

Choices  
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St Thomas More Catholic Secondary School  
**GCSE Options Booklet**

**2020 - 2022**



# ST THOMAS MORE CATHOLIC SECONDARY SCHOOL

## *'Primus Servus Dei'*

### ***Dear Parents/Carers of Year 9 Students***

For Year 10 subject options, we are very pleased to offer a range of courses both compulsory and optional to meet the needs of all of our students. For students entering Year 10 of Key Stage 4 in September, we have designed a flexible curriculum in line with Government 14-19 initiatives. We believe this will encourage high levels of individual success with students engaged on courses that best fit their interests.

The curriculum at Key Stage 4 consists of a compulsory Core curriculum of GCSE subjects. These are Religious Education, English Language, English Literature, Maths, ICT and Science. Pupils will also continue to study Physical Education, Personal and Social Education, including Citizenship, as part of the pastoral programme together with work-related learning as appropriate to individuals.

Students will then have the opportunity to choose a further three GCSE subjects from a wide range of traditional GCSEs and BTECs, which are subjects closely linked to working in these areas. One subject should be selected from each option line. The combination of subjects should be carefully considered to ensure breadth of study.

It is very important that students and parents think carefully about the decisions they make in subject choices. Courses need to be looked at closely to take into account learning and assessment styles, to ensure that these suit the needs of the individual student.

### **Essential Date**

**Return Option Sheet:      Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> March 2020**

Please ring the school if you wish to make an appointment to discuss queries or problems. Your point of contact would be Mrs C Soraghan (Deputy Head Teacher) or email to [csoraghan@stm.beds.sch.uk](mailto:csoraghan@stm.beds.sch.uk)

Yours sincerely,



Mrs C Soraghan  
Deputy Head Teacher

Core  
Curriculum  
2020-2022

## GCSE Religious Studies

Examination Board - **AQA B**

### Why study GCSE RE?

Religious Education is the "core of the core curriculum" in a Catholic school (*Pope St John Paul II*). Placing RE at the core of the curriculum in Catholic schools helps the school to fulfil its mission to educate the whole person in discerning the meaning of their existence, since "Religious Education is concerned not only with intellectual knowledge but also includes emotional and affective learning. It is in the mystery of the Word made flesh that the mystery of what it is to be human truly becomes clear. Without religious education, pupils would be deprived of an essential element of their formation and personal development, which helps them attain a vital harmony between faith and culture." (*Religious Education curriculum Directory p4*). Furthermore, religiously literate children and young people are able to engage in a fully informed critique of all knowledge, "leading, for example, to an understanding of the relationship between science and religion or history, and between theology, sport and the human body." (*Religious Education Curriculum Directory p4*).

### Course Content

The Religious Studies course will be split into 2 papers:

- **Paper One – Catholic Christianity**

Our GCSE enables you to focus in depth on the Catholic faith, by looking at beliefs, teachings, practices, sources of authority and forms of expression within Catholic Christianity. Students will explore six key doctrines of the Church: Creation, Incarnation, Trinity, Redemption, Church and the Kingdom of God and finally, Eschatology. Students also explore the basis of these beliefs in scripture and their expression both in the visual arts and in the increasing agency of the Church in tackling global concerns about the environment. Catholic Christianity will be studied in the context of Christianity as a whole, and common and divergent views within Catholic Christianity will be included throughout.

- **Paper Two – Perspectives on faith**

Students will broaden their understanding of religion by studying the beliefs and practices of another major world faith, Judaism. Students will explore the key beliefs, teachings and religious practices of Judaism.

There is also the opportunity to explore two contemporary ethical issues; Peace and Conflict, and Religion, Relationships and Families. In studying these ethical themes, students will consider different religious, philosophical and ethical arguments and their impact and influence in the modern world. Students will become aware of the Christian viewpoints to these issues alongside non-religious viewpoints.

### Assessment

Paper 1 – Catholic Christianity- 50% of GCSE

Paper 2 – Perspectives on Faith- 50% of GCSE

## **GCSE English Language**

Examination Board - **Edexcel**

### **Why study GCSE English Language?**

English Language is a broad subject which will support students in learning how to analyse language across a range of contexts and from different times in history.

It provides an enriching opportunity to explore the mechanics of language and how it links to society through themes such as identity, power, gender, sexuality, technology and the arts. The Speaking and Listening elements develop the student's confidence and ability to discuss and present ideas, opinions and viewpoints.

### **Course Content**

Students must demonstrate skills in the areas of:

- Reading
- Writing
- Understanding and Producing Non-Fiction and Transactional writing
- Speaking and Listening
- Spoken Language

They will have to communicate clearly to a variety of audiences and for different purposes through both written and speaking and listening tasks. Pupils will also have to read and study a selection of texts including drama and prose. They will need to understand and analyse a range of fiction and non-fiction texts from 19th century and 20th century writers.

### **Assessment**

Examination - Fiction and Imaginative writing -40% of GCSE grade

Examination - Non-Fiction and Transactional writing- 60% of GCSE grade

## **GCSE English Literature**

Examination Board - **Edexcel**

### **Why study GCSE English Literature?**

GCSE English Literature offers you the chance to study classic literature and some contemporary novels too. English literature should develop knowledge and skills in reading, writing and critical thinking. Through literature, students have a chance to develop culturally and acquire knowledge of the best that has been thought and written. Studying GCSE English Literature should encourage students to read widely for pleasure, and act as a preparation for studying literature at a higher level. Students will be given the opportunity to study a wide range of literature including Shakespeare, poetry, a contemporary play and a novel from the English Literary Heritage – all of which aim to develop the student's historical, cultural, moral and critical understanding.

### **Course Content**

Pupils will study a number of literary texts, including a work by Shakespeare, a prose text selected from the English Literary Heritage (for example, Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde) and a selection of poetry.

### **Assessment**

Examination- Shakespeare and Post 1914 Literature- 50% of GCSE grade  
Examination- 19<sup>th</sup> century Novel and Poetry since 1789- 50% of GCSE grade

## **GCSE Mathematics**

Examination Board - **Edexcel**

### **Why study GCSE Mathematics?**

The GCSE Mathematics curriculum provides a broad, coherent, satisfying and worthwhile course of study. It encourages students to develop confidence in, and a positive attitude towards mathematics. The curriculum enables students to recognise the importance of mathematics in their own lives and its contribution to society. It provides a strong mathematical foundation for students who go on to study mathematics at a higher level post-16. The course will allow students to develop fluent knowledge, skills and understanding of mathematical methods and concepts; applying mathematical techniques to solve problems.

### **Course Content**

1. Number
2. Algebra
3. Ratio, proportion and rates of change
4. Geometry and measures
5. Probability
6. Statistics

It is recommended students purchase a scientific calculator to support their mathematical studies. The calculator used by the department is the Casio fx85GT.

### **Assessment**

The GCSE course is entirely assessed by written examination in year 11. There is no coursework element to this GCSE. The exam consists of three equally weighted papers – one non-calculator and two calculator papers.

There are two tiers of entry for the examination: Foundation tier where grades 1 to 5 may be awarded and Higher tier, where grades 3 to 9 may be awarded.

## GCSE Separate Sciences (formerly Triple Science)

Examination Board - **AQA**

### Why study GCSE Separate Sciences?

As well as being a core subject that all employers look for, science ignites curiosity and helps to explain the world around us using a variety of concepts, theories and evidence. In the separate sciences course, Biology, Chemistry and Physics are studied separately. Students studying the separate sciences course will gain three GCSE grades from 4-9. This course allows progression to A-levels in Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Psychology and Geology.

### Course Content

Students will be taught biology, chemistry and physics separately.

#### Biology content

• Cell biology • Organisation • Infection and response • Bioenergetics • Homeostasis and response • Inheritance, variation and evolution • Ecology

#### Chemistry content

• Atomic structure and the periodic table • Bonding, structure, and the properties of matter • Quantitative chemistry • Chemical changes • Energy changes • The rate and extent of chemical change • Organic chemistry • Chemical analysis • Chemistry of the atmosphere • Sustainable Development

#### Physics content

• Forces • Energy • Waves • Electricity • Magnetism and electromagnetism • Particle model of matter • Atomic structure • Space

Students will plan, carry out and analyse a variety of practical work as part of this course. There are twenty-eight required practical activities that students must complete as part of the course which students can be questioned on in the exams. There will also be numerous other practical opportunities throughout the course.

### Assessment

Separate sciences are 100% linear, with all of the examination taking place at the end of year 11. Students will sit six exams, two exams per Science GCSE, each contributing 50% to the overall grade and each exam will last 1hr 45mins.

In each paper, students will have to answer the following question styles:- multiple choice, structured, closed short answers and long structured responses. Key mathematical skills will be required in all papers. There is no coursework unit for this course.



## **ICT (Information and Communications Technology)**

Examination Board - **British Computing Society - The Chartered Institute of ICT**

### **Why study ICT?**

ECDL is the European Computer Driving Licence, recognised by employers across the globe as the benchmark in digital and IT user skills. This qualification is designed to improve learners understanding of the essential concepts and skills to work effectively and efficiently using IT. By completing this qualification, a variety of opportunities will open up through the broad range of skills covered, and to provide proof of IT competence.

ICT skills are essential for success in employment, in higher education and are one of the fundamental transferable skills required by employers. The ICT Department deliver these skills across the whole group, effectively engaging and inspiring students of every ability to achieve great things.

### **Course Content**

There are 4 units that we will study on this course:

#### **Word Processing**

This module sets out essential concepts and skills relating to the ability to use a word processing application to create everyday letters and documents.

#### **Presentations**

This module sets out essential concepts and skills relating to demonstrating competence in using presentation software.

#### **Spreadsheets**

This module sets out essential concepts and skills relating to understanding the concept of spreadsheets and demonstrating an ability to use a spreadsheet to produce accurate work outputs.

#### **Improving Productivity**

This is the ability to plan, evaluate and improve procedures involving the use of IT tools and systems in order to improve the productivity and efficiency of work activities.

### **Assessment**

This qualification is 100% exam based

Students will sit 4 on screen examinations at the end of the teaching of each unit.

## Core Physical Education and Games

### Course Content

Physical recreation has a large part to play in the development of the individual. Physical Education is also necessary in the development of a Christian respect for the body and concern for physical well-being.

All pupils will cover a broadly-based modular programme.

Areas to be covered:

**Major Outdoor Games:** Hockey, Football, Netball, Rugby, Cricket, Tennis, Rounders

**Indoor Games:** Basketball, Volleyball, Badminton, Table Tennis,

**Individual Activities:** Gymnastics, Health-related Fitness, Athletics, Trampolining

**Other areas:** Orienteering

### Extra-Curricular Activities

We like to encourage as many students as possible to take part in clubs and teams. ALL activities are open to ALL students. There are clubs and teams for the above activities, plus dance.

Option  
Subjects  
2020-2022

## **GCSE Art, Craft and Design: Combined Titles**

Examination Board - **OCR**

### **Why study GCSE Art, Craft and Design?**

Art offers a creative way of expressing a view point, title or theme. Students actively engage in the process of creating and developing art work, encouraging independent, critical and reflective learning. Specific practical skills are taught at the start of the course, which are transferable and support other techniques and processes. As we progress, students are encouraged to take more ownership of the types of artwork they create, ranging from fine art to street art. They also develop creative skills in how to build a project, responding to these chosen influences to design more personal outcomes.

Students should become confident in taking risks and learning from their mistakes, exploring and experimenting with ideas, materials, tools and techniques. Our aim is to increase independence, refining and developing ideas and proposals, and present personal outcomes that they are proud of. Students will develop cultural knowledge, understanding and application of art, craft and design in a number of contexts, societies and cultures. Also, they will develop an understanding of the different roles, functions, audiences and consumers of the art, craft and design practice.

Art leads to a number of different industries, ranging from architect to illustrator, from theatre design to prosthetics in film. There are both broad and specific degrees at university that can lead to rewarding careers.

### **Course Content**

This Art & Design course is very popular as it offers students the most creative freedom. It allows students to experiment with a wide variety of materials, techniques and processes, discover new skills and find out which aspects of art and design most interests them. The course allows students to work in more than one of the following areas:

- Fine Art
- Graphic Design
- Photography
- Textiles
- Three-Dimensional Design

### **Assessment**

Unit 1: Portfolio unit - controlled assessment 60% of the GCSE grade

Unit 2: Externally set exam 40% of the GCSE grade

# GCSE Art and Design: Graphic Communication

Examination Board - **OCR**

## Why study GCSE Graphic Communication?

Graphic Communication offers a way of creating and developing design-based outcomes using artistic techniques and processes. It has a purpose, and can be the start of a journey to professions such as architect, illustrator, typographer, game illustrator, concept artist or graphic designer. Students actively engage in the design process in order to improve critical and reflective thinking, increasing their visual communication skills. They learn how to respond to a brief as well as creatively explore more open aspects of the subject; they have the opportunity to think about the audience as well as experiment with an ideas to see where they end up.

Students are encouraged to become confident in taking risks and learning from their mistakes when experimenting with ideas. They use different materials, techniques and processes to find the best possible way of creating their outcome. This will range from printing techniques to Photoshop. Like all art endorsements, graphics is a subject that allows the learning to be individualised, so they can follow their interests and produce personal outcomes. Students must research other artists and designers so that they can adapt it to produce a personal outcome.

The controlled assessment and set task are developed from a title and brief, and allow students to explore the best way of communicating a message. To be able to do this successfully they will need to consider the impact their work will have on the viewer.

Graphical art is used for a very definite purpose, which is why it is a specialism within the Art and Design specification.

## Course Content

The Graphic Communication course is very popular as it offers the students the independence to creatively explore a theme, but with the focus of a specific outcome. It allows students to experiment with a number of different materials, techniques and processes, and discover how best to communicate a specific message. The products of Graphic Communication are:

- Illustration
- Typography
- Printmaking
- Computer aided design and digital imaging
- Advertising and/or packaging

## Assessment

Unit 1: Portfolio unit - controlled assessment - 60% of GCSE grade

Unit 2: Externally set exam - 40% of GCSE grade

# GCSE Art and Design: Photography

Examination Board - OCR

## Why study GCSE Photography?

Photography sits well within the aspects of Art and Design, using taught skills and techniques to visualise an underlying theme or context. As a creative subject it allows students to explore and express a range of outcomes that fit best within that student's skill set.

Students will actively engage in the process of art and design, developing as independent learners, as well as critical and reflective thinkers.

They will develop creative skills, learning to use imagination and intuition when exploring and creating imagery based outcomes. Students are guided to be confident in taking risks and learning from their mistakes, through exploration and experimentation. They will learn to continually refine and develop ideas and proposals, creating personal responses that have meaning. Students will develop cultural knowledge, understanding and application of photography and technologies in historical and contemporary contexts, societies and cultures. They will also develop an understanding of the different roles, functions, audiences and consumers of photographic practice. The skills gained through study of GCSE Photography are transferable and lend themselves to a wide variety of careers within any creative sector. This could include further study or roles within industries such as: Graphic/web design, commercial photography, advertising, fashion, journalism/editorial, documentary (including film and television), and forensics.

GCSE Photography is particularly suited to those that have a flair for, and enjoy the process of creation. Students will need to express enthusiasm for their project work, and should be willing to spend time outside of their lessons collecting imagery and exploring ideas.

## Course Content

This Photography course is a new opportunity for students, as we now have an excellent trained specialist in the department. It allows students to experiment with a wide variety of techniques and processes that link to photography, discover new skills. The course allows students to work in more than one of the following areas:

- Documentary photography
- Photo-journalism
- Studio photography
- Location photography
- Experimental imagery
- Installation
- Moving image

## Assessment

Unit 1: Portfolio unit - controlled assessment 60% of the GCSE grade

Unit 2: Externally set exam 40% of the GCSE grade

# GCSE Business Studies

Examination Board - **Edexcel**

## Why study GCSE Business Studies?

Students will be introduced to the world of small businesses and will look at what makes someone a successful business person. Students will find out how to develop an idea and spot an opportunity, and turn that into a successful business. Students will understand how to make a business effective and manage money and will also see how the world around us affects small businesses and all the people involved.

## Course Content

**Theme 1 Investigating Small Business:** Theme 1 concentrates on the key business concepts, issues and skills involved in starting and running a small business. It provides a framework for students to explore core concepts through the lens of an entrepreneur setting up a business

Content overview

- Topic 1.1 Enterprise and entrepreneurship
- Topic 1.2 Spotting a business opportunity
- Topic 1.3 Putting a business idea into practice
- Topic 1.4 Making the business effective
- Topic 1.5 Understanding external influences on business

**Theme 2 Building a Business:** Theme 2 examines how a business develops beyond the start-up phase. It focuses on the key business concepts, issues and decisions used to grow a business, with emphasis on aspects of marketing, operations, finance and human resources. Theme 2 also considers the impact of the wider world on the decisions a business makes as it grows.

- Topic 2.1 Growing the business
- Topic 2.2 Making marketing decisions
- Topic 2.3 Making operational decisions
- Topic 2.4 Making financial decisions
- Topic 2.5 Making human resource decisions

## Assessment

Unit 1 - **Written Examination, 1 hour 30 minutes, 90 marks - 50% of GCSE grade**

Unit 2 - **Written Examination, 1 hour 30 minutes, 90 marks - 50% of GCSE grade**

The papers will consist of calculations, multiple-choice, short-answer and extended-writing questions

# GCSE Computer Science

Examination Board - **OCR**

## Why study GCSE Computer Science?

*"Learning to write programs stretches your mind, and helps you think better, creates a way of thinking about things that I think is helpful in all domains."* Bill Gates, Chairman - Microsoft

Computer Science is the course for students who want to know how computer technology works. It will provide students with an insight into what goes on 'behind the scenes', including computer programming which many students find absorbing. This specification recognises the well-established methodologies of computing, alongside the technological advances which make it such a dynamic subject. Students will complete this course equipped with the logical and computational skills necessary to succeed at A-level, the workplace or beyond.

## Course Content

OCR's GCSE (9–1) in Computer Science encourages learners to be inspired, and challenged through completing a coherent, satisfying and worthwhile course of study. If you are interested in how computers work, using maths in a different way and analytical thinking this course will be right for you. You will study 2 components of computing towards your final GCSE grade.

- **Computer Systems-** This involves you having a deep understanding of what the hardware is inside a computer. You will consider how computers communicate to each other using different networks and also about the environmental impact.
- **Computational thinking, algorithms and programming-** This section of study requires you to learn about how to create efficient and robust programs. You will consider how to write instructions to a machine for it to be able to carry out a process in the most effective way.

During your study you will undertake **Practical Programming**, in which you will be given the opportunity to undertake a programming task(s), either to a specification or to solve a problem (or problems). You may draw on some of the content in both components when engaged in Practical Programming.

You will study:

1. Systems architecture
2. Memory and storage
3. Computer networks, connections and protocols
4. Network security
5. Systems software
6. Ethical, legal, cultural and environmental impacts of digital technology
7. Algorithms
8. Programming fundamentals
9. Producing robust programs
10. Boolean logic
11. Programming languages and Integrated Development Environments

**END OF YEAR 9 MATHS GRADES WILL BE USED TO DETERMINE YOUR ABILITY TO ACCESS THIS COURSE, STUDENTS MUST ACHIEVE A 3+.**

## Assessment

Two exams that are equally weighted 1hr 30min each



## GCSE Design Technology - Resistant Materials

Examination Board - **AQA**

### Why study GCSE Resistant Materials?

The course is centred on design and problem-solving using students' imagination, knowledge and use of materials with technology. It demands active workshop experience and the production of works of quality and would be an ideal choice for those who enjoy design and make activities. GCSE Resistant Materials students have carried on to study Product Design at AS / A2 levels as well as Engineering at University to degree level. Other pupils have gone on to complete trade training including trades such as Carpentry, Plumbing, Electronics and Decorating.

### Course Content

Students develop skills through design and make projects and become versatile in a range of materials but can specialise in the latter stages of the course. A fundamental knowledge of wood, metal and plastics is developed and there is a possibility of using other materials. Students will also develop a wide knowledge of a range of tools and processes.

The course also aims to develop an understanding of CAD/CAM and the use of IT skills in coursework is a requirement.

As part of the coursework students will be required to complete practical outcomes with specialist tools and we would advise that after school sessions are run to enable students to complete quality outcomes within the time specified.

### Assessment

Exam Unit: One examination covering 2 sections - 2 hours (50% of the total grade)

NEA = 50% of the total grade (Controlled Assessment):

As part of the coursework; a major project lasting 40 hours of the student's time is asked for. This will require work to be completed at home and consists of the design and making of a product following a design brief and theme set by the exam board.

**Section A** - Core technical principles (20 marks). A mixture of multiple choice and short answer questions assessing a breadth of technical knowledge and understanding.

**Section B** - Specialist technical principles (30 marks). Several short answer questions (2–5 marks) and one extended response to assess a more in depth knowledge of technical principles.

**Section C** - Designing and making principles (50 marks). A mixture of short answer and extended response questions including a 12 mark design question.

# GCSE Textile Design

Examination Board: **Edexcel**

## Why study GCSE Textiles?

The course would appeal to anyone with a creative and enquiring mind who has a real interest in design and who enjoys practical development work which in turn leads to the creation of textile products.

Students who have studied this subject at GCSE have followed these career paths previously: Fashion Designer / Product Designer/ Textiles Artist / Writer and Editor for Fashion Magazine/ Buyer / Visual Merchandiser / Theatre Production: Costume design / Interior Designer

## Course Content

Textile Design is a versatile practice that involves the creation, selection, manipulation and application of a range of materials such as fibres, yarns and fabrics, and processes such as weaving, knitting, stitching and printing to create designs and products.

Textile designers work in multi-disciplinary ways to create ideas, materials and techniques for different applications. Textile designers also play an important role in the world of fashion, theatre, performance and retail. Students will also understand that Textile Design practitioners may work within a team environment in a large commercial manufacturing company, on a single aspect of the design or making process, or work as freelance practitioners on commissions or self-directed projects.

The areas of study are:

- **Constructed textiles:** Innovative manipulation and reworking of threads and fabrics.
- **Dyed fabrics:** the use of dyes and resist and applied techniques.
- **Printed fabrics:** techniques such as monoprint, transfer-relief, relief print, lino-cut, silk-screen printing on fabrics.
- **Fashion design:** pattern cutting, adornment, accessories and illustration on fabrics with consideration of sustainable materials, recycling and ethic
- **Drawing, designing,** the History of Fashion and Textiles, Colour, Form and Presentation skills will also be taught.

The course offers opportunities to create Textiles through fashion, furnishings, and costume and Textiles-art pieces and equips students with the skills to enjoy, produce and engage with the visual arts throughout their lives.

The course also develops transferable skills – students will learn to apply a creative approach to problem solving

• consider and develop original ideas from initiation to realisation • analyse critically their own work and the work of others • express individual thoughts and choices confidently • take risks, experiment and learn from mistakes

## Assessment

### Component 1 (60%) Personal Portfolio:

- From centre-based starting points
- Students create a personal portfolio of work comprising:
  - Supporting studies
  - Personal response(s)
- Internally assessed and externally moderated.

### Component 2 (40%) Externally Set Assignment:

- Externally set broad-based thematic starting point released on 2 January
- A centre-devised preparatory study period followed by a 10-hour sustained focus period in which students create personal response(s)
- Students' work must comprise:
  - Preparatory studies
  - Personal response(s)
- Internally assessed and externally moderated.

# GCSE Food Preparation and Nutrition

Examination Board - **AQA**

## Why study GCSE Food Preparation and Nutrition?

Our fresh and exciting GCSE Food Preparation and Nutrition specification equips students with a wide array of culinary techniques and recipes as well as in-depth knowledge of nutrition, food traditions and kitchen safety. This course is created to inspire and motivate students with a view to opening students' eyes to a world of possible career opportunities and giving them the confidence to cook with ingredients from across the globe.

## Course Content

Food preparation skills – these are intended to be integrated into the five sections:

1. **Food, Nutrition and Health:** What food is composed of, why we need it and how it affect our long term health
2. **Food Science:** What happens to ingredients when they are cooked
3. **Food Safety:** How you can prepare and cook food safely
4. **Food Choice:** How the choices people make affect their own health and well-being, their families and the people who produce the food
5. **Food Provenance:** Which food different cultures eat throughout the world, how the choices we make affect the global environment and its natural resources

## Assessment

**Paper 1** : Food Preparation and Nutrition - 50% of GCSE grade

**Paper 2** : Non-Examination Assessment (NEA) tasks - 50% of GCSE grade

# GCSE French

Examination Board - **Edexcel**

## Why study GCSE French?

If you enjoy communicating with other people, finding out how language works, learning about different countries and cultures, then studying GCSE French is an excellent choice for you! Of course you will learn to understand a lot more of the language. However, there are many other reasons for taking this GCSE course, such as being able to share your interests, ideas and opinions with other people who speak French. You will learn about the countries where French is spoken and get more out of a trip there. You will add an international dimension to your choice of GCSE subjects, which is something many future employers and higher education providers look for. You will learn many skills which are useful in a wide range of future careers, such as the ability to communicate clearly, being confident about speaking in public, using problem-solving strategies, etc. You will create greater opportunities for yourself to work abroad, or for companies in the UK with international links. Many employers look for people who speak a foreign language.

## Course Content

GCSE French helps you explore a wide range of topics, from celebrations and festivals, through getting by as a tourist in France, to international campaigns and events. You will learn a lot about French culture through a range of interesting topics which will add to your understanding of the language and country.

### There are 5 Main Themes:

- Identity and Culture
- Local area, holiday travel
- School
- Future aspirations, study and work
- International and global dimension

## Assessment

% of total	Title	Type of assessment
25%	Listening and Understanding	Examination
25%	Speaking	Oral Exam
25%	Reading and understanding	Examination
25%	Writing	Examination

## GCSE Geography

Examination Board - **AQA**

### Why study GCSE Geography?

Geography is a unique subject because it looks at both the physical structure of the planet *and* the social structure (i.e. how we affect our environment and how it affects us) in the past, present and future.

Geography can be divided into two main branches: Physical Geography and Human Geography.

Geographers deal with the natural world and how we behave in it, their jobs can take them everywhere, from taking soil samples on the edge of a volcano to mapping a new town, charting the changes to a glacier in the Arctic, or even teaching you in a comfortable classroom.

Geographers have done many important things for the human race, including charting new territory, developing maps (cartography) and measuring distances to help us to get from A to B long before we could simply take a picture of an area from space. We wouldn't have Google maps without them.

Imagine ...

Geography will help you develop your communication and teamwork skills, as you'll often work on group projects. You'll also develop your research and analysis skills using IT and fieldwork, which means you'll be able to collect and look for patterns in data.

Employers love the mix of technical and social skills people get from studying geography, which they see as very transferable, ie useful for a whole range of jobs.

### Course content

#### Living with the Physical environment

The Challenge of Natural Hazards

The Living World

Physical Landscapes in the UK – Rivers and Coasts

#### Challenges in the Human environment

Urban Issues and Challenges

Changing Economic World

The Challenge of Resource Management - Water

### Assessment: 3 examinations at the end of Year 11

**Paper 1** - 1 hour and 30 minutes – Living with the physical environment - 35% of GCSE grade

**Paper 2** - 1 hour and 30 minutes – Challenges in the human environment - 35% of GCSE grade

**Paper 3** - 1 hour and 15 minutes – Geographical applications (issue evaluation based on a pre-release resource booklet, fieldwork and geographical skills) - 30% of GCSE grade

# **BTEC Health and Social Care**

Examination Board - **Edexcel**

## **Why study BTEC Health and Social Care?**

Students who are interested in a variety of jobs in the caring profession are encouraged to consider this option. BTEC Health and Social Care is a useful subject if considering a career in Teaching – primary or secondary schools, Midwifery, Social Work, Police, Care Work, Nursery Nursing, Nursing – (adult, child or mental health) and Childcare.

## **Course Content**

### **Component 1** Human Lifespan Development

Learners will investigate how, in real situations, human development is affected by different factors and that people deal differently with life events.

### **Component 2** Health and Social Care Services and Values

Learners study and explore practically, health and social care services and how they meet the needs of real service users. They also develop skills in applying care values through a work experience visit.

### **Component 3** Health and Wellbeing

Learners will study the factors that affect health and wellbeing, learning about physiological and lifestyle indicators, and how to design a health and wellbeing improvement plan.

## **Assessment**

**Component 1** - internally assessed through a portfolio of coursework.

**Component 2** - internally assessed through a portfolio of coursework.

**Component 3** - internally assessed through an exam board set task and will be completed under controlled conditions.

## **GCSE History**

Examination Board - **Edexcel**

### **Why study GCSE History?**

People who study history are fearless explorers of the past. They investigate past politics, societies, cultures, languages, health, art, education, money, conflicts and more, look at how things have developed over time and connect the dots to understand how we got where we are today. Historians are skilled at asking questions, spotting bias and prejudice and reaching reasoned conclusions based on evidence- useful skills for everyday life.

Our GCSE course builds on KS3 topics to help students confidently develop a more nuanced understanding of history and provides a stepping stone to further study at A level. Student will develop their powers of analysis and evaluation which will be invaluable skills for careers in Law, Media, Journalism and Finance.

### **Course Content**

#### **Paper 1 – Thematic Study with Historic Environment**

Crime and Punishment in Britain c1000 to present and Whitechapel, c1870-11900: crime, policing and the inner city

This unit studies the nature and changing definitions of criminal activity, of law enforcement and punishment. It will also include 4 case studies from the period. The historic environment study focuses on Whitechapel, crime and policing in the inner city.

#### **Paper 2: Period Study and Depth Study**

The American West, 1835-1895

Anglo-Saxon and Norman England 1060-1088

This unit looks at Anglo-Saxon society, the last years of Edward the Confessor and the Norman invasion.

The American West section studies the Plains Indians, the development and settlement of the West, farming and the cattle industry.

#### **Paper 3 – Modern Depth Study**

The USA 1954-75: conflict at home and abroad

This unit studies the position of black Americans in the early 1950s, demonstrations and boycotts, Malcolm X and Black Power and the Civil Rights movement. It also looks at the US involvement in the Vietnam War, opposition to it, the peace process and reasons for the failure of the USA in Vietnam.

### **Assessment**

Paper 1 – exam – 1 hour and 15 minutes - 30% of GCSE grade

Paper 2 – exam – 1 hour and 45 minutes - 40% of GCSE grade

Paper 3 – exam – 1 hour and 20 minutes - 30% of GCSE grade

## GCSE Italian

Examination Board - **Edexcel**

### Why study GCSE Italian?

If you enjoy communicating with other people, finding out how language works and learning about different countries and cultures, studying GCSE Italian is an excellent choice for you!

Of course you will learn to understand a lot more of the language, you will be able to share your interests, ideas and opinions with other people who speak Italian and add an international dimension to your choice of GCSE subjects, which is something many future employers and higher education providers look for. People with language skills and knowledge are highly thought of in the modern world. They stand out as talented and successful people, with broad and exciting horizons!

### Course Content

GCSE Italian helps you explore a wide range of topics, from celebrations and festivals, through getting by as a tourist in Italy, to international campaigns and events. You will learn a lot about Italian culture through a range of interesting topics which will add to your understanding of the language and country.

#### There are 5 Main Themes

- Identity and Culture
- Local area, holiday travel
- School
- Future aspirations, study and work
- International and global dimension

### Assessment

% of total	Title	Type of assessment
25%	Listening and Understanding	Examination
25%	Speaking	Oral Examination
25%	Reading and understanding	Examination
25%	Writing	Examination.



## GCSE Media Studies

Examination Board - Eduquas

### Why study GCSE Media?

This course aims to provide a dynamic, creative introduction to the Media industry while still containing the practical elements and skills students will need to pursue a career in this industry. Students are encouraged to study and then design in a variety of different media forms, including the Music and Film industries. This qualification lays an appropriate foundation for further study of Media Studies or related subjects, in particular A Level Media Studies. It encourages the development of critical understanding of the impact of mass media and its technologies on contemporary society which may lead to jobs in Journalism, Film and Television. You will have the opportunity to work with Apple Macs and the latest software programmes.

### Course Content

Media Studies has been completely redesigned to allow students to now study NINE media forms across the two-year programme ensuring that students have a full understanding of all media industries and all interests are catered for. We will study these media forms through set texts that you will be questioned on directly in the examination, this allows you to enter the exam with a confidence.

#### **Component 1: Exploring the Media**

##### Section A: Exploring Media Language and Representation

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.

##### Section B: Exploring Media Industries and Audiences

This section we will study how different media industries work and the audiences of these industries. We will look at least two of the following media forms: film, newspapers, radio or video games.

#### **Component 2: Understanding Media Forms and Products**

This component assesses all areas of the theoretical framework and contexts of the media looking in detail at two media areas - television and music.

#### **Component 3: Creating Media Products**

There is no written coursework in this subject. 30% of your grade is earned from the practical production you will create.

### Assessment

#### Component 1: Exploring the Media

Written examination: 1 hour 30 minutes - 40% of qualification

#### Component 2: Understanding Media Forms and Products

Written examination: 1 hour 30 minutes - 30% of qualification

#### Component 3: Creating Media Products

Non-exam assessment –Coursework - 30% of qualification

## GCSE Music

Examination Board - **OCR**

### Why study GCSE Music?

Music is constantly evolving, inspiring creativity and expression in a way that no other subject can. OCR have designed a relevant and contemporary GCSE qualification that offers you the chance to study a wide range of musical genres, with more opportunities for practical learning. If you enjoy music and can play an instrument or sing then GCSE Music will be an enjoyable course and qualification to study for.

The ability to sing or play a musical instrument, or the commitment to learn to do so is vital, as performance is a key part of the course. Free instrumental/vocal tuition will be provided for this performance element. Students must also learn to read the treble and bass clefs, and know the geography of the piano keyboard.

### Course Content

#### Component 01/02: Integrated portfolio

Students develop their understanding of performance and composition through exploration of their own instrument within styles and genres of their choosing. They demonstrate their playing skills and abilities by practising and performing a piece musically, accurately and with appropriate interpretation. In the composition element of this component, they demonstrate knowledge of composition techniques, use of musical elements and resources, including specific instrumental and technology techniques.

#### Component 03/04: Practical component

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

#### Component 05: Listening and appraising

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

### Assessment

Integrated portfolio (01 or 02) 30% Non-exam assessment (internally marked, externally moderated)

Practical component (03 or 04) 30% Non-exam assessment (internally marked, externally moderated)

Listening and appraising (05) 40% (written paper, externally marked)

## GCSE Drama

Examination Board - **Edexcel**

### Why study GCSE Drama?

Taking a GCSE in Drama provides opportunities for students to understand and create drama as a practical art form. They develop a range of theatrical skills and work collaboratively to generate and communicating ideas and meanings through informed artistic choices.

### Course Content

Students gain a practical understanding of drama, and apply this knowledge to their performances as they develop their practical skills.

**Component 1: Devising** - Non-examination assessment, 40% of the qualification.

- Create and develop a devised piece from a stimulus (free choice for centre).
- Performance of this devised piece or design realisation for this performance.
- Analyse and evaluate the devising process and performance.
- There are two parts to the assessment: 1) a portfolio covering the creating and developing process and analysis and evaluation of this process 2) a devised performance/design realisation.

**Component 2: Performance from Text** - Non-examination assessment, 20% of the qualification.

- Students will perform in two key extracts from a performance text.
- Centre choice of performance text.

**Component 3: Theatre Makers in Practice** - Written examination: 1 hour 30 minutes 40% of the qualification.

- Practical exploration and study of one complete performance text.
- Choice of eight performance texts.
- Live theatre evaluation – free choice of production.

### Assessment

**Component 1** is internally assessed and externally moderated.

**Component 2** will be externally marked by a visiting examiner.

**Component 3** is a written paper which will also be externally marked.

# GCSE Physical Education

Examination Board - **Edexcel**

## Why study GCSE PE?

A qualification in this subject can help pupils who are interested in careers in such areas as: leisure and recreation (one of the largest growth industries in this country today); recreational management; police; fire or armed services; medical profession; professional sports; journalism; teaching; sports science; physiotherapy; coaching; sports administration; ground staff. This can positively contribute to the quality of life, which the pupils will experience when leaving school. The aims of the course are to improve the student's ability to plan, perform and evaluate physical activity and to increase the student's knowledge and understanding of physical activity.

## Course Content

1. Fitness and Body Systems
2. Health and Performance
3. Practical Skills

## Assessment

Written examination for Fitness and Body Systems -36% of GCSE grade

Written examination for Health and Performance -24% of GCSE grade

Practical assessment which is 40% of GCSE grade. Practical Assessment will be from the following list:

- One team activity from set list
- One individual activity from set list
- One free choice activity from set list

It is an expectation for the course that you play for the School in at least one sports team and/or compete for a club outside of School.

## GCSE Polish

Examination Board - **AQA**

Teacher - **Ms Agnieszka Haremza**

### Why study GCSE Polish?

Our objective is to enable students of all abilities to develop their Polish language skills to their full potential, equipping them with the knowledge to communicate in a variety of contexts with confidence.

### Course core content

Students study all of the following themes on which the assessments are based.

Theme 1: Identity and culture

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

Theme 3: Current and future study and employment

### Assessment

GCSE Polish has a Foundation Tier (grades 1–5) and a Higher Tier (grades 4–9). Students must take all four question papers at the same tier. All question papers must be taken in the same series.

**Paper 1: Listening-** Understanding and responding to different types of spoken language.

- Written exam: 35 minutes (Foundation Tier), 45 minutes (Higher Tier)
- 40 marks (Foundation Tier), 50 marks (Higher Tier)

**Questions-** Foundation Tier and Higher Tier

- Section A – questions in English, to be answered in English or non-verbally
- Section B – questions in Polish, to be answered in Polish or non-verbally

**Paper 2: Speaking-** Communicating and interacting effectively in speech for a variety of purposes.

- Non-exam assessment
- 7–9 minutes (Foundation Tier) + preparation time
- 10–12 minutes (Higher Tier) + preparation time
- 60 marks (for each of Foundation Tier and Higher Tier)

**Questions-** Foundation Tier and Higher Tier

The format is the same at Foundation Tier and Higher Tier, but with different stimulus questions for the Photo card and different stimulus materials for the Role-play.

**Paper 3: Reading-** Understanding and responding to different types of written language.

- Written exam: 45 minutes (Foundation Tier), 1 hour (Higher Tier)
- 60 marks (for each of Foundation Tier and Higher Tier)

**Questions-** Foundation Tier and Higher Tier

- Section A – questions in English, to be answered in English or non-verbally
- Section B – questions in Polish, to be answered in Polish or non-verbally
- Section C – translation from Polish into English (a minimum of 35 words for Foundation Tier and 50 words for Higher Tier)

**Paper 4: Writing-** Communicating effectively in writing for a variety of purposes.

- Written exam: 1 hour (Foundation Tier), 1 hour 15 minutes (Higher Tier)
- 50 marks at Foundation Tier and 60 marks at Higher Tier

**Questions Foundation Tier**

- Question 1 – message (student produces four sentences in response to a photo) – 8 marks
- Question 2 – short passage (student writes a piece of continuous text in response to four brief bullet points, approximately 40 words in total) – 16 marks
- Question 3 – translation from English into Polish (minimum 35 words) – 10 marks
- Question 4 – structured writing task (student responds to four compulsory detailed bullet points, producing approximately 90 words in total) – there is a choice from two questions – 16 marks

**Higher Tier**

- Question 1 – structured writing task (student responds to four compulsory detailed bullet points, producing approximately 90 words in total) – there is a choice from two questions – 16 marks
- Question 2 – open-ended writing task (student responds to two compulsory detailed bullet points, producing approximately 150 words in total) – there is a choice from two questions – 32 marks
- Question 3 – translation from English into Polish (minimum 50 words) – 12 marks

# GCSE Sociology

Examination Board - **AQA**

## Why study GCSE Sociology?

Sociology is the study of the relationship between people, their environment and the community around them. By the end of the course you will have a good idea how our society works and why people act and react as they do. Sociology involves analysing how culture and environment affect people and the way they behave. Sociologists also do lots of “hands on” research of their own as well as studying information from books and other people. Research into issues such as inequality, gender socialisation, crime and punishment, gangs and youth subcultures as well as equal rights form the basis of much of the work.

It will expand your understanding of the world in which we live and encourage you to question what we consider to be common sense. It will give you a good foundation for business, economics, politics, law, humanities and social sciences at a higher level. It will give you opportunities for employment in business, media and journalism, teaching, finance, law, social services including social work and youth work. It complements all other Humanities subjects along with Media Studies, English and Psychology.

## Course Content

- The sociological approach
- Social structures, processes and social issues
- Families
- Education
- Crime and deviance
- Social stratification
- Sociological research methods

## Assessment

Sociology GCSE is assessed through 100% examination. Students will sit 2 papers at the end of the two year course.

**Paper 1:** 1 hour 45 minutes (50% of the GCSE)

**Paper 2:** 1 hour 45 minutes (50% of the GCSE)

Each paper will include two multiple choice questions followed by a range of short and extended responses.

## Useful Careers Websites

St Thomas More School Careers Website – [www.uxplore.co.uk](http://www.uxplore.co.uk) and register using the code **15133**.

National Careers Service website: <https://nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk> includes information on career profiles plus a careers matching quiz – Skills Health Check.

Other careers websites include [www.plotr.co.uk](http://www.plotr.co.uk) and [www.icould.com](http://www.icould.com) and for graduate level careers [www.prospects.ac.uk](http://www.prospects.ac.uk)

Information about Universities can be found using [www.ucas.com](http://www.ucas.com)

Information about Apprenticeships and live vacancies can be found using [www.getingofar.gov.uk](http://www.getingofar.gov.uk)

Alternative routes into employment can be found using [www.notgoingtouni.co.uk](http://www.notgoingtouni.co.uk)

If you would like to book a Careers Appointment in School, please either email your details directly to [faye.gadsby@bedford.gov.uk](mailto:faye.gadsby@bedford.gov.uk) or speak to your Form Teacher.