

# OPTIONS KEY STAGE 4 2026



## KING EDWARD VI LORDSWOOD SCHOOL FOR GIRLS

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*Educational excellence for our City*

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## **KING EDWARD VI LORDSWOOD SCHOOL FOR GIRLS**

Dear Students

As you are aware this is a very important time as you will shortly be making choices about the subjects that you wish to study next year. In preparation for this, you will have already started to have discussions with your form tutor regarding your career aspirations and you will be provided with information about the courses available to you next year. In addition, we have created an area on the school website to help support you in making your choices for your Key Stage 4 programme of study. At Key Stage 4, you will follow a broad and balanced core curriculum that consists of the following subjects: English Language, English Literature, mathematics, science, French or Spanish, geography or history, religious studies, physical education and PSHCE. Although you must take all of these subjects, you will have the opportunity to access different courses in science. Your subject teachers will guide you in making the most appropriate choice in this subject area. Additionally, you have the opportunity to choose two further subjects, that you will study alongside your core curriculum. There are many different courses on offer that will suit your interests, abilities and career aspirations. When choosing your optional subjects you must consider the following:

- Which subjects do I enjoy most?
- Which subjects do I do well in?
- Which subjects will I engage in most over the next two years?
- What are my career aspirations?
- Will the course I choose be suitable and support my career aspirations?

This is about your future so please do not choose subjects just because your friends are doing them or because you like the teacher! You must choose the subjects that you want to do and those that you feel that you will be successful in. Talk to your subject teachers, form tutors and parents as they will also guide and advise you about which courses are most suitable for you. Remember that you are required to stay in education or training until you are 18. It is therefore important that when you are considering your options, you think about what you want to progress on to post 16. Ultimately the KS4 curriculum, both core and optional subjects, provide a solid platform for post 16 study regardless of what you may choose to study in the future. We will aim to provide you with your first choices but there may be times when we are not be able to do so, therefore you must consider your reserve choices carefully as once options are confirmed they will not be changed. For a subject to run we need a minimum of 15 students. Your option choices form needs to be completed and returned to me by no later than Friday 6th February 2026.

If you do require any further information, then please do not hesitate to speak to me.

Loveena Verma

Assistant Headteacher (Assessment, Data & Outcomes)



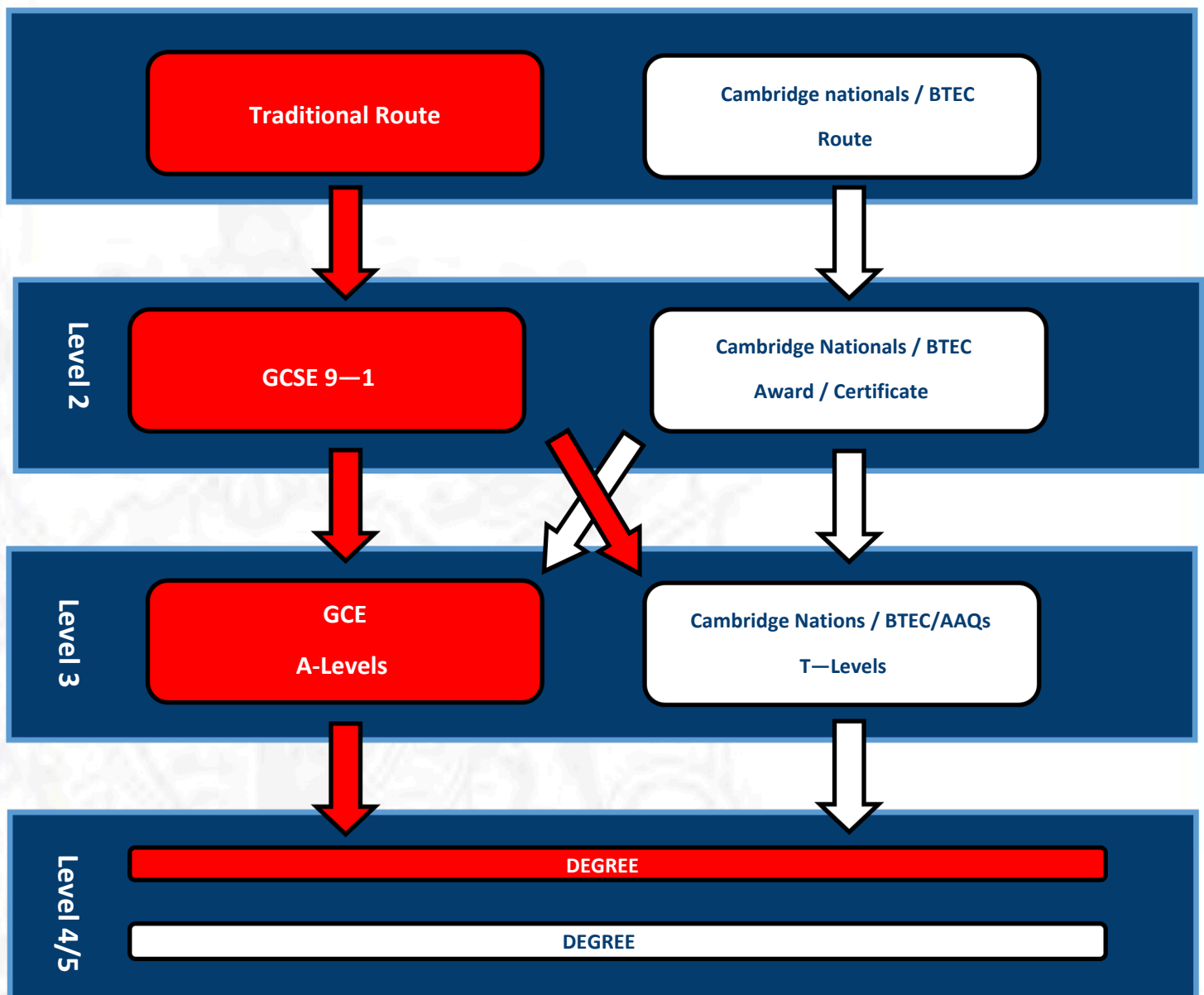
# KING EDWARD VI LORDSWOOD SCHOOL FOR GIRLS

## Curriculum, qualifications and progression

All GCSEs will be assessed at the end of the two year course, in the May and June examination period. There may be an opportunity for some aspects of the GCSE equivalent courses to be examined at dates earlier than this, depending on the examination board. GCSE subjects are graded on a scale of 1 to 9, where 9 is the highest grade. Grade 5 is slightly above the performance of the old grade C.

BTEC/Cambridge nationals are equivalent to one GCSE and are graded distinction\* to pass at level 2. Students not achieving the level 2 criteria can be graded at level 1 distinction to pass. All vocational options will have at least 20% of the course externally assessed. Both GCSEs and vocational courses can be used as a prerequisite to A levels and other level 3 qualifications.

## 14—19 Qualifications and progression pathways





## **KING EDWARD VI LORDSWOOD SCHOOL FOR GIRLS**

### **CORE SUBJECTS**

- GCSE English Language
- GCSE English Literature
- GCSE Mathematics
- GCSE Science
- GCSE French or Spanish
- GCSE Geography or History
- GCSE Religious Studies
- Physical Education (Non - qualification)
- PSHCE (Non - qualification)

### **OPTION SUBJECTS**

- GCSE Art and Design
- GCSE Business Studies
- GCSE Citizenship Studies
- GCSE Computer Science
- Creative iMedia
- GCSE Drama
- Health and Social Care BTEC Award
- Hospitality and Catering Level 2 Award
- GCSE Music
- GCSE Photography
- GCSE Physical Education
- GCSE Separate Science



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# **CORE SUBJECTS**







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# English Literature

**What is the qualification?** English Literature GCSE awarded at grades 9 – 1 (AQA)

## **What will I be doing on the course?**

For GCSE English Literature, there are two examinations, with Paper 1 testing your understanding of Shakespeare's 'Macbeth' and either Brontë's 'Jane Eyre' or Charles Dickens's 'A Christmas Carol'.

Paper 2 assesses your ability to analyse Priestley's 'An Inspector Calls' and compare two of the studied 'Power and Conflict' poems. On this second paper, you will also have to analyse an unseen poem, and then compare this poem to a second unseen poem.

## **Spoken Language (speaking and listening)**

This component does not count towards the overall GCSE grade. A separate endorsement/certificate will be awarded. It is covered through one presentation and subsequent discussion.

## **Assessment**

The course is assessed by 100% terminal examination at the end of Year 11. There are two examinations.

## **What skills do I need to develop to be successful at this course?**

You will need to develop your ability to write extended essays in timed conditions. You will need to be able to identify relevant supporting textual detail and language and structural devices as well as analyse texts and writers' language choices in depth. You must be able to comment on the effects at word, sentence and text level. You will need to work both independently and in groups to plan, discuss and present ideas orally.

## **What could I use this qualification for?**

GCSE English Literature provides excellent preparation for a range of subjects at A level that require essay writing as well as comparative and analytical skills. GCSE English Literature nurtures the skills required particularly in the humanities and the social sciences. Careers in this subject could include poet, lawyer, publishing editor, campaigners, editors and novelist. Every area requires English skills, but some possible career pathways include journalism, film, marketing, freelance writing, law, copywriting, teaching, broadcasting and publishing.



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# Mathematics

**What is the qualification?** Mathematics GCSE Higher tier grade 9 – 4 (Edexcel)

Foundation tier grades 5 – 1 (OCR)

## **What will I be doing on the course?**

The mathematics department follows a linear GCSE course. The scheme of work is organised into distinct topics to allow you to develop mathematical fluency in all areas of maths, but teaching will make connections between these topics to aid the development of mathematical reasoning and problem solving. The sequencing of the topics follows a sensible and logical order to ensure you have the prerequisite skills to build upon prior knowledge at each stage of your learning. The prerequisite skills and connected topics will be referred to by teachers, and shared with you at all opportunities.

## **What skills do I need to develop to be successful at this course?**

You need to be able to problem solve, communicate effectively using numbers and symbols, explain and justify solutions and have the ability to interpret and discuss data.

## **Assessment**

The course is assessed by 100% terminal examination at the end of Year 11. There are three papers, all of which are 1 hour 30mins.

## **What could I use this qualification for?**

GCSE Mathematics provides you with improved opportunities for further education, training and employment. A good qualification in mathematics is necessary for most careers such as accountancy, architecture, financial services, underwriter, risk analyst and media analyst. It is essential for further study in many subjects for example psychology, biology, chemistry and physics.

## **Additional information**

Provision is made to take stand alone Level 3 qualifications and/or further maths for students that are identified as excelling in the subject .



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# Combined Science

**What is the qualification?** The combined science qualification is worth two GCSEs, consisting of two equal or adjacent grades from 9-9 to 1-1 (AQA)

## **What will I be doing on the course?**

Studying combined science at GCSE will build on your knowledge and understanding of KS3 science to provide the foundations for understanding the material world. Scientific understanding is changing our lives and is vital to the world's future prosperity. During this course you will be taught essential aspects of the knowledge, methods, processes and uses of science, with an emphasis on each of the three different sciences; biology, chemistry and physics. To support and consolidate your understanding of scientific concepts, you will also complete practical work. This will also serve to develop your investigative science skills and handling of specialist science equipment to take measurements.

## **Assessment**

At the end of Year 11 you will sit six papers: two biology, two chemistry and two physics. Each of the papers will test your knowledge and scientific understanding, and include questions related to the practical activities that you have completed. Each paper is worth 70 marks and 1 hour 15 minutes in length. Examination papers will have a mixture of multiple choice, structured, closed short answer, and open response questions.

## **What skills do I need to be develop to be successful at this course?**

To be successful in science you need to be able to apply your knowledge to new situations. You need to have the ability to draw conclusions from data, and use the information to explain scientific theory. You should be confident in using a range of practical and mathematical techniques. This will also enable you to understand the nature, processes and, methods of science through different scientific enquires enabling you to develop you observational, practical, modelling, enquiry, and problem solving skills. You must have good mathematical skills and an ability to analyse and evaluate data and draw accurate conclusions. You will need to be able to apply your knowledge to novel situations.

## **What could I use this qualification for?**

A GCSE in science can open many doors. You may choose to continue to study A levels in science, psychology or opt for the BTEC Level 3 in Medical biology. Many universities and employers are keen for you to have good science grades as it shows you are an analytical and logical thinker. You could use this qualification to study any of the sciences at A level. Good GCSE science grades are essential for many university courses. Careers include medicine, dentistry, lab technician, engineering, toxicologist, forensic scientist, academic researcher, software engineer.



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# French

**What is the qualification?** French GCSE awarded at grades 9 – 1 (Edexcel)

### What will I be doing on the course?

You will build upon prior grammatical knowledge whilst regularly revisiting tenses and other key grammatical points in new contexts to ensure knowledge is secure. At key stage 4, the course is split up into the following six themes: My personal world, lifestyle and wellbeing, my neighbourhood, media and technology, studying and my future and travel and tourism.

### Assessment

At the end of Year 11, you will sit the following four examinations:

Paper 1: Listening and understanding in French (25% of final grade)

- Foundation tier: 45 minutes including 5 minutes reading time
- Higher tier: 1 hour including 5 minutes reading time

Paper 2: Speaking in French (25% of final grade)

- Foundation tier: 7–9 minutes plus 15 minutes preparation time
- Higher tier: 10–12 minutes plus 15 minutes preparation time.

Paper 3: Reading and understanding in French (25% of final grade)

- Foundation tier: 45 minutes
- Higher tier: 1 hour

Paper 4: Writing in French (25% of final grade)

- Foundation tier: 1 hour 15 minutes
- Higher tier: 1 hour 20 minutes.

### What skills do I need to develop to be successful at this course?

In order to be successful in this course you will need to develop your level of proficiency in listening, speaking, reading, writing and translation. In addition, you will need to develop the following transferable skills: Cognitive skills - Systems thinking, decision making and reasoning. Critical thinking - analysing, synthesising and reasoning skills. Interpersonal skills - Communication, active listening, oral communication, written communication, assertive communication and non verbal communication. Adaptability – ability and willingness to cope with the unpredictable and communication styles and cultures. Self-management and self-development – ability to work autonomously, be self-motivating and self-monitoring, willing and able to acquire new information and skills.

### What could I use this qualification for?

In recent years, higher education institutions and employers have consistently flagged the need for students to develop a range of transferable skills to enable them to respond with confidence to the demands of undergraduate study and the world of work. Entrance to many further education institutions is often dependent on students possessing a GCSE in a MFL. There are a wide range of careers on offer to those who have studied languages from teaching, journalism and business to politics, accounting and law.



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# Spanish

**What is the qualification?** Spanish GCSE awarded at grades 9 – 1. (Edexcel)

## **What will I be doing on the course?**

You will build upon prior grammatical knowledge whilst regularly revisiting tenses and other key grammatical points in new contexts to ensure knowledge is secure. At key stage 4, the course is split up into the following six themes: My personal world, lifestyle and wellbeing, my neighbourhood, media and technology, studying and my future and travel and tourism.

## **Assessment**

At the end of Year 11, you will sit the following four examinations:

Paper 1: Listening and understanding in Spanish (25% of final grade)

- Foundation tier: 45 minutes including 5 minutes reading time
- Higher tier: 1 hour including 5 minutes reading time.

Paper 2: Speaking in Spanish (25% of final grade)

- Foundation tier: 7–9 minutes plus 15 minutes preparation time.
- Higher tier: 10–12 minutes plus 15 minutes preparation time.

Paper 3: Reading and understanding in Spanish (25% of final grade)

- Foundation tier: 1 hour 15 minutes.
- Higher tier: 1 hour 20 minutes.

Paper 4: Writing in Spanish (25% of final grade)

- Foundation tier: 1 hour 10 minutes.
- Higher tier: 1 hour 20 minutes.

## **What skills do I need to develop to be successful at this course?**

In order to be successful in this course you will need to develop your level of proficiency in listening, speaking, reading, writing and translation. In addition, you will need to develop the following transferable skills: Cognitive skill - Systems thinking, decision making and reasoning. Critical thinking - analysing, synthesising and reasoning skills. Interpersonal skills - Communication – active listening, oral communication, written communication, assertive communication and non-verbal communication. Adaptability – ability and willingness to cope with the unpredictable and communication styles and cultures. Self-management and self-development – ability to work autonomously, be self-motivating and self-monitoring, willing and able to acquire new information and skills.

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# Geography

**What is the qualification?** Geography GCSE awarded at grades 9 – 1 (OCR)

## **What will I be doing on the course?**

### **Living in the UK Today**

This component investigates the dynamic and diverse geography of the UK. It draws on a range of themes to explore the changing but distinctive physical and human environments, the processes which drive them and the challenges they create. Topics covered in this component are: Landscapes of the UK, People of the UK and UK Environmental Challenges.

### **The World Around Us**

This component explores the complexities of the planet and the interconnections that take place. It draws on a range of themes to examine the changing, dynamic nature of physical and human environments, the role of decision makers and the sustainable nature and management of these environments. Topics covered include: Ecosystems of the Planet, People of the Planet and Environmental threats to our Planet.

### **Geographical Skills**

Geographical skills are fundamental to the study and practice of geography. They are integrated into all aspects of the subject. Themes covered include: Geographical Skills and Fieldwork Assessment.

### **Assessment**

Living in the UK Today (01) – 1 hour written paper (30% of total GCSE)

The World Around Us (02) – 1 hour written paper (30% of total GCSE)

Geographical Skills (03) – 1 hour 30 minutes written paper (40% of total GCSE)

## **What skills do I need to develop to be successful at this course?**

Literacy – to be able to ‘write like a geographer’, with concise language and good use of key terminology. Organisation – to ensure that all deadlines are met and that you prepare well for assessments in lessons and formal examinations. Cartographic skills – select, adapt and construct maps. Graphical skills – effectively present and communicate data through graphs and charts, whilst developing the skill to extract, interpret, analyse and evaluate information. Numerical and statistical skills – cross-curricular skills which can be adapted from mathematics.

## **What could I use this qualification for?**

Geography is recognised as a subject which develops many key skills. It will be of benefit to you when applying to college and university as it shows that you have a good understanding of the world around you and possess a range of valuable skills. Geography is often considered as the link between the sciences and humanities and so works well for those following either route. Careers using geography include town planning, forestry, meteorology, construction work and waste management.



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# History

**What is the qualification?** History GCSE awarded at grades 9 – 1 (AQA)

## **What will I be doing on the course?**

**Conflict and tension, 1918–1939:** This wider world depth study enables you to understand the complex and diverse interests of different individuals and states. It focuses on the causes of the Second World War and seeks to show how and why conflict occurred and why it proved difficult to resolve the issues which caused it. This study also considers the role of key individuals and groups as well as how they were affected and influenced by international relations.

**Germany, 1890–1945: Democracy and dictatorship.** This period study focuses on the development of Germany during a turbulent half century of change. It was a period of democracy and dictatorship – the development and collapse of democracy and the rise and fall of Nazism. You will study the political, economic, social and cultural aspects of these two developments and the role ideas played in influencing change. You will also look at the role of key individuals and groups and the impact the developments had on them.

**Britain - Power and the people:** This thematic study will enable you to gain an understanding of the development of the relationship between the citizen and the state in Britain over a long period of time. It considers the causes, scale, nature and consequences of protest to that relationship. By charting the journey from feudalism and serfdom to democracy and equality, it reveals how, in different periods, the state responds to challenges to its authority and the consequences. It allows you to construct an understanding of the rights and responsibilities of the citizen.

**Elizabethan England: c.1568–1603:** This option allows you to study in depth a specified historical period, the last 35 years of Elizabeth I's reign. The study will focus on some major events of Elizabeth I's reign considered from the economic, religious, political, social and cultural standpoint and arising controversies.

## **Assessment**

GCSE History is assessed through exams only - there is no coursework. There are two exams at the end of Year 11 which are 2 hours each. You will be tested on how well you:

- Know and understand the key features of the periods studied.
- Explain and analyse historical events using concepts like cause, consequence, change and continuity.
- Interpret and evaluate sources from the time to make supported judgements,
- Assess different interpretations of the past and explain why they differ.

Good spelling, punctuation and grammar (SPaG) are also rewarded in your written answers.

## **What skills do I need to develop to be successful at this course?**

To succeed in History, you'll need to be able to select, organise and communicate historical knowledge clearly and effectively. You'll also develop the ability to examine and interpret different historical sources to reach balanced and well-reasoned conclusions. If you are curious about the past, motivated to learn and keen to strengthen your literacy and analytical thinking, you'll thrive in this subject.

## **What could I use this qualification for?**

Studying History can lead to a wide range of careers, including archaeology, conservation, museum or art curation, heritage management and historical research. It also builds transferable skills that are highly valued in professions such as law, journalism, politics, teaching and business. Colleges and universities highly value History students because they know they are independent thinkers who aren't afraid of hard work and can analyse, argue and communicate effectively. Ultimately, History teaches you to think critically, argue persuasively and understand the world around you - skills that open doors to many future opportunities.



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# Religious Studies

**What is the qualification?** Religious Studies GCSE awarded at grades 9 – 1 (AQA)

## **What will I be doing on the course?**

Religious Studies is a core GCSE subject that encourages you to explore big questions about life, purpose, and morality. You'll examine how religion, belief, and ethics shape people's decisions, communities, and society as a whole. This course develops your ability to think critically, analyse different viewpoints, and communicate your ideas clearly, while also encouraging you to reflect on your own values and beliefs. Whether you're interested in philosophy, current affairs, or understanding global cultures, Religious Studies helps you make sense of the world around you.

In **Paper 1**, you will study two major world religions: Christianity and Islam. You'll explore their central beliefs, teachings and practices, and learn how faith is expressed by individuals and communities in the UK and globally.

In **Paper 2**, you will explore philosophical and ethical themes, examining how religious and non-religious viewpoints respond to complex moral issues, such as abortion, euthanasia, marriage, divorce, human rights, crime, punishment, and conflict in the modern world.

## **Assessment:**

Assessment takes place at the end of Year 11 through **two written examinations**, each lasting **1 hour 45 minutes**:

**Paper 1:** The study of religions — beliefs, teachings and practices.

**Paper 2:** Thematic studies — philosophical and ethical issues. Each paper contributes 50% of your final GCSE grade.

## **What skills do I need to develop to be successful at this course?**

Through GCSE Religious Studies, you will develop strong critical thinking and problem-solving skills, enabling you to analyse and compare different viewpoints and evidence. You will learn to communicate your ideas clearly and persuasively, while reflecting on your own values and ethical reasoning. The course also helps you build a deeper understanding of diverse cultures and worldviews, preparing you to engage thoughtfully with complex issues both in study and everyday life.

## **What could I use this qualification for?**

GCSE Religious Studies opens doors to a wide range of careers and pathways where understanding people, culture, and ethics is key. Beyond traditional fields such as law, teaching, social work, and healthcare, it is also valuable for careers in journalism and media, analysing current affairs and ethical dilemmas; politics and public service, understanding diverse communities and worldviews; and the creative industries, including writing, storytelling, film, and game design that explore moral themes. It is equally useful in international relations and diplomacy, working across cultures and faiths; conflict resolution and humanitarian work, promoting understanding in global or community contexts; and technology and AI ethics, shaping responsible innovation for the future. By studying Religious Studies, you gain a broader perspective, sharper thinking skills, and the ability to engage thoughtfully with complex issues, giving you a unique edge in almost any field.



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# Physical Education Core

## What will I be doing on the course?

You will take part in three hours of Physical Education every two weeks. Our aspiration is for all students to develop independence, organisational skills, confidence, and the ability to lead a variety of activities. Throughout the course, you will work towards planning and delivering a sports festival for primary school children, gaining valuable experience in creating and leading engaging sessions.

Over the two years, you will participate in a wide range of sports and physical activities designed to promote not only physical fitness but also important life skills such as communication, teamwork, leadership, social interaction, time management, and resilience. Developing resilience is a key focus — learning to stay motivated, overcome challenges, and respond positively to setbacks both in sport and in everyday life.

While developing skills and leadership qualities is central to the course, the main focus is on enjoyment and fostering a lifelong love of being active and healthy. We aim to inspire you to find activities you enjoy and can continue beyond school, supporting your physical, mental, and emotional wellbeing in the future.

Our curriculum includes a mix of both popular sports such as football, badminton, tennis, and netball, as well as less traditional and emerging activities like pickleball, ultimate frisbee, and goalball. This variety ensures all students have the opportunity to discover new interests, experience inclusive sports, and develop a broad understanding of physical activity.

Through these experiences, you will build confidence, develop lifelong healthy habits, and gain the tools to lead a balanced and active lifestyle.



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# Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship Education (PSHCE)

“PSHCE education is a school curriculum subject in England that helps children and young people stay healthy, safe and prepared for life – and work – in modern Britain.” PSHE Association (2022). The curriculum at King Edward VI Lordswood School for Girls supports the school’s personal development vision of empowering students to become self aware, confident and resilient in order for them to be able to make the right choices in their future lives so that they stay safe and makes a significant contribution to society. It:

- Provides you with opportunities to reflect on your identity, clarify your own values and attitudes, and explore the complex and conflicting range of values and attitudes encountered now and in the future.
- Promotes spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development of students– with a focus on British Values and Citizenship.
- Develops capacity to make informed decisions in relation to your wellbeing, both physical and mental.
- Develops understanding of social wellbeing: relationships between friends, family, and others – how to stay safe, express consent, and be able to communicate when you do not feel safe.
- Provides expert independent, up-to-date careers guidance that gives you the best information and opportunities available and helps you progress into further education, training and employment.

Our PSHCE curriculum is based on five strands that are covered in all year groups via a spiral model where topics are repeated and taught in an age-appropriate manner:

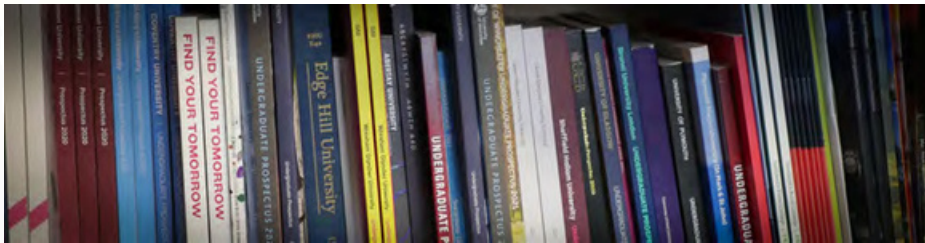
Strand A – Careers/Finances/Education

Strand B – Identity/Social and Emotional Wellbeing

Strand C – Mental and Physical Health

Strand D – Citizenship and Charity

Strand E – Risk and Safety



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# Careers

Good careers guidance broadens horizons, challenges stereotypes, and raises aspirations. Careers education at King Edward VI Lordswood School for Girls is student-centred and inclusive providing a broad range of experiences and knowledge, and is also targeted specifically for your interests and strengths.

Our careers programme at King Edward VI Lordswood School for Girls follows a 7 year continuation of learning and development from Years 7 - 13, ensuring every student is equipped to make informed and confident choices about their future.

### **Careers statement**

Our aim is to inspire students to explore their aspirations, understand the breadth of opportunities available and develop the skills and confidence needed to make successful transitions to the next stages of education or employment.

Careers education is delivered through a variety of learning experiences, including the academic curriculum, PSHE lessons, form tutor time, assemblies, enrichment and values days, and access to the Unifrog platform, as well as visits and trips that bring learning to life.

### **Year 10**

#### **Creating experiences**

In Year 10, you will complete a week of practical work experience, helping you to develop key employability and transferable skills while gaining an insight into the world of work. You also have opportunities for both 1:1 and group careers interviews with a qualified Careers Adviser. Students with additional needs will receive tailored support and targeted interventions to ensure they are fully prepared for their next steps.

### **Year 11**

#### **Moving on**

All students in Year 11 will have a 1-1 careers interview with our Careers Adviser, to discuss post 16 options and next steps. Data from these sessions contributes to our destination tracking and support planning. Students will have access to careers fairs, lunchtime drop-in sessions and ongoing PSHE lessons focussed on careers and progression pathways. These opportunities ensure every student is informed, supported and ready to take their next step with confidence.



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# **Option Subjects**



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# Art and Design

**What is the qualification?** Art and Design GCSE awarded at grades 9–1 (AQA)

## **What will I be doing on the course?**

This course allows students to explore and experiment with a wide range of art techniques and media. You will be given two project themes over the two years for which you will have to produce a sketchbook and final piece.

During the course, you will be shown how to draw and use printing techniques, paint, photography and digital media. You will then be able to choose which media or combination of media you wish to use to produce your final pieces. All of the work produced for these projects will be submitted in a portfolio which equates to 60% of the overall marks. In addition to this portfolio, you are also given a selection of questions/ themes that have been written by the examination board. You will have a set number of weeks to produce a sketchbook based on your chosen question/ theme and then a ten hour examination during which you will have to make the final piece. The examination unit will make up the other 40% of the overall grade.

**Assessment** The main deadlines are as follows;

**Year 10 Spring term:** project 1 deadline, to be assessed as part of Unit 1.

**Year 11 end of Autumn term:** Project 2 deadline, to be assessed as part of Unit 1.

**Spring term:** Examination paper (Unit 2; Externally set question) preparatory period plus 10 hour examination time.

All units are internally assessed and a sample will be externally moderated.

## **What skills do I need to develop to be successful at this course?**

You need to be extremely creative and the more ideas you have the better. You also need to be willing to using techniques and media that you find more challenging or with which you are unfamiliar. We will teach you how to improve your drawing and making skills during lessons but you may be required to come to art club to practise any that you find particularly difficult or to complete work that cannot be taken home. You need to be able to manage your time well because artwork can be time consuming and require careful planning. You need to be able to research artists and designers using the internet, books and by going to exhibitions. You will also have to develop an analytical writing style and be able to show that you think carefully about imagery rather than take it at face value.

## **What could I use this qualification for?**

This qualification will allow you to go on and study an art based course at Post 16 and it will also help you enhance your research skills, analytical skills, independent and creative thinking skills and time management skills – all of which are very useful whichever courses you go on to study. Careers in Art and Design include artist, illustrator, fashion photographer, teacher, graphic designer, animator and many more.



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# Business Studies

**What is the qualification?** Business Studies GCSE awarded at grades 9 – 1 (OCR)

## What will I be doing on the course?

This course is a broad-based qualification providing an introduction to business. This qualification will encourage you to be inspired and challenged by following a broad, coherent, satisfying and worthwhile course of study and to gain an insight into related sectors and various types of businesses in the UK and internationally. The GCSE will enable you to understand businesses around you, including your local high street; investing decisions they make in order to be successful. Business studies will prepare you to make informed decisions about your future goals and career choices.

## Assessment

Business 1: (Paper 1) Business activity, marketing and people (50% of total mark)

- Unit 1 Business activity
- Unit 2 Marketing
- Unit 3 People

Business 2: (Paper 2) Operations, finance and influences on business (50% of total mark)

- Unit 4 Operations
- Unit 5 Finance
- Unit 6 Influences on businesses
- Unit 7 The independent nature of business

## Assessment

In year 11

paper 1— 1 hour 30 minutes

Paper 2—1 hour 30 minutes

## What skills do I need to develop to be successful at this course?

It is important that students are reading local and national newspapers to help contextualise the theory they are learning and, applying their knowledge to real life situations, means that independent research is vital to success. Mathematical calculations are also integral to the finance unit and students need to be confident in working out and analysing results. This course involves lots of discussion and team work.

## What could I use this qualification for?

This qualification will allow you to go on and study a business based course at Post 16 and it will also help you enhance your research skills, analytical skills, independent and creative thinking skills and team building skills. Careers in business include marketing, accountancy, human resource management, finance and business management. The subject also complements careers in IT and media.



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# Citizenship

**What is the qualification?** Citizenship GCSE awarded at grades 1– 9 (AQA)

## **What will I be doing on the course?**

You will explore how society works, the role of citizens, and how individuals can influence decisions in a democratic system. The course focuses on rights, responsibilities, and participation in civic life. You'll engage in debates, research, case studies, and an Active Citizenship project, where you take real action on an issue that matters to you.

There are 5 units of study:-

### **1. Citizenship skills, processes and methods.**

Students learn to research and analyse citizenship issues, develop evidence-based arguments, and communicate clear, reasoned conclusions while considering different perspectives.

### **2. Life in modern Britain**

Students explore British values, identity, diversity, and the role of media, while examining the UK's global relationships and ways citizens can influence society.

### **3. Rights and responsibilities**

Students study the principles of law, citizens' rights and responsibilities, the justice system, and how laws and human rights have developed and are protected in the UK and internationally.

### **4. Politics and participation**

Students learn about how political power and democracy operate in the UK, including the roles of parliament, government, political parties, elections, and devolved administrations.

### **5. Active Citizenship**

Students learn about citizenship actions taken by others and carry out their own investigation and practical action, developing skills such as research, planning, collaboration, and evaluation to create positive change.

## **Assessment**

All examinations will take place at the end of Year 11.

Paper 1: 80 marks, 1 hour 45 minutes (50% Of GCSE).

Paper 2: 80 marks, 1 hour 45 minutes (50% Of GCSE).

## **What skills do I need to develop to be successful at this course?**

You will need to think critically, evaluate evidence, debate ideas, make persuasive arguments and justify your conclusions. If you are motivated and enjoy citizenship, are engaged in current affairs and stay up to date then you are likely to thrive in this subject.

## **What could I use this qualification for?**

Citizenship is excellent preparation for A levels in the humanities and the social sciences e.g. sociology, government and politics or law. If you choose to follow a more scientific route, citizenship is ideal evidence for universities and future employers of your literacy, analytical skills and understanding of the world around you.



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# Computer Science

**What is the qualification?** Computer Science GCSE awarded at grades 9 – 1 (OCR)

## **What will I be doing on this course?**

GCSE Computer Science consists of two units:

**01** - Computer Systems

**02** - Computational Thinking.

In this course you will understand and apply the fundamental principles and concepts of Computer Science. For each of these units you will sit an examination at the end of Year 11.

### **Computer Systems Paper 1**

- 1.1 Systems Architecture
- 1.2 Memory Storage
- 1.3 Computer networks, connections & protocol
- 1.4 Network Security
- 1.5 System Software
- 1.6 Ethical, legal, cultural, & environmental impacts of digital technology

### **Computational thinking, algorithms & programming Paper 2**

- 2.1 Algorithm
- 2.2 Programming Fundamentals
- 2.3 Producing Robust Program
- 2.4 Boolean Logic
- 2.5 Programming language & IDE

### **Assessment**

Two 1 hour 30 minutes examinations in Year 11

## **What skills do I need to develop to be successful at this course?**

Problem solving, independence and time management are just some skills. You will build on your knowledge from Key Stage 3.

## **What could I use this qualification for?**

Computer Science will help you develop a range of skills which can help you in the career of your choice. Some of these skills are problem solving, decomposition, abstraction, understanding how computers operate and how networks transmit data. In addition to this you will also develop your programming skills.

Careers you could use this for:

Programming engineer, Data scientist, Software tester, Web developer, Systems analyst, Business analyst, Product manager, Network architect, Software engineer, Technical support, Game developer and cyber security.



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# Creative iMedia

**What is the qualification?** Cambridge Nationals (OCR) Level 1/Level 2 in Creative iMedia

## **What will I be doing on the course? How will it be structured?**

You will design, plan, create and review digital media products which are fit for purpose meeting both client and target audience requirements. You will apply the fundamental principles and concepts of digital media including factors that influence product design, use of media codes and conventions, pre-production planning techniques, legal issues and creation/publishing/distribution considerations. You will use your learning in practical, real-life situations, such as:

- developing visual identities for clients
- planning and creating original digital graphics
- planning, creating and reviewing original digital media products.

**Assessment** There are two mandatory units.

Unit R093: Creative iMedia in the media industry - This is assessed by taking an exam. You will learn about the media industry, digital media products, how they are planned, and the media codes which are used to convey meaning, create impact and engage audiences.

Unit R094: Visual identity and digital graphics - This is assessed by completing a set assignment. You will learn how to develop visual identities for clients and use the concepts of graphic design to create original digital graphics to engage target audiences.

The optional unit:

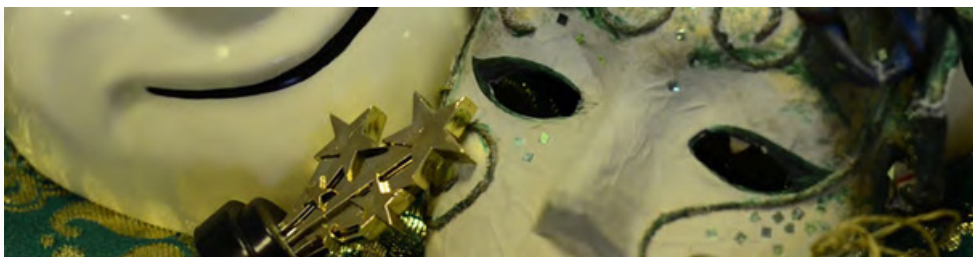
Unit R096: Animation With Audio - This is assessed by completing a set assignment. You will learn how to plan, create and review an animation with audio products.

## **What skills will need to be developed to be successful at this course?**

You will need to think creatively, innovatively, analytically, logically and critically.

## **What could I use this qualification for?**

Careers in this subject include: Production assistant, video editor, social media specialist, social media manager, film maker, digital artist, producer, sound engineer and video game designer.



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# Drama

**What is the qualification?** Drama GCSE awarded at grades 9 – 1 (Eduqas)

**What will I be doing on the course?**

**Component 1:** Devising Theatre. You will explore a range of performance genres, design concepts (costume/makeup/set) and create an original performance or design and create a set or costume from a stimulus set by the exam board. This is worth 40% of the final grade.

**Component 2:** Performing from a text. You will perform two extracts of a play of your choice to a visiting Eduqas examiner or design and create a set or costume for the performers. This is worth 20% of the qualification.

**Component 3:** Interpreting Theatre. You will study a complete play through practical application and watch a live performance and analyse these during a written examination. This is worth 40% of the mark. You will visit a range of live performances across the country, watch touring theatre companies and explore a wide range of theatre genres including physical theatre, naturalism and surrealism to aid your exam work. You will work both individually and in groups and you will be able to tailor the course to your own strengths and preference.

**Assessment** 60% performance and exploration.

**Component 1:** (non-exam assessment): There will be opportunities for you to perform to your teacher. These devised pieces will be internally assessed by your teacher and then externally moderated. During these explorations, you will be awarded marks for your collaboration, supporting notes, and the final performance of the piece. You can choose between designer and actor roles.

**Component 2:** (non-exam assessment): The performance of an extract from a play will be externally assessed by a visiting examiner. You can choose between designer and actor roles.

**Component 3:** You will answer questions on a set text studied and a live performance seen. 40% written examination, 1 hour and 30 minutes.

**What skills do I need to be successful at this course?**

To be successful in drama you must develop your creativity, communication and teamwork skills as all of the units will involve group work and collaboration. You will also develop your design, improvisation and acting skills, alongside leadership skills. A real sense of collaborative spirit is an asset. You will be expected to meet deadlines in order to be successful.

**What could I use this qualification for?**

This course gives you a good basis for further study of drama in either A Level Drama and Theatre Studies or Level 3 Performing Arts courses. It would also support applications for art, photography, fashion and design, English, law, marketing, psychology and sociology. In addition it will develop your level of confidence, communication and social skills and help with future college and job interviews as well as any career that works with people and communities.



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# Health And Social Care

**What is the qualification?** BTEC Level 1/Level 2 Tech Award in Health and Social Care (Pearson)

## **What will I be doing on the course?**

**Component 1:** Human Lifespan Development. You will explore different aspects of growth and development and the factors that can affect this across the life stages. You will explore the different events that can impact an individual's physical, intellectual, emotional and social development and how individuals cope with and are supported through changes caused by life events.

**Component 2:** Health and Social Care Services and Values. You will explore health and social care services and how they meet the needs of service users. You will also study the skills, attributes and values required when giving care.

**Component 3:** Health and Wellbeing. You will explore the factors that affect health and wellbeing, learning about physiological and lifestyle indicators, and person-centred approaches to make recommendations to improve an individual's health and wellbeing.

## **Assessment**

Year 10 Component 1—Internal assessment

Year 11 Component 2—Internal assessment

Year 11 Component 3— External examination

## **What skills do I need to develop to be successful at this course?**

To be successful in health and social care you need to have a passion and interest in people, the world of health and how we develop. You will be organised and have a neat book filled with information and knowledge gained in class to support you in your controlled assessments. You will be able to work well independently and in groups to develop your understanding and to apply your knowledge to real life case studies.

## **What could I use this qualification for?**

If you achieve a Level 2 pass (equivalent to a GCSE grade 4) or better it is then possible to progress on to Level 3 qualifications such as Child Development, or the Cambridge Technical in Health and Social Care. It could help you to enter the apprenticeships and traineeship routes in Child Care, Social Care work or work in the health sector. You will also be able to use the transferable skills such as self-reflection, communication, teamwork and problem solving in other areas of study.



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# Hospitality and Catering

**What is the qualification?** Hospitality and catering Level 1/2 vocational award in (WJEC)

## **What will I be doing on the course?**

In Year 10, you will take part in practical cooking activities to practise, hone and learn new high level cooking skills which will feed into unit 2. Alongside this you will study the content for the written examination;

**Unit 1-** The hospitality and catering industry - includes learning about the vocational sector and applying this to a set scenario where you consider hospitality and catering provision for specific locations. You will also look at how establishments operate efficiently, legally and financially whilst meeting the needs of their clients .

**Unit 2-** Hospitality and catering in action - (non-practical element). The content will cover the nutritional needs of different groups of people and their selection of appropriate dishes for them, a variety of factors affecting menu decisions and how to produce an effective time plan when preparing more than one dish. You will also learn to evaluate the dishes you have made and your own performance.

## **Assessment**

The qualification is made up of two units.

Year 11 unit 1: The hospitality and catering industry. You will study the externally assessed examination content throughout the course and will sit the examination in January of year 11. The examination is 90 minutes in length and accounts for 40% of the qualification.

Year 11 unit 2: Hospitality and catering in action. This is a 12 hour controlled assessment. You will study content for the internally assessed unit throughout year 10 and will sit the controlled assessment in the autumn term of year 11. This will involve both practical and written work.

## **What skills do I need to develop to be successful at this course?**

You should have an interest in making food products and the hospitality and catering industry in general. You must also have an open mind towards food and be willing to experiment with new and different ingredients. You will continue to develop a range of food preparation and cooking techniques as well as developing your knowledge of nutrition and the hospitality and catering sector.

## **What could I use this qualification for?**

Career paths include: food technology, food science, the health sector, teaching, nutrition, dietetics, environmental health and hotel/ restaurant management.



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# Music

**What is the qualification?** Music GCSE 9-1 J536 (OCR)

## **What will I be doing on the course?**

GCSE in music provides an accessible and creative musical education, integrating the three main components: performing, composing and appraising. You will broaden your musical horizons within five areas of study as you explore musical context, language, performance and composition.

There are five areas of study:

- Area of study 1: My music
- Area of study 2: The concerto through time
- Area of study 3: Rhythms of the world
- Area of study 4: Film music
- Area of study 5: Conventions of pop

**Component 01/02: Integrated portfolio (30%)**

You develop your understanding of performance and composition through exploration of your own instrument within styles and genres of your choosing.

**Component 03/04: Practical component**

You will develop your skills and understanding of performance and composition. The focus of the performance aspect of this component is on the demands of performing with an ensemble. You are also required to compose a piece of music appropriate for one of the areas of study in response to a set brief.

**Component 05: Listening and appraising**

This component focuses on areas of study 2, 3, 4, and 5. You will demonstrate your knowledge and understanding of musical elements, contexts and language.

## **Assessment**

60% coursework comprising 30% performance and 30% composition

40% external exam (Listening and Appraising) 1 hour 30mins

## **What skills do I need to develop to be successful at this course?**

Performance assessment can be taken on any instrument, including voice and ICT. Composition may be live or ICT based. A desire to explore music in depth and understand developments over time is essential. Previous experience in instrumental skills, performance or creating music is helpful but the course is designed to be accessible to all including students who have experienced music in the classroom only.

## **What could I use this qualification for?**

First and foremost the course will make you a better and more confident musician and listener. The GCSE provides opportunity to progress onto other music related courses such as A level Music, vocational qualifications in performance, production and programming, degrees in such varied areas as performance, acoustics or sound design and a glorious array of careers in the music profession like music composer, music therapist, instrumentalist, music journalist and record producer.



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# Photography

**What is the qualification?** Photography GCSE awarded at grades 9 – 1 (AQA)

## **What will I be doing on the course?**

This course allows you to explore and experiment with a wide range of photographic techniques and digital media. You will be given two coursework project themes over the two years for which you will have to produce a portfolio and final piece. During the course you will be shown how to use digital cameras, different lens settings, studio lighting, the darkroom and computer software including Photoshop. You will then be able to choose which method or combination of methods you use to produce your final pieces. All of the work you produce for these projects will be submitted in a coursework portfolio which equates to 60% of your overall mark. In addition to this portfolio, you are also given a selection of questions/ themes that have been written by the examination board. You will have a set number of weeks to produce a portfolio based on your chosen question/ theme and then a ten hour examination during which you will have to make the final piece. The examination unit will make up the other 40% of your overall grade.

## **Assessment**

Year 10 Spring term: Project 1 & 2 to be assessed as part of Unit 1

Year 11 Autumn term: Project 3 to be assessed as part of Unit 1

Year 11 Spring term: Examination paper (Unit 2) preparatory period plus 10 hour examination time

## **What skills do I need to develop to be successful at this course?**

You need to be extremely creative and the more ideas you have the better. You also need to be willing to try using techniques and media that you find more challenging or with which you are unfamiliar. We will teach you how to improve your photographic skills during lessons but you may be required to come after school to practise using the darkroom. You will be taught how to use digital cameras and Photoshop software on the PCs. This is something that you will need to become confident using through practice. You need to be able to manage your time well because photography can be time consuming and requires careful planning. You need to be able to research artists and designers using the internet, books and by going to exhibitions. You will also have to develop an analytical writing style and be able to show that you think carefully about imagery rather than take it at face value.

## **What could I use this qualification for?**

This qualification will allow you to go on and study an art based course at Post 16. It will also help you enhance your research skills, analytical skills, independent and creative thinking skills and time management skills – all of which are very useful whatever courses you go on to study. Careers in photography include: fashion photographer, wedding photographer, teacher, graphic designer, forensic photographer and many more.



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# Physical Education

**What is the qualification?** Physical Education GCSE awarded at grades 9 – 1 (Edexcel)

**What will I be doing on the course?**

- Component 1: Fitness and Body Systems
- Component 2: Health and Performance

You have to perform in 3 sports. It is strongly recommended that you participate in outside clubs to practise your skills.

Coursework: You will create a 6 week improvement plan of a component of fitness. You will then carry out the fitness plan during the summer holidays and write a 1500 word evaluation.

25% of the lessons will be dedicated to physical fitness/ skill development in an area of sport.

## Assessment

Paper 1- 1 hour 30 minutes

Paper 2- 1 hour 15 minutes

Practical moderation day

Coursework deadline– Year 11 autumn term

**What skills do I need to develop to be successful at this course?**

If you play for a team or are a member of an extracurricular club outside school, this will aid the progress you make on this course. It is important that you are developing your physical skills in sports outside of school and enjoy learning about how the body works when participating in physical activity. You must be committed to attending extracurricular clubs and be passionate and enthusiastic about sports.

**What could I use this qualification for?**

This course will enable you to follow A level Physical Education and will complement a range of other A level subjects, including biology and psychology due to the scientific content of the course. GCSE PE is a good foundation for a career in sports and physical education, as well as a wide range of others, including physiotherapy, sports business, personal trainer, physical therapy, sports psychology and nutrition.

The health and fitness industry is one of the fastest growing internationally so the GCSE PE course would be an exciting choice in a fast developing society.



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# Separate Science

## **What is the qualification?**

The GCSE separate science course leads to three separate GCSEs in biology, chemistry and physics. 9 - 1 (AQA)

## **What will I be doing on the course? How will it be structured?**

You will study the same topics as those students studying the GCSE combined science courses, however, as separate science students, each topic will be covered in more detail. There will be required practicals you will need to carry out, and whilst there are no controlled assessment components, you will be asked about the practical work in your final examinations. You will be taught by three science teachers and have separate lessons for biology, chemistry and physics. There are 7 units of work in biology, 10 in chemistry, and 8 in physics.

*Biology*—A mixture of human and plant biology topics are covered over the two years. You will need to carry out 10 required practical's.

*Chemistry* - A mixture of physical, earth, organic and analytical chemistry topics are covered over the two years. You will need to carry out 8 required practical's.

*Physics* - A mixture of topics relating to everyday life such as forces and motion, electricity and electromagnetic waves. You will need to carry out 10 required practicals.

## **Assessment**

The course is assessed by 100% terminal examination and you will sit two 1 hour 45 minute examinations per science at the end of Year 11 (6 papers in total).

## **What skills do I need to develop to be successful at this course?**

To be successful in the separate sciences you have to be dedicated and have a real interest and enthusiasm for science. You will develop your scientific knowledge and conceptual understanding through the specific disciplines. This will also enable you to understand the nature, processes and methods of science through different scientific enquiries enabling you to develop your observational, practical, modelling, enquiry, and problem solving skills. You must have good mathematical skills and an ability to analyse and evaluate data and draw accurate conclusions. You will need to be able to apply your knowledge to novel situations.

## **What could I use this qualification for?**

You could use this qualification to study any of the sciences or psychology at A level. Good GCSE science grades are essential for many university courses. Careers include medicine, dentistry, lab technician, engineering, toxicologist, forensic scientist, academic researcher, software engineer.



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### Guidance on completing your options form

The core subjects: English, English Literature, mathematics, science, religious studies, French or Spanish, geography or history, PSHCE and physical education will be followed by all students. You must choose a humanities option - either, geography or history.

You will be choosing **one** subject from each of the option blocks. For option 1 and 2, you will also need to select a reserve option, **which must not be the same as your first choice**. If art, business studies or health and social care is selected as the first option in block 1, they cannot be the first option for block 2. Whilst every effort to enable all students to study their first choice subjects, at times this may not be possible. In the event of significant issues in this regard, students and parents/carers will be consulted before allocation of subjects.

### Options Block

<b>Humanities option</b>	Geography History
<b>Option 1</b>	Art Business Citizenship Computer Science Drama Health & Social Care Hospitality & Catering PE
<b>Option 2</b>	Business Creative iMedia Health & Social Care Music Photography Separate science

Please be aware there needs to be a minimum of 15 students for a course to run and there is also an upper limit for some subjects. Before making your choices, read the subject information carefully and speak to your subject teachers, review tutors and parents/ carers. Once options have been confirmed, there will be no opportunity to make any changes. A copy of the option form will be emailed to your school account and will also be available [here](#). This will need to be completed fully and your parents/carers must sign and date it to ensure they are aware of your choices. The completed form needs to be returned to student reception by **Friday 6th February 2026**.

# Key stage 4 options 2026-28



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## Option form

**Student name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Form Group:** \_\_\_\_\_

### Option Choices

Please complete the table below by ticking the choice of GCSE humanities subject:

Humanities option	GCSE humanities option (tick one)	
	Geography	
	History	

Please complete the table below by ticking **one** first choice and a reserve choice for each option block:-

		First choice (tick one)	Reserve choice (tick one)
<b>Option 1</b>	Art		
	Business Studies		
	Citizenship		
	Computer Science		
	Drama		
	Health & Social Care		
	Hospitality & Catering		
	PE		

		First choice (tick one)	Reserve choice (tick one)
<b>Option 2</b>	Art		
	Business Studies		
	Creative iMedia		
	Health & Social Care		
	Music		
	Photography		
	Separate Science		

I confirm I am happy with the choices made and understand once they have been confirmed, they cannot be changed.

Signed (student): \_\_\_\_\_

Signed (parent/carer): \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/carer name: \_\_\_\_\_

Please return this form to Mrs Verma via the student reception by Friday 6th February 2026.