



KS4 Options 2024

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Welcome

Dear Parent/Guardian

Choosing options is an exciting process and represents the first time in a young person's school life when they can make decisions about what they study. Although about choosing options, the mantra is very much about keeping options open while also considering subjects which will support future plans, hopes and aspirations.

We do not structure the process with performance tables in mind so there is still considerable choice and we have a broad and balanced range of subjects to choose from. The only subjects which are compulsory are those required by the National Curriculum, so nobody is forced to study a language or humanities subject if they really don't feel it suits them. This gives students the ability to choose courses that they enjoy and help develop their talents. Of course a wide choice also brings its own challenges.

Some parents and carers may be aware of the English Baccalaureate (EBacc). This is a qualification comprising 5 GCSEs at grade 4 and above in English, Mathematics, two sciences, History or Geography and French or German. At the moment it is a performance indicator for schools. It is possible that university departments, certainly in the higher status universities, for some courses will regard it as a feature in selection of candidates in future. There is no sign of this yet.

Many schools are making Humanities and Languages compulsory for all in response to the Government's initiative. Many more are insisting that those capable of passing them should be made to take a Humanities and Languages option. Our governors looked at changing the options to make some subjects compulsory for some students, which would certainly help us in the league tables. However, we feel it better to allow families to make the choice, while being fully informed of its significance.

If your child chooses not to study for the EBacc there is a danger that in four years' time they will not be able to gain access to the university course

or a profession that they want. It is also possible that some sixth forms will look for it for at least some courses. We do not know precisely how key this qualification will be but there is a chance it will become useful in some areas, particularly for students who are more able academically.

We are happy to leave the decision to you and your child. We appreciate that you may be happy to take the risk of not opting for the EBacc in order to allow them to study a combination of subjects they enjoy and feel will offer them more.



As part of the options process, your child will have a discussion with a member of the Senior Leadership Team and there will be a chance for you to gather more information at the Options Evening. If your child's options do not include the EBacc, and we feel they could pass it, we will make contact with you, just for a conversation. We are merely seeking to ensure you feel we have paid sufficient respect to your freedom to choose and allowed you to do so in full knowledge of the issues surrounding the EBacc.

I hope you find this booklet useful. As ever, the options process is about communication so please do get in touch with the school at any time if you have questions or concerns.

Best wishes,

John Marston, Headteacher

Introduction

For the past three years you have studied the same subjects as everyone else, with little or no choice.

In Year 10 there is some choice in the subjects you can study.

This booklet will help make sure you follow the right courses for your abilities, needs and interests. Selecting the right courses is important. It could affect your future.



The Process

Ultimately, it is important that you are given the information needed to make a sensible decision. As well as this booklet, support will come in the form of presentations, PSHE activities, options evening and advice from staff in school and friends / family outside school.

You will also have an interview with a member of the school's Senior Leadership Team in February to help select the right courses. Subject Leaders will provide specific information and can be contacted with questions too. In addition, our Careers Advisor, Mrs Ward, can provide further advice.

The deadline for submitting your course preferences is **Monday 18th March**. There will be an online form to complete via the school website. On the form you must indicate your four preferred option choices as well as two 'back-up' choices.

Once you have chosen your subjects, we do our very best to allocate to you your preferred courses. Please note, however, that:

- occasionally there can be a clash of courses on the timetable
- some courses may become oversubscribed so that we cannot guarantee your choices
- in the event of an option course having a very small take-up, it will not run

It is therefore important that you indicate courses in order of preference and that you consider carefully your 'back-up' choices.

Your Choices

All pupils study English, Maths, Science, core PE and PSHE. These subjects take up 18 out of the 30 lessons each week.

Option subjects take up the remaining 12 lessons.

Both GCSE and BTEC options take three lessons a week.

ASDAN Skills is the only double option and takes six lessons a week.



Whatever you choose, the total number of lessons must add up to twelve.

This means you can choose:

- 4 single options
- 2 single options + ASDAN Skills

These are the options we offer:

- Art and Design: Fine Art | GCSE
- Computer Science | GCSE
- Dance | GCSE
- Design & Technology: Food Preparation & Nutrition | GCSE
- Design & Technology: Textiles | GCSE
- Design & Technology: Product Design | GCSE
- Design & Technology: Resistant Materials | GCSE
- Drama | GCSE
- Enterprise | BTEC Technical Award
- French | GCSE
- Geography | GCSE
- German | GCSE
- Health and Social Care | BTEC Technical Award
- History | GCSE
- Music | GCSE
- Music Technology | GCSE
- Photography | GCSE
- Physical Education | GCSE
- Religious Studies | GCSE
- Skills for Life | ASDAN (double option)

Certification

The majority of courses in this booklet lead to GCSE (General Certificate of Secondary Education) qualifications. Please see the individual course pages for details.

Your child will be sitting the new specifications which means they will have all their subjects graded 9-1, where 9 is the highest award.

Vocational Courses (mostly BTECs) will continue to be graded at Level 1, or Pass, Merit, Distinction and Distinction* at Level 2.



Please speak with individual subjects regarding the overall assessment grade to be used.

In some subjects it may be more appropriate for some pupils to aim for the Entry Level Certificate. This is provided by the same examination boards as the GCSE, and offers assessment at a more basic level.

Non-Exam Assessment

In some courses the final written examination will be only one part of the overall assessment, and non-exam assessment (informally known as 'coursework') will form an important part of the final grade.

In all these courses you must be prepared to complete non-exam assessments on time and to the best standard you can manage.

Non-exam assessment is work undertaken in the classroom but under exam conditions. In some courses this will begin in Year 10.

Questions To Think About

What do I want to do when I leave school?

You may already know exactly what career you wish to follow. If so, you should choose the subjects which may be needed as qualifications. If you are a more academically able student, you should also bear in mind the 'EBacc' qualification that Mr Marston refers to in the introductory letter to this booklet.



Remember, you may change your mind about your career in the next two years and it is not usually possible to change your chosen subjects part of the way through a two-year course. For this reason, it is best to have a balanced range of courses to keep career options open.

We hope most of you will stay in education at Wallingford School until you are 18. You may wish to consider which subjects you might go on to study or what training course you might apply for after Year 11.

Most Year 9 pupils have no settled ideas of what they would like to do after leaving school. Again, you need a balanced set of courses from the range available. This will leave you with plenty of possible careers to choose from in the future.

What subjects do I enjoy?

Only you know the answer to this. If you like a subject, you will enjoy working hard at it. Hard work is essential whatever you choose.

What subjects am I good at?

As well as thinking carefully about this yourself, you should use the advice of your teachers and form tutor.

How do I enjoy working?

Some subjects will require you to do coursework (NEA non-examination assessment). Others will be assessed mainly by exam. Think about which way of working you prefer. If you are not confident in exams, you should consider coursework based courses or vocational courses where there may be a smaller exam element.

Why study English?

The study of English allows you to explore the language in which you think and speak. By the end of the course we hope you will feel confidence and enjoyment in using the most flexible and influential language in the world!

What will I study?

The course will lead to two separate GCSEs: one in English Language (AQA 8700) and one in English Literature (AQA 8702).

English Language will involve exploring and producing non-fiction; understanding and analysing prose fiction; and writing creatively. You will study texts from a variety of genres and eras.

English Literature will involve: reading and responding to Shakespeare and contemporary drama; studying 'classic' novels and more recent novels from other cultures; understanding and analysing a wide range of poems.

How will I study?

English is studied through a variety of whole class, group and individual tasks: discussions and debates; play readings and poetry performances; non-fiction and creative writing tasks.

How will my work be assessed?

Achievement in English Language and Literature will be graded from 1-9, with 9 being the highest level.

Spoken Language will be awarded Pass, Merit or Distinction.



English Language

100% final exam, without tiers; there will be no coursework or controlled assessment.

Paper 1: Explorations in Creative Reading and Writing (1 hour 45 minutes)

Paper 2: Writers' Viewpoints and Perspectives (1 hour 45 minutes)

Spoken Language (formerly Speaking and Listening) will be assessed and reported separately and given a 0% weighting.

English Literature

100% final exam, without tiers; closed book; there will be no coursework or controlled assessment.

Paper 1: Shakespeare and the 19th century novel (1 hour 45 mins)

Paper 2: Modern texts and poetry (2 hours and 15 mins)

Mathematics | GCSE

Why study Maths?

Nationally, the Mathematics GCSE is split into two tiers, Foundation and Higher.

We use this flexibility to provide courses that allow you to fulfil your mathematical potential and so achieve your best possible grade.

The allocations to these courses are based on performance in Year 7, 8 and 9, but they are not rigid and transfers between sets can take place in Year 10 and 11, particularly after assessments.

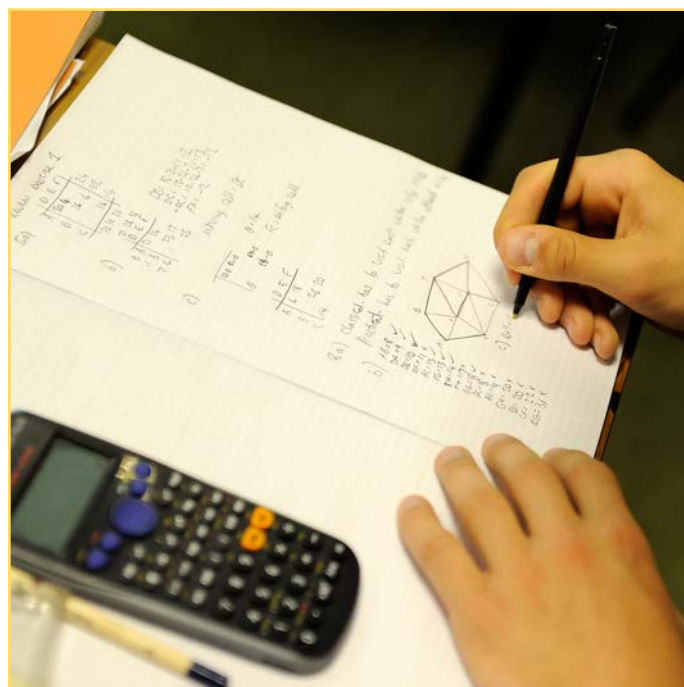
These courses build on the work done in Key Stage 3 and offer you the opportunity to acquire new mathematical knowledge, to enhance numeracy skills and to develop further your problem-solving techniques.

What will I study?

The six areas of Mathematics that you will study are:

- Number
- Algebra
- Ratio, proportion and rates of change
- Geometry and measures
- Probability
- Statistics

In addition to these areas, you will be assessed on 'Functional elements' of mathematics, where more focus will be put on problem solving and the ability to think about the context of a question. You will also be required to memorise formulae.



How will my work be assessed?

You will be assessed at the end of Year 11. You will sit three papers of equal weighting each 1 hour and 30 minutes long. One will be a non-calculator paper and the other two will be calculator.

There is no coursework or controlled assessment in Mathematics. The grades available depend on the tier studied:

- For Higher, grades 4-9 are available
- For Foundation, grades 1-5 are available

Why study Science?

The study of science enables you to make informed choices and decisions about a wide range of issues that will have an impact on your life from IVF treatments, to cloning, to whether we should release nano-scale robots into human bodies to fight illness.

Science is a compulsory subject. Some pupils will study Triple Science, resulting in a GCSE in Biology, Chemistry and Physics, but most of the year group will follow a Combined Science course leading to two GCSEs. The decision about which course you take will be made by your Science teachers to ensure that you stand the best chance of succeeding and achieving highly in Science. You can successfully go onto study A-level Science from either Combined or Triple Science.



What will I study?

You will study a wide range of content across the whole spectrum of the sciences.

The aims of the course are:

- To learn how science affects our everyday life and how to evaluate scientific information and evidence presented by, for example, the media.
- To learn how ideas can be explained using science, and how theories are developed.
- To develop your ability to explain things in a scientific way and communicate your ideas to others.
- To develop the skills you need to carry out practical work safely and accurately.
- To prepare you for further studies and careers which need a Science background.

How will I study?

Your lessons will be a variety of practical tasks, discussion based lessons and written work. We aim to ensure that there are a range of activities in every lesson and our primary objective is to enable you to learn and reach your full potential.

How will my work be assessed?

You will be assessed at the end of Year 11. You will sit six papers, two Biology, two Chemistry and two Physics for both Combined Science or Triple Science. The Combined Science papers are 1 hour 15 minutes long, whereas the Triple papers are 1 hour 45 minutes long as they test more content.

There is no coursework or controlled assessment in Science. The grades available depend on the tier studied:

- For Higher, grades 4-9 are available
- For Foundation, grades 1-5 are available

Physical Education | CORE

Year 10 Core PE Pathways Programme

In Year 10 you will study a variety of activities, which are suited to the class. There is an emphasis on participation and engagement, ensuring that you develop a range of transferable skills, including self-confidence and the ability to work with others.

- Invasion Games - Netball, Football, Rugby, Hockey, Lacrosse, Handball and Basketball.
- Racket Sports - Badminton and Tennis
- Fitness
- Dance and Trampolining
- Striking and Fielding - Rounders and Cricket

You will participate in two lessons a week, one indoor and one outdoor.

Fixtures and practices continue to run for Year 10 students, enabling and encouraging participation in sporting activities.



Art & Design: Fine Art | GCSE

Why study Art & Design?

GCSE Art & Design is a course which gives you a wide range of creative, exciting and stimulating opportunities to explore your interests in art and design in ways that are personally relevant and truly developmental in nature. You will develop creative, imaginative and practical skills and learn to appreciate works of art produced by artists, crafts people and designers from different times and cultures.



What will I study?

Art is not just about drawing and painting but encompasses working and experimenting with a range of different media in 2D and 3D including printmaking, mixed-media, sculpture, ceramics, digital photography and image manipulation.

How will I study?

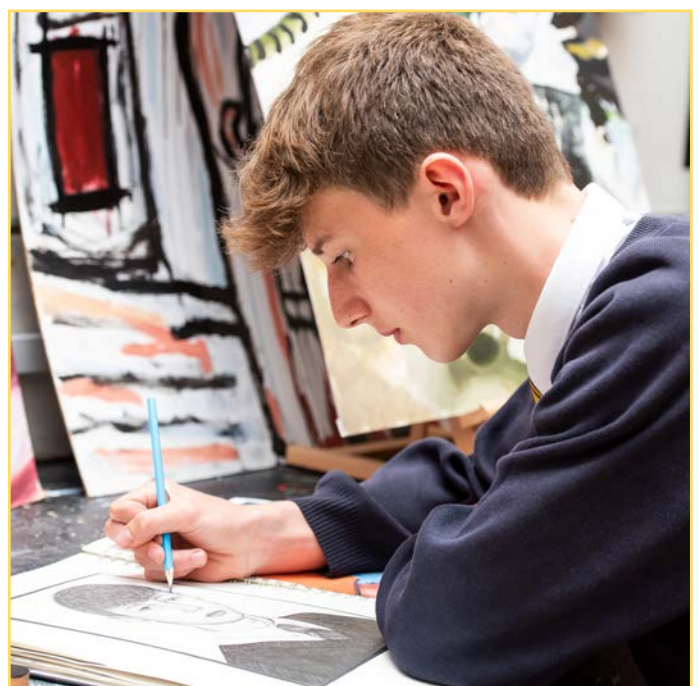
- **Unit 1:** Portfolio of Work (60% of your final grade). During the course you will be expected to complete at least two theme-based projects for Unit 1. You will explore, experiment and develop ideas in your sketchbook towards a series of final outcomes in varied media.
- **Unit 2:** Externally Set Task (40% of your final grade). The Exam board, AQA, will set a question paper containing a selection of

starting points/themes. You will then have three months to research, experiment and develop ideas in order to produce a piece of artwork in the exam.

How will my work be assessed?

Throughout the course you will be assessed on the following criteria:

- Developing ideas through investigations informed by contextual and other sources demonstrating analytical and cultural understanding.
- Refining ideas through experimenting and selecting appropriate resources, media, materials, techniques and processes.
- Recording ideas, observations and insights relevant to their intentions in visual and/or other forms.
- Presenting a personal, informed and meaningful response demonstrating critical and analytical understanding, realising intentions and, where appropriate, making connections between visual, written, oral or other elements.



Computer Science | GCSE

Why study Computer Science?

You have grown up in a world where technology is evolving rapidly, creating new subject areas to explore and changing the way people work in every area from medicine and fashion to engineering and economics.

Computer Science explores the principles of digital technology and a way of working called 'computational thinking', with coding as a core of the course. You've got to be able to think logically, solve puzzles and be tenacious when the going gets tough. But it is also really creative, and you'll get a real buzz out of getting something to work yourself, especially when programming.

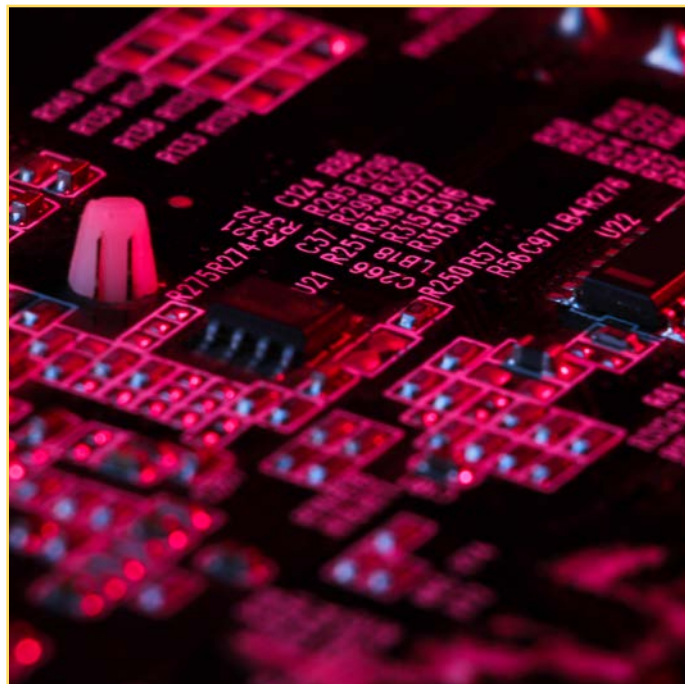
What will I study?

There are a range of practical and theory topics:

- Python programming and skills in algorithm building, problem solving
- Computer science topics such as networking, cybersecurity, how computers are made and what their different components do
- Understand the impacts of digital technology to the individual and to wider society
- Applying mathematical skills relevant to Computer Science

How will I study?

You will have a mix of practical and theory lessons. You will be learning the skills to take a systematic approach to problem solving. You will be independently designing, writing, testing and refining your programs, applying your growing knowledge of computer science and IT systems to your program development.



How will my work be assessed?

There are two written exams to the assessment. Each is worth 50% of the overall mark.

- **Exam 1:** a written paper with a mixture of short to medium length questions covering topics such as networking and computer systems
- **Exam 2:** a live programming exam with a mixture of Python and theory questions



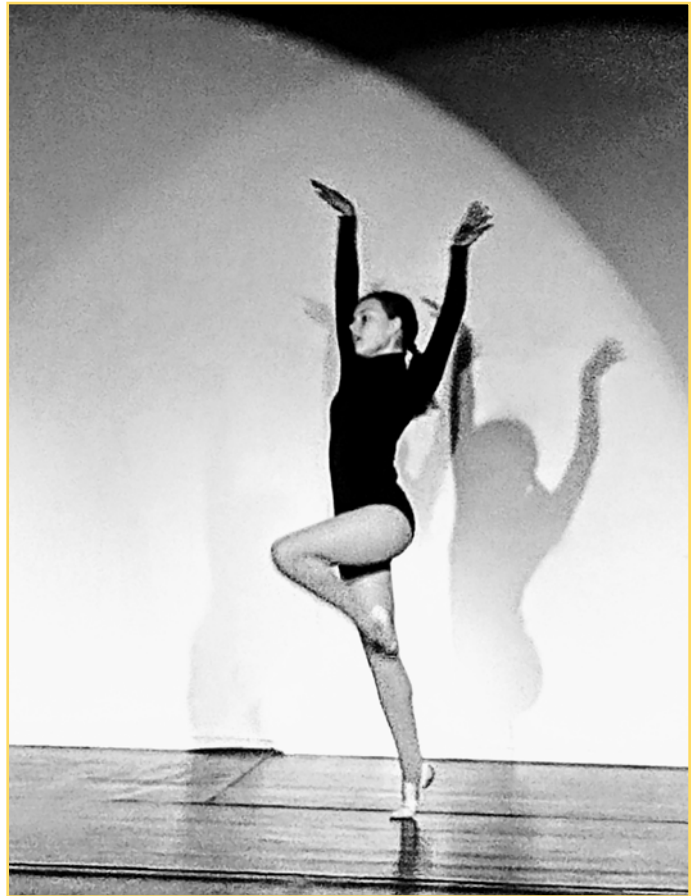
Why study Dance?

This is a fantastic course for students who enjoy all aspects of dance and wish to extend their practical skills to include technique, performance and choreography skills. You will become more confident in expressing yourself and communicating ideas as well as working in groups and individually. The course also builds on your appreciation of dance pieces performed by others, including professionals.

What will I study?

You will develop your own performance skills performing as part of a group and individually. You will also develop your own choreography skills through applying different devices and principles.

Through observation and analysis, you will learn to evaluate your own dance choreography and performances, as well as pieces from professional companies, to include consideration of the lighting, set design costumes and accompaniments that they use.



How will I study?

Lessons are mainly practical based and you will work individually on tasks, as well as part of groups, in order to develop technique, choreography skills and performance skills. A proportion of the lessons will be focused on preparation for the written exam.

How will my work be assessed?

Practical exam 60%

- Set phrase solo
- Duet/trio performance
- Choreography piece

Written exam 40%

- Dance Appreciation; a 90 minute written exam.

Design Technology: Food Preparation & Nutrition | GCSE

Why study Food Preparation & Nutrition?

Are you interested in healthy eating? Do you love cooking? This is the course for you. It is a creative and stimulating course for students of all abilities.

The course focuses on developing practical cookery skills and new techniques. You will also learn about nutrition and healthy eating which are essential for life. This qualification will lead to a wide array of jobs including Food Technologist, Chef, Food Buyer, Environmental Health Officer and Nutritionist.



What will I study?

- What food is made up of, why we need it and how it affects our long term health.
- How food can be prepared and cooked skilfully and safely to produce delicious, nutritious meals for different people and situations.
- What happens to ingredients in food when you prepare and cook them.
- Where food comes from and how it is produced and sold.
- How the food choices people make affect the health and well-being of the global environment and its natural resources.
- Which foods different cultures eat throughout the world.



How will I study?

The emphasis in Year 10 is on developing your practical skills and understanding of nutrition and healthy eating. We make lots of dishes including Chicken Kiev, Mediterranean Quiche and Fish Pie. We learn how to fillet fish and portion a whole chicken, make pasta, enrobing (e.g. Chicken Kiev), how to improve the presentation with garnishes and layered desserts.

How will my work be assessed?

Your GCSE grade will be awarded as a result of completing two units of work:

- A written examination worth 50% of the total marks.
- Two Non-Examination Assessment (NEA) tasks; NEA1 is a Food Science Investigation (15%) and NEA2 is a Food Preparation task which includes a 3-hour practical exam (35%).

Design Technology:

Art & Design: Textiles | GCSE

Why study Textiles?

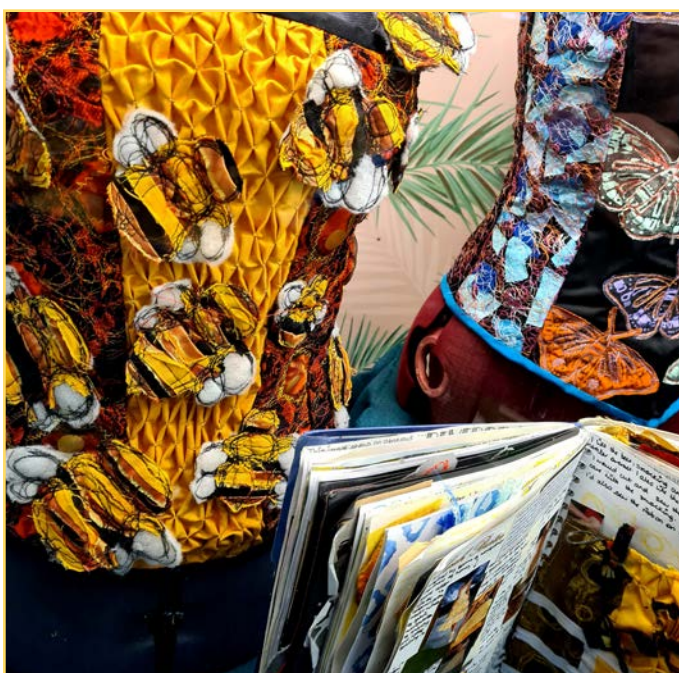
This Textiles course offers creative and exciting opportunities to explore world of Art, Fashion and Textiles. It provides an excellent foundation for students wishing to progress on to A-Level Fashion and Textiles or to degree level courses.

What will I study?

You will study a range of areas covered by Textile design such as art textiles, fashion design and illustration, costume design and soft furnishings and/or textiles for interiors. You will look at the work of artists and designers as well as working from primary sources taken from your own observations in order to inspire your ideas.

You will learn a range of textile design skills, techniques and processes, including: weaving and felting; printing, applique and embroidery; and construction methods and garment making.

You will explore the use of media and materials such as: pencil, paint, inks and dyes; yarns and threads; and fibres and fabrics.



How will I study?

Throughout the course you will complete a number of design & make projects researching and developing your ideas in sketchbooks and making a final textile outcome.

You will be required to show that you can meet the following assessment objectives:

- Develop ideas through investigations, demonstrating an understanding of sources.
- Refine work by exploring ideas, experimenting with media, materials, techniques and processes.
- Record ideas, observations and insights as work progresses.
- Present a practical outcome that demonstrates understanding of visual language.

How will my work be assessed?

- **Component 1:** Coursework Portfolio Non-exam assessment (NEA) - A long project supported by other work from the course. No time limit - 96 marks (60% of GCSE).
- **Component 2:** Externally set assignment - Produce a response to one of a range of starting points set by the exam board. A preparatory period followed by a 10-hour practical exam - 96 marks (40% of GCSE).

Design Technology: Product Design | GCSE

Why study Product Design?

The Product Design GCSE will prepare you to participate confidently and successfully in a growing technological world.

You will gain knowledge of wide influences on design, including new and emerging technology, historical, social, environmental and economic factors. Many of the areas covered will be related to sustainability, which is increasingly important and relevant to modern life, and will be useful in many fields of work.

You will work creatively and develop problem solving skills when designing, making, testing and evaluating prototypes. By the end of the course you will have a deep understanding of the design process, which could be applied to a wide range of disciplines. You will also have created a valuable portfolio of work to take to interviews.

Further study is ideally suited to Product Design A Level, which is offered at Wallingford School, although this is not the only option. Possible careers would be Graphic Design, Product Design, Architecture, Digital Design, Interior Design and many other types of design and engineering.

What will I study?

You will study core design and technology principles, including a broad range of processes, materials, techniques and equipment. You will also study specialist technical principles, which will largely be through graphic products. This is not limiting though - your prototypes can be plastic, wood or metal based and can also include mechanics and electronics, depending on your interests and ability. In addition, you will use a range of sketching, technical drawing and CAD/CAM to

aid design and prototype development. It is not essential that you have good drawing skills, as designs can be communicated in a number of ways.

How will I study?

One period per week will be dedicated to theory and the double lesson to practical coursework. You will focus on learning key design knowledge and practical skills in Yr 10, as well as beginning to build theory knowledge. You will develop confidence through practice, using a variety of tools and equipment, to aid the design and making of your prototypes. Your final coursework will begin in the June of Yr 10 and will be complete by the Easter of Yr 11. You will choose a theme from a choice of three given by the exam board - these are deliberately non-specific so that you can tailor your coursework and prototypes in a way that will best suit your interests and ability.



How will my work be assessed?

Two units are assessed. Both units are worth 50% of the final grade.

- Final written exam, 2 hours, 100 marks - a mixture of multiple choice core theory and specialist extended written questions.
- Non-Exam Assessment (NEA) - This is coursework and is a project comprising a design folder and prototypes.

Design Technology: Resistant Materials | GCSE

Why study Resistant Materials?

The Resistant Materials GCSE will prepare you to participate confidently and successfully in an increasing technological world.

You will gain awareness and learn from wider influences on design and technology including historical, social, cultural, environmental and economic factors. You will have the opportunity to work creatively when designing and making and apply technical and practical expertise.

You will study core technical and designing and making principles, including a broad range of design processes, materials techniques and equipment.

You will also have the opportunity to study specialist technical principles in greater depth. Further study for this course would be through Product Design A Level.

This course would suit those who wanted a greater understanding of a range of design work and processes.



What will I study?

In addition to the Core, Specialist, Design and Making technical principles, you will use CAD/ CAM to aid product development and manufacture and consider and address environmental, sustainable, social and moral issues that affect the process.

How will I study?

You will focus on developing key practical skills in Yr 10, as well as developing your theory and design knowledge. You will learn to use a variety of tools and machines as well as CAD/ CAM to aid the development and manufacture of your products, which will be a folder of design work and a 3D product.

How will my work be assessed?

Two units are assessed. Both units are worth 50% of the final grade.

- Written exam, 2 hours, 100 marks - a mixture of multiple choice core theory and specialist extended written and design questions.
- Non-Exam Assessment (NEA) - This is coursework and is a project comprising of a design folder and a 3D product.



Why study Drama?

Drama will teach you performance skills in different theatrical styles, for different audiences. You can choose to act, design, stage manage or create technical support for a performance.

Above all, it is a subject that concerns itself with the development of personality. Drama will help you develop your personal and social skills, in that you will become more confident in expressing yourself, communicating ideas and working with others.

What will I study?

You will be following the Edexcel GCSE in Drama syllabus, made up of three sections, two of which are completed during the course based around exploration of theme and texts (60%). The third section is an end of course exam (40%).



- Drama Exploration I - This component is concerned with the use of Drama to explore ideas and issues, responding to stimulus material selected from different times and cultures. 10% is practical, 30% written coursework response.
- Drama Exploration II - This will involve the in-depth performance of two extracts from the same play. Externally marked. 20% of final mark.
- Written Exam 40%: Section A is written response to a set text from a performance, director and designer point of view. Section B is a written response to a live theatre visit.



Photo: *The Woman in Black* at Fortune Theatre, London

How will I study?

Throughout the course written work will involve keeping a Drama notebook. This will be supplemented by closer focus on particular aspects such as the elements of Drama in preparation for the written portfolios. These notebooks act as a record of your practical work and show how you respond to and develop a variety of stimuli from different cultures and historical periods.

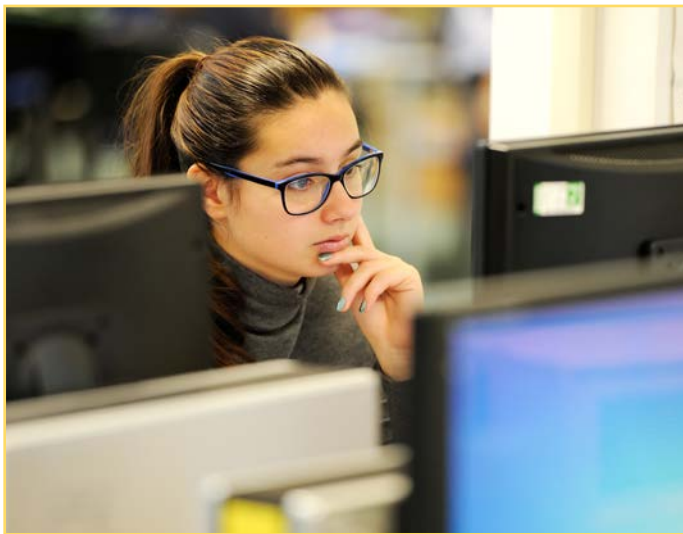
How will my work be assessed?

The final marks come from your work throughout the course and a final written exam.

- Practical devised performance exam [10%] based upon a stimulus.
- Coursework portfolio [30%]
- Practical performance exam [20%]. This will be a prepared performance from two established scripts of between 10 and 20 minutes in length.
- Written exam [40%] based on practical work and texts studied throughout the course and a 'Live Theatre' visit.

Enterprise | BTEC

Technical Award



Why study Enterprise?

BTEC Tech Award in Enterprise has been designed to help KS4 14-16-year-old learners develop their business skills through practical and skills-based learning. Students who are interested in researching companies, presenting ideas and applying financial concepts are perfect for this course. It will prepare students for future study in Business disciplines and for the world of work.

What will I study?

- Component 1: Exploring enterprises
- Component 2: Planning for and pitching an enterprise
- Component 3: Promotion and Finance for enterprise (external exam)

How will I study?

You will study through teacher led activities supported by visits to local and national enterprises, the use of ICT and independent learning. You will also be encouraged to keep up to date with enterprises in the news.

How will my work be assessed?

The course will be assessed by a combination of internal and external assessments over the course of year 10 and 11.

- Component 1: Exploring Enterprises - Internally assessed Set Tasks (30% of the total course). Exam Conditions.
- Component 2: Planning for and Pitching an Enterprise Activity - Internally assessed Set Tasks (30% of the total course). Exam Conditions.
- Component 3: Promotion and Finance for Enterprise - Externally assessed task (40% of the total course).

You will then receive either a Level 1 Award or a Pass, Merit, Distinction or Distinction* at Level 2. To gain a D* you must have a Distinction in each component.





Why study French?

If you enjoy communicating with other people, finding out how language works and learning about different countries and cultures, studying GCSE French is an excellent choice for you! It is a real skill for life.

You will:

- be able to share your interests, ideas and opinions with other people who speak the language.
- take part in the French Exchange to Grenoble and learn about the countries where French is spoken.
- add an international dimension to your choice of GCSE subjects, something many employers and higher education providers look for.
- create greater opportunities to work abroad, or for companies in the UK. Many employers look for people with language skills.

What will I study?

Having already completed three years of language study, you're well prepared to do this GCSE course! You already know a lot of the vocabulary and grammar you'll need for GCSE. You know how to talk about yourself, your family

and friends, your hobbies, where you live, school, holidays, food and drink. You'll build on this knowledge during your GCSE course, and move on to new topics such as social media and gaming, relationships and equality, and global issues such as the environment.

How will I study?

In class you will study in groups, pairs and individually, practising all four skills of speaking, listening, reading and writing. There will also be an emphasis on learning phonics, grammar and a wide range of vocabulary.



How will my work be assessed?

We follow the Edexcel 2024 specification (first certification from 2026) with all skills assessed at the end of the course.

- Paper 1: Speaking (conducted by your teacher, marked by an examiner) - 25%
- Paper 2: Listening - 25%
- Paper 3: Reading - 25%
- Paper 4: Writing - 25%

Why study Geography?

Geography will help you understand the world around you; the landscape (physical geography), the people (human geography) and how one may affect the other, sometimes in quite spectacular ways. Employers and universities know that geography students develop a wide range of transferable skills; not just map skills but also things like fieldwork, teamwork, literacy and analytical skills.

Students wanting to directly use geography have gone on to the following areas of work: Environment Agency, flood defence, town planning, ecological conservation, marketing and business consultancy, law, meteorology, economic development, health careers, international development aid organisations and teaching!



What will I study?

We cover a wide range of topics to enable you to be well informed on all sorts of current issues, including: natural hazards, ecosystems, UK landscapes, urban development, economic activity and the challenge of resource management.



How will I study?

Geography is a subject that can use a wide range of learning styles. Visual, logical and verbal skills are used all the time. We try to fit in discussion and consider opinions, to help you develop confidence with the issues we study (intra- and interpersonal skills). You will develop map skills, analyse photos and learn to interpret the world around you, using ICT and a range of fieldwork skills.

There is one day of compulsory fieldwork required for this course.

How will my work be assessed?

In total there are 3 AQA exams:

- Paper 1: Physical Geography - 35%
- Paper 2: Human Geography - 35%
- Paper 3: Geographical Applications (skills and fieldwork) - 30%

Why study German?

If you enjoy communicating with other people, finding out how language works and learning about different countries and cultures, studying GCSE German is an excellent choice for you! It is a real skill for life.

You will:

- be able to share your interests, ideas and opinions with other people who speak the language.
- take part in the German Exchange to Bad Wurzach and learn about the countries where German is spoken.
- add an international dimension to your choice of GCSE subjects, something many employers and higher education providers look for.
- create greater opportunities to work abroad, or for companies in the UK. Many employers look for people with language skills.

What will I study?

Having already completed three years of language study, you're well prepared to do this GCSE course! You already know a lot of the vocabulary and grammar you'll need for GCSE. You know how to talk about yourself, your family and friends, your hobbies, where you live, school, holidays, food and drink. You'll build on this knowledge during your GCSE course, and move on to new topics such as social media and gaming, relationships and equality, and global issues such as the environment.

How will I study?

In class you will study in groups, pairs and individually, practising all four skills of speaking, listening, reading and writing. There will also be an emphasis on learning phonics, grammar and a wide range of vocabulary.



How will my work be assessed?

We follow the Edexcel 2024 specification (first certification from 2026) with all skills assessed at the end of the course.

- Paper 1: Speaking (conducted by your teacher, marked by an examiner) - 25%
- Paper 2: Listening - 25%
- Paper 3: Reading - 25%
- Paper 4: Writing - 25%



Health & Social Care | BTEC

Technical Award



Why study Health & Social Care?

This qualification will allow you to gain a clearer understanding of the health of individuals and how society supports them holistically. You will also gain an understanding of the importance of communication both for service providers and service users. You will learn the importance of the value of care and how to use legislation to positively impact the safety and securing of service users. You will develop an understanding of the different body systems and understand what disorders can have an effect on our body systems both physically and psychologically. You will also learn how to analyse an individual's needs and gain a wider knowledge of the different Health & Social Care Sectors.

What will I study?

Throughout the course, you will complete three components which will make up your qualification.

The components you will complete are:

- Component 1: Human Lifespan Development (Coursework - Exam conditions - 30%)
- Component 2: Health and Social Care Services and Values (Coursework - Exam conditions - 30%)
- Component 3: Health and Wellbeing (Exam - 40%)

How will I study?

Health and Social Care will be taught through both pupil and teacher lead activities. The course is taught through a variety of learning styles and lessons will include discussion work, group work, paired work and independent work. This course is assessed through one exam and two exam conditions assessment based units

How will I be assessed?

Assignments for component 1 and component 2 will be internally assessed and externally verified by the exam board. Component 3 will be externally assessed by the exam board. Qualification achieved will be either Level 1 or Level 2 Pass, Merit, Distinction or Distinction*.





Why study History?

History teaches many valuable and transferable skills which you will be able to apply in other subjects and in your future career and studies. History helps develop your skills of understanding, analysis, summary, inference and essay writing.

Studying the past will help you to develop an understanding of the world you live in today.

What will I study?

The course covers a range of medieval, early modern and modern history. Students will study:

Medicine in Britain, 1250 to present, considering the changes in medicine over the years, with particular focus on injuries and treatment in the First World War; Elizabethan England 1558-1588, with a focus on Elizabeth's religious policies, the situation she faced abroad and Elizabethan society; Super power relations, looking at the relationship of USA

and USSR throughout the second half of the twentieth century in the Cold War; and Weimar and Nazi Germany, where we consider how the Nazi Party came to power in Germany and how life for the German people changed as a result of this.

How will I study?

History is taught through a wide range of methods, which appeal to different learning styles. Lessons feature a variety of activities, including discussion work, group and pair work, source analysis, written work, PowerPoints, group presentations and much more. Be prepared to share your ideas.

How will my work be assessed?

- Thematic study and historic environment (Medicine in Britain 1250 - present date) -30%
- Period study an British depth study (Elizabethan England 1558 -1588 Super power relations (Cold War) 1941-1991) - 40%
- Modern depth study (Weimar and Nazi Germany 1918-1939) - 30%





Why study Music?

You will:

- be able to study Music in much greater depth than you have at KS3.
- develop a deeper understanding of a wide range of musical styles, genres and traditions from all over the world.
- understand how to explain what you hear in music accurately, with reference to the subtleties in the rhythm, harmony and instrumentation.
- be more informed about how to perform music to bring out the full effect of a piece or song.
- improve your instinct for how notes can be made to fit together to create a range of musical effects. This will give you more
- build confidence for improvising and composing your own music.

What will I study?

The AQA course is delivered through four areas of study:

- Western classical tradition 1650–1910
- Popular music
- Traditional music
- Western classical tradition since 1910

How will I study?

- Component 1 – Understanding Music (40% of the marks)
- Component 2 - Performing Music (30% of the marks)
- Component 3 - Composing (30% of the marks)

All of the units will be covered during lessons, but due to the nature of the performance unit, you will also be expected to take extra-curricular instrumental lessons (voice, or any other musical instrument). You should aim to be able to sing or play a piece of music to Grade 3 standard at the very minimum for assessment.

You will need to read music notation.



How will my work be assessed?

- Component 1 takes the form of a listening exam, where you will listen to musical extracts and answer questions based on what you hear. You will also be expected to notate a short melody or rhythm at some point during the exam. You will have to write critically about two of the set pieces in the areas of study.
- Component 2 requires two performances (individual and group) on your instrument or voice.
- Component 3 requires you to write two compositions. One composition is to a brief, the other is a free composition; composing a piece of music stimulated by two or more of the areas of study.

Music Technology | GCSE



Why study Music?

You will:

- be able to study Music in much greater depth than you have at KS3.
- develop a deeper understanding of a wide range of musical styles, genres and traditions from all over the world.
- understand how to explain what you hear in music accurately, with reference to the subtleties in the rhythm, harmony and instrumentation.
- increase awareness and confidence with software used to produce music in the modern popular music industry.
- improve your instinct for how notes can be made to fit together to create a range of musical effects. This will give you more
- build confidence for improvising and composing your own music.

What will I study?

The AQA course is delivered through four areas of study:

- Western classical tradition 1650–1910
- Popular music
- Traditional music
- Western classical tradition since 1910

How will I study?

- Component 1 – Understanding Music (40% of the marks)
- Component 2 - Performing Music (30% of the marks)
- Component 3 - Composing (30% of the marks)

All of the units will be covered during lessons, due to the time consuming nature of coursework, you will be expected to work outside of lessons developing your performances and compositions using music software.

How will my work be assessed?

- Component 1 takes the form of a listening exam, where you will listen to musical extracts and answer questions based on what you hear. You will also be expected to notate a short melody or rhythm at some point during the exam. You will have to write critically about two of the set pieces in the areas of study.
- Component 2 requires two performances (individual and group), produced using DAW software and a variety of techniques to sequence and record performances of pre-existing pieces of music. This includes using a combination of midi tracks and audio tracks to create accurate realisations.
- Component 3 requires you to write two compositions. One composition is to a brief, the other is a free composition; composing a piece of music stimulated by two or more of the areas of study. Again, this will be using DAW software.

Due to the nature of this being a technology course there is no requirement to play a musical instrument.

Photography | GCSE



Why study Photography?

GCSE Photography is a course which gives you a wide range of creative, exciting and stimulating opportunities to explore your interests in taking and manipulating photographs. You will develop creative, imaginative and practical skills and learn to appreciate photography produced in a range of different times and cultures

What will I study?

The course will explore a range of methods of making photographs such as digital photography, darkroom photography and other techniques such as manual photograph manipulation, pinhole camera photography and storyboarding. Pupils will have the opportunity to develop skills in portraiture, location photography, studio photography, experimental imagery, installation, documentary photography, photo-journalism, animation and fashion photography. Pupils will also study the ways in which meanings, ideas and intentions relevant to photography can be communicated including the use of colour, line, form, tone, texture, shape, pattern, composition, scale, sequence, surface and contrast.

How will I study?

- Unit 1: Portfolio of Work (60% of your final grade). During the course you will be expected to complete a number of theme-based projects for Unit 1. You will explore, experiment and develop ideas in your photographic sketchbook towards a series of final photographic outcomes.
- Unit 2: Externally Set Task (40% of your final grade). The Exam board, AQA, will set a question paper containing a selection of starting points/themes. You will then have three months to research, experiment and develop ideas in order to produce a piece of artwork in the exam.

How will my work be assessed?

Throughout the course you will be assessed on the following criteria:

- Developing ideas through investigations informed by contextual and other sources demonstrating analytical and cultural understanding.
- Refining ideas through experimenting and selecting appropriate resources, media, materials, techniques and processes.
- Recording ideas, observations and insights relevant to their intentions in visual and/or other forms.
- Presenting a personal, informed and meaningful response demonstrating critical and analytical understanding, realising intentions and, where appropriate, making connections between visual, written, oral or other elements.

Physical Education | GCSE

Why study PE?

The study of Physical Education will help you develop a large range of transferable skills, encompassing both theory and practical elements. Students who choose Physical Education usually show a strong interest and passion for exercise and sport and regularly play outside of school.

What will I study?

The course is 60% theory and 40% practical. Within the practical you will cover a range of sports and complete a fitness programme.

The theory covers a broad spectrum of subject content and some of the units are listed below.

- Applied anatomy and physiology
- Biomechanics
- Social cultural issues
- Psychology
- Training principles and methods
- Diet and nutrition
- Drugs in sport
- First aid and injuries
- Components of fitness
- Healthy active lifestyle



How will I study?

Including Core PE lessons, you will have five PE lessons a week, of which three will be theory lessons. The theory lessons will be classroom based and will work on the examination part of the course. You will experience a variety of learning styles and teaching methods to give you the best opportunity to learn all the information needed for the final exam. The other two lessons will be practically based and will focus on your ability in a range of activities.



How will I be assessed?

The course is broken down into 60% theory and 40% practical. The practical is assessed by three practical performances, each worth 10% of their overall grade. The final 10% of the practical is assessed through completing a Personal Exercise Programme.

The understanding of the theory is assessed through two examination papers, covering all aspects learned from both the theory and practical lessons, including the topics listed above.



Why study Religious Studies?

Religious Studies will help you improve your understanding of people and religious influences on their lives. This course will appeal to those who are interested in exploring a variety of important issues in the world today such as views on crime, peace and conflict, moral issues such as abortion and euthanasia and relationships. You will focus on two major world religions, Christianity and Islam, although there will be some opportunity to explore other religious ideas, beliefs and attitudes.

What will I study?

We follow the AQA A specification, which covers religious, philosophical and ethical thought and teaching.

Component 1: Beliefs, Teachings and Practices in Christianity and Islam. This component covers beliefs and teachings about the nature of God, the afterlife, authority, as well as exploring a wide range of religious practices and festivals.

Component 2: Themes – We study four themes:

- Theme A: Relationships and Families
- Theme B: Religion and Life
- Theme D: Religion, Peace and Conflict
- Theme E: Religion, Crime and Punishment

How will I study?

We use a variety of teaching and learning methods to ensure that all students are catered for and enjoy the lessons. We study issues in class that often lead to group work and research. We enjoy plenty of class discussions and focus on the skill of debate as this is a crucial part of our work in RS. This will be a vital skill that we learn to translate into written discussion.

You will be expected to keep your class book up-to-date and you will have the opportunity to complete guided practice exam questions to get you familiar with the exam requirements.



How will my work be assessed?

There is no coursework. Instead there are exams at the end of Year 11.

Skills for Life | ASDAN

(double option)

Why study Skills for Life?

The ASDAN award scheme is a nationally recognised certificated course. The aim of the programmes is to enable young people to understand themselves and others better and to become more prepared for making the transition to adult life. The world you are entering needs adults who are not only capable of acquiring and applying the necessary academic and occupational knowledge and skills, but flexible enough to adapt to the rapid changes taking place and equipped to make active and creative contributions to local, national and international community life.

What will I study?

These awards have been designed by practitioners as a means by which Key Skills can be developed, assessed and accredited, and personal achievements formally recognised, within the framework of the Progress File.

Challenges and activities will develop the following skills:

- Communication
- Working with others
- Improving own learning and performance
- Problem solving

You will be given a Progress File, which you complete in order to achieve the Bronze or Silver Award. You will have an increased sense of ownership and control of your own learning – vital in raising levels of motivation, achievement and self-esteem.

You will be able to:

- assess your own learning.
- set clear and achievable goals.

- identify, express and reflect on your own view of progress and development opportunities.
- summarise achievements and compile a portfolio of supporting evidence.



How will I study?

This is a module-based course and so is assessed through 100% coursework. You will choose from twelve modules, each with sub-sections that need to be evidenced. You will learn through a variety of tasks, for example, trips into Wallingford, providing help in the local community and visits from external agencies.

How will my work be assessed?

Your work will be assessed through the completion of your Progress File. When you have completed a task and gathered evidence your teacher will sign the section to show its completion. The aim is for you to complete up to Bronze level by the end of Year 10 and complete the Silver level in Year 11.

Important Dates

Thursday 1st February: Year 9 Parents' Evening

Friday 2nd February: Options booklets given to pupils

Wednesday 9th February: Options Evening

Week beginning 19th February: Pupils meet with SLT

Monday 18th March: Deadline for submitting options form

May onwards: Confirmation of courses



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