



Year 9 Choices Guide

2024



February 2024,

Dear Archer parents and students,

We have been delighted by the response of our students to the curriculum opportunities available to them as they move into Year 9.

Our Year 9 curriculum builds on the foundations of our excellent provision across Year 7 and Year 8, allowing students to sample a range of new courses, as well as beginning to specialise in subjects at which they have begun to excel. Archer Academy students will begin their Key Stage 4 programme of study from Year 9, enabling a 3 year depth Key Stage 4 model, with a deliberately flexible and staggered approach to subject specialisation.

Our Year 9 curriculum is designed to enable greater personalisation for our students and is designed through a series of blocks; with students able to make choices in some blocks in Year 9 and then refine and make further choices in Year 10. Students will not be making decisions about their final GCSE portfolio until midway through Year 9.

The beginning of Year 9 is the first step for our students in creating their personal curriculum pathway through which they can truly realise their potential.

How does our Year 9 curriculum model work?

Our Year 9 curriculum is composed of five blocks.

Red block: This block constitutes the core curriculum; subjects everyone must study. In Year 9 students will begin their GCSE courses in English Language and Literature, Mathematics and Science. Students will continue to study a foreign language/functional skills and PE in a similar format to now. Humanities subjects: History and Geography also form part of the red block.

Grey block: This block constitutes the additional core curriculum for our students; securing statutory parts of the curriculum. Additionally, this block enables us to provide opportunities for our students to continue to grow as independent learners and build the skills needed for success at GCSE, A Level and beyond. In addition to students' compulsory subjects in the red block, students will study SPPEC (social, political, philosophy, ethics, culture) over the course of Year 9.

Purple block: This block enables students to make decisions about their technology, creative, performing and visual arts curriculum. Students have benefitted from extensive breadth in their technology, creative, performing and visual arts subjects across Year 7 and Year 8. Year 9 provides the opportunity for students to study two courses in depth, for two hours each per week. Students should make two choices in this block.

Green block: This block provides our students with the opportunity to experience an introductory year in one of a variety of GCSE courses. Amongst the menu of courses available, this block provides students the opportunity to extend their Science curriculum. Additionally, a vocational option is available. Students should make one choice in this block.

White block: This block forms enrichment choices for our Year 9 cohort. As students move into Year 9, they will have separate enrichment choices to the rest of lower school. Students will not make their enrichment choices until September. This block is designed to enrich and extend our students' experiences and skills to support their wider learning.

For our Year 9 students their enrichment programme will be distinctly different on each afternoon. On one afternoon per week students will make a choice to study a course for a full academic year; these courses will include opportunities such as *Duke of Edinburgh*, *Sport Studies*, *debating society* and other programmes which have the possibility of external accreditation in the future. On the other afternoon, students will be able to make different choices each term, as they do now, from a range of courses designed to spark their imaginations and try something different; such as *Japanese Animation*, *Yoga*, *Sign Language*, *Street Dance*, as well as a host of sports clubs.

Vocational qualifications

The majority of courses we offer at Archer Academy are GCSE, however we also run Vocational technical qualifications for students. They contain both internally and externally assessed elements, and are equivalent to one GCSE. The qualifications are graded Pass, Merit and Distinction.

Making informed choices

What follows in this booklet is detailed information about each of the subject's students are able to choose from in Year 9; across the **purple** and **green** blocks. It is imperative that students make broad and balanced choices; not narrowing their curriculum too significantly at this stage whilst taking the opportunity to play to their strengths.

Before any choices are made students should:

1. **Read** this booklet carefully.
2. **Discuss** the subjects with parents or carers. Which do you enjoy the most and are most relevant for you?
3. **Ask** for further information from subject teachers, Heads of Department and form tutors.
4. **Select** the subject's students want and would like to study. These are not necessarily the ones chosen by your friends.
5. **Remember** the choices you make help to shape your decisions for your final GCSE portfolio. Your choice may have an influence on what you do in Year 10, your future career or course selection for Sixth Form. Once you have started your course, you must see it through to the end on Year 9.
6. **Reflect** by asking themselves some searching questions:
 - *Am I on track to achieve my target level in the subjects (or similar subjects) I would like to choose by the end of the academic year? Am I considering choosing subjects (or similar subjects) in which my attainment to date is high? If not, what can I do to raise the level of my work?*
 - *Have I discussed my progress with my form tutor recently?*
 - *Have I spoken to my subject teacher?*
 - *Have I shown good motivation so far?*
 - *Do I really know what the subject involves?*
 - *Have I considered any specific requirements for the course? For example, Music?*
 - *Have I thought ahead and considered possible career paths to see if this subject would be useful in my future?*

Thinking ahead to Year 10

Our students will refine and finalise their choices in Year 9 ready for Year 10. This options process will provide all of our students with the chance to qualify for the high status national academic standard called the English Baccalaureate. This standard is becoming increasingly important for employers as well as for college and university selection processes. Students can reach the English Baccalaureate standard by gaining GCSE passes in English Language, English Literature, Mathematics, Science which includes Computer Science, a Modern Foreign Language, History or Geography. We are determined that the vast majority of Archer Academy students should reach this important standard as long as it is an appropriate route for them.

However, we are aware that the English Baccalaureate pathway is not the route suited to all students and their ambitions for their future. Therefore, Year 10 choices do include a variety of vocational based subjects such as Business Studies and Child Development to enable every student to realise their potential and relish their learning. Students do have the opportunity to study a vocational course in Year 9 in preparation for this pathway (Business Studies); do review the choices blocks carefully and contact Ms Brami for more information.

Students will then make further choices, based on their experiences of subjects in Year 9, to finalise their GCSE portfolio.

What happens next?

Naturally, as parents, you will want to make the best choices and to have access to good quality advice. This booklet helps start that process by providing an overview of the courses we offer. Please use this booklet to support discussions at home, as a family, and with subject teachers and Heads of Department.

Students, following discussion with teachers and parents, should then submit their choices via an online form by **Friday 15th March**. The form requires a code specific to each student. These will be emailed to each students' Archer email account shortly after the options evening, along with a link to the form. If students have difficulty accessing their email, their form tutor will be able to give them the link and code.

Every effort will be made to ensure that as many students as possible are successful in getting their first choices. However, if too few students opt for a subject or if a subject is oversubscribed, it may be necessary for a student to study a reserve choice. In this case the student will sit down with Mr Oakley and Mr Hilton to discuss the matter. Therefore, students should please think carefully about their second and third choices.

Students should record their two subject choices for the **purple block** and make one subject choice in the **green block** on their choices form; enclosed at the back of this booklet.

This is an exciting time for our students. Our ability to offer this curriculum design is based on their success and maturity to date. We very much look forward to supporting you and them on this next stage in their journey.

Please do not hesitate to contact your child's form tutor or any of their subject teachers as these all important decisions are made.

Best wishes,

Miss Harrison
Headteacher

Making choices

This is how your Year 9 curriculum will be constructed:

Red Block - Core subjects							Grey block	Purple Block	Green Block	White Block
English Language English Literature	Mathematics	Combined Science	French or Spanish or Functional Skills	History	Geography	PE	SPPEC	Make two choices	Make one choice	Enrichment

Core curriculum

All students follow the core curriculum. This is designed to give you the skills and qualifications that you will need for the future; whatever you decide to do. You will also have two hours of PE – to keep you healthy in body as well as mind! Finally, all students will study SPPEC (social, political, philosophy, ethics, culture) for one hour.

Choices subjects

The remaining subjects available are for you to choose from across two blocks. These blocks have been designed to allow you personalise your curriculum and prepare well for Upper School. You need to choose two subjects from the purple block and one subject from the green block to create your pathway.

Purple Block (2 Choices)	Green Block (1 Choice)
Art and Design	Business & Enterprise (vocational)
Dance	Computer Science
Design & Technology	Further Science
Drama	Hospitality and Catering
Graphics	PE GCSE
Music	Photography
	Politics
	Psychology

GCSE Grades and changes to GCSE specifications

GCSE subjects are now awarded on a scale from 9-1 instead of what you may be used to (A* - G). The specifications for the GCSE courses have been rewritten and in general the following changes are common:

- There is less coursework (now called Non-Examined Assessment or NEA), and no longer any controlled assessments
- Maths content has been increased in relevant subjects
- Quality of written English counts for more marks
- The amount of content has increased and, in some cases, brought in some of the A level content
- All courses are now linear, so all assessment takes place at the end of year 11. Exams will cover all content studied from the start of year 9.

For all GCSE subjects, students will be assessed against this new scale where a 9 is the highest possible grade and 1 is the lowest.

There is not a direct translation between the old letter grades and the new number grades, and the artificial C/D borderline is now less important to students and schools. However, a “strong pass” is considered to be a grade 5 or above. Grade 6 has become the new entry requirement for continuing to study a course at A level.

The following helps to explain what the new grades mean:

- The new numbered grades do not translate directly from the old grades A* - G, but we do know that approximately the same proportion of students who achieved:
 - grade A or higher received a grade 7 or higher
 - grade C or higher received a grade 4 or higher
- Grade 9 is a new grade for very high performing students, in approximately the top fifth of the cohort
- Grade 5 is the benchmark for a 'good pass'
- Grade 4 is a standard pass
- The bottom of grade 1 is the same as the bottom of grade G

NEW GCSE GRADING STRUCTURE											
9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	U		
<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: center;"> <div style="text-align: center;"> </div> <div style="text-align: left;"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Broadly the same proportion of students will achieve a grade 4 and above as currently achieve a grade C and above. ▪ Broadly the same proportion of students will achieve a grade 7 and above as achieve an A and above. ▪ The bottom of grade 1 will be aligned with the bottom of grade G. </div> </div>											
			A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	U
CURRENT GCSE GRADING STRUCTURE											

Art and Design

Subject: Art and Design

Purple Block Choice

Grade level 9-1

Examining body: Edexcel

Specification: GCSE Art & Design 1AD0

Synopsis of course:

In year 9, we embark on a foundation year, designed to refine skills that are necessary for the GCSE course. We do intensive drawing practice, we work with clay, we explore the design process. We learn to mix flesh tones, work with wire etc. All of these skills prepare us for the GCSE to follow.

This GCSE course aims to develop:

- Creative and imaginative ability and the practical skills for expressing original ideas, feelings and meanings in Art and Design
- Investigative, analytical and experimental learners with critical and enquiring minds
- Cultural knowledge and understanding of art, craft and design used in different times, contexts and societies
- Confidence, resilient, self-disciplined and committed learners.

This course encompasses art and design and encourages students to explore a range of 2 or 3 dimensional approaches to their studies. Work produced will demonstrate the use of formal elements and creative skills, and allow students to visually communicate feelings, ideas and observations.

Teaching methods and resources:

Over the course of year 10 and 11 students will work through GCSE Art and Design which is set through 3 units, both internal and externally set. Students will complete their own portfolio to showcase their skills and the processes used to create the work. Work will be monitored through class, group and individual critical tutorials, one to one feedback (written and verbal) and demonstrations. Students will be expected to work in at least 2 of these disciplines: **Painting and drawing, sculpture, print making and alternative media.**

Students will be required to use and develop these skills:

- A range of art and design processes
- An understanding of how ideas, feelings and meanings are conveyed
- An understanding of the work of others and how it relates to own practice and social, historical and cultural context
- An ability to record observations and experiences using appropriate materials and processes
- An exploration of sources (analysis and evaluation) and mediums (experimentation)
- An ability to refine and develop work as it progresses.

Assessment methods:

Unit 1: Personal portfolio in Art and Design weighted at 60% of the total GCSE.

- This unit is internally set, marked and standardised before external moderation
- Students must show evidence of all 4 assessment objectives (see below)

Unit 2: Externally set assignment in Art and Design weighted at 40% of the total GCSE

- This unit consists of one externally set, broad based thematic starting point.
- Work produced will consist of 30 hours of preparatory work and a 10 hour exam
- This unit is externally set, internally marked and standardised before external moderation
- Students must show evidence of all 4 assessment objectives (see below)

Students will be assessed against 4 assessment objectives, each weighted equally at 25%:

- **AO1:** Develop their ideas through investigations informed by contextual and other sources, demonstrating analytical and cultural understanding
- **AO2:** refine their ideas through experimenting and selecting appropriate resources, media, materials, techniques and processes
- **AO3:** record ideas, observations and insights relevant to their intentions in visual and/or other forms
- **AO4:** present a personal, informed and meaningful response demonstrating analytical and critical understanding.

Where could studying GCSE Art and Design take me? Further study and employment opportunities:

This course provides the ideal preparation for A-level Art and Design, Textiles and A Levels courses such as Fine Art.

The course is ideal for students considering future careers in the Art, Design and Technology industries: branding, graphics, textile and fashion design, interior design, architecture and decoration etc.

Head of Department: Ms. Clarke

Business & Enterprise

Subject: Business & Enterprise (VCERT)

Green Block Choice

Grade level: Pass-Merit-Distinction-Distinction Star

Examining body: NCFE

Specification: NCFE Level 2 Certificate in Business and Enterprise

Synopsis of course:

This is an introduction to the vocational course that students can study in year 10 and 11. During Year 9 students will investigate what a business and enterprise is and evaluate how and why these decisions are made. Once this investigation has been completed students will then create a small business or project, this will be developed in pairs where they will work in pairs. Where they will need to analyse how they have performed and the areas of improvement for their business.

With a vocational course the assessment is via coursework (worth 75%) than for a full GCSE. Whilst this is not actually a GCSE qualification it is classed as "equivalent to" a GCSE. Grades are awarded as Pass, Merit or Distinction rather than 9-1:

- Pass is equivalent to a GCSE grade 4.
- Merit is equivalent to a GCSE grade 5.5
- Distinction is equivalent to a GCSE grade 7
- Distinction Star is equivalent to a GCSE grade 8.

This qualification is designed for students who want an introduction to business and enterprise that includes a vocational and hands-on element. It has been developed to enthuse and inspire students about a career in business and enterprise. The qualification will appeal to students who wish to either set up their own business, move into employment or progress onto further study in business.

Students will cover a range of areas such as types of business, skills and characteristics of entrepreneurs, marketing, and risks and rewards in business. This will include looking at local businesses and local entrepreneurs.

Students will be encouraged to come up with business plans for their own ideas and investigate the issues facing a start-up business.

There will be a focus on marketing, understanding why this is important, how to target a market through research, and the impact of social media on promotion.

The finance unit will focus on the money side of business in terms of sources of funding, costs, cash flow and profits, and what it means to break even. This will involve a wider understanding of tax and national insurance within the UK.

The final unit allows the students to plan and carry out their own business project, working with others and reflecting on their contributions to its success.

Teaching methods and resources:

Students will enjoy this course by learning how to:

- Make concise reports
- Plan investigations
- Use their mathematical skills in a practical context
- Think creatively and independently
- Communicate effectively
- Learn in a team
- Utilise ICT to research and present their findings

Students will need to take an interest in the wider world of business and a healthy interest in TV programs such as Dragons Den and The Apprentice is helpful.

Assessment methods:

<p>Unit 01: Introduction to business and enterprise</p> <p>This unit aims to give students an introduction to business and enterprise. It gives students an introduction to start up projects and helps them to identify risks and rewards.</p>	<p>Internally assessed portfolio of evidence</p>	<p>25%</p>
<p>Unit 02: Marketing for business and Enterprise</p> <p>This unit aims to give students an insight into market research, and different marketing opportunities and techniques.</p>	<p>Internally assessed portfolio of evidence</p>	<p>25%</p>
<p>Unit 03: Finance for business and enterprise</p> <p>This unit aims to provide students with a basic knowledge and understanding of business finance for a new business or enterprise.</p>	<p>Internally assessed portfolio of evidence</p>	<p>25%</p>
<p>Unit 04: Plan, develop and participate in a business or enterprise project</p> <p>This unit aims to develop a project plan and implement the project. The learner will then go on to evaluate the overall success of the project.</p>	<p>Internally assessed portfolio of evidence</p>	<p>25%</p>

Where could Business Studies take me? Further study and employment opportunities:

From an entrepreneur to a charity worker to an accountant, studying Business and Entrepreneurship will give you the skills to enter virtually any industry. Business and Enterprise gives you the choice to specialise in an area of business such as marketing and promotion or to combine all aspects of business by owning and running your own enterprise.

Some of the more focused careers that Business and Enterprise can lead to are:

- Marketing
- Human Resources
- Accountancy
- Purchasing
- Public Relations
- Advertising
- Logistics
- Production
- Retail Management
- Administration
- Banking
- Insurance

In addition, this qualification is a good route into apprenticeships, as well as level 3 certificates and diplomas at college.

Head of Department: Mr Ruffles

Computer Science

Subject: Computer Science

Green Block Choice

Grade level: 9-1

Examining body: OCR

Specification: Computer Science J277

Synopsis of the course:

Every time you use a computer (laptop, tablet, mobile phone) you are using programs that have been created by programmers – the software engineers who shape the connected world in which we increasingly live, work and play.

Studying computer science in Year 9 will open up an incredible range of opportunities as you learn to become a creator of the digital world rather than just a consumer. Find out how a computer thinks and how it remembers, and start to take control by learning how to program.

This GCSE course aims to:

- introduce students to the exciting world of computer science
- start on a journey that allows students to become masters of the digital world
- develop critical thinking, analysis and problem-solving skills
- learn the basics of programming
- prepare students for GCSE computer science

Teaching methods and resources:

For this year 9 course, learning to code will be a core part of the year because this is at the heart of computer science. Students will need to be prepared to rise to the challenge of breaking apart problems into small steps so that they can be turned into programming code.

We will be using Python which can be installed for free at home.

In addition, students will learn about binary numbers and logic gates, and how a computer works on the inside. This understanding will then lead on to how computers store information in various forms.

There is a significant mathematical element to the subject and so students considering it should be confident mathematicians.

Students will be assessed by the following methods at GCSE, Year 9 will follow a similar structure:

The full GCSE includes two written exam papers worth 50% each and a programming project which must be completed within a set time (but does not count towards the GCSE).

To prepare students for this in year 9 there will be tests to check understanding and an end of year exam, as well as short programming projects which will contain varying degrees of challenge depending on the level each student is working at.

Where could studying computer science take me? Further study and employment opportunities:

The year 9 course will be an excellent preparation for the full GCSE in Computer Science. This can then lead on to A level Computer Science.

The digital industry is a fast growing success story in this country and particularly in London, and there is an incredible range of careers, college and university courses that are looking for talented and enthusiastic students. Even those interested in engineering, biology, physics and chemistry will benefit from a computer science grounding and computing skills are in high demand in many industry sectors.

Head of Department: Mr Oakley

Dance

Subject: Dance

Purple Block Choice

Grade level 1-9

Examining body: AQA

Specification: GCSE Dance

Synopsis of the course:

This GCSE Dance course aims to:

- Build on your physical and expressive performance skills.
- Expand on your knowledge of choreography and provide you with an opportunity to create contemporary dance repertoire.
- Examine a range of professional works and study practitioners within the field.
- Improve your understanding of dance specific terminology and literacy.
- Develop your resilience, independence, discipline and creativity.

The GCSE year 9 dance course will focus on students developing their practical understanding of contemporary performance technique and the craft of choreography. Practical dance repertoire created and learned will allow students to build on their coursework in year 10. The students will study the basics in theory and analyse a professional dance work to assist them making effective progress in their written examination.

Teaching methods and resources:

Lessons will be a mixture of practical performance technique, choreography and theory sessions. The students will study the course for two hours per week. There will be additional extended performance opportunities to enhance the student's ability and prepare them for their final examination in year 11.

Skills Required

- Imagination and creativity.
- Commitment to attending lessons and after school rehearsals on a weekly basis.
- Some previous dance experience or the ability to show potential and enthusiasm in dance.
- Positive approaches to choreography and challenging dance stimuli.
- Willingness to work in groups and participate in other student's choreography.
- Resilience and high levels of discipline.

Assessment methods:

Critical Appreciation of Dance

You will be required to write a written exam paper based on two chosen professional works. This year the students will be studying three of the professional works from the GCSE dance course anthology. These include:

- A Linha Curva by Itzik Galili
- Infra by Wayne McGregor
- Shadows by Christopher Bruce

Set Phrases and Contemporary Technique

These contemporary dance sequences will demonstrate your understanding of the technical and expressive performance skills required to achieve GCSE Level. It is examined externally by the AQA. You will build on your physical skills each week through technical exercises.

Performance in a Duo or Group

You will perform this dance with others in the group, the choreography will be based on a chosen professional dance work or stimulus. The students will need to demonstrate a range of technical, physical and expressive skills. They must sustain a solid insight of their role in group performance.

Duet Composition

In this unit you will be given the opportunity to explore three motifs from a professional work and develop this into a duet choreography

Group Choreography

This choreographic dance task allows you to be innovative and creative. The students independently pick a stimulus or starting point for their composition, and are expected to create a dance for 2, or maximum 5, dancers.

Where could studying GCSE dance take me? Further study and employment opportunities:

You will learn invaluable skills that employment and higher education institutes will recognise and find extremely interesting – confidence, creativity and team work.

The course is ideal for students considering to develop their creativity, management, responsibility and leadership skills.

Other opportunities:

There are a wealth opportunities that come with studying GCSE dance! These include:

- *Showcase performances
- *Competition squads
- *Workshop days with visiting companies and professional dancers
- *Theatre trips

Head of Department: Miss Harris

Design Technology

Subject: Design Technology	
Purple Block Choice	
Grade level 9-1	
Examining body: OCR	Specification: GCSE Design & Technology J310
Synopsis of the course: <p>In year 9 students will undergo a range of smaller projects and tasks that are designed to refine the skills and knowledge that are necessary for success in the GCSE course. This course differs from the Design Technology – Graphics option in it's focus on primarily resistant materials such as timber and polymers as the materials used. Students will be encouraged to -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Engage actively in the processes of design and technology in order to develop as effective and independent learners.• Make informed decisions, consider sustainability and combine skills with knowledge and understanding in order to design and make quality products.• Combine their designing and modelling skills with knowledge and understanding, in order to produce outcomes capable of being rigorously tested. <p>This course encompasses research, designing and making. It also encourages students to explore existing products and designers to inform their own work. Work produced will demonstrate the use of formal elements and creative skills, and allow students to visually communicate feelings, ideas and observations.</p>	
Teaching methods and resources: <p>Over the course of year 10 and 11 students will take part in a mixture of practical/coursework lessons which will be two hours a week and another one hour theory lesson.</p> <p>Students will be given the task of designing and making a product for a real client that they choose. This can be a family member, a friend or even a business on the local high street. Students will research into what design needs they have and work through the design process to a completed functioning product. Students will complete their design work through a variety of methods including sketching, modelling and CAD.</p> <p>Students will then make their final design after consultation with their client. They will use a variety of production methods and materials to realise their final design.</p> <p>Students will complete skills building projects at the start of year 10 and will begin their personal design and make their project in the June of this year.</p> <p>Students will learn practical skills using a range of materials but primarily focussed on resistant materials such as timber and polymers. They will learn to use a range of tools, equipment and machinery in a safe, accurate and responsible manner.</p>	
Assessment methods: <p><i>Students will be assessed on a written theory exam and a practical design and make project.</i></p> <p>GCSE students will be assessed on</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Iterative design challenge (Coursework) 50% of marks	

- Principles of Design and Technology (2hr written theory exam) 50% of marks

Where could studying GCSE Design and Technology take me? Further study and employment opportunities:

This course provides preparation for A Levels courses such as Product Design. The course is ideal for students considering future careers in product design, industrial design, graphic design, architecture, engineering etc.

Head of Department: Ms Ozier

Drama

Subject: Drama

Purple Block Choice

Grade level 9-1

Examining body: OCR

Specification: GCSE Drama

Synopsis of the course:

OCR's GCSE (9–1) in Drama will encourage learners to:

- Apply knowledge and understanding of drama when making, performing and responding to drama.
- Explore performance texts, understanding their social, cultural and historical context including the theatrical conventions of the period in which they were created (a performance text is one that has been written specifically for theatrical performance)
- Develop a range of theatrical skills and apply them to create performances.
- Work collaboratively to generate, develop and communicate ideas.
- Develop as creative, effective, independent and reflective students able to make informed choices in process and performance.
- Contribute as an individual to a theatrical performance.
- Reflect on and evaluate their own work and that of others.
- Develop an awareness and understanding of the roles and processes undertaken in contemporary professional theatre practice.
- Adopt safe working practices.

The GCSE year 9 drama course focuses on developing a practical understanding of drama and refining the craft of the devising process. The students will study a range of famous playwrights and work on performance skills and the art of characterisation. The course will enable students to build on their understanding of how to write about drama and build their knowledge of complex terminology.

Teaching methods and resources:

The students will explore a mixture of practical performance and devising workshops and theoretical sessions. The students will study the course for two hours per week. There will be additional extended performance opportunities to enhance their ability and prepare them for their final external examinations in year 11.

Skills Required

- Ability to contribute and direct others in the devising process.
- Commitment to attending lessons and after school drama rehearsals on a weekly basis.
- Passion for drama performance and exploring new scripts and playwrights.
- Positive and resilient approaches to independent rehearsal.
- Willingness to work in groups and collaborate/lead in the devising process.
- Evaluative and analytical processes when writing about drama.
- Creativity when exploring a specific role or key theme.

Assessment methods:

Devising Drama

Tomorrow's World & Political theatre

You will take part in a series of workshops that will be centred on a range of drama genres, themes and topics. For example you will take part in lessons that explore the concept of 'Tomorrow's World'. You will

also learn about political theatre and how this powerful genre of theatre can be used to challenge the audience. You will be expected to use Drama strategies and techniques to explore this stimulus and work collaboratively in groups to create your own, original theatre.

Documentary Evidence (written project)

Throughout the workshops you must keep a logbook of everything you do to ensure that you write an effective Drama portfolio. Your portfolio will show your understanding of how you have explored the work and an evaluation of the work you have done. You will be expected to use detailed and analytical writing techniques.

Presenting and Performing Texts

Metamorphosis and The Exam

You will be expected to explore Steven Berkoff's famous play, *Metamorphosis and The Exam* by Andy Hamilton. You will be put in groups, by your teacher and refine scripted scenes from the productions. You will be assessed on your skills in acting and interpretation of the playwright's intention. In Year 9, there will be various opportunities to be assessed on your performance skills in order for you to develop as an actor.

Devise and Response

Devising Drama Workshops

You will take part in a series of workshops exploring a range of diverse stimuli based on the OCR question paper. This will range from historical, visual and literacy-based questions. You will show your ability to interpret your selected question through a devised response. This will build on your creativity skills and prepare you fully for the devised unit in year 10.

You will also practically explore the three key practitioners and understand how they shaped theatre as we know it today.

Where could studying GCSE drama take me? Further study and employment opportunities:

You will learn invaluable skills that employment and higher education institutes will recognise and find extremely beneficial.

You will develop directing, creative, performance, evaluating, self-management and leadership skills as well as confidence in public speaking and articulating your ideas.

The course is ideal for students considering future careers within the creative and performing arts field. Help will be given to students preparing for auditions for full time courses at the end of key stage four.

Head of Department: Miss Rodford

Further Science

Subject: Further Science	
Green Block Choice	
Grade level: 9-1	
Examining body: AQA	Specification: This course supports entry to both the Combined and Separate Science pathway offered at GCSE
Synopsis of the course: The course aims to teach a range of scientific skills in the context of investigative scientific work. The focus is on the development of transferable scientific skills using a range of contexts drawn from all scientific disciplines. It also aims to push students to look beyond the text book and consider the innovations in STEM which often occur in the boundaries between traditional subjects. Whilst our aim is to stretch students the course is very much suitable for all students who have a passion for and enjoyment of science.	
Teaching methods and resources: The course will be topic based for 2 terms (for example; Genetics, inherited disorders, cloning, nanoparticles, hybrid cars, the Big Bang, radioactivity) with supporting practical investigations. We will also aim to reinforce the skills developed in the student's core science GCSE lessons. Significant amounts of written work will be required including experimental write ups, research-based essays on scientific topics and more traditional exam style questions. In the third term students will carry out a CREST award, an accredited scheme which allows students to select a project, plan and carry out an investigation in small groups.	
Assessment: All GCSE science assessment is now 100% exam based. To mirror this, student's progress in Additional Science will be measured based on questions which test the skills and knowledge being developed drawn from past GCSE papers. The CREST award will be teacher assessed and submitted centrally to CREST Awards for certificates to be issued.	
Where could studying Additional Science take me? Further study and employment opportunities: Science is compulsory for all students to GCSE. The aim of Additional Science is to develop student's skills and depth of understanding to preparation for their GCSE studies in either the Core or Separate Science pathway. We also want to take the opportunity to stretch students and cover topics that are simply interesting and highlight the amazing range of scientific discovery beyond the confines of the GCSE syllabus. It is important to note that this course is <u>not</u> a requirement for studying separate sciences at GCSE.	
Head of Department: Ms. Ahmed	

Graphics

Subject: Graphics	
Purple Block Choice	
Grade level 9-1	
Examining body: OCR	Specification: GCSE Design & Technology J310
<p>Synopsis of the course: In year 9 students will undergo a design and make project that lasts throughout the year and closely models the structure of the Iterative Design Challenge that makes up 50% of the GCSE grade. This course differs from the Design Technology – Product Design option in it’s focus on primarily papers and boards as the materials used. Throughout this project students will be encouraged to -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage actively in the processes of design and technology in order to develop as effective and independent learners. • Make informed decisions, consider sustainability and combine skills with knowledge and understanding in order to design and make quality products. • Combine their designing and modelling skills with knowledge and understanding, in order to produce outcomes capable of being rigorously tested. <p>This course encompasses research, designing and making. It also encourages students to explore existing products and designers to inform their own work. Work produced will demonstrate the use of formal elements and creative skills, and allow students to visually communicate feelings, ideas and observations.</p>	
<p>Teaching methods and resources:</p> <p>Over the course of year 10 and 11 students will take part in a mixture of practical/coursework lessons which will be two hours a week and another one hour theory lesson.</p> <p>Students will be given the task of designing and making a product for a real client that they choose. This can be a family member, a friend or even a business on the local high street. Students will research into what design needs they have and work through the design process to a completed functioning product. Students will complete their design work through a variety of methods including sketching, modelling and CAD.</p> <p>Students will then make their final design after consultation with their client. They will use a variety of production methods and materials to realise their final design.</p> <p>Students will complete skills building projects at the start of year 10 and will begin their personal design and make their project in the June of this year.</p> <p>Students will learn practical skills using primarily papers and boards, they will learn to use graphical skills, both hand skills and computer aided design skills to embellish the materials. They will learn to use a range of relevant tools, equipment and machinery in a safe, accurate and responsible manner.</p>	
<p>Assessment methods:</p> <p><i>Students will be assessed on a written theory exam and a practical design and make project.</i></p> <p>GCSE students will be assessed on</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Iterative design challenge (Coursework) 50% of marks • Principles of Design and Technology (2hr written theory exam) 50% of marks 	

Where could studying GCSE Design and Technology take me? Further study and employment opportunities:

This course provides preparation for A Levels courses such as Product Design.

The course is ideal for students considering future careers in product design, industrial design, graphic design, architecture, engineering etc.

Head of Department: Ms Ozier

Hospitality and Catering

Subject: Hospitality and Catering	
Green Choice Block	
Grade level Pass – Merit - Distinction	
Examining body: WJEC	Specification: 5569QA
<p>Synopsis of the course: This is a vocational qualification which is delivered under the Vocational Curriculum pathway. This qualification enables learners to develop transferable skills, such as researching, planning, and making decisions and judgements. The qualification recognises the value of learning skills, knowledge, and vocational attributes which complement GCSEs. Moreover, this qualification will broaden learners' experience and understanding of the varied progression options available to them. Students will have the opportunity to complete 60% of the qualification through coursework which is marked internally and moderated both internally and externally. The final 40% is via external assessment (written exam). Whilst this is not a traditional academic GCSE qualification it is classed as "equivalent to" a full GCSE based on points as described below: Grades are awarded as Pass, Merit or Distinction rather than 9-1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Level 2 Pass is equivalent to a GCSE Grade 4 · Level 2 Merit is equivalent to a GCSE Grade 5.5 · Level 2 Distinction is equivalent to a GCSE Grade 7 · Level 2 Distinction * is equivalent to a GCSE Grade 8 <p>WJEC Level 1 and Level 2 vocational award in hospitality and catering encourages students to develop their skills using a range of ingredients and tools/equipment as well as developing their knowledge of hospitality & catering industry and health & safety whilst cooking. Students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Select and use tools/equipment and processes to produce quality products. • Understand the functional properties of food. • The effects of combining different ingredients and the interaction of foods during preparation and cooking. • Understand the nutritional properties of food. • Demonstrate competence in a range of practical food skills/methods/processes to produce quality outcomes. • Understanding the hospitality & catering industry 	
<p>Teaching methods and resources:</p> <p>Over the course of year 10 and 11 students will take part in a mixture of practical/coursework lessons which will be two hours a week and another one-hour theory lesson. The theory lesson will address key areas of the exam such as nutrition, food legislation, understanding the hospitality & catering sector, food safety and exam techniques. Students will work through the design process by researching dishes, developing ingredients lists and altering these through research and then complete a practical task followed by evaluation of their outcome. Students will work through a wide range of tasks and contexts to develop their skills with a variety of dishes and ingredients in preparation for their final dish.</p>	
<p>Assessment methods:</p> <p>Unit 1: The hospitality and catering industry (90marks)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Onscreen assessment • Written exam 	

Unit 2: Hospitality and catering in action (Pass-Merit-Distinction)

- Coursework
- Practical exam

The assessment of the coursework is split into the following areas:

- LO1: Understand the environment in which hospitality and catering providers operate
- LO2: Understand how hospitality and catering provisions operate
- LO3: Understand how hospitality and catering provision meets health and safety requirements
- LO4: Know how food can cause ill health
- LO5: Be able to propose a hospitality and catering provision to meet specific requirements

Where could studying WJEC Hospitality and Catering take me? Further study and employment opportunities:

Tourism management, Chef, Caterer, Food technologist, Dietician.

Head of Department: Ms Ozier

Music

Subject: Music

Purple Block Choice

Grade level: 9-1

Examining body: OCR

Specification: 2016

Music in Year 9

In Year 9 Music students will have the opportunity to explore a number of different musical styles, and delve a little deeper into both the theoretical musical content and the historical context of music.

Key topics include: **Baroque to Romantic** (A History of Western Music) **Film Music** (Storytelling and popular Leitmotifs) **Music and Politics** (Popular and Protest Music) as well as **Musical Theatre** and the opportunity to **compose within any chosen style**.

*With 2 hour lessons, students will have the opportunity and freedom to explore performance and composition properly.

The aims and objectives of this qualification are to enable students to:

- Engage actively in the process of music study.
- Develop confidence and fluency in performing skills individually and in groups.
- Explore compositional skills to organise musical ideas and make use of appropriate resources
- Broaden musical experience and interests, develop imagination and foster creativity
- Develop knowledge, understanding and skills needed to communicate effectively as musicians
- Develop awareness of a variety of instruments, styles and approaches to performing and composing
- Utilise music technologies in composition and presentation of music
- Recognise contrasting genres and styles of music and placing them on a chronology timeline
- Learn effective strategies to become independent learners with enquiring minds
- Reflect on and evaluate their own and others' music
- Engage with, and appreciate, the diverse heritage of music; in order to promote personal, social, intellectual and cultural development.

Teaching methods and resources:

Lessons will be divided between individual and group Performance rehearsal, Composition and Music Writing, and preparing for the written test by exploring and analysing several pieces of music from the following four areas – Classical, Vocal Music, Music for Stage and Film, and Fusion.

- Solo performing
- Ensemble performing
- Approaches to performing
- Developing musical ideas
- Compositional techniques and strategies
- Ensuring technical control and coherence
- Methods of notating composition scores

Assessment methods:

In line with the GCSE specification students will be assessed in Performance, Composition and Listening and Appraisal.

Termly Assessment – Listening and Appraisal exams

½ Termly Assessments – in either Performance or Composition (solo or as part of an ensemble)

Where could studying Music take me? Further study and employment opportunities:

This course provides the ideal foundation year for GCSE Music (Edexcel) and is essential preparation for A Level courses such as Music and Music Technology. Studying instrumental music or singing to a high standard indicates a good work ethic, commitment to rehearsal and dedication to learning, especially useful to emphasise on university applications. Music is viewed as both a creative art and as an academic subject, given the necessity of historical and theoretical knowledge required to reach the top grades.

The course is ideal for students considering future careers in Professional Musicianship, Performance Art, Musical Theatre, Music Therapy, Advertising and Creative Media, Teaching, Music Technology and Sound Engineering, Radio Production, the Music and Music Festival Industry, Live Music Industry. For students with intentions of applying to university – having a music GCSE is seen as a positive accolade by Russell Group and Oxbridge colleges; who have significant extracurricular musical programmes which are populated by students from across the university.

Head of Department: Mr Woodward

Photography

Subject: Photography

Green Block Choice

Grade level 9-1

Examining body: Edexcel

Synopsis of course: This Year 9 foundation GCSE course aims to introduce students to a variety of experiences exploring a range of photographic media, techniques and processes. They will be made aware of both traditional and new technologies. Students will learn about composition, will practice the use of several camera settings and will set up a portfolio of experimental learning.

Students' responses to a range of artists will be shown through practical and critical activities which demonstrate the candidates' understanding of different styles, genres and traditions.

GCSE Art and Design (Photography) provides students with a wide range of creative, exciting and stimulating opportunities to explore their interests in ways that are both personally relevant and developmental in nature. This two-unit specification enables students to develop their ability to actively engage in the processes of Art and Design – to build creative skills through learning and doing, to develop imaginative and intuitive ways of working and develop knowledge and understanding of media, materials and technologies in a range of contexts, societies and cultures.

Teaching methods and resources:

Students are required to work in one or more area(s) of photography, such as those listed below. They may explore overlapping areas and combinations of areas.

- portraiture
- architecture
- still-life photography, working from objects or from the natural world or studio work
- documentary photography, photo journalism
- Fine art photography

Students will use workbooks to underpin their work where appropriate. There is no specific requirement for students to demonstrate drawing skills in this course unless they wish to. Students may use traditional methods and/or digital techniques to produce images. Students will be required to demonstrate skills in all of the following:

- the ability to explore elements of visual language, line, form, colour, pattern and texture in the context of photography
- the ability to respond to an issue, theme, concept or idea or work to a brief or answer a need in photography
- appreciation of viewpoint, composition, depth of field and movement; time-based, through such techniques as sequence or 'frozen moment'
- the appropriate use of the camera, film, lenses, filters and lighting for work in their chosen area of photography
- understanding of techniques related to the developing and printing of photographic images, where appropriate, presentation and layout

Students must show knowledge and understanding of:

- how ideas, feelings and meanings can be conveyed and interpreted in images and artefacts created in the chosen area(s) of photography
- historical and contemporary developments and different styles and genres

- how images and artefacts relate to social, environmental, cultural and/or ethical contexts, and to the time and place in which they were created
- continuity and change in different styles, genres and traditions relevant to photography
- the working vocabulary and specialist terminology which is relevant to their chosen area(s) of photography

Students will be assessed by the following methods at GCSE, Year 9 will follow a similar structure:

Students will acquire a detailed knowledge and understanding of the four assessment objectives: develop, refine, record and present. The course is made up of two units:

- Unit 1 – Personal Portfolio of Work: This is worth 60% of the final GCSE mark and can include a range of a pupil's most successful work.
- Unit 2 – Externally Set Assignment: This is an exam and will involve a theme issued by the exam board with a variety of starting points to choose from. Students have until the day of the exam to complete preparatory studies to create a final piece in 10 hours (2 school days) of exam time. This is worth 40% of the final GCSE mark.
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Where could studying Photography take me? Further study and employment opportunities:

This course provides the ideal foundation year for GCSE Photography and then good preparation for further progression to Art and Design related courses such as A-level Art and Design and enhanced vocational and career pathways.

The course is ideal for students considering future careers in the creative arts, media and design; for example: advertising, fashion, documentary, film and animation.

Head of Department: Ms Clarke

Physical Education

Subject: Physical Education

Green block choice

Grade level 9-1

Examining body: AQA

Specification: 8582

Synopsis of course:

This GCSE foundation course aims to open your eyes to the amazing world of sports performance. Not only will you have the chance to perform in three different sports through the non-exam assessment component, you will also develop wide ranging knowledge into the how and why of physical activity and sport.

The combination of the physical performance and academic challenge provides an exciting opportunity for students. You can perform, and then, through the academic study, learn how to improve your performance through the application of the theory.

Physical Education is learned through a range of different contexts, looking at the impact it has on both our and other people's everyday lives. You will learn the reasons why we do things, why some people out-perform others, mentally and physically. You will also delve into the ethical considerations behind the use of drugs whilst gaining an understanding of the consequences of inactivity and poor diet.

Teaching methods and resources:

The course will be a mixture of practical and theoretical teaching. At least one hour a week will be practically based and when possible, other theory elements will be delivered in a practical setting. In the lessons the students will need to work independently and in groups. Research skills will be very important to ensure students are up to date with the wider issues in sport.

Students will be required to use and develop these skills:

- research and analysis of current issues in sport
- be able to use a range of team and individual skills in practical settings
- understand how to give effective feedback to performers and analyse their own performance
- an ability to use a range of tactics and techniques to improve performance

Assessment methods:

Content Overview	Assessment Overview	Assessment Overview
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applied anatomy and physiology. • Physical training • Use of data • Movement analysis 	The human body and movement in physical activity in sport. (01) 78 marks 1hr 15mins written paper	30% of total GCSE
Socio-cultural influences <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sports psychology • Health, fitness and wellbeing • Use of data • Socio-cultural influences 	Socio-cultural influences and well-being in physical activity and sport (02) 78 marks 1 hour written paper	30% of total GCSE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practical activity assessment (3 activities mixed of team and individual sports) • Analysing and evaluating performance to bring about improvement. 	Practical performance in physical activity and sport (03) 100 marks Non-exam assessment	40% of total GCSE

Where could studying PE take me? Further study and employment opportunities:

This course provides the ideal foundation year for GCSE PE and is a good preparation for A Level courses such as A-level PE. This is an interesting and challenging learning experience. In it we introduce key sporting ideas and show how these interact with practical performance, you will gain insights into the relationships they have with each other throughout the course.

There is an opportunity for the development of transferable skills including: decision making, psychological understanding of people, independent thinking, problem solving and analytical skills as well as thinking, acting and reacting under pressure.

The course is ideal for students considering future careers in teaching and coaching, sports science, media, marketing, sports management, health and exercise, sports psychology, diet and nutrition, physiotherapy

Head of Department: Mr Clark

Politics

Subject: Politics GCSE	
Green Block Choice	
Grade level 9-1	
Examining body: OCR	Specification: J270
“If you do not take an interest in the affairs of your government, then you are doomed to live under the rule of fools” – Plato	
Synopsis of course Politics is the study of how society is organised and the forces that shape all of our lives. Politics is all around us and is key to understanding the way things work now, how we got to be here and where we are going in the future. We will explore politics all the way from the most local actions of councils up to the global role of the UN, giving students an appreciation of the breadth and depth of politics both at home and around the world. The course has been designed to enable learners to understand and appreciate key citizenship issues at home, in school and as young citizens in their wider community. It encourages independent learning, critical thinking and decision making – all personal skills for the 21st century, critical for progress and engagement in further education and the workplace.	
This is an introductory course, tailored to give students an overview of both UK and global politics. The intention is to give students the skills they need to succeed in the Politics GCSE course and, even for those who don't wish to continue after year 9, to provide them with the motivations and knowledge to be active citizens in later life. It is not a requirement to study this course to take the full GCSE in year 10/11 but it will give students a strong head start.	
Topics covered: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Democracy and government in the UK• The role of the media• The economy• Political philosophy• Global politics	
Skills Required <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Data analysis and interpretation of statistics• Essay writing• Critical thinking• Engagement in news and interest in national/international affairs	
Teaching methods and resources: As with all of our courses, we aim to create the most stimulating classroom environment possible to enable our young people to thrive in our subject. This course lends itself well to discussion and debate: we will encourage students to verbalise their opinions, defend their arguments and challenge the statements of others in a supportive and formal way. We will link the content to contemporary and relevant examples throughout the course to enable our learners to feel the relevance of the content they are studying. Group and paired work will be emphasised to create a collaborative atmosphere and stimulate in-depth discussions.	
Head of Department: Mr Ruffles	

Psychology

Subject: Psychology

Green Block Choice

Grade level 9-1

Examining body: OCR

Specification: J203

Synopsis of course:

The foundation year for OCR's GCSE (9–1) specification in Psychology is designed to inspire and engage learners by providing a broad, coherent, satisfying and worthwhile course of study which develops an understanding of the ideas and values that characterise 'self' and others. Learners will be equipped with a psychological literacy that enables them to apply their knowledge and skills in their everyday lives, including making informed decisions about further study and career choices.

The whole purpose of the year 9 course is to act as a preparation for the demands of the GCSE course. As such, we will be studying a range of topics that tangentially link to those we will do in year 10 & 11, but not to the extent that we will repeat content. The emphasis is on developing the psychological skills and ways of thinking that will enable them to flourish in their GCSE.

Teaching methods and resources:

OCR's GCSE (9–1) in Psychology will encourage learners to:

- use specialist vocabulary, psychological concepts, terminology and conventions to engage in the process of psychological enquiry
- acquire knowledge and understanding of psychology, developing an understanding of self and others, and how psychological understanding can help to explain everyday social phenomena
- understand how psychological research is conducted, including the role of scientific method and data analysis
- present information, develop arguments and draw conclusions through a critical approach to psychological evidence, developing as reflective thinkers
- develop an understanding of the relationship between psychology and personal, moral, social and cultural issues, and develop an understanding of ethical issues in psychology
- develop an understanding of psychological issues, the contribution of psychology to individual, social and cultural diversity, and how psychology contributes to society.

Assessment methods:

The assessment of Year 9 Psychology will take varied forms: we will do some exam papers, designed to test their knowledge of the course, and will also complete some GCSE essays. There will also be more synoptic assessment strategies which will take a more continuous form, utilising the classwork and HW as evidence (as well as some project-based learning)

The topics we will study are:

1. Social Psychology
2. Psychological Problems and Mental Illness
3. Conspiracy Psychology
4. Attachment
5. Research Methods
6. Criminal Psychology

Where could studying Psychology take me? Further study and employment opportunities:

This course provides the ideal foundation and good preparation for the GCSE course in Psychology. The course is ideal for students considering future careers in psychology, mental health, medicine, business management or nursing amongst many others.

Head of Department: Mr Ruffles