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INTRODUCTION TO KS4

The move from Key Stage 3 to Key Stage 4 is a significant one for all pupils. You will have an opportunity to decide on some of the subjects which you will study for the General Certificate of Secondary Education examinations. Most of the courses leading to GCSE are now assessed through examinations only. A few still require you to produce extended pieces of coursework or undertake controlled assessments. ALL courses will require you to work hard, to make sustained efforts, and to organise your work so that you can meet deadlines and prepare yourself thoroughly for all aspects of assessment.

In this booklet you will find information about all of the courses offered in Key Stage 4, both examined and non-examined. The purpose of the booklet is to help you and your parents form some ideas about which are the appropriate subjects for you to study. You will receive further guidance from Form Tutors, subject teachers and careers staff.

The National Curriculum makes it compulsory for all pupils to continue to study certain subjects up to the end of Year 11. The government has introduced the English Baccalaureate which may become an important requirement for a range of careers and Higher Education courses in the near future. As a result, it is expected that students will pursue at least one language and a humanities course at GCSE level.

In order to satisfy the demands of the National Curriculum, and recent Government initiatives aimed at increasing flexibility at Key Stage 4, we have structured the curriculum as follows:

Core Subjects - These are all compulsory.

GCSE Courses:

English and English Literature

Mathematics

Science (Combined Science, Biology, Chemistry and Physics)

Religious Education

Humanities—Geography or History

Languages—French or German

Non-Exam Courses:

Physical Education, Citizenship and Life skills (PSHE)

This core will take up about 70% of the curriculum time.

Optional Subjects - The remaining time may be used to add GCSE options from the following list: Art, Business Studies, Computer Science, Design and Technology, Geography, History, French, German, Music, Physical Education (GCSE).

If you want further information about any of the courses in this booklet ask your subject teacher, or the appropriate Subject Leader.

YEAR 9 OPTIONS PROCESS – INFORMATION

This term is a significant one for Year 9, as your son makes key choices about his GCSE studies. At Boston Grammar School we aim to support him through this important process by helping him to make informed choices about his future.

When choosing his options your son needs to consider his strengths and career options carefully. To aid him in deciding which subjects to pursue the following information will be of great benefit.

The 13th February is Parents' Evening which will give you the opportunity to discuss your son's strengths and potential in the subjects he is interested in following at GCSE. An initial poll for options has taken place during an assembly. This enables the school to gauge possible numbers for each subject and arrange the actual options to accommodate the majority of students' first choice wishes. A copy of the initial option blocks is below. The final option choices will look very similar and parents / guardians will have the opportunity to review and discuss them before completing the final form.

There will also be a series of assemblies led by Subject Leaders aimed at giving students further information on course content and structure. These have already started.

The final deadline for preferred options is 24th April 2020.

Boys will choose four options. They are expected to select a foreign language and they must select a humanities subject, History or Geography.

Please note: Below is a typical layout based on student preferences. The block this year will be similar in layout but will be designed to meet the preferences of this year group (as far as possible) determined by the straw poll

Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4
History	Geography	French	German
PE	DT	Business	Computing
Music	German	Geography	History
DT	Business	Art	PE
Business	History	DT	Geography

ATTAINMENT GRADES

Your son's attainment grade will now move to a more traditional GCSE number grade 1-9. At the start of any two year course the grades given out will only be an estimate of the 'most likely' grade they look like they will achieve if they continue to work and learn at the same pace for the remainder of the course. As the course progresses the accuracy of that prediction improves, as more content has been covered. However, it should be noted much will depend on your son's approach to revision and exam preparation in deciding the final grade and he should start and maintain this work straight away and not leave it until Easter of Year 11.

ENGLISH AND ENGLISH LITERATURE

English Language
Exam Board AQA
Specification Number 8700

English Literature
Exam Board AQA
Specification Number 8702

What's it all about?

GCSE English Language and English Literature changed in 2015, and the new courses are designed to inspire, challenge and motivate every student. Two compulsory subjects are taught within one block of lessons. You will study a range of fiction and non-fiction texts and learn how to develop your written and spoken responses. In English Language you will sit two examinations which test your ability to read with understanding and write for a variety of purposes and audiences. In English Literature you will complete two examinations which enable you to develop your appreciation of novels, poetry and plays.

What will I get out of the subject?

The course will enable you to become a proficient and able communicator with the confidence to use language for a variety of purposes. In both subjects you will use your analytical skills to explore the ways in which authors create meanings in texts. Our ultimate aim is to instil a love of books which will last a lifetime!

How will the subject be useful to me in the future?

English is a vital tool for all students. You will need good grades in English to be able to enter many college and university courses and professions. Your study of Language and Literature will prepare you should you want to take the A-level English Language and/or Literature course, and will help you to develop your analytical skills. The work which you do in English should also help to prepare you for the variety of texts and written work which you will undoubtedly come across in your adult life.

How will my work be assessed?

English Language is a modular course consisting of three units, only two of which count towards the final GCSE qualification: Speaking and Listening will also be assessed but will no longer count towards the GCSE grade. Results for this will be published as a separate endorsement and will be graded on a scale of 1-5.

Unit	Content	Weighting
Paper 1: Exploration in Creative Reading and Writing	Section A: Reading Section B: Writing	50% of GCSE
Paper 2: Writers' Viewpoints and Perspectives	Section A: Reading Section B: Writing	50% of GCSE
Non-examination Assessment: Spoken Language	Presenting Responding to questions and feedback	Separate endorsement (0% weighting of GCSE)

English Literature is also a modular course consisting of two units: Both courses are linear; all examinations are taken at the end of the course.

Unit	Content	Weighting
Paper 1: Shakespeare and the 19th-century novel	Section A: Shakespeare Section B: 19th-century novel	40% of GCSE
Paper 2: Modern texts and poetry	Section A: Modern texts Section B: Poetry Section C: Unseen poetry	60% of GCSE

MATHEMATICS

Exam Board: Edexcel
Specification Number: 1MA1

What's it all about?

GCSE Mathematics assesses the new Key Stage 4 programme of study which schools and colleges are required to teach. The secondary mathematics programmes of study place a renewed emphasis on problem-solving, functionality and mathematical thinking. There will be a much greater emphasis in examinations on the assessment of applying mathematics and using mathematics to solve problems. Some questions will be set in contexts that students should be expected to deal with in the real world. Students might be asked to answer questions on, for instance, decorating a room or designing a garden; or perhaps paying bills or sorting out rotas for shop staff. Questions will also require students to be able to communicate the mathematics they have applied. This may involve, for example, giving a reason for an answer, correctly setting out a proof or accurately marking up a statistical diagram.

What will I get out of the subject?

Mathematics is an essential tool for all students. Students are encouraged to develop their confidence to use mathematics to tackle problems in the work place and everyday life. They will also develop the ability to think and reason mathematically, and to realise the application of mathematics in the world around them.

How will the subject be useful to me in the future?

The skills that you learn over the course will involve tackling problems that are unfamiliar to you and you will gain the confidence to work through such problems, which will be a valuable tool for later life. GCSE Mathematics is required to gain entry on to many further education courses, as well as for employment. You could also go on to study A-level Mathematics and Further Mathematics.

How will my work be assessed?

The GCSE will follow the two tiers introduced in 2016: Foundation tier, where grades 1 up to 5 may be achieved and Higher tier, where grades 4 up to 9 are possible. It is envisaged that all pupils at Boston Grammar School will be entered for the Higher tier. The GCSE will be entirely assessed by written examination, which means that no coursework will be expected from any student.

The specifications are linear – this means that all the examinations are taken at the end of the course and any part of the specification can be tested on any paper. There are three examinations in this course. Each exam is 1 hour 30 minutes long. No calculators are allowed for Paper 1. This specification is designed to be holistic, with a clear structure, and to encourage and motivate students.

The content of GCSE Mathematics has been grouped into the topic areas of Number (15%), Algebra (30%), Geometry and Measures (20%), Statistics and Probability (15%) and Ratio, proportion and rates of change (20%).

SCIENCE

Exam Board: Edexcel

Specification Number: 1CSO, 1BIO, 1CHO and 1PHO

Our GCSE Science qualifications are based on the Edexcel 2016 Science syllabus. Key Stage 4 Science provides routes to a range of qualifications covering GCSE Combined Science, GCSE Biology, GCSE Chemistry and GCSE Physics.

Our aim is to make Science accessible to all students. Our Science curriculum is designed to meet the diverse aims and ambitions of students – from those who simply want to understand the world around them, to those who want to progress onto further, in-depth study.

Science qualifications can lead to careers in a huge range of scientific disciplines. Medicine, dentistry, veterinary medicine, pharmacology, food science, environmental sciences, marine biology, agriculture, biochemistry and engineering (genetic, chemical, structural, electrical, electronic, mechanical) are just a few of the hundreds of opportunities available. There are more people employed in the UK chemical sector and related jobs than in any other sector of the UK economy. As well as this, many universities and employers look on sciences as valuable GCSEs to have, not only because of their versatility, but also because of the logical manner in which scientists think and explain problems with which they are presented.

Students will study and complete GCSE Combined Science as a minimum. The aim is for the more able students to study the separate science courses allowing them to achieve three GCSEs in the three separate sciences. The courses are designed to help students develop their questioning, analytical and evaluative skills alongside core practical skills. Our course structure can be adapted to suit individual teaching approaches and students' needs.

GCSE Combined Science

GCSE Combined Science provides knowledge and understanding of science that is relevant to students' everyday life. Our aim is to engage students – to stimulate excitement and intrigue about how science works.

Course Structure

GCSE Combined Science contains 3 modules that cover Biology, Chemistry and Physics—15% of the final exams will assess practical skills and 20% will assess maths applications.

Assessment

External assessment (100%)

Six seventy minute tiered written examinations, two each for Biology, Chemistry and Physics. Each examination will contain a mixture of question styles, including objective questions, short answer questions and extended writing questions.

Internal assessment—16 Core practicals

16 Core practicals set by the exam board and assessed in the external exam to assess scientific thinking and practical skills.

GCSE Separate Sciences (Most able students)

The more able students will study further extension units in order to achieve three Science GCSEs, one in each of the three science subjects, instead of the Combined Science GCSE's. This will give them a better grounding in Science should they wish to go on to study Science A level courses.

Course Structure

GCSE Combined Science contains 3 modules that cover Biology, Chemistry and Physics—15% of the final exams will assess practical skills and in Biology 10%, Chemistry 20% and Physics 30% will assess maths applications.

Assessment

External assessment (100%)

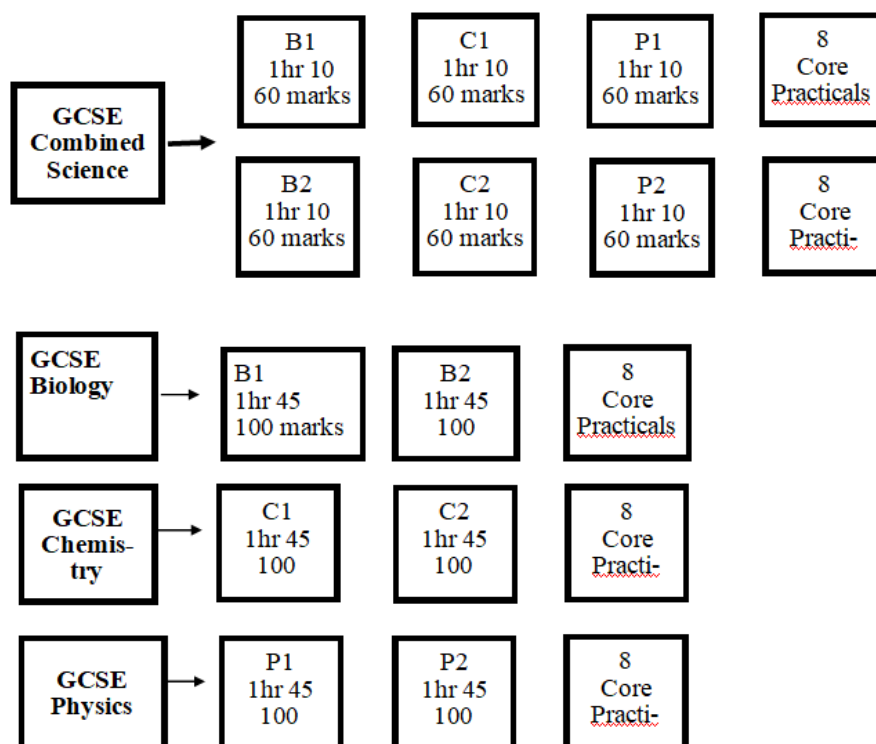
Six 1hr 45min tiered written examinations, two each for Biology, Chemistry and Physics. Each examination will contain a mixture of question styles, including objective questions, short answer questions and extended writing questions.

Internal assessment—24 Core practicals

24 Core practicals set by the exam board and assessed in the external exam to assess scientific thinking and practical skills.

Note: Selection for Separate Sciences will be based on performance in the end of year 10 Science exam and the level of work produced throughout year 9/10.

GCSE Science qualification pathways:



PSHE

At Boston Grammar School, Citizenship is delivered both via academic subjects (such as History, English and Geography) and by the School's dedicated 'Life Skills' programme, incorporating Personal and Social Health Education.

Careers education and Guidance

'Careers education and guidance programmes make a major contribution to preparing young people for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life.' (The National Framework for Careers Education and Guidance)

Careers Education and Guidance is a formal part of the Life Skills curriculum in Key Stage 4. The aim is to provide a programme which helps pupils to develop the skills and knowledge to make informed decisions about their future choices. Topics to be covered in the programme include: using Careers information, post-16 and post-18 opportunities, introduction to the world of work, application procedures, equal opportunities, decision-making and financial awareness. There is also a programme of individual interviews with pupils to assist them in their consideration of their options after GCSE.

There is a section in the School Library devoted to Careers materials which cover, among other issues, Higher Education and occupations. Computer programmes such as Kudos and Kangaroo are also available in the Library.

Liliane Mitchell is the School's Careers Adviser, and she will be involved in guidance for pupils both in Key Stage 4 and the Sixth Form.

BUSINESS STUDIES

Exam Board: Edexcel
Specification Number: 1BS0

What's it all about?

The GCSE in Business Studies starts with a focus on the skills and qualities of an entrepreneur and how these help small businesses to be set up and be successful. The course then develops on these areas to consider how businesses can grow from a small scale to becoming successful in a national and international setting.

What will I get out of the subject?

The course will provide you with a keen insight into how businesses operate, and a clear understanding of the financial, marketing and human resource elements of the business world. You will learn how to analyse and interpret financial data and evaluate different strategies to ensure a business can compete in local, national and global markets.

How will the subject be useful to me in the future?

An understanding of business will benefit anyone throughout their adult life, whether as a consumer, an employee or in self-employment. GCSE Business Studies provides an excellent foundation for A-level studies in Business or Economics, although it is not a requirement for progression to such studies at this school. The Young Tycoons scheme, currently offered to students in year 12, will give the opportunity for practical application of the business principles learned through this GCSE subject.

Business students can	Business students are
Prepare detailed summary reports	Good motivators
Research, collect and handle data	Enterprising
Make decisions about issues	Problem solvers
Analyze material	Good with numbers and preparing visual stimuli
Think creatively and independently	Well rounded, flexible thinkers
Assess the effects of changing environments	Assess the effects of changing environments

How will I be assessed?

There are two examinations which are taken at the end of year 11. There is also a 'controlled assessment' to be completed under close supervision during the first term of year 11.

Assessment	Topics Covered	% of total grade
Theme 1 Examination 1 hour 30 minutes	Enterprise and Entrepreneur Spotting and opportunity Putting ideas into action Making the business effective Understand external influences	50%
Theme 2 Examination 1 hour 30 minutes	Growing the business Making market decisions Making operational decisions Making financial decisions Making HR decisions	50%

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

French

Exam Board: Edexcel

Specification Number: 1FRO

German

Exam Board: Edexcel

Specification Number: 1GNO

Both German and French will be following the Edexcel syllabus. The textbooks used are Stimmt! for German, whilst French uses Studio. The content is very similar in both languages and covers aspects already learnt in KS3, but in more depth and with advanced vocabulary and grammar.

The topics included are: School, spare time, relationships, identity and culture, world of work, international and global dimension, my local area and holidays. In both languages there is significant reference to French and German literature, history and culture. Also, there is a considerable emphasis on translation, which is a new element from 2016 onwards.

Homework will be set frequently and an emphasis will be on learning vocabulary, as this is key to all skills required for French and German and essential for success in exams. The new 9-1 grading system replaces A*-G, and there will be no controlled assessment. All papers will be set and marked by the awarding organisation.

Papers are tiered, with 25% assessment weightings per skill.

The skills include:

- Reading (short and longer texts, some of which have been taken from prose literature in the target language, a translation from French/ German into English)
- Writing (writing a short text, a longer text and a translation from English to French/ German)
- Listening
- Speaking (including a conversation, a picture description and straight forward Q&A)

Why study languages?

To quote Nelson Mandela 'If you talk to a man in a language he understands, that goes to his head, but if you talk to him in his own language, that goes to his heart.'

However, learning languages does not only enable us to communicate with people in German or French, but learning another language will open our eyes to other cultures and prepare us to learn other language-based systems such as programming or logistics.

Learning a language can open doors into a large number of job markets including Business, Engineering, Banking and Leisure and Tourism to name but a few.

GEOGRAPHY

Exam Board: AQA Specification.

Syllabus Number: 8035

What's it all about?

Students will travel the world from their classroom, exploring case studies in the United Kingdom (UK), higher income countries (HICs), newly emerging economies (NEEs) and lower income countries (LICs). Topics of study include climate change, poverty, deprivation, global shifts in economic power and the challenge of sustainable resource use. Students are also encouraged to understand their role in society, by considering different viewpoints, values and attitudes.

Units of study

Living with the physical environment

Section

1. The challenge of natural hazards
2. The living world
3. Physical landscapes in the UK

Written exam: 1 hour 30 minutes (35% of GCSE)

Challenges in the human environment

Section

1. Urban issues and challenges
2. The changing economic world
3. The challenge of resource management

Written exam: 1 hour 30 minutes (35% of GCSE)

There is no coursework, but you have to complete two fieldwork exercises, on both a human Geography topic and a physical one. You will be assessed on these in a final exam that lasts one hour. You will also be assessed on your geographical skills.

Written exam: 1 hour (30% of GCSE)

Geographers can	Geographers are
Make a concise report	Good communicators
Collect and handle data	Spatially aware
Make decisions about an issue	Problem solvers
Analyse material	Good team players
Organise themselves	Computer literate
Think creatively and independently	Well rounded, flexible thinkers
Ask and answer questions	Socially, economically and environmentally aware

What jobs can I do with Geography?

There are many varied jobs that a Geographer might wish to do. They include; cartographer, utilities manager, analyst, planner, social worker, market researcher, housing officer, estate agent, economic developer, location analyst, retailer, regional developer, transport manager, aid worker, diplomat, refugee advisor, charity co-ordinator and many more.

HISTORY

Exam Board: AQA
Specification: 8145

The syllabus studied is 'OCR Explaining the Modern World'. This topic allows students to link thematic studies in order to understand change and continuity, to understand the nature of how historians work and to understand the complexity of a society or historical situation and the interplay of different factors within it.

- Conflict and tension 1918-1945
- Germany, 1890-1945
- British Thematic Study: Power and the people 1170– the present day
- Elizabethan England (this includes the study of a historic environment/building)

What will I get out of the subject?

History is the study of people in the past. It involves investigating political, economic, social, religious and cultural aspects of societies. Change and continuity, progress and regress are at the heart of any study of the past. We encourage our students to constantly ask: Why? The causes and consequences of events and the motives behind people's actions often create lively debate when they come under scrutiny. Pupils at 'The Boston Grammar School' are challenged to think and analyse, as well as make well balanced judgements. There is no single answer to any historical enquiry, but pupils must learn to substantiate their claims and interpretations. This is our most important part in preparing our pupils for their future roles in society. More generally the course aims to stimulate interest in the past and, in the process to provide an invaluable preparation for citizenship, work and leisure.

How will the subject be useful to me in the future?

History can make a significant difference to the thinking of the young people who emerge from our school. It can contribute to their ability to handle information critically and intelligently, to their spiritual and moral development, their self-esteem and ability to work well with others, their ability with language, numbers, ICT and other skills which are valued by employers and which can also contribute to their chances of living happy, worthwhile and fulfilled lives. History closes no doors. Employers in very diverse fields actively seek history as part of a candidate's range of qualifications. Studying the past is the best way of preparing for the future!

How will my work be assessed?

Assessed by?	Description of work	% of Total mark
Examination	'Germany' and 'Conflict and Tension'	50%
Examination	'Power and the People' and 'Elizabethan England'	50%

RELIGIOUS STUDIES

Exam Board: WJEC/Eduqas
Specification Number: C120P3

What's it all about ?

We will be following the full course set by Eduqas. This involves units on Issues of Relationships, Issues of Life and Death, Issues of Good and Evil and Issues of Human Rights. Students will study the beliefs, teachings and practices of Christianity and Islam. These two components will be assessed by compulsory questions focussing on knowledge, understanding and evaluation of the subject content. This course will develop learners' knowledge and understanding of religions and non-religious beliefs, such as atheism and humanism. Students will also develop knowledge and understanding of religious beliefs, teachings, practices, and sources of wisdom and authority, including through their reading of key religious texts, other texts, and scriptures of the religions they are studying. This specification challenges learners to reflect on and develop their own values, beliefs and attitudes in the light of what they have learnt and contributes to their preparation for adult life in a pluralistic society and global community. RS at BGS also enables learners to deepen their understanding of the relationships between people whilst becoming informed about common and divergent views within traditions in the way beliefs and teachings are understood and expressed.

What will I get out of the subject?

This course not only provides the opportunity for students to develop and mature their thinking on religious, moral and philosophical questions, but it also enables one to see the world from a wider perspective. Students will be required to take an analytical approach to their studies as they assess, in depth, a wide range of perspectives on questions of identity, truth, values and commitment. Through study and debate, students will give independently reasoned, well informed insights into what is for billions of people the very core of their existence, their faith.

In recent years Religious Studies has been the most entered subject at GCSE behind English, Mathematics and Science. As an academic institution it is our aim that students leave us fully equipped to compete in the wider world of work and higher education.

How will the subject be useful to me in the future?

This subject would be useful for careers where taking other people's views into consideration is important for example, nursing, teaching, law, the armed forces and any other job that involves contact with other human beings. In our modern, multi-cultural age it is vital that young people can show employers and admission tutors that they are able to see the world from more than just their own perspective. It is a subject that opens up discussions on moral and ethical issues and develops students' own ideas about what is right and wrong. This course will help you to hone your skills of reasoning and debate as well as giving you an insight into the lives of others and the way society functions.

As you would expect from the RE department at BGS there will be some fun and plenty of interesting lessons along the way. An A-level Religious Studies course is available at a later date for which this course provides an acceptable introduction.

How will my work be assessed?

This will be assessed by one terminal examination and does not involve Coursework. This programme of study leads to the award of Full Course GCSE at the end of year 11.

ART

Exam Board: AQA Fine Art
Specification Number: 8202 C/X

Studying art and design is of high value for students wishing to work in any design field or any creative industries for example, advertising, graphic design, architecture, digital imaging, photography, advertising, fashion or film and television production. It also encourages students to think creatively and develop transferable art and design skills.

The GCSE course in Art and Design comprises two units — one coursework portfolio worth 60% , and one externally set assignment worth 40%. Currently, the school follows the AQA Fine Art course structure.

The course is designed to allow you to build upon your existing skills whilst exploring new media and techniques. Students are required to examine works produced by other artists, and to use some of the ideas and processes they discover in the development of their own work. At the end of the course, successful students will be able to:

- Record accurately, by drawing, painting, writing and photographing
- Analyse art produced by others
- Use a range of media with skill and control
- Develop ideas into a well-considered outcome
- Research effectively
- Sustain interest through a long-term project

In January of the second year, you will begin work on your externally set assignment, This is set by the exam board. You will be given a period of 12 weeks to complete a portfolio of preparatory work, both in class and at home, before producing the final outcome to the project under controlled conditions during a ten hour examination. Spaced over two school days.

Both of the units of the course are marked in the same way. There are four assessment objectives, each being worth 25% of the overall marks out of 96 for that unit.

The four objectives address researching the work of others and other sources, experimentation, and development of ideas, recording through drawing, photography and writing and producing a personal response—the resulting folio of work including final pieces.

Coursework and externally set assignment work is supported by gallery visits and other enrichment opportunities.

A strong work ethic, willingness to draw confidently and embrace new techniques and ideas and a commitment to working additional hours on project work at home are essential as much of the 60% coursework folio is addressed with homework tasks.

Assessment for the GCSE course is as follows:

Coursework	60%
Externally-set project	40%

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

Exam Board: Edexcel
Specification Number: 1DT0

The most innovative and forward thinking course available, helping to create today's problem solvers for tomorrow's problems.

Design and Technology has a key role in the future of the nation. Design, engineering and manufacturing are all essential skills that were ever present through the ages making us the great nation that we are today. Having pushed these industries out, we have now realised how important these skills are to the development of the country.

As two main areas of a Government push towards STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths) Technology and Engineering play a key role, offering progression into careers such as automobile, graphic, fashion, furniture and product design, nuclear, railway and submarine engineering, as well as providing a sound grounding for many careers where problem solving is at the forefront.

With this course you will start with exciting mini briefs, building on the many skills you have already mastered, these will prepare you for your main project. Your coursework portfolio (non-examined assessment) is based on a contextual challenge released by the exam board.

The assessment is broken down as follows –

Theory Paper

Written Paper 1 hour 45mins – 50%

Coursework Portfolio

Internally assessed and externally moderated.

Assessing the four strands of your project - Investigate, Design, Make & Evaluate – 50%

MUSIC

Exam Board: WJEC Eduqas
Specification Number: C660QS

What's it all about?

Studying Music at GCSE level allows students to extend and develop their skills and knowledge in the three key areas of Listening, Composing and Performing.

Students will find out more about different types of music, investigate how music is put together and how it has changed over time. They will also create their own pieces and improve their performance skills both as a soloist and within an ensemble.

What will I get out of the subject?

GCSE Music is suitable for all students with a love of and interest in music. It is a particularly good option for those who already sing or play an instrument as these skills count towards your final grade. In addition to developing music based skills, students also develop many other valuable skills such as independent learning, research, planning, perseverance and problem solving.

How will the subject be useful to me in the future?

Music qualifications are highly regarded by colleges of further education and employers alike as musicians are trained to work methodically and to be self-disciplined. You may wish to use GCSE Music as a basis for further study such as A-Level Music. You may wish to use it as a springboard into other related areas such as Music Technology.

How will my work be assessed?

Component	%	Exam or Coursework	Requirements
Performing	30%	Coursework	Students perform at least one solo and one ensemble piece of their own choice. Participation in extra-curricular groups and performances is expected.
Composing	30%	Coursework	Students are required to write two pieces. One to a brief set by the exam board and one is free choice.
Listening	40%	Exam	1 hour, 15 minutes. Students are tested on set works from the four different areas of study: Musical Forms and Devices, Music for Ensemble, Film Music and Popular Music as well as discussing and comparing pieces of music unfamiliar to them.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Exam Board: AQA

Specification Number: 8582

In GCSE Physical Education pupils will develop and apply their knowledge, skills and understanding of physical education through three practical activities from a set list. One must be a team activity; one must be an individual sport. It is imperative that they play at least two activities to school team standard or above.

They will develop their knowledge and understanding of the different factors that affect participation and performance and demonstrate their relationship.

Pupils will gain an understanding of the role of rules and conventions in selected activities.

They will promote their understanding of the health benefits and risks associated with taking part in physical activity and plan, perform and evaluate a personal exercise programme.

Pupils will develop the skills necessary to analyse and improve performance and they will support their personal and social development through adopting different roles in selected activities when working with others.

35% of the total marks will come from a one hour 15 minute written paper.

35% of the total marks will come from a one hour 15 minute written paper.

The remaining 30% will come from their three chosen practical activities.

The non-examination element of Physical Education is compulsory for all pupils. A variety of sporting activities are offered, one of which will be a game where pupils will play the full recognised version of a competitive game, and athletics. In both areas of activity pupils will have the opportunity to undertake a variety of roles, for example: performer, official or coach. In Key Stage 4 an emphasis is placed upon maximum participation, enjoyment and the importance of working with others whatever the individual's sporting ability. Pupils will be given opportunities to participate in frequent physical activity conducive to a healthy lifestyle, and will plan, undertake and evaluate a safe health-promoting exercise programme.

Through its extra-curricular programme the Physical Education department organises a variety of activity sessions and fixtures at club, form, and team levels. These sessions are arranged at lunchtime, after school, and at weekends.

COMPUTING

Exam Board: OCR

Specification Number: J276

The course gives students a real, in-depth understanding of how computer technology works. Students will no doubt be familiar with the use of computers and other related technology from their other subjects and elsewhere. However, this course will give them an insight into what goes on 'behind the scenes', including computer programming, which many students find absorbing.

The course provides excellent preparation for higher study and employment in the field of computer science. The increasing importance of information technologies means there will be a growing demand for professionals who are qualified in this area. Students who've taken a GCSE in Computer Science and who then progress to study the subject at A Level or university will have an advantage over their colleagues who are picking up the subject at these levels.

The course will develop critical thinking, analysis and problem solving skills through the study of computer programming, giving students a fun and interesting way to develop these skills, which can be transferred to other subjects and even applied in day-to-day life. In this respect, the course provides excellent preparation for students who want to study or work in areas that rely on these skills, especially where they are applied technical problems. These areas include engineering, financial and resource management, science and medicine.

The assessment is broken down as follows:

Programming Project

Controlled assessment – Internally assessed and externally moderated
20 hours

Computer Systems

Written Paper 1 hour 30mins - 50%

Computational Thinking, Algorithms and Programming

Written Paper 1 hour 30mins – 50%