



# **North Cestrian School**

## **GCSE Options Booklet**

**September 2025 – July 2027**

**A GUIDE FOR YEAR 9 PUPILS AND THEIR PARENTS  
ON CHOICE OF SUBJECTS FOR KEY STAGE 4**

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Here is the information that pupils need to make informed choices about the subjects they will study in Year 10 and 11. Pupils will apply for their favoured subjects following a range of experiences including:

The guidance on the Options Step One Forms Questionnaire – [Step 1](#)

## Co27 OPTIONS STEP 1 - Subjects I am most likely to apply for.

This step gives school a rough idea of numbers for each subject in order to start the construction of the school timetable and staffing numbers.

**Choose the subjects you are MOST LIKELY to want to study. This is not your final choice.**

Remember NOT to put the same subject in twice! **We need 4 different choices from you.**

Remember you CANNOT select both Art and Art and Design: Graphic Communications.

- The assemblies from School Leaders and current year 11 students (including follow up activities)
- The taster lessons in each subject (designed to provide a realistic idea of the demands and content of the qualification)
- The opportunity for parents to consider the school report from Data Capture 1 and email teachers regarding courses
- An online information evening for parents on 23<sup>rd</sup> January, 5.45-6.30pm with Q and A session 6.30-7pm.
- A parents' evening with Senior Leaders on 28<sup>th</sup> January (book your School Cloud appointment [here](#) with Mr Bell)
- Careers advice and guidance from Mr. Boswell in Personal Development Lessons
- A careers meeting with Mr Gallamore, the Hamblin Educational Trust's Careers Advisor.

Throughout this application process pupils are supported to apply for subjects which they can show matches their passion and purpose. If these things can be demonstrated by the pupil, their application to the subject is more likely to be successful. As with any application for a course or career, and especially those with limited numbers and challenging entry requirements, pupils should do all they can to maximise their chances of success.

The first Forms questionnaire is designed to provide a more unrestricted choice... what are the most appropriate subjects for the pupil? Which subjects do they feel best suited to?

Click and complete the Step1 Link above. **COMPLETE THIS BY FRIDAY 7<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY 2025**

From this, the Option Blocks will be built, in an attempt to meet the demand for courses. The school's facilities and staffing will also have a bearing on the number of places available on each course.

Following publication of the Blocks, students will be asked to apply for one subject in each column, following the rules on a second Forms Questionnaire. Students via Step 2 will also apply for a backup subject in each column. In effect, they are making their written application at this stage.

The best applications will be from candidates who can show:

Passion - their talents, interests, and commitment (this may be a good data capture 1 in Year 9, extra-curricular attendance, Cultural Capital, Character Development, evidence of reading / trips / visits around the subject)

Purpose – how the qualification / subject links to future ambitions and goals (this may be post-16 pathways, potential university courses, job opportunities, something integral to a rich and fulfilling life, a way in which you see your contribution to modern Britain and being a global citizen)

- Students will be interviewed before the confirmation of their three Options.

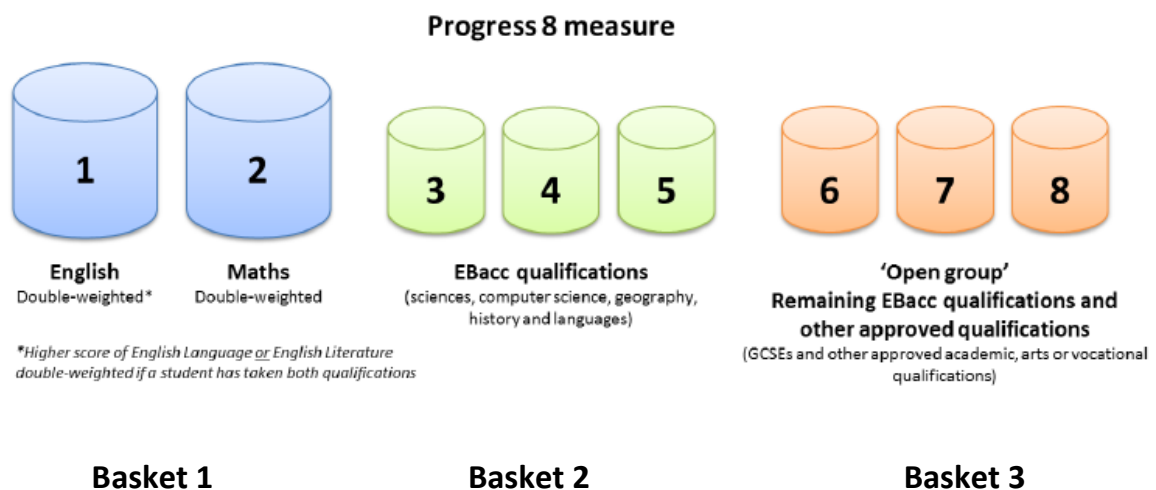
Most students will complete 8 to 10 **GCSE or GCSE equivalent** (Level 2) qualifications. Some students may be able to add an extra qualification in their home language. All pupils complete a non-examined PSHE Course which includes careers education and advice.

Current Government measures:

**EBacc** - indicates school performance in terms of the breadth and perceived quality of subject qualifications taken by individuals i.e. % pupils taking GCSEs in Sciences, modern foreign languages and humanities subjects (see below).

We expect all high ability pupils (including all other pupils with a flair and commitment to these subjects) to take the Spanish GCSE. Pupils opting for Spanish will be given a priority place on the Barcelona fieldtrip which is in the summer term of Year 10. To be awarded the EBacc one of the other two choices needs to be Geography and/or History to maintain breadth and hence greater choice in further education. All three Sciences are mandatory for all pupils as part of Combined or Triple Science.

**Progress 8** is the Government's measure of pupils' academic achievements in schools. Maths and English each carrying double weighting. Whilst all subjects we offer are eligible for the Progress 8 measure, pupils are also obliged to have a **balanced portfolio** in order to fulfil Progress 8 criteria. Pupils must therefore select both **Basket 2** and **Basket 3** subjects when making their 3 Option choices.



## **ART, CRAFT AND DESIGN - [AQA 8201](#)**

**Please note:** pupils may **NOT** select **BOTH** GCSE Art, Craft and Design and GCSE Graphic Communications.

### **Why study Art?**

Art and Design is a great choice for students who enjoy being creative, work hard and want to increase their practical skills and improve their analytical, communication and research abilities. The AQA Art and Design Course will help you develop your artistic skills and expand your creativity, imagination and independence. The skills students gain make it a great complement to other subjects. Art and design is a way of seeing things and making sense of the world around us. It can help with further study and prepare you for the world of work.

Students will explore ideas and convey experiences relating to a theme. Areas of study will include drawing, painting and mixed media in a wide range of types of media and materials.

### **What skills will I need?**

Students will need to have consistently good effort in lessons and a positive attitude to improve. Good drawing and painting skills are needed but these will be a strong focus and will be developed during the course. Additional work students undertake to research or make will strengthen their sketchbook work. Quality artwork takes time to complete, students will need to be committed to succeed.

### **Course Content and Assessment**

Component 1 Portfolio 60%	Students produce a portfolio of practical work covering each of the assessment objectives.
Component 2 Externally set task 40%	Work begins on the themes released by the exam board in January Y11. At the end of the preparatory period students spend 10 hours in exam conditions working on the final piece.

Both components are assessed against the following objectives:

- AO1:** Develop ideas through investigations, demonstrating critical understanding of sources.
- AO2:** Refine work by exploring ideas, selecting and experimenting with appropriate media, materials, techniques and processes.
- AO3:** Record ideas, observations and insights relevant to intentions as work progresses.
- AO4:** Present a personal and meaningful response that realises intentions and demonstrates understanding of visual language.

All work is assessed internally and moderated externally.

### **How could it help with my future?**

Art develops a wide range of transferable skills highly valued by employers. Students develop skills in project management, time planning, creative thinking and problem solving, investigation and research skills, the ability to develop, refine and present your ideas.

Art is a wide-ranging curriculum that allows for many creative and art-based avenues to be explored in Post-16 education. Studying art can lead to careers in interior design and architecture; product, graphic, and jewellery design; theatre and film set design, animation; advertising and publishing; retail design; fashion; journalism; illustration; professional artist and teaching.

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## BUSINESS – AQA 8132

GCSE Business provides students opportunities to apply core business knowledge (marketing, finance, human resources and operations) supporting them to make rapid and sustained progress, whilst developing transferable skills. Students will develop skills such as problem solving, and analysis and evaluation. They will consider the impact of business, entrepreneurship and consumerism on their lives, as well as becoming more perceptive consumers.

### Assessment

Paper 1: Influences of operations and HRM on business activity	+	Paper 2: Influences of marketing and finance on business activity
<p><b>What's assessed</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Business in the real world</li> <li>• Influences on business</li> <li>• Business operations</li> <li>• Human resources</li> </ul>		<p><b>What's assessed</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Business in the real world</li> <li>• Influences on business</li> <li>• Marketing</li> <li>• Finance</li> </ul>
<p><b>How it's assessed</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Written exam: 1 hour 45 minutes</li> <li>• 90 marks</li> <li>• 50% of GCSE</li> </ul>		<p><b>How it's assessed</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Written exam: 1 hour 45 minutes</li> <li>• 90 marks</li> <li>• 50% of GCSE</li> </ul>
<p><b>Questions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Section A has multiple choice questions and short answer questions worth 20 marks.</li> <li>• Section B has one case study/data response stimuli with questions worth approximately 34 marks.</li> <li>• Section C has one case study/data response stimuli with questions worth approximately 36 marks.</li> </ul>		<p><b>Questions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Section A has multiple choice questions and short answer questions worth 20 marks.</li> <li>• Section B has one case study/data response stimuli with questions worth approximately 34 marks.</li> <li>• Section C has one case study/data response stimuli with questions worth approximately 36 marks.</li> </ul>

Pupils will have the opportunity to build on the core skills that are required in business and everyday life. To support the development of these skills, students **must** engage in current affairs by reading, listening and watching any media that is advised.

Studying Business can support progression onto further education courses such as Accountancy, Business or Economics and to add to your CV you will have the opportunity to enter nationally recognized competitions such as The London Institute of Banking and Finance Student's Investor Challenge and the Manchester Airport's Dragons' Den Competition.

The transferable nature of the content and skills in Business ensures that a wide variety of careers such as (but not limited to) Chartered Accountancy, Insurance Underwriting, Trading, Public Relations, Marketing and Banking.

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## Computer Science GCSE (9–1) OCR (J277)

### Why should you take GCSE Computer Science?

The specification has been developed to build on the knowledge, understanding and skills learnt in Key Stage 3 (Years 7-9). Once completed, it should also enable students to progress onto AS Level Computer Science where they can gain an understanding of how Computer Science affects the world around us and, ultimately, a career in a Computer Science field.

### ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVES

<b>AO1</b>	Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the key concepts and principles of Computer Science.
<b>AO2</b>	Apply knowledge and understanding of key concepts and principles of Computer Science.
<b>AO3</b>	Analyse problems in computational terms: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to make reasoned judgements</li> <li>• to design, program, evaluate and refine solutions.</li> </ul>

### CONTENT OVERVIEW AND ASSESSMENT

<p><b>J277/01: Computer systems</b></p> <p>This component will assess:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Systems architecture</li> <li>• Memory and storage</li> <li>• Computer networks, connections and protocols</li> <li>• Network security</li> <li>• Systems software</li> <li>• Ethical, legal, cultural and environmental impacts of digital technology</li> </ul>	<p><b>Written paper:</b>  <b>1 hour and 30 minutes</b>  <b>50% of total GCSE</b>  <b>80 marks</b></p>
<p><b>J277/02: Computational thinking, algorithms and programming</b></p> <p>This component will assess:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Algorithms</li> <li>• Programming fundamentals</li> <li>• Producing robust programs</li> <li>• Boolean logic</li> <li>• Programming languages and Integrated Development Environments</li> </ul>	<p><b>Written paper:</b>  <b>1 hour and 30 minutes</b>  <b>50% of total GCSE</b>  <b>80 marks</b></p>
<p><b>Practical Programming</b></p> <p>All students will be given the opportunity to undertake a programming task(s), either to a specification or to solve a problem (or problems), during their course of study.</p>	

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## GCSE Art and Design – Graphic Communication

**Please note:** pupils may **NOT** select **BOTH** GCSE Art, Craft and Design and GCSE Graphic Communications.

### What is it?

A creative course focused on designing visual materials to communicate ideas, emotions, and information.

### What will you learn?

- **Design Areas:** Work on projects in fields like advertising, typography, and web design.
- **Skills:** Plan, design, and create visuals for specific audiences.
- **Creativity:** Experiment with different techniques and tools to express ideas.

### How is it assessed?

- **Component 1: Portfolio (60%)** – A collection of your best work developed throughout the course.
- **Component 2: Externally Set Assignment (40%)** – Respond to a design brief with preparation time and a 10-hour final session to create your piece.

### Why choose this course?

- Great for creative students who love visual design.
- Prepares you for further study or careers in design, marketing, or media.
- Encourages imaginative thinking and problem-solving.

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## ENGINEERING Level 1-2 Award WJEC

The Level 1 / 2 Award in Engineering is a Technical Award recognised by the DfE as a more practical alternative to GCSE. Vocational Awards are awarded on an 8-point scale: Level 2 Distinction\*, Level 2 Distinction, Level 2 Merit, Level 2 Pass, Level 1 Distinction\*, Level 1 Distinction, Level 1 Merit, Level 1 Pass.

### Why study Engineering?

Studying Engineering can lead to exciting career prospects and top salaries across a wide range of industries. Problem solving is critical to working in engineering. Finding solutions to problems to ensure a product is fit for purpose involves learning about materials, design and engineering processes, the safe use of tools and equipment and the mathematics that engineers use.

### What will I study?

The course is devised around the concept where pupils are offered a learning experience through purposeful and relevant sector related tasks with the characteristics of real work. They plan activities, carry out acquiring and applying knowledge, skills and understanding in order to complete activities and finally review the outcomes and learning. Pupils will consider how the impact of their learning impacts individuals, employers, society and the environment, alongside a range of generic and transferable skills. Pupils will learn how to analyse an engineered product to identify manufacturing criteria such as the materials to use; read engineering drawings to create a working plan of production to make a product; a range of hand, machine and computer aided design and manufacture operations to produce products.

Summary of Assessment	
Unit 1: Manufacturing Engineering Products Controlled assessment: 20 hours 40% of qualification	80 marks
An assignment brief will be provided by WJEC that will include a scenario and several tasks available via the WJEC Secure Website.	
Unit 2: Designing Engineering Products Controlled assessment: 10 hours 20% of qualification	40 marks
An assignment brief will be provided by WJEC that will include a scenario and several tasks available via the WJEC Secure Website.	
Unit 3: Solving Engineering Problems Written examination: time of exam - 1 hour 30 minutes 40% of qualification	80 marks
Questions requiring objective responses, short and extended answers, based around applied situations. Learners will be required to use stimulus material to respond to questions.	

### Assessment:

#### What skills will I need?

- Determination and good problem-solving skills to help work independently.
- The ability to complete in-depth written work related to the projects.
- The ability to communicate and develop design ideas.
- Good ICT & maths skills.
- The ability to work accurately with tools and equipment to make quality products.
- Follow instructions and be able to act on advice given from staff.

Further course information: [WJEC Engineering course details](#)

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## FOOD PREPARATION & NUTRITION GCSE - AQA 8585

**Website:** <https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/food-preparation-and-nutrition/gcse/food-preparation-and-nutrition-8585/specification>

### Why study food preparation and nutrition:

- You will be able to demonstrate effective and safe cooking skills by planning, preparing and cooking a variety of food commodities whilst using different cooking techniques and equipment
- You will develop knowledge and understanding of the functional properties and chemical characteristics of food as well as a sound knowledge of the nutritional content of food and drinks
- You will understand the relationship between diet, nutrition and health, including the physiological and psychological effects of poor diet and health
- You will understand the economic, environmental, ethical and socio-cultural influences on food availability, production processes, diet and health choices
- You will demonstrate knowledge and understanding of functional and nutritional properties, sensory qualities and microbiological food safety considerations when preparing, processing, storing, cooking and serving food
- You will understand and explore a range of ingredients and processes from different culinary traditions (traditional British and international) to inspire new ideas or modify existing recipes.

### Course Content & assessment:

1. Diet & Nutrition
2. Cooking Methods
3. Food Science
4. Food Safety
5. Food Choices
6. Food Provenance
7. Cooking Skills

### How is it Assessed?

- **Written paper** 1 hr 45 mins 50% of GCSE Externally marked
- **Non-Exam Assessment:** 2 NEA tasks 50% of GCSE Internally marked (Moderated by AQA)

#### NEA Task 1

Written report (1,500 – 2,000 words) including photographic evidence of a practical investigation in Food Science. [completed Oct-Dec Y11].

#### NEA Task 2

Food preparation assessment. Students will prepare, cook and present a final menu of three dishes, planning in advance how this will be achieved - (3-hour practical session and written portfolio including photographic evidence of three dishes. [completed by Jan-March Y11]

### Career Opportunities:

Food and Nutrition qualifications can provide a good background for work in catering, as a dietician in health services or commercial food production; food scientist; health & fitness roles; food & health journalism and publishing.

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## Level 2 Certificate in Further Maths GCSE – AQA 8365

### Unleash your inner Mathematician with AQA Level 2 Further Maths!

Are you ready to challenge yourself and take your mathematical skills to the next level? The AQA Level 2 Certificate in Further Mathematics is designed for students who love maths and want to explore its exciting and complex world beyond the standard GCSE curriculum.

This course isn't just about solving equations – it's about unlocking the secrets of advanced mathematics and gaining a head start in A-levels or future STEM careers. You'll dive into fascinating topics like **calculus, matrix transformations, and proof**, all while sharpening your problem-solving skills and logical thinking.

Master concepts that most students only encounter later in their academic journey. Whether you aspire to be a scientist, engineer, economist, or data analyst, Further Maths equips you with the tools to excel. It's perfect if you enjoy the tackling tough challenges and want to stand out academically.

Take this opportunity to show just how far you can go with your mathematical talent. The AQA Level 2 Further Maths course is your gateway to exploring maths at its most exciting and rewarding!

### Ready to rise to the challenge? Dive into Further Maths and see where it can take you!

#### Who is this option suitable for?

- Higher Level Mathematicians – there is cross over content with some of the GCSE supporting you attain a top GCSE grade
- Those considering A-Level Maths – it acts as a great foundation and transition for the A-level Maths course.
- Mathematicians with a curiosity and interest in the subject that are willing to work hard – you will be expected to carry out additional independent work.

Further Maths: <https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/mathematics/aqa-certificate/mathematics-8365/specification>

The specification content is set out in six distinct topic areas although the questions asked will range across these topics.

#### Course Content

- 1 Number
- 2 Algebra
- 3 Coordinate Geometry (2 dimensions only)
- 4 Calculus
- 5 Matrix Transformations
- 6 Geometry

#### Assessment

- Assessed at the end of the course; 100% Exam at the end of year 11.
- 2 equally weighted papers; one non-calculator and one calculator allowed; 80 marks each, both 1 hour and 45 minutes.
- The papers are made up of a mix of question styles, from short, single mark questions to multi-step problems. The difficulty increases, as a student progresses through the paper.

## GEOGRAPHY GCSE - AQA (8035)

Website: <https://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/geography/specifications/AQA-8035-SP-2016.PDF>

### Why study Geography?

The study of Geography enables students to gain a broad range of skills that are relevant to all careers. Statistics show that geographers are very employable, because they possess the abilities and skills that employers value. Geography is very important in our world with issues arising from people, places and environments. Geography will give you the knowledge, skills and understanding to enjoy, manage and sustain the future of the Earth and its many people groups.

### Geography courses provide employers with people who:-

- Have good communication skills – Written/oral skills, projects and presentations.
- can work in a team – Fieldwork to develop teamwork and leadership skills.
- can analyse – Geographical investigations test hypotheses and involve analysis.
- can ask questions and then find the answers – Pose problems and then investigate the answers; looking at complex systems in a straight-forward way, developing leadership and problem-solving skills allowing them to undertake complex decision-making exercises using information.
- are computer literate – Use ICT for data collection, research and analysing spread sheets.
- are spatially aware – Geographers use maps all the time on many different scales from many different sources including satellites and GIS.
- are environmentally and socially aware - understanding the links between places and people.

**Course Content and Assessment** - 100% Examination via three written exams at the end of Year 11.

#### 1. Living with the Physical Environment (35%)

Subtopics may include Section A - The Challenge of Natural Hazards (Natural Hazards, Tectonic Hazards, Weather Hazards, Climate Change). Section B - The Living World (Ecosystems, Tropical Rainforests, Cold Environments). Section C (UK Physical Landscapes, River Landscapes in the UK, Glacial Landscapes in the UK).

#### 2. Challenges in the Human Environment (35%)

Subtopics may include Section A – Urban Issues and Challenges, Section B – the Changing Economic World, Section C – the Challenge of Resource Management (Resource Management, Food).

#### 3. Geographical Applications (30%)

Subtopics may include Issue Evaluation and Fieldwork.

**Students are required to develop and demonstrate skills including cartographic, graphical, numerical and statistical, literacy, the use of qualitative and quantitative data, and formulating enquiry and argument throughout their study of the specification. Skills will be assessed in all three written exams. Ordnance Survey (OS) maps or other map extracts may be used in any of the three exams.**

### Fieldtrips

There are many opportunities for fieldtrips throughout the course. The **compulsory trip** is to Wales to study glaciation in Cwm Idwal; collect data for tourism in Betws-y-coed and measure various characteristics of rivers on the River Glaslyn. This is an important part of the course and will be examined in paper 3 so pupils are expected to attend.

### Access to Further and Higher Education

AS/A Level or degree in Geography, where the subject can be linked with many other subjects to develop an Arts or Science based understanding.

### Career Opportunities

There are some jobs where a qualification in Geography is of direct relevance, but a lot of employers from a variety of fields and many higher education courses ask for geography in combination with one or two other subjects. This can not only lead to careers in surveying, meteorology, geology and environmental science but can also be studied alongside economics or politics, for example, leading to careers in social work, retail and personnel, town planning and many more. Recent graduates have entered diverse areas, for example, marketing, teaching, IT, environmental planning and engineering the police, finance and banking.

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## HISTORY GCSE – AQA 8145

Website: <http://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/history/gcse/history-8145>

### Why study History?

History is a fascinating subject, and it teaches you to think in ways not found in any other discipline. History is one of the most mobile and versatile of academic qualifications. There are many things you can do with a GCSE in History. The qualification shows that you have a high level of literacy and that you are able to analyse complex information.

### Assessment and units of study:

#### Paper 1

\* **Germany 1890-1945:** Democracy and Dictatorship - the development and collapse of democracy and the rise and fall of Nazism. Study Germany pre-Hitler, Hitler's take-over of power, life in Nazi Germany and the Holocaust

\* **Conflict and Tension 1918-39** - seeking peace through the Treaty of Versailles post WWI and the role of Hitler's aggressive foreign policy in causing World War 2.

Paper 1: Understanding the modern world
<p><b>What's assessed</b></p> <p>In Section A there is a choice of <b>four</b> period studies, each with a focus on two key developments in a country's history over at least a 50 year period.</p> <p>In Section B there is a choice of <b>five</b> wider world depth studies. These focus on international conflict and tension.</p>
<p><b>How it's assessed</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Written exam: 2 hours</li> <li>• 84 marks (including 4 marks for spelling, punctuation and grammar)</li> <li>• 50% of GCSE</li> </ul>
<p><b>Questions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Section A – six compulsory questions (40 marks)</li> <li>• Section B – four compulsory questions (40 marks)</li> <li>• Plus 4 marks for spelling, punctuation and grammar</li> </ul>

#### Paper 2

\* **Britain: Health and the People, c1000 to the Present Day** - the importance of war, superstition and religion, government, and science and technology, in changes to medicine and health over time.

\* **Elizabethan England, c1568–c1603** - discover the leadership of Elizabeth I and her Golden Age – religion, exploration, poverty and crime, Mary Queen of Scots and the Spanish Armada

Paper 2: Shaping the nation
<p><b>What's assessed</b></p> <p>In Section A there is a choice of <b>three</b> thematic studies, which look at key developments in Britain over a long period.</p> <p>In Section B there is a choice of <b>four</b> British depth studies incorporating the study of a specific historic environment.</p>
<p><b>How it's assessed</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Written exam: 2 hours</li> <li>• 84 marks (including 4 marks for spelling, punctuation and grammar)</li> <li>• 50% of GCSE</li> </ul>
<p><b>Questions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Section A – four compulsory questions (40 marks)</li> <li>• Section B – four compulsory questions (40 marks)</li> <li>• Plus 4 marks for spelling, punctuation and grammar</li> </ul>



**Access to Further and Higher Education:** Provides access to A level and AS History in school sixth forms or at college. It is also a very well-respected GCSE that is appreciated for candidates applying for courses such as English Literature, Media Studies, Philosophy, Psychology, Politics, Art, etc.

**Career Opportunities:** Strong research and communication skills make historians much in demand in today's competitive job market. Studying History provides good preparation for a wide range of careers, for example: the legal profession, local government, journalism, publishing, the police force and many other careers involving people, such as teaching, social work, banking and finance.

*"We are born into history. History is around us everywhere we look. The life of each person on our planet is affected by history. There is no getting away from it."* Edward Carr

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## MUSIC GCSE– EDUQAS/WJEC 601/8131/X

This specification enables learners to develop knowledge and understanding of Music through four interrelated areas of study:

- Area of study 1: Musical Forms and Devices
- Area of study 2: Music for Ensemble
- Area of study 3: Film Music
- Area of study 4: Popular Music

The specification has three components based on the three skills of performing, composing and appraising. An integrated approach to the three skills is encouraged through each area of study and serves to highlight the importance of the relationship between composer, performer and audience. Knowledge and understanding of each area of study is assessed explicitly in Component 3. However, learners are also required to perform and compose music using conventions, styles or idioms linked to at least one area of study. Learners may choose the same or different areas of study for Components 1 and 2. Learners will also have the opportunity to follow their own musical interests in composition and performance.

### Assessment:

<b>Component 1</b> <b>Performing</b>	A minimum of two pieces, one of which must be an ensemble performance of at least one minute duration. The other piece(s) may be either solo and/or ensemble. One of the pieces performed must link to an area of study of the learner's choice.	Non-exam assessment: internally assessed, externally moderated 30% of qualification
<b>Component 2</b> <b>Composing</b>	Two compositions, one of which must be in response to a brief set by WJEC. Learners will choose one brief from a choice of four, each one linked to a different area of study. The briefs will be released during the first week of September in the academic year in which the assessment is to be taken. The second composition is a free composition for which learners set their own brief.	Non-exam assessment: internally assessed, externally moderated 30% of qualification
<b>Component 3</b> <b>Appraising</b>	This component is assessed via a listening examination. Eight questions in total, two on each of the four areas of study. Area of study 1: Musical Forms and Devices Area of study 2: Music for Ensemble Area of study 3: Film Music Area of study 4: Popular Music Two of the eight questions are based on extracts set by WJEC.	Written examination: 1 hour 15 minutes (approximately) 40% of qualification

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## DRAMA GCSE

**Examination Board:** Eduqas (WJEC)

**Online Resources:** [Eduqas Website](#)/[BBC Bitesize](#)

### Why Study GCSE Drama?

You'll develop a wide range of skills. You'll gain confidence and have fun. You'll learn to work within a team and balance a range of ideas. You'll have a mix of practical and written work. You will go on and watch live theatre performances. You will do workshops with professional actors. The World Economic Forum's Future of Jobs Report predicts creativity, innovation and ideation will be key skills for the workforce of the future. These so-called soft skills, which sit alongside analytical thinking and problem-solving, will replace manual tasks that become automated. When business leaders across the world were surveyed, they voted Creativity as the most important workplace capability to help their businesses survive and grow. This means that the study of creative subjects, like Drama, is becoming even more important and relevant to young people to give you the chance to succeed – whatever your ambitions! At the same time, you will find many opportunities to develop and improve your personal wellbeing both independently and as part of a wider community.

### Component 1 – Devising Theatre

You will participate in the creation, development, and performance of a piece of devised theatre. You will produce:

- A portfolio of supporting evidence based on the rehearsal process.
- A performance lasting between 5-16 minutes.
- An evaluation of the final performance.

**Teacher Assessed and Externally Moderated – 40%**

### Component 2 – Performing from a Text

You will study two extracts from the same text chosen by you or your teacher. You can choose to be assessed on acting. You will produce:

- A performance lasting between 5-14 minutes using sections of text from both extracts.

**Externally Assessed by a Visiting Examiner – 20%**

### Component 3 – Interpreting Theatre

Written examination: 1 hour 30 minutes. You will answer:

- Section A: Set Text - A series of questions based on the set text that you have studied.
- Section B: Live Theatre Review – One question from a choice of two, analysing and evaluating a given aspect of a live theatre production seen during the course.

**Externally assessed written examination – 40%**

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## PSYCHOLOGY GCSE – Edexcel 1PS0



*Psychology is the science of the mind. The human mind is the most complex machine on Earth. It is the source of all thought and behaviour.*

GCSE Psychology in Edexcel is designed to inspire and engage pupils by developing critical analysis, independent thinking and research skills in the fundamentals of Psychology. Psychology is an extremely popular A Level and Degree choice, and by offering at GCSE level, we are looking to give our students the edge in future applications to colleges and university. GCSE Psychology provides students opportunities to apply core skills (from English, Maths and Science) to understand the ideas and values that characterise the self, and society. Students will also develop highly desirable skills such as research, analysis and evaluation, as well as transferable skills that will prepare them for their future.

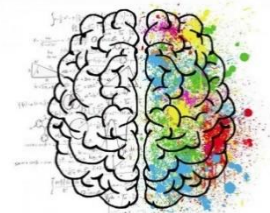
### Assessment

Paper 1 (*Paper code: 1PS0/01)	Paper 2 (Paper code: 1PS0/02)
<p><b>Written examination: 1 hour and 45 minutes</b></p> <p><b>55% of the qualification</b></p> <p><b>98 marks</b></p>	<p><b>Written examination: 1 hour and 20 minutes</b></p> <p><b>45% of the qualification</b></p> <p><b>79 marks</b></p>
<p><b>Content overview</b></p> <p>These topics are in Section A of the content. This paper may also draw on knowledge and understanding of investigations from Section C.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Topic 1: Development – How did you develop?</li> <li>• Topic 2: Memory – How does your memory work?</li> <li>• Topic 3: Psychological problems – How would psychological problems affect you?</li> <li>• Topic 4: The brain and neuropsychology – How does your brain affect you?</li> <li>• Topic 5: Social influence – How do others affect you?</li> </ul>	<p><b>Content overview</b></p> <p>Topics 6 to 10 are optional; students must study <b>two</b> of them. Topic 11 is compulsory.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Topic 6: Criminal psychology – Why do people become criminals?</li> <li>• Topic 7: The self – What makes you who you are?</li> <li>• Topic 8: Perception – How do you interpret the world around you?</li> <li>• Topic 9: Sleep and dreaming – Why do you need to sleep and dream?</li> <li>• Topic 10: Language, thought and communication – How do you communicate with others?</li> <li>• Topic 11: Research methods – How do you carry out psychological research?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Assessment overview</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This is a written examination in which all questions must be answered.</li> <li>• The paper consists of six sections. The first five sections each cover one of the topics listed above. These sections will include multiple-choice, short-open and open-response questions.</li> <li>• The sixth section will contain two extended open-response questions. These questions will focus on debates within psychology and the interrelationships between the core areas of psychology.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Assessment overview</b></p> <p>Students must answer:</p> <p>All questions from Section A.</p> <p>All questions from <b>two</b> sections – B to F.</p> <p><b>Section A: Research methods – How do you carry out psychological research?</b></p> <p>This section will focus primarily on Topic 11: Research methods – How do you carry out psychological research?, although it can draw on material from Topics 1 to 5 from Paper 1. It will contain question types that include calculations, multiple-choice, short-open and open-response questions, and one extended open-response question.</p> <p><b>Sections B to F: Optional topics</b></p> <p>Each of these sections covers one of the optional Topics 6 to 10. These sections will include multiple-choice, short-open and open-response questions, and one extended open-response question.</p> <p>Calculators may be used in the examination. Information on the use of calculators during the examinations for this qualification can be found in <i>Appendix 2: Calculators</i>.</p>

Paper 2 optional topics will be:

- Topic 6: Criminal Psychology
- Topic 9: Sleep and dreaming

There are a plethora of reasons to study Psychology; it helps us to understand ourselves better, you will develop critical thinking and it gives us a greater understanding of human relationships. Moreover, it is exciting, challenging and above all, inspiring!



*“When we are open to new possibilities, we find them. Be open and sceptical of everything”.*

*Todd Kashdan*





## SPANISH GCSE – EDEXCEL

[Pearson Edexcel GCSE Spanish \(2024\) | Pearson qualifications](#)

- ...ve you a sense of achievement
- ✓ Languages give you the edge in the job market
  - ✓ Languages are a life skill
  - ✓ Languages are a social skill
  - ✓ Languages teach you cultural awareness
  - ✓ Languages teach you communication skills and adaptability
  - ✓ Languages combine well with virtually any subject for further study
  - ✓ Learning languages gives you greater opportunities to travel and work abroad
  - ✓ Language learning gives you transferable skills like memory training and literacy
  - ✓ Language learning gives you a better awareness and understanding of your first language

### How the course is assessed:

**Paper 1: Speaking in Spanish (25%)** Task 1: Read aloud; Task 2: Role play; Task 3: Picture task with conversation

**Paper 2: Listening and understanding in Spanish (25%)** Section A: Response to multiple-choice, multiple-response and short-answer open responses; **Section B:** Dictation : Transcription of spoken Spanish into written Spanish.

**Paper 3: Reading and understanding in Spanish (25%)** Section A: Reading and Understanding (multiple-choice, multiple-response & short-answer open response questions)  
Section B: Translation into English

**Paper 4: Writing in Spanish (25%)** Foundation Tier: 1 x picture-based task Foundation and Higher Tiers : 2 x open-response questions; 1x translation into Spanish

As there are two tiers of entry **Foundation ( Grades 1-5)** and **Higher( Grades 4-9)** every effort will be made to ensure that maximum progress is achieved, and pupils will be entered for the examination at levels appropriate to their attainment.

### Thematic contexts:

- My personal world
- Lifestyle and wellbeing
- My neighbourhood
- Media and technology
- Studying and my future
- Travel and tourism

family	friends	relationships	equality
physical well-being	mental well-being	food and drink	sports
places in town	shopping	transport	the natural world
environmental issues	social media and gaming	future opportunities (e.g. work, travel)	school
music	TV and film	accommodation	tourist attractions

During the 2 years, pupils are encouraged to support their learning in the classroom by independent study at home. Recommended activities: engaging with the **National Languages Challenge** and **Cultural Capital Opportunities**; there are a wealth of materials online, and films and music widen knowledge and help pupils use their language skills in contexts which best suit their interests. The **Duolingo** app is excellent for building skills outside the classroom too.

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**SPORTS SCIENCE – OCR****OCR Cambridge National: Sport Science Level 1/2 Award/Certificate - J828**

Unit		Guided Learning hours & assessment		
Both MANDATORY Units	<i>R180: Reducing the risk of sports injuries and dealing with common medical conditions: In this unit, students will learn how to prepare participants to take part in physical activity in a way which minimises the risk of injuries occurring; prepare them to be able to react to common injuries that can occur during sport and physical activity and to recognise the symptoms of some common medical conditions.</i>	70 marks	1 hour 15 mins	48 hours <b>Written paper,</b> OCR –set and marked
	<i>R181: Applying the principles of training: fitness and how it affects skill performance: In this unit, students will learn how to conduct a range of fitness tests, what they test and their advantages and disadvantages. They will also learn how to design, plan and evaluate a fitness training programme. This will give them the background knowledge they need to be able to plan and deliver appropriate fitness tests, some of which will be adapted to suit the skills of the sporting activity.</i>  Students will then interpret the data collected from fitness tests and learn how best to feed this back so that participants can go on to make informed decisions about their fitness training.	80 marks	Approx. 16 hours	48 hours <b>Centre-assessed Task,</b> OCR moderated
Plus ONE of the following OPTIONAL units for Certificate	<i>R182: The body's response to physical activity and how technology informs this: In this unit, students will learn to understand how both the cardio-respiratory and musculoskeletal systems provide you with the energy and movements needed to keep you exercising and in turn how exercise helps develop both of these systems.</i>	40 marks	Approx. 8-10 hours	24 hours <b>Centre-assessed task,</b> OCR moderated
	<i>R183: Nutrition and sports performance: In this unit, students will learn to consider the composition of healthy, balanced nutrition. They will consider the necessity of certain nutrients and their role in enabling effective performance in different sporting activities. The knowledge gained will be used to produce an appropriate, effective nutrition plan for a performer.</i>	40 marks	Approx. 8-10 hours	24 hours <b>Centre-assessed task,</b> OCR moderated

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## Media Studies GCSE – (Eduqas 603/1115/0)

**Overview** - We believe that the study of Media is essential to any young person as it helps you to think analytically about the world of media 'product' that surrounds and profoundly influences us, positively or negatively.

We teach pupils the skills to dissect agendas and have much more agency and control over their own lives, in areas such as advertising and social media. Pupils are very engaged with Media as it is a contemporary and interactive subject that encourages creativity, analytical, research, and communication skills, through exploring a range of media forms and perspectives.

We study television, film, gaming, apps, radio, magazines, newspapers, advertising and social media, amongst others; 11 separate Media 'texts' plus the chance to create their own in coursework.

Many pupils choose GCSE Media Studies for its relevance to their lives and for the opportunities it provides for exploring issues through the use of different media in creative and practical ways.

If your interests, skills or career ambitions match any of these Media Studies is for you:

- Journalism and publishing
- Broadcast media
- Advertising and marketing
- Public relations
- Sociology
- Philosophy
- Psychology
- Gaming



- Social Media
- Communication
- Film
- Government and politics
- Performing arts
- Art and design
- Information technology
- English Language and/or Literature

### Subject content:



### Assessments

Media One – Exam	Media Two – Exam	Non-exam assessment:
<p><b>Component 1: Exploring the Media</b></p> <p><b>Written examination: 1 hour 30 minutes</b> <b>40% of qualification</b></p> <p><b>Section A: Exploring Media Language and Representation</b></p> <p>This section assesses media language and representation in relation to two of the following print media forms: magazines, marketing (film posters), newspapers, or print advertisements.</p> <p>There are two questions in this section:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• one question assessing media language in relation to one set product (reference to relevant contexts may be required)</li> <li>• one two-part question assessing representation in relation to one set product and one unseen resource in the same media form.</li> </ul> <p>Part (a) is based on media contexts. Part (b) requires comparison through an extended response.</p> <p><b>Section B: Exploring Media Industries and Audiences</b></p> <p>This section assesses two of the following media forms: film, newspapers, radio, video games. It includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• one stepped question on media industries</li> <li>• one stepped question on audiences.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Component 2: Understanding Media Forms and Products</b></p> <p><b>Written examination: 1 hour 30 minutes</b> <b>30% of qualification</b></p> <p>This component assesses all areas of the theoretical framework and contexts of the media in relation to television and music.</p> <p><b>Section A: Television</b> • one question based on an extract from one of the set television programme episodes to be viewed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• one question on media industries, audiences or media contexts.</li> </ul> <p><b>Section B: Music</b> (music videos and online media) • one question on either media language or</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• one question on media industries, audiences or media contexts.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Component 3: Creating Media Products</b></p> <p><b>Non-exam assessment 30% of qualification</b></p> <p>An individual media production for an intended audience in response to a choice of briefs set by WJEC, applying knowledge and understanding of media language and representation. This could be a music video, newspaper, radio show, magazines, website etc that the student has to create – they will get a choice of options.</p>

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## **MANDATORY CORE SUBJECTS**

### **English Language - AQA (8700)**

The course is designed to inspire and motivate, providing appropriate stretch and challenge whilst ensuring that the assessment and texts are, as far as possible, accessible to all students. It enables students to develop the skills they need to read, understand and analyse a wide range of different texts and write clearly.

### **Subject Content**

Explorations in Creative Reading and Writing

Writers' Viewpoints and Perspectives

Spoken Language Endorsement (non-examination assessment)

### **Paper 1: Explorations in Creative Reading and Writing 50% of GCSE**

Written Examination 1hour 45 minutes

**Section A – Reading (25%):** Students answer four questions on one literature fiction text.

**Section B – Writing (25%):** Students answer one question, writing to describe or narrate.

### **Paper 2: Writers' Viewpoints and Perspectives 50% of GCSE**

Written Examination 1hour 45 minutes

**Section A - Reading (25%):** Students answer four questions on two linked non-fiction texts.

**Section B - Writing (25%):** Students answer one question, writing to present a viewpoint.

### **Non-Examination Assessment: Spoken Language Separate endorsement (0% of GCSE)**

- Presenting
- Responding to questions and feedback
- Presenting

Teacher set and assessed throughout course.

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## English Literature - AQA (8702)

A course designed to inspire, challenge and motivate every student, no matter what a pupil's level of ability.

### Subject Content

Shakespeare – '*Macbeth*'

The Nineteenth Century Novel – *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* - R.L Stevenson

Modern Prose or Drama – *An Inspector Calls* - J.B Priestley

Poetry Anthology/Unseen Poetry – Power and Conflict Cluster

### Paper1: Shakespeare and the Nineteenth Century Novel 40% of GCSE

Written Examination 1hour 45 minutes

**Section A - Shakespeare:** Students answer one question. They will be required to write in detail about an extract from the play and then to write about the play as a whole.

**Section B - The Nineteenth Century Novel:** Students answer one question. They will be required to write in detail about an extract from the novel and then to write about the novel as a whole.

### Paper 2: Modern Texts and Poetry 60% of GCSE

Written Examination 2 hours 15 minutes

**Section A - Modern Texts:** Students answer one essay question from a choice of two on their studied modern prose or drama text.

**Section B - Poetry:** Students answer one question comparing one named poem and one other poem from their chosen anthology cluster.

**Section C - Unseen Poetry:** Students answer one question on one unseen poem and one question comparing this poem with a second unseen poem.

Note: This course is now separate from English Language, but students benefit hugely from its transferable skills.

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## MATHEMATICS - AQA 8300

### Key Information

- Assessed at the end of the course; 100% Exam at the end of Year 11.
- 3 equally weighted papers;
  - 80 marks each.
  - 2 calculator papers and 1 non-calculator paper.
  - Each paper is 1hour and 30 minutes.
- Pupils will sit either the Higher or Foundation tier – teacher/Faculty decision
  - **Higher tier awards Grades 9-4**
  - **Foundation tier awards Grades 5-1**

### Subject Content

- Number
  - Structure and calculation
  - Fractions, decimals and percentages
  - Measures and accuracy
- Algebra
  - Notation, vocabulary and manipulation
  - Graphs
  - Solving equations and inequalities
  - Sequences
- Ratio, proportion and rates of change
- Geometry and measures
  - Properties and constructions
  - Mensuration and calculation
  - Vectors
- Probability
- Statistics

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## RELIGIOUS STUDIES GCSE - AQA 8062

### Course Overview:

- To explore a wide range of fundamental issues around our local and global community.
- To develop skills, knowledge and understanding of religions and beliefs by exploring the significance, the teachings and the practices of different belief systems.
- To enable learners to develop their own attitudes and opinions towards beliefs and religions.

**Religious Studies is a mandatory subject at North Cestrian School. All students begin their course of study in Year 9 and take their GCSE exam at the end of Year 11.**

### Course Content

#### **Paper 1 – Study of Religions: Christianity & Islam.**

- Christianity: Beliefs and Teachings
- Christianity: Practices
- Islam: Beliefs and Teachings
- Islam: Practices

#### **Paper 2 – Thematic Studies**

- Theme A: Relationships and families
- Theme B: Religion and life
- Theme D: Religion, peace and conflict.
- Theme E: Religion, crime and punishment

### How the course will be assessed:

Students will have full course examinations at the end of Year 11 -2x 1hr 45-minute papers will be sat by all students.

### What can you do next with this subject?

A GCSE in Religious Studies can allow progression to study an A Level in the very popular options of Philosophy and Ethics, Religious Studies or Theology. A level Religious Studies is a rigorous, valuable and useful qualification. The chance to think deeply about a wide range of questions, including across philosophy, theology, ethics and social sciences, is one of the reasons why A level RS has become such a popular choice for students. Religious Studies builds strong foundations for a career path in any of the following areas including Law, Politics and Government, International Relations, Theology, Journalism and Media.

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**GCSE SCIENCES**  
**AQA Combined Science 8464 (Double Award, 2 GCSEs)**  
**Biology 8461, Chemistry 8462, Physics 8463 (Separate Sciences, 3 GCSEs)**

Science is mandatory for all pupils – there is no option choice to be made.  
 All pupils study Biology, Chemistry and Physics

GCSE Science provides the foundations for understanding the material world and helps students to develop curiosity about the natural world, insight into how science works, and a greater appreciation of its relevance to their everyday lives. GCSE science should enable students to develop:

- scientific knowledge and conceptual understanding through the specific disciplines of Biology, Chemistry and Physics
- understanding of the nature, processes and methods of science, through different types of scientific enquiries that help them to answer scientific questions about the world around them
- their ability to learn and apply observational, practical, modelling, enquiry and problem-solving skills, both in the laboratory, in the field and in other learning environments

All students are assessed via 6 written examinations at the end of the two-year course. There is no coursework or teacher assessment in the science GCSE. The examinations cover knowledge and understanding of both the science content and a series of embedded skills such as mathematics (10-40%) and those relating to knowledge and understanding of practical work (20%).

All students will study one of two science pathways which both cover aspects of biology, chemistry and physics: Either

- **Combined Science** (2 GCSEs from average performance in Biol/Chem/Phys)
- **Separate Sciences** (3 different GCSEs in Biology, Chemistry and Physics)

The pathway is based on prior performance, aptitude and interest in the subject as the **separate Science pathway is taught at a much faster pace** in order to cover the additional and more demanding content of the third GCSE. The common foundations of both GCSE science pathways are taught in Year 9 & Year 10. In the summer term of Year 9, staff allocate pupils to each pathway via Y9 performance and discussion with pupils. Entry for separate science GCSEs is not automatic and is dependent on pupils making satisfactory progress, as judged by teaching staff.

Combined Science GCSEs accepted for entry to A level science courses by most sixth forms and colleges.

Examination entries for each pathway can be made at either **Higher (Grades 9-4, confident Level 5+)** or **Foundation (Grades 5-1)** tier. This decision about tiers of entry will be made by the faculty based on the performance and confidence of individual students after the first year of study.

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