



**St John Fisher**  
Catholic High School

**Key Stage 4**  
**Information Booklet**  
**2026-2028**





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# From the Headteacher

Dear Student

Choosing which subjects to study for GCSE is a really important decision and this booklet is designed to help you to make the right choice for you.

We encourage all students to make the best use of their talents and abilities and we want you to study subjects that you not only enjoy but will succeed at so that you have more options post-16 and in the future.

The National Curriculum requires that you continue to study RE, Maths, English and Science, and that you have lessons in PSHE and PE. This is the same in all schools but leaves about half of each week available for other courses.

This booklet gives you details of the different courses and explains the process of making your decision. At the Options afternoon on Tuesday 3 February 2025, we will explain the process again and you and your parents/carers will be able to talk to your teachers about the subjects you are interested in.

In your meeting with Miss Reeve, our Careers Advisor, you will complete the necessary form indicating the subjects you would like to study. You will then be asked to discuss this with your parents/carers and return the form with their signature of consent.

Yours sincerely

Natasha Wilmore

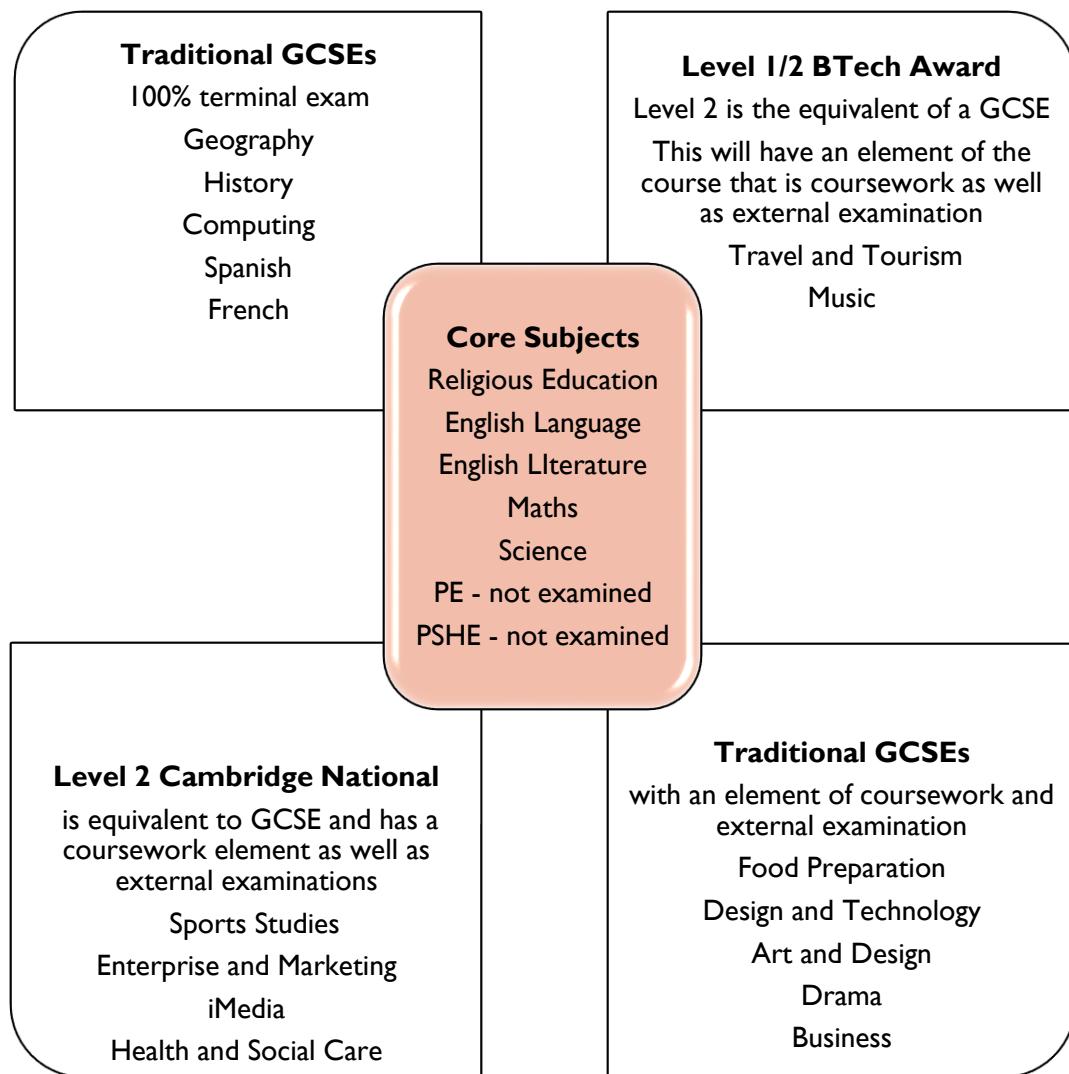
**Natasha Wilmore**  
**Headteacher**

# The Curriculum

The National Curriculum requires that all students study certain core subjects but you do have some choices to make. You should bear in mind the mix of lessons you will be attending. You will be studying these courses for 2 years so you will need to give it careful consideration. In Key Stage 3 we did this for you and ensured that you had a mixture of creative, practical and technological lessons and academic subjects.

The subject that you must study are called **The Core Curriculum or Core Subjects**.

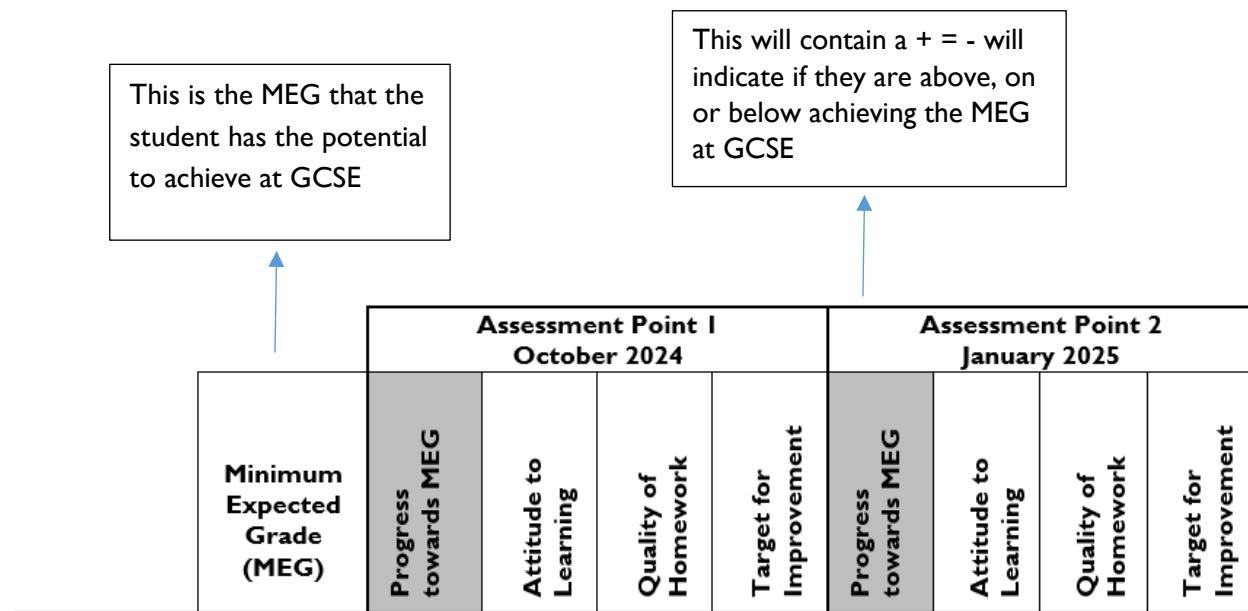
The subjects that you can choose to study are called **The Optional Curriculum or Options**. These subjects cover a wide variety of levels.



# Making Choices

You should discuss your choices with your parents, Miss Reeve, form tutor and teachers. You will also receive information on different courses through your normal subject lessons. Parents will be able to speak to your teachers about the Key Stage 4 courses on Tuesday 3 February at the Year 9 Options afternoon.

When making your choices for GCSEs, use your recent Report to guide you.



You should also consider how best you work – do you like working on projects or having mini deadlines? Do you like preparing, revising and sitting exams? Think about the combination of subjects in light of the different ways of assessment involved.

## Yellow Route

This route is designed to give you extra support by having EAL or Learning Support lessons to support the core subjects like English and maths. By reducing the number of subjects being studied, you are more likely to succeed in the core subjects.

Subjects studied for the yellow route:

Core Subjects (no choices to be made):	Religious Education English Language English Literature Maths Science (Double Award)	= 6 or 7 GCSEs or equivalent
Choose between	Learning Support or EAL	
We strongly recommend you choose:	Travel and Tourism (Double Option)	

However, you could choose 2 from the choices below. These are all at Level 2/GCSE level and would increase the number of subjects you study and your workload. Please note the subjects in purple are more academic as they are traditional GCSEs with 100% examinations.

French	Spanish	Drama	Sport Studies
Computing	Food Preparation	Design & Technology	Art & Design
Enterprise & Marketing	Geography	History	Music
Business	iMedia	Health and Social Care	

### Green Route

Students who are making progress towards a MEG range of 3-5 are encouraged to follow the purple route providing a balance of the more academic subjects with others. This balance is designed to support students to achieve and be successful in all subjects that they take.

Core Subjects (no choices to be made):	English Language English Literature Maths Religious Education Science (Double Award)	= 9 GCSEs or equivalent
Choose 1 subject (you are encouraged to choose a subject where your working at MEG is 4 and above. If you do not have one of these at MEG 4, choose 3 from the below list):	Computing French Geography History Spanish	
Choose 2 (or 3) subjects from the following list:	Art and Design Business Creative iMedia Design and Technology Drama Enterprise and Marketing Food Preparation Health and Social Care Music Sports Studies	

## Blue Route

Students who are making progress towards MEGs 5 and above are encouraged to follow the more academic blue route. This provides students with appropriate challenge suitable for their ability.

Core Subjects (no choices to be made):	English Language English Literature Religious Education Maths Science (Double Award)
Choose 2 subject (you are encouraged to choose a subject where your MEG is 5 and above):	Computing French Geography History Spanish
Choose 1 subject from the following list:	Art and Design Business Creative iMedia Design and Technology Drama Enterprise and Marketing Food Preparation Health and Social Care Music Sports Studies

## Red Route

The red route offers triple science as an option. Triple Science is more demanding than double and students are offered this route based on the recommendation of their Science teacher.

Core Subjects (no choices to be made):	English Language English Literature Religious Education Maths
Option:	Triple Science
Choose 1 subject (you are encouraged to choose a subject where your MEG is 5 and above):	Computing French Geography History Spanish
Choose 1 subject from the following list:	Art and Design Business Creative iMedia Design and Technology Drama Enterprise and Marketing Food Preparation Health and Social Care Music Sports Studies

NB Please note that students are encouraged to take a particular route but, apart from the Core Subjects, the choice of subjects chosen is up to them. Some advice when choosing options is as follows:

 <b>Yes</b> – Choose the subject if:	 <b>No</b> – Do <u>not</u> choose the subject if:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• You already enjoy the subject.</li><li>• Your teacher thinks you should.</li><li>• You're already good at it.</li><li>• You are interested in the topics it will cover.</li><li>• You like the method of assessment.</li><li>• You need it for your future plans.</li><li>• You have considered the combination of subjects and assessment methods.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• You're only doing it because your friends are.</li><li>• You don't like the subject.</li><li>• You like the teacher but not the subject.</li><li>• You haven't found out what topics it covers.</li><li>• You haven't found out how you will be assessed.</li><li>• You think it will be easy (it won't be!)</li></ul>

# Where can my GCSE choices lead me?

## Post 16

Option	Examples	Key Points
<b>Level 3</b> A levels	English A Level	Strong routes to university or other Higher Education institutions.
	Health and Social Care	Keeps your options open – you can apply for many courses in Higher Education.
<b>Level 2</b> Vocational Qualifications	Plumbing Childcare	Gets you started in a particular sector. Can be a stepping stone to more advanced qualifications.
<b>Apprenticeship (Post 16)</b> Level 2 or Level 3	Logistics (Tesco) Customer Service (Boots)	Lets you work on a placement and learn at the same time. At Post 16 most options are at intermediate level. You will need to apply in a competitive process. Being offered a place is not a guarantee of permanent employment.

## Post 18

Option	Examples	Key Points
<b>Higher Education Courses</b>	Nursing Law Performing Arts	Strong route to professional employment. Study a subject in depth, usually for 3 years.
<b>Apprenticeship (Post 18)</b>	Chartered Surveying (degree app) Chemical Science (Higher app)	Let you work on a placement and learn at the same time. At Post 18 most options are at higher or degree level. You will often need A levels You will need to apply in a competitive process. Being offered a place is not a guarantee of permanent employment.
<b>Employment</b>	Local employment opportunities	Enter the job market You will need to apply and your GCSE and other grades will be important.
<b>Gap Year</b>	Opportunities to volunteer, work or build skills	Opportunity to take a year out – normally before progressing to Higher Education.

# How parents can help their children to reach their potential in Key Stage 4

- Show interest in your child's work.
- Encourage your child to meet all deadlines and commitments concerning their work. Coursework and homework should be given priority over other out-of-school commitments.
- Don't book holidays during school time as it is very difficult for your child to catch up on the work they will miss.
- Ensure there is an area in your home suitable for study, somewhere that is a quiet area, free from distraction.
- Attend the scheduled parents' evenings or specially arranged appointments concerning the progress of your child.
- Continue to keep the school informed, as early as possible, of all matters likely to affect your child's school work and attendance.
- Check EduLink One to see what homework they have been set and when it is due to be handed in.
- Endorse and accept the school's rules and sanctions that exist to ensure that each student achieves their maximum potential.

## Core Subjects

# English Language (AQA) and English Literature (EDEXCEL) GCSE

**GCSE Equivalent:** 1 each

**Single/Double:** Single

### What does the course involve?

You will study texts which help you to develop your reading, writing, speaking and listening skills.

### What will I study?

A wide range of high-quality, challenging, classic literature and extended literary non-fiction, such as essays, reviews and journalism, including:

- at least one play by Shakespeare
- works from the 19<sup>th</sup>, 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries
- an anthology of poetry centred around the themes of power and conflict

You will:

- Re-read literature and other writing as a basis for making comparisons.
- Critically evaluate the language, structure and contexts in which texts were written and evaluate their effects on the contemporary audience and authorial intention.
- Apply critical reading skills to unseen texts – including poetry – and make cohesive links and comparisons between and within literature texts.
- Understand and critically evaluate texts through reading in different ways for different purposes, summarising and synthesising ideas and information, and evaluate their usefulness for particular purposes.
- Write accurately, fluently, effectively and at length for both pleasure and information.
- Adapt your writing for a wide range of purposes and audiences: to describe, narrate, explain, instruct, give and respond to information, and argue.
- Select and organise ideas, facts and key points, cite evidence, details and quotations effectively and pertinently for support and emphasis.
- Select, and use judiciously, vocabulary, grammar, form, and structural and organisational features, including rhetorical devices, to reflect audience, purpose and context using Standard English where appropriate.
- Make notes, draft and write, including using information provided by others (e.g. writing a letter from key points provided; drawing on and using information from a presentation).
- Restructure writing, and amend the grammar and vocabulary to improve coherence, consistency, clarity and overall effectiveness, paying attention to the accuracy and effectiveness of grammar, punctuation and spelling.
- Prepare and perform a spoken assessment in class.

### How is the course assessed?

External examinations. We are currently using AQA as examining body for English Language and EDEXCEL for English Literature

### What can I do with this course in the future?

There are a vast range of career opportunities for students studying either language or literature at Post 16. Language is the basis of all career options so knowledge and an understanding of how language works is imperative. The study of English Language and Literature will open the door to any tertiary institution.

# Mathematics GCSE (AQA)

**GCSE Equivalent:** I

**Single/Double:** Single

## **What does the course involve?**

GCSE Mathematics consolidates and extends many of the skills encountered at Key Stage 3. It encourages you to develop confidence in mathematics, apply the skills gained at Key Stage 3 and recognise the importance of mathematics in your own life and in society. You will develop the ability to:

- acquire and use problem-solving strategies.
- select and apply mathematical techniques to everyday mathematical problems and real-world situations.
- reason mathematically, make deductions and draw conclusions.
- interpret and communicate mathematical information in a variety of forms appropriate to the information and context, and use technology effectively.
- work both cooperatively and independently.

## **What will I study?**

The GCSE syllabus includes: Number; Algebra; Ratio; Proportion and Rates of Change; Geometry and Measures; Probability and Statistics. Elements of functional mathematics are embedded into the curriculum which ensure students have the skills required to use mathematics in real-life contexts. Understanding of the topics will be assessed every 3-4 weeks.

## **How is the course assessed?**

The assessment of the GCSE course is carried out through examinations at the end of the course.

The GCSE Mathematics has a Foundation tier (grades 1 – 5) and a Higher tier (grades 4 – 9).

The final examination comprises of three different papers; a non-calculator paper and two sets of calculator papers. Each paper assesses the student's ability to recall, select and apply knowledge of mathematics and to interpret, analyse and solve problems. Students must take three question papers in the same tier. All question papers must be taken in the same exam series.

## **What can I do with this course in the future?**

Mathematics pervades so many aspects of everyday life. It is almost impossible to imagine a job that does not require some mathematical understanding. Wherever you plan to work, mathematics will play an important part in your life. Many careers in science, information technology, finance and engineering require mathematical study to a higher level.

# Religious Studies GCSE (EDEXCEL)

**GCSE Equivalent:** I

**Single/Double:** Single

## **What does the course involve?**

GCSE Religious Studies offers you the opportunity to develop your knowledge and understanding of the Roman Catholic tradition and explore questions about the meaning and purpose of life. You will also get the opportunity to compare and contrast these beliefs with a second World Faith (Judaism).

## **What will I study?**

Specification A (Full Course): Faith and Practice in the 21st Century.

Students will undertake an in-depth study of Catholic Christianity and be encouraged in a critical and reflective approach to the study of religion. This course places a greater emphasis on the study of one religion (Christianity) and brings to life the foundations of faith and practice.

## **How is the course assessed?**

Three exams will be taken in May and June, at the end of Year 11.

### Paper 1 - Catholic Christianity

- Content - Beliefs and teachings, Practices, Sources of Wisdom & Authority, and Forms of Expression and Ways of Life
- Assessment 1 hour 45 mins

### Paper 2 - Study of Second Religion: Judaism

- Content - Beliefs and teachings, Practices
- Assessment 50 mins

### Paper 3 - Catholic Christianity: Philosophy and Ethics

- Content – Arguments for the existence of God, Teachings on Relationships and families in the 21st Century
- Assessment 50 mins

## **What can I do with this course in the future?**

GCSE Religious Studies provides a firm foundation for A Level Religious Studies. The knowledge and understanding of religion and its relevance and application in people's lives and the development of critical skills can lead to a career in any sphere which involves dealing with people. It provides a valuable qualification for anyone wishing to work in sectors of the employment market where communication skills are important, e.g. teaching, nursing, social work, pastoral ministry, journalism, the caring professions, business management, law, and politics.

# Science Double Award GCSE (AQA)

**GCSE Equivalent:** 2

**Single/Double:** Double

## **What does the course involve?**

Combined Science is worth 2 GCSEs which means you will be studying 7 lessons of science per fortnight.

There is no coursework: all exams will be taken at the end of year 11.

## **What will I study?**

### Biology

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

### Chemistry

- Atomic structure and the Periodic Table
- Bonding, structure and the properties of materials
- Qualitative chemistry
- Chemical changes
- Energy changes
- Rate and extent of chemical reactions
- Organic chemistry
- Chemical analysis
- Chemistry of the atmosphere
- Using resources

### Physics

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

## **How is the course assessed?**

There are six examinations to be taken in the summer of Year 11, two from each of Biology, Chemistry and Physics. They are all 75 minutes long and equally weighted.

## **Is this the right course for me?**

This course is flexible enough to suit all students of all ability levels. A few students may start on the Entry Level Certificate route and will then progress to the full double award GCSE when their understanding has developed to an appropriate level. Most students will study the double award as detailed above. This course is ideal for students who wish to acquire scientific skills, knowledge and understanding necessary for progression to further learning in the Sciences at Post 16 level.

# Citizenship & PSHE

## What does the course involve?

All students will follow a varied programme of Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education and Citizenship.

## What will I study?

Topics to be studied will be:

- Study skills required at Key Stage 4
- Financial capability and money sense
- Decision making, managing risk and staying safe
- Active and responsible citizenship
- Personal wellbeing and living healthy lives, including developing resilience and promoting good physical and mental health
- Positive, healthy relationships
- Identity and diversity
- Careers and work related learning

## How is the course assessed?

There are no exams as the course is designed to give all students the skills needed to have a positive and successful life, making positive contributions to society. Students will be encouraged to work together in small groups cooperatively and take responsibility for their own learning.



# Physical Education

## What does the course involve?

At Key Stage 4 our aim is to ensure that each student, whilst continuing to develop games skills, tactical awareness and a greater depth of understanding, also follows a broad selection of activities.

We hope that all students gain enjoyment from the programme and continue to develop an active and healthy life-style. We aim to promote lifelong participation in sport through a love for Physical Education.

## What will I study?

- Athletics
- Badminton
- Basketball
- Cricket
- Dance
- Football
- Fitness
- Netball
- Pickleball
- Rounders
- Rugby Union
- Table Tennis
- Tennis
- Trampolining
- Volleyball

## How is the course assessed?

There is no formal assessment of Core PE.

# Option Subjects

## Art and Design GCSE (Edexcel)

**GCSE Equivalent:** 1

**Single/Double:** Single

### **What does the course involve?**

Starting in Year 10, you will investigate a wide variety of techniques that cover a broad selection of skills including a 3D, textiles and 2D element that run alongside two main themes. You will research, investigate and gather information about the selected theme, using the library and the Internet. These elements will enable you to produce two units for your coursework portfolio.

### **What will I study?**

Painting, drawing, sculpture and mixed media are at the core of this course. You will be encouraged to investigate different sources for inspiration and will be using photography and digital media as a tool for your investigation.

### **How is the course assessed?**

You will be assessed on 4 key areas; research, experimenting with materials, drawing ability and producing a final piece.

- Your first component is a portfolio of coursework made up of at least two units.
- The second component is the externally set exam, started at the very start of the spring term of Year 11 and leading up to a 10 hour controlled test, in the summer term. You will have a short preparation period and you may discuss your ideas with your teacher. The work produced in your 10 hour controlled exam must be your own unaided work.

### **Is this the right course for me?**

This course would suit you if you are creatively minded, produce your own art work independently at home or have an ability in drawing and painting and are able to experiment with different media. You should have an interest in how artists in the past and today use different styles to make art.

### **What can I do with this course in the future?**

Students may go on to study Art in our Sixth Form. Careers in Art include illustration, photography, fashion, textiles, jewellery, furniture design, graphic design and teaching. The creative industries in the UK are always expanding, particularly in digital arts and design. Contrary to popular belief, there are many opportunities and jobs available in this sector.

# Business Studies GCSE (OCR)

**GCSE Equivalent:** I                    **Single/Double:** Single

## **What does the course involve?**

This course equips learners with the skills and confidence to explore how different business situations affect business decisions and develop life skills that enable them to become financially and commercially aware.

## **What will I study?**

OCR Business covers range of topics that provide you with a broad understanding of how businesses operate. Main topic areas that will be covered include; Business activity, Marketing, People/Human Resources, Operations, Finance, Influences on business, Interdependence of business functions.

## **How is the course assessed?**

This course is 100% externally assessed: There are two exam papers, each 1 hour 30. minutes long. Each paper is worth 50% of the GCSE.

- Paper 1 (Business 01): covers Business activity, Marketing and People. 80 marks.
- Paper 2 (Business 02): covers Operations, Finance and Influences on business (with some synoptic assessment - meaning you may need to apply knowledge across the whole course). 80 marks.

## **Is this the right course for me?**

It is suitable for students who are interested in learning how companies and organisations work - from staffing, supply, production to money, marketing, and big-picture business decisions. Enjoy thinking about real-world issues like business growth, ethics, globalisation, environment, and want to understand how business affects (and is affected by) society.

## **What can I do with this course in the future?**

Upon qualification from GCSE Business, you gain a broad foundation that can lead to various next steps: Progressing to A-Level (or equivalent) in Business, Economics, Finance, Accountancy, or related subjects and vocational routes/ qualification to Level 3 Cambridge Technical or apprenticeships in business-related fields.

You will also develop transferable skills - analysis, decision-making, numeracy, evaluation, understanding of economics and world events - that help in many sectors.

# Computing GCSE (AQA)

**GCSE Equivalent:** I

**Single/Double:** Single

## What does the course involve?

You will need to have a basic understanding and interest in programming and computing. A high level of mathematical skills would be beneficial. GCSE Computing develops your problem solving skills and teaches you a deeper understanding of how computer systems are developed. The knowledge, skills and understanding you learn on the course will give you skills that can be used in all subjects and in the future.

## What will I study?

These topics are taught throughout the two years with time to practice and prepare for the examinations:

- The theory of computer science, how computers work and programming skills.
- Fundamentals of algorithms – How computer programs are designed and developed.
- Programming – Different programming techniques to make programs.
- Fundamentals of Data Representation – How computers store images, sound etc. and binary numbers.
- Computer Systems – How computer systems are set up.
- Fundamentals of Computer Networks – How computer networks are set up.
- Fundamentals of Cyber Security – How companies keep their data secure on the Internet.
- Relational Databases and SQL – Looking at how databases store data and how to use code to update, delete and search for relevant information.
- Legal, Ethical and Environmental Issues – Learn how to discuss the issues surrounding the use of Computer Systems.

## How is the course assessed?

The GCSE is assessed through 2 examinations with a combination of multiple choice, short and longer answer questions.

## Is this the right course for me?

This course is suitable for students who wish to progress to study Computing at A Level or use ICT/Computing in the world of work. You should also:

- Want to know how systems work, not just use them.
- Be interested in learning challenging new skills in the field of Computer Science.
- Have a logical approach to problems.

## What can I do with this course in the future?

The qualification is designed to allow progress onto further study such as A level Computing or to give good quality ICT skills suitable for work or study in other subject areas.

This course will help for a wide range of further education. It will also give experience of some of the areas of employment in the computer science industry.

# Creative iMedia Cambridge National (OCR)

**GCSE Equivalent:** I

**Single/Double:** Single

## **What does the course involve?**

Creative iMedia is a more practical course looking at how computers help with creative media. Students will be able to apply their creative skills to a number of different applications and learn skills such as research, planning, review, working with others and communication that can all be used in different areas in the future.

## **What will I study?**

Creative iMedia in the media industry – looking at how the media industry plan, design and use different forms of media to promote, advertise and educate.

Visual Identity and Digital Graphics – creating graphic products for a client brief.

Characters and Comics - creating a character and a comic for a client brief.

## **How is the course assessed?**

The course is assessed with one hour and 30 minute exam and two pieces of coursework that are marked by your teacher and moderated by OCR.

In Year 10, the first piece of coursework is completed and sent to the exam board. The second unit is started at the end of Year 10. In Year 11 the second coursework unit is completed and then at the end of the year the exam is taken.

## **Is this the right course for me?**

This course is suitable for students who wish to progress to study Level 3 Cambridge Technicals or any other Computing or ICT A Level. It is also suitable for those who want to use ICT/Computing in the world of work. You should also:

- Want to learn about design for clients
- Be able to work independently and enthusiastically

## **What can I do with this course in the future?**

The qualification is designed to allow progression onto further study such as Cambridge Technicals in IT or to give good quality ICT skills suitable for work or study in other subject areas. This leads to various careers and courses in a wide range of topics and industries.

# Design and Technology GCSE (AQA)

**GCSE Equivalent:** I

**Single/Double:** Single

## **What does the course involve?**

Design Technology is about understanding people, questioning existing ways of doing things and seeing opportunities for innovative products that will enrich quality of life. Students explore techniques and gain research skills to uncover unique opportunities and develop technical knowledge and skills to turn such opportunities into desirable products to meet real needs. Our plan is to ensure that you develop the necessary creative, technical, thinking and skills to become a designer. GCSE Design Technology will take all you have learnt throughout Technology from Key Stage 3 to a more advanced level. You will learn how to identify new scientific methods and core principles along with designing and making skills. You will learn how designers influence our everyday lives and experiment with different materials.

## **What will I study?**

You will learn about designing, modelling, materials and making products. You will gain an understanding of how design can influence our daily lives with skills needed to produce a viable working product.

You will learn how technology uses CAD (Computer Aided Design) and manufacture to develop and improve new and existing products. You will develop your knowledge of materials and processes together with skills needed to produce an accurate end product. You will be expected to calculate area, scale and mathematical equations to help your design development; create 2D and 3D design modelling; understand the client's needs and how the prototype meets the needs of the client.

## **How is the course assessed?**

- In Year 10 you will complete a selection of theory based exercises together with mini projects which will help you understand some of the materials, skills and knowledge needed for year 11 coursework.
- Year 11 consists of a 30-35 hour controlled coursework assessment which is worth 50% of your final mark.
- The final 50% of the marks comes from a 2 hour written paper on the theory taught throughout the two years.

## **Is this the right course for me?**

You must enjoy designing new ideas, creating models and understanding how the product works.

## **This course is suitable for:**

- Anyone who wants to be a designer in the future, those students that enjoy the challenge of problem solving, working out why and how things work and how they can be improved to make our lives better.
- Those students that enjoy more of a 'hands on' approach and want to develop a range of practical skills whilst allowing them to become designers of the future, expressing a creative and innovative approach and maybe becoming the next James Dyson.

You must have an understanding of mathematics such as area, algebra and scale. You must have the ability to solve modelling and manufacturing problems when making.

## **What can I do with this course in the future?**

Design and technology can lead to many varied career pathways. From practical careers in the construction, manufacturing or engineering environments, into further education as product designers, industrial design or study furniture design, architecture and marketing to name but a few.

# Drama GCSE (OCR)

**GCSE Equivalent:** I

**Single/Double:** Single

## **What does the course involve?**

- **Devising Drama:** Students research and explore a stimulus, work collaboratively and create their own devised drama. They will complete a portfolio of evidence, give a final performance of their drama, and write an evaluation of their own work. (30% of total GCSE)
- **Presenting and performing texts:** Students develop and apply theatrical skills in acting or design by presenting a showcase of two extracts from a performance text. (30% of total GCSE)
- **Drama: Performance and response:** Students explore practically a whole performance text and demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of how drama is developed, performed and responded to. They also analyse and evaluate a live theatre performance. (40% of total GCSE)

## **What will I study?**

You will learn a variety of skills in GCSE Drama including:

- Devising your own original performances using a stimulus
- Performing extracts from an existing script
- Watching, analysing and evaluating live theatre
- Understanding what the role of a director entails
- Exploring lighting and sound design, exploring costume and set design
- Taking part in various practical workshops, taking part in numerous performance opportunities

## **How is the course assessed?**

- **Devising Drama:** Assessed internally, subject to an external moderation. You will perform your devised piece of Drama and create a logbook reflecting on your work. (30% of total GCSE)
- **Presenting and performing texts:** Assessed by an external examiner. They will watch your two performance extracts from an existing script and they will read your concept pro forma. (30% of total GCSE)
- **Drama: Performance and response:** This is a written exam that takes place at the end of Year 11. Section A focuses on the study of a set text whilst Section B asks students to reflect on a live piece of theatre that they have seen. (40% of total GCSE)

## **Is this the right course for me?**

Drama GCSE is suitable for you if:

- You have an interest in performing
- You want to develop your confidence
- You enjoy working as part of a team
- You have an interest in watching performances
- You are interested in other roles within theatre, such as directing or designing
- You like working practically
- You are committed and enthusiastic about Drama

## **What can I do with this course in the future?**

OCR GCSE Drama will provide a good basis for further studies at A Level. As a subject, Drama provides some of the most transferable skills that you will use in your adult life. Drama is regarded as a very useful qualification which develops communication and problem-solving skills. This course would prepare a student for any job which involves oral communication and dealing with members of the public. The Drama process develops the skills of negotiation, evaluation, communication and cooperation, which companies recognise as essential if their personnel are to be effective. Finally, Drama teaches you to work as part of a team. Here you will learn to balance ideas, work with and listen to others, evaluate your work and develop your organisational skills.

# Enterprise and Marketing Cambridge National (OCR)

**GCSE Equivalent:** I

**Single/Double:** Single

## **What does the course involve?**

The course involves learning about how businesses market and propose new ideas. There is a whole element of enterprise and understanding customer needs and behaviour.

## **What will I study?**

While studying the course, you will learn about the main concepts that are used when starting a new business. You will progress to learning about designing business proposals, identifying customer profiles and design ideas. There is also an element of finance and marketing. You will end up making a brand identity and getting the opportunity to pitch your new idea.

You will study 3 units:

- Unit R067 – Enterprise and Marketing Concepts
- Unit R068 – Design a Business Proposal
- Unit R069 – Market and Pitch a Business Proposal

## **How is the course assessed?**

This course is assessed both internally and externally. The 3 units consist of an exam and creating a portfolio based on evidence collected. The units are graded with Pass, Merit, Distinction and Distinction\* grades.

- Unit R067 - 1 hour and 15 mins exam with multiple choice, some short answer questions and one extended response question.
- Unit R068 - 60 Mark centre-assessed assignment set by OCR
- Unit R069 - 60 Mark centre-assessed assignment set by OCR

## **Is this the right course for me?**

It is hoped that the type of student who will choose this course will be:

- Interested in developing and implementing new ideas in Business
- Self-motivated and organised
- Capable of learning concepts, and applying knowledge and analysing information

## **What can I do with this course in the future?**

Cambridge National attracts all sorts of students with a range of abilities; it complements many other courses and develops a wide range of skills. Some students will go on to Level 3 Cambridge Technical in Business and university later on; others will learn essential skills to help them to get straight into the world of work. Learners may progress onto OCR's Level 3 Certificate in Preparing for a Business Venture, OCR's Level 3 Cambridge Technicals in Business, Introductory Certificates in Marketing or A Levels in related subjects.

# Food Preparation and Nutrition GCSE (AQA)

**GCSE Equivalent:** I

**Single/Double:** Single

## **What does the course involve?**

Food Preparation and Nutrition focuses on practical cooking skills. The course gives students a thorough understanding of nutrition, food provenance and the working characteristics of food ingredients.

Food Preparation and Nutrition will suit any student who has enjoyed the work in Year 9 and who wants to build on their acquired skills. It will suit any student who has a keen interest and passion in food. It requires organisation and planning, as the emphasis is on the making.

It should be noted that students will have to be organised, provide their own ingredients and containers. Students will also be expected to attempt all practical work, even if it is not a family favourite!

## **What will I study?**

You will learn many different practical techniques including pastry and cake making methods, bread making, cooking with meat and fish, as well as foods from other cultures, sauce making and techniques to create a range of products. Consideration for the functions of the ingredients, the science and creativity is key.

You will be encouraged to try out different techniques and methods and to develop your own individual style. Team work is also encouraged as this is a required skill in industry. Theory work highlights the need for food and kitchen safety, preservation, environmental issues, packaging and labelling, food science, nutrition and catering for special diets.

## **How is the course assessed?**

Year 10 work is taught in units which each have a different practical and theory focus.

The course is split 50% non-exam assessment and 50% final written examination. The non-exam assessment consist of one food investigation (15%) (1,500 to 2,000 word report) and one food preparation assessment 35% (plan, prepare, cook and present a 3/4 course menu). A final written examination worth 50% of the final mark takes place in the Summer Term of Year 11.

## **Is this the right course for me?**

The course would suit you if you enjoy practical work and like to spend time preparing and cooking food at home. You should have a keen interest to learn more about food and nutrition both theory and application through practical work. Also, if you are considering a career in a food related profession this would be a good choice for you.

## **What can I do with this course in the future?**

Food Technology is an exciting, creative and innovative subject. It is academic as well as practical. People who study Food Preparation and Nutrition have a wealth of career opportunities open to them including: Dietician, Hotel/Restaurant Management, Event Management, Careers in the Forces and Food Design or Production within the Food Industry. Food Preparation and Nutrition can also lead to employment and careers in The National Health Service e.g. Dieticians, Nutritionists. Let us not forget that the food industry is still one of Britain's largest employers.

# French GCSE (AQA)

**GCSE Equivalent:** I

**Single/Double:** Single

## What does the course involve?

GCSE French develops your ability to communicate in speaking and writing, and to understand what you hear or read in French. The course also provides an insight into the culture and civilisation of France and other French-speaking countries and develops the skills, language and attitudes required for further study, work and leisure.

## What will I study?

The course consists of three themes divided into three subtopics:

### Theme 1: People and lifestyle

- Identity and relationships with others
- Healthy living and lifestyle
- Education and work

### Theme 2: Popular culture

- Free-time activities
- Customs, festivals and celebrations
- Celebrity culture

### Theme 3: Communication and the world around us

- Travel and tourism, including places of interest
- Media and technology
- The environment and where people live

## How is the course assessed?

GCSE French will be assessed at the end of Year 11 by:

25% Listening Examination

25% Reading Examination

25% Speaking Examination

25% Writing Examination

## Is this the right course for me?

It is expected that you will be:

- Capable of achieving grades 4-9, having achieved grades 3-4 at Key Stage 3.
- Motivated and passionate about Languages, namely French.
- Interested in communicating in French and keen to learn about another culture.

## What can I do with this course in the future?

Many employers expect knowledge of at least one foreign language. It is useful in the following areas: Hospitality and Catering; Telecommunications; Financial and Legal Services; Transport; Retailing, Manufacturing; Building and Construction; Leisure and Recreation; and Education.

# Geography GCSE (EDEXCEL)

**GCSE Equivalent:** I

**Single/Double:** Single

## What does the course involve?

There has never been a better or more important time to study Geography. With growing interest in issues such as climate change, migration, and environmental damage, Geography is one of the most relevant courses you could choose to study. Geographers are also highly employable. Whatever your passion for the world - fascination with landscapes or concerns about inequality - Geography will provide you with knowledge and transferable skills that will reward you personally and advance you academically.

## What will I study?

The Edexcel A Geography GCSE is a modular course comprising three components of study:

- Component 1: The Physical Environment- This unit will examine five topics; The Changing Landscapes of the UK, Coastal Landscapes and Processes, River Landscapes and Processes, Weather Hazards and Climate Change and Ecosystems, Biodiversity and Management.
- Component 2: The Human Environment - This unit will examine four topics; Changing Cities, Global Development, Resource Management and Water Resource Management.
- Component 3: Geographical Investigations - This unit is fieldwork based and will involve students completing activities around the themes of rivers and inner urban areas.

## How is the course assessed?

Components 1 and 2 combined are worth 75% of the GCSE and Component 3 is worth 25%. All components are assessed by separate 90 minute examinations sat in June of Year 11.

## Is this the right course for me?

Are you:

- Interested in learning about the modern world in which we live?
- Wanting to link science subjects with arts and humanities subjects?
- Willing to act on the advice and guidance of experienced staff?

## What can I do with this course in the future?

Geography is a broad based academic subject which will open up options for you in your future. Employers and universities see geography as a robust subject rich in skills, knowledge and understanding. As a subject linking the arts and the sciences it is highly flexible in terms of what you can combine it with at GCSE.

If you choose to take geography on to A level or university there are literally hundreds of courses to choose from and the range of career areas accessed by graduates of geography will probably surprise you; including surveyors, planning officers, consultants, risk analysts, aid workers and architects as well as teachers, travel and tourism professionals and workers in landscape management and nature conservation.

# **Health and Social Care Cambridge National (OCR)**

**GCSE Equivalent:** I

**Single/Double:** Single

## **What does the course involve?**

The Health and Social Care course is a challenging and rewarding Key Stage 4 subject which will help you to develop independence and confidence in using skills that would be relevant to the health and social care sector. The qualification will also help you to acquire and develop transferable skills and tools that can be used in other life and work.

## **What will I study?**

Year 10 students are taught two units:

- R033: Supporting individuals through life events
- Optional unit R035: Health promotion campaigns

In Year 11 students are taught the remaining units:

- R034: Creative and therapeutic activities (Assessed by a Set Assignment)
- R032: Principles of care in health and social care setting - 1 hour 15-minute examination which is sat at the end of the course in Year 11.

## **How is the course assessed?**

4 modules – 3 coursework modules and one external examination, as detailed below:

- R032: Principles of care in health and social care settings (Assesses by an exam)
- R033: Supporting individuals through life events (Assessed by a Set Assignment)
- R034: Creative and therapeutic activities (Assessed by a Set Assignment)
- R035: Health promotion campaigns (Assessed by a Set Assignment)

## **What can I do with this course in the future?**

Further vocational study at Level 3 vocational qualifications such as the AAQ in Health and Social Care, AAQ In Child Development, A levels in Psychology, Biology or Sociology, as well as apprenticeships.

Health and Social Care can lead to a career in nursing, midwifery, social work, nursery nurse, teacher, personal carer, care assistant, and occupational therapist.

# History GCSE (EDEXCEL)

**GCSE Equivalent:** I

**Single/Double:** Single

## What does the course involve?

GCSE History provides students with a wide variety of skills and experiences. By studying different periods of time, students are guaranteed a varied content. However, while the course is exciting and successful, students should be aware that hard work is required.

## What will I study?

The course comprises three examinations all sat at the end of Year 11.

Paper 1: Crime and punishment in Britain, c1000–present and Whitechapel, c1870-c1900: crime, policing and the inner city (30% of mark).

- This unit covers the changing nature of crime and how punishments have changed over time. Students explore how definitions of crime have changed and how laws have adapted to changing methods of crime. This paper also includes a section called the historic environment where students will study the area of Whitechapel and the problems it faced from 1870-1890.

Paper 2: Early Elizabethan England 1558-88 and Superpowers and the Cold War 1945-1991 (40% of mark).

- This unit is divided into two sections. The first section is the British element and explores the nature of Elizabeth I's early years as Queen of England. The second section investigates the origins of the Cold War and the relationship between the Superpowers 1941-1991 .

Paper 3: The Weimar and Nazi Germany 1918-39 (30% of mark)

- This unit examines the 21 years from Germany's defeat in the First World War to the outbreak of the Second World War. Students explore the creation of the Weimar Republic and the rise of and ultimate success of the Nazi Party in 1933. Students explore what it was like to live in Nazi Germany and how different groups of people were treated under their regime.

## How is the course assessed?

All units of study are assessed at the end of Year 11.

## Is this the right course for me?

Are you:

- Interested in learning about the past?
- Willing to act on the advice and guidance of experienced staff?

## What can I do with this course in the future?

History imparts skills in researching, organisation, using information, evaluating evidence and communicating understanding. The course leads to further historical study at A-Level and university where it is a highly respected qualification. History can lead to careers in Law, Management, Social Work, Teaching, Journalism, Accountancy, Archaeology, Librarianship, Local Government, Administration, the Civil Service, Museums, the Arts and Publishing.

# **Music Practice BTEC Tech Award Level 1/2 (EDEXCEL)**

**GCSE Equivalent:** I

**Single/Double:** Single

## **What does the course involve?**

BTEC Music can help you take your first steps towards a career in the music industry. You will learn essential skills from performing and composing to producing and creating a music product. The course provides a fantastic opportunity to learn the skills needed to be successful in the music industry.

## **What will I study?**

The Specification that we follow is the BTEC Tech Award in Music (Level 2). This course is equivalent to a GCSE. The course comprises of three components:

**Component 1: Exploring Music Products and Styles.** In this component, students will:

- Explore different styles and genres of music.
- Take part in practical workshops to understand stylistic features and characteristics.
- Develop techniques in making music products

**Component 2: Music Skills Development.** In this component, students will:

- Reflect on their progress, and on areas for improvement.
- Choose a job role and explore the skills needed to fulfil it.
- Develop a range of skills.
- Apply skills and techniques in a music performance, creation or production.

**Component 3: Responding to a music brief.** In this component, students will:

- Choose an area of the industry that excites them (composer, performer or producer).
- Explore the brief and come up with possible responses and ideas.
- Use relevant resources, skills and techniques to develop and refine musical material.
- Present their final response (solo or in a group).
- Review and reflect their approach to the brief and their final outcome.

## **How is the course assessed?**

Students will be awarded a final grade at the end of the course, which takes into consideration the grades from each component:

- Component 1: Coursework is internally assessed and worth 30% of the course.
- Component 2: Coursework is internally assessed and worth 30% of the course.
- Component 3: is externally assessed and worth 40% of the course. Students will respond to a brief to either perform or compose a piece of music.

## **Is this the right course for me?**

The BTEC Music course is perfect for students with a passion for music and is ideal preparation for students who would like to pursue a career in music.

## **What can I do with this course in the future?**

Students who have enjoyed Music may want to continue with the subject to study Music BTEC Level 3 or A Level at college or sixth form. This could lead to a career in music as a performer, composer, music therapist, events manager, teacher. The course also provides skills in teamwork, organisation, independence, punctuality and problem solving which are desirable to employers in all career paths.

# Science Triple Award GCSE (AQA)

**GCSE Equivalent:** 3

**Single/Double:** Triple

## What does the course involve?

Triple Science is worth 3 GCSEs. Students who choose this option will have an additional 4 periods of science per fortnight. There is no coursework: all exams will be taken at the end of year 11.

## What will I study (extra triple topics highlighted in **BLUE**)

### Biology

- Cell biology
- Organisation
- Infection and response – **Growing bacteria in a lab, monoclonal antibodies and their uses**
- Bioenergetics
- Homeostasis and response – **Brain, eye and eye problems. Plant hormones and uses. Thermoregulation and Osmoregulation**
- Inheritance, variation and evolution – **DNA and protein synthesis, gene expression and mutation. Embryonic cloning and adult cell cloning and speciation**
- Ecology – **Feeding relationships and decomposition, biomass and trophic levels and food security**

### Chemistry

- Atomic structure and the Periodic Table – **Transition metals**
- Bonding, structure and the properties of materials – **nanoparticles and their uses**
- Qualitative chemistry – **Atom economy, titrations and gas volumes**
- Chemical changes
- Energy changes – **Fuel cells and batteries**
- Rate and extent of chemical reactions
- Organic chemistry – **Organic reactions and polymers**
- Chemical analysis – **Testing for ions**
- Chemistry of the atmosphere
- Using resources - **Composites**

### Physics

- Forces – **Moments, levers and gears. Momentum, force and safety and fluid pressure**
- Energy – **Infra-red and black body radiation**
- Waves – **Sound, ultrasound and seismic waves. Lens ray diagrams**
- Electricity – **Static electricity and electric fields**
- Magnetism and electromagnetism – **Generator effect, generating AC and transformers**
- Particle model of matter – **Gas pressure and volume**
- Atomic structure – **Nuclear fusion and fission, medical uses of radiation**
- Space

## How is the course assessed?

There are six examinations to be taken in the summer of Year 11, two from each of Biology, Chemistry and Physics. They are all 105 minutes long and equally weighted.

## Is this the right course for me?

As more challenging topics have dropped down from A-Level, we would expect students to be working towards at least a grade 6 in their Key Stage 3 studies. Students with an overall excellent attendance and behaviour record would also be recommended. This course is also ideal for students who wish to acquire scientific skills, knowledge and understanding necessary for progression to further learning in the Sciences at Post 16 level.

# Spanish GCSE (AQA)

**GCSE Equivalent:** I                    **Single/Double:** Single

## What does the course involve?

GCSE Spanish develops your ability to communicate in speaking and writing, and to understand what you hear or read in Spanish. The course also provides an insight into the culture and civilisation of Spain and other Spanish-speaking countries and develops the skills, language and attitudes required for further study, work and leisure.

## What will I study?

The course consists of three themes divided into three subtopics:

### Theme 1: People and lifestyle

- Identity and relationships with others
- Healthy living and lifestyle
- Education and work

### Theme 2: Popular culture

- Free-time activities
- Customs, festivals and celebrations
- Celebrity culture

### Theme 3: Communication and the world around us

- Travel and tourism, including places of interest
- Media and technology
- The environment and where people live

## How is the course assessed?

GCSE Spanish will be assessed at the end of Year 11 by:

25% Listening Examination

25% Reading Examination

25% Speaking Examination

25% Writing Examination

## Is this the right course for me?

It is expected that you will:

- Be in Year 9 Spanish teaching group.
- Be capable of achieving grades 4-9, having achieved grades 3-4 at Key Stage 3
- Be motivated and passionate about Languages, namely Spanish.
- Be interested in conversing in Spanish and keen to learn about another culture.

## What can I do with this course in the future?

Many employers expect knowledge of at least one foreign language. It is useful in the following areas: Hospitality and Catering; Telecommunications; Financial and Legal Services; Transport; Retailing, Manufacturing; Building and Construction; Leisure and Recreation; and Education.

# **Sport Studies Cambridge National Level 2 (OCR)**

**GCSE Equivalent:** I

**Single/Double:** Single

## **What does the course involve?**

Students will develop knowledge, understanding and practical skills that can be used in the Exercise, Physical Activity, Sport and Health sector. During the course you will:

- Understand contemporary issues in sport and how they impact on different sporting activities
- Apply your skills as both a performer in two different sporting activities and as a leader in one sporting activity
- Learn how to be a sports leader, through using your initiative to solve problems and making decisions when dealing with rapidly changing conditions and situations
- Understand the relationship between sport and the media and applying this to real life examples
- Learn how to evaluate and interpret the different ways in which sport is represented by the media

## **What will I study?**

- R184 Contemporary issues in sport
- R185 Performance and leadership in sports activities
- R186 Sport and the media

## **How is the course assessed?**

Written Examination: 75 minute written exam on Contemporary Issues in Sport that is externally assessed. This is worth 40% of the final assessment.

Coursework: The rest of the assessments will come in the form of Internal Assessments for each unit undertaken. Each assessment will be moderated to Pass, Merit or Distinction standard. The 2 coursework units are worth 60% of the final assessment.

## **Is this the right course for me?**

Students will need to have a good knowledge of a range of different sports. Students must understand key techniques involved in sport, have a knowledge of drills and activities to improve their skills as well as a tactical appreciation of the sport. Students need to have a high performance in at least one team and one individual sport. Students should have a basic knowledge of key issues in sports e.g. sportsmanship, sports values, governing bodies.

## **What can I do with this course in the future?**

Students who have enjoyed Physical Education may want to continue with the subject to study Level 3 courses in the Sixth Form at St John Fisher School. Employment opportunities where the skills acquired will be particularly valued include: the sport and leisure industry - sports attendants, supervisors/managers, professional sportsmen/women, personal trainers, fitness instructors, roles in the media, coaches in specific areas; travel and tourism – travel representatives, adventure holiday work, teaching, sports injury specialists and sports psychologists.

# Travel and Tourism BTEC Tech Award Level 1/2 (EDEXCEL)

**GCSE Equivalent:** 2

**Single/Double:** Double

## **What does the course involve?**

Travel and Tourism is an exciting vocational course packed with a mixture of industry knowledge and practical classroom activities preparing you for employment; particularly employment in real life businesses, such as airlines like Easyjet, tour operators like Jet2 and accommodation providers like Travelodge Hotels.

While learning about the travel and tourism industry, you will develop your basic skills in ICT, literacy, numeracy, team work, creative thinking, self management, reflective learning and effective participation. This is a guided course based on independently completing a variety of short tasks. Close guidance and support is provided in all lessons by the teachers and teaching assistants from both the EAL and SEN departments.

## **What will I study?**

In common with all Tech Award qualifications, Travel and Tourism involves work on three units. Two units are coursework based, one completed in Year 10 and the second completed at the start of Year 11. The third unit has an examination which is taken at the end of Year 11:

- Travel and Tourism Organisations and Destinations
- Customer Needs in Travel and Tourism
- Influences on Global Travel and Tourism

## **How is the course assessed?**

Travel and Tourism Tech Award is assessed over three equally weighted units, although it is mainly coursework based. After you have been taught how to complete the assignments, you will be guided through the completion of drafts of all of your work. All coursework is assessed by your teachers.

## **What can I do with this course in the future?**

The Travel and Tourism Tech Award attracts all sorts of students.

- Ambitious students, keen to study more GCSEs or A Levels can use this course to improve the basic literacy and language skills that they will need in the future.
- Alternatively, pupils keen to get straight into the world of work after school, for example on a training programme with a large retailer, benefit greatly not only from the employability skills they have learnt, but also the customer service and marketing skills.

There is also a clear progression from this to other courses, such as BTEC Level 3 qualifications taken in sixth form or college.