of setting up a new business and its financial management. You will also develop key skills, such as analysis and review of key financial statements.

This qualification provides an engaging, practical and relevant introduction to the world of business. It encourages you to explore the range of business types and understand the factors that influence success through analysing business models. It enables you to develop, enhance and apply your research, practical, communication and technical skills through creating and presenting a business plan for a realistic business start-up in your local area.

You will study **three mandatory units**, covering key aspects that underpin all business and the development of business models:

- **Mandatory units**
- Unit 1: Introduction to Business
- Unit 2: Finance for Business (External Assessment)
- Unit 3: Enterprise in the Business World (Synoptic)

**You will choose a further unit from three optional units**, covering marketing, customer services, and business recruitment:

- **Optional units**
- Unit 4: Promoting a Brand
- Unit 5: Principles of Customer Service
- Unit 6: Recruitment, Selection and Employment.

### **Assessment:**

You will carry out tasks/assignments throughout the course. Your teacher will mark these, and you will receive feedback on your progress.

Unit 2 is externally assessed via a test set and marked by Pearson.

### **Developing employability skills**

The vast majority of employers require learners to have certain technical skills, knowledge and understanding to work in a particular sector, but they are also looking for employability skills to ensure that employees are effective in the workplace. Throughout this course, you will develop a range of employability skills, engage with employers and carry out work-related activities.

***Who to talk to: Miss K. Carter***

## **COMPUTER SCIENCE (GCSE)**

Computer science gives learners a real, in-depth understanding of how computer technology works as well as providing excellent preparation for higher study and employment in the field of Computer Science. It develops critical thinking, analysis and problem-solving skills through the study of computer programming. Computer technology continues to advance rapidly and the way that technology is consumed has also been changing at a fast pace over recent years. The growth in the use of mobile devices and web-related technologies has exploded, resulting in new challenges for employers and employees. For example, businesses today require an ever-increasing number of technologically-aware individuals. This GCSE specification encourages all to develop their interest in Computer Science by becoming creators of games, apps and systems, rather than simply using programs designed by others.

Overview of the subject content:

- Fundamentals of algorithms
- Programming
- Fundamentals of data representation
- Computer systems
- Fundamentals of computer networks
- Internet and communications
- Ethical, legal and environmental impacts of digital technology on wider society, including issues of privacy
- Aspects of software development

### **Assessment:**

Unit 1 (50%) Understanding Computer Science (Externally assessed digital exam). Sat in Year 10.

Unit 2 (50%) Computer Programming (Externally assessed on screen exam based on pre-release brief). Sat in Year 11.

The course is normally only available to pupils with a Global Grade A, with excellent Numeracy or Mathematical skills.

***Who to talk to: Mr A. Salter***

## **DESIGN TECHNOLOGY SUBJECTS**

DT gives you a choice of three areas based upon the view that Design and Technology is essentially a practical activity involving the combination of skills with knowledge and understanding in order to design and make quality products.

Pupils will have the opportunity to analyse and evaluate situations, design and make products and then evaluate their performance. The pupils will have the opportunity to work with a range of different materials and use the CAD/CAM machinery e.g. Laser cutter.

A fundamental part of the course is for the pupils to undertake a range of different practical projects in order to improve their manufacturing skills. Pupils will gain a better understanding of industrial practices and how different products are manufactured.

The different options that can be taken in Year 10 are:

- IT User Skills in Open Systems and Enterprise [Level 2 Certificate]
- Engineering (NVQ)

**They are outlined in greater detail below.**

### **IT USER SKILLS IN OPEN SYSTEMS AND ENTERPRISE**

This Level 2 qualification has a points score worth the equivalent of 2 GCSEs at B grade.

This course is varied and is offered to students in Years 10 and 11. Students will complete modules using Microsoft Office suite and CAD software such as Adobe Photoshop, Techsoft 2D Design, PTC Prodesktop and other CAD software.

Students will be expected to learn the basics of mechanical Computer Aided Design, Animation, Digital image manipulation and much more. At the end of their academic year, they will sit an online exam where their competency with the software will be tested.

The units covered in the syllabus include:-

- Desktop Publishing
- Design Software
- Additive Manufacture Design and Make
- Web site Software
- Developing Computer Games and Puzzles
- Drawing and planning – linked to Architecture
- Word processing
- Presentation software

The Level 1 qualification has a points score worth the equivalent of 2 GCSEs at D grade. The Level 2 qualification has a points score worth the equivalent of 2 x GCSE at B grade.

***Who to talk to: Miss A. Belton or Mr J. Killingsworth***

## **DIPLOMA IN ENGINEERING (NVQ)**

### **What will you learn?**

The NVQ Diploma in Practical Engineering Operations will introduce the essential skills and knowledge you will need to work in engineering. It will cover general skills like safety, efficient and effective working practices and technical communications. You will also produce work which will prove your ability in a particular area such as fabrication, welding and materials processing.

### **Transferable subject skills**

Throughout the course you will be taught how to safely and accurately undertake workshop skills along with essential theoretical work. The course will provide you with essential skills that are highly regarded for work in industry and apprenticeships. During the course, you will make a number of items with a high level of skill and accuracy.

### **Why choose Engineering?**

Skilled engineers are always in demand within the workplace. The course provides the basic skills required by employers for apprenticeships or college course entry requirements.

### **Who is Engineering suitable for?**

The subject is suitable for all pupils who enjoy working with metal and the specialist processes and machinery associated with this. The course is suited to those who enjoy learning new skills and enjoy making things.

The course is 100% coursework. This will be assessed from several units over the period of two years. This is a Level 2 qualification.

***Who to talk to: Mr K. Abell.***

## **DRAMA (GCSE)**

Drama is an enjoyable and varied course and there are many reasons for choosing Drama as an option. It is not just about wanting to become a famous actor, it provides you with essential life / social skills, such as:

- Communication
- Confidence
- Teamwork

- Problem-solving
- Organisation skills
- Leadership

These are skills that you need in all careers, but specifically Drama can help you to become a teacher, actor, lighting or sound technician, costume designer, media representative, director, set designer, public speaker.

You will take part in group work, extra rehearsals, independent research, reading a variety of plays, and directing. You also get the opportunity to visit theatres to watch live and professional performances, attend theatre workshops, and study the world of theatre as a whole, not just acting. You will need to understand that Drama is not a soft option, and that commitment, enthusiasm, passion, and hard work are essential for success and enjoyment.

### **Unit 1: Devising Theatre 40%**

- You create, write, develop, and perform a devised scene from a stimulus provided by the WJEC. The scene is linked to a style/practitioner of theatre. This is worked on as part of a group ranging from 2 to 5 people. If a pupil wishes to study technical theatre they are added to a group and provide LFX, SFX, costume, or set.
- You must also produce a reflective log of your devised work to back up the performance.

### **Unit 2: Performing from a Text 30%**

- You create, develop, and perform an extract from a pre-written script. The group ranges from 2 to 4 performers. If a pupil wishes to study technical theatre they are added to a group and provide LFX, SFX, costume, or set.

### **Unit 3: Interpreting Theatre 30% - Written Exam 2 hours**

- You are expected to answer questions about 1 set text and unseen texts. The questions will be from the point of view of an actor, director and technician

***Who to talk to: Miss S. Reynolds, Mr Williams or Mrs J. Jame***

## **GEOGRAPHY (GCSE)**

Should I take Geography?

- ✓ Did I enjoy the Geography lessons in years 7-9?
- ✓ Did I enjoy the teaching in years 7-9?
- ✓ Do I enjoy fieldwork?
- ✓ Do I enjoy a varied course?
- ✓ Do I enjoy finding out about the world in which I live?

If you have answered “yes” to any of these questions, then you should be thinking about doing Geography at GCSE level.

### **How is the course structured?**

Unit 1: Our Physical and Human World – Pupils will learn about rivers, coasts, migration and settlement change.

Unit 2: Developing Fieldwork Skills – Pupils will go out on fieldwork and then complete a fieldwork enquiry.

Unit 3: Our Dynamic and Diverse World – Pupils will learn about inequality, weather and climate and physical and human global challenges.

Unit 4: Sustainable Solutions - Pupils will complete a decision-making exercise.

60% of the grade comes from the Unit 1 and Unit 2 written exams and 40% from non-exam assessments (Unit 3: fieldwork enquiry and Unit 4: decision making exercise).

During the course you learn many invaluable skills including map and atlas work, drawing and interpreting graphs, being able to conclude and evaluate. Throughout the course, numeracy, literacy, and digital competency are developed.

At GCSE it is a great qualification and combines well with other subjects. We have students combining Geography with just about every subject you can think of! It links well with them all as it has so many facets and skills within it. The skills base you form from taking GCSE Geography makes you highly regarded by employers. Geography gives you a distinct advantage if you are thinking of a career in many things. This list is endless but includes cartography, architecture, civil service, landscape architecture, local government, marketing, town and country planning, teaching, transport, tourism, the armed services, civil aviation, estate agency, the leisure industry, nature conservancy, surveying, energy sector, flood protection.

Please see your Geography teacher for further information. It is recommended that you do not choose Geography if your Global Grade is below C.

**Who to talk to: Mrs M. Killingsworth or your Geography teacher.**

## **HISTORY (GCSE)**

Why choose history?

History is a well- recognised and respected academic subject, often looked upon favourably by employers. It is also a useful discipline for entry to higher education at university level and is welcomed by the most prestigious universities. They know that a person who has studied history successfully is able to:

- understand information
- analyse and evaluate information
- present clear, logical reports both written and orally
- understand concepts of change, cause and consequence.

These skills are very important requirements for many careers including the police force, doctors, lawyers, teachers, accountants, social workers, managers, the armed forces and numerous others.

From 2025 a brand-new restructured History GCSE is on offer. At GCSE you will study three key modules, each of which will be examined. There will also be a controlled assessment based on the changes in crime and punishment over a period of time.

### **Unit 1: Wales and the early Tudors c.1485-c.1547**

- The accession of Henry VII.
- The governance of Wales under Henry VII, 1485-1509.
- Henry VIII's early attempts to control Wales.
- The impact of the early Reformation on Wales.
- The Acts of Union 1536 and 1543.

### **Unit 2: The Black Death 1330 – 1360: a case study in medieval society.**

- How disease was able to spread in the fourteenth century.
- The spread of the Black Death.
- Attempts to limit the spread of disease.
- Reactions to the spread of disease.
- The legacy of the Black Death.

### **Unit 3: Changes in the US Society 1880-1980.**

- Race and immigration.
- The roaring '20s.
- The end of prosperity.

- Civil Rights c.1945-c.1968.
- Second-wave Feminism c.1960-c.1980.

Unit 4: A Changing Society: Changes in Crime and Punishment 1800-1900.

It is recommended that you don't choose History if your Global Grade is below C.

***Who to talk to: Mrs R. Williams (G.0.5) or your History teacher***

## **TOURISM (LEVEL 1/2)**

Should I take Tourism? Did you enjoy Geography and History in years 7-9 but found it too hard? Well this is the course for you.

How is the course structured?

**75% Coursework**

**25% Exam**

### **Unit 1: Customer Experience (Course Work)**

You will go on field work and collect data to understand how tourism and tourism services are affected by customer experience.

### **Unit 2: The Business of Tourism (Exam)**

You gain knowledge on different types of businesses and understand how business work and solving issues in tourism

### **Unit 3: Developing UK Tourism (Course Work)**

You gain understanding of destinations and why they appeal to different tourists.

**Career options- Travel Agent, Hotel Manager, Spa Manager, Tour Operator, Event & Conference Organiser, Tour Guide, Executive Chef, PR Manager, Leisure Activity Co-ordinator**

Field work is a key element of this course and throughout the 2 years you will visit local tourist attractions.

The following skills will be developed:

Map work, using graphs, numeracy, literacy, ICT skills, collecting data through fieldwork and current issues. This may be a good choice if you are also choosing Public Services or Hospitality and Catering.

***Who to talk to: Miss N. John or your Geography Teacher.***

## **HAIRDRESSING & BEAUTY (VTCT LEVEL 2)**

This qualification is the Level 2 Extended Award in Hair and Beauty skills (VRQ).

The main purpose of the qualification is to enable learners to develop hair and beauty skills, techniques and knowledge, which will prepare learners to progress to the next level of vocational learning. All the units in this qualification directly prepare learners for further study in the hair and beauty sector. All units in this qualification have been designed as a foundation for further study both in the hair and beauty sector. Learners will develop knowledge of the hair and beauty sector to allow progression into either hairdressing or beauty therapy.

**Mandatory unit** - Create an image based on a theme.

Optional units (minimum of 3 units) which **could include** basic nail art, basic skin care, basic blow dry and finishing hair, shampoo and treat hair, basic plait and twist hair, basic manicure, working in the hair and beauty industries, colour hair using semi-permanent colour.

Learners will work in a mixed ability setting, but will be interviewed prior to the start of the course to assess their interest and suitability for the course. This is a two-year course open to both male and female students who are interested in a career in Hair and Beauty.

The programme is a partnership between QEHS and Coleg Sir Gâr. Two hour practical activities are carried out in our own salon at the Carmarthen Leisure Centre.

To successfully achieve this qualification, learners will complete a range of practical assessments alongside assignments for each unit taken. On occasions, there will be homework set.

As spaces are limited on this course, priority will be given to pupils with Global Grade C, D and E. Excellent attendance is also a key factor on whether a pupil will be accepted on this course.

***Who to talk to: Mr G. Roberts***

## **HEALTH , SOCIAL AND CHILD CARE - GCSE**

This course will interest you if you are thinking of a career in health (including nursing), social care or early years services.

Students pursuing a course of study based on this specification will develop their knowledge and understanding of Health and Social Care in a vocational context. It is a suitable qualification for those who want a broad background in this area and also those who want to progress to higher education.

The course is split into three units:-

### **Unit 1:**

Health and Social Care, childcare in Wales in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. This is a written examination and worth **40%** of the final GCSE grade. Pupils will be entered for this written examination in the Summer of year 10.

This unit will enable candidates to gain knowledge and understanding of the main health, social care and children's service provision available to meet individuals' needs.

Candidates will learn about:

- Human growth, development and wellbeing across the life cycle
- Factors affecting growth, development and wellbeing across the life cycle
- Legislation and service provision across health and social care, and childcare
- Core principles, values and approaches when working with health and social care, and childcare
- The promotion and maintenance of health and wellbeing of individuals throughout their life.
- Indicators and tool to measure and support health and wellbeing
- Welsh language and culture in health and social care, and childcare.

**Unit 2:** Adult Health and Social Care. This is a piece of NEA coursework and is worth 30% of the final GCSE.

The pupils will have 12 hours in order to complete this piece of work.

Candidates will learn about:

- Types of care to meet individual needs and achieve positive outcomes
- How professionals work to meet needs in adult health and social care
- Public health and health promotion in adult health and social care
- Key conditions and illnesses in adulthood.

Unit 3 Childcare. This is a piece of NEA coursework and is worth 30% of the final GCSE.

The pupils will have 12 hours in order to complete this piece of work.

Candidates will learn about:

- Life stages, expected milestones and PILES
- Play and play work
- Types of care and intervention to meet children's needs and achieve positive outcomes

- How professionals work to meet children's needs
- Health promotion and early intervention in childcare
- Key conditions and illnesses in children.

***Who to talk to: Mrs S. Makinson***

## **BTEC LEVEL 1 /2 AWARD IN HOSPITALITY AND CATERING**

### **Overview**

The course aims to provide candidates with knowledge and experience of a range of culinary skills and different management careers within the Hospitality and Catering Industry. The level 1/2 Award in Hospitality and Catering can help you take your first steps towards a career in events, catering or accommodation. You'll learn essential skills such as planning and running an event, preparing and serving food and drink, and delivering first-class customer service. The course lasts 2 years in which the candidates complete 3 controlled assessments and 1 external examination.

### **Assessment**

The course consists of four units; this qualification is equivalent to 1 GCSE.

External examination 25%

Three Controlled assessments 25% each

### **Topics covered:**

- Introducing in the hospitality industry
- Working in the hospitality industry
- Food safety and health and safety in hospitality
- Planning, Preparing, cooking and finishing food.

The candidate will be awarded one of the following results on completion of the 2 years: **Level 1 Pass (D) Level 2 pass ( C ), Merit ( B ) Distinction ( A ) Distinction\* (A\*)**

### **Progression.**

The specification provides candidates with the foundation for them to be able to study the Hospitality A level course within the school.

The course also enables the candidate to follow careers in the following:-

### **Careers within the Hotel Industry:**

- Hotel Management

- Food & Beverage Manager
- Banqueting Manager
- Head Chef
- Human Resources Manager

**Careers within the Catering Industry:**

- Chefs- Head Chef, Sous Chef, Commis Chef
- Catering Manager
- Hospitality Manager- Organising Private Functions & Private Dining Events
- Restaurant Manager
- Running your own Business

***Who to talk to: Mrs E. Simpson or your Technology teacher.***

## **BTEC LEVEL 1 /2 FIRST AWARD IN INFORMATION AND CREATIVE TECHNOLOGY (BTEC IT)**

**Awarding Body:** Edexcel

**Qualification:** BTEC level 1/2

This option, which will count for one GCSE at the end of the course, is an exciting way to develop your ICT skills through practical activities. This course has a 25% on screen Theory Exam and a vocational approach to study and is most suited to students that prefer a combination of written assessment and practical assignment based work, but will give you excellent experience in working with and developing projects.

**You will learn:**

1. To investigate online services and online communication.
2. To investigate components of the internet and how digital devices exchange and store information.
3. To investigate issues with operating online.
4. The Online World looking at the components and uses of online technology.
5. Using a range of ICT software applications and evaluating their use.
6. The role of different software in organisations and their applications.

**This subject is most suitable for students who:**

- Prefer doing written exams in addition to practical coursework assignments.
- Want hands on experience in creating databases and digital online portfolios.
- Want to learn about analogue and digital data and programming concepts.
- Enjoy working on projects to meet a deadline.

**Assessment method:**

Core Units Unit 1 - Online World (external assessment via online test – 1 hour)  
Unit 3 - A Digital Portfolio Optional  
A further two internally assessed units will also be completed.

**Skills acquired**

- Developing key skills in numeracy, communication and ICT.
- Identify and understand the use of computer hardware.
- Develop problem solving skills by applying ICT to real life situations.
- Developing web development planning and creating skills.
- Organising work and presenting it in a structured online folder.

***Who to talk to: Miss K. Granville.***

## **MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES (FRENCH & SPANISH) GCSE**

Languages are playing an increasingly important role across all sectors. In many careers, employers and universities are looking for people who have a GCSE in a foreign language. However, even if you are not planning to work or travel abroad, a GCSE in MFL is sought after by businesses in Wales and the UK. The GCSE course is well adapted to the demands of modern life. You will learn language required in every day situations as well as more complex ways of expressing yourselves. The course content requires you to put the language to real use as well as allowing you to gain an understanding of the culture and life in a different country. The skills acquired through studying a language at GCSE will be useful if you ever need to learn a different language in the future.

**Course Content**

The majority of content will build on what you have learnt with us in Years 7, 8 and 9. The language assessed will focus on real-life contexts and will fall under the themes of Leisure and Wellbeing, Travel and Study and Work. Tasks could include a role play in a shop where you need to make a complaint, comprehension questions on a French/Spanish newspaper article or on a French/Spanish podcast or a writing task describing what you like doing in your free time. Opportunities will be given for you to practise and be assessed in your Speaking, Listening, Reading and Writing skills. Throughout the course, there is a huge emphasis on improving your communication skills in different contexts which is useful for any employer or any career pathway.

**Assessment:**

Speaking 30%: This will include reading aloud, a role play, a presentation/discussion and a conversation. This will be assessed through an assessment in Year 11.

Reading and Writing 15%: An assessment in year 11.

Listening 20%: An examination at the end of Year 11.

Reading and Writing 35%: An examination at the end of Year 11.

***Who to talk to: Mrs E. Ward or Mrs G.Hughes.***

## **LEVEL 2 CERTIFICATE IN VEHICLE COMPONENT FITTING (VRQ)**

This is a two-year course open to both male and female students who are interested in learning about the maintenance of motor vehicles. The qualification has a predominately practical approach to assessment.

Learners will develop their knowledge and skills of:

- health, safety and good housekeeping in the automotive environment;
- tools, equipment and materials for vehicle maintenance;
- removal and fitting of basic light vehicle mechanical, electrical and trim components and non-permanently fixed vehicle body panels;
- spark ignition engine systems;
- and suspension systems.

Learners must demonstrate their selected units' learning outcomes by following and achieving the required assessment components. The assessments for this qualification combine various assessment styles/methodologies, including written, practical and online tests, in order to suit the subject of the units.

The programme is a partnership between the school and Coleg Sir Gâr (Pibwrlwyd Campus). The course involves attending college for one morning or one afternoon session per week. As spaces are limited, priority will be given to pupils with global grade C or lower.

***Who to talk to: Mr G. Roberts.***

## **MUSIC (GCSE)**

Do you think that GCSE music is not for you, that it's just learning about classical styles, or that only people who play in the orchestra can take it?

If so, you are not alone. But the truth is that GCSE music is a really good option choice for all sorts of pupils, especially if you:

- Enjoy listening to any kind of music.
- Are interested in learning more about different styles of music.
- Would like to learn how to create your own music.
- Want to improve your existing instrumental/vocal skills OR learn how to play an instrument/sing (pupils taking GCSE music receive free peripatetic tuition in school as part of the course).
- Are looking for a creative subject with a significant emphasis on practical work rather than written examinations.

The GCSE music course continues to develop the 3 skills of performing, composing and appraising that you will already be familiar with from your lessons in years 7-9.

### **PERFORMING 32.5% (non-exam assessment)**

- Sing or play on your own or as part of a group for 4-6 minutes, a minimum of 2 pieces.

### **COMPOSING 32.5% (non-exam assessment)**

- Create 2 original pieces lasting between 3-6 minutes in total.
- Write a Reflective Log linked to one of the compositions.

### **APPRaising 35% (digital examination)**

- 1½ hour digital exam, with a mixture of short and more extended answers in response to 2 set works and unseen extracts.

GCSE music is a good choice for anyone considering studying music or performing arts at AS/A Level and university. It can also be beneficial in a whole host of different careers within the performing arts industry, including session musician, composer, conductor, radio broadcaster, arts administration, events organiser, music therapist, teacher, music journalist, stage manager, musical theatre performer, sound engineer, recording studio technician. GCSE music also develops and promotes wider skills and attributes that are highly regarded by many

employers and that are particularly beneficial on UCAS applications, including communication, presentation skills, team working, leadership, focus, refinement, creativity and self-confidence.

***Who to talk to: Mrs R. Honour or your Music teacher.***

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND HEALTH(GCSE)**

The GCSE PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND HEALTH will enable you to engage in a practical course, designed to encourage you to be inspired, motivated and challenged by the subject and allow you to make informed decisions about further learning opportunities and career pathways. You will acquire the knowledge, understanding, skills and values to develop and maintain your performance in sports or physical activities and understand the benefits to health, fitness and well-being.

**WHAT WILL I STUDY?** The specification in Physical Education and Health will enable you to make connections between theory and practice so that you are able to apply your understanding of the factors that underpin health and wellbeing, sports and physical activity and use this knowledge to improve performance.

### **How I will be assessed:**

#### **UNIT 1: PRINCIPLES OF PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND HEALTH**

- Digital examination: 1 hour 30 minutes
- Marked by WJEC • 40% of qualification • 80 marks
- Questions requiring objective response, quick responses, short and extended answers.

#### **UNIT 2: PERFORMANCE AND PERSONAL TRAINING**

Non-examination assessment: internally assessed by your teacher and externally moderated by a WJEC visiting moderator

- 60% qualification

- 120 marks Practical non-examination assessment:
- Perform in **one sport or physical activity** from the approved list.
- Perform in **a second sport or physical activity or provide coaching in a sport or physical activity** from the approved list.
- Plan, implement and evaluate a personal training activity over 8-10 weeks for a sport or physical activity from the approved list.

**WHAT SKILLS WILL I DEVELOP?** By studying Physical Education and Health you will be able to:

- perform effectively in different sports and physical activities by developing skills and techniques and selecting and using tactics, strategies and/or compositional ideas
- analyse physical performance and select appropriate strategies and interventions for development and improvement
- think critically and reflectively about your own and others performance
- develop knowledge and understanding of health, wellbeing, sport and physical activity and the links between them
- understand the factors that impact on levels of activity and the relationship with physical, social and emotional health and wellbeing
- understand the socio-cultural influences on participation, and contemporary developments within sport and physical activity

**CAREERS IN PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND HEALTH** This qualification provides an excellent foundation for the study of WJEC AS and A Level Physical Education or WJEC Level 3 Sport. It will also provide a satisfying and worthwhile course of study if you choose not to progress further. Importantly, studying GCSE Physical Education and Health will develop many transferable skills including communication, performance and presentation skills, teamwork, leadership, focus, refinement and self-confidence. The career possibilities that come from studying Physical Education and Health are extensive, but a few are listed here: Fitness Instructor, Personal Trainer, PE Teacher, University Lecturer, Physiotherapist, Sports Massage Therapist, Leisure and Recreation Manager, Sports Business Manager, Sports

Administrator, Sports Coach, Sports Development Officer, Sports Journalist, Sports Commentator, Sports Medicine, Professional Sports Performer, Sports Scientist, Sports Nutritionist, Professional Sports Official/ Referee, Event Coordinator.

***Who to talk to: Mr C. Thomas or your PE teacher.***

## **LEVEL 2 PREPARATION FOR PUBLIC SERVICES (BTEC)**

The BTEC Level 2 Certificate in Preparation for Public Services is a course for students that have a personal drive and motivation to join the United Kingdom's public services such as Police, Fire, Ambulance, Prison Service, Border Force, Armed Forces (Army, Royal Air Force, Royal Navy and Royal Marines), Local Councils, Voluntary Sector and charity organisations.

Our strong links with the Public Services means you will benefit from a large selection of industry based employees coming to visit the college, to speak to you and give you the opportunity to undertake job related practical activities. This is an exciting, interesting and challenging course that will allow you to gain knowledge of the work undertaken by the Public Services and develop some skills needed by them such as communication, team working, leadership, problem solving and ICT.

Through this vocational course you gain transferable skills that are valued by any employer increasing your employability opportunities in a wide range of industries as well as developing your physical and mental strength. There are four units where you will undertake a variety of theory and practical activities related to the Public Services; unit 1 Public Services Skills, unit 2 Employment, unit 3 Health & Fitness, and unit 6 Expedition & Land Navigation.

This BTEC course is 100% coursework and is assessed through a number of practical and theory based assessments. You will achieve the equivalent of two GCSE's after completing this course.

***Who to talk to: Mr G. Price or Mr R. Evans***

## **RELIGIOUS STUDIES (GCSE) FULL COURSE**

Religious Studies provides an opportunity for students to learn about the diversity of beliefs and cultures that exist in our world, understanding the need for tolerance, resilience and empathy in a diverse and pluralistic modern world.

Along with developing their curiosity about the purpose of life, students will be given the opportunity to develop and understand religious and non-religious beliefs, values, teachings, practices and philosophical convictions. Students will explore ways in which religious and non-religious ethical and philosophical convictions have influenced human experience and society. Students will be given the opportunity to reflect on their own values, beliefs and perspectives and those of others.

It is a highly versatile course, and many students have progressed onto the following careers: Teaching, Medicine, Social Work, Nursing, Public Services Sector, Law, to name just a few. The subject enables students to improve their literacy skills through discussions and debates, reading and writing. Pupils are given the opportunity to consider arguments for and against modern philosophical and ethical issues such as, sexual ethics, medical ethics, environmentalism, Human Rights, War, life after death and the death penalty.

Unit 1- Religious and non-religious beliefs and practices.

Written exam 1 hour 30 – 30% of qualification.

In this unit you will explore key diverse religious and non-religious beliefs, practices and worldviews. You will develop an understanding of key elements of religious studies to enable conceptual understanding of the nature of belief. You will explore sources of authority and ethical systems that shape religious and non-religious perspectives towards morality. You will understand how beliefs and teachings shape religious and non-religious views on identity, belonging, meaning, purpose, and belief in life after death you will study the core beliefs and teachings of Christianity, Islam and non-religious beliefs. Topics will include the Nature of belief and why some people do or do not believe in God and what their beliefs are.

You will study the Christian and Muslims views on God, the beliefs and teachings of Jesus and Prophet Muhammad and Christian and Muslims belief in faith in action.

You will study the beliefs and teachings about life after death for Christians, Muslims and non-believers, including funeral rites.

Unit 2 – Religious and Relationships.

Non-examination assessment -20% of qualification

In this unit you will research information relating to religion and relationships and analyse findings. You will look at how the changing landscape of religious beliefs and societal attitudes relating to relationships, and changes in relevant UK law where appropriate (maybe take this bit out?), interconnect. You will gain an insight into religious and non-religious perspectives and experiences relating to relationships and analyse and evaluate the societal and ethical implications of findings. You will be required to reflect on personal values and beliefs relating to relationships.

You will focus on one of two themes set annually by WJEC. For example, Marriage, adultery, divorce and remarriage, artificial contraception and natural family planning, cohabitation and

sex before and outside marriage and same-sex relationships, civil partnerships and same-sex marriage.

### Unit 3 – Roles, Rights and Responsibilities

Written examination – 30 % of qualification

In this unit, you will develop an understanding of the different perspectives and interpretations about what makes us human, caring for the world, animal rights, freedom of religious expression and medical ethics. You will explore sources of authority and ethical systems that shape religious and non-religious perspectives towards what makes us human, caring for the world, animal rights, freedom of religious expression and medical ethics. You will study each topic from a Christian, Muslim and non-religious' believers' perspective.

### Unit 4 – Religion and Human Rights

Non-examination assessment - 20% of qualification

In this unit, you will consider an ethical and/or moral human rights issue from religious and non-religious viewpoints. You will develop an awareness of your own rights, the rights of others and develop a commitment to justice. You will apply your knowledge and understanding in the context of one of the following key themes which will be released by the WJEC: Freedom of religion and belief, Commitment to justice and Crime and punishment,

***Who to talk to: Miss R. Davies***

## **BTEC LEVEL 2 CERTIFICATE IN PERSONAL GROWTH AND WELLBEING**

The new Level 2 BTEC Certificate in 'Personal Growth & Well-being' will cover the following Units in far greater detail:

- Healthy Lifestyles
- Emotional Health & Well-being
- Social Health & Well-being.
- Maintaining Sexual health & Well-being
- Investigating Personal Identity
- Developing Resilient behaviours.

The aim is for pupils to develop transferable life skills such as

- Communication
- Working with others

- Problem-solving
- Managing & presenting information
- Self-management

All units are internally assessed and externally verified. The qualification is designed around practical skills and tasks that place an emphasis on learner's responses to everyday life situations & scenarios.

***Who to talk to: Mrs R. Axon***

## WHAT NEXT?

Talk to your parents and teachers and decide what is the best combination of subjects for you. With the help of your Parents/Carers complete the online form that you will be given by choosing your 3 options in order of preference as well as a reserve choice. The reserve choice is important because it is quite likely that you will be unable to do all three of your first choices as they may clash on the timetable or because a subject has been taken out of the options due lack of pupil interest.

Submit the form with your choices by **Friday 30<sup>th</sup> January**. If you submit your form later than this date, there is a strong chance that the options you chose will already be full.

You will then be called to a meeting with a member of staff to discuss your options and hopefully, to finalise them. You will still be able to make changes at the end of the process, but these changes will only be possible if there is room in the subjects/classes that you want to move into.

Later in the year your parents will receive confirmation of your choices and will be asked to acknowledge receipt of this confirmation.