Manor High School guidance for Students, Parents and Carers

Options Booklet

2026/2027 Version

Contents

Welcome

Dear Students and Families

The options process marks an important milestone as students begin to shape their academic journey for Years 10 and 11. It is an exciting opportunity to explore subjects that reflect individual interests, strengths and future aspirations. We encourage you to read this booklet carefully, as the choices made at this stage will play a key role in the next phase of education.

Students should take time to reflect on the subjects they enjoy and feel motivated by. Enjoyment and success often go hand in hand; choosing subjects that genuinely interest you can make learning more rewarding and support strong outcomes.

Alongside personal interests, it is also important to consider future ambitions. Think about how the courses on offer may support potential career pathways or further education, and how they can help build a solid foundation for the future.

When reviewing options, please also consider the methods of assessment. Different courses are assessed in different ways, and the structure of a course can have a significant impact on your learning experience. Some students thrive in exam-based subjects, while others perform best in courses with non-exam assessments such as coursework or projects completed over time.

Please remember that staffing may change due to timetabling, so choices should be based on the subject itself rather than a particular teacher. We strongly encourage students to speak with their teachers to gain a clear understanding of each course and to seek advice where needed. Our staff are always happy to support you through this process.

Mr Karavadra oversees the options process. Following the Options Evening, where you will have the opportunity to gather further information from subject teachers, students will be asked to submit their preferences. Formal confirmation of option choices will be issued later in the academic year.

This booklet is designed to support you in making informed and confident decisions about your future. We wish you every success as you take this important step forward.

Yours sincerely

Mr Greiff

Headteacher

What is the Options process?

Subjects are organised into option blocks, which are shared with students and parents before choices are made. Students are asked to select one first-choice subject and one reserve-choice subject and to record these on the options choices form. Completed forms should then be returned to the school by the stated deadline.

While we make every effort to accommodate students' preferences, there may be occasions when we need to speak with a student to review their choices. This may be necessary if:

- a subject has too few or too many students opting for it
- staffing or timetable arrangements change
- student's choices limit future pathways
- selected subjects are not considered the most appropriate match for a student's strengths, interests, or prior attainment.

Any such discussions will be supportive and will involve careful consideration of the student's needs and aspirations.

Timeline	Event
January 2026	Options Evening
February 2026	Options choice form open
February 2026	Final Deadline for choices to be made
Summer Term	Confirmation to student

Please note, it will not be possible for students to change their options once they are finalised.

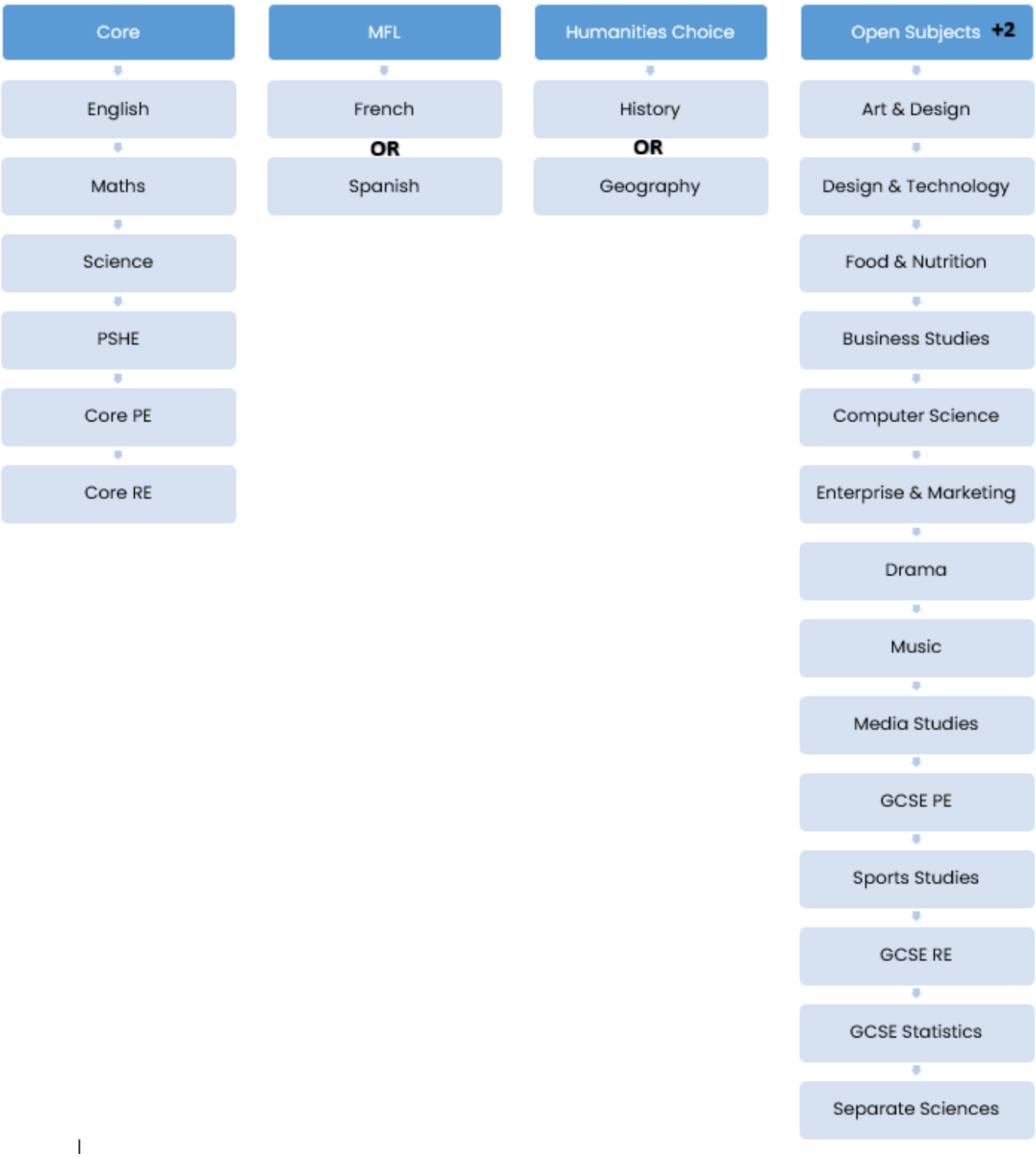
Students who return their Options form after deadline may find their choices restricted.

What will I study in KS4?

All students follow a core curriculum at Key Stage 4, which includes English Language and English Literature, Mathematics, Science, PSHE, Core Physical Education, and Core Religious Education.

Students will also study either Geography or History and will continue with French or Spanish course they began in Year 8.

In addition, students will choose two further subjects from the open options list to complete their KS4 programme of study.



English Baccalaureate (EBACC)

The English Baccalaureate (EBacc) is a set of GCSE subjects designed to keep students' options open for further study and a wide range of future careers. These subjects are highly valued by universities and employers and are essential for many degree courses. Research shows that GCSE subject choices can significantly influence future opportunities, with studies indicating that students who follow the EBacc are more likely to continue in full-time education and achieve stronger outcomes in English and mathematics. The EBacc includes English Language and Literature, Mathematics, the Sciences, Geography or History, and a modern foreign language. Students do not sit an additional examination to achieve the EBacc.

Making the right choices

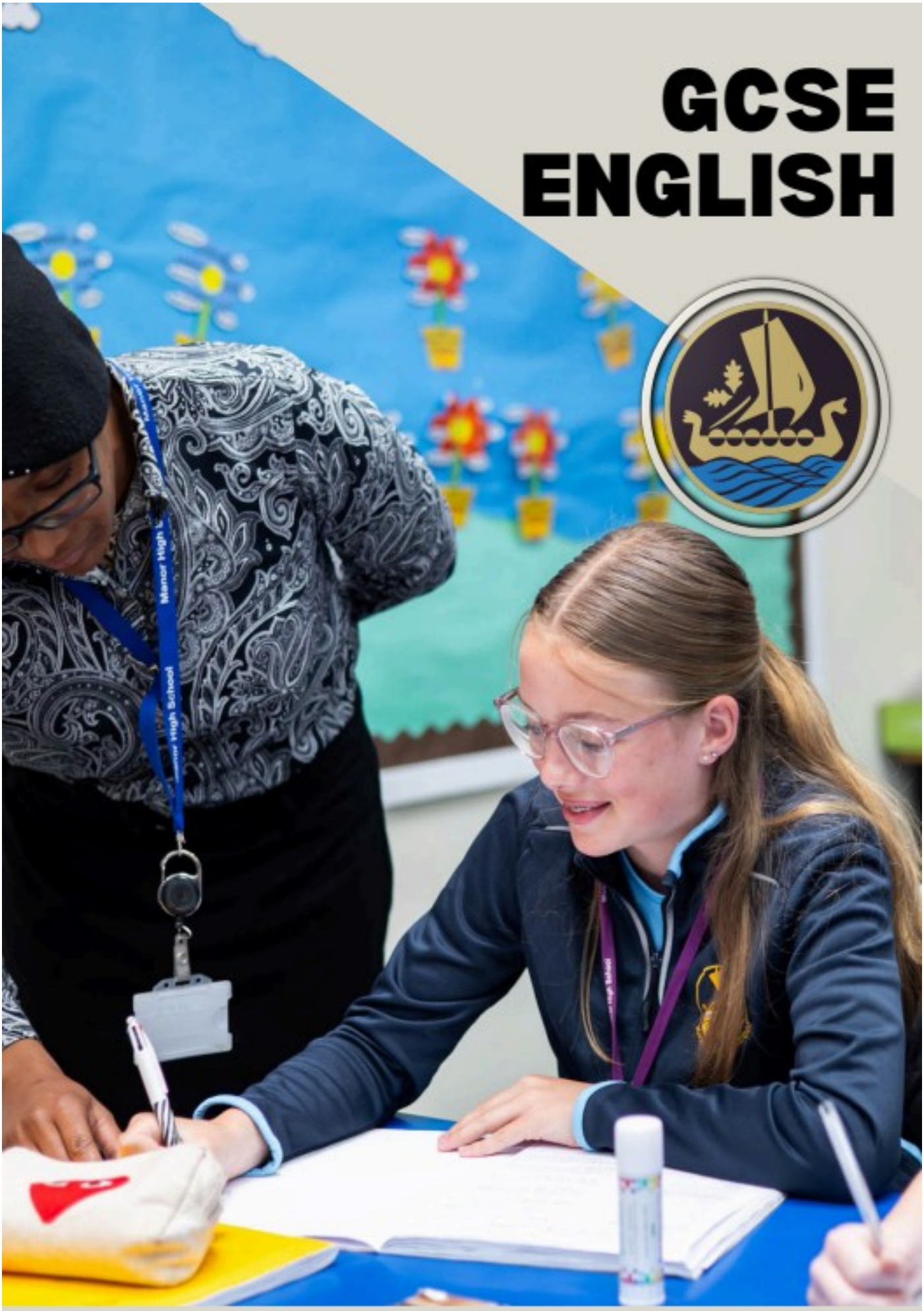
Choosing GCSE options is an important step, as these subjects will be studied throughout Key Stage 4 and can influence future education and career pathways. It is important that choices are made carefully, based on each student's interests, strengths, and long-term goals. Students are encouraged to take time to understand what each subject involves, including the skills required and how the course is assessed. Parents and carers play an important role in supporting these discussions at home, alongside guidance from teachers who know the student well. The table below outlines helpful and unhelpful reasons for choosing a subject.

Helpful reasons	Less helpful reasons
• It links to a possible future career or pathway	• Friends are choosing the subject
• It suits the student's skills and strengths	• Wanting to be in the same class as friends
• The student enjoys the subject and is motivated to succeed	• Believing the course will be easy
• Course content and assessment have been researched	• Choice based on a current teacher
• Advice has been sought from subject teachers or tutors	• A sibling previously studied the subject
• Builds on knowledge and skills developed so far	• Choosing solely because a parent prefers it

Who can I ask for help?

Your tutor	knows you well and will have an idea of what might be good choices for you in school for the next 2-3 years
Your Head of Year	will have a good understanding of the options choices available and could be a good sounding board if you are really struggling
Your Family Member	know you best and will have a good idea of what you like and dislike and whether an option is good for you
Curriculum Leaders	CL's have an overview of all of the options subjects in their faculty – they can help point you in the right direction

GCSE ENGLISH



GCSE English Literature (AQA)

What will I learn on this course?

On the AQA English Literature course, you will study a range of classic and modern texts, including a Shakespeare play, a 19th-century novel, a modern drama or prose text, and a selection of poetry. You will learn how to analyse themes, characters, context and writers' methods in detail. The course helps you develop critical thinking, interpretive skills and the ability to form well-supported arguments about literary texts.

What sort of skills do I need to be successful on this course?

To succeed, you need strong reading comprehension skills and the ability to explore layers of meaning in complex texts. You should be able to write clearly and analytically, using quotations to support your ideas. An interest in stories, characters and historical context will help, as will the ability to express your opinions confidently. Good revision habits and memory skills are also useful because you need to learn key quotations and understand each text thoroughly.

How is the course assessed and graded?

AQA English Literature is assessed through **two written exam papers**, with **no coursework**.

- **Paper 1: Shakespeare and the 19th-century novel** You will write essays on a Shakespeare play and a 19th-century novel studied in class.

- **Paper 2: Modern Texts and Poetry** You will answer questions on a modern drama/prose text, a cluster of anthology poems, and unseen poetry.

Grades are awarded on the **9–1 scale**, with 9 being the highest. Marks are based on your ability to analyse, interpret and write clearly under timed conditions.

What careers is this good for?

English Literature is valued in careers that require analytical thinking, creativity and strong communication. It is especially useful for roles such as teaching, journalism, law, publishing, media, marketing, writing, editing, public relations and the arts. It also develops transferable skills—critical thinking, empathy, reasoning and effective communication—which are valuable in almost any profession.

Who can I speak to for more information?

Mrs Goddard

GCSE English Language (AQA)

What will I learn on this course?

On the AQA English Language course, you will learn how writers use language and structure to influence readers. You will explore a range of fiction and non-fiction texts, developing the ability to analyse meaning, tone and viewpoint. You will also learn how to write effectively for different purposes and audiences, including descriptive, narrative and transactional writing. In addition, you will practise comparing texts, evaluating writers' methods and expressing your ideas clearly.

What sort of skills do I need to be successful on this course?

To succeed, you need strong reading skills, including the ability to identify key information, infer meaning and analyse language closely. You should also be able to write accurately, using a wide vocabulary and varied sentence structures. Time-management skills are important for completing exam tasks efficiently, and you should be confident in expressing your own ideas and interpretations. A willingness to read widely and engage critically with texts will help you perform at a high level.

How is the course assessed and graded?

The AQA English Language GCSE is assessed through **two exam papers**, each worth 50% of the final grade.

- **Paper 1: Explorations in Creative Reading and Writing** *Section A*: Analysis of a fiction extract *Section B*: Descriptive or narrative writing

- **Paper 2: Writers' Viewpoints and Perspectives** *Section A*: Reading and comparing non-fiction texts *Section B*: Transactional writing (e.g., letter, article, speech)

There is **no coursework**. Grades are awarded on the 9–1 scale, with 9 being the highest.

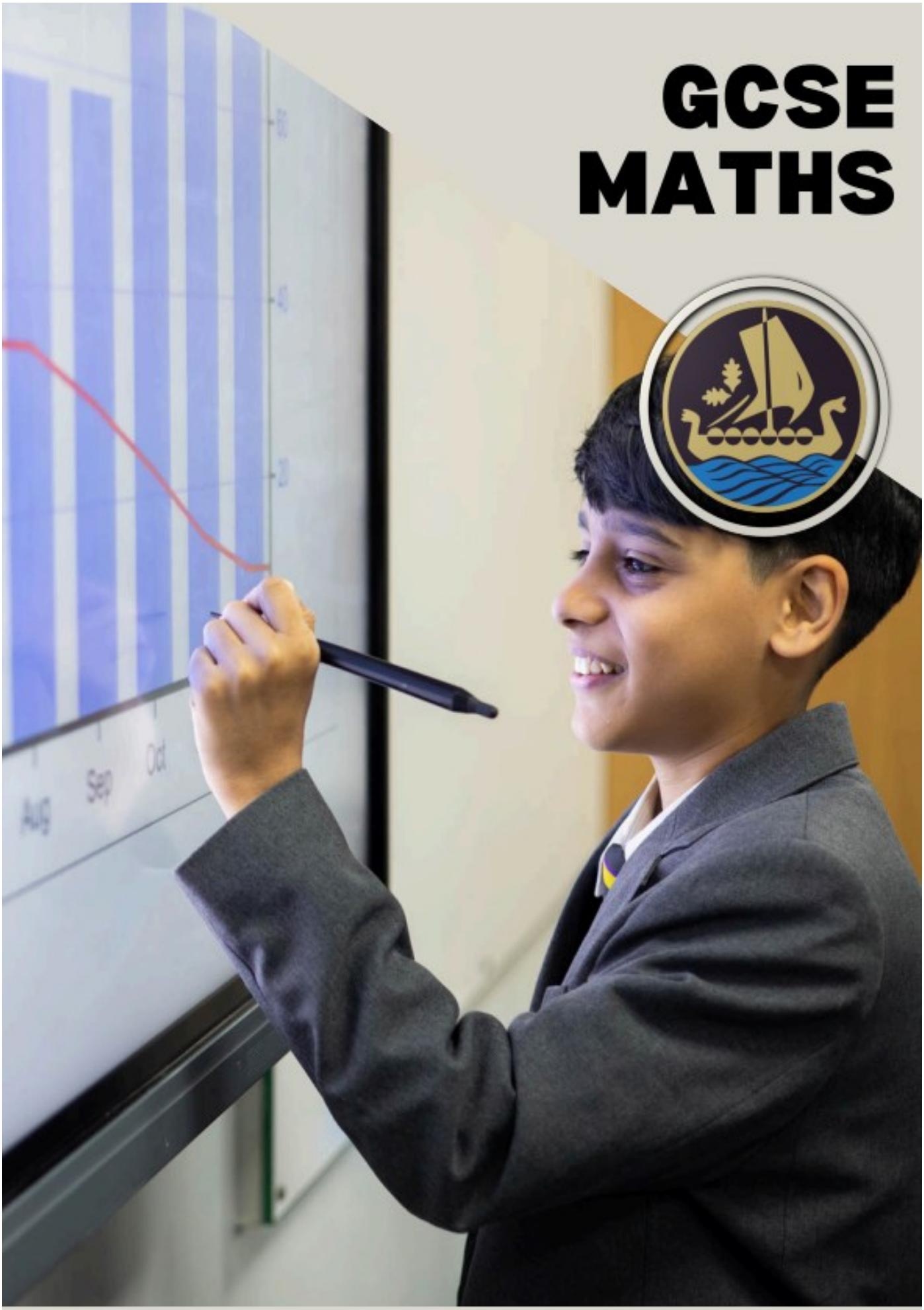
What careers is this good for?

English Language opens pathways into a wide range of careers. It is particularly valuable for roles that require communication, critical thinking and analytical skills. Common careers include journalism, media, marketing, teaching, publishing, law, public relations and business. It also supports careers in the creative industries, such as writing, editing and content creation. Because strong communication skills are essential in nearly every profession, this qualification is widely respected.

Who can I speak to for more information?

Mrs Goddard

Notes


GCSE
MATHS
Aug
Sep
Oct

GCSE Maths (AQA)

What will I learn on this course?

On the AQA Maths course, you will learn essential mathematical skills used in everyday life, further study and many careers. This includes number work, algebra, geometry, ratio and proportion, probability and statistics. You will learn how to solve problems logically, interpret data, work with formulas and apply mathematical reasoning to real-life and abstract situations. The course strengthens both your calculation skills and your ability to think methodically.

What sort of skills do I need to be successful on this course?

To succeed in AQA Maths, you need good logical thinking, attention to detail and the ability to work accurately under pressure. You should be confident with basic arithmetic and willing to practise regularly, as repetition helps build fluency. Problem-solving skills, resilience and the ability to break larger problems into smaller steps are also important. A positive attitude towards challenge is helpful, as maths often requires patience and persistence.

How is the course assessed and graded?

AQA Maths is assessed through **three exam papers**, each worth one third of the final grade:

- **Paper 1:** Non-calculator
- **Paper 2:** Calculator
- **Paper 3:** Calculator

All papers test a mixture of number, algebra, geometry, ratio, statistics and probability.
You will be entered for either **Foundation (grades 1–5)** or **Higher (grades 4–9)**, depending on your ability and teacher recommendation. There is **no coursework**; your grade is based entirely on the exams.

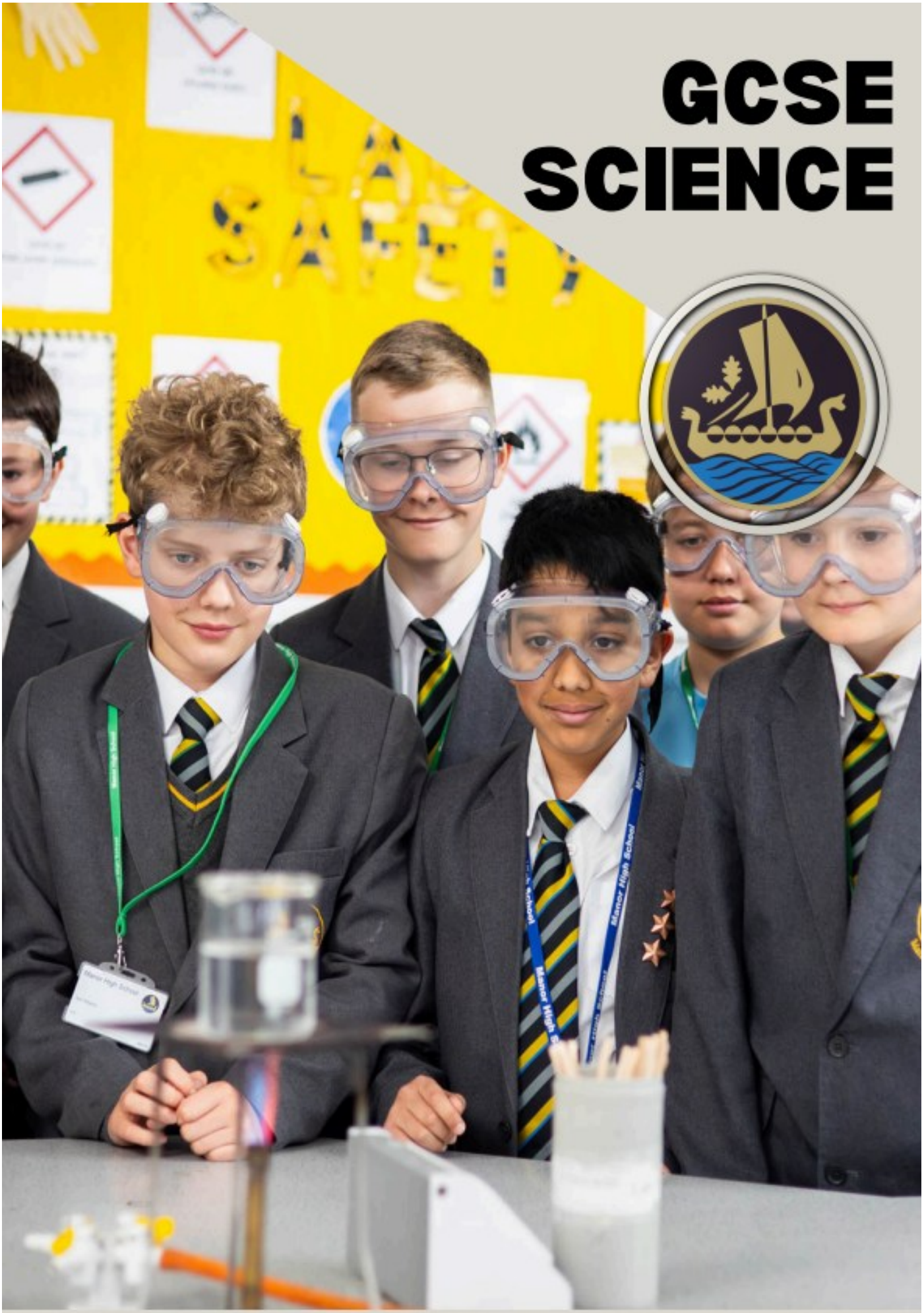
What careers is this good for?

Maths is one of the most widely useful GCSEs and opens doors to many career paths. It is especially important for fields like engineering, finance, accounting, computing, architecture, business, science, healthcare, data analysis and construction. Strong mathematical skills are also valued in apprenticeships, technical roles and university courses. Because Maths develops problem-solving, logical thinking and analytical skills, it is a foundation for almost any future pathway.

Who can I speak to for more information?

Mr Patel

GCSE SCIENCE



GCSE Combined Science (AQA)

What will I learn on this course?

On the AQA Combined Science course, you will study **Biology, Chemistry and Physics**, gaining a broad understanding of how the natural world works.
Topics include cells, health, genetics, chemical reactions, the periodic table, energy, electricity, forces, waves and the environment.
You will learn how to think scientifically, interpret data, carry out practical experiments and apply scientific ideas to real-world situations. The course gives you a strong foundation across all three sciences without specialising in just one.

What sort of skills do I need to be successful on this course?

To succeed, you should be able to think logically, understand key scientific concepts and work carefully in practical experiments. Good numeracy skills help, especially when analysing data or interpreting graphs. You also need to be able to learn and recall scientific facts, explain ideas clearly and apply knowledge to unfamiliar scenarios. Being organised and willing to revise regularly is important because the content is detailed and covers three subjects.

How is the course assessed and graded?

AQA Combined Science is assessed through six exam papers—two for each science:

- **Biology Paper 1 & Paper 2**
- **Chemistry Paper 1 & Paper 2**
- **Physics Paper 1 & Paper 2**

Each paper is 1 hour 15 minutes and worth an equal share of the grade.
There is no coursework, but you will complete required practicals in lessons that may be tested in the exams.
You receive **two GCSE grades** (e.g., 5–5, 6–5, 7–7) based on your overall performance across all papers.

What careers is this good for?

Combined Science provides a strong base for many future career paths, especially those involving science, technology, engineering or healthcare. It supports routes into:

- Nursing, midwifery and healthcare roles
- Engineering and technical careers
- Laboratory work and research
- Environmental science and conservation
- Dentistry, veterinary care (with further study)
- Computer science and data-related jobs
- Apprenticeships in STEM fields

Who can I speak to for more information?

Miss Thompson

GCSE Separate Sciences (AQA)

What will I learn on this course?

On the AQA Triple Science course, you will study **three separate GCSEs**: Biology, Chemistry and Physics.
Each subject goes into more depth than Combined Science. You will learn:

Biology: cells, organisation, bioenergetics, infection, homeostasis, inheritance , ecology
Chemistry: atomic structure , bonding, quantitative chemistry, chemical changes, energy transfer, rates of reaction, chemical analysis, organic chemistry, earth atmosphere and resources
Physics: energy, electricity, particles, radiation , forces, waves, space physics,

What sort of skills do I need to be successful on this course?

To succeed in Triple Science, you should be confident with science content and willing to study in depth. Useful skills include:

- **Good numeracy**, especially for physics and chemistry calculations
- **Logical thinking** and the ability to apply knowledge to new situations
- **Confidence with practical work** and interpreting experimental results
- **An interest in how things work**, both in living systems and physical processes.

How is the course assessed and graded?

Triple Science is assessed through **six exam papers**—two for each separate GCSE:

- **Biology Paper 1 & Paper 2**
- **Chemistry Paper 1 & Paper 2**
- **Physics Paper 1 & Paper 2**

Each paper is **1 hour 45 minutes**, and each pair of papers gives you **one GCSE grade**.
This means you receive **three separate GCSE grades**: one for Biology, one for Chemistry, and one for Physics. There is no course work is 100% assessed through examinations.

What careers is this good for?

Triple Science is ideal for students thinking about science-related careers. It is particularly useful for careers such as:

- Medicine, nursing, dentistry and other medical fields
- Engineering (electrical, mechanical, chemical, aerospace, civil)
- Forensics and laboratory science
- Environmental science and conservation
- Computer science, robotics and data science
- Research and technology development

Triple Science is highly respected and opens many pathways in STEM careers as well as apprenticeships and university routes.

Who can I speak to for more information?

Miss Thompson

Statutory Subjects

Core PE

What will I learn on this course?

You will learn how to improve your **fitness, health, teamwork, and practical skills** through a range of sports and physical activities. You'll take part in games, individual sports, fitness training, and sometimes outdoor activities.

How is the course assessed and graded?

Core PE is **not assessed and does not lead to a GCSE grade**. Your progress is measured through participation, effort, teamwork, and improvement.

Core RE

What will I learn on this course?

You will learn about **different religions, beliefs, values, and worldviews**, and how they influence people's choices and behaviour. You'll explore topics like morality, equality, human rights, and ethical issues in modern society.

How is the course assessed and graded?

Core RE is **not assessed and does not lead to a GCSE grade**. Your progress is based on participation, discussion, and completing class activities.

Core PSHE

What will I learn on this course?

You will learn about **health and wellbeing, careers and future pathways, relationships, life skills, financial literacy, and how to make safe and informed choices**. Topics may include mental health, finance, citizenship, employability, and personal development.

How is the course assessed and graded?

Core PHSE is **not assessed and does not lead to a GCSE grade**. Your progress is shown through participation, completing class activities, and engaging with discussions.

GCSE HUMANITIES

GCSE Geography (OCR)

What will I learn on this course?

On the OCR Geography course, you will learn about the **physical and human processes** that shape our planet. Topics include rivers, coasts, weather and climate, ecosystems, population, urbanisation, economic development, and globalisation. You will also study **geographical skills** such as map reading, data interpretation, fieldwork techniques and using GIS (Geographic Information Systems). The course helps you understand the interaction between people and the environment and prepares you to analyse real-world geographical issues.

What sort of skills do I need to be successful on this course?

To succeed, you should enjoy **investigating the world** and asking questions about how and why things happen. Skills that help include:

- **Data analysis** – interpreting graphs, charts and maps
- **Writing clearly** – explaining ideas with evidence
- **Problem-solving** – thinking about solutions to geographical issues
- **Numeracy** – calculating percentages, averages and scales
- **Curiosity and observation** – especially for fieldwork tasks

Good organisation and revision habits will also help, as the course covers a wide variety of topics.

How is the course assessed and graded?

OCR GCSE Geography is assessed through **three written exam papers**, covering physical, human, and geographical skills content:

- **Paper 1:** Our Natural World (physical geography)
- **Paper 2:** People and Society (human geography)
- **Paper 3:** Geographical Applications (fieldwork, skills and decision-making)

There is **no coursework**, but fieldwork is a required part of the course and questions on your fieldwork experience appear in exams. Grades are awarded on the **9–1 scale**.

What careers is this good for?

Geography develops skills in research, analysis, problem-solving and communication, making it useful for many careers. Examples include:

- Environmental management and conservation
- Travel, tourism and hospitality
- Emergency management and sustainability consultancy
- Teaching and academia

It is also an excellent foundation for A-Level Geography.

Who can I speak to for more information?

Mr Sloneczny

GCSE History (OCR)

What will I learn on this course?

British history — The People's Health (c.1250–present): how health, disease, medical knowledge and public health changed over centuries: from medieval times to modern Britain — epidemics, public health reforms, how society responded.

Local history (History Around Us): study of a historic site chosen by your school (or centre), its significance, what physical remains and sources tell us about past events and how the local environment has changed over time.

World history — Living under Nazi Rule (1933–1945): life in Germany under the Nazis — dictatorship, ideology, impact on civilians, war, persecution and historical consequences.

What sort of skills do I need to be successful on this course?

Because of the variety in topics — from medieval conquest to modern world war, local history to long-term health changes — you'll need:

- Strong **source analysis** skills — especially for depth studies where you'll interpret evidence and evaluate different viewpoints (e.g. sources about Norman Conquest or Nazi Germany).
- **Essay and extended-answer skills** for explaining cause & consequence, change & continuity, and giving balanced judgements.
- **Ability to make connections** across different periods and contexts (e.g. comparing public health in medieval vs modern times; comparing government control in Nazi Germany vs other societies).
- Good **revision habits**: lots of content across many eras, so being organized and regularly reviewing is important.

How is the course assessed and graded?

- **Paper 1 (J411/11):** British Thematic + British Depth → 40% of total GCSE. ***(Elizabethans+ People's Health)***
- **Paper 2 (J411/21):** History Around Us ***(local site study)*** → 20% of total GCSE.
- **Paper 3 (J411/39):** World Period Study + World Depth Study → 40% of total GCSE. ***(Making of America+ Nazi Germany)***

There is no coursework. Your final grade is based on combined performance across these papers.

What careers is this good for?

Because this version covers a broad range of historical periods and contexts — from medieval Britain to modern America and Nazi Germany, plus local history — it gives a strong foundation for many routes:

- **Further History / Humanities study:** A-levels or further study in History, Politics, Sociology.
- **Research, journalism or media:** analysing sources, writing essays, weighing interpretations.
- **Law, politics, public service or civil society:** understanding historical context, societal change.

Who can I speak to for more information?

Mr Parpworth

Notes


GCSE
FRENCH &
SPANISH

GCSE Spanish (Edexcel)

What will I learn on this course?

On the Edexcel Spanish course, you will learn to communicate confidently in Spanish across a wide range of everyday topics. You will build skills in **listening, speaking, reading and writing**, expand your vocabulary and develop a solid understanding of grammar.
You will learn how to talk about yourself, your family, relationships, hobbies, school life, holidays, future plans, work, global issues and Spanish-speaking cultures. By the end of the course, you'll be able to understand spoken and written Spanish more easily and express your own ideas clearly.

What sort of skills do I need to be successful on this course?

To succeed, you should enjoy learning languages and be willing to practise regularly. Strong listening skills, good memory for vocabulary and a careful approach to grammar are helpful.
Confidence in speaking is useful but not essential—improvement comes with practice. Staying organised will help you learn new words and revise effectively. Being open-minded, patient and willing to try speaking even when you're unsure will help you make rapid progress.

How is the course assessed and graded?

Edexcel GCSE Spanish is assessed through **four exam papers**, each worth 25%:

- **Listening:** Understanding spoken Spanish in various situations
- **Speaking:** A role-play, a picture-based discussion and a general conversation
- **Reading:** Comprehension questions and translation from Spanish to English
- **Writing:** Short and long writing tasks plus translation into Spanish

You will be entered for either **Foundation (grades 1–5)** or **Higher (grades 4–9)**.
There is **no coursework**; your final grade depends entirely on the exams.

What careers is this good for?

Spanish is the **second most spoken language in the world**, so it opens up many opportunities in global careers such as:

- International business and finance
- Tourism and travel
- Translation and interpreting
- Teaching and education
- Media, journalism and communications
- Government, diplomacy and international relations
- Hospitality, airlines and customer service

Language skills also develop confidence, cultural awareness and communication—qualities valued in almost every job.

Who can I speak to for more information?

Mrs Rodriguez

GCSE French (Edexcel)

What will I learn on this course?

On the Edexcel French course, you will learn to understand and communicate confidently in French across a variety of real-life topics. You will develop skills in **listening, speaking, reading and writing**, while building a strong vocabulary and understanding of key grammar.

You will learn to talk about yourself, your family, hobbies, school, holidays, future plans, global issues and French-speaking culture. The course also helps you understand how the language works so you can create your own sentences, not just memorise phrases.

What sort of skills do I need to be successful on this course?

To succeed in French, you need good listening skills, an interest in languages and a willingness to practise regularly. You should be comfortable memorising vocabulary and using grammar rules. Confidence helps, especially in speaking, but you don't need to be perfect—progress comes from practising little and often. Good organisation skills are important for revising vocab and keeping notes tidy. A positive attitude towards trying new phrases and making mistakes will help you improve much

How is the course assessed and graded?

Edexcel GCSE French is assessed through **four exam papers**, each worth 25% of the final grade:

- **Listening:** Understanding spoken French in different contexts
- **Speaking:** A role-play, a picture-based discussion and a general conversation
- **Reading:** Comprehension tasks and translation from French to English
- **Writing:** Writing tasks of different lengths and translation into French

You will be entered for either **Foundation (grades 1–5)** or **Higher (grades 4–9)**.

What careers is this good for?

French is extremely valuable in many career paths, especially ones involving communication and travel. It supports roles in:

- International business and marketing
- Tourism and hospitality
- Translation and interpreting
- Teaching and education
- Journalism and media
- Government, diplomacy and the civil service
- Transport, aviation and travel industries

It also strengthens communication, memory, confidence and cultural awareness—skills valued in almost every profession.

Who can I speak to for more information?

Mrs Rodriguez

Notes

OPTION SUBJECTS

GCSE Art & Design (AQA)

What will I learn on this course?

GCSE Fine Art helps you develop **creative ideas** and express them through **personal and meaningful artwork**. You will explore themes inspired by artists, cultures, nature, objects and your own experiences. You will work with a wide range of **materials, techniques and processes**, which may include:

- Drawing and painting
- Printmaking
- Mixed media
- Photography and digital processes

You will use a **sketchbook** to record ideas, practise techniques, research artists and develop your work. You will learn how to **refine and improve your work**, developing confidence, independence and a personal artistic style.

What sort of skills do I need to be successful on this course?

To succeed in Fine Art, you need creativity, imagination and a willingness to experiment. Strong observational skills and the ability to work independently are helpful. You don't need to be "perfect" at drawing to do well, but you should enjoy exploring visual ideas and trying new techniques.
Good organisation is important, especially keeping your sketchbook up to date. Patience and attention to detail will also help you refine and improve your work over time.

How is the course assessed and graded?

AQA Fine Art is assessed through **two components**:

- **Component 1: Portfolio (60%)** Artwork completed during the course. This includes your sketchbooks, experiments, artist research and final pieces.
- **Component 2: Externally Set Assignment (40%)** A project based on a theme given by AQA. You develop preparation work over several weeks and then complete a final piece during a supervised 10-hour period.

You are graded on how well you develop ideas, experiment with media, record your processes and produce a meaningful and well-realised final outcome. Grades follow the **9–1 scale**.

What careers is this good for?

Fine Art builds creativity, problem-solving, presentation and visual communication skills—useful in many careers. It directly supports creative pathways such as:

- Graphic design, illustration and animation
- Architecture and interior design
- Fashion and textile design
- Photography, film and media
- Fine art, sculpture and gallery work
- Art therapy and teaching

It is also valued in fields such as marketing, product design, advertising and creative digital industries. Any career that benefits from imagination and visual thinking can be supported by this course.

Who can I speak to for more information?

Mrs Watson

GCSE Design & Technology (AQA)

What will I learn on this course?

On the AQA Design and Technology course, you will learn how to **design, make, and evaluate products** using a variety of materials and technologies. Key topics include:

- **Designing skills:** researching, generating ideas, modelling, sketching, CAD (computer-aided design)
- **Making skills:** working with wood, metal, plastics, textiles, and electronic components
- **Materials and components:** properties, uses, and sustainability considerations
- **Manufacturing and production:** techniques, processes, and quality control
- **Evaluation and testing:** assessing your own work and improving designs

What sort of skills do I need to be successful on this course?

To succeed, you should be:

- **Confident in using sketch up and building 3D models on the iPad**
- **Creative and imaginative** – generating innovative solutions and designs
- **Practical and hands-on** – confident using tools and materials safely
- **Organised and methodical** – planning projects and meeting deadlines

How is the course assessed and graded?

AQA Design and Technology is assessed through **two components**:

- **Component 1: Written Exam (50%)** – 2 hours, covering core technical principles, specialist knowledge, designing, and making principles.
- **Component 2: Non-examined Assessment (NEA) / Practical Project (50%)** – designing, making, and evaluating a final product.

Grades are awarded on the **9–1 scale**, based on performance in both the exam and project.

What careers is this good for?

Design and Technology develops practical, creative, and problem-solving skills that are valuable in many careers, such as:Product design and industrial design

- Architecture and interior design
- Manufacturing and production
- Furniture or fashion design
- Graphic design and CAD-based industries

It also provides a strong foundation for **A-Level Design and Technology**, **Product design** and engineering courses, or vocational qualifications.

Who can I speak to for more information?

Mr Parker

GCSE Food & Nutrition (AQA)

What will I learn on this course?

On the AQA Food Preparation and Nutrition course, you will learn about **practical cooking skills** alongside scientific and nutritional knowledge. Key topics include:

- **Nutrition and diet:** understanding nutrients, balanced diets, and the needs of different groups
- **Food science:** chemical and physical properties of ingredients, cooking processes, and food safety
- **Food preparation and cooking skills:** practical techniques, knife skills, cooking methods, and recipe development
- **Food provenance and sustainability:** seasonal foods, environmental impact, and ethical sourcing
- **Menu planning and evaluation:** designing, cooking, and assessing dishes for health, cost, and sensory quality

You will gain hands-on experience in preparing a variety of dishes and learn to make informed choices about food and nutrition.

What sort of skills do I need to be successful on this course?

To succeed, you should be:

- **Organised and methodical** – planning recipes and practical work carefully
- **Practical and hands-on** – confident using kitchen equipment safely
- **Creative** – experimenting with flavours, textures, and presentation
- **Analytical** – evaluating your dishes and understanding how ingredients work together
- **Time management skills** – completing practical tasks within set time limits

Attention to detail and good hygiene practices are essential for safe and successful cooking.

How is the course assessed and graded?

AQA Food Preparation and Nutrition is assessed through:

- **Written Exam (50%)** – 1 hour 45 minutes, covering nutrition, food science, food safety, and the wider food context
- **Non-Exam Assessment (NEA) / Practical Project (50%)** –

Task 1: Food investigation (30 marks) Students' understanding of the working characteristics, functional and chemical properties of ingredients. Practical investigations are a compulsory element of this NEA task.

Task 2: Food preparation assessment (70 marks) planning, preparing, cooking, and evaluating 3 dishes demonstrating different skills and techniques

Grades are awarded on the **9–1 scale**, based on both theory and practical work.

What careers is this good for?

This course is valuable for careers in food, health, and hospitality, such as:

- Chef or professional cook
- Nutritionist or dietitian
- Food scientist or technologist
- Hospitality and catering management
- Food product development and quality control
- Teaching food and nutrition
- Health promotion and wellness industries

Who can I speak to for more information?

Miss Hackfath

GCSE Business Studies (OCR)

What will I learn on this course?

On the OCR Business Studies course, you will learn how businesses are set up, how they operate and what makes them successful. You'll study key areas such as marketing, finance, human resources, production, business planning and ownership styles.
You will learn how businesses make decisions, how they respond to changing markets, and how external factors—like the economy, competition or government—affect them. The course also develops your ability to analyse real businesses and apply business concepts to real-world situations.

What sort of skills do I need to be successful on this course?

To do well in Business Studies, you need good problem-solving skills and the ability to think logically along with sound mathematical understanding .
Being able to write well-structured answers, explain your ideas and apply theory to examples is important. Curiosity about how companies work—whether small start-ups or big global brands—will also help. Good organisation and revision habits are useful, as the course covers a wide range of topics.

How is the course assessed and graded?

OCR GCSE Business is assessed through **two written exams**, each worth 50%:

- **Business 1: Business activity, marketing and people**
- **Business 2: Operations, finance and influences on business**

Both exams include multiple-choice questions, short answers and longer, extended-response questions where you apply knowledge to business scenarios.
You will receive a grade on the **9–1 scale**, with no coursework or controlled assessment.

What careers is this good for?

Business Studies gives you a strong foundation for many careers because it develops skills in communication, problem-solving, decision-making and data analysis. It is especially useful for careers in:

- Business management
- Marketing and advertising
- Finance, accounting and banking
- Human resources
- Entrepreneurship and running your own business
- Retail, sales and customer service
- Project management
- Economics and business consultancy

It also supports further study in subjects like A-Level Business, Economics or Accounting, as well as business-related apprenticeships.

Who can I speak to for more information?

Mrs Muchira

GCSE Computer Science (OCR)

What will I learn on this course?

On the OCR Computer Science course, you will learn how computers work, how software is developed, and how data is processed. Topics include:

- **Programming** – writing code using Python, creating algorithms, and problem-solving with computational thinking.
- **Computer systems** – hardware, software, memory, storage, networks, and cybersecurity.
- **Data and databases** – how data is stored, retrieved, and manipulated.
- **Impact of technology** – how computing affects society, the environment, and individuals.

You will also gain practical experience designing, testing, and implementing programs, giving you a strong foundation for further study or a career in computing.

What sort of skills do I need to be successful on this course?

To succeed, you should have strong **logical thinking** and problem-solving skills. Attention to detail is important when writing code and debugging programs. You should be able to work systematically, break problems into smaller steps, and think critically. Good numeracy and a willingness to practise programming regularly are also important. Creativity helps when designing solutions and developing your own projects.

How is the course assessed and graded?

OCR Computer Science is assessed through **two exam papers** and a **programming project**:

- **Paper 1:** Computer systems – 1 hour 30 minutes, 50% of the grade.
- **Paper 2:** Computational thinking, algorithms and programming – 1 hour 30 minutes, 50% of the grade.
- **Programming project / practical tasks** are incorporated into the course and may form part of controlled assessment in some cases (depending on your school), but the final GCSE grade is primarily based on the two exams.

Grades are awarded on the **9–1 scale**.

What careers is this good for?

Computer Science is highly valuable in nearly every sector. It is particularly useful for careers in:

- Cybersecurity and IT support
- Data analysis and data science
- Game design and animation
- Web development and digital media
- Further study in computing, engineering, or STEM-related fields

It also develops problem-solving, logical reasoning, and analytical skills, which are valued in almost any profession.

Who can I speak to for more information?

Mr Ahmed

Cambridge National Enterprise & Marketing (OCR)

What will I learn on this course?

On the OCR Cambridge National Enterprise and Marketing course, you will learn how businesses develop ideas, research markets, and promote products to succeed in a competitive environment. Key topics include:

- **Enterprise and marketing concepts** – understanding entrepreneurs, market research, financial viability, and the marketing mix.
- **Designing a business proposal** – creating product ideas based on customer profiles, conducting research, and assessing financial viability.
- **Marketing and pitching a proposal** – developing a brand identity, planning promotional campaigns, and delivering a professional pitch.

What sort of skills do I need to be successful on this course?

- **Creative and innovative** – generating ideas for new products and marketing campaigns
- **Organised and methodical** – planning research, managing projects, and meeting deadlines
- **Numerically confident** – working with costs, pricing strategies, and financial calculations
- **Analytical and problem-solving oriented** – interpreting market research and evaluating business proposals
- **Good communicators** – presenting ideas clearly, both in writing and through professional pitches.

How is the course assessed and graded?

Assessment is mostly project-based, with one exam and two practical units. Each unit involves real-world tasks such as market research, creating a product proposal, planning a promotional campaign, and delivering a professional pitch.

Mandatory units – include an externally assessed exam on enterprise and marketing concepts, plus two practical assignments:

- Design a business proposal—Coursework (30%)
- Market and pitch a business proposal—Coursework (30%)
- Enterprise and Marketing concepts—Exam (40%)

What careers is this good for?

Enterprise and Marketing prepares you for careers in the business and commercial sectors, such as:

- **Business development and entrepreneurship** – starting and managing your own business
- **Marketing and advertising** – creating campaigns and promoting products
- **Sales and retail management** – understanding customer needs and driving business growth

Who can I speak to for more information?

Mr Berry

Drama (EDUQAS)

What will I learn on this course?

On the Eduqas GCSE Drama course, you will learn about **acting, performance, theatre design and production, and drama analysis**. Key areas include:

- **Practical performance:** developing acting skills, improvisation, and performing scripted and devised work
- **Acting techniques:** voice, movement, characterisation, and stagecraft
- **Theatre styles and practitioners:** studying different performance styles and influential theatre-makers
- **Theatre design elements:** production style, set, staging, lighting, sound, props and costume

What sort of skills do I need to be successful on this course?

To succeed, you should be:

- **Confident and expressive** – enjoy performing and presenting
- **Creative and imaginative** – developing ideas for characters and performances
- **Communicative and empathetic** – working well in groups, collaborating and responding to others' ideas, using initiative and taking the lead.
- **Reflective and resilient**– able to evaluate performances, suggest improvements and take on feedback.

How is the course assessed and graded?

Eduqas GCSE Drama is assessed through a **combination of practical and written work**:

- **Component 1: Devising Theatre (40%)** – create and perform an original piece; submit a portfolio reflecting the process
- **Component 2: Performing from a Text (20%)** – perform a scripted piece in a group
- **Component 3: Interpreting Theatre (40%)** – written exam analysing live theatre and understanding a set text and interpreting how this could be performed and staged.

What careers is this good for?

Creativity, innovation, and problem-solving—the core of the drama curriculum— are vital skills for the future . Drama develops highly transferable skills like confidence, problem-solving, and presentation which are valuable in many professions, for example Law (presenting in court), Business (leadership and public speaking), Teaching, Marketing, and Social Work.

Careers in Drama:

- Acting, directing, and theatre production
- Stage management and technical theatre
- Events management and public speaking

Who can I speak to for more information?

Mrs Woods

GCSE Music (OCR)

What will I learn on this course?

On the OCR GCSE Music course, you will learn about **performing, composing, and understanding music** from a wide range of styles and traditions. Key learning areas include:

- **Performance:** developing skills on your chosen instrument or voice
- **Composition:** creating your own music using melodies, chords, structure, technology, and musical devices
- **Listening and appraising:** studying a variety of musical genres, analysing rhythm, melody, harmony, texture, instruments, and context
- **Musical styles:** covering film music, popular music (various genres), classical music and styles from around the world

What sort of skills do I need to be successful on this course?

- **Engaged** – enjoy playing, singing, creating and listening to music.
- **Musically skilled** — have experience of singing or playing an instrument.
- **Committed and resilient** — be self disciplined and dedicated to practicing and developing your musical skills.
- **Creative and open-minded** – able to experiment with ideas when composing, be open to exploring lots of different musical styles.
- **Analytical** – able to listen carefully to music and describe features using musical vocabulary.

How is the course assessed and graded?

OCR GCSE Music is assessed through three components:

- **Performance (30%)**
- Two performances on your instrument/voice: one solo and one ensemble (group)
- **Composition (30%)**
- Two compositions: one to a brief set by OCR and one free composition
- **Listening Exam (40%)**
- Written exam on musical elements of set genres (concerto, film, world music, rock and pop)

What careers is this good for?

Music strengthens transferable skills like teamwork, confidence, creativity, analysis, and communication—useful in many professions. Careers directly using music include:

- **Performance & Creation:** Professional musician (soloist, band member, or orchestral), session musician, songwriter, and composer for film, TV, and video games.
- **Production & Sound Technology**: Music producer, sound engineer (studio or live events), mastering engineer, and sound designer for digital media and AI systems.
- **Business & Management**: Artist manager, A&R (Artist & Repertoire) scout, music publisher,

Who can I speak to for more information?

GCSE Media Studies (AQA)

What will I learn on this course?

On the AQA Media Studies course, you will learn about **how media is created, produced, and consumed**. Key areas include:

- **Media language:** how meaning is created through images, text, sound, and layout
- **Representation:** how people, places, events, and ideas are portrayed in media
- **Audience:** who consumes media, how audiences respond, and the effects of media
- **Media contexts:** understanding the social, cultural, and historical background of media products

You will also gain **practical skills**, producing your own media content such as magazines, short films,

What sort of skills do I need to be successful on this course?

To succeed, you should be:

- **Creative and imaginative** – generating ideas for media projects
- **Analytical** – able to evaluate media products and explain meaning, representation, and impact
- **Good communicators** – able to present ideas visually and in writing
- **Organised and independent** – managing projects and meeting deadlines
- **Tech-savvy** – comfortable using digital tools for media production

Attention to detail and an interest in media, films, TV, social media, magazines, and advertising will help you engage with both theory and practical tasks.

How is the course assessed and graded?

AQA Media Studies is assessed through a **combination of written exams and coursework/project work**:

- **Component 1: Understanding the Media (Exam, 35%)** – analyses media products, audience, and industries
- **Component 2: Media Forms in Depth (Exam, 35%)** – studies specific media forms such as film, newspapers, video games, or advertising
- **Component 3: Creating Media Products (Coursework, 30%)** – producing a media product for a target audience

What careers is this good for?

Media Studies develops analytical, creative, and technical skills, which are useful for careers in:

- Film, television, and video production
- Journalism, publishing, and advertising
- Social media management and digital marketing
- Graphic design and animation

It also develops transferable skills such as research, presentation, planning, and project management.

Who can I speak to for more information?

Miss Jordan

GCSE Physical Education (OCR)

What will I learn on this course?

On the OCR GCSE PE course, you will learn about **the science of sport, physical performance, and how to improve health and fitness**. Key topics include:

- **Applied anatomy and physiology:** muscles, bones, movement, and how the body responds.
- **Physical training:** fitness components, training methods, injury prevention
- **Sports psychology:** motivation, goal-setting, mental preparation, and skill development
- **Socio-cultural influences:** participation in sport, media, and ethical issues like drugs in sport
- **Health, fitness, and well-being:** diet, lifestyle, and long-term benefits of physical activity
- **Practical performance:** developing skill, technique and tactics across a range of sports.

What sort of skills do I need to be successful on this course?

To succeed in GCSE PE, you should be:

- **Physically active** – regularly taking part in sport or physical activity
- **Skilled in at least three sports** – as these contribute to your practical grade
- **Hard-working and committed** – especially in fitness and practical sessions
- **Analytical** – able to evaluate performance and understand sports science
- **Organised** – keeping up with both theory and practical work

How is the course assessed and graded?

OCR GCSE PE is assessed through **both exams and practical performance**:

- **Component 1: Physical Factors Affecting Performance (Exam, 30%)** Anatomy, physiology, movement analysis, and physical training
- **Component 2: Socio-Cultural & Psychological Factors (Exam, 30%)** Sports psychology, social influences, health & well-being
- **Component 3: Practical Performance (30%)** Assessment in **three sports**:
- One team sport, One individual sport, One of either
- **Component 4: Analysis & Evaluation of Performance (Coursework, 10%)** A written analysis of your own or someone else's performance

Final grades are awarded on the **9–1 scale**.

What careers is this good for?

GCSE PE is useful for careers in:

- Sports coaching and teaching
- Physiotherapy and sports rehabilitation
- Fitness training and personal training
- Nutrition and sports science
- Sports journalism and media
- Professional sport or sports development

Who can I speak to for more information?

Mr Cox

Cambridge National Sports Studies (OCR)

What will I learn on this course?

On the Cambridge National in Sports Studies, you will learn about **sport, physical activity, coaching, and the sports industry**, with a strong focus on practical skills and applied learning. Key areas include:

- **Sporting skills and performance** – developing techniques, tactics, and applying them
- **Sports leadership** – planning, delivering, and reviewing sports sessions
- **Contemporary issues in sport** – participation, barriers, media, role models, and major events
- **Outdoor and adventurous activities** – teamwork, safety, and practical challenges
- **Health, fitness, and training** – understanding fitness components and improving performance (depending on your chosen units)

The course mixes theory with hands-on experience in sport and physical activity.

What sort of skills do I need to be successful on this course?

To succeed, you should be:

- **Physically active and enthusiastic about sport**
- **Willing to participate regularly** in practical lessons and activities
- **A good communicator and team player** – especially in leadership tasks
- **Organised and responsible** – for planning sessions and completing coursework
- **Reflective and analytical** – able to evaluate performance and suggest improvements

You don't have to be an elite athlete, but you do need commitment and a positive attitude towards physical activity.

How is the course assessed and graded?

The course is assessed through **internally assessed assignments** and **one written exam**:

- **Exam Unit (25%)** – usually Contemporary Issues in Sport
- **Coursework/Practical Units (75%)**

Each unit is graded **Pass, Merit, or Distinction**, with your overall grade being equivalent to a GCSE. There is **less exam pressure** than GCSE PE, but consistent effort in coursework is essential.

What careers is this good for?

Sports Studies supports pathways in:

- Sports coaching and development
- Fitness and leisure industry roles
- Outdoor education and adventure activities
- Sports media, journalism, or event management

Who can I speak to for more information?

Mr Cox

GCSE RE (EDUQAS)

What will I learn on this course?

On the course, you will learn about **Islamic beliefs, teachings, and practices**, as well as how Muslims live out their faith today. Key topics include:

- **Islamic beliefs** – Allah's nature, angels, Prophethood, holy books, Akhirah (life after death)
- **Islamic practices** – the Five Pillars, Salah, Sawm, Zakah, Hajj, festivals like Eid.
- **Life issues** – relationships, families, gender roles, equality
- **Ethical and moral issues** – the value of life, abortion, euthanasia, crime and punishment
- **Philosophical questions** – the existence of God, evil and suffering, justice, and human rights
- **Sources of wisdom** – the Qur'an, Hadith, Shari'ah law, and Muslim traditions

You'll explore how beliefs influence behaviour and how religion shapes society in the modern world.

What sort of skills do I need to be successful on this course?

To succeed, you should be:

- **Open-minded and respectful** – able to understand different beliefs and viewpoints
- **Good at writing explanations and arguments** – especially 12-mark evaluation questions
- **Interested in real-world issues** – justice, equality, ethics, and society
- **Thoughtful and reflective** – able to consider moral and philosophical ideas
- **Organised** – remembering key teachings, quotes, and examples

You do **not** need to be religious to do well; it's about understanding and analysing beliefs.

How is the course assessed and graded?

Eduqas GCSE is assessed through **three exam papers**:

- **Component 1: Religious, Philosophical and Ethical Studies in the Modern World (50%)** Topics like relationships, life issues, crime and punishment, human rights.
- **Component 2: Study of Christianity (25%)** Christian beliefs and practices.
- **Component 3: Study of a World Faith – Islam (25%)** Islamic beliefs and practices in depth.

You will answer a mixture of short questions, explanation questions, and extended evaluative essays. Grades are awarded on the **9–1 scale**.

What careers is this good for?

GCSE RE helps develop communication, analysis, empathy, and critical thinking—skills useful in many careers, such as:

- Law, policing, and criminology
- Journalism, media, and broadcasting
- Politics, government, and international relations
- Healthcare and community work
- Charity, international aid, and human rights work

It also provides a strong foundation for **A-Level Religious Studies**, Philosophy, Sociology, Ethics, or Humanities subjects.

Who can I speak to for more information?

Mr Sloneczny

GCSE Statistics (Edexcel)

What will I learn on this course?

On Edexcel GCSE Statistics, you will learn how to **collect, analyse, interpret, and present data**, and how statistics is used in real life. Key topics include:

- **Data collection methods:** surveys, questionnaires, experiments, sampling techniques
- **Data presentation:** charts, tables, scatter graphs, box plots, histograms
- **Statistical calculations:** averages, ranges, standard deviation, probability
- **Interpreting results:** spotting patterns, trends, correlations, and anomalies
- **Probability and risk:** theoretical and experimental probability

What sort of skills do I need to be successful on this course?

To succeed, you should be:

- **Comfortable with maths** – especially number work, graphs, and basic algebra
- **Logical and analytical** – able to interpret data accurately
- **Organised and methodical** – good at following steps and checking calculations
- **Curious about real-world problems** – why things happen and what data shows
- **Accurate and detail-focused** – small errors can change results in statistics

You do **not** need to be top set at maths, but confidence with numbers definitely helps.

How is the course assessed and graded?

Edexcel GCSE Statistics is assessed through **two exam papers**:

- **Paper 1: Data Collection & Processing (50%)** Covers planning investigations, sampling, presenting data, and interpreting results.
- **Paper 2: Statistical Methods (50%)** Covers probability, distribution, correlation, averages, spread, and more complex analysis.

Both exams are written papers with a mix of short questions, calculations, and longer reasoning questions.
Grades are awarded on the **9–1 scale**.

What careers is this good for?

Statistics is useful in almost every sector. It can lead to careers in:

- Data analysis and data science
- Business, finance, and economics
- Engineering and technology
- Sports analysis and performance science
- Government, law, and public policy
- Scientific research and environmental studies

It's also an excellent stepping stone to **A-Level Maths, Further Maths, or A-Level Statistics**.

Who can I speak to for more information?

Mr Lansdale

Notes