Abbey CBS

Year 10 options

Dear Student and Parent(s)

We now approach an important milestone in Year 10, it is time choose GCSE subjects. Some subjects are compulsory and must be taken – others are optional and let you build on current academic strengths and personal interests. You face important decisions which will determine the subjects that you will study at GCSE, A Level and perhaps even later at university, if that is the pathway you choose to follow. It is true to say that your future career will begin to take shape based on the subject choices that you make now.

In recent times there have been many changes to the examination system here in the North. The decision to retain the A*-G grading system for GCSE means that students rarely take examinations offered by English Awarding Bodies who will be using a 9-1 grading system. There are many benefits to using a local awarding body (CCEA), most notably the availability of modular pathways in a range of subjects, including both English and Maths. All GCSEs offered by English awarding bodies (OCR, AQA) are linear and all examinations are taken at the end of the second year of the course. The disruption caused by the cancellation of exams and the modification of specifications due to the Covid pandemic has now been resolved and this summer will see a return to previous grade boundaries and an expected fall in outcomes most notably the awarding of the A* grade.

This booklet is designed to help you and your parents make the best decisions possible. It is vital that you make the right choice so that you do not have any regrets later on, and that you are able to maximise your potential and achieve the highest possible grades across all GCSE and BTEC qualifications. There are many people willing to help you and who can give you expert advice. Talk to your teachers; subject and Form Teachers, who can provide information based on their experience and who know your strengths and attributes as a student. Discuss matters with your parents, family and friends. They too can give you the benefit of their experiences and advice. Ms Reynolds, Head of Careers and Mrs Murphy will be available as part of the process, and I will meet with you and your parents to discuss your academic profile throughout KS3 and make recommendations for you going forward.

Above all, make sure that you choose subjects that you like, enjoy and experience success in. It is very true that students perform much better at what they enjoy and at Key Stage 4 there will be many demands on your time from your subjects. So, be prepared to work hard, show resilience and perseverance and strive to achieve the high personal targets that you will set for yourself and will be expected by the school. Look forward to the challenges and the excitement of new classes, courses and experiences.

We have high expectations of our students at Abbey CBGS. To keep your pathway open at Post-16, you must aim to achieve at least a Grade B in each GCSE subject and a merit in a BTEC qualification. With discipline and determination, I know that you can achieve this challenging target. Having said that, I believe that many of you can achieve well in excess of that. I say this with confidence since you are embarking upon a GCSE path followed by many students of the Abbey who have repeatedly attained top grades in previous years. I confidently predict that if you do your best, you will be expertly supported by your teachers.

Making the right choices now will positively impact on your experience in Years 11 & 12. Take your time to get it right and make sure you seek advice and guidance.
I wish you every success with your choice and your GCSE studies and I ook forward to seeing you thrive over the next 2 years.

Mrs Savage
Principal

YOUR GCSE SUBJECTS AND BEYOND

It is time to think about the courses you are going to take over the next few years.

Choosing which subjects to study for your GCSEs will involve making decisions. Do you go for Irish, Spanish or French? Business Studies or Geography? As you have learned in your Careers Education and Guidance classes, you are in the driving seat - you now have a say in shaping your future.

Making decisions about the future is difficult for everyone. Many find this exciting, but for some it can appear a little daunting. Don't worry! There are plenty of people who are there to help you and this booklet will give you information about each subject on offer to help you make the best decision for you.

SECTION 1: FOR STUDENTS

SOME COMMON QUESTIONS:

Q1. *WHY DO I HAVE TO CHOOSE?*

- Because there is a limit on the number of subjects you can study at Key Stage 4.
- Because it's time for you to have a say in what you study.
- Because as work gets harder you will want to concentrate on your strengths.
- Because this is your first step in deciding your own future.
- Because there are new subjects in Key Stage 4 Curriculum.

Q2. *WHAT DO I CHOOSE?*

Before you make up your mind about your subjects you need to consider:

- What you are good at?
- What you enjoy?
- What might be useful or necessary later on?

Q3. *WHOM CAN I ASK FOR HELP?*

Parents, Teachers, Careers staff and friends.

- They know your likes and dislikes.
- What you're like as a person.
- What you seem to be good at.

Q4. *DO MY SUBJECTS SUPPORT MY CAREER CHOICE?*

This is an important question and one that needs to be answered at an early stage.

In careers classes you have investigated your qualities and skills with a view to trying to match these skills to a particular career path.

Q5. WHO CAN HELP ME WITH CAREER CHOICES?

The Careers Department: Ms Reynolds, Mr Grogan and Mrs Murphy

Ask:

- Which careers are linked with different subjects?
- Which options are available in schools after GCSEs?
- How you can find out more.
- What to do if you can't take the subjects you want?

Your Subject Teachers

- What their subject involves in Years 11 and 12? – Exams, practical work, oral or aural work, controlled assessment.
- When are exams taken – Year 11, Year 12, or both?

Where else can you get advice?

- **Your parents**
- **Your aunts, uncles, grandparents**
- **Your friends/ older pupils**
- **Your parents' employers**
- **At your Options Interview**

Q6. WHAT IF MY PARENTS WANT ME TO CHOOSE A DIFFERENT CAREER?

Your parents know you very well. They know more than you about the world of work.

But their choice may not be your choice. Ask them why they prefer different subjects and be ready to explain and discuss your ideas too.

Q7. WHAT IF I CAN'T DO THE SUBJECTS I REALLY WANT?

The school tries its best to accommodate every student's choice. Sometimes however, you may find the timetable structure will not allow a certain combination of subjects, but this is a rare occurrence. Sometimes we are forced to withdraw a subject should demand prove insufficient. Because we design our option blocks around your choices, it is therefore important that if there is a subject you really want to choose, you pick it when completing your option form. It is always useful therefore to have a reserve subject in the background in case it is needed. If you are informed one of your subjects is 'clashing' ask these two questions from your careers teacher:

- What subject is most like the one you want, and keeps the same career doors open?
- Is there any other way to keep the subject going now?

Q8. *WHAT IF I CHOOSE SUBJECTS GEARED TOWARDS ONE CAREER AND THEN DECIDE I WANT TO DO SOMETHING ELSE?*

Try to always choose subjects that allow you to keep your options open. It is perfectly normal to change your mind as you continue your studies. By choosing one language and one science (even though they are not compulsory) you will have a profile that is varied and robust and will prepare you for a wide spectrum of careers. Some subjects are also available as 'fresh start' subjects at AS or A2.

Q9. *WHICH SUBJECTS ARE A REQUIREMENT FOR AS/A2 STUDY?*

It is a school requirement to have at least a Grade B, at Higher Level, in a related subject at GCSE before you are eligible to join an AS course.

Some A-levels pick up where GCSEs leave off and therefore you would find the A-level content very difficult if you don't have a GCSE in that subject.

These A-levels include Biology, Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry, Music, Technology, Art and Modern Languages. Heads of Department will advise you on these and other subjects which may be included here.

Other subjects allow for a "fresh start" at A-level and are appropriate for students who are new to the subject - e.g. Politics, Economics, and some BTEC Courses. ***However, these subjects will require minimum grades in Maths and English***. Discuss the entrance criteria with the subject teacher.

Q10. *WHAT IF I DON'T HAVE ANY IDEA ABOUT A CAREER?*

Don't panic! Lots of people don't. Year 10 is when you **start** thinking about careers. Over the next few years, you will continue to have career classes and guidance interviews. All you need to do now is get advice from your teachers so as to make sure you keep open as many options as you can.

Admission to all GCSE classes in 2025 is at the discretion of Senior Management and is based on successful completion of the subject at Key Stage 3. Final Decisions on entrance to GCSE Subjects and admissions criteria will be made by Senior Management.

Senior Management reserve the right to change/enhance admissions criteria at any time during the academic year. All decision made by Senior Management are final.

SECTION II: MAINLY FOR PARENTS FAMILIAR

In Abbey CBGS, our Key Stage 4 curriculum keeps options open - students will not be locked out of career pathways if they choose carefully. Students will study nine/ten subjects with four of these compulsory. You will have received a Pupil Profile through the school communication service and the results of your son's most recent CAT data and explanatory notes. This data will help you in the decision-making process. Please look closely at not just the recorded result, but the cohort average and how your son's performance compares in a particular subject. Some of the subjects on offer will be new to your son, he will have the opportunity to hear more about what these entail at a year group assembly. However, there is an overview contained of all subjects on offer contained within this booklet. If you have any queries about the options process, please contact Mrs Savage through her PA ctrainor560@c2kni.net

HOW CAN PARENTS HELP?

Check:

- Has your son all the **FACTS?**
- He really knows what each option involves;
- He knows what the subject teacher thinks of his abilities;
- He knows what career implications his choices might have;
- That he is being **REALISTIC** about his choices;
- That he has accepted that he might not get a first choice, and so has thought carefully about an alternative;
- That he has, or knows where, to seek **ADVICE.**

CHECK YOUR SON:

- Is not choosing a subject just to be with a friend;
- Is not choosing a subject just because of a teacher;
- Has chosen subjects to ensure success using the Pupil Profile as a guide;
- Has not put off thinking about options, until the last minute.

****Please also check the additional information from the Careers Department at the end of this booklet.**

Pupils are reminded that GCSEs and BTEC Level 2 qualifications will be the only certified and completed qualifications prior to university or higher level apprenticeship applications in 7th Year. As such, they can play an important part in progression to third level education.

SECTION III: Personal Career Planning

Personal career planning is a process which enables young people to make informed decisions in relation to career development and to act on these decisions.

The Careers classes in Abbey CBGS are carefully planned and taught so that the students develop the skills necessary to manage this strategy for decision making. It is important to realise that personal career planning is not just a matter of job selection. In their career classes, students are given an opportunity to gather information, gain greater awareness of themselves and work out (largely through choosing appropriate subjects) a career path that will lead them to their chosen destination.

This year's personal career planning will form the basis for further work in Years 11, 12 and beyond. It is important therefore that students should undertake this work with care and enthusiasm.

ENCOURAGE YOUR CHILD TO AIM HIGH

SUBJECT PROFILES

This next section of the booklet contains further information on each subject. These subject profiles are designed to give you a broad idea about these courses and how and when they are assessed. The contact name for each subject is at the end of each overview.

SECTION IV: Compulsory and Key Curricular Subjects

All students in Abbey CBGS will study nine subjects with the top 40% of mathematicians studying an accelerated route through GCSE maths (completed at the end of Year 11) which allows for a tenth GCSE in Further Maths at the end of Year 12.

Some students who study GCSE Drama may also be offered an additional qualification in Level 2 Performance Skills as a tenth subject.

As previously mentioned at the presentation in November, you will be required to study each of the following core elements of the curriculum. In this section, you will find specific information about each of these compulsory requirements.

- Mathematics
- English Language
- English Literature
- Religious Studies

Choosing a **Science** and a **Modern Foreign Language** is no longer a compulsory option. However, we *strongly recommend* that all students choose to study at least one language and/or one science option. A pupil who does not choose from this section, must meet with Mrs Savage to discuss the reason for this pathway.

SECTION V: Familiar and Fresh Start Subjects

The final section are subjects familiar to you and some new subjects or 'fresh start' that you may not have studied before. While a Modern Language and a Science are not compulsory subjects, we *strongly recommend* that all pupils choose a science and/or a language as part of their GCSE profile. A pupil who does not choose a science or a language will be invited to a meeting to discuss the chosen pathway. These subjects have been arranged in alphabetical order for ease of reference.

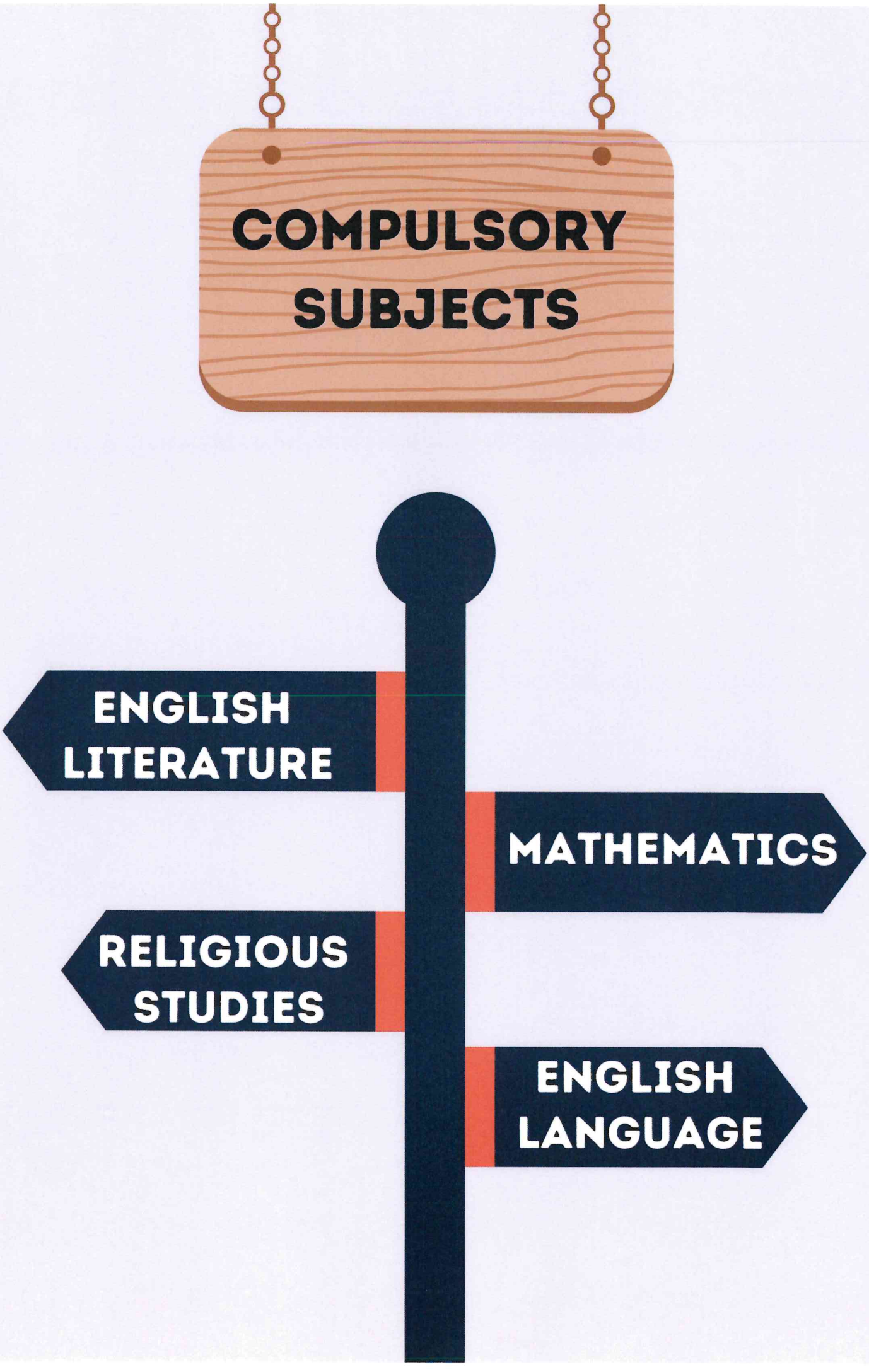
You must choose nine subjects. With the exception of Computer Science and Technology and Design, all subjects are Northern Ireland CCEA examinations.

BTEC qualifications include Digital Information Technology and Travel and Tourism. A recommended profile to ensure pathways remain open at Post -16 and beyond is as follows:

1. English Language
2. English Literature
3. Religious Studies
4. Mathematics
5. Science Option
6. Modern Foreign Language Option
7. Free Choice
8. Free Choice
9. Free Choice

The Option Process Timeline

Thursday 28 November 2024: Introduction to Year 10 Options - presentation by Mrs Savage
Monday 20 January 2025: Introduction to new subjects - presentation to year group
Wednesday 22 January 2025: Publication of Pathways Booklet on Year 10 Google Classroom
Week beginning Monday 27 January 2025: Mrs Savage available for individual Option Meetings in person or online.
Tuesday 28 January 2025: Year 10 Progress Meeting with current subject teachers
Monday 7 February 2025: Final submission date for uploading of GCSE Options Form


COMPULSORY SUBJECTS
ENGLISH LITERATURE
MATHEMATICS
RELIGIOUS STUDIES
ENGLISH LANGUAGE

MATHEMATICS

All students must study Mathematics to GCSE Level. The course available is Northern Ireland 2 Tier Modular GCSE and the 2 tiers of entry are Foundation and Higher.

For the Higher Tier grades A* to D are available, and for Foundation grades C to G can be obtained.

We propose to enter students for Higher Tier with the possibility of Foundation Tier if required.

HIGHER TIER: GRADES A*– C WILL BE ASSESSED

CONTENT	ASSESSMENT	WEIGHTINGS	AVAILABILITY
Unit M3 or M4: Higher Tier	External written examination with calculator 2 hours	45%	Summer from 2018 and January from 2019
Unit M7 or M8: Higher Tier Completion Test	Two external written examinations: • Paper 1 without calculator 1 hour 15 mins • Paper 2 with calculator 1 hour 15 mins	55%	Summer from 2019 and January from 2020

At the end of 4th year each student will complete 45% of their GCSE by sitting module 4 (M4), while a few may prefer to drop to module M3. Module 4 will assess work at grades A* - D, while module 3 will assess work at grades B - E.

The module component will be an external written examination with calculator and will address the following three assessment objectives:

The paper is of duration 2 hours. Results for the module paper will be available in August.

The final 55% is the completion paper which is taken in June of 5th year. Dependent upon their module result in 4th year, students will study either M7 (grades B – E) or M8 (grades A* - D). The completion paper will be split into 2 papers – a non-calculator and a calculator and will address the same three assessment objectives as the module component. These will be taken in the same exam session, with the non-calculator paper first.

Each paper is of 1¼ hours duration. Thus exam session will be approximately 2¾ hours.

The course presents students with four areas of study:

- Using and Applying Mathematics
- Number and Algebra
- Shape, Space and Measures
- Handling Data.

Career Opportunities:
A GCSE grade of B or above is essential for many careers: teaching (required by law), most banks/building society careers, most technical and scientific jobs, engineering, medicine, dentistry, insurance, health service management, nursing, psychology, management jobs and many office and shop jobs.

GCSE FURTHER MATHEMATICS

This subject is studied in fifth year. Only those students who reach a certain level at KS3 are permitted to study the subject in fifth year. These students must also have obtained at least a Grade B at Higher Level GCSE Mathematics in fourth year. Those who do not obtain the required standard at KS3 may study GCSE Further Maths in lower sixth year.

A student wishing to study Mathematics to "A" Level would find it very helpful to have done GCSE Further Maths. Those students taking Physics would also benefit from the subject.

If a student in the Abbey wishes to do 'A' Level Maths and has not completed GCSE Further Maths he must study the subject in Lower Sixth year, and have gained a Grade A or A* at Higher Level GCSE Mathematics, with an M4 & M8 GCSE Maths combination.

Key features:
The key features of the specification appear below:

- This course offers opportunities to build on the skills and capabilities developed through the delivery of the Key Stage 3 curriculum in Northern Ireland.
- It caters for students who require knowledge of mathematics beyond GCSE Higher Tier Mathematics and who are capable of working beyond the limits of the GCSE Mathematics specification.
- It is designed to broaden the experience of students whose mathematical ability is above average and who:
- will follow mathematical courses at AS/A Level;
- will follow other courses at AS/A Level that require mathematics beyond GCSE Higher Tier; or
- would like to extend their knowledge of mathematics.

Content	Assessment	Weightings	Availability
Unit 1: Pure Mathematics (Mandatory)	External written examination in the form of a single question-and-answer booklet that includes a formula sheet 2 hours	50%	Summer from 2018
Unit 2: Mechanics (Optional)	External written examination in the form of a single question-and-answer booklet that includes a formula sheet 1 hour	25%	Summer from 2019
Unit 3: Statistics (Optional)	External written examination in the form of a single question-and-answer booklet that includes a formula sheet 1 hour	25%	Summer from 2019

Head of Department: Mrs S Burns

English Language and English Literature

The study of English Language and Literature should enable students to:

GCSE English Language is a modular specification with 4 assessed units.
This specification aims to encourage students to:

- demonstrate skills in speaking, listening, reading and writing necessary to communicate with others confidently, effectively, precisely and appropriately;
- express themselves creatively and imaginatively;
- become critical readers of a range of texts, including multi-modal texts;
- use reading to develop their own skills as writers;
- understand the patterns, structures and conventions of written and spoken English;
- understand the impact of variations in spoken and written language and how they relate to identity and cultural diversity; and
- select and adapt speech and writing to different situations and audiences.

The CCEA GCSE English Language Specification is designed to be compatible with CCEA GCSE English Literature.

GCSE English Literature is a modular specification with three assessed units.
This specification aims to encourage students to:

- become critical readers of prose, drama and poetry;
- develop the ability to analyse the impact of language, structure and form in a range of texts;
- connect ideas, themes and issues in a range of texts;
- explore contexts and experience different times, cultures, viewpoints and situations in texts;
- read for enjoyment and nurture a lifelong love of literature.

English Language		English Literature
Unit 1: 1hour 45-minute examination 30% Writing for Purpose and Audience Reading to Access Non-Fiction & Media	**Summer Year 11**	**Unit 1: The Study of Prose** 1 hour 45-minute examination One question on the study of a Modern Novel; One question on an 19th Century Unseen Prose extract
Unit 2: Speaking and Listening – 20% 3 tasks consisting of individual presentation, group interaction and role play		**Controlled Assessment** Unit 3: The Study of Shakespeare Students complete one task: an extended writing question based on a theme. (Term One Year 12)
Unit 3: Controlled Assessment – 20% Studying Spoken and Written Language Students complete 2 written tasks.		
Unit 4: 1hour 45 minute examination - 30% Personal or Creative Writing and Reading Literary and Non-Fiction Texts Students respond to five tasks.	**Summer Year 12**	***Unit 2: The Study of Drama and Poetry*** 2 hour examination: one question in each section Section A: The Study of Drama Section B: The Study of Poetry

Head of English: Mr M McMahon

RELIGIOUS STUDIES

Board: CCEA

Religious studies is a compulsory subject at GCSE level

Specification Overview

Module 1 (Unit 5) : Christianity through a study of the Gospel of Mark. The Topics to be covered are:
The Identity of Jesus, Miracles of Jesus, Teachings of Jesus, The Death and Resurrection of Jesus and The Role and Nature of Christian Discipleship

An externally assessed paper will be completed at the end of year 11 worth 50% of the overall GCSE. This exam is 1 hour 30 minutes long.

Module 2 (Unit 6) is: An Introduction to Christian Ethics. The Topics to be covered are: Personal and Family Issues, Matters of Life and death, Developments in Bioethics, Contemporary Issues in Christianity and Modern Warfare

An externally assessed paper will be completed at the end of year 12 worth 50% of the overall GCSE. This exam is 1 hour 30 minutes long.

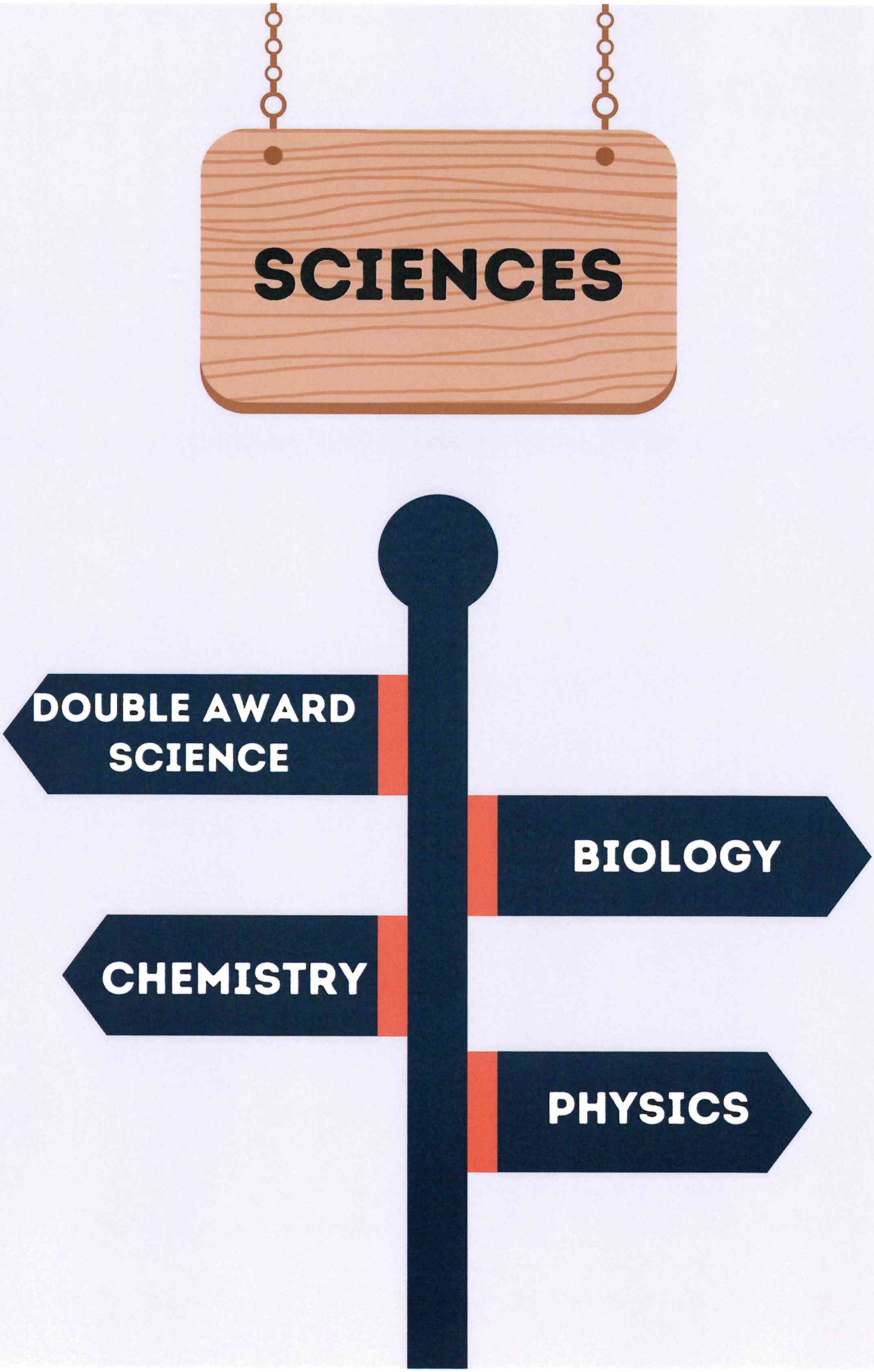
Skills developed at GCSE level:

Many of the skills involved are common to the other literary subjects included in the Key Stage Four programme, including research and investigation, discussion and written communication.

Career Opportunities:

This subject is recognised by all third level institutions as a well-developed Arts based GCSE option. The skills acquired while studying the subject are valuable for the study of a wide variety of Third Level courses e.g. English, History, Law and Education.

Head of Religious Studies: Mrs L McKeever


SCIENCES
DOUBLE AWARD SCIENCE
BIOLOGY
CHEMISTRY
PHYSICS

SCIENCES

There are a number of different pathways open to students.

A student may choose to study Single Award Science. This counts as **one choice on the Option Form**. It allows the students to study all three scientific disciplines at a reduced content. Single Award Science is recommended to students who wish to have a Science GCSE but do not wish to progress to A-level Science.

A student may choose to study Double Award Science. This counts as **two choices on the Option Form** but has the advantage of allowing students to study all three scientific disciplines: biology, chemistry and physics.
Selecting DA Science may be the appropriate option if you have broad interests, as it provides you with the opportunity to select another subject from those on offer, while still studying three sciences. Double Award Science is recognised by universities when they require students to have science qualifications at GCSE.

Alternatively, a student may choose to study a scientific discipline as a discrete option: studying biology or chemistry or physics by itself.

Finally, a student may choose to combine the discrete sciences in any combination of two or three:

- Biology, Chemistry and Physics (3 option choices)
- Biology and Chemistry (2 option choices)
- Chemistry and Physics (2 option choices)
- Physics and Biology (2 option choices)

If you study Biology, Chemistry and Physics as separate subjects, you will be allocated 4 periods per week for each science. This option provides 3 GCSE grades, one for each science.

You should select this option if:

- you have a deep interest in all three sciences (Biology, Chemistry and Physics)
- you have a definite career path in mind which is Science based
- **you consistently attain high grades in KS3 Science Assessments.**

If you choose to study two separate sciences ensure you have identified from your careers research that you will not require the third Science.

N.B: Students are not permitted to combine Single Award Science or Double Award Science with a separate scientific discipline.

SINGLE AWARD SCIENCE

Board: CCEA

Single Award Science will involve the study of all three sciences and will be allocated 4 periods per week.

Single Award Science consists of four units:

Unit 1	Unit 2	Unit 3	Unit 4
Biology	**Chemistry**	**Physics**	**Practical Skills**
Cells Food & diet Chromosomes & genes Co-ordination and control Reproductive system Variation and adaption Diseases and the body's defences Ecological relationships	Acids, bases and salts Elements, compounds and mixtures Atomic structure and Periodic Table Bonding Materials Symbols, formulae and equations Qualitative analysis Rates of reaction Organic chemistry	Electrical circuits Household electricity Energy Electricity generation Heat transfer Waves Road transport and safety Radioactivity Earth in space	**Booklet A – 7.5%** Practical skills assessment - Students carry out two practical tasks **Booklet B - 17.5%** External written exam - Students sit a written exam paper
25%	25%	25%	25%
1 hour written paper	1 hour written paper	1 hour written paper	2 hours practical 1hr 15mins exam

Requirements
Success in SA Science requires students who are hardworking and have the ability to organise their work and time. SA Science involves both practical and written work and pupils must be able to behave in a responsible and safe manner at all times in the laboratory.

Single Award science has a calendar of public examination modules in November, February and June.

Relevance to Future Career/Higher Education
Single Award Science **does not enable** students to progress to A-level Biology, Chemistry or Physics.

Contact Teachers: Mrs McCorry (Co-ordinator)/ Ms Magowan

DOUBLE AWARD SCIENCE

Board: CCEA

Double Award Science will involve the study of all three Sciences and will be allocated 8 periods per week. In comparison to the separate Science option, each Science at Double Award contains 2 thirds of the content of a separate Science. This option provides 2 GCSE grades, which can be the same or different depending on the outcome of module results (A*A*, A*A, AB etc).

You should select this option if:

- you consistently attain high grades in KS3 Science Assessments.
- you have a keen interest in all three Sciences (Biology, Chemistry and Physics)
- you wish to keep your options open in terms of future A-Level choices and careers.

What the subject is about?

Double Award Science involves the study of all three Sciences.

BIOLOGY DA

Biology deals with every aspect of life in living organisms and how they interact with the environment. It is highly relevant to everyday life: from your own health to our food supply and control of disease.

The Biology course consists of two modules summarised in the table below:

Unit 1: Cells, Living Processes and Biodiversity
Assessment offered November, February & May/June of Year 11
11% of DAS grades

Unit 2: Body Systems, Genetics, Microorganisms and Health
Assessed in May/June of Year 12
14% of DAS grades

CHEMISTRY DA

Chemistry is a study of the structure of substances and how they change. Chemistry and the work of chemists affect our lives in many ways: from the paper and ink in this booklet, to the food in the last meal you ate and the fibres and colours of the clothes you are wearing.

The chemistry course consists of two modules summarised in the table below:

Unit 1: Structures, Trends, Chemical Reactions, Quantitative Chemistry and Analysis.
Assessment offered November, February & May/June of Year 11
11% of DAS grades

Unit 2: Further Chemical Reactions, Rates and Equilibrium, Calculations and Organic Chemistry
Assessed in May/June of Year 12
14% of DAS grades

PHYSICS DA

Physics is concerned with how and why things behave as they do and attempts to explain natural phenomena in the universe. Physics involves the study of objects which vary in size from the smallest atoms that can't be seen with the naked eye to galaxies that are so far away from us they can only be seen as specks of light in the sky.

The Physics course consists of two modules summarised in the table below:

Unit 1: Force and Motion, Energy, Moments, Density, Kinetic Theory and Nuclear Fission and Fusion.
Assessment offered November, February & May/June of Year 11
11% of DAS grades

Unit 2: Waves, Light, Electricity, Magnetism, Electromagnetism and Space Physics.
Assessed in May/June of Year 12
14% of DAS grades

DAS PRACTICAL PROCESSES: UNIT 7

In year 12 pupils will carry out the Practical skills unit across all three disciplines.

- This involves carrying out three practical skills booklets (A and B) for each science.
- This contributes to 25% of the DAS grades.

Practical Skills Unit (externally marked)	**Booklet A:** Students carry out three practicals (Biology, Chemistry and Physics) in the final year of study. **Booklet B:** external written examination with questions that include short responses, extended writing and calculations set in a practical context for Biology, Chemistry and Physics. Foundation and Higher Tiers: 90 mins.	Booklet A: 7.5% Booklet B: 17.5% 25%	Booklet A: between1 December and 1 May. Booklet B: Summer (Year 12).

Requirements
Success in DA Science requires students who are hardworking and have the ability to organise their work and time. DA Science involves both practical and written work and pupils must be able to behave in a responsible and safe manner at all times in the laboratory.

Relevance to Future Career/Higher Education
Double Award Science enable students to keep all their A-Level Science options open. It prepares students for the A-Level Sciences which are required for a wide variety of careers e.g. medicine, dentistry, pharmacy, veterinary medicine, engineering, agriculture, food science, optometry, sports science, physiotherapy etc.

Contact Teachers: Mrs McCorry (Co-ordinator)/ Mrs McGinley (Head of Biology)/ Dr Carey (Head of Chemistry)/ Mr Patterson (Head of Physics)

BIOLOGY

Board: CCEA

Biology is offered as a separate science subject and is a very popular at GCSE.

What the subject is about.

Specification Overview

Unit 1: Cells, Living Processes and Biodiversity
Written paper – 1 1/4 hours
35 % of GCSE
Assessed in May/June of Year 11

Unit 2: Body Systems, Genetics, Microorganisms and Health
Written paper – 1 1/2 hours
40 % of GCSE
Assessed in May/June of Year 12

Unit 3: Practical skills
*Written paper – 1 hour (17.5% of GCSE)
Assessed in May/June of Year 12

*Two set practical tasks (7.5% of GCSE)
(completed January/February of Year 12 and marked externally)

Biology represents the most challenging and exciting frontier in science. With new developments every day and endless possibilities, modern biology, based on genetics and DNA is having, and will have a huge influence on our lives.

Biology deals with every aspect of life in living organisms and how they interact with the environment. The study of biology at GCSE involves both practical and written work. You will learn how to conduct investigations safely using a variety of apparatus and techniques, and how to communicate your findings appropriately while linking scientific evidence to everyday life.

The GCSE Biology course provides a solid foundation for further study in biology. Whether your interest is human biology or microorganisms, plants or animals, genetics or how we influence the environment, GCSE Biology will have plenty to enthuse you. Biology is a fascinating subject with many avenues to explore - the more you explore the greater the fascination.

Requirements and Expectations
You should study GCSE Biology if you enjoyed the Biology topics covered at KS3, scored well in topic tests and assessments and want to deepen your knowledge and understanding.

Many of our students continue their studies of Biology into A Level and pursue careers such as medicine, dentistry, veterinary, optometry, forensic science, sports science, food science, agricultural sciences, teaching, pharmacy, zoology, radiography and archaeology.

Contact Teachers:
Mrs O Mc Ginley (Head of Department) / Mrs D McCorry / Ms V Magowan

CHEMISTRY

GCSE Chemistry is an important and challenging subject which helps form a deep understanding for the world around us. The Abbey follows the CCEA specification which encourages pupils to develop their curiosity about the material and physical worlds and provides insight into and experience of how science works.
It enables students to engage with chemistry in their everyday lives and to make informed choices both about further study in Chemistry and related disciplines, and about their careers. GCSE Chemistry provides students with a solid basis for the study of Chemistry at A level and beyond.

Assessment:
There are a total of four formal examinations over the two years that contribute to the overall GCSE grade.

Y11:

- **Unit 1** in the summer of Y11 which is worth 35% of the total marks.

Y12:

- **Unit 2** in the summer of Y12 which is worth 40% of the total marks.
- **Unit 3 Booklet A** which is a practical exam done in class before Easter and is worth 7.5% of their total marks.
- **Unit 3 Booklet B** in the summer of Y12 which is worth 17.5% of the total marks.

Course content

Unit 1: Structures, Trends, Chemical Reactions, Quantitative Chemistry and Analysis.
Students will learn about the different types of bonding and structures of substances and how substances behave both physically and chemically. They will learn how different substances are identified using chemical tests. They will also learn how to construct balanced chemical equations and use these to calculate amounts of substances.

Unit 2: Further Chemical Reactions, Rates and Equilibrium, Calculations and Organic Chemistry.
Students will learn about a wide range of chemical processes such as oxidation and reduction and electrochemistry. They will study how chemical processes are affected by different condition such as temperature changes. They will begin the study of organic chemistry which is the chemistry of the carbon compounds that make up all living things.

Unit 3: Practical Skills
Students will complete a set of practicals during the course which will be examined in Unit 3 both during a practical examination and a written paper.

Career opportunities in Chemistry
Studying chemistry can result in careers in various fields including; Nanotechnology, Environmental science, Forensics, Biotechnology, Medicine, Veterinary medicine, Pharmaceuticals, Engineering and Pharmacy.

PHYSICS

What the subject is about.

Importance is attached to the knowledge, skills and understanding of how science works in the world at large as well as in the laboratory. Pupils will be expected to evaluate evidence and the implications of Physics on society. There will be opportunities to explain, theorise and model in science and the procedural and technical knowledge of science practice will be emphasised.

Assessment Procedures

The structure of the GCSE course is summarised in the table below:

	Assessment	Weighting of GCSE
Unit 1 – Year 11 Force and Motion, Energy, Moments, Density and Kinetic Theory and Radioactivity.	An externally assessed written examination at the end of Year 11, consisting of a number of compulsory structured questions that provide opportunities for short answers, extended writing and calculations.	37.5%
Unit 2 – Year 12 Waves, Sound and Light, Electricity, Magnetism, Electromagnetism and Space Physics.	An externally assessed written examination at the end of Year 12, consisting of a number of compulsory structured questions that provide opportunities for short answers, extended writing and calculations.	37.5%
Unit 3 – Year 12 Practical Skills	**Booklet A**: between 1st December and 1st May , two practicals, externally marked. **Booklet B:** external written examination at end of Year 12 with questions that include short responses, extended writing and calculations set in a practical context for Physics.	Booklet A: 7.5% Booklet B: 17.5% Total 25%

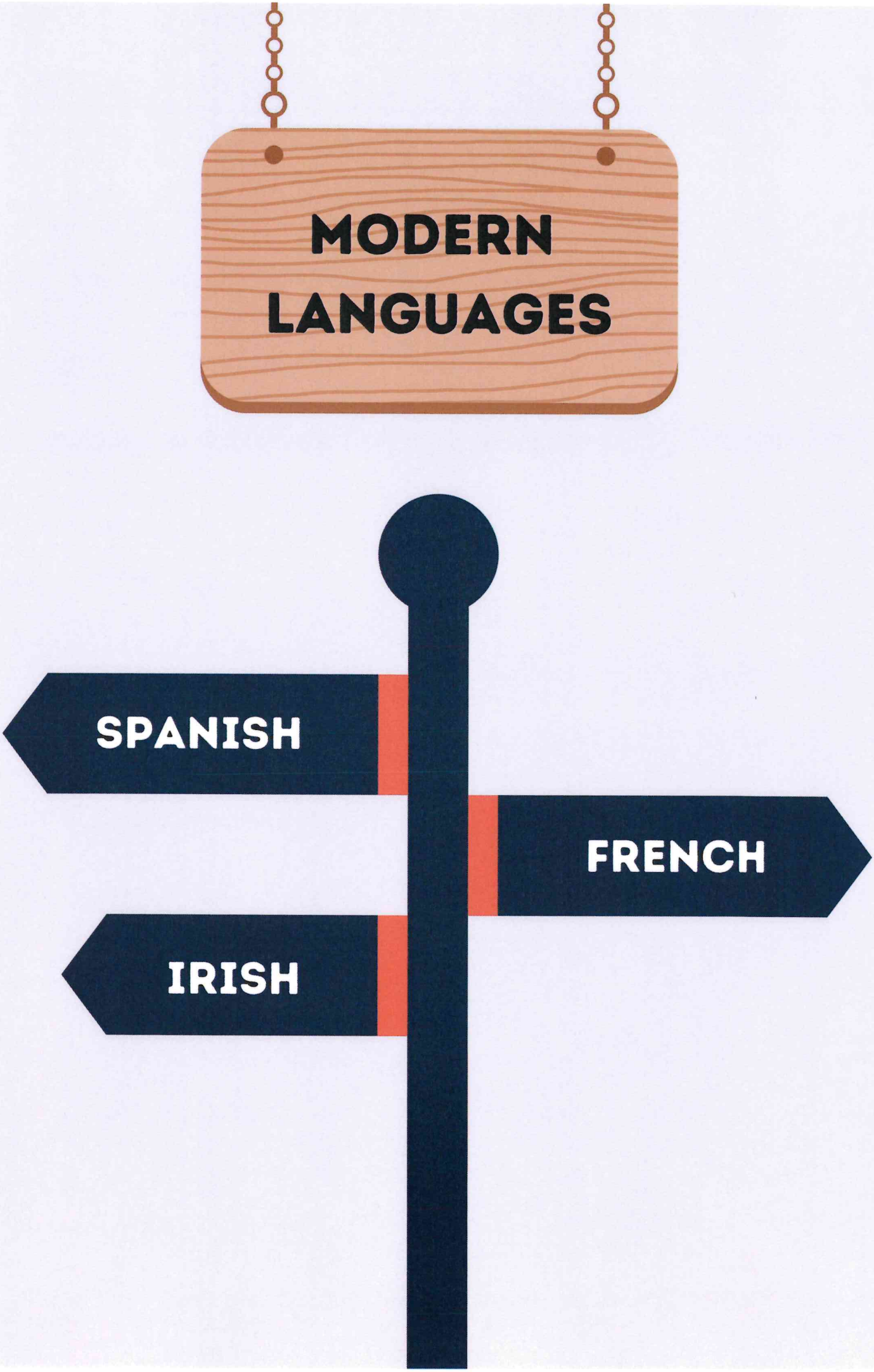
Requirements

Physics involves both practical and written work. Pupils will learn how to conduct investigations safely and how to communicate their findings in a concise way. Pupils will have the opportunity to use a range of apparatus, make measurements and present and interpret the data collected. There will be a lot of
Mathematical content that involves using equations and analysing experimental data, any student taking on GCSE Physics will have to be very competent and confident in using Mathematical procedures. They will be expected to behave in a responsible manner and be aware of their own and others safety.

Relevance to Future Career/Higher Education

GCSE Physics is a necessary requirement for Medicine, Pharmacy, Veterinary, Engineering and other related areas. In addition, Physics provides a worthwhile course for candidates of varying backgrounds in terms of general education and lifelong learning.

Contact Teachers: Mr G Patterson, Mr B Hamill, Mr D Patton


MODERN
LANGUAGES
SPANISH
FRENCH
IRISH

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

Students, having had the opportunity to study French, Irish and Spanish at Key Stage 3, should now choose to continue with at least one language.

Alternatively, students may choose to continue more than one language to GCSE (two or three option choices on the Option Form)

Two Languages at GCSE?

Have you considered studying two languages at GCSE? Being able to speak more than one foreign language will be an unbelievable asset to you in any career path you choose. Choosing a second language will help you with your study of the first: you'll be familiar with the structure and often vocabulary can be similar. With two languages the opportunities presented are endless, from travel to employment to gaining a better understanding of other countries - the list goes on! It has been scientifically proven that studying multiple languages at once is good for your brain and increases your capacity for language learning, put simply, studying more than one language makes languages easier. Choose two languages for GCSE study, and you will be able to communicate in three tongues in the world of business, finance and law –even more important in a post Brexit world!

GCSE FRENCH, IRISH AND SPANISH

In studying CCEA GCSE Modern Languages, you will develop knowledge of the language and culture of your chosen Target Language country, as well as the skills of speaking, listening, reading and writing.

The course is assessed through equally weighted Written Papers for listening, reading and writing skills and a 7-12 minute speaking test for the oral component. CCEA will mark all components.

Subject content

This is based on three contexts for learning, both in students' own countries and communities, and in the Target Language countries and communities:

Contexts for Learning

Content	Elaboration of Content
Students' lives, families, homes and interests, and those of others in Target Language-speaking countries and communities	Myself, my family, relationships, and choices (for example family and friends) Social media and new technology (for example online communications, computers, tablets, and smartphones) Free time, leisure, and daily routine (for example sports, hobbies, cinema, TV, music, dance, fashion, eating out, shopping, at home, at school and at the weekend) Culture, customs, festivals, and celebrations (for example Easter, Christmas, birthdays, cultural activities and events, national holidays, celebrations and cuisine).

Students' lifestyles and attitudes to environmental, social and global issues, and those of others in Target Language - speaking countries and communities	• My local area and the wider environment (for example home, neighbourhood, town or city, places to visit, region and country) • Community involvement (for example charity and voluntary work) • Social and global issues (for example health, lifestyle, anti-social behaviour, caring for others and caring for the environment) • Travel and tourism (for example holidays, destinations, transport, tourist information, weather, directions, accommodation, activities, shopping and eating out).
Education and employment issues in students' own country or community and in Target Language -speaking countries and communities	• My studies and school life (for example school subjects, uniform, timetable, rules and regulations) • Extra-curricular activities (for example clubs, societies, events, trips and visits) • Part-time jobs and money management (for example evening work, weekend work and work experience) • Future plans and career (for example Post -16 education, further studies, employment, aspirations and choices).

Examination / Assessment

Unit 1: Listening 25% (Foundation and Higher Tier Entries)

An externally assessed paper. Candidates listen and respond to a variety of stimuli in both Target Language and English.

Unit 2: Speaking 25% (One Tier of Entry)

Two role plays from the same Context of Learning and a general conversation, one from each of the other two Contexts for Learning.

Students prepare the first conversation topic in advance, prescribed by CCEA.

Teachers record and authenticate all evidence.

Unit 3: Reading 25% (Foundation and Higher Tier Entries)

A written paper lasting 50 minutes at Foundation Tier and 1 hour for Higher Tier.

Students respond to a variety of stimuli, referring to past, present and future events using selection, gap filling, answers in English and answers in the Target Language (TL).

Students need to identify and extract details, points of view, understand gist, attitudes and emotions and draw conclusions.

Unit 4: Writing 25% (Foundation and Higher Tier Entries)

A written paper lasting 1 hour at Foundation Tier and 1 hour 15 minutes at Higher Tier. Each paper has four questions.

Foundation Tier	**Higher Tier**
Q1: Listing and short phrases task	Q1 Short phrases/ sentence responses in TL
Q2: Short phrase/sentence responses in TL	Q2: Short responses in TL to one or more pieces of text.
Q3: Short translation exercise from English into TL	Q3: Short translation exercise from English into TL

	Q4: Structured extended writing task in TL. Students to respond to one question out of three. Each question has five bullet points.	Q4: Structured extended writing task in TL. Students to respond to one question out of three. Each question has five bullet points.

What do I need to be able to take this course?

A GCSE in a Modern Language builds on grammar and vocabulary covered in Y8 to Y10. It is, therefore, advisable to have achieved a minimum of 70% in Assessments. At GCSE level, students are expected to listen to French, Spanish or Irish in their free time and must be prepared to spend a lot of time learning vocabulary independently.

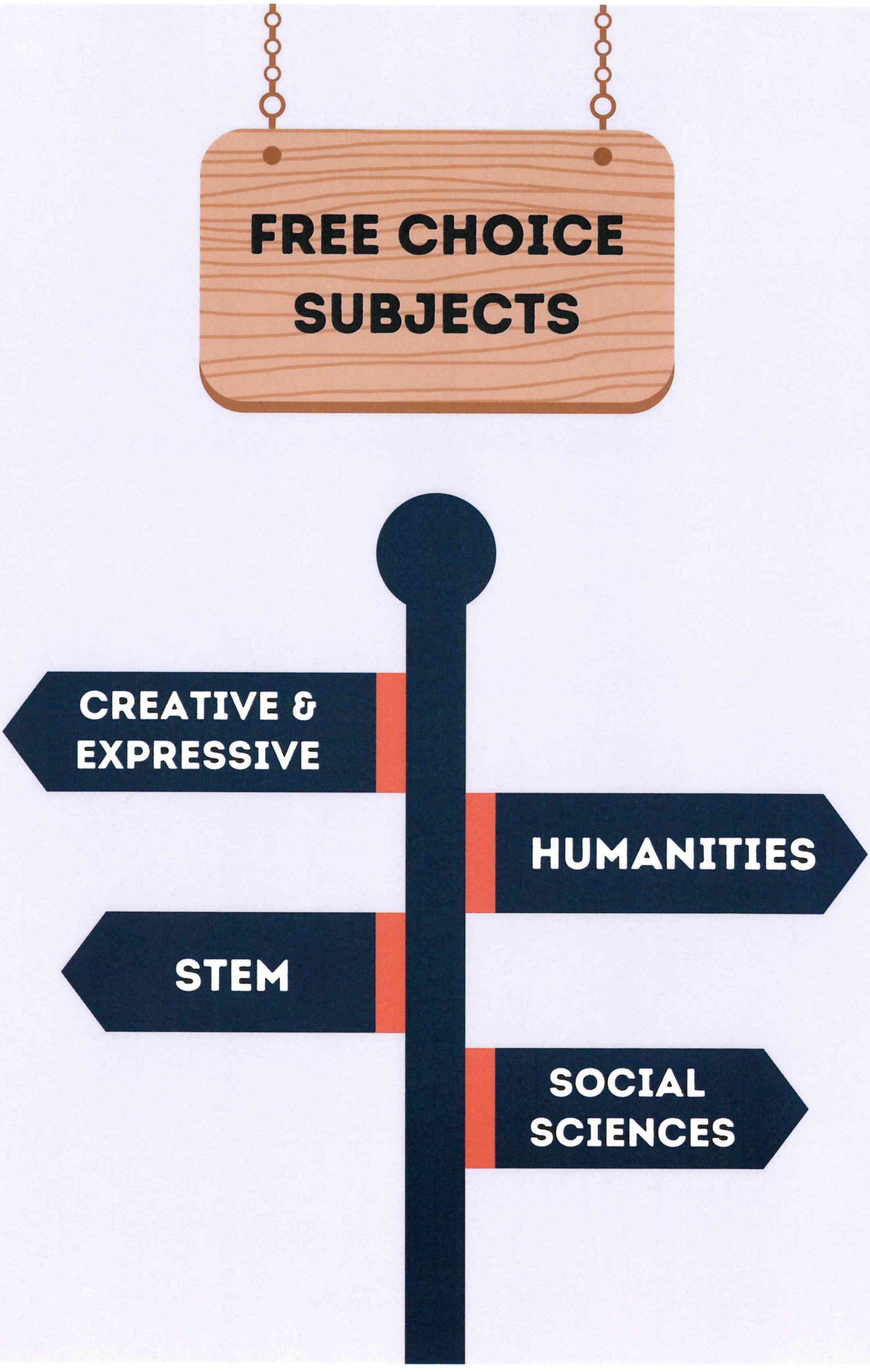
Requirements for Pupils

- Pupils should have a good homework and assessment record at KS3.
- Pupils should be well-organised and conscientious in learning written and oral work.
- Good communication skills and confidence in speaking in the Target Language are desirable.
- Good analytical skills and understanding of grammar concepts are essential.

Possible Career Paths

Business
Civil Service
Engineering
Interpreting Services
Journalism
Language Development Officer
Law
Lecturing (University)
Managerial Positions
Media (television, radio, internet)
Teaching
Translation Services

For more Information about the study of languages contact: Mrs P McClean/Ms M Quinn/ Mrs J McGivern


FREE CHOICE SUBJECTS
CREATIVE & EXPRESSIVE
HUMANITIES
STEM
SOCIAL SCIENCES

GCSE ART & DESIGN

GCSE in Art and Design gives you opportunities to actively engage in the creative process of art, craft and design to develop as an effective and independent learner. You will have the freedom to explore many art, craft and design skills and processes throughout the two components of this course. You will develop core knowledge, understanding and skills through your own exploratory work and the research of others' work. There will be a focus on drawing as it is fundamental to the creative process in all art, craft and design disciplines. Assessment will take place at the end of your course.

Component 1

Part A: Exploratory Portfolio

You will experiment in some of the following disciplines.

Fine art – drawing and painting, sculpture, printmaking; Textiles; Ceramics; Graphic Design; Photography; Moving Image or animation; Digital media; 3D design. You will explore the processes and contexts of practitioners.

Throughout Part A you will learn how to use the formal visual elements of Art & Design, including: colour ; line; shape; form; texture; tone; pattern.

Part B: Investigating the Creative and Cultural Industries

You will complete one practical task set by your teacher. You will build on the knowledge and skills gained in Part A. You will learn about the different roles and work practices used in the production of art, craft and design in the creative and cultural industries. This may include practical opportunities, for example workshops, museum visits, gallery visits or collaborating on a project. You will produce an outcome.

Component 2

Externally Set Assignment

You will complete work in response to a stimulus paper released in the final year of your course.

You will complete at least 20 hours of preparatory work in response to the theme in the paper. You will also produce and complete a final outcome based on your preparatory work within a set period of 10 hours under exam conditions.

Component	Assessment Description	Weighting
Component 1 **Part A:** Exploratory Portfolio **Part B:** Investigating the Creative and Cultural Industries	**Controlled Assessment** **Portfolio of experimental work** Teacher assessed, moderated by CCEA 50 marks (25%) **Personal Outcome or Design Solution** Teacher assessed, moderated by CCEA 70 marks (35%)	**60%**
Component 2 **Externally Set Assignment**	**Controlled Assessment** **Preparatory Work and a Final Outcome** Teacher assessed, moderated by CCEA 80 marks	**40%**

CROSS-CURRICULAR SKILLS AT KEY STAGE 4

COMMUNICATION, USING MATHEMATICS AND USING ICT

You will have opportunities to develop your communication skills and use mathematics and ICT in a variety of ways: using written or visual language of art and design or making a personal response informed by contextual understanding; estimating quantities of materials required and costing a design; and using digital graphic design, experimenting with relevant software to help explore and realise creative intentions.

THINKING SKILLS AND PERSONAL CAPABILITIES AT KEY STAGE 4
SELF-MANAGEMENT, WORKING WITH OTHERS AND PROBLEM SOLVING
You will be encouraged to: record ideas, responses, intentions, and outcomes in coherent forms such as sketchbooks, journals, photographs, or blogs; plan your 10-hour examination period; share resources and consider others; respond to the demands, constraints and parameters of set briefs, projects, or commissions.

WHAT CAN I DO WITH A QUALIFICATION IN ART AND DESIGN?
You could progress to our A level qualifications in Art and Design or other related courses. You may go on to become a practicing artist, designer or architect and contribute to the economy as part of the fast-growing creative and cultural industries. Students of Art and Design develop valuable transferable skills, which are sought after by many colleges and universities, employers, and industry leaders. These practical skills and the ability to solve problems and think creatively will be used throughout your life.

Contact Teacher: Ms O Hughes (Head of Art and Design)

BUSINESS STUDIES

Board: CCEA

CONTENTS	ASSESSMENT	WEIGHTING	AVAILABILITY
Unit 1 Starting a Business - *Creating a Business* - *Marketing* - *Production*	External written examination 1 hour 30 mins Short structured questions and extended writing	40%	Summer Year 11
Unit 2 Developing a Business - *Human Resources* - *Business Growth* - *Finance*	External written examination 1 hour 30 mins Short structured questions and extended writing	40%	Summer Year 12
Unit 3 Planning a Business (synoptic) - *Business Plan*	Controlled assessment Students complete the following: • Booklet A: Planning (research booklet completed in class on theory topics from Year 11 and 12) • Booklet B: Communicate Findings (1 hour unseen written exam with short structured questions and	20%	Term 2 (Jan/Feb) Year 12

	extended writing linking to their Booklet A research) Teachers mark the task, and we moderate the results.		

Skills developed: The course in Business Studies will introduce students to the skills, knowledge and attitudes necessary for setting up or managing a business or a particular aspect of a business e.g. accountancy, sales, marketing or management.
Career Opportunities: Business Studies provides a very useful foundation for higher level study. It is acceptable for entrance into a wide range of degree courses, leading into careers such as marketing/sales, personnel/business management, consultancy, accountancy, banking, business law, finance, insurance, investment, teaching and self-employment in one's own business enterprise.

Business and Communication Systems

Board: CCEA

CONTENTS	ASSESSMENT	WEIGHTING	AVAILABILITY
Unit 1: Software Applications for Business Use of ICT: - *File Management* - *Word-Processing* - *Spreadsheets* - *Databases* - *Presentations* - *Web Browsing &internet searching* - *Email* - *Web Authorising*	External computer-based examination 2 hours Students complete tasks using a range of software applications	40%	Summer Year 11
Unit 2: The Business Environment - *Types of business ownership* - *Stakeholders* - *Communication* - *Digital Trading* - *Recruitment* - *Selection* - *Training* - *Implications of Digital Technology* - *Marketing*	External written examination 1 hour Structured questions	35%	Summer Year 12
Unit 3: Developing Digital Solutions	Controlled assessment Students project manage and	25%	Summer Year 12

- Planning and researching - Using software application - Evaluation	develop a digital solution for a given problem within a business context. Teachers mark the tasks, and we moderate the results		

Career Opportunities:

Business Studies provides a very useful foundation for higher level study. It is acceptable for entrance into a wide range of degree courses, leading into careers such as ICT, marketing/sales, personnel/business management, consultancy, accountancy, banking, business law, finance, insurance, investment, teaching and self-employment in one's own business enterprise.

Contact Teacher: Ms P McQuillan (Head of Business Studies)

GCSE Computer Science

AIMS:

Students should be able to:

- understand and apply the fundamental principles and concepts of Computer Science, including abstraction, decomposition, logic, algorithms, and data representation
- analyse problems in computational terms through practical experience of solving such problems, including designing, writing and debugging programs
- think creatively, innovatively, analytically, logically and critically
- understand the components that make up digital systems, and how they communicate with one another and with other systems
- understand the impacts of digital technology to the individual and to wider society
- apply mathematical skills relevant to Computer Science.

THIS COURSE IS SUITABLE IF:

You would like to develop computational thinking, programming, and problem-solving skills. These skills that are extremely attractive in the modern workplace as they empower you to solve complex, challenging problems, enabling you to make a positive difference in the world. Computing skills are essential in a wide range of professions, from astronomy to financial analysis – not just in IT related jobs!

WHAT WILL I STUDY?

Unit 1: Computer systems
- Systems Architecture
- Memory and storage
- Computer networks, connections and protocols
- Network security
- Systems software
- Ethical, legal, cultural and environmental impacts of digital technology

Unit 2: Computational thinking, algorithms and programming
- Algorithms
- Programming fundamentals
- Producing robust programs
- Boolean logic
- Programming languages and Integrated Development Environments

HOW WILL I BE ASSESSED?

Content	Assessment	Weightings
Computer systems unit 1	External written examination 1 hour and 30 minutes, 80 marks	50%
Computational thinking, algorithms and programming unit 2	External written examination 1 hour and 30 minutes, 80 marks	50%

WHAT SKILLS WILL I GAIN STUDYING THIS SUBJECT?

- programming skills that are extremely attractive in the computing/IT industry and in the modern workplace
- a deep understanding of computational thinking and how to apply it through a chosen programming language.
- efficient decision making and problem-solving skills to ensure successful solutions to problems.
- project-based skills. You will undertake a programming task(s), which will develop analysis, design, implementation, testing and evaluative skills.
- self-management, set personal learning goals and targets to meet deadlines and effectively managing time.

PROGRESSION ROUTES AFTER THIS COURSE:

- A-Level Computing or Digital Technology
- Computing Degrees
- Career in: Engineering/Games Development/Programming/Systems Analyst and Software Engineering
- Skills learnt are transferable to most jobs.

WHERE CAN I FIND OUT MORE?

OCR website https://www.ocr.org.uk/qualifications/gcse/computer-science-j277-from-2020/

Mr J McGuire (Head of Computing)

GCSE CONSTRUCTION AND THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

GCSE Construction is a practical, work-related course. You learn by completing projects and assignments on realistic workplace
situations and activities. You focus on subject areas and develop a range of specialist skills and knowledge.
This specification aims to encourage students to:

- Develop a broad knowledge of the Construction Industry
- Apply their knowledge in work related contexts by the manufacture of an A framed table and a Computer Aided Design project.
- Investigate opportunities to progress into A Level, further education, training, or employment in the construction Industry.
- Develop key transferrable skills that are important in a working life.
- Develop knowledge of the materials and sustainable methods used in domestic and commercial construction.

CONTENTS	ASSESSMENT	WEIGHTING	AVAILABILITY
Unit 1: Introduction to the Built Environment	**External written examination** **1 hour** You will develop an understanding of construction and the built environment., the importance of health and safety in the construction industry and the employment opportunities in the industry. Short structured questions and extended writing	**20%**	**Summer Year 11**
Unit 2: Sustainable Construction	**External written examination** **1 hour 30 mins** Paper includes questions based on per-release materials You will interpret drawings of domestic buildings and demonstrate awareness of the issues surrounding sustainable development in the construction industry. Short structured questions and extended writing	**30%**	**Summer Year 12**
Unit 3: Construction Craft Project	**Controlled assessment** Students complete the following: You must complete a woodwork- based project. The Craft project is made up of a product and an evaluation.	**25%**	**Summer Year 12**
Unit 4: Computer Aided Design	**Controlled Assessment** You will develop an understanding and a working knowledge of CAD in the construction Industry. You will produce a portfolio of work, including working drawings for a domestic building and one detail drawing.	**25%**	**Summer Year 12**

Career Opportunities:
The GCSE Construction course is a great foundation for studying Construction at A Level as the topics covered are the same at A Level and having studied at GCSE it makes it an easy transition. The CAD architectural element delivered at GCSE prepares students for their first year degree studies in the area of design. This course is designed to equip individuals who wish to gain the practical skills, knowledge and understanding required for success for employment in the technical and professional disciplines within the Construction and Engineering Environment.
If you wanted to get a job straight away, you could enter work-based training through the Apprenticeship or Pre-Apprenticeship programme. Also with GCSE Construction students may choose to progress to A Level and you can study BTEC Level 3 National qualifications in Construction and the Built Environment which are equivalent to A Levels. The BTEC Nationals offer learners modern, work-related qualifications which open the door to higher education and to ultimately pursue an occupation in areas such as:
Architectural Design, Construction Engineering and Management, Building Surveying, Quantity Surveying, Property Management, Land Administration, Land Surveying, Town Planning.

Contact: Mr G Savage (Head of Construction)

DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY (CCEA)(Replaces GCSE ICT)

DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY (CCEA) Route A: Multimedia

- It offers opportunities to build on the skills and capabilities developed through the delivery of the Key Stage 3 curriculum in Northern Ireland.
- The content relates directly to current software development trends and the study of modern technology-based systems.
- The content is a balance between knowledge and application.
- It provides a sound basis for further study in both GCE Digital Technology and GCE Software Systems Development.

What will I study?

Unit 1: Digital Technology 30% External exam 1 hour

In this unit, students explore a range of digital technologies available for data storage, manipulation, presentation, and transfer. They also evaluate the importance of data security and data legislation.

Unit	Areas of Study
Digital Technology	In this unit you will learn about: • Digital data: Representing data, images, sound portability. • Software: Systems software, operating systems, utility programs. • Database Applications. • Spreadsheet Applications. • Hardware: Fetch execute cycle, computer performance, input, output, storage devices. • Network Technologies. • Cyberspace Network Security Data Transfer. • Cloud Technology. • Ethical, Legal and Environmental impact of Digital Technology • Digital Applications.

Unit 2: Digital Authoring Concepts 40 % External Exam 1 hour thirty minutes

In this unit, students gain an understanding of the concepts in the development of digital systems. They enhance the knowledge and skills developed in Unit 1.

Unit	Areas of Study
Digital Authoring Concepts	In this unit you will learn about: • Designing solutions: Exploring multimedia design (Movie timeline, storyboard), Exploring Database design (Form, report wireframes, data dictionary, ER). • Digital Development considerations: Types of User Interfaces. • Multimedia applications: Gaming, Social Media, Websites (Ecommerce). • Multimedia authoring: Website creation in HTML. • Database Development. • Test Plan.

Unit 3: Digital Authoring Practice Controlled assessment 30%

In this unit, students design, develop and test digital multimedia systems.

Unit	Areas of Study
Digital Authoring Practice	This is your coursework unit: The project brief will be provided annually by CCEA. You will identify and research a realistic problem. You will then design a solution, implement, and test your solution, and document and evaluate your solution

What can I do with a qualification in Digital Technology? Look at the Facts!

IT professionals can earn 43% more than the average across all occupations in NI. IT professionals earn on average £400 per week, compared to £300 for other professionals in the same age band.

There will always be a job in IT. Six months after graduating those with IT related degrees are more likely to be hired than other academic disciplines. **IT JOBS** are multiplying four times faster than any other sector.

With a qualification in Digital Technology, you will not be limited to working in the IT industry, many sectors such as Music, Retail, Hospitality employ IT professionals. In future 90% of jobs such as Engineering, Accountancy, Nursing, Medicine, Art, Architecture, and many more will require some level of digital skills.

Summary

Digital Technology would be beneficial in a wide range of careers. The IT industry now accounts for a significant proportion of our economic output. It is a sector with salaries higher than the Northern Ireland average and job opportunities are increasing rapidly. The IT industry in Northern Ireland is forecast to grow at 2.4% per year from 2006 to 2021, over three times the rate of overall employment growth in Northern Ireland. (www.bringitonni.info/parents--guardians/key facts/) accessed December 2015.

In fact, almost every organisation will use IT to conduct their daily operations. As a result, almost all organisations will value the knowledge, understanding and skills that GCSE Digital Technology develops. Skills that you will acquire include research, investigation, analysis, communication, problem-solving, time management and working with others. You will also develop practical skills using Multimedia, Spread sheets and Databases packages.

Contact: Mr D McCann (Head of ICT)

BTEC Tech Award in Digital Information Technology (2022)

Why choose a BTEC Tech Award in Digital Information Technology?
This qualification is for pupils interested in taking a hands-on course alongside their GCSEs that will offer them an insight into what it is like to work in the Digital sector.
Tech Awards are Level 1/Level 2 courses, they are the same size and rigour as GCSEs, widening learners' options at Key Stage 4, while keeping all options open for progression into post-16 education and training.
The BTEC Tech Award in Digital Information Technology gives you a broad introduction to several aspects of 'digital' – from interface design to data management and IT systems – enabling you to see what areas you are most keen on and keeping your options wide open for progression.

Assessment Overview

Component	GLH	Qualification Weighting	Marks available	Type of assessment	Length of Assessment	Availability
Component 1: Exploring User Interface Design Principles and Project Planning Techniques	36	30%	60	Internal assessment (PSA*) with 4 tasks. Externally moderated	6 hours of supervised sessions	Twice a year: September release for December/January moderation (from 2023) January release for May/June moderation (from 2023)
Component 2: Collecting, Presenting and Interpreting Data	36	30%	60	Internal assessment (PSA*) with 3 tasks. Externally moderated	7 hours of supervised sessions	Twice a year: September release for December/January moderation (from 2023) January release for May/June moderation (from 2023)
Component 3: Effective Digital Working Practices	48	40%	60	External synoptic exam. Externally marked	1 hour 30 minutes	Twice a year in January and May (from 2024)

60% Internal coursework, 40% one External written paper.
Component 1: Exploring User Interface Design Principles and Project Planning Techniques. Pupils will develop their understanding of what makes an effective user interface and how to effectively manage a project. They will use this understanding to plan, design and create a user interface for an application chosen by the Exam board. **(Internal).** Usually completed using a Presentation package e.g. Powerpoint.
Component 2: Collecting, Presenting and Interpreting Data. Pupils will understand the characteristics of data and information and how they help organisations in decision making. They will use data manipulation methods to create a dashboard to present and draw conclusions from information, for an application chosen by the Exam board. **(Internal).** Usually completed using a Spreadsheet Package e.g. Excel.
Component 3: **Effective Digital Working Practices.** Pupils will explore how organisations use digital systems and the wider implications associated with their use. **(External)**

With a Tech Award you will:
• Get a taste of what the Digital sector is like.
• Gain transferable skills and confidence that will help you in the world today and prepare you for their futures.
• Receive an introduction to vocational study.
• Have opportunities to apply learning from your GCSE subjects to every day and work contexts.
• Build applied knowledge and skills that show an aptitude for further learning, both in the sector and more widely. This course can lead to further vocational studies in BTEC Nationals in IT Level 3 which we offer in the Abbey Grammar school.

Career Opportunities
Digital skills span **all industries**, and **almost all jobs** in the UK today require employees to have a good level of digital literacy, putting it increasingly on a par with English and maths skills.

Contact Teachers: Mr D Mc Cann, Mr M Grogan

Where can I find out more information?
https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/btec-tech-awards/digital-information-technology-2022.html

DRAMA
DRAMA AND PERFORMANCE SKILLS

Drama

INTRODUCTION

The GCSE Drama specification allows you to develop your knowledge, understanding and skills in relation to drama. You will be expected to engage actively in the process of dramatic study and to work closely with other students in your group to create, develop and realise your performances. You can choose between two pathways for your performances – acting or design. You will also study a set text and complete a written examination based on this.

- You will have a choice of two pathways – performing (acting) or design (costume, lighting, multimedia, set or

WHY STUDY DRAMA?

sound).

- You will have an opportunity, as part of a group, to devise your own performance.
- You will also, as part of a group, investigate, create and develop a scripted performance (based on an existing script).

WHAT WILL I STUDY?

COMPONENT	AREAS OF STUDY
Component 1: Devised Performance	You will: • work in groups to devise a performance; • research style, genre, professional practice and the work of theatre practitioners to inform your outcome; • decide on a target audience; • rehearse and prepare for the performance; • contribute to the final performance, according to your chosen pathway (acting or design); and • produce a student log at the end of the process, in which you record a summary analysis and evaluation of your work and the work of others.

Component 2: Scripted Performance	You will: • work with your group to select, edit and shape a script to perform; • research style, genre, professional practice, materials and/or equipment; • create a theatrical interpretation or design concept that has meaning for an audience; • rehearse and prepare for the performance; and • contribute to the final performance, according to your chosen pathway (acting or design).
Component 3: Knowledge and Understanding of Drama	You will: • study one of the following set texts: – A Midsummer Night's Dream; – Juno and the Paycock; – The Crucible; – Philadelphia, Here I Come!; – Tea in a China Cup; – Blood Brothers; – Across the Barricades; or – Sparkleshark; • develop understanding of the text and elements such as the use of language, style and genre; • consider context, production and design; and • analyse and evaluate your own work and the work of others, for example analyse a live or recorded theatre event.

HOW WILL I BE ASSESSED?

COMPONENT	ASSESSMENT DESCRIPTION	WEIGHTING
Component 1: Devised Performance	Controlled assessment 30 hours Devise and act (for at least 5 minutes) in a group performance or Devise, present and realise your design concept in a group performance (30 marks) ..... Complete a student log (20 marks) Teachers mark the task and we moderate the results.	15% 10%

Component 2: Scripted Performance	Controlled assessment 42 hours Select and interpret a published play script Act in a group performance or Present and realise your design concept in a group performance (60 marks) Teachers mark the task and we moderate the results	35%
Component 3: Knowledge and Understanding of Drama	External written examination 1 hour 30 minutes You answer three questions using one set text. (You can bring an unmarked copy of the set text into the examination.)	

Performance Skills

INTRODUCTION

The Level 2 Performing Skills qualification has recently been integrated into the Key Stage 4 Drama curriculum. This addition is strategic, as it aligns well with the existing Drama GCSE course. It offers students an opportunity to earn a second qualification by submitting some of their GCSE coursework for assessment in Performing Skills also. This approach allows students to attain two qualifications without incurring a substantial increase in workload.

WHAT WILL I STUDY?

The table below summarises the structure of this qualification.

All three units are **mandatory**.

Content	Assessment	Availability
Unit 1: Working in the Performing Arts Industry	Portfolio of evidence, internally assessed and externally moderated	Winter and Summer
Unit 2: Develop Technique for Performance	Portfolio of evidence, internally assessed and externally moderated	Winter and Summer
Unit 3: Rehearse and Perform	Portfolio of evidence, internally assessed and externally moderated	Winter and Summer

CROSS-CURRICULAR SKILLS AT KEY STAGE 4 COMMUNICATION, USING MATHEMATICS AND USING ICT
You will have opportunities to develop these skills in a variety of ways, for example: • presenting your work to an audience through the devised and scripted performances and in your responses to questions in the written examination; • (design students) understanding intensity levels of lighting and sound; and • researching the set text and selected materials for the devised and scripted performances.
THINKING SKILLS AND PERSONAL CAPABILITIES AT KEY STAGE 4 SELF-MANAGEMENT, WORKING WITH OTHERS AND PROBLEM SOLVING
You will be encouraged to, for example: • produce your own student log for Component 1; • work together for a collective goal such as group rehearsals and performances; and • justify your performance and design ideas for the set text in the written examination

WHAT CAN I DO WITH A QUALIFICATION IN DRAMA?

This course gives you the opportunity to explore a range of practical, creative, analytical and performance skills. The majority of careers and further study pathways increasingly require the range of skills developed through the qualification: presentation, collaboration, confidence, evaluation and innovation. Studying GCSE Drama can lead to further study in the performing arts, a career in acting or design, or a wide variety of other careers that use the skills described above. The creative arts is a healthy and growing sector in Northern Ireland and GCSE Drama is a very relevant qualification.

Contact: Mr P McParland (Head of Drama)

Food & Nutrition

GCSE Food & Nutrition combines aspects of science, nutrition, cooking and consumerism. Students learn about the inter-relationships between diet, health, food choice and the management of resources.

GCSE Food & Nutrition gives students a valuable insight into:

- What's really in the food we eat every day;
- The growing impact of diet related illnesses on the health of today's society.
- How to plan and cook nutritious and economical meals;
- How to choose the best food for themselves and their family;
- The science of food;
- The importance of good nutrition and health; and
- The role of the consumer in modern eating patterns.

GCSE Food & Nutrition is divided into two compulsory units; these are outlined in more detail below:

• **Component 1: Food and Nutrition** • Food Provenance • Food processing and production • Food and nutrition for good health • Energy and nutrients • Macronutrients (Carbs, Fat, Protein) • Micronutrients (Vitamins / Minerals) • Fiber • Water • Nutrition throughout the life cycle • Special Diets (Vegetarian, Coeliac etc.) • Health Issues (Diabetes, Cancer, Heart Disease) • Being an effective consumer • Factors affecting food choice • Food Safety • Food poisoning • Budgeting • Debt • Credit / Loans / Managing Money • Food Labelling	**Weighting: 50% Written Exam, Summer 2027**

• Food Ethics – Food Miles / Organic / Fairtrade • The Law and food	
Component 2: Practical Food and Nutrition (Controlled Assessment Task) • Planning activity; • Practical activity – 3-hour practical cooking exam – 3 course & 3 accompaniments • Evaluation activity	**Weighting: 50% Controlled Assessment, October 2026**

2 Specification at a Glance

The table below summarises the structure of this GCSE course.

Content	Assessment	Weightings	Availability
Component 1: Food and Nutrition	External written examination 2 hours 120 marks The written paper includes multiple-choice, short and structured questions, and questions requiring extended writing.	50%	**This is a linear qualification.** **Assessment is available each Summer from 2019.**
Component 2: Practical Food and Nutrition	Controlled assessment 120 marks Students complete **one** task that involves the following: • Part A: Research and Viewpoints; • Part B: Justification of Choice; • Part C: Planning; • Part D: Practical Activity; and • Part E: Evaluation. Students present the written report on the task in the required format. Teachers mark the task, and we moderate the results.	50%	**We will issue the title of the task on 1 September of the academic year in which the award is to be made.** **Assessment is available each Summer from 2019.**

Sample of the specification below:

Content	Learning Outcomes
Energy and nutrients	Students should be able to: • explain the factors that influence individual energy requirements; • analyse the relationship between food intake, portion size, basal metabolic rate (BMR) and physical activity level (PAL), in achieving energy balance and maintaining a healthy weight; • identify the percentage of recommended energy values provided by protein, fat and carbohydrates;
Macronutrients	• explain the functions and identify the main sources of the following macronutrients: – protein (including biological value and complementation); – fat: saturated and unsaturated (including monounsaturated and polyunsaturated); and – carbohydrates: sugars (simple) and starches (complex);
Micronutrients	• explain the functions and identify the main sources of the following micronutrients: – vitamins A, B_1, B_{12}, C and D, and folate; and – the minerals sodium, iron and calcium; • explain the interactions between iron and vitamin C, and between calcium and vitamin D; • discuss the possible consequences of deficiencies in these micronutrients: – folate; – vitamin C; – vitamin D; – calcium; and – iron; and
Fibre	• explain the functions and identify the main sources of fibre.

In GCSE Food & Nutrition, students are assessed against three assessment objectives. They must:

AO1: recall, select and communicate their knowledge and understanding of a range of contexts;

AO2: apply skills, knowledge and understanding in a variety of contexts and in planning and carrying out investigations and tasks; and

AO3: analyses and evaluate information, sources and evidence, make reasoned judgments and present conclusions.

The study of Food and Nutrition at GCSE can present career opportunities for pupils who may be interested in the following fields of study:

- Food and nutrition - dietetics, medicine, food science, teaching;
- Food technology – product development;
- Business;
- Health education and promotion;
- Consumer studies – trading standards, consumer legislation;
- Environmental health;
- Advertising, Sales and Marketing;
- Health and social services - administration, nursing, child care and research work
- Horticulture / Agricultural Studies
- Catering and hospitality industry – chefs, management

***Please note at GCSE, students purchase and provide all their own ingredients for every practical lesson. There are no practical lessons in Year 11, the only practical work occurs during the first 8weeks of Year 12 in preparation for the cookery exam.**

Full GCSE specification available here:
https://ccea.org.uk/key-stage-4/gcse/subjects/gcse-home-economics-food-and-nutrition-2017

Contact: Mrs M O'Donovan (Head of Food & Nutrition)

GEOGRAPHY

To study GCSE Geography is to explore the world around us. Geography is a fascinating subject that helps us understand where and how people live. It helps us understand the worlds physical features and the study of people and cultures that inhabit our world. Geography gives a balanced viewpoint of the world around us which is excellent preparation for the world of work. You will have the opportunity to gain transferable skills such as:

- The ability of work as a team
- Good communication skills
- Problem solving and logical reasoning
- Environmental and social awareness
- Managing information
- Flexible thinking

Geography at GCSE provides an opportunity for students to build upon the knowledge and skills obtained at Key Stage 3. The topics studied are as follows:

Unit 1 (40%) **Understanding Our Natural World**	**Unit 2 (40%)** **Living in Our World**	**Unit 3 (20%)** **Fieldwork Skills**
Theme A: River Environments	Theme A: Population and Migration	Data Collectiion
Theme B: Coastal Environments	Theme B: Change in Urban Areas	Data Analysis
Theme C: Our Changing Weather	Theme C: Contrasts in World Development	Data Interpretation
Theme D: Restless Earth	Theme D: Managing Our Resources	Enquiry Conclusion & Evaluation

There is no controlled assessment (coursework) – instead students complete a fieldwork investigation based on a river study. The data collected is used in the completion of the Unit 3 examination (20%)

Career Opportunities

Geography is a versatile subject that compliments subjects such as Business Studies, Biology and Chemistry. It can be easily combined with almost all GCSE subjects and therefore can widen your career choice. GCSE Geography allows students to proceed to careers as diverse as Law, Urban Planning, Quantity Surveying, Sustainability consultant, Architecture, Marketing, Teaching, Engineering, Finance and the Travel and tourism sector. Geography is a facilitating subject which can open doors to a variety of degree courses and careers. Geography will inspire students to become global citizens that have an active role in society.

Contact: Mrs D Simpson (Head of Geography)

HISTORY

The History Department has chosen the CCEA Syllabus as being most suited to the individual interests and skills of the teachers in the Department.

AIMS

1. The stimulation of interest in and enthusiasm for the study of the past.

2. The development of a feeling for the past.

3. The acquisition of knowledge and understanding of human activity in the past, linking it, as appropriate, with the present.

4. An understanding of the nature of cause and consequence, continuity and change, similarity and difference.

5. The development of essential study skills such as the ability to locate and extract information from primary and secondary sources; to detect bias; to analyse this information and to construct a logical argument.

6. The furthering of methods for the discovery, interpretation and communication of knowledge about the past.

Paper 1: **Germany 1918 – 39**

Britain, Northern Ireland, Eire 1920-49

Paper 2: **International Relations: The Cold War 1945-89, New tensions after 1989: Al Qaeda and 9/11, The 2003 invasion of Iraq and the rise of Islamic State.**

THE EDUCATIONAL VALUE OF GCSE HISTORY -

Pupils who have studied History at GCSE Level are better able to understand their own world: public events, current affairs and contemporary trends. A greater understanding of the past helps create a critical awareness of the present: GCSE History promotes empathy and helps pupils to understand the attitudes of others: Moreover, it helps pupils to examine political claims critically, which could be vital in preventing the enslavement of future generations.

History has special relevance for those who proceed to careers in Law, Journalism, Politics, Social Work, the Civil Service and Teaching. Perhaps less obvious is the value for those interested in Management, Architecture and Sales. Above all, History is about people and as such is of some relevance to almost every career.

Obtaining a grade B or higher in GCSE History, along with the experience of working at that subject, will be of benefit for those pupils interested in taking 'A' Level History and / or A Level Politics.

Also, in the past ten years GCSE History has produced some of the best results in the school, with students regularly finishing in the top 3 places in Northern Ireland. The last 3 years GCSE results have been particularly outstanding.

It should be noted that History is one of the Russell Group universities' facilitating subjects. The Russell Group is a group of the 24 leading universities in the UK, (of which Queen's University, Belfast is a member). With History seen as a 'facilitating subject'; they see the study of the subject as opening doors to more degrees and more professions.

Contact: Mr D Evans (Head of History and Politics)

LEARNING FOR LIFE and WORK

INTRODUCTION

Learning for Life and Work explores local and global issues and investigates cultural diversity and the challenges and opportunities this brings to our society. By studying this subject, you can develop your skills to support you in thinking and acting independently. Studying Learning for Life and Work can provide preparation for future employment, as you will study the skills, qualities and attitudes required for a successful career, how employers assess candidates' suitability for a particular job and how to prepare for an interview. You will explore the role of the entrepreneur in starting up a business. The course will also help you to plan for your personal career and consider lifelong learning benefits.

WHY STUDY LEARNING FOR LIFE AND WORK?

In studying Learning for Life and Work, you will learn about topics such as diversity and inclusion, causes of conflict, human rights and social responsibility. This subject will develop your knowledge and understanding of living a healthy lifestyle, impacts on health, having a healthy mind, healthy relationships and a positive concept of self. You will also study personal safety, and how to manage a budget and make financial decisions based on analysing information available to you. As well as learning how to prepare for an interview and what employers are looking for, you will also study employment contracts and terms and conditions of employment. It will inform you about what is expected of you as an employee, as well as the responsibilities of the employer.

UNIQUE FEATURES OF THIS QUALIFICATION?

This specification is a unitised course. There is now only one controlled assessment task, submitted at the end of the second year of the course. There are a number of topics covered in this qualification that you will find beneficial to you in everyday life:

- democracy and active participation – ways in which young people can participate in democratic processes and the benefits of this participation for the young person and for society;
- benefits and misuse of social media – making young people consider the risks, as well as the opportunities, of using social networking online;
- making informed financial decisions – protecting against fraud and identity theft, comparison websites, and financial advice and consumer protection;
- employment – skills shortages, emerging careers resulting from globalisation, codes of conduct in the workplace, work-related stress and roles of trade unions;
- social responsibility of businesses – how businesses can demonstrate social responsibility and the benefits of this to their business;

and • self-employment – importance of an entrepreneur carrying out research before starting up a business.

WHAT WILL I STUDY?

Unit 1: Local and Global Citizenship –

This unit covers: • diversity and inclusion; • rights and responsibilities; • government and civil society; • democratic institutions; • democracy and active participation; and • the role of NGOs.

Unit 2: Personal Development –

This unit covers: • personal health and well-being; • emotions and reactions to life experiences; • relationships and sexuality; • personal safety and well-being; • responsible parenting; and • making informed financial decisions.

Unit 3: Employability –

This unit covers: • the impact of globalisation on employment; • preparing for employment; • rights and responsibilities of employers and employees; • social

responsibility of businesses; • exploring self-employment; and • personal career management.

Unit 4: Investigation (Controlled Assessment Task) –

You will complete one task from a choice of three. The task involves the following: Planning, Research, Communicating Findings, Self-Evaluation and Presentation of Task.

HOW WILL I BE ASSESSED?

UNIT ASSESSMENT DESCRIPTION WEIGHTING:

- Unit 1: Local and Global Citizenship External written examination 1 hour (20%)
- Unit 2: Personal Development External written examination 1 hour (20%)
- Unit 3: Employability External written examination 1 hour (20%)
- Unit 4: Investigation (Controlled Assessment Task) Controlled assessment (40%)

WHAT SKILLS WILL I DEVELOP?

This qualification will help you gain valuable skills that can lead to further study at Advanced level in a range of subjects, for example GCE Business Studies, GCE Professional Business Services, GCE Government and Politics or GCE Health and Social Care. Applying the range of skills that you will gain through studying this subject will be of benefit, as you can use them in a variety of careers – skills such as carrying out research; participating in discussions, debates and interviews; making financial decisions; using ICT; working with others; analysing information to make and justify a decision; and creating reports or presentations.

WHAT CAN I DO WITH A QUALIFICATION IN LEARNING FOR LIFE AND WORK?

Studying Learning for Life and Work can lead to careers in accounting, banking, retail, research, human resources, health and social care, government, small business and to self-employment as an entrepreneur.

Contact: Mr G Morgan (Head of LLW)

GCSE Moving Image Arts

Why choose Moving Image Arts?
Moving Image Arts is an ideal choice for students wishing to pursue a career in the creative industries. This unique subject develops critical and creative abilities in all the key creative areas of film production, including writing, directing, editing, producing and production design. While all students' creative work is grounded in film analysis from a range of disciplines and contexts, the subject also fosters and encourages independence, originality, and experimentation.

Subject Title: GCSE Moving Image Arts
This specification focuses on how to create moving image products, and the genres within filmmaking. Students plan and create moving image products and analyse and critically evaluate moving image genres. Through studying this specification students:

- develop an understanding of film language in theory and practice.
- develop ideas through investigating and experimenting with film-making techniques and processes.
- develop the ability to manage resources and equipment in relation to film production and produce moving image artworks.
- develop technical competence in the use of film-making techniques; and
- evaluate the effectiveness of their own practice.

Moving Image Arts consists of 3 Components:

Component 1: Critical Understanding of Creative and Technical Moving Image Production
This component takes the form of an online examination carried out in Year 12.
This examination is **40%** of the overall GCSE mark.
Section A: Film Language, Genre and Representation.
Section B: Creative Production, Management and Industry Contexts.
Section C: Comparative Analysis.

Component 2: Acquisition of Skills in Moving Image Production
This component aims to enable students to develop five core skills of film production:
Storyboarding, Camera, Editing, Postproduction sound, Animation
Students must apply these core skills in the **four tasks** set by CCEA.
These tasks are carried out in Year 11 and together are worth **20%** of the overall GCSE mark.

Component 3: Planning and Making a Moving Image Product
This component aims to extend students' skills to create a complete film production. Students create their own research analysis and production portfolio, including one complete short genre film with associated creative and organisational preproduction and production materials.
Component 3 is carried out in Year 12 and is worth **40%** of the overall GCSE mark.
Component 3 has **four stages:**
Stage 1: Research Analysis
Stage 2: Creative Preproduction, Planning and Organisation
Stage 3: Creative Production and Post-Production
Stage 4: Evaluation
Students extend the skills they acquired in Component 2 by:

- Developing a narrative and script before producing a storyboard.
- Using others' work to influence their own camera work and editing, which must reflect genre-specific techniques and purposes.
- Recording and editing a wider range of production sound, including location sounds and dialogue where appropriate.

Moving Image Arts Careers
Director. Art Director. Producer. Animator. Special Effects. Editor. Director of Photography. Costume Supervisor. Moving Image Arts teacher. Media based posts. Sound Artist.

Contact: Mrs L Doey (Head of MIA)

GCSE MUSIC

Examination Board: CCEA

This specification is intended for candidates who wish to pursue music at GCSE, building on skills and knowledge developed at Key Stage 3. The students taking music at GCSE Level will be interested in the subject and will also be accomplished performers at Grade 3-4 level and higher by April of Year 12.

DRAFT SPECIFICATION: GCSE Music consists of three units.

Performing & Appraising	*Externally assessed by visiting examiner.* 1 Solo performance and 1 ensemble performance. It should last no longer than 6 minutes. Discussion lasts approximately 3 minutes	35% *Performance 30%* *Discussion 5%*
Composing	*Controlled assessment – Internally assessed.* Candidate creates 2 compositions. One will be in response to a pre-release stimulus; one is free choice.	30%
Listening & Appraising	External written examination 1 hour 30 minutes	35%

Listening and Appraising will involve both familiar and unfamiliar music relating to the Area of Studies. The Areas of Study are:

1 **Western Classical Music (1600- 1910)**
- Handel: *For unto us a child is born* from the Messiah
- Mozart: *Horn Concerto No 4, 3rd Movement*
- Berlioz: *Symphonie Fantastique, 4th Movement*

2 **Film Music**
- Eric Coates: *March* (The Dam Busters)
- John Williams: *Superman Theme*
- James Horner: *Young Peter* from the Amazing Spiderman

3 **Musical Traditions in Ireland**
- Beoga: *Prelude Polkas: Prelude Polka, Paddy's Polka No 2 and Millstream Reel*
- Stonewall: *Fife Medley: Boys of Belfast and The Girl I Left Behind*

4 **Popular Music (1980 – Present Day)**
- Eurythmics: *Sweet Dreams*
- Ash: *Burn Baby Burn*
- Florence and the Machine: *Cosmic Love*

GCSE Music is an excellent choice for any type of musician.

The lessons involve use of IT, practical performing and composing sessions, as well as developing independent academic study of music. All types of musicians can thrive on this course as well, with guitarists often finding performing and composing easy, traditional musicians often find the listening and appraising their strength. Commitment is needed to develop weaker areas and fully utilise strengths. Involvement with ensemble work, be it choir or a band, is necessary and an approximate performance level of grade 3 or equivalent is advisable as well as continued instrumental tuition. GCSE Music is varied, interesting, challenging and satisfying.

Contact: Mrs C Keenan (Head of Music)

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Aims and objectives
The GCSE Physical Education specification is broad, coherent and practical, designed to encourage learners to be inspired, motivated and challenged by the subject and enable them to make informed decisions about further learning opportunities and career pathways.

Through studying GCSE Physical Education learners will acquire the knowledge, understanding, skills and values to develop and maintain their performance in physical activities and understand the benefits of health, fitness and well-being. Learners will develop theoretical knowledge and understanding of the factors that underpin physical activity and sport and use this knowledge to improve performance.

Component 1: Introduction to physical education
Written examination: 2 hours
60% of qualification

Learners will be assessed through a range of short and extended questions. The questions will be based on stimuli/ sources.

Component 2: The active participant in physical education
Non-exam assessment
40% of qualification

This component is internally assessed and externally moderated.
Learners will be assessed in **three** different activities in the role of performer in at least **one** individual and **one** team sport.
Learners will be further assessed through a written analysis and evaluation of their personal performance in **one** of their chosen activities.

The subject content focuses on five key areas:-

1. Health, training and exercise
2. Exercise physiology
3. Movement analysis
4. Psychology of sport and physical activity
5. Socio-cultural issues in physical activity and sport.

Contact: Mr D Gordon

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

GCSE Design and Technology will prepare our students to participate confidently and successfully in an increasingly technological world. Students will gain awareness and learn from wider influences on Design and Technology including historical, social, cultural, environmental and economic factors. Students will get the opportunity to work creatively when designing and making and apply technical and practical expertise.

Our GCSE allows students to study core technical and designing and making principles, including a broad range of design processes, materials techniques and equipment. They will also have the opportunity to study specialist technical principles in greater depth.

You can find out about our Design and Technology qualifications at aqa.org.uk
A breakdown of Assessment follows:

Paper One - 50%	
What's assessed:	**How it's assessed:**
• Core technical principles • Specialist technical principles • Designing and making principles	• Written exam: 2 hours • 100 marks • 50% of GCSE

Questions	
Section A – Core technical principles (20 marks)	A mixture of multiple choice and short answer questions assessing a breadth of technical knowledge and understanding.
Section B – Specialist technical principles (30 marks)	Several short answer questions (2–5 marks) and one extended response to assess a more in depth knowledge of technical principles.
Section C – Designing and making principles (50 marks)	A mixture of short answer and extended response questions including a 12 mark design question.

Coursework – 50%	
What's assessed:	**How it's assessed:**
Practical application of: • Core technical principles • Specialist technical principles • Designing and making principles	• Non-exam assessment (coursework): 30–35 hours approx • 100 marks • 50% of GCSE Task(s) • Investigating • Designing • Making • Analysing and Evaluating • Students will produce a working prototype and a portfolio of evidence (max 20 pages) • Work will be marked by the teachers in the Abbey and moderated by AQA

Career Opportunities:
The course provides an important grounding in all aspects of Engineering and Design, and is widely recognised as an excellent starting point for university courses in Electrical, Electronic, Microelectronic (Computer), Civil, Aeronautical and Mechanical Engineering, as well as such courses as Architecture, Quantity Surveying, Advertising and Product Design & Manufacture. It is also possible to take a B.Sc.(Hons) course in Technology and Design as well as a teaching degree. Design and Technology also allows students to have "tasters" of a lot of different skills and experiences, this helps broaden knowledge and keeps careers options open.
Contact teacher: Mr M. Rodgers

BTEC Travel and Tourism

Why study Travel & Tourism?

BTEC Travel and Tourism gives pupils a broad knowledge and understanding of the Travel and Tourism Industries in the UK. Pupils also gain insight into related sectors such as business and retail and distribution and hospitality and catering.

This course allows pupils to explore their ICT, communication and presentation skills. Pupils will learn the structure of the Travel and Tourism industry through many research methods and activities and most importantly begin to realise the employment potential of Travel and Tourism.

Component 1 (Internal Assessment) = 30%	Travel and Tourism Organisations and Destinations
Component 2 (Internal Assessment) = 30%	Customer Needs in Travel and Tourism
Component 3 (External Synoptic) = 40%	Influences on Global Travel and Tourism

How will I be assessed?

You will complete two Controlled Assessment Tasks (60%) and one External Exam (40%).

- Year 11– Component 1 Controlled Assessment will be completed.
- Year 12– Component 2 Controlled Assessment & Component 3 External Exam completed.

Careers

Job opportunities for pupils with BTEC qualification in Travel & Tourism are wide and varied- travel consultants, conference organisers, restaurant managers, cabin crew, Marketing Executive, Hotel manager, Spa Manager, Airline Pilot, Interpreter, Visitor Attraction Manager, Holiday Representative, Zookeeper, Lifeguard, PR Manager, Tour Operator and many more.

Contact: Mrs A Elmore

Careers Department Information – Jan. 2025

■ GCSEs and Level 2 BTECs are the **ONLY fully completed qualifications** you have when applying to universities in NI, England, Scotland, Wales. Some universities will only consider GCSEs at the first attempt for some competitive entry courses. ***Resits of GCSEs may not be considered by all universities*** for courses of study such as medicine or dentistry. For study in those degree areas for some universities, a maximum of one BTEC qualification will be considered alongside GCSEs and scored depending on performance in each individual unit. GCSE grades are therefore important for competitive entry applications.

■ Universities in the **UCAS** system (NI/ENG/SCOT/WALES) usually only take the **best NINE GCSE results** (or accepted L2 qual.s) for competitive entry courses and add them to other scores from **admissions tests**. Selection in such a process usually involves an **interview** too.

■ The **A* grade** at A Level may be specified as part of an alternative offer for a limited range of degree programmes at some universities.

■ **Aptitude tests** for medicine, dentistry, other high demand courses, and any course at **Oxford or Cambridge**, form an important part of the application process, e.g. the University Clinical Aptitude Test (UCAT) for medicine, the Medical Selection Admissions Test (MSAT) for physiotherapy (at Ulster University), the Thinking Skills Assessment (TSA) for politics and economics courses at Oxford. Therefore, students should know they are aiming for high grades at GCSE AND that additional research begins in GCSE years for such degree programmes.

■ Students interested in applying to university for medicine, veterinary medicine/science, dentistry, and competitive entry subjects such as law at **IRISH universities (RoI)** should consider completing **four subjects at A Level to AS level ONLY** because of the change to the tariff points system from 2025. This is a points-based system. You can compare the UCAS and CAO tariff points tables below.

■ **UCAS applications** to **NI/ENG/SCOT/WALES** are scored as follows as of 2017:

A2 Grade	Tariff	Level 3 BTEC Subsid. Diploma Grade	Tariff	AS & AS VCE Grade	Tariff
A*	56	Distinction*	56	//	//
A	48	Distinction	48	A	20
B	40	//	//	B	16
C	32	Merit	32	C	12
D	24	//	//	D	10
E	16	Pass	16	E	6

Note: Queen's University Belfast considers a Level 3 Distinction = A; L3 Distinction = B

■ **CAO applications** to the **Republic of Ireland** are scored as follows as of Nov. 2024:

Best FOUR subjects at A Level from ONE academic year; OR
Best THREE at A Level from ONE academic year, plus ONE AS subject from either the same or preceding year only. (In other words from the same two-year certification cycle.)

From: Nov. 2024	**Universities and associated colleges**			**Dundalk Institute of Technology**	
		4th Subject		***(points under review as of JAN. 2025)***	
Grade	**Best 3 A-Levels**	**A-Level**	**AS Level**	**First 3 A-Levels**	**AS Levels (& 4th A-level where presented)**
A*	192	24	24†	175	/
A	165	24	24	165	75
B	142	20	20	140	65
C	120	18	18	120	50
D	100	16	16	100	35
E	67	14	14	50	20

† Extended Project is now accepted and scored as an AS. It is possible to attain an A* in the EP.

Institutes of Technology (other than DkIT) and other HEIs offering QQI HET awards:
Applicants are scored on the basis of a **maximum of 4 different subject results** at A and/or AS level.
For scoring purposes, the following combination of A Levels and AS Levels are permitted:
1. The best 4 A level results in a single sitting.
2. The best 3 A level results in a single sitting, plus the best AS level result from the previous or the same sitting.
3. The best 2 A level subject results in a single sitting, plus the best 2 results at AS level from the previous or the same sitting.
4. The best 1 A level subject result in a single sitting, plus the best 3 results at AS level from the previous or the same sitting.
5. The best 4 AS level subject results in a single sitting.

Important information for all applicants to RoI universities
• Evidence of GCSE examinations must be supplied to meet minimum entry requirements.
• AS Levels must be in different subjects to those taken at A-Level.

Please note: **ALL applicants to university must check the matriculation and minimum entry requirements for EACH course applied to.**

Up to date **entry requirements** for ALL university courses can be found online via the **universities' websites** or via UCAS using its course finder tool for NI/ENG/SCOT/WALES.

Copies of prospectuses for all major UK and Irish universities and training colleges are available in the careers room for students to review as well as a range of relevant **resources for students** in the **Careers Google Classroom**.

Choosing Subjects for GCSE

Over the next few weeks, you will begin to make several important decisions about your education and your future. Some decisions will be more difficult to make than others.

During your taught Careers Education and LLW Employability programmes, you will focus on preparing a **personal career plan** (PCP) that reflects what you think you would like to do in the future. This involves looking more closely at your skills and qualities as an individual, reflecting on your **strengths and weaknesses**, then focusing on **what you are good at, interested in and enjoy**.

You will also look at the various sources of information available to help you make both short-term and long-term career plans. During **careers classes** with Ms Reynolds, Mrs Murphy, and Mr Grogan you can **discuss subject options for GCSE** and the importance of choosing subjects relevant to your career ideas.
The following is an overview of what to consider before making your subject choices.

Choosing the 'Right' GCSE Subjects

The 'right' choice should include a combined consideration of these factors:

(1) Subjects that you really like:

The more you enjoy a subject; the easier it is to learn.

(2) Subjects that you are good at:

Subjects change in their content and the way they are taught from junior school to GCSE level, so make sure you speak to your teacher about **coping with this change**.

(3) Subjects that you may ***need*** for your career:

Careers are flexible and not fixed destinations. Choosing a career is a continuous process which involves a series of choices as you make your way through life.
Your GCSE subject choices will support or provide the career opportunities open to you.
Think ahead and choose subjects that:

a) will help with your A Level studies;
b) are **needed for entry into university** courses;
c) are needed for entry into further education courses; and which
d) may help you land a job.

Carefully consider the GCSE and A level **subject requirements** for courses.

(4) Subjects that keep your options open:

Taking a broad and balanced range of subjects will leave open many career doors and close few.

(5) What your teachers say:

Teachers should be able to advise you whether your choice of GCSE subjects is **suited to your interests and abilities**.

(6) What parents and friends say:

Listen to others as they can pass on valuable knowledge and experience on the importance of certain subjects in the world of work. However, always remember it is **your subject choice** and **you** must do what is **right for you**.

(7) Preferably, do NOT combine GCSE Digital Technology and GCSE Computer Science.

Your choice should be one or the other. Please note that computer science requires strong mathematical ability.

(8) Preferably, choose a language AND a science subject.

Although most universities do not specify GCSE entry requirements in detail, it is important to understand that offering a GCSE science demonstrates your ability to analyse data and understand scientific principles. If you wish to pursue a course of study that requires the application of these skills, then it would be important to offer some level of science at GCSE.
*If interested in **primary school teacher training in Northern Ireland, you MUST have a science at GCSE**. If interested in primary school teacher training with maths or science pathways, you must have double award science (or triple award).
In addition, language skills are highly sought after in the world of work as we become even more globalised. Even if you do not wish to specialise in languages beyond school, many employers seek graduates who can apply linguistic skills as they are operating and competing internationally.
*A language at GCSE is a requirement for entry to most programmes at these Irish universities: UCD, UCC, MU, UofG, TCD. Please check universities webpages for up-to-date requirements!

What questions should I ask my teachers?
Your teachers will view it as part of their responsibility that you are entered for the most appropriate subjects and courses available. So, make sure you ask each subject teacher:

- How much reading is involved?
- How much writing is involved?
- How much coursework/controlled assessment is involved?
- What percentage of the marks is given for coursework?
- Are there different tiers of assessment?
- Is there an oral test?
- Is there a listening test?
- What weighting has the exam/s?
- Do I need to get more information on this subject?
- Are there projects to do?
- What practical skills are involved?
- How much laboratory or fieldwork is there?
- What careers or career pathways are associated with this subject?

Ask plenty of questions; get plenty of answers. Armed with the information, you should be well placed to begin to make your GCSE decisions - **the choice is yours**.

Good luck.

Ms A. Reynolds (Head of Careers Education & Guidance)