



Key Stage 4 Courses Guide 2018 - 2021



THE KING'S ACADEMY
The Emmanuel Schools Foundation

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Foreword

The end of Year 8, and the Years 9, 10 and 11 that follow, are crucial in the life of The King's Academy students as they strive to develop their characters, to understand the world around them better so that they can make good decisions, to seek answers to the big question of life, of course to achieve their very best results in a range of subjects and qualifications.

At the beginning of Year 9, students begin to specialise in areas of personal interest as well as taking a core of essential subjects.

The courses offered by The Academy are broadly of three types: GCSE, Technical Award and Entry Level Certificate. Further information on each of these is given below.

General Certificate in Secondary Education

A GCSE is primarily an academic programme of study culminating in a final examination after two years, sometimes incorporating some element of coursework or controlled assessment. Parents and students may be aware that for the examinations taken in the summer of 2018, the grading structure for the majority of subjects will no longer be from A* to G, but will instead be from 9 to 1, with 9 being the top grade. The table below shows approximately how the former grades equate to the new grades.

NEW GCSE GRADING STRUCTURE																			
9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	U										
<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 currently achieve an A and above. ■ The bottom of grade 1 will be aligned with the bottom of grade G. 																			
<table border="0" style="width: 100%; text-align: center;"> <tr> <td>A*</td> <td>A</td> <td>B</td> <td>C</td> <td>D</td> <td>E</td> <td>F</td> <td>G</td> <td>U</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>										A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	U	
A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	U											
CURRENT GCSE GRADING STRUCTURE																			

The Academy offers a wide range of subjects to students. Further information on each subject can be found in the second part of this booklet. The list of subjects is as follows:

GCSEs

English Language

English Literature

Mathematics

Combined Science (Dual Award)

Biology

Chemistry

Physics

French

German

Geography

History

Computing

Business Studies

Art & Design

Textiles

Engineering

Food & Nutrition

Technical Awards

Technical Awards are offered in a range of courses in different areas that are more vocational in nature. They prepare students for work in particular areas (e.g. ICT, food preparation and cookery) and are assessed through a combination of controlled assessment, portfolio work and internal and external examination. The exact proportions of each assessment type vary between qualifications but typically they include a much higher proportion of coursework and controlled assessment than GCSEs.

Technical Awards (and equivalent)

V Certificate in Engineering Studies (Level 1/2)

Level 2 Technical Certificate in IT

V Certificate in Food & Cookery (Level 1/2)

Child Development and Care (Level 2)

V Certificate in Health Studies (Level 1/2)

Entry Level Certificate

Where a student will struggle to access the demands of either a GCSE or Technical Award in a subject, an Entry Level Certificate may be a more appropriate pathway. The Entry Level Certificate is assessed through a combination of coursework and teacher assessment.

Entry Level Certificates (and equivalent)

English

Geography

Mathematics

History

Science

Prince's Trust Achieve (formerly xl)

Students are guided onto the different types of courses based on where their aptitude and attitude indicate a high chance of success.

The appropriate balance of courses is vital for every student and therefore has to be tailored to their desires, needs and abilities. It is a fact that very few students will have exactly the same set of courses as each other because of this tailoring and the final decisions will be made in discussion with senior members of Academy staff. As is always the case, our aim is to help individuals reach their highest personal potential. Option forms are tailored to students' needs so it is likely that whilst students will have similar choices available when compared with one another, they may vary slightly.

Curriculum Overview

In line with the statutory National Curriculum, all students study a core subject combination of English, mathematics, science, and religious studies and will undertake qualifications in these subject areas, typically GCSEs. In addition, students will follow a non-examined course in physical education (core PE).

The remainder of the curriculum is formed from the 'option subjects'. All students will be placed on a pathway that reflects the aptitude and attitude that they have demonstrated throughout Years 7 and 8, as well as considering their potential, career aspirations and likely post-16 progression routes. Students will be assigned to one of four pathways:

Pathway	French and/or German	Geography and/or History	Free Choices
Blue	Compulsory	Compulsory	1
Red	Option, or Computing	Compulsory	1
Green	May be an option	Compulsory	2
Yellow	No	Option	3

In Year 9, all students will continue to study Geography and History. Students will also begin to select their options for Years 10 and 11. Where choices are compulsory, e.g. modern foreign languages for students on blue route, these choices **must** form part of a student's programme of study in Years 9, 10 and 11.

In Year 9, all students will study one additional option subject, to enable them to make an informed choice about which of their subjects to continue studying in Years 10 and 11. At the end of Year 9, students will then choose to discontinue the study of some of their subjects, e.g. they may choose to study history or geography, and choose which of their 'free' choices to continue studying. Some students will have the option of studying French GCSE and German GCSE, or Geography GCSE and History GCSE.

Please note that students may not be placed on their first choice courses if the course is over-subscribed (or under-subscribed which may result in withdrawal of the course), or if the course is considered to be unsuitable for the student.

Coursework and Controlled Assessments

Within the subject descriptions that follow, you will see that in some subjects there is a coursework or controlled assessment element. This may make up a significant proportion of students' total assessment. In other words, students can improve their grades with very good coursework or controlled assessments, even if they have difficulty with the final examination. This consideration may have a bearing on the choice of subject. Staff will give students very clear plans and advice concerning coursework and controlled assessments. All students will know what is expected of them in order to meet the different criteria and to gain good marks.

Students will have project, coursework and controlled assessment deadlines throughout the two years of their courses and these are agreed with the teacher. The deadlines for the submission of coursework and controlled assessments will be staggered throughout Year 9, 10 and 11, but it is important that students organise their time efficiently. Precise deadline dates will be supplied to parents and students at the start of each academic year.

Final deadlines **must** be met. A letter or phone call will inform parents if students have not met the deadline or if they have submitted sub-standard work. Any such student will be required to attend a series of after-school supervisions in the week following the deadline in order to complete their work. At the end of that week all the work will be submitted to the examination board regardless of quality. **Poor marks will therefore result in poor final grades.**

Mobile Phones

Many students have use of a mobile phone which has full internet access including access to social media. Whilst there are many benefits to students in having these devices, uncontrolled use of mobile phones during studies, homework and revision is widely recognised as being seriously damaging to students' learning. The main reasons are the coming together of the 'dependency' that students develop for their phones, and the frequent and distracting interruption that they cause students whilst studying, or even overnight.

Frequent interruptions are an extremely damaging reason for students not concentrating on important and often difficult studies.

Because of these difficulties and their seriousness, we strongly advise parents to establish and enforce clear rules on their children's use mobiles. One helpful rule is that children should not have their mobile phone in the same room with them when they are studying, revising, doing homework, or sleeping, with the phone instead being re-charged elsewhere in the home – in a place agreed with the parent – during these times.

Paid Part-time Work

Part-time work in the evening and at weekends is a potential threat to students' studies, both through tiredness and lack of proper homework study. All such commitments must therefore be recorded and if the Academy believes that any student's work is suffering because of tiredness or lack of work at home, we expect parents to give us full backing in insisting that the part-time work ceases immediately. It is our expectation that no part-time work is done on Monday - Thursday evenings during term-time with the exception of paper rounds or the like that are completed before 6.00 pm. The Academy will not sign any work permits for students in Years 7-11 which go beyond the guidelines above.

Art and Design (GCSE)

Examination Board: AQA

Course Description and Organisation

The course will include practical work supported by critical and contextual understanding in a variety of 2D and 3D disciplines including:

- sculpture;
- ceramics;
- print-making;
- photography.

The course will build on the work done in Key Stage 3 and will be a culmination of five years' of Art and Design education.

The course is suitable for a wide variety of students, including creative artists, those wishing to balance academic and practical subjects in their week, and those who simply enjoy Art and are willing to work hard. Homework will be an essential part of the course and the examination.

ICT will be an important part of the course and will include the use of digital cameras, the creative use of computers and scanners and use of the internet as an important tool for research. Students will also develop skills in communication, use of number, problem solving and evaluation.

The coursework component will consist of at least two assignments, each covering four assessment objectives:

- AO1: Developing ideas through contextual/critical understanding;
- AO2: Refining ideas by experimenting with materials, techniques and processes;
- AO3: Recording ideas through drawings, paintings, photography and presentation skills;
- AO4: Create a personal response which grows from the research and development.

The study of contemporary and historical Art from both western and non-western sources will be an integral part of each assignment.

Assessment Arrangements

Assessment is by coursework (60%) and a final timed examination (40%). Regular interim assessment will take place to enable students, parents and teachers to monitor progress. The final GCSE assessment will be carried out by the examination board.

Career Opportunities

GCSE Art & Design will enable students to develop their skills further at A Level or equivalent qualifications. This may then lead to a career as an art dealer, fine artist, graphic designer, illustrator, museum curator, photographer, product designer, textile designer or web designer.

Additional Information

Depending on student numbers and student aptitude, students may be offered GCSE Fine Art instead of GCSE Art & Design. In Year 9, students may follow a common course in Art & Design and Fine Art to assess their suitability for each course.

Fine Art (GCSE)

Examination Board: AQA

Course Description and Organisation

The course will include practical work supported by critical and contextual understanding primarily in 2D disciplines including:

- drawing;
- painting;
- printmaking;
- photography.

The course will build on the work done in Key Stage 3 and will be a culmination of five years' of Art and Design education.

The course is suitable for a variety of students, including gifted artists with well-developed painting and drawing skills, those wishing to balance academic and practical subjects in their week, and those who simply enjoy Art and are willing to work hard. Homework will be an essential part of the course and the examination.

ICT will be an important part of the course and will include the use of digital cameras, the creative use of computers and scanners and use of the internet as an important tool for research. Students will also develop skills in communication, use of number, problem solving and evaluation.

The coursework component will consist of at least two assignments, each covering four assessment objectives:

- AO1: Developing ideas through contextual/critical understanding;
- AO2: Refining ideas by experimenting with materials, techniques and processes;
- AO3: Recording ideas through drawings, paintings, photography and presentation skills;
- AO4: Create a personal response which grows from the research and development.

The study of contemporary and historical Art from both western and non-western sources will be an integral part of each assignment.

Assessment Arrangements

Assessment is by coursework (60%) and a final timed examination (40%). Regular interim assessment will take place to enable students, parents and teachers to monitor progress. The final GCSE assessment will be carried out by the examination board.

Career Opportunities

GCSE Art & Design will enable students to develop their skills further at A Level or equivalent qualifications. This may then lead to a career as an art dealer, fine artist, graphic designer, illustrator, museum curator, photographer, product designer, textile designer or web designer.

Additional Information

Depending on student numbers and student aptitude, students may be offered GCSE Art & Design instead of GCSE Fine Art. In Year 9, students may follow a common course in Fine Art and Art & Design to assess their suitability for each course.

Business Studies (GCSE)

Examination Board: AQA

Course Description and Organisation

Most large businesses started life as small organisations. This course will provide students with the opportunity to explore real business issues and how businesses work. Students will apply their knowledge and understanding to different business contexts ranging from small enterprises to large multinationals and businesses operating in local, national and global contexts.

During the two year course, students will study six units:

- Business in the real world: the purpose of business activity, the role of business enterprise and entrepreneurship, and the dynamic nature of business;
- Influences on business: how external influences, such as political and environmental factors, impact upon business, and how businesses change in response to these influences;
- Business operations: the production of goods and the provision of services, supply management, quality control and the importance of customer service;
- Human resources: the recruitment and selection process, the importance of a motivated workforce and types of training undertaken by businesses;
- Marketing: the purpose and methods of market research, the factors influencing pricing decisions and the benefits and drawbacks of promotional methods used by businesses;
- Finance: the sources of finance available to businesses, the concept of revenue, costs, profit and loss, and using financial statements to analyse the performance of a business.

Assessment Arrangements

Assessment is by two timed examinations at the end of Year 11. Each exam is based on a real business case study and contributes towards 50% of the final grade. Regular assessment will take place at the end of each unit of work to enable students, parents and teachers to monitor progress.

Career Opportunities

Students that have studied GCSE Business Studies may go on to study A Level Business Studies in the Sixth Form or may wish to pursue a career as a business owner or in the areas of management, advertising, retail, public relations, finance and accounting, recruitment, customer service, market research and operations management.

Child Development and Care (Level 2 Award)

Examination Board: NCFE/CACHE

Course Description and Organisation

In Year 9, students will study a course that prepares students for Years 10 and 11, studying the underlying principles of the Year 10 and 11 course.

During Year 10 students will work on Unit 1 in which they need to complete tasks which build to form an assessment. During Year 11 students will have a similar style of work, namely tasks which make up another assessment as well as a multiple choice exam. The exam will assess their understanding of all the material studied over the two years.

The Level 2 CACHE qualification in Child Development focuses on the fundamental principles of learning to care for children. The aims are to:

- provide an opportunity to gain a vocational qualification that gives a basic introduction to the child care sector;
- include the knowledge and understanding of child development and well-being necessary for working with children in a variety of settings;
- actively engage students in understanding the processes of caring for children aged 0-5 years;
- help students to understand child development through investigation and evaluation of a range of services and organisations;
- allow students to examine issues which affect the nature and quality of human life including an appreciation of diversity and cultural issues;
- develop students' awareness of the influences on a child's health and well-being.

This course will appeal to learners who enjoy studying a subject that is relevant to real life experiences and are interested in working with children. Students must be able to work well both independently and as part of a team. It is essential that students are hardworking, committed and motivated.

Assessment Arrangements

The CACHE course is assessed by three units:

Unit 1: An Introduction to working with Children aged 0-5 years;

Unit 2: Development and Well-being, 0-5 years;

Unit 3: Childcare and Development, 0-5 years.

Units 1 and 2 consist of the creation of assessment portfolios based on carrying out a series of tasks. These are graded A* through to D and will include the learning and development of the knowledge needed for the multiple choice exam, Unit 3, which will be graded as either a Pass or Refer, Refer meaning the paper is below the level needed for the qualification.

Career Opportunities

This qualification will qualify students to work with children aged 0-5 by creating a solid foundation for further programmes of training, such as apprenticeships in child care.

Computer Science (GCSE)

Examination Board: OCR

Course Description and Organisation

Computer technology continues to advance rapidly through the use of mobile devices and web-related technologies. As well as exploring how a computer works through studying the hardware and software, students will write their own programs using the Python programming language, explore how to set up a computer and how to perform maintenance on computer systems. The course covers a lot of mathematical and physiological terminology in relation to computer systems.

The course is assessed through three components:

Component 01 – Computer Systems

Component 01 focuses on Computer Systems. It is an examined unit and makes up 40% of the assessment total.

Component 02 – Computational Thinking, Algorithms and Programming

Component 02 focuses on computational thinking and algorithms. Students will be tested on the elements of computational thinking and logic. They are principally assessed on their ability to write, correct and improve algorithms. It is an examined unit and makes up 40% of the assessment total.

Component 03 – Programming Project (non-exam assessment)

This component is the non-exam assessment where candidates will be challenged by a range of exciting and engaging tasks to apply the knowledge and skills they have learned. This component makes up 20% of the assessment total.

These skills will be the best preparation for learners who want to go on to study Computer Science at A Level and beyond. The qualification will also provide a good grounding for other subject areas that require computational thinking and analytical skills.

Assessment

Assessment is by one controlled assessment (20%), and two external examinations at the end of Year 11 (80%).

Career Opportunities

This course will prepare students for careers in systems management, computer networking, programming, game creation, web design, mobile and web-related industries.

Additional Information

The subject will only be offered to some students because of the mathematical and scientific demands of the course.

Design and Technology (GCSE)

Examination Board: AQA

Course Description and Organisation

To succeed in GCSE design and technology students will need to already have a good foundation in writing, drawing and practical skills. These will then be developed over the two year course in Years 10 and 11. This subject has close links to ICT, business studies, mathematics, English and science. GCSE design and technology is held in high esteem by employers, colleges and apprenticeship schemes.

In Year 9, students will follow a common course with the AQA Technical Award in Materials Technology. This will help students and teachers to determine the appropriate pathway for each student.

The course will cover six key areas:

- engineering materials;
- engineering manufacturing processes;
- systems;
- testing and investigation;
- the impact of modern technologies;
- practical engineering skills.

The course content will be delivered through a combination of theory and practical activities, where knowledge and skills are developed through practical contexts.

Assessment Arrangements

The course is assessed through two components:

Examination: a two hour examination, completed at the end of Year 11 and worth 60% of the overall mark.

Non-exam assessment: a response to a brief released by AQA at the end of Year 10. Students will prepare an engineering product and supporting written material in response to the brief. This component is worth 40% of the overall mark.

Career Opportunities

This course leads naturally into A Level Product Design in the Sixth Form. University degrees and engineering apprenticeships are also a popular route to an exciting career in engineering.

Drama (GCSE)

Examination Board: OCR

Course Description and Organisation

Drama gives students the opportunity to explore the subject from a range of perspectives by devising their own, original work; by bringing to life the work of a playwright; as theatre reviewers, developing their own thoughts on what makes drama and theatre successful; and as creative artists building and bringing a character to life through exploration and rehearsal.

GCSE Drama follows on from Drama work that students have done in Key Stage 3. Students will develop their improvisation and acting skills to a higher level. They will also look at plays in more detail and look at different ways of bringing a script alive on stage.

Theatre visits are an essential part of the course. It is a compulsory element of the course to visit the theatre to complete an evaluation of a live production. Students are also encouraged to visit the theatre independently to experience a variety of different theatre styles and genres.

Assessment Arrangements

The course consists of three components:

Component 1: Devising Drama

Students will create a devised performance in groups. They will be able to select a starting point from a range of stimuli provided by the exam board. All performances will be supported by a portfolio which is evidence of the students' devising process and can be made up of a combination of writing, images, observation notes and artefacts.

Component 2: Text Performance

Students will study a text chosen by the centre. Students will take a part in two performances of two extracts from the text. Students will be required to produce an accompanying concept document which outlines their intentions for the performance.

Component 3: Written Exam

Section A: Students will be asked about preparing and performing a text. They will draw on the experience of studying a whole text during the course from a list set by the exam board. The questions will focus on the process of creating and developing a performance, working as a director, performer and designer, as well as the performance of a character from the text.

Section B: This section asks the students to review a performance they have seen on their course. They will be primarily assessed on their ability to analyse and evaluate, but will also be marked on their accurate use of subject specific terminology.

Career Opportunities

This course leads naturally into A Level Theatre Studies, an Advanced Vocational Certificate of Education in Performing Arts or a BTEC National Certificate or Diploma in Performing Arts. It also allows students to develop important transferable skills such as self-confidence, problem-solving, communication skills and the ability to work effectively as part of a team. Students would be able to consider a whole variety of careers including; working with children, retail work, travel and tourism, community work, sales and marketing and of course, a career in theatre and television.

Engineering Studies (Level 1/2 V Certificate)

Examination Board: NCFE

Course Description and Organisation

To succeed in the V Certificate in Engineering Studies students will need to already have a solid foundation in writing, drawing and practical skills. These will then be developed over the two year course in Years 10 and 11. This subject has close links to ICT, business studies, mathematics, English and science. The Technical Award in Materials Technology is held in high esteem by employers, colleges and apprenticeship schemes.

In Year 9, students will follow a common course with GCSE design and technology. This will help students and teachers to determine the appropriate pathway for each student.

The course will cover a number of topics with students undertaking both theory and practical work in each area to:

- understand how drawing is applied in engineering;
- understand and use appropriate tools and equipment;
- understand and use appropriate materials.

The course content will be delivered through a combination of theory and practical activities, where knowledge and skills are developed through practical contexts.

Assessment Arrangements

The course is assessed through four units:

- Unit 1: Introduction to engineering (internally assessed portfolio)
- Unit 2: Introduction to engineering drawing (externally set and marked assignments)
- Unit 3: Tools and equipment for engineering (internally assessed portfolio)
- Unit 4: Engineering materials and their properties (internally assessed portfolio)

Career Opportunities

This course leads naturally into vocational engineering routes, e.g. Level 3 BTECs, or apprenticeships.

English Language and English Literature (GCSE)

Examination Board: AQA

Course Description and Organisation

The syllabus offers all candidates an opportunity to demonstrate attainment in speaking and listening, reading and writing, and responding to a range of both non-fiction and fiction texts.

Most students will follow courses in English language and English literature. There is no coursework element and students will be assessed in exams at the end of the course. In English literature, students will study “Romeo and Juliet”, “Jekyll and Hyde”, “An Inspector Calls”, and a range of poetry related to the theme of power and conflict.

Assessment Arrangements

There are two examinations in English Language:

- Paper 1, Explorations in Creative Reading and Writing, looks at how writers use narrative and descriptive techniques to engage the interest of readers;
- Paper 2, Writers' Viewpoints and Perspectives, looks at how different writers present a similar topic over time. Both papers also have a writing section.

Students will also complete a non-exam assessment unit, spoken language, which will appear as a separate grade on their results.

In English literature, there will also be two examinations:

- Shakespeare and the nineteenth century novel;
- Modern Texts and Poetry.

Entry Level Certificate in English

Examination Board: Edexcel

Entry Level English (OCR) is offered alongside GCSE to suitable candidates who are unlikely to achieve a grade 1 in GCSE English language and/or literature. Students in this group are likely to be entered for both levels of qualifications. Entry Level English is designed to be accessible and relevant and provide learners with recognition for their achievements. Students sit a variety of coursework and exam tasks in reading, writing, and speaking and listening. These are designed to enable students to progress at their own pace, whilst helping them to develop confidence in their use of essential English skills.

English forms part of every student’s core curriculum and as such, students will follow one of the pathways in this subject.

Food Preparation and Nutrition (GCSE)

Examination Board: AQA

Course Description and Organisation

This GCSE is an exciting and creative course which focuses on practical cooking skills to ensure that students develop a thorough understanding of nutrition and the working characteristics of food materials. Food is a material with unique properties: it has specific characteristics which must be considered and understood before products can be successfully designed and made.

Assessment Arrangements

The GCSE course is assessed through coursework (50%) and external examination (50%). The assessments comprise:

Coursework 1: Food investigation

This is a 10 hour piece of work where students' understanding of the working characteristics, function and chemical properties of ingredients are examined. This is worth 15% of the grade.

Coursework 2: Food preparation and assessment

This is a 20 hour piece of work to plan a set of food dishes to be cooked in a three hour exam situation. This is worth 35% of the final grade.

Examination

A final one hour 45 minute examination will take place in May/June of Year 11. Questions will test the application of knowledge and understanding of materials, components, processes, techniques, technologies and evaluation of commercial practices and food products. This is worth 50% of the final grade.

ICT is an important part of the course and will include the use of word processing, spreadsheets, databases, nutritional analysis programmes, desk-top publishing and other media such as digital cameras, scanners and the internet.

Careers Opportunities

This course will lead to a vast range of employment opportunities, including caterer, chef/cook, confectioner, consumer adviser, dietician, home care organiser, food shop retailer, food writer/photographer, health promotion officer, environmental health officer, home economist, nutritionist, restaurant manager, demonstrator, teacher of Food Technology/Catering/Hospitality, careers in food manufacturing and food science.

Food and Cooking (Level 1/2 V Certificate)

Examination Board: NCFE

Course Description and Organisation

This qualification is designed for those with an interest in food and cookery. It will provide students with experience of using different cooking techniques which can be used in further education and apprenticeships. There is a strong emphasis on gaining the required knowledge via practical work, thus it is ideal for someone who prefers to learn “by doing”.

The course is divided into four units:

- Unit 1: Preparing to cook Food;
- Unit 2: Understanding Food;
- Unit 3: Exploring balanced diets;
- Unit 4: Planning and producing dishes.

In each of the areas work will be collected and tasks undertaken throughout.

Areas of study include:

- The industry – food and drink;
- Job roles, employment opportunities and relevant training;
- Health, safety and hygiene;
- Food preparation, cooking and presentation;
- Nutrition and menu planning;
- Costing and portion control;
- Specialist equipment;
- Communication and record keeping;
- Environmental considerations.

Assessment Arrangements

Assessment is by portfolio (75%) and examination (25%).

Careers Opportunities

This course will lead to a vast range of employment opportunities, including caterer, chef/cook, waiting staff, bar staff, catering assistant, confectioner, restaurant manager and local authority health inspector.

Geography (GCSE)

Examination Board: Edexcel

Course Description and Organisation

Geography is perhaps uniquely placed to provide opportunities for developing each of the six key skills of communication, application of number, ICT, teamwork, problem solving and 'study skills'. In addition, a knowledge and understanding of the world around us is increasingly important - not least due to the ever-increasing question marks that hang over our planet's sustainability. Geography also helps to develop respect for the environment and an awareness of complex social, political and moral issues such as population growth and biodiversity, through to our use of natural resources and the preservation of the ozone layer.

The GCSE Geography course is divided into three units:

Unit 1: The Physical Environment

This unit builds on the skills studied in Years 7, 8 and 9 giving the opportunity to develop more advanced skills appropriate for a GCSE geographer. The topics covered in the unit include: the changing landscapes of the UK; coastal landscapes and processes; river landscapes and processes; weather hazards and climate change; ecosystems; biodiversity and management (37.5% of total mark).

Unit 2: The Human Environment

This unit includes the following human geography topics: changing cities; global development; resource management; energy resource management (37.5% of total mark).

Unit 3: Geographical Investigations: Fieldwork and UK Challenges

This unit comprises two sections: the first relates to the river and settlement fieldwork completed during Year 10. The second involves a variety of UK challenges, including: resource consumption; sustainability; settlement; population; economic challenges; landscapes challenges; climate change (25% of total mark).

Case studies from the local area, other parts of the UK and abroad will ensure that students' knowledge and understanding is improved through being rooted in the real world. The work covered will be relevant to students' everyday life, yet also expand their horizons through learning more about unfamiliar aspects of the wider world. Students will be expected to work using maps, graphs and statistics, as well as sources of information in textbooks and on the internet. They will also be given the opportunity to carry out fieldwork.

Assessment Arrangements

GCSE geography is assessed through three externally examined papers, completed at the end of Year 11.

Career Opportunities

Geography is suitable as a general qualification for a number of jobs as it is highly prized by employers. More specific job areas include town and country planning, environmental agencies, surveying, mapping, meteorology, landscape architecture, travel and tourism, and teaching.

Most students must study either Geography or History in Years 10 and 11, but there will be the opportunity to study both subject to agreement

Geography (Entry Level Certificate)

Examination Board: OCR

Course Description and Organisation

This is a two year course designed for students who are unlikely to gain Grade 1 at GCSE.

It covers four key geographical themes and explores modern world geography and current issues such as sustainability.

Key themes of study include:

- People, Rivers and Coasts;
- People and Places;
- Natural Hazards and People;
- People, Products and Services.

Assessment Arrangements

Pupils will complete a project based on the River Tees which is worth 60 marks. There is also an end of course test which is worth 40 marks.

Additional Information

Students will study this course in conjunction with the Entry Level Certificate in History course.

Health and Fitness (Level 1/2 V Certificate)

Examination Board: NCFE

Course Description and Organisation

The Certificate in Health and Fitness course will appeal to students if they have a keen interest in sport and recreation; take part in sport or recreation outside of class time; want to know more about the benefits of sport and exercise; want to study a course that is active and that they will enjoy or if they are considering a sports-related career or a further education course in the area of physical education or sports science. The Certificate in Health and Fitness is a more appropriate for students wishing to study physical education but who may struggle with the demands of GCSE physical education.

In Year 9, students will follow a common course with GCSE physical education. This will help students and teachers to determine the appropriate pathway for each student.

The objectives of this qualification are to help learners to:

- prepare, plan and develop a personal health and fitness programme
- understand the benefits of fitness
- know the functions of the main body systems
- understand the benefits of a healthy balanced diet and how it affects lifestyles.

Assessment Arrangements

Students undertake four units:

- Unit 1: principles of health and fitness (internally assessed portfolio)
- Unit 2: healthy lifestyles (internally assessed portfolio)
- Unit 3: preparing and planning for health and fitness (externally assessed)
- Unit 4: personal health and fitness programme (internally assessed portfolio)

Career Opportunities

The course might develop an interest in careers in sport and physical education, such as teaching, sports administration and management or coaching and fitness instruction.

Additional Requirement:

Students wishing to study the Certificate in Health and Fitness must demonstrate sustained commitment to represent one of the Academy's extracurricular teams or take active participation in other extracurricular activities outside of the Academy to support their skill development in this subject.

History (GCSE)

Examination Board: AQA

Course Description and Organisation

This course offers students the opportunity to study a range of historical periods across time and develop their understanding of how to interpret evidence effectively.

There are four units of study in GCSE History which will be selected from topics such as:

- The history of medicine and public health from prehistoric times to the present day;
- Norman England – 1066 to 1100;
- The development of the American West in the nineteenth century;
- Conflict and Tension 1990 to 2009.

Assessment Arrangements

There are two examinations, which will be sat at the end of Year 11: one examination paper will cover Medicine and Norman England; the other paper will cover the American West and Conflict and Tension (1990-2009) topics. There is no coursework component in GCSE History.

Career Opportunities

GCSE history is suitable as a general qualification for jobs regarding skills of communication both oral and written, e.g. journalism, law, civil service, police work and information services. More specific job types are archivists, museum workers, archaeologists, antiques traders/restorers, museum curators and History teachers.

Most students must study either Geography or History in Years 10 and 11, but there will be the opportunity to study both subject to agreement.

History (Entry Level Certificate)

Examination Board: OCR

Course Description and Organisation

This is a two year course designed for students who are unlikely to achieve a Grade 1 at GCSE.

Students study two topics: 'The Wild West 1845-1895' and 'Medicine Through Time'.

Assessment Arrangements

Students will produce a portfolio of three pieces of work on the two topics of study, which is worth 50% of the final qualification.

They also have to produce a piece of work about an important individual in history. This is also worth 50%. There is no end of course test.

Additional Information

Students will study this course in conjunction with the Entry Level Certificate in Geography course.

IT (Level 2 Cambridge Technical Certificate)

Examination Board: OCR

Course Description and Organisation

The Level 2 Cambridge Technical Certificate in IT is a recognised qualification for computer users. Completing this qualification will improve students' basic IT skills and understanding of IT applications. It will teach them how to use the software efficiently and also teach them how to use a computer confidently and effectively. The qualification also encourages problem-solving, creativity and communication.

Students will study two mandatory units:

- Essentials of IT: an overview of the IT sector, hardware, software, installing and upgrading processes, the use of the World Wide Web and the benefits of using IT in business.
- Essentials of cyber security: understanding the increasing importance of this issue in IT related activities, understanding possible cyber threats and how these can be managed.

Students will also study one further mandatory unit – using data analysis software – and will choose one of the following two units:

- Using emerging technologies; *or*
- Using social media channels for business.

Assessment Arrangements

The first two units – essentials of IT and essentials of cyber security – are externally assessed. The remaining units are internally assessed.

Career Opportunities

Students that have studied Level 2 IT may pursue a career in areas such as administration, recruitment, ICT support, market research and data analysis. However, the skills addressed on the course will be useful in a wide range of careers.

Mathematics (GCSE)

Examination Board: Edexcel

Course Description and Organisation

This qualification encourages students to develop confidence in, and a positive attitude towards, mathematics and to recognise the importance of mathematics in their own lives and to society. It prepares students to make informed decisions about the use of technology, the management of money, further learning opportunities and career choices.

The mathematics course will help the pupils develop the ability to:

- acquire and use problem solving strategies;
- select and apply mathematical techniques and methods in mathematical, every-day and real world situations;
- reason mathematically, make deductions and inferences and draw conclusions;
- interpret and communicate mathematical information in a variety of forms appropriate to the information and context.

All students currently in Year 8 will follow the new GCSE Specification at Key Stage 4. This is a linear course (i.e. there is no coursework involved and only one set of final exams at the end of the course, consisting of three papers). There are two levels of entry: Higher (Grades 9 to 4) and Foundation (Grades 5 to 1). Students in the lowest sets may sit the Foundation level tier and/or take an Entry Level Certificate in Mathematics.

Both tiers of entry encompass work on:

- Number;
- Algebra;
- Ratio, Proportion, and Rates of Change;
- Geometry;
- Probability and Statistics.

The course includes a greater focus on problem solving, where students are required to apply their class work to real life situations.

Assessment Arrangements

For the linear course, all exams are at the end of Year 11 and are made up of a non-calculator and two calculator papers. All papers are 1 hour 30 minutes long. Each paper is worth one third of the final grade.

The final decision on the tier of entry is finalised after the second rehearsals in Year 11. This will be based upon teacher recommendation, assessments throughout Year 10 and Year 11, Year 11 exam results, student effort and other considerations.

Career Opportunities

Competence in mathematics is required for most vocations and careers. It is considered to be an essential entrance requirement for higher education and all students entering the Sixth Form should have a grade 4 or above in mathematics or be prepared to resit the examination.

Mathematics (Entry Level Certificate)

Examination Board: WJEC

The Entry Level Certificate in Mathematics (OCR) is offered alongside GCSE to suitable candidates who are unlikely to achieve a Grade 1 in GCSE mathematics. Students in this group are likely to be entered for both qualifications. Entry Level Mathematics is designed to be accessible and relevant and provide learners with recognition for their achievements.

The Entry Level Certificate in Mathematics is based on the National Curriculum programmes of study leading to achievement at National Curriculum levels 1, 2 and 3. Wholly assessed by teachers, it recognises small steps of achievement based on practical tasks.

Wherever appropriate, students will always be entered for GCSE Mathematics.

Mathematics forms part of every student's core curriculum and as such, students will follow one course in this subject.

Modern Foreign Languages (GCSE) (French or German)

Examination Board: AQA

Course Description and Organisation

A modern foreign language is an increasingly important subject for study at GCSE. By the end of the course, students will be able to share their interests, ideas and opinions with other people who speak French and German.

The GCSE language course consists of four units based on the following skills: speaking, listening, reading and writing. For all skills students will study the following topics:

Theme 1: Identity and culture

Me, my family and friends;

Technology in everyday life;

Free-time activities;

Customs and festivals in French-speaking countries/communities.

Theme 2: Local, national, international and global areas of interest

Home, town, neighbourhood and region;

Social issues;

Global issues;

Travel and tourism.

Theme 3: Current and future study and employment

My studies;

Life at school/college;

Education post-16;

Jobs, career choices and ambitions.

Assessment Arrangements

Examinations in the four skills are held at the end of Year 11 and these examinations are equally weighted. Exams can be taken at Foundation or Higher tier and are all externally assessed.

Career Opportunities

Students will add an international dimension to their choice of GCSE subjects, something many future employers and higher education providers are seeking. Students will also learn many skills which are useful in a wide range of future careers, such as the ability to communicate clearly, being confident about speaking in public and using problem-solving strategies. Students will also create greater opportunities for themselves to work abroad, or for companies in the UK with international links. Many employers look for people with the ability to speak a foreign language, and indeed some universities are now requiring students to have studied a modern foreign language at GCSE.

Only language(s) studied during Year 9 are continued to GCSE level.

Music (Level 2 Technical Award)

Examination Board: RSL

Course Description and Organisation

The RSL Level 2 Technical Certificate in Music gives students the opportunity to express themselves through performance and compositions, as well as developing an understanding of different musical genres, technical aspects of music and an appreciation of the work of the music industry.

By studying this course, students will:

- understand theoretical and contextual issues relating to music style, audience and the music industry;
- perform effectively on their instrument/voice;
- rehearse and display musicianship skills;
- initiate and develop repertoire;
- rehearse effectively and perform music live;
- understand relevant aspects of music technology.

Through developing the skills, knowledge and understanding outlined above, learners are provided with the basis for further development with the ultimate aim being the creation of a musician with the knowledge and skills-set to be able to perform and record music in a professional capacity (i.e. be a recording and performing artist.)

Assessment Arrangements:

The core unit is externally assessed and takes the form of a controlled assignment, providing the opportunity for learners to demonstrate and also integrate their knowledge, understanding and skills from across the area of study.

The remaining credits are made up from optional units that can be tailored to suit students' interests and strengths from three areas:

- performance;
- technology;
- composition.

Career Opportunities:

The RSL Level 2 Technical Certificate in Music will support progression towards becoming a musician (classical soloist, chorister, orchestral player, singer, theatre orchestra, forces bandsman, session musician, accompanist, conductor, solo artist), composer, DJ, music therapist, school teacher, instrumental/vocal coach, arts administrator, events organiser, sound engineer, producer, critic, actor, television presenter, orchestra manager/ secretary, floor/ stage manager.

Additional Requirements:

It is essential that students can already play an instrument or sing prior to starting the course and ideally have some knowledge of music theory. Students should be on track to achieve at least ABRSM Grade 4 by the end of Year 11. As a condition of entry to the course, students are required to attend an extra-curricular ensemble throughout the course to support their skill development in the subject.

Physical Education (GCSE)

Examination Board: Edexcel

Course Description and Organisation

The GCSE Physical Education course will appeal to students if they have a keen interest in sport and recreation; take part in sport or recreation outside of class time; want to know more about the benefits of sport and exercise; want to study a course that is active and that they will enjoy or if they are considering a sports-related career or an A Level or higher education course in the area of physical education or sports science.

In Year 9, students will follow a common course with the AQA Technical Award in Sport. This will help students and teachers to determine the appropriate pathway for each student.

The course is divided into four components:

Component 1: Fitness and Body Systems (36%): applied anatomy and physiology; movement analysis; physical training and the use of data.

Component 2: Health and Performance (24%): health, fitness and well-being; sport psychology; socio-cultural influences; use of data.

Component 3: Practical Performance (30%): skills during individual and team activities; general performance skills.

Component 4: Personal Exercise Programme (10%): aim and planning analysis; carrying out and monitoring the PEP; evaluation of the PEP.

Assessment Arrangements

Components 1 and 2 are both assessed by written examination: component 1 is assessed through a 1 hour 45 minute examination and component 2 through a 1 hour 15 minute examination. Both papers are assessed at the end of Year 11 and consist of multiple choice, short answer and extended writing questions.

Component 3 is assessed through the completion of three practical activities from a set list: one must be a team activity; one must be an individual activity; and the final activity can be a free choice. This assessment is internally marked and externally moderated.

Component 4 is assessed through students producing a Personal Exercise Programme (PEP), requiring analysis and evaluation of their performance. This assessment is internally marked and externally moderated.

Career Opportunities

The course might develop an interest in careers in sport and physical education, such as teaching, sports administration and management or coaching and fitness instruction.

Additional Requirement:

Students wishing to study GCSE Physical Education must demonstrate sustained commitment to represent one of the Academy's extracurricular teams or take active participation in other extracurricular activities outside of the Academy to support their skill development in this subject.

Religious Studies (GCSE)

Examination Board: AQA

Course Description and Organisation

Religious Studies is an engaging course for students of all faiths and none. It offers students the opportunity to reflect on the beliefs and practices of others, as well as encouraging them to develop their own personal and moral framework.

The course is divided into two components:

Component 1: the study of religions: beliefs, teachings and practices

Students will undertake an in-depth study of two major World Religions, Christianity and Islam

Component 2: thematic studies

Students will study four religious, philosophical and ethical themes, comprising:

- relationships and families;
- religion and life;
- religion, peace and conflict;
- religion, crime and punishment.

Students will study a variety of differing views on each topic whilst also being encouraged to develop and justify their own reasoned views.

Assessment Arrangements

Assessment is by 100% written examination through two separate examinations at the end of Year 11, one for each module. There is no coursework.

Career Opportunities

Religious studies provides the opportunity to develop many key skills required for future study and employment. The course encourages students to develop empathy and respect towards others, to embrace difference and to present their own views with clarity and sensitivity. Such skills are useful in any job that involves working with others, for example, the police force, education, journalism, medicine or law.

Religious Studies (GCSE Short Course)

Examination Board: AQA

Where the GCSE religious studies course is not appropriate, some students will follow a short course in religious studies. This covers some of the same content as above, but allows students to explore a smaller number of topics more fully.

Religious studies forms part of every student's core curriculum and as such, students will follow one course in this subject.

Sciences

In Year 9, all students will commence their studies in GCSE science. There are three routes available to students: GCSE combined science, GCSE 'triple' science (biology, chemistry and physics) and Entry Level Certificate in Science. Further details of each course are given below.

Combined Science (GCSE)

Examination Board: AQA

The majority of students will study GCSE combined science. Students who follow this course will achieve the equivalent of two GCSEs in science. This course is an equal mixture of biology, chemistry and physics. The course provides an excellent grounding in science, and good preparation for A Levels in science subjects (biology, chemistry, physics, applied science and psychology).

Assessment is through six examinations at the end of Year 11.

'Triple' Science (GCSE Biology, Chemistry and Physics)

Examination Board: AQA

Students who have shown an aptitude and enthusiasm for science in Years 7 and 8, or who show this during the GCSE work in Year 9, will be given the opportunity to study 'triple' science. This course is for students who like to understand scientific ideas in depth and who find explanations of how the world works fascinating. Students who take the 'triple' science option will achieve three GCSE qualifications in science at the end of Year 11: GCSE biology, GCSE chemistry and GCSE physics.

Triple science students initially cover the same content as that of students who do not take this option. After that, they take ideas and concepts in biology, chemistry and physics further. The extra content means that triple science students are very well-prepared for A Levels in science subjects. **However, triple science is not a requirement for entry to A Level science courses.**

The summary of content in each GCSE is given below.

Biology: cell biology; organisation; infection and response; bioenergetics; homeostasis and response; inheritance, variation and evolution; ecology

Chemistry: atomic structure and the periodic table; bonding, structure and the properties of matter; quantitative chemistry; chemical changes; energy changes; the rate and extent of chemical change; organic chemistry; chemical analysis; chemistry of the atmosphere; using resources

Physics: forces; energy; waves; electricity; magnetism and electromagnetism; particle model of matter; atomic structure; space physics

From the science of kidney dialysis to synthesising flavour molecules and making electric motors, the 'triple' science option is hands on, enjoyable and engaging.

By the end of this course students will have had many opportunities to enjoy a real breadth of knowledge and a deep understanding of science. The courses are taught by three specialist teachers in biology, chemistry and physics. Assessment is through six examinations at the end of Year 11.

Science (Entry Level Certificate)

Examination Board: OCR

The Entry Level Certificate in Science is an internally assessed Key Stage 4 science qualification for those students where a GCSE may not be a realistic or appropriate goal. Taught and assessed in small units, this course gives students realistic targets and achievements and enables the more able students to progress to GCSE.

The topics that are covered include aspects of biology, chemistry and physics:

Biology: dead or alive; babies; extinction; casualty; healthy eating; control systems; gasping for breath

Chemistry: acids and alkalis; cooking and cleaning; colours and smells; metals; fibres and fabrics; clean air

Physics: communications; electricity; forces; light; space

Careers in Science

Science qualifications open the door to a wealth of future careers. These possibilities include scientific and technical professions such as healthcare (for example, medicine, nursing, dentistry, pharmacy, veterinary science), research and development (industry, pharmaceuticals, biomedical) and engineering (mechanical, chemical and civil).

In addition, many other occupations require or would benefit from science qualifications such as teaching, sport, legal work and public relations. With science students are gaining the knowledge and skills to be at the forefront of developments and innovations for the world of the future.

Science forms part of every student's core curriculum and as such, as students will follow one course in this subject.

Textiles Technology (GCSE)

Examination Board: OCR

Course Description and Organisation

The course is suitable for students who wish to balance academic and practical subjects in their week and those who simply enjoy working with fabrics and textile media and are interested in fashion.

ICT is an important part of the course and will include the use of digital camera work, the creative use of computers, computerised textile machinery, scanners and the use of the internet as an important tool for both research and portfolio work.

The course is taught in three units:

- *Unit 1*: design and make controlled assessment portfolio (30%);
- *Unit 2*: 1 hour 30 minute written paper based around sustainable design and the technical aspects of textiles (40%);
- *Unit 3*: design and make controlled assessment portfolio (30%).

Students will have a choice of a range of themes to base their portfolio assessment pieces on.

Some examples of themes for Unit 1 are:

- *Embellishing the 21st Century*: create a textile piece using recycled remnants and pre-manufactured components such as zips, buttons, beads and lace.
- *Textile and Fibre Artists*: using a textile designer or fibre artist as a starting point, design and create a textile wall panel or piece of soft furnishing.

Some examples of themes for Unit 3 are:

- *20th Century Inspiration*: take inspiration from an art movement or 'innovation' based on the 20th Century and develop a textile piece based on this theme.
- *Historic Origins*: trace the origins of textiles through history or from an historic house or museum; design and make a textile item that reflects a chosen period.

It is expected that Unit 1 will be completed in the first year of the GCSE course (Year 10) and Units 2 and 3 will be completed in the final year of the GCSE course (Year 11).

Assessment Arrangements

Assessment is by two controlled assessment portfolios (Units 1 and 3, comprising 60%) and one timed examination (40%). The portfolios are assessed internally within the department and students will be regularly assessed for Units 1 and 3 in particular to monitor progress. The final GCSE assessment will be completed by OCR to standardise the grade for the controlled assessment portfolios. Unit 2 will be an externally set written paper.

Career Opportunities

This course will prepare students well for careers in the fashion industry, e.g. designer, fashion journalism, clothing manufacturing.

Prince's Trust Achieve Course (formerly Prince's Trust xl)

Examination Board: The Prince's Trust

Course Description and Organisation

The course aims to develop personal, teamwork and communication skills. A number of modules are chosen from the following areas:

- personal, interpersonal and teamwork skills;
- community awareness projects;
- citizenship;
- enterprise;
- preparation for work.

Within these areas students will gain Entry Level 3, Level 1 and Level 2 Certificates as well as an Award, Certificate or Diploma depending on the level and number of certificates obtained.

Assessment Arrangements

For each unit, a portfolio of evidence will be submitted for external assessment by a member of the Prince's Trust.

Career Opportunities

The key skills targeted in the course are highly valued by employers and institutions of further and higher education. They will enable students to make the most of employment and training opportunities.