

Year 9 Options 2025



SIR WILLIAM ROBERTSON
ACADEMY

Welcome

I hope that you will find the information in this booklet interesting and useful. Please read it carefully and make sure that you discuss your choice of subjects with your parents/carers and your teachers.

You will see from the booklet that there are certain courses which you have to take and certain courses which you might choose to take. Think carefully about your choice of courses and try to keep your options open as far as possible. Opting for courses which you know you are good at, or that you particularly enjoy, is always a good starting point! If you enjoy a subject you are more likely to be successful.

Some of you will have clear plans for what you want to achieve in the future and will know that you need to study particular courses to achieve your goals. We offer a range of GCSE and vocational courses to suit the range of interests, abilities and aptitudes of all students.

I hope that during the next two years you will start to think seriously about opportunities to continue your education beyond Year 11. The courses that may be open to you will be influenced by how well you do from now on. You should work hard therefore, as now is the time to make sure that you achieve good results in the future.

Mark Guest
Headteacher



How to Use This Booklet

This booklet is for you

This booklet is intended to be the starting point for discussions with your parents, carers and teachers about the courses you will choose to follow for the next two years. The decisions you make now will help to shape your future. It is therefore very important that you look at all of the available courses on offer and that the choices you make are right for you!

For each course, you must find out from your teachers what sort of teaching and learning is involved and consider carefully the demands this will have on you. Be honest about the type of learner you are, your abilities and the sort of things you enjoy or are good at. The choices you make will give you access to future career opportunities and any future courses you may wish to follow beyond the age of 16. Try to find out more about the different progression routes once these courses are completed.

There is a network of support available to help you make the right decision. You are already receiving careers education and learning about the range of opportunities that are open to you, and you will receive further advice on choosing courses, work experience and how to achieve your goals. A wide range of careers information is available on the school website.

Additional Guidance

Work Experience

Work experience takes place during Year 10 and is an exciting chance for you to work within a business environment for a week. This is an important part of the Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance (CEIAG) programme and will give you an insight into working life and an understanding of the employability skills you will need to develop in preparation for this.

For further information see Mrs Dowding

Some useful websites are:

<https://nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk>

www.apprenticeships.org.uk

<http://www.icould.com/>

There is also CEIAG advice for parents, students and employers on our school website

The Key Stage 4 Curriculum – Core Subjects

Key Stage 4

During Key Stage 4 you will study towards your GCSE and other examinations. These will consist of CORE subjects and OPTION subjects.

The CORE subjects are those we believe **all** students at Sir William Robertson Academy should study. These subjects are key to progression into sixth form, college, university and employment. For example, if you wish to gain an engineering apprenticeship, most employers will insist on good qualifications in English, mathematics and science. If it is your aim to study business at university, it is essential to have good grades in English and mathematics; GCSE and A-level business studies qualifications are usually seen as helpful but not essential.

The compulsory Core subjects are:

English

Mathematics

Science

Modern Foreign Language - French (N1 & S1)

History or Geography or Travel & Tourism

Physical Education

Personal & Social Education

Careers, Citizenship and RS

English

All students will take two GCSE qualifications: English language and English literature.

Mathematics

All students study towards GCSE mathematics. More able mathematicians are given the opportunity to study towards a GCSE qualification in further mathematics.

Modern Foreign Languages (French)

We strongly believe that studying a modern foreign language increases your potential to secure good offers at college, sixth form and higher education establishments. In today's global economy a second language is a demonstrable skill that could enhance your employment prospects.

With this in mind, students who are currently in the top set will continue to study GCSE French. Studying a modern foreign language is optional for all other students, but we strongly recommend that this is given serious consideration.

GCSE Science

All students study towards GCSE combined science. Those who show a real aptitude for science during year 10 will have the opportunity to move to the triple science pathway in year 11. The decision regarding who is best suited to each course is made by the Science Department with the aim of giving students the best chance of achieving their potential. GCSE combined science is a double award worth two GCSEs; GCSE triple science leads to three separate awards in biology, chemistry and physics.

Qualifications

GCSE

We believe that the GCSE is still the most suitable qualification for most of our students.

All GCSE subjects are now graded from 9 to 1 where 9 is the highest grade, a grade 5 is regarded as a good pass and a grade 4 is regarded as a standard pass.

If you are considering studying pure A-level courses at sixth form or college then GCSEs offer the clearest progression route and will best prepare you for the rigours of A-level study.

English Baccalaureate

The English Baccalaureate is designed to recognise the achievement of any student who secures good GCSE passes in English, mathematics, two sciences, a modern foreign language and a humanities subject such as history or geography. All students on the green pathway and most students on the blue pathway will study towards this award. It should be noted that in order to gain the English Baccalaureate students must achieve **all six** of the above-mentioned subject qualifications at least GCSE grade 5.

Technical Awards

Technical awards are vocational qualifications which are widely recognised by employers and colleges. They are usually made up of 60% internally assessed coursework and 40% externally assessed assignment or written paper, which can be retaken if necessary.

These awards assess your ability to perform certain tasks or demonstrate certain skills and can be more suited to the learning styles of some of our students.

Technical awards can be awarded at both level 1 and level 2 and are graded Pass, Merit, Distinction and Distinction*. Most colleges offer BTEC and NCFE qualifications from level 2 to level 3, and this could be a progression route that suits you if you are considering apprenticeships or a specific career path.

These awards also offer progression routes to sixth form and universities through their equivalent level 3 qualifications. Vocational qualification subjects that we offer in our sixth form include: Computing, BTEC sport, Health and Social Care and Business & Enterprise.



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The Core Subjects



Course Title: GCSE English Language & English Literature

About this course

Two GCSEs for the price of one! GCSE Language study will assess students' ability to examine a range of fiction and non-fiction texts, exploring linguistic choices and writing creatively. GCSE Literature explores a selection of poetry, prose, and dramatic texts. Both courses will extend students beyond the levels possible at KS3. These are now 100% 2-year terminal examination courses with no coursework.

Who would this course suit?

English is for everyone! It will stretch and challenge the most able and will help develop the skills of those to whom English and literacy skills do not come as naturally. It is a demanding course and will require a good deal of independent learning. Assessment will be using the 9-1 system. All students sit the same examinations; there are no separate tiers of entry in English language or English literature.

How is this course taught and assessed?

English Language 100% examination

PAPER 1 (1h 45m)

Section A – READING (based on extract from prose fiction)

Section B – WRITING TO DESCRIBE/NARRATE

PAPER 2 (1h 45m)

Section A – READING (two non-fiction texts)

Section B – VIEWPOINTS WRITING

English Literature 100% examination

PAPER 1 (1h 45m)

Section A – Shakespeare (*Macbeth*)

Section B – 19th century novel (*A Christmas Carol* by Charles Dickens)

PAPER 2 (2h 15m)

Section A – MODERN DRAMA (*An Inspector Calls*)

Section B – POEMS PAST & PRESENT (*Power & Conflict* cluster from AQA Anthology)

Section C – UNSEEN POETRY

What can you do with this qualification?

A GCSE in English language or literature is an essential qualification in modern life and demonstrates to others a level of skill using language that will impress future employers or colleges and sixth forms. Many who do well in these subjects go on to study them at A-level, and beyond.

Course details

Exam board: AQA Value: 2 x GCSE

For further information speak to:

Mr Bingham (Head of English)

Course Title: GCSE Mathematics

About this course

All students are required to study mathematics at Key Stage 4. The course content is organised into six broad topic areas as follows:

- Number
- Algebra
- Ratio
- Geometry
- Probability
- Statistics

Who would this course suit?

Maths is for everyone! It is diverse, engaging and essential in equipping students with the skills needed to reach their future destination, whatever that may be. All employers and trainers value mathematics as one of the most important functional skills required to increase our readiness for an ever-changing global employment market.

How is this course taught and assessed?

This course should enable students to:

1. Develop fluent knowledge, skills and understanding of mathematical methods and concepts
2. Acquire, select and apply mathematical techniques to solve problems
3. Reason mathematically, make deductions and inferences and draw conclusions
4. Comprehend, interpret and communicate mathematical information in a variety of forms appropriate to the information and context

GCSE mathematics has a foundation tier (grades 5 - 1) and a higher tier (grades 9 – 4). Students must take three question papers at the same tier. All question papers must be taken in the same series.

Paper 1: non-calculator (1h 30m)

Paper 2: calculator (1h 30m) Paper 3: calculator (1h 30m)

All papers are taken at the end of the two-year course and have an equal weighting towards the final GCSE grade.

What can you do with this qualification?

GCSE mathematics is widely regarded as being central to any future endeavour. The knowledge, understanding and skills developed in this subject are invaluable in our everyday lives and demonstrate our ability to solve problems, make deductions and draw conclusions. This qualification provides a foundation for further academic and vocational study or employment. Students who are successful on the course will be able to continue their studies post-16. We use mathematics every day, whether to manage our personal finances or to work in environments as diverse as retail, education and aeronautical design

Course details

Exam board:

Edexcel Value: 1 x GCSE

For further information speak to:

Mr Barnes

Course Title: GCSE Combined Science

About this course

At the end of Year 11 you will have two GCSEs in science. Students will study biology, chemistry and physics topics. This allows all students to prepare for further studies or have a knowledge of science which allows them to make informed choices in life.

Who would this course suit?

All students will study combined science at GCSE unless they show an aptitude for triple science. The decision regarding who is best suited to each course will be made by the Science Department, with the aim of giving pupils the best chance of achieving their potential.

How is this course taught and assessed?

This course is taught from Year 10 through to Year 11. It is made up of modules in biology, chemistry and physics which will help you to develop the knowledge, understanding and skills needed for adult life. It will also prepare you for further study in science post-16.

Assessment for this course is linear, with written examinations being held in the summer term of Year 11. Two 1h 15 min papers will be sat for each of the three disciplines. Collectively these make up 100% of your final grade. You will also carry out a series of 'required' practical sessions throughout the course. These are not individually assessed, but questions relating to the practical work will contribute to 15% of the total marks in the written examinations. Additionally, at least 20% of the total marks will be based upon mathematical skills. There is no coursework.

What can you do with this qualification?

This combined science route at Key Stage 4 Science could enable progression to A-level science courses for suitable students.

Course details

Exam board: AQA

Value: 2 x GCSE

For further information speak to:

Mr Wigham

Course Title: GCSE Triple Award Science

About this course

This route through Key Stage 4 science leads to three separate awards in biology, chemistry and physics. It offers greater breadth and depth of study for those aspiring to follow a career in medicine, dentistry or related disciplines.

Who would this course suit?

This course is aimed at students who are currently working at Grade 5 and above, and who show the potential to achieve the higher grades (7 - 9) at GCSE. The final decision regarding who is best suited to this course will be made by the Science Department, with the aim of giving students the best chance of achieving their potential.

How is this course taught and assessed?

Each of the three subjects is taught by a subject specialist - one each for biology, chemistry and physics.

Each subject is assessed by two 1h 45m written papers containing a combination of multiple choice, structured, closed short answer and open response questions. This assessment is linear and is carried out at the end of the two years, so in total you will have 6 x 1 h 45m examinations for your three science disciplines as part of your Year 11 examinations. For each of the sciences the two papers account for 100% of your final grade. You will also carry out a series of 'required' practical sessions for each science subject. Although not individually assessed, these practical components sit right at the heart of science and are aimed at developing scientists of the future. Questions relating to the practical work contribute to 15% of the total marks in the written examinations. Additionally, at least 20% of the total marks will be based upon mathematical skills. There is no coursework.

What can you do with this qualification?

This route through Key Stage 4 allows you to study each of the three sciences in detail and will enable you to progress to A-level courses in any or all three of the science subjects.

Course details

Exam board: AQA

Value: 3 x GCSE

For further information speak to:

Mr Wigham

Course Title: GCSE French

About this course

80% of the world's population are non-English speakers, and so learning a foreign language is as important as ever. Not only does the GCSE French course aim to prepare students for a future living and working within a global community, it also increases opportunities within academia and the workplace. This course will support students' knowledge of their own language through analysing grammar. It will also allow them to gain an insight into the people and cultures of other countries and to improve their communication skills, both in English and in French, for leisure and work.

Who would this course suit?

The course requires an interest in French language and culture. You will need enthusiasm and resilience to work out new language and communicate effectively. Successful candidates support their learning in the classroom by regularly revising vocabulary, and by finding opportunities in their everyday lives to improve and practice in order to become competent in all four skill areas.

How is this course taught and assessed?

The course includes a number of topics including:

- My personal world
- Lifestyle and wellbeing
- My neighbourhood
- Media and Technology
- Studying and my future
- Travel and Tourism

During the course students build upon the grammatical awareness and language skills, such as translation and transcription, which they developed at Key Stage 3. They will broaden the breadth and depth of their knowledge to include the defined content contained within the topic areas.

GCSE French is assessed at the end of Year 11 as follows:

- Listening (25%)
- Speaking (25%)
- Reading (25%)
- Writing (25%)

What can you do with this qualification?

Students who are successful on this course can continue their studies post-16 at A-level. This could lead to a variety of degree courses with language units, including new languages, such as European law with French/Spanish or Portuguese.

The ability to communicate in another language could lead to a career in teaching, interpreting or working overseas for multi-national corporations, as well as in organisations such as the Foreign Office.

Course details

Exam board: AQA/Edexcel (TBD)

Value: 1 x GCSE

For further information speak to:

Miss Phillips, Miss Brousse, Mr Reed & Mrs Doney

Course Title: Core PE

Irrespective of whether you decide to choose physical education as a GCSE or BTEC option you will all take part in core PE in Year 10 and Year 11.

During Year 7, Year 8 and Year 9 your activities were selected by the PE department to ensure you developed the knowledge, tactics and strategies for an active life-style across a broad range of physical activities. The PE Department created a sequenced curriculum based on the following RASCAL principles:

- Respect
- Activity
- Sustained Resilience
- Confidence
- Applied Competition
- Leadership

In Year 10 and Year 11 you will tackle complex and more demanding activities. The main aim is for you to further develop your RASCAL skills and personal fitness to ensure you have an active healthy lifestyle. You will devise tactics and strategies to overcome opponents, develop techniques in competitive sports and undertake an outdoor and adventurous activity.



For further information speak to:

PE Department



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The Option Subjects



Course Title: GCSE History

About this course

This course offers a wide range of exciting topics and time periods. The course will see students whisked on a tour of world and European history, and also offer an in-depth focus on elements of British history. There really is something for everyone – war, medicine, plague, dictatorship, key individuals, religion, monarchs, battles, weapons, science & technology If you like a challenge and want an opportunity to study a subject that will develop your knowledge AND equip you with a wide range of valuable skills, then GCSE history is for you!

Some of the skills and qualities you will learn and develop are: independence, communication, critical thinking, research, evaluation, using evidence, interpretation, analysis, objectivity, literacy, numeracy, thinking skills, working to deadlines, personal organisation and revision skills, empathy and resilience.

How is this course taught and assessed?

The GCSE history course is divided into four units. Each unit covers a specific era detailing key events and people that helped shape the world as it is today. Two GCSE examinations will assess your learning at the end of Year 11:

Paper 1

Section A is a period study with a focus on two key developments in a country's history over at least a 50-year period: **Germany, 1890-1945 Democracy and Dictatorship.**

Section B is a wider world depth study, focusing on international conflict and tension: **Conflict and Tension, 1894-1918.**

Paper 2

Section A is a thematic study which looks at key developments in Britain over a long period: **Britain, Health and the People, c1000 – the present day.**

Section B is a British depth study incorporating the study of a specific historic site: **Norman England, c1066-1100.**

Who would this course suit?

This course would suit students who are interested in unravelling the mysteries of history around us, as well as those interested in what drives change. It covers issues such as conflict, key triggers of change and how the past influences the present.

This course will suit you:

- If you are interested in events of the past, and how they have shaped the world we live in
- If you genuinely wish to engage intellectually with some of the most extraordinary, notorious, brilliant and original people in the history of our planet
- If you wish to study a subject that will open many doors for you and provide you with a lifelong thirst for knowledge

What can you do with this qualification?

History provides young people with a wealth of skills that support many other subjects in the curriculum, but also valuable skills that will increase their employability whatever their chosen career. The transferrable skills, abilities and attitudes developed through the study of history make young people highly attractive to employers. History is valued in most fields, especially occupations such as law, accountancy, public relations, marketing, research, journalism, education, business and government. History is a fantastic 'all round' subject that keeps your future options open!

Course details

Exam board: AQA GCSE History 8145

Value: 1 x GCSE

For further information speak to:

Mr Squire, Mrs Rawding, Mr Mounsey & Miss Tooze

Course Title: GCSE Geography

About this course

Have you ever watched the television and said, “We’ve just done that in geography!” Well, if you want to know how the earth works and how it changes peoples’ lives, then GCSE geography is for you.

This course follows on naturally from Key Stage 3. In fact, pupils in lower school have already been studying GCSE material in a spiral curriculum. GCSE geography involves the study of important events and issues that often feature in the news, such as earthquakes, hurricanes, climate change, immigration and how changes in the world economy can affect our lives.

How is this course taught and assessed?

Major topics include: the destructive power of natural hazards such as volcanoes and earthquakes; how rivers and the sea produce natural landforms and cause flooding; how the world’s business and trade affects the wealth of people and countries; where people live and why they move, including why people from other countries have been attracted to the UK; how urban areas grow and change in response to our needs.

All topics will be examined at the end of Year 11, accounting for 100% of the total mark. The examination papers will include sections on fieldwork, which is undertaken during Year 10 and Year 11.

All students will sit three exams at the end of Y11:

Paper 1

Physical Geography: Natural Hazards, Living World, UK Landscapes (1h 30m)

Paper 2

Human Geography: Urban, Changing Economic World, Resources (1h 30m)

Paper 2

Geography Skills and Issue Evaluation (1h 30m)

Who would this course suit?

Geography is suitable for all students who have an interest in the world around them. Students need to be able to look at features and situations and ask who, what, where, how and why? They should be able to describe and interpret photographs, graphs and (of course) maps! Geography is about places! Students should also enjoy studying outside the classroom, as fieldwork is an important element of the course.

GCSE geography also offers a good balance with your other Key Stage 4 subjects.

What can you do with this qualification?

GCSE geographers can continue to study at 16+ by taking A-level geography, and this course provides an excellent foundation for students who wish to do this. It can also open doors to a wide range of careers including travel, tourism, leisure and roles within the environmental and development sectors.

Famous geographers include Prince William, Amy Macdonald, Michael Jordan and Olympic gold medalists Matthew Pinsent and James Cracknell.

Course details

Exam board: AQA

Course code: AQA A

Value: 1 x GCSE

For further information speak to:

Geography Department Staff

Course Title: GCSE Art & Design

About this course

Art is a comprehensive area of visual, emotional, expressive and tactile concepts. Studying art will encourage you to explore your imagination and to express and communicate thoughts and feelings. Art develops your capacity for creative and independent thought and your ability to make critical judgements; it encourages key skills that are important in many areas of work, not just in the creative sector.

This course will give you the opportunity to use a broad range of media depending on your skills, aptitude and areas of interest. Techniques and approaches include drawing, painting, printing, collage, mixed media, textiles and 3D work (wire, clay, plaster, card etc.). You will also have the opportunity to visit important galleries.

How is this course taught and assessed?

The coursework portfolio is work developed during the course by the student from a starting point given by the teacher. It includes a lot of preparation work (i.e. drawing and other studies, looking at the work of artists, developing ideas through practice and experimentation) and a final piece. The portfolio work is both creative and challenging, and the development of ideas into a successful outcome is very rewarding. The externally set task, provided by the exam board, is conducted in a similar way to a coursework project, although the final piece is completed under exam conditions. Students have a number of starting points to choose from which they then develop according to their interests and creative strengths.

GCSE Art & Design is assessed:

60% Coursework

40% Externally set task

Who would this course suit?

It is vital to have an interest in art and design. Although an ability to draw is important, students will have plenty of opportunity to improve and develop their observational skills. Given the wide variety of materials and approaches available it is good for students to have an open mind and to be willing to explore ideas in a number of ways.

As coursework is worth 60% of the total grade it is important that students have a mature attitude and are willing to work hard. Coursework covers four assessment objectives including critical analysis, observation, investigation & experimentation and final realisation.

What can you do with this qualification?

Students who are successful on this course can further their study at 16+ by studying art at A level or choosing vocational qualifications at college. The range of careers available in the creative sector is vast; one of the largest nationally. The skills gained are transferrable, and the ability to think divergently, independently and creatively is a skill valued by employers, colleges and universities, irrespective of the area of further study undertaken.

Course details

Exam board: AQA

Value: 1 x GCSE

For further information speak to:

Mrs Grant, Mrs Norman & Miss Crook

Course Title: GCSE Art & Design—Graphic Communication

About this course

If you enjoy being creative, want to increase your practical skills and improve your analytical, communication and research abilities, then graphic communication is a great choice. The skills you gain make it a great complement to other subjects, and it can help you with further study and prepare you for the world of work.

Throughout this course you will learn how to design visual materials to convey information, ideas, meaning and emotions in response to a given or self-defined brief. Areas of study include communication graphics, advertising, branding, packaging design, typography and motion graphics. You will look at different approaches and use a variety of different media, techniques and materials. Alongside improving your practical expertise, you will learn how to: develop, refine and record your ideas; present a personal response that realises your intentions; improve your creative skills through the effective and safe use of media, materials, techniques, processes and technologies; successfully use visual language and the formal elements (e.g. colour line, form, shape, tone, texture) and use drawing skills for different needs and purposes.

How is this course taught and assessed?

There are two components:

Component 1 Portfolio: Produce a sustained project and a selection of further work that represents the course of study. This is worth 60 % of your overall marks.

Component 2 Externally Set Assignment: This is a separate externally set paper featuring seven tasks. You have to complete one of these tasks and will be given preparation time plus ten hours of supervised time in which to do so. This is worth 40 % of your total marks.

GCSE Art & Design – Graphic Communication is assessed:

60% Coursework

40% Terminal examination: a 10-hour practical assessment prepared for in advance of the exam date

Who would this course suit?

Studying GCSE graphic communication gives you access to a broad and balanced curriculum, which is an excellent foundation for whatever you choose to do afterwards. The transferable skills you will gain, such as creativity, analysis and problem solving, complement a range of other subjects and careers.

It is vital to have an interest in art and design. Although an ability to generate and record ideas is important, you will have plenty of opportunity to improve and develop your observational skills. Given the wide variety of materials and approaches available it is good to have an open mind and to be willing to explore ideas in a number of ways.

As coursework is worth 60% of the total grade it is important that you have a mature attitude and are willing to work hard. There is an element of critical analysis worth 25% of the marks, so a good understanding of English language would also be of benefit.

What can you do with this qualification?

This course will enable you to continue your studies post-16. If you decide not to take your studies any further the transferable skills you gain will still be valuable. You will develop problem-solving, creative thinking, investigation, research, communication and teamwork skills alongside the ability to develop, refine and present ideas. Employers and universities regard all of these highly.

Art and design opens the door to many exciting careers. Try these for starters: fashion design; graphic design; art; theatre design; illustration; video game design; photography; architecture; product design; teaching; textile design; advertising; publishing; interior design; hair and make-up design or retail design.

Course details

Exam board: AQA

Value: 1 x GCSE

For further information speak to:

Ms Vere

Course Title: NCFE Level 1/Level 2 Technical Award in Business & Enterprise

About this course

Business is a major part of everyone's life, and anybody who has a good idea about how businesses work is at an immediate advantage. This course will give you the opportunity to explore real business issues and understand how businesses work. The course is a technical alternative to a GCSE qualification with equivalent levels of rigour and challenge. You will investigate, analyse and evaluate different business environments, ranging from small enterprises to large multinationals, operating in local, national and global contexts. The course subject content is made up of eight themes: entrepreneurship, business organisations and stakeholders; market research, market types, market orientation and marketing mix; human resources requirements; operations management; business growth; sources of funding and business finance; impact of the external environment; business planning.

Who would this course suit?

Are you interested in the real world of business and want to understand how it all fits together? Do you like making decisions and think you could spot a business opportunity like an entrepreneur? Would you like to know how a real business is set up and then developed into being successful? Do you want to develop your communication skills in essay writing and business presentations? Are you independent and able to meet deadlines? If you have answered 'yes' to these questions you could well be suited to the course.

How is this course taught and assessed?

The course should enable students to:

- Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of business concepts, issues and terminology
- Apply knowledge and understanding of concepts and issues to business context, and to interpret business information
- Analyse and evaluate business information and issues to demonstrate understanding of the impact of these on business activity and to make reasoned judgements and justified business decisions

Exam Component: consists of a 1hr 30m externally assessed examination worth 40% of the overall grade.

Coursework Component: consists of an internal coursework project worth 60% of the overall grade that will be completed within a 21-hour time frame.

What can you do with this qualification?

This course provides an excellent insight into the real world of business and how it operates at all levels, from the smallest firm to the largest global corporation. As a result, the skills you acquire and develop will be in great demand and form an excellent foundation for A levels, apprenticeships and university courses.

Course details

Exam board: NCFE

Value: Equivalent to 1 x GCSE (Level 2 Pass, Merit, Distinction and Distinction*)

For further information speak to:

Mrs Francis

Course Title: NCFE CACHE Level 2 Technical Award in Child Development & Care

About this course

This qualification provides the opportunity to gain a vocational qualification that gives a basic introduction to the childcare sector. It has been designed to meet the needs of learners from the age of 14 years, and includes the knowledge and understanding of child development and well-being necessary for working with children in a variety of settings. It is aimed at a range of learners who wish to be introduced to childcare and development for children aged 0-5 years. It also gives learners an insight into their preferred learning styles and assists in developing their ability to study.

We study units such as: holistic development, factors that affect development, care routines, play and activities, early years provision, legislation, policies and procedures, expectations of the early years worker, roles and responsibilities, observation and planning for early years.

Who would this course suit?

Anyone who wishes to pursue a career in childcare or a student on the Orange Pathway.

How is this course taught and assessed?

This qualification consists of two assessments graded Distinction * to Level 1 Pass.

Learners must achieve one non-exam assessment. This is an assignment that is set by the examination board (CACHE) and internally assessed. It is then externally moderated.

Learners also take an external assessment in the form of an examination at the end of Year 11. The marks for both assessments are combined to form the overall grade.

What can you do with this qualification?

Pursue a career in childcare through apprenticeship or continued studies in childcare at a higher level.

Course details

Exam board: NCFE CACHE

Value: Equivalent to 1 x GCSE

For further information speak to:

Mrs Davies, Miss Franklin & Dr Corbitt

Course Title: GCSE Computer Science

About this course

Computing is of enormous importance to the economy, and the role of computer science as a discipline itself (and as an 'underpinning' subject across science and engineering) is growing rapidly.

Computer technology continues to advance rapidly, and the way in which technology is consumed has also changed at a fast pace in recent years. The growth in the use of mobile devices and web-related technologies has exploded, resulting in new challenges for employers and employees.

This course covers a range of topics. These include how processors work; modern network layouts and how they function; how types of software are used within computer systems; fundamental algorithms; how we store data within computers in binary form; using new-found programming skills on an independent coding project by solving a real-world problem.

How is this course taught and assessed?

Students studying this course will:

- develop a good grounding in mainstream computing theory and understanding
- develop a deep understanding of problem solving and experience in creating logical and efficient solutions
- acquire and apply knowledge, some technical skills and an understanding of the use of algorithms in computer programs to solve problems using programming
- develop their understanding of current and emerging technologies and how they work, applying this knowledge and understanding in a range of contexts

Assessment:

Principles of Computer Science (1h 30m examination) – 50%

Application of Computational Thinking (2h examination) – 50%

Who would this course suit?

The course is suitable for any student who is interested in computer technology and programming or is thinking about a career in the computing industry. The course has a great deal of academic rigour, particularly in the study of algorithms and binary coding.

A sound grasp of mathematics is required.

What can you do with this qualification?

Successful completion of this course can lead to level 3 courses in ICT at colleges. Alternatively, it can lead to A level computer science courses at sixth form or the BTEC Level 3 Extended Certificate in Computing offered at SWRA.

Course details

Exam board: Edexcel

Value: 1 x GCSE

For further information speak to:

Ms Somerville

Course Title: GCSE Design and Technology - Product Design with Timbers Specialisation

About this course

This GCSE course enables students to explore, create and evaluate a range of design processes and outcomes. Students will use creativity and imagination to design and make prototypes that solve real and relevant problems, considering their own and others' needs, wants and values. This qualification gives students the opportunity to apply knowledge from other disciplines including mathematics, science, art and design, computing and the humanities.

During this course students will acquire knowledge and understanding of different materials and manufacturing processes in order to design and make with confidence. They will learn the theory of the core subjects and the specialism (timbers) through mini practical projects and written research and will learn how to take design risks, helping them to become resourceful, innovative and enterprising citizens. They will also develop an

awareness of practices from the creative, engineering and manufacturing industries and examine the impact of design and technology on daily life and the wider world, both historically and in the present day. As such they will develop an understanding that high-quality design and technology is important to the creativity, culture, sustainability, wealth and wellbeing of the nation and the global community.

How is this course taught and assessed?

This qualification consists of compulsory and optional topics. Students will study one compulsory topic (the core content) and one optional topic – in this case timbers. The assessment will consist of two separate components:

Externally examined paper: 2 sections (1h 45m) - 50% of qualification

Section A covers the core content

Section B covers the material category you have chosen.

Non-examined assessment: Project – 50% of qualification

Assessed on skills in investigating, designing, making and evaluating a prototype product. Internally assessed and externally moderated

The project theme will be released by Edexcel one year before certification, to be completed during the final year of this GCSE course.

Who would this course suit?

The course is ideally suited to learners who enjoy both the practical and theoretical elements of learning and who have a desire for greater focus on creativity.

Alongside a passion for the subject, you will need to have a good imagination and to enjoy making items in 3D and working with timber. You will also need to be able to present ideas clearly using CAD, ICT and traditional drawing skills.

You need to have a logical way of thinking, be able to plan out step-by-step how to make things, be creative, be able to imagine things in 3D and be hard-working and self-motivated.

What can you do with this qualification?

This GCSE course ensures clear progression of knowledge, understanding and design/making skills to A level qualifications. This course gives learners a whole host of easily transferable skills. It enables them to develop a wide range of practical making skills, an understanding of commercial processes and an in-depth knowledge of materials and their properties. Additionally, learners will gain transferable skills such as communication and teamwork that will benefit them in the workplace.

Course details

Exam board: Edexcel

Value: 1 x GCSE

For further information speak to:

Mr James

Course Title: GCSE Drama

About this course

SWRA's drama curriculum offers students opportunities for personal development, nurturing self-assurance and building resilience. Our actors become articulate and confident communicators – essential attributes for success in whatever profession they choose. The aim of this course is to introduce you to the basics of theatre craft and performance. You will gain an understanding of what is dramatically effective and how to convey meaning on stage.

If you are interested in drama and performance, then this is an option for you. From the start of the course, you are challenged in all areas of performance and are expected to be able to discuss ideas and interpret what you see on stage. You will be taken to see professional pieces of theatre which will improve your understanding of the subject at work and provide you with ideas for your own drama. It is a very exciting course, full of opportunities to explore complex ideas and to learn how to communicate meaning through drama.

Who would this course suit?

- You will need to have focus and concentration
- You will need to perform in front of audiences
- You will need good speaking and listening skills
- You will need to be imaginative
- You will need to be willing to take risks
- You will need the ability to laugh at yourself

How is this course taught and assessed?

Component 1: Devising

Coursework 40% – 60 marks

- Students will create and develop a devised piece from a stimulus
- Performance of this devised piece
- Portfolio – Students will analyse and evaluate the devising process & performance

Component 2: Performance from Text

Coursework 20% – 48 marks

- Students will perform two key extracts from a performance text (monologue/duologue and a group piece)

Component 3: Theatre Makers in Practice

Written examination: 40% – 60 marks 1 hour 30 minutes

- Practical exploration and study of one complete performance text
- Live theatre evaluation

What can you do with this qualification?

Post-16: Students can further their study post-16 by studying drama and theatre at A-level, or through vocational qualifications at college.

Career Routes: A GCSE in drama would be beneficial for anyone wishing to pursue a career in theatre or film (the third largest industry in the UK). Students who are still unsure about the career they would like to pursue will find that GCSE drama will still be beneficial to them. Most professional job roles advertise for someone who is a creative problem solver, a team player and a good communicator. These transferable skills will all be gained over the 2 years of study.

Course details

Exam board: Edexcel

Value: 1 x GCSE

For further information speak to:

Miss Burrough & Miss Scorrer

Course Title: Level 1/Level 2 Vocational Award Hospitality and Catering

About this course

WJEC Level 1/2 Vocational Awards (Technical Awards) provide learners with opportunities to study vocational subjects alongside GCSEs and other general and vocational qualifications as part of a broad programme of study. They offer an experience that focuses on applied learning, i.e. acquiring and applying knowledge, skills and understanding through purposeful tasks set in sector or subject contexts that have many of the characteristics of real work.

The Vocational Award in Hospitality and Catering has been designed to support learners in schools who want to learn about this vocational sector and the potential it can offer them for their careers or further study. It is most suitable as a foundation for further study. This further study would provide learners with the opportunity to develop a range of specialist and general skills that would support their progression to employment.

Who would this course suit?

This course is suitable for any pupil who has a genuine interest in catering and the hospitality industry. You will need a mature attitude and a commitment to providing ingredients for the practical lessons. The course requires pupils to prepare, cook and present food showing skill and accuracy.

We see this qualification as another step towards creating a healthier society and improving the nation's cooking skills, as well as setting some learners on the path to careers in the food and hospitality industries.

How is this course taught and assessed?

The areas you will be studying are:

- Hospitality and catering provision
- How hospitality and catering provisions operate
- Health and safety in hospitality and catering

Food safety in hospitality and catering

The course comprises three units and is assessed as follow

Unit 1: The hospitality and catering industry- written exam (1hr 20 mins) 40%

Unit 2: Hospitality and catering in action – controlled assessment (approx. 12 hours) 60%

What can you do with this qualification?

This qualification is suitable for students seeking to specialise in hospitality and catering and for those who wish to progress on to further education. It also offers valuable preparation for entering the world of work.

Course details

Exam board: WJEC

Value: 1 x GCSE

For further information speak to:

Mrs Clayton & Mr Farr

Course Title: GCSE Religious Studies—AQA Full Course

About this course

The GCSE religious studies syllabus is wide and varied. Students study the beliefs, teachings and practices of Christians and Muslims alongside ethical topics such as:

- Relationships & Families
- Religion, Peace & Conflict Religion
- Crime & Punishment
- Religion & Life.

Who would this course suit?

This programme is suitable for students wishing to broaden their horizons and challenge themselves. Religious studies is a subject that allows individuals to develop an understanding of their own and others' sense of self, thus enhancing empathy and the ability to relate. These skills are not just of value to students now; they will be relevant and applicable in the future as members of a diverse Britain and a global community. Within the lessons, group work is of importance, but so too is personal reflection.

How is this course taught and assessed?

The course is 100% examination based.

Students will study the beliefs, teachings and practices of two religions (Christianity and Islam) and four philosophical and ethical themes (relationships and families; religion peace and conflict; religion and life; religion, crime and punishment).

Assessment is via two written exams (1h 45 m each). Each section has a common structure of one five-part question of 1, 2, 4, 5 and 12 marks.

What can you do with this qualification?

This course will help pupils to understand our society. Religious studies makes students ask questions; it makes the familiar strange and the strange familiar, and it enables and develops students. This allows them to prosper in both the school community and wider society, where awareness and understanding of beliefs makes for successful, confident and responsible citizens. Pupils who are successful on this course can further their study at 16+ by studying Philosophy and Ethics at A Level.

Course details

Exam board: AQA Religious Studies A
Qualification Value: 1 x GCSE

For further information speak to:

Mrs Karim-Sayer & RS Department

Course Title: Pearson BTEC Level 1/Level 2 Technical Award in Music Practice

About this course

The course will give you the opportunity to learn how music is performed, composed and created, as well as how it is recorded and produced. You will be able to create music however you like, be it on your own chosen instrument or using a Digital Audio Workstation (DAW) and recording both your own and others' pieces of music.

How is this course taught and assessed?

The course has 3 areas of study that are listed below:

Component 1: Exploring Music Products and Styles

Coursework

- Students will explore and analyse the stylistic features of a range of genres of music.
- Students will complete a series of workshops exploring performance, creation and production in the different styles studied.
- Portfolio – Students will create a document discussing the styles of music, and music products to demonstrate this practically.

Component 2: Music Skills Development

Coursework

- Students will have the opportunity to develop two musical disciplines through engagement in practical tasks, while documenting their progress and planning for further improvement.

Component 3: Responding to a Music Brief

External Assessment:

- Students will develop and present music in response to a given music brief by performing stylistically accurate cover versions, creating original music, or using a DAW.

Who would this course suit?

Students who:

- Enjoy music at any level
- Have a drive to complete coursework-based tasks
- Play a musical instrument or sings or is interested in learning to do so
- Are creative and interested in how music is created across all aspects of the music industry

What can you do with this qualification?

This qualification allows you to pursue further education qualifications such as a Level 2 Technical Certificate, or a Level 3 programme such as A Levels, T Levels or a BTEC National, either on its own or in combination with A levels.

The course gives you a broad overview of key areas within the music industry and is designed for people who wish to pursue careers in music creation, music production, radio, live music performance or teaching music.

Course details

Exam board: Pearson (Edexcel)

Value: Equivalent to 1 x GCSE

For further information speak to:

Mr Willson

Course Title: GCSE Physical Education

About this course

The GCSE PE qualification is a linear qualification, meaning that you will sit all your exams and submit all your practical assessments at the end of the course. GCSE PE has become more academic, and much of the new material has been taken from the first year of the old A level PE course. Units covered include: 1. Applied Anatomy and Physiology, 2. Movement Analysis, 3. Physical Training, 4. Use of Data, 5. Sports Psychology, 6. Socio-cultural Influences, 7. Health, Fitness and Wellbeing.

How is this course taught and assessed?

The theory aspect of the course will be assessed by two written examinations at the end of Year 11, each lasting 1h 15m. Within these two examinations there will be a mixture of multiple-choice questions, short answer questions and extended answer questions. 60% of the marks for this qualification are based on theory and 40% are based on your competence in performing as an individual and in a team in three different sports.

During the course you will have four lessons of PE per week. Two of these will be theory lessons and two will focus on practical elements. The anatomy and physiology unit will be taught within a practical setting where you will be given opportunities to work independently and apply knowledge to sporting situations.

The practical activity list on the new GCSE PE is limited, and you will be assessed in individual sports like athletics, trampolining and table tennis as well as team sports.

Who would this course suit?

This course is aimed at students who have a strong academic ability, purely because aspects of A level PE have been included in the course and because the theory weighting of the course now overshadows the practical. On top of this, you will be required to show competence as a performer in three sporting activities. All students who have selected the GCSE PE and BTEC Award in Sport, Activity and Fitness will undertake six weeks of academic and practical assessments at the start of Year 10. Following these assessments, the PE Department will look at which course you will be best suited to.

What can you do with this qualification?

Some of the careers this award could lead to are: the armed forces, sports assistant, pool lifeguard, gym/fitness assistant, sports scientist or sports coach.

The qualification could also lead to further study, such as A level PE or the BTEC Level 3 National Certificate and Extended Diploma delivered at SWRA.

Course details

Exam board: AQA

Value: 1 x GCSE

For further information speak to:

PE Department Staff

Course Title: Pearson BTEC Level 1/Level 2 Technical Award in Sport

About this course

The Pearson BTEC Level 1/Level 2 Tech Award in Sport requires learners to complete 3 components:

1. Preparing participants to take part in sport and activity
2. Taking part and improving other participants' sporting performances
3. Developing fitness to improve other participants' performance in sport and physical activity

Who would this course suit?

This new BTEC in sport requires you to lead, perform and coach in practical situations, attend all external assessments throughout the course and have the ability to apply knowledge in the examination taken at the end of Year 11.

How is this course taught and assessed?

Units are assessed throughout Year 10 and Year 11, and attendance for internal assessments is essential otherwise a zero grade is recorded. Pupils are expected to lead warm-ups and plan and run practical sessions and are assessed on their ability to communicate and lead with confidence.

The final assessment at the end of Year 11 is a 1 hr 30m examination where the ability to recall and apply learning from the two-year course is essential. A full knowledge of components of fitness, fitness training principles, fitness testing and identifying appropriate training programmes for a variety of individuals is essential.

What can you do with this qualification?

Some of the careers this award could lead to are: the armed forces, sports assistant, pool lifeguard, gym/fitness assistant, sports scientist or sports coach.

The course could also lead to further study, such as A level PE or the BTEC Level 3 National Certificate and Extended Diploma delivered at SWRA. This qualification will give you direct access to university courses.

Course details

Exam board: Edexcel

Value: Equivalent to 1 x GCSE

For further information speak to:

PE Department Staff

Course Title: GCSE Media Studies

About this course

This GCSE offers students the chance to develop the skills necessary to analyse media texts, understand who produces them and how, explore how the media influences audiences and compare and contrast contemporary media texts with legacy texts. This course also gives students the opportunity to create a media product of their choice and explore the common conventions surrounding the products they are creating.

During the two-year course students will explore a range of media concepts and study aspects of crime drama, magazines, newspapers, radio broadcasts, music videos, video games, film posters and print advertising.

The core concepts taught are:

1. Media language
2. Media representations
3. Media industries
4. Media audiences

Who would this course suit?

This is quite an intensive course with several aspects to it. Pupils will need to have a strong grasp of English, as a large part of the subject involves analysing and evaluating pieces of media text. We also study theorists and how certain theories apply to the media texts that we are evaluating. In addition, there is a creative element where pupils plan and design their work and then create what they have studied on a computer. This means that they will need to have a good understanding of ICT, especially of Publisher and PowerPoint.

How is this course taught and assessed?

Component One: Exploring the Media

Written examination: 1h 30m

40% of qualification

Component Two: Understanding Media Forms and Products

Written examination: 1h 30m

30% of qualification

Component Three: Creating Media Products

Non-Exam Assessment

30% of qualification

What can you do with this qualification?

The media is an important part of our everyday lives, and in order to use and access it fully we need to be media-literate. Pupils who want to work in any part of the media industry will find this GCSE invaluable

Course details

Exam board: EQUQAS

Value: 1 x GCSE

For further information speak to:

Mrs Mallowney

Course Title: BTEC Level 1/Level 2 Tech Award in Travel and Tourism

About this course

The Pearson Level 1/Level 2 Tech Award in Travel and Tourism is for learners who want to acquire sector-specific applied knowledge through vocational contexts by studying the aims, products and services of different travel and tourism organisations, their use of consumer technologies, the features of tourist destinations, how organisations meet customer needs and preferences, and the influences on global travel and tourism as part of their Key Stage 4 learning. The qualification enables learners to develop their transferable skills, such as researching, planning, and making decisions and judgements. It covers three units:

1. Travel and Tourism Organisations and Destinations
2. Customer Needs in Travel and Tourism
3. Influences on Global Travel and Tourism

Who would this course suit?

The Tech Award gives learners the opportunity to develop applied knowledge and understanding in a range of areas related to the travel and tourism industry. This Tech Award complements the learning in GCSE programmes such as GCSE Geography and GCSE Business by broadening learners' experience and skills participation in different contexts, with the opportunity for them to practically apply their knowledge and skills through areas such as investigating different travel and tourism organisations, how they identify trends and customer needs to provide products and services, the factors influencing tourism, and the impact of tourism on destinations.

How is this course taught and assessed?

The three components in the qualification give learners the opportunity to develop broad knowledge and understanding of the travel and tourism sector, and relevant transferable skills such as research and communication skills at Levels 1 and 2. Components 1 and 2 are assessed through non-exam internal assessment. The non-exam internal assessment for these components has been designed to demonstrate application of the conceptual knowledge underpinning the sector through realistic tasks and activities. Non-exam internal assessment is delivered through Pearson-set Assignments. These assignments are set by Pearson, marked by the centre and moderated by Pearson. There is one external assessment, Component 3, which provides the main synoptic assessment for the qualification. Component 3 builds directly on Components 1 and 2 and enables learning to be brought together and applied to realistic contexts. This is assessed through a written 90-minute examination.

What can you do with this qualification?

A Levels as preparation for entry to higher education in a range of subjects. Study of a vocational qualification at Level 3, such as a BTEC National in Travel and Tourism, which prepares learners to enter employment or apprenticeships, or to move on to higher education by studying a degree in the tourism sector.

Course Details

Exam board: Pearson
Value: 1 x GCSE

For further information speak to:

Mr Saunders

Course Title: ASDAN Certificate of Personal Effectiveness Level 1 and Level 2

About this course

The Certificate of Personal Effectiveness (CoPE) is a nationally recognised qualification available at Levels 1, 2 here at SWRA. The qualification offers imaginative ways of accrediting young people's activities. It promotes, and allows students to record, a wide range of their personal qualities, abilities and achievements, as well as introducing them to new activities and challenges. The course is designed to help students to develop themselves across six key skills that prepare them for the next stage of life beyond school:

- Working with others
- Improving their own learning and performance
- Problem solving
- Research
- Discussion
- Oral presentation

CoPE enables students to:

- Develop and demonstrate a range of personal, key and employability skills
- Broaden their experience
- Manage their learning in a variety of real-life contexts

How is this course taught and assessed?

Students will work through a student book that comprises of 13 modules, choosing modules that are based upon their interests. The module titles are: Communication; Citizenship and community; Sport and leisure; Independent living; The environment; Vocational preparation; Health and fitness; Work-related learning and enterprise; Science and technology; International links; Expressive arts; Beliefs and values; Combined studies.

The modules are divided into three sections: A, B, and C. Each section is made up of varying activities, called challenges, and will take at least 10 hours to complete – 10 hours is worth one credit. Students will need to gain 12 credits (120 hours of activities) to gain the Certificate of Personal Effectiveness (CoPE) qualification.

Along with their completed challenges, students will produce a portfolio of evidence to demonstrate their achievements. The portfolio might include reports, photographs, witness statements or podcasts. The portfolio has proven to be something students are particularly proud of. Students can use their portfolio to present their work and its journey to prospective employers or further education institutions.

Who would this course suit?

The CoPE course is designed for students who require a greater level of support with their studies. It complements the skills that are required for GCSE English and GCSE Mathematics, in a practical, enjoyable, and engaging way.

What can you do with this qualification?

It will provide students who are aiming to attend a further education setting to follow an Entry Level or Level 1 Course with the ideal skillset to access those qualifications. It would also be a benefit to students who may wish to leave school to follow a Supported Internship or Apprenticeship pathway in a range of areas of employment.

Course Details

Awarding Body: ASDAN

Qualification: Certificate of Personal Effectiveness Level 1 (100/3558/8) and Level 2 (100/3559/X) <https://www.asdan.org.uk/courses/certificate-of-personal-effectiveness-level-1-and-2/>

For further information speak to:

Dr Miles or Miss Johnstone

Option Blocks

Pupils choose either **History** or **Geography** or **Travel and Tourism**.

Pupils then choose **one subject** plus **one reserve** from each of the option blocks below. Pupils in **S1** and **N1** must choose **French** from one of the three blocks.

OPTION BLOCK A

GCSE: Graphic Communication
GCSE: D&T Product Design
Level 1&2 Vocational: Hospitality & Catering
GCSE: French
Level 1&2 Vocational: Business & Enterprise
GCSE: Computer Science
GCSE: Religious Studies
Level 1&2 Vocational: Music Technology
GCSE: Second Humanities (History/Geography)
ASDAN

OPTION BLOCK B

GCSE: Art & Design
GCSE: D&T Product Design
Level 1&2 Vocational: Hospitality & Catering
GCSE: French
Level 1&2 Vocational: Business & Enterprise
GCSE: Computer Science
GCSE: Media Studies
Level 1&2 Vocational: Childcare & Development
GCSE: Drama

OPTION BLOCK C

GCSE: Art & Design
GCSE: Physical Education
Level 1&2 Vocational: Sport
GCSE: French
Level 1&2 Vocational: Business & Enterprise
GCSE: Religious Studies
GCSE Media Studies
Level 1&2 Vocational: Childcare & Development
GCSE: Drama

The online **options form** can be **accessed** via the school website from **Friday 7th March**.

The **deadline** for **submitting** the online form is **Friday 21st March**.

SIR WILLIAM ROBERTSON
ACADEMY

