



Ashmole Academy

# KS4 Curriculum & Options Choices

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**Ashmole  
Academy**



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## Introduction

### Welcome to Ashmole Academy's guide to our Key Stage 4 curriculum

Key Stage 4 is an important stage in our students' educational journey.

Our aim is to ensure each student selects a combination of subjects that align with their interests, strengths, and future aspirations.

Choosing wisely will provide a solid foundation for future academic success and personal development.

Within this booklet, you will find a summary of the wide range of subjects we offer as part of our Key Stage 4 Curriculum, detailed information about the programme of study for each GCSE subject, and a clear guide to navigating the options process.

# Ashmole KS4 Curriculum



The Ashmole KS4 Curriculum provides the range of subjects of qualifications to prepare students for a highly competitive, diverse and ever-changing future education system and employment market.

Students follow a curriculum that allows them to gain GCSE qualifications in subjects that facilitate access to the full range of further education institutions. Most students will be expected to study a language and a humanities or a creative subject alongside the core compulsory subjects: English, Mathematics and Science.

Some students will be identified to study Functional Literacy or Functional Numeracy to complement their GCSE study of both English and Mathematics. By doing so they will improve their chances of securing at least a Grade 5 in both GCSE English and Mathematics. This will then provide them with a wider range of post-16 options, including meeting the entry requirements to Ashmole Academy Sixth Form.

All students have a number of options choices enabling them to select subjects based on their own preferences. Students, for example, can choose to study a new subject like Business, or to choose additional humanities or creative subjects.

The combination of core and free choice options enables all students to maintain sufficient breadth of study. However, it is good advice to all students that if they have an intention to study a subject at school or in a college post-16, that subject should be chosen at Key Stage 4.

## Non-examined subjects

All students will study a programme of Religious Studies and Physical Education. These are non-examined and will not lead to a qualification. Students who wish to study either Religious Studies or Physical Education in greater depth and work towards a GCSE qualification may do so as one of their optional GCSE subjects.

## The structure of the curriculum

The curriculum consists of 50 lessons over a two-week timetable.

The table below shows the number of lessons per core subject for students through Years 10 and 11. The proposed number of lessons may be revised if there is an additional need in a particular curriculum area or if there are further changes made by the government.

These courses will be completed in May/June of Year 11. GCSEs are graded with a scale from 9 to 1, with 9 being the highest grade.

Subject	Year 10	Year 11
English	9	9
Mathematics	8	8
Science	12	12
Religious Studies (Core)	1	0
Physical Education (Core)	4	1
OPTION	4	5

## Assessment

Throughout Key Stage 4, students will be assessed using the GCSE scale (9 to 1). This will be reflected in their assessments and yearly reports.

The current GCSEs have a demanding subject content, which will be assessed by a terminal examination. Coursework or non-examined assessment has been removed from a number of subjects, with the exception of Performing Arts, Physical Education, and Art and Technology subjects.



**Pupils are highly motivated and work hard to achieve and learn successfully.**

- Ofsted Report 2021



## Curriculum Pathways

It is important for students to follow a curriculum that allows them to flourish and achieve success. Having more than one curriculum pathway means that all learners are able to select the most appropriate range of subjects and qualification types tailored to their individual interests, strengths and aspirations.

Our curriculum pathways are designed to be inclusive so that every Ashmole learner is supported in achieving their potential. Each Curriculum Pathway includes a number of compulsory subjects and several subject options from which to choose.

As part of our commitment to personal development, all students, regardless of their curriculum pathway, will study Religious Studies, PSHE and Physical Education. These are non-examined and will not lead to a qualification.

## Curriculum Pathway One

This curriculum pathway consists entirely of a set of GCSE subjects that keep a young person's options fully open for further study and future careers. Students on pathway one will sit 9 or 10 GCSEs in total.

On pathway one, students will study all core subjects: both English Literature and Language, Mathematics and Science (either Separate or Combined). These core subjects are complemented by two subjects from two of the three mandatory categories: Languages / Humanities / Creative.

This selection is complemented by two further subjects, which are an open choice.

## Curriculum Pathway Two

This curriculum pathway consists of the core subjects and provides students with either an additional Functional Literacy or Functional Numeracy course.

On pathway two, students will sit 8 or 9 GCSEs in total. Students will study all core subjects: both English Literature and Language, Mathematics and Science (either Separate or Combined).

These subjects are complemented by two subjects from two of the three mandatory categories: Languages / Humanities / Creative.

This selection is complemented by one further subject, which is an open choice.

\*N.B.

1. Computer Science is a challenging GCSE which includes programming and relies on strengths in logical thinking, numeracy and literacy. Therefore, this course has a minimum entry requirement of an Ashmole score of 7 in Mathematics and an Ashmole score of 6 in English.
2. Due to the similarities in course content, students may not select the following combinations; Product Design and Textiles
3. Students cannot choose the language they are not studying.

## Pathway One

				2 subjects from 2 of the 3 mandatory categories			
Core				Humanities	Language	Creative	Open 2 Choices
English Language	Mathematics	Biology	Geography	French	Art	Art	
English Literature		Chemistry	History			Business Studies	
		Physics	Religious Studies	Spanish	Drama	Computer Science	
		Or			Music	Drama	
		Combined Science			Product Design	Food Preparation and Nutrition	
					Textiles	French	
						Geography	
						History	
						Music	
						PE	
						Product Design	
						Religious Studies	
						Spanish	
						Textiles	

## Pathway Two

				2 subjects from 2 of the 3 mandatory categories			
Core				Humanities	Language	Creative	Open 1 Choices
English Language	Mathematics	Biology	Numeracy	Geography	French	Art	Art
English Literature		Chemistry	Literacy				History
		Physics		Religious Studies	Spanish	Drama	Computer Science
		Or				Music	Drama
		Combined Science				Product Design	Food Preparation and Nutrition
						Textiles	French
							Geography
							History
							Music
							PE
							Product Design
							Religious Studies
							Spanish
							Textiles

# Options Process and Timeline



## Year 9 Parents' Evening

Parents/Carers and students were invited to discuss progress made in Year 9 and to ask questions about GCSE courses in subjects in advance of options choices.

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11th December 2025

## Options guidance in tutorial sessions

Students will receive guidance through tutorial sessions on how to select option subjects and on general preparation for the start of Key Stage 4.

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January – April 2026

## Options Guidance Assemblies

Key staff will provide guidance on the Options Process to students. An outline of the option subjects available will be given to students.

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February 2026

## Options Evening

Parents/Carers and students are invited to attend our Options Evening to gain more understanding of the options process as well as subject specific information for all subjects studied at GCSE.

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5th March 2026

## Final Options Deadline

All students will need to submit their initial choices in advance of the optional guidance interviews.

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20th March 2026

## Start of GCSE Courses

Year 9 students will start their full Key Stage 4 timetable after the May Half-Term break.

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2nd June 2026

## Completion of GCSE Courses

Students will finish their Key Stage 4 courses and take their terminal GCSE examinations.

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May/June 2028

# Careers Guidance



## How are students given guidance on Careers?

All students will receive careers advice and guidance during Years 10–11. This is through our individualised online Unifrog profiles, individualised independent careers guidance, tutor time sessions, assemblies, specialist talks, and Employability Day.

Students are also directed to websites whereby they can further research their interests, whether it be the next stage of their education or insight into job specifications and entry requirements. Tutorial activities and PSHE lessons will explore the opportunities available Post-16 and the pathways available, whether it be at a school or college.

One of the highlights of Year 10 is Work Experience, which takes place at the end of the academic year. This gives all students a better understanding of the world of

work and can help them to make the link between their studies and the skills needed to be successful in the workplace. Work experience also helps students to improve their confidence and sense of responsibility transitioning into Year 11 and is concerned with giving students an understanding and experience of working life.

Guidance is provided in school through one-to-one mentoring in Year 11, as well as through impartial guidance by an external provider. All students have the opportunity to receive some independent advice and guidance. Different groups of students may be seen together, depending on their prospective future educational and career pathway.

# Unifrog

**To support your child in making the right decisions, they have access to Unifrog.**

Unifrog is the complete destinations platform. It brings all the available information into one single, impartial, user-friendly platform that helps students to make the best choices for their future pathways and careers.

At this stage, it will provide clear advice on how decisions this year may help shape their future decisions. It will help your child identify their personality type, their personal strengths and areas to develop, and encourage them to strengthen their employability skills.

Students in Year 9 can easily explore a vast bank of career profiles and start to

understand the various courses and options ahead. As they begin to identify exciting potential pathways, their raised aspirations will help in their own academic performance.

Further along the line, they can explore every apprenticeship, university course, and college course in the UK and around the world, as well as career opportunities, such as MOOCs (online courses), School Leaver Programmes, and work experience opportunities.

Further help on how Unifrog can support your child in their future pathways can be found on the following link:

Learn more about Unifrog here: [www.unifrog.org](http://www.unifrog.org)

## The Ashmole Careers Booklet

Lastly, all students have access to the newly created Ashmole Careers Booklet. The booklet is designed to support our students when making informed decisions about their futures. It is information on:

- The different post-16 and post-18 pathways ahead
- How their subjects link to career routes
- How Unifrog can support students with choosing their GCSE subjects
- Hyper-linked links to informative websites

The Ashmole Careers Booklet can be accessed via Google Classroom.



“I am extremely pleased with the high level of teaching that my children have received at Ashmole Academy. The teachers have enabled my children to excel in every way, which I feel has helped them develop a passion for learning.”

- Source



# The Core Subjects

English 14

Math 16

Science 18



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“The quality of pupils’ work is first rate.”

- Ofsted Report 2021

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# English

Examination Board: AQA

Syllabus Code: 8700, 8702

Tiers of Entry: No

Course Work: No

Number of Examinations: 4

The functions of literature and language in enabling students to lead the best possible lives are at the forefront of the curriculum. The English department strives to foster within pupils a love of language and literature. We aim to create the very best communicators, readers, writers and thinkers. Through English Language, we seek to provide students with the language capacity to navigate and succeed in courses of their own choosing, as well as inspiring those students who wish to pursue language-centred careers. Through English Literature we seek to develop students' abilities to think deeply about humanity, and to discover the assets of their Literary Heritage, whilst developing the critical skills necessary to evaluate the ideas and the craft of these texts.

## GCSE Course Content

Students will learn how to read closely and analyse a diverse range of texts, inferring meaning and understanding techniques that writers use. They will learn how to write for a variety of contexts and audiences. They will also develop the skill of writing an extended response to source material or questions.



## Assessment of the Course

### English Language

The course will be assessed by examinations at the end of the course in Year 11.

#### Paper 1: Explorations in Creative Reading and Writing

- 1 hour 45 minutes
- (50% of the qualification)

#### Paper 2: Writers' Viewpoints and Perspectives

- 1 hour 45 minutes
- (50% of the qualification)

Additionally, there will be a non-examination, separate assessment in Spoken Language. This does not contribute to the GCSE grade but will receive a separate endorsement.

### English Literature

#### Paper 1: Shakespeare and the 19th Century Novel

- 1 hour 45 minutes
- (40% of the qualification)

#### Paper 2: Modern Texts and Poetry

- 2 hours, 15 minutes
- (60% of the qualification)

## Next Steps

The study of English enables students to develop literacy skills that lie at the heart of almost all learning. It allows students to express their ideas and understanding with coherence and cohesion. This refers to both written and spoken language. Furthermore, the close analysis of texts and opportunity to respond builds and enhances students' ability to infer and formulate structured arguments, in addition to understanding how linguistic techniques and presentational devices construct meaning.



# Maths

**Examination Board:** Edexcel A

**Syllabus Code:** 1MA0

**Tiers of Entry:** Yes

**Course Work:** No

**Number of Examinations:** 3

The Mathematics Department at Ashmole Academy aims to equip all students with a deep, confident understanding of mathematical concepts and processes, enabling them to think logically, solve problems creatively, and apply their knowledge with fluency and accuracy. We believe that studying GCSE Mathematics is an essential investment in a young person's future, providing not only strong academic foundations but also the high-value skills—analytical thinking, critical reasoning, resilience and effective decision-making—that are increasingly in demand in a rapidly changing world.

Our curriculum is designed to develop learners who can apply mathematics beyond the classroom: interpreting data, evaluating information, understanding financial decisions, and approaching real-life challenges with

confidence. As a gateway qualification required by most employers, training providers and universities, GCSE Mathematics opens the door to a wide range of future opportunities. At Ashmole, we strive to ensure every student becomes a capable, adaptable and empowered mathematician, ready to succeed in further study, the workplace and adult life.

## Course Content

The subject content is organised into five broad topic areas:

- Number
- Algebra
- Geometry and measures
- Statistics and probability
- Ratio and proportional change

## Assessment of the Course

The course will be assessed by three examinations at the end of the course in Year 11.

Paper 1: Non-calculator	Paper 2: Calculator	Paper 3: Calculator
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 1 hour and 30 minutes (80 Marks)</li><li>• (33.3% of the qualification)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 1 hour and 30 minutes (80 Marks)</li><li>• (33.3% of the qualification)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 1 hour and 30 minutes (80 Marks)</li><li>• (33.3% of the qualification)</li></ul>

## What skills does Mathematics help students to develop?

Mathematics strengthens a wide range of transferable skills that benefit students both in school and beyond. Through the GCSE course, students learn to recall and apply key knowledge with accuracy, select and use appropriate mathematical methods in varied contexts, and interpret and analyse complex problems. They develop logical reasoning, strategic thinking, resilience and the ability to make informed, evidence-based decisions—skills that are invaluable across all subjects, careers and everyday life.

## Additional Information

Students for both tiers will need a scientific calculator.

## Next steps

The linear GCSE Mathematics course provides a strong foundation for further study, particularly A Level Mathematics, by ensuring students have secure and up-to-date experience across all key areas of the curriculum. GCSE Mathematics is a well-regarded facilitating subject that supports progression to higher education and a wide range of careers, including:

- Software Development and Testing
- Quantity Surveying
- Game Design
- Finance and Accounting
- Engineering and Sound Technology

Achieving a solid grade in GCSE Mathematics keeps future pathways open and supports success in both academic study and the modern workplace.



# Science

**Examination Board:** AQA

**Syllabus Code:** Separate: 8461 Biology / 8462 Chemistry / 8463 Physics / Combined: 8464

**Tiers of Entry:** Yes

**Course Work:** No

**Number of Examinations:** 6

The Science Department wants to nurture the next generation of science specialists by guiding students along their path to becoming citizens with a passion and curiosity for science in the world around us. This will be rooted in a strong base of knowledge, where students will be well versed in modern methods and ideas of science.

Students will consistently be encouraged to expand on and consolidate their learning throughout their Ashmole journey. They will be educated to use scientific reasoning and thinking skills to problem solve, communicate effectively, work cooperatively and use technology. At the conclusion of their education with Ashmole, our students will be capable of applying their scientific knowledge to contemporary issues, making connections between scientific disciplines, and pursuing post-secondary education or careers in the fields of science, medicine and engineering.

## Separate Science

### Course Content

Many students will take examinations in the GCSE Separate Sciences course: Biology, Chemistry and Physics. This will be taught by specialist teachers of each subject. Upon successful completion, this will lead to three distinct GCSEs in the grade range 9-3. The Separate Science GCSE examinations cover the three sciences in significant detail.

### Assessment of the Course

The course will be assessed by examinations at the end of the course in Year 11. In their examinations, students will be required to demonstrate their understanding of scientific experimentation. At least 15% of the total marks available in each Science GCSE will be dedicated to this.

Students will sit two examinations for each of the Biology, Chemistry and Physics (six in total). Examinations will take the following format:

#### Paper 1

- 1 hour 45 minutes
- (50% of the qualification)
- 100 marks

Mixture of multiple choice, structured, closed short answer and open response questions.

#### Paper 2

- 1 hour 45 minutes
- (50% of the qualification)
- 100 marks

Mixture of multiple choice, structured, closed short answer and open response questions.

## Combined Science

### Course Content

Many students will take examinations in the GCSE Combined Science course: Biology, Chemistry and Physics. This will be taught by specialist teachers of each subject. Upon successful completion, this will lead to a qualification worth two GCSEs in the grade range 9-9 to 1-1.

In addition to the study of working scientifically, students will learn about vital concepts in Biology, Chemistry and Physics, with each subject carrying an equal weighting. This will be taught by specialist teachers of each subject.

### Assessment of the Course

The course will be assessed by examinations at the end of the course in Year 11. In their examinations, students will be required to demonstrate their understanding of scientific experimentation. At least 15% of the total marks available will be dedicated to this.

For Combined Science examinations, two papers for each of the Science subjects will be taken (six in total). Examinations will take the following format:

#### All Combined Science Papers

- 1 hour and 15 minutes
- 70 marks
- (16.7% of the qualification)

Mixture of multiple choice, structured, closed short answer and open response questions.

## What skills does Science help students to develop?

Science will help students to question the world around them and develop their curiosity. Students will learn key aspects of Biology, Chemistry and Physics allowing them to better understand matter, electromagnetism, space, movement and living systems. Students are encouraged to interpret the nature of science and scientific methodology. They will develop skills in scientific enquiry and team work from doing practical work. This will allow students to develop skills of planning, analysis and evaluation.

### Additional Information

- With both Separate and Combined Science, you study all three sciences: Biology, Physics, Chemistry. Separate Science contains more content in each science.
- Entry on to the separate course will be determined by assessments and teacher evaluations in school. The course is designed such that a final decision is delayed until the end of Year 10 allowing for an informed decision on your suitability based on achievement.
- No matter if you study Separate or Combined Science you are still able to undertake A Levels if you meet the relative entry requirements at Ashmole.

### Next steps

Science provides an excellent platform for the study of A Level Science courses. Equally, Science provides a stimulating look at Science and the world around us and gives an excellent level of scientific literacy and understanding for those students who choose to continue their Post 16 studies outside of the Science subjects.

Although there are obvious career paths that having a strong basis in Science is essential (i.e. Medicine, Engineering, Chemical/Drug Research, Pharmacology) studying and specialising in a particular Science does not limit you to these. Not only does Science teach you about how everyday life around you works on atomic through to a macro scale, studying Science provides you with a transferable set of skills that will put you at an advantage in whatever career you wish to pursue. The multidisciplinary nature of the subject means that you will refine a host of skills from problem solving, performing calculations or communicating clearly.



# Humanities & Languages

History 22

Geography 24

Religious Studies 26

Modern Foreign Languages 28



# History

Examination Board: Edexcel

Syllabus Code: 1H10

Tiers of Entry: No

Course Work: No

Number of Examinations: 3

## The History Department

The History department aims to provide students with the knowledge of key events in British and world history from the past 1000 years and the way in which life has changed across the period.

History aims to give students the skills to communicate narratives and explanations of the past and create independent judgements and conclusions.

Students will gain an understanding of how historical evidence can be evaluated, as well as how history is interpreted, written about and researched.

Students will be encouraged to demonstrate their desire to continue exploring the past and to broaden their knowledge independently.

## Course Content

Students will acquire knowledge of key events in British and world history from the past 1000 years and the way in which life has changed across the period. Students will develop the skills to communicate narratives and explanations of the past and create independent judgements and conclusions. Students will reach an understanding of how historical evidence can be evaluated, as well as how history is interpreted, written about and researched.

## Assessment of the Course

Students will be required to answer short questions and more detailed essay-style questions. They will also have to analyse and evaluate the use of sources as evidence.

The course will be assessed by examinations at the end of the course in Year 11.

### Paper 1 – Medicine Through Times

- 1 hour and 20 minutes (30% of the qualification)

### Paper 2 – International Relations / King Richard and King John

- 1 hour and 50 minutes (40% of the qualification)

### Paper 3 – Germany 1918-1939

- 1 hour and 30 minutes (30% of the qualification)

## What skills does History help students to develop?

The course encourages students to develop the skills of enquiry, analysis, argument, explanation and evaluation. Students will learn how to communicate effectively through essay writing and debate.

## Next steps

History is a valued subject that is very well respected by employers and universities. It will prepare students to write essays effectively, communicate ideas clearly, debate important issues and listen to the views of others in preparation for A Level and beyond.

Future careers could include:

- Law
- Journalism
- Curator
- Archivist



# Geography

**Examination Board:** Edexcel B

**Syllabus Code:** 1GBO

**Tiers of Entry:** No

**Course Work:** No

**Number of Examinations:** 3

The Geography department aims for all students at Ashmole Academy to be a local and global citizen.

We want students to be equipped with knowledge which makes them aware of the world they live in, and the part they play. We want our students to look for the Geography around them in the future.

## Course Content

At GCSE Geography students will study: Global Geographical Issues, looking at Hazardous Earth: climate change, extreme weather and tectonic events. Students will learn about the challenges of an urbanising world: how rapid urbanisation impacts quality of life in different parts of the world. In addition they will study global economic development, looking at issues based upon the changing context of population, economy and society and of technological and political landscapes. In UK Geographical Issues students will gain a knowledge and understanding of the UK's geography, including its physical and human landscapes, environmental challenges, changing economy and society, the importance of cultural and political factors, and its relationships with the wider world. In People and the Environment Issues, students will study the distribution and characteristics of large scale natural global ecosystems; how humans use, modify and change ecosystems and environments in order to obtain food, energy and water resources and the impacts of this.

## Assessment of the course

The course will be assessed by examinations at the end of the course in Year 11. All aspects of the course will be examined, with fieldwork being assessed as 15% of the GCSE.

### Paper 1 Global Geographical Issues

- 1 hour and 30 minutes
- (37.5% of the qualification)

### Paper 2 UK Geographical Issues

- 1 hour and 45 minutes
- (37.5% of the qualification)

### Paper 3 Making Geographical Decisions

- 1 hour and 30 minutes
- (25% of the qualification)

## What skills does Geography help students to develop?

In Geography GCSE students will learn and use a variety of transferable skills throughout the course, including:

- Skills – numeracy, statistical, cartographic
- Literacy
- Collecting, analysing and interpreting information and data
- Evaluation and assessment: making decisions; reaching judgements and conclusions
- Communicating your findings in different ways and listening to other people's opinions
- Working independently

## Additional Information

Students must undertake two days of fieldwork – a human geography study and a physical geography study.

## Next steps

- This GCSE course forms the basis for further study in Geography, as it gives students the necessary content in both human and physical Geography and skills to progress onto A Level and, if desired, University courses in Geography or related disciplines. This course also develops a broad range of skills including statistics and literacy and therefore is useful for other routes of study.
- Geography is a well respected subject by employers and universities.
- The course allows students to analyse resources, write extended answers and reach judgements. Geography also enhances students' teamwork skills.

Future careers could include: Environmental Science, Development Studies, Planning, Law.



# Religious Studies

Examination Board: AQA

Syllabus Code: 8062

Tiers of Entry: No

Course Work: No

Number of Examinations: 2

Religious Studies gives all students the opportunity to:

- Ask and explore answers to the biggest questions of life.
- Examine critically the beliefs and practices of different worldviews – religious and non-religious.
- Explore a range of philosophical, ethical and theological issues.
- Reflect on their own beliefs and practice.

Our students will leave Ashmole intellectually curious, critically capable, yet also informed and respectful about the different beliefs, attitudes and ideas of humanity, past and present, equipping them to shape the future.

## Course Content

The course is split into two equal sections:

### 1. The study of the Beliefs and Practices of:

- Christianity
- Islam

### 2. Religious, Philosophical and Ethical Studies:

- Relationships and families
- Religion and life
- The existence of God and revelation
- Religion, peace and conflict

## Assessment of the Course

Each exam paper has four sections, each with a range of knowledge, understanding, comparison and evaluation questions. The course will be assessed by examinations at the end of the course in Year 11.

### Paper 1: The Study of Religions

- 1 hour 45 minutes
- (50% of the qualification)

### Paper 2: Thematic Studies

- 1 hour 45 minutes
- (50% of the qualification)

## What skills does Religious Studies help students to develop?

Students will:

- Explain, analyse and evaluate key religious, philosophical and ethical issues.
- Debate different viewpoints, expressing their own ideas and understanding those of others.

## Next Steps

This GCSE course forms the basis for further study in Religious Studies, providing the necessary content and skills to develop your religious, ethical and philosophical thinking. Topics studied feed directly into the A Level, as well as any further study of Religious Studies, Philosophy or Theology.

Furthermore:

- Religious Studies is a subject that will develop your skills of explaining, comparing and evaluating – complementing those in other subjects such as English and History.
- It is well respected by Universities and is often used as a platform for studying similar subjects, as well as law and medicine.
- The content and skills learned in RS will be of great use in any career that involves working with people, such as social work, community work, politics, teaching, medicine, law and many others!

## Additional Information

RS is not compulsory as a GCSE; however, it is studied as a non-examination subject once a fortnight for those who do not choose it as an option. There is rich and varied content to the course that suits those of religious or non-religious worldviews.

# Modern Foreign Languages

**Examination Board:** AQA

**Syllabus Code:** French: 8658 / Spanish: 8698

**Course Work:** No

**Tiers of Entry:** Yes

**Number of Examinations:** 4

The Modern Foreign Languages Department aims to enthuse and engage learners to manipulate language and express themselves confidently and accurately (both verbally and in writing).

We endeavour to do this by providing a curriculum that gives students an insight into different cultures of the global community, and the opportunity to reflect on the place of their own culture and language within it.

## Course Content – French and Spanish

Students will learn how to understand and provide information and opinions, which relate to their own experiences and those of people in countries and communities where the language is spoken, across a range of contexts and interests. They will develop their language skills to their full potential, equipping them with the knowledge to communicate in a variety of contexts with confidence.

## Assessment of the Course

Assessment is set in the context of these three themes:

### Theme 1: People and lifestyle

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

### Theme 2: Popular culture

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

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

- Travel and tourism
- Media and technology
- The environment and where people live

The course will be assessed by examinations at the end of the course in Year 11.

Paper 1 Listening	Paper 2 Speaking	Paper 3 Reading	Paper 4 Writing
<p>Written exam: 35 minutes (Foundation tier), 45 minutes (Higher tier) • 40 marks (Foundation tier), 50 marks (Higher tier) • 25% of GCSE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Section A – listening comprehension questions in English, to be answered in English or non-verbally (32 marks at Foundation tier and 40 marks at Higher tier)</li> <li>• Section B – dictation where students transcribe short sentences, including a small number of words from outside the prescribed vocabulary list (8 marks at Foundation tier and 10 marks at Higher tier)</li> </ul>	<p>Non-exam assessment (NEA) • 7–9 minutes (Foundation tier) + 15 minutes' supervised preparation time 10–12 minutes (Higher tier) +15 minutes' supervised preparation time • 50 marks (for each of Foundation tier and Higher tier) • 25% of GCSE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Role-play / Reading aloud task and short conversation / Photo card discussion / Response to the content of the photos on the card / Unprepared conversation</li> </ul>	<p>Written exam: 45 minutes (Foundation tier), 1 hour (Higher tier) • 50 marks (for each of Foundation tier and Higher tier) • 25% of GCSE</p>	<p>Written exam: 1 hour 10 minutes (Foundation tier), 1 hour 15 minutes (Higher tier) • 50 marks (for each of Foundation tier and Higher tier) • 25% of GCSE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Foundation: five short sentences in response to a photo / short piece of writing in response to five compulsory bullet points, approx 50 words / five short grammar tasks / translation of sentences from English into French / a piece of writing in response to three compulsory bullet points, approx 90 words.</li> <li>• Higher: translation of sentences from English into French / a piece of writing in response to three compulsory bullet points, approx 90 words / open-ended writing task approx. 150 words in total)</li> </ul>

## What skills does the subject help students to develop?

In a Languages GCSE, students learn and use a variety of skills throughout the course, many of which are transferable. These include:

- Literacy Translation
- Grammatical agreement
- Self and Peer-evaluation
- Communicating views in different ways
- Deduction of meaning
- Speaking and listening to other people's opinions
- Working independently

## Next Steps

The content, contexts and purposes of a GCSE specification in a modern foreign language will provide an appropriate foundation for A Level study and a suitable preparation for higher education or employment.

University courses in Languages are highly rated and a modern foreign language is often a good complementary option, with the added bonus of potentially completing part of the course abroad.

Learning a foreign language can build your communication, interpersonal, intercultural, and public speaking skills. Some studies have also shown that learning another language can improve your ability to multi-task and block out distractions. That would definitely come in useful during exam revision.

Languages are great for a wide variety of careers, especially those involving translation or communication with people from non-English speaking countries. This can include careers in tourism, government, politics, media, publishing, and journalism. You can also work in education, fashion or law!

Entry requirements for language courses at university tend to vary across institutions. If you want to study a language such as French or Spanish at university you will need to have studied it at A-level as an entry requirement. Some universities, like University College London, require a Modern Foreign Language GCSE for entry across all of its degree programmes.

Bear in mind too that languages are classified as facilitating subjects, which are subjects favoured by top universities for a whole range of degree courses, so they are a great option, whatever you want to do!

## Additional Information

The decision on tier of entry is finalised in Year 11 and is based on prior achievements in a range of assessments.

Students must sit the same tier in all four papers.



# Personal Development and Skills for Life

Functional Literacy and Numeracy

32

Non-examined Subjects

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# Functional Literacy and Numeracy

## Functional Literacy

The Functional Literacy course will follow a curriculum designed to secure and develop essential reading, writing and oracy skills for learners who require additional language and literacy support. The curriculum is both ambitious and inclusive, enabling learners to make strong progress towards GCSE English Literature and GCSE English Language. The course aims to remove barriers to learning through the explicit teaching of vocabulary, language structures and comprehension strategies so that students can better access the wider curriculum, communicate effectively and prepare successfully for GCSE English.

The curriculum encompasses reading and writing, oracy, speaking and listening, (including opportunities for physical drama, creative IT and multimedia skills.

## Functional Numeracy

The Functional Numeracy course will secure and develop essential mathematical knowledge, skills and reasoning for learners who require additional support in Maths. The curriculum will be ambitious and inclusive, enabling learners to make strong progress towards GCSE Mathematics.

The course aims to remove barriers to learning through explicit teaching of mathematical vocabulary, symbols, structures and problem-solving strategies, so that students can better access mathematical concepts, reason confidently, communicate their thinking clearly and prepare successfully for GCSE Mathematics.

The curriculum will be taught through a range of strategies, including guided practice, mathematical talk and reasoning, visual and concrete representations, structured problem-solving, and the use of creative IT and digital tools to support understanding and engagement.

# Non-examination Compulsory Subjects

## Physical Education

All students will continue to follow a non-examination but compulsory programme of Physical Education. Students will follow three sports from at least two different areas of the curriculum in Year 10. In Year 11 students will choose two sports from a larger option pool.

The range of activities includes football, basketball, cricket, rounders, netball, aerobics, table tennis and badminton. It is the aim that all students have a much greater understanding of high-level performance, fitness, training and refereeing for their chosen activities.

## PSHE

Key Stage 4 PSHE (Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education) is delivered through timetabled lessons and focuses on a number of key issues such as physical and mental wellbeing, financial management, relationships and sexual health.

PSHE also includes a number of wider-based lessons on crime and punishment, environmental issues, human rights and politics.

Central to the PSHE provision is SMSC education – Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural education. This is key in developing students into thoughtful, confident, well-informed and compassionate young people who are able to lead happy, safe and responsible lives.

Students in Year 10 have one PSHE lesson per cycle and also explore these issues in other areas of the curriculum including subject lessons, assemblies, tutor sessions, careers education and talks from external agencies.

## Religious Studies

As part of the broad and balanced curriculum that Ashmole Academy offers, Religious Studies is taught as a compulsory but non-examined subject delivered once a fortnight. As with all Religious Studies lessons, there is a focus on 'Big Questions' and the course follows some of the similar themes to those chosen at GCSE, with an emphasis on those that provide particularly stimulating discussion, such as: prejudice and discrimination, the existence of suffering, miracles, God's existence and much more. Religious views are discussed, as appropriate.

Lessons are discussion-led, with regular use of videos as a catalyst for thought and reflection, and opportunities for students to explore their own views and debate with others.



# Options Subjects

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“Pupils’ behaviour is exemplary. They are highly respectful of others and of their teachers.”

- Ofsted Report 2021

”

# Art & Design

Examination Board: Edexcel

Syllabus Code: 1FA0

Tiers of Entry: No

Course Work: Yes

Number of Examinations: 1

The Art department aims for all students to be Active Cultural Citizens through the creation and consumption of Art. Students will think creatively to develop visual language to interpret and record the world around them whilst gaining an understanding of the importance of what Art contributes to our culture. Students will translate their learning to be the next generation of artists/designers.

## Course Content

The GCSE Art & Design course centres around four main themes; Nature, Objects, The Environment and People.

**Nature:** Exploring a range of – processes to create clay tiles, mono printing and relief printing techniques Exploring a range of experimental drawing methods, including print making to record the colour, texture and forms in nature.

**Still life:** Observational drawings using a range of material, assemblage, developing watercolour painting techniques, exploring patterns, collage techniques

**Portraiture:** Exploring acrylic painting techniques, developing an understanding of proportion

**Environment:** Experimenting with different recording techniques to interpret the world around them

## Assessment of the Course

The course will be assessed by an examination at the end of the course in Year 11 and through a personal portfolio.

### Unit 1 -Personal Portfolio

- Is completed in lessons and regular homework, covering all four assessment criteria.
- 60% of the overall grade.

### Unit 2- Examination

- The externally set examination is released by the examination board in the January of Year 11; students will produce work in response to a set brief, carried out in a preparatory period before producing their final piece during a period of 10 hours in examination conditions.
- 40% of the overall grade.

## What skills does Art & Design help students to develop?

The students will learn to develop their ideas through investigations informed by selecting and critically analysing the work of professional artists.

They will refine their ideas as their work progresses through experimenting with media, material, techniques and process.

Students will be using drawing, painting and other materials to record their ideas and observations and develop their skills in using specialist vocabulary to evaluate their own work.

The conclusion of each project will be a painting, print, sculpture or textile piece which students produce over a sustained period of time.

## Next steps

Students should follow a GCSE Art & Design course if they wish to pursue a career in Architecture, Graphic Design, Interior Design, Illustration, Theatre Design, Fashion and Textiles, Make up, Special Effects, Fine Art Painting or Sculpture, Animation, Photography, Restoration and much more.

Students learn to develop artistic skills of drawing, painting, 3D design, ceramics, photography, mixed media, silk painting, batik and printing. In addition, skills of analysis, critical awareness, self-confidence, independence, cooperation, time management and organisation skills.

GCSE Art & Design is required to progress onto A Level Fine Art at Ashmole Academy.

## Additional Information

Students purchase their own art pack, including sketchbook, paints, paint brushes and sketching pencils. Specialist Art materials relating to ceramics, printmaking, textiles and sculpture are provided by the school.



# Business

**Examination Board:** Edexcel

**Syllabus Code:** 1BS0

**Tiers of Entry:** No

**Course Work:** No

**Number of Examinations:** 2

The Business GCSE course will enable students to understand the business world. This comprises businesses which range from small enterprises to large multinationals and businesses operating in local, national and global contexts.

Studying this course will enable students to develop as commercially minded and enterprising individuals who think critically, drawing on business information and evidence to develop arguments and make justified decisions.

## Course Content

The Business GCSE course will enable students to understand the business world. This comprises businesses which range from small enterprises to large multinationals and businesses operating in local, national and global contexts.

Studying this course will enable students to develop as commercially minded and enterprising individuals who think critically, drawing on business information and evidence to develop arguments and make justified decisions.

## Assessment of the Course

The course will be assessed by examination(s) at the end of the course in Year 11.

### Theme 1: Investigating Small Business

- 1 hour 45 minutes
- (50% of the qualification)

### Paper B: Calculator

- 1 hour 45 minutes
- (50% of the qualification)

## What skills does Business Studies help students to develop?

In Business GCSE students learn and use a variety of transferable skills throughout the course, including:

- Develop as enterprising individuals with the ability to think commercially and creatively to demonstrate business acumen, and draw on evidence to make informed business decisions and solve business problems
- Develop as effective and independent students, and as critical and reflective thinkers with enquiring minds
- Use an enquiring, critical approach to make informed judgements
- Investigate and analyse real business opportunities and issues to construct well-argued, well-evidenced, balanced and structured arguments, demonstrating their depth and breadth of understanding of business
- Develop and apply quantitative skills relevant to business, including using and interpreting data

## Next steps

This GCSE course forms the basis for further study in Business or Economics. It gives the necessary content about the business world to progress onto A Level and, if desired, University courses in Business or Economics or related disciplines, which include Accounting, Finance, Law and Advertising.

This course also develops a broad range of skills, including numeracy and literacy, and therefore is useful for other routes of study.

## Additional Information

Students are permitted to use a calculator in their examinations.



# Computer Science

Examination Board: AQA

Syllabus Code: 8525

Tiers of Entry: No

Course Work: No

Number of Examinations: 2

The Computer Science department aims to foster a love for programming by getting students working with real-world code and providing a good understanding of the fundamental principles of computing.

## Course Content

The Computer Science GCSE course is designed to challenge students to approach software and technology from a new perspective, with an appreciation and understanding of how common apps and programs have been created. It will also provide students with a broad knowledge of the hardware devices used and how they function.

- **Fundamentals of algorithms** – programs as implementations of algorithms, decomposition and abstraction, mechanics of searching and sorting algorithms
- **Programming** – programming language, Boolean operations, data structures, input/output and file handling, string handling and random number generation, subroutines and robustness
- **Data representation** – number bases, converting between bases, units of information, character encoding, representation of images and sound, data compression
- **Computer systems** – hardware and software, Boolean logic, software classification, systems architecture
- **Computer networks** – types of network, protocols, network security
- **Cyber security** – types of threat, penetration testing, social engineering, malicious code, prevention of threats
- **Impact of digital technology** – ethical, legal and environmental impacts, privacy
- **Aspects of software development** – design, implementation, testing, evaluation and refining

## Assessment of the Course

The course will be assessed by examinations at the end of the course in Year 11.

### Paper 1: Computational Thinking and Programming Skills

- 2 hours
- (50% of the qualification)

### Paper 2: Computing Concepts

- 1 hour 45 minutes
- (50% of the qualification)

## What skills does Computer Science help students to develop?

In Computer Science GCSE, students learn and use a variety of transferable skills throughout the course, including: numeracy, literacy, collecting, analysing and interpreting information and data, evaluating work, communicating findings, listening to opinions, and working independently.

## Programming Skills

A key part of the delivery of this specification is the development of students' programming skills. Throughout their course of study, students must be given the opportunity to design, write, test and refine, using one or more high-level programming language(s) with a textual program definition. In developing these skills, schools and colleges are free to choose the context (i.e., they can be developed in relation to solving a specific problem

or to a specification).

In assessments where programming skills are assessed, students' ability to:

- Design
- Write
- Test, and
- Refine

a program to a set task/brief (or to solve a problem) will be evaluated. Students are free to use any of the programming languages supported by this specification at the time of their assessment.

## Next steps

GCSE Computer Science supports all subjects both at Sixth Form level and beyond. Computer Science is relevant to all jobs and careers, and employers are increasingly looking for candidates with high-level computing skills and qualifications.

This course also develops a broad range of skills including numeracy and literacy and therefore is useful for other routes of study.

The UK IT sector currently has an enormous skills gap, where there are more jobs than qualified applicants. This is especially prevalent in the programming space.

Computer Science has links to many

careers, with IT becoming increasingly linked with everything we do. Even if your job does not involve IT expertise directly, having a knowledge of Computer Science is valuable in most careers. Careers that are directly linked to Computer Science include: Web Design, Software Developer, Network Security, Robotics Engineer, Cloud Developer, Data Scientist, Games Designer, Network Engineer/Manager, Systems Analyst, Information Scientist, and IT Support Technician, as well as fields as far-reaching as Science, Engineering, Medicine, and Social Sciences.

\*N.B. Computer Science is a challenging GCSE which includes programming and relies on strengths in logical thinking, numeracy, and literacy. Therefore, this course has a minimum entry requirement of an Ashmole score of 7 in Mathematics and an Ashmole score of 6 in English.

# Drama

Examination Board: AQA

Syllabus Code: 8261

Tiers of Entry: No

Course Work: Yes

Number of Examinations: 1

In Drama, we believe all students should have the opportunity to explore their creativity and what it means to be human through a love of Drama.

The Drama department at Ashmole seeks to embrace the talents of all students. By providing opportunities for students to explore the roles of actor, director, script writer, designer and critic, we endeavour to develop a lifelong appreciation of Drama, Theatre and the Arts.

## Course Content

Study of this subject allows students to build their confidence in performance, as well as

developing their skills in working creatively and cooperatively with others, and taking increased responsibility and ownership of projects they create. Drama can help encourage the following: enthusiasm, confidence, self-esteem and social skills. Drama has the additional merit of helping students develop tolerance and empathy; adopting a role that requires an appreciation of others' perceptions, as well as providing new ways of communicating and understanding others. The GCSE Drama course at Ashmole Academy offers a challenging and stimulating environment in which to study, where students are positively encouraged to broaden their performance, group work and analytical skills.

## Assessment of the Course

- The course will be assessed by examination (Component 1) at the end of the course in Year 11
- For Component 2, pupils are assessed on coursework as well as a performance. The coursework contributes to 75% of Component 2 and therefore 30% of their final grade
- Component 3 is a performance examination, where pupils will be assessed by an external examiner on two extracts from a play.

Component 1: Written Examination	Component 2: Devising Drama (practical)	Component 3: Texts in Practice (practical)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 hour and 45 minutes</li> <li>• (40% of the qualification)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Non-examined assessment</li> <li>• (40% of the qualification)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Performance of two extracts</li> <li>• (20% of the qualification)</li> </ul>

## What skills does Drama help students to develop?

GCSE Drama complements a range of subjects and is useful in building confidence and team cooperation, as well as improving presentation skills. It lends itself naturally to those wishing to study A Level Drama in the Sixth Form, but can also complement subjects such as English or Psychology.

A qualification in Drama would be particularly useful if pursuing a career in teaching, public services, social services, law, the media or indeed any career which involves communication, interpersonal skills and working with members of the public.

## Additional Information

Students are always assessed individually even though they work in groups throughout the GCSE course.

Students will complete one written exam and one piece of coursework; all the rest is practical. Students will not be able to choose groups but they will always be put with people who they work best with.

## Next steps

In our currently ever-changing job landscape, it is important that young people are gaining an array of transferable skills – Drama is the perfect subject for this. Workplace and University statistics show that Drama students have one of the highest employment rates because the subject develops the skills of self-confidence, team-work and critical thinking skills, all of which are highly favoured by employers.

This could lead you to arts-based careers such as:

- Actor
- Director/Producer
- Stage Manager
- Designer (Set, Costume, Props, Lighting, Sound)
- Broadcast presenter
- Community arts worker
- Dramatherapist
- Runner, broadcasting/film/video

However, not everyone who studies Drama goes on to be an actor or director. The skills you gain could be applied to the following fields of work:

- Education
- Law
- Social/Welfare
- Marketing/sales/advertising
- Business/financial

# Food Preparation & Nutrition

**Examination Board:** Eduqas

**Syllabus Code:** C560

**Tiers of Entry:** No

**Course Work:** Yes

**Number of Examinations:** 1

Design and Technology aims to provide a curriculum that develops self-motivated, confident learners who can work independently and in teams. We focus on building technical and practical skills alongside the soft skills valued by employers. Our priority is to nurture critical thinkers and problem solvers who learn from mistakes, becoming responsible citizens ready to make a positive contribution to society.

The Eduqas Food Preparation & Nutrition course is designed to help learners develop strong technical and practical skills in the kitchen, alongside the wider soft skills that are essential for life and valued by employers.

We encourage students to think critically, explore ingredients and techniques with confidence, and approach practical tasks as opportunities to experiment and problem-solve without fear of making mistakes. Ultimately, we want students to develop the intelligence, confidence, and real-world life skills that empower them to make informed food choices and approach issues of health

and sustainability with maturity and good judgement.

## Course Content

The Food Preparation and Nutrition GCSE course will include aspects of Nutrition, Food and Cooking, and Food Preparation. In addition, it will encourage students to cook and enable them to make informed decisions about a wide range of further learning opportunities and career pathways, as well as develop vital life skills that enable them to feed themselves and others affordably and nutritiously, now and later in life.

### Topics include:

- Food commodities
- Principles of nutrition
- Diet and good health
- The science of food
- Where food comes from
- Food spoilage
- Cooking and food preparation

## Assessment of the Course

### Component 1: Written Examination

- 1 hour 45 minutes
- (50% of the qualification)

### Component 2: Non-examined Assessment (NEA)

- Non-examination assessment:
- Assessment 1: Food Investigation – 8 hours
  - Assessment 2: Food Preparation – 12 hours
  - (50% of the qualification)

## What skills does Food Preparation & Nutrition help students to develop?

In Food Preparation and Nutrition GCSE, students learn and use a variety of transferable skills throughout the course, including:

- Numeracy
- Literacy
- Evaluating your work
- Working independently
- Range of cooking techniques

## Next steps

The course is ideal for students who are thinking about entering the catering, food development, hospitality, and leisure industries. It is also useful for students considering the fields of health, nutrition, or dietetics.

It also develops students as confident and capable cooks when at university or when leaving home.



“Staff are highly aspirational for their pupils, including for sixth-form students.”

- Ofsted Report 2021



# Music

**Examination Board:** Edexcel

**Syllabus Code:** 1MU0

**Tiers of Entry:** No

**Course Work:** Yes

**Number of Examinations:** 1

In Music, we want students, by the end of their career at Ashmole, to:

- Create and experience a wide range of music at school
- Appreciate the place of music in their world
- Express thoughts and opinions on the music they experience

## Course Content

Through the GCSE Music course, students will actively develop their skills in performing, composing, and analysing music. They will develop an awareness of a variety of instruments, music technologies, genres, styles, and traditions of music.

Students will be expected to read music and be able to apply theoretical music knowledge to pieces of music they listen to and study. These may be set works they have already studied or unfamiliar works. They will learn about the historical context of pieces of music and how the context has influenced the composer and audience.

Topics include:

- **Musical elements** – organisation of pitch, basic melodic devices, tonality and harmony, structure, sonority, texture, tempo, and dynamics
- **Musical contexts** – effect of purpose and intention, the effect of audience, time, and place on music.

- **Musical language** – reading and writing of staff notation, major, minor, and extended chords as well as associated chord symbols, using appropriate musical vocabulary and terminology

Students will be expected to perform, compose, and appraise music from a range of areas of study.

The areas of study are:

- Instrumental Music 1700-1820
- Vocal Music
- Music for Stage and Screen
- Fusions

Students must demonstrate performing ability on their voice or instrument to the equivalent of a minimum of grade 3 standard (and grade 5 standard to access the highest marks). This is essential for success on the course, and where there is doubt over the suitability of this course for a particular student, an internal audition will be arranged to assess their performing ability.

## Assessment of the Course

The course will be assessed by examination(s) at the end of the course in Year 11 alongside the NEA.

### Component 1: Performing

- Non-examined assessment (30% of the qualification)
- One solo performance and one ensemble performance.
- Minimum combined duration of 4 minutes

### Component 2: Composing

- Non-examined assessment (30% of the qualification)
- Two separate compositions, one to a given brief and one free choice.
- Minimum combined duration of 3 minutes.

### Component 3: Appraising

- Written examination: 1 hour and 45 minutes (40% of the qualification)
- Set works and unfamiliar pieces will feature in this exam.

## What skills does Music help students to develop?

Throughout the course, students will develop a range of skills which include:

- Performing and composing skills, including the ability to make music individually and in groups.
- Knowledge of music history through time and music theory.
- Critical and creative thinking, aesthetic sensitivity, emotional awareness, cultural understanding, self-discipline, self-confidence, and self-motivation.

## Next Steps

- Music is a fun, sociable and engaging subject that develops many parts of the brain, including practical skills and critical inquiry.
- It is highly valued by universities and looks good on any CV as an indication of your talent and creativity.

Music at GCSE is excellent preparation for A Level Music. Music is an academically rigorous and artistically challenging discipline, and studying Music can lead to a wide range of careers such as: performer, composer, record producer, sound engineer, radio presenter, radio producer, songwriter, teacher, DJ, publishing, artist management, journalist, or music therapist.

If a career in music is not the ultimate goal, music training and the associated skills are complementary to many other professions and careers. For example, performing skills will give students confidence in presenting to an audience, which is particularly useful if pursuing a future career in drama or law. Listening skills will enhance the aural perception needed in language study. Many excellent musicians also go on to study Medicine, Mathematics, or the Sciences at top universities.

## Additional Information

- To be successful in the GCSE music performance, students should be able to play to grade 3 standard as a minimum. Singing counts as an instrument and is suitable for both solo and ensemble requirements.
- Ensemble skills are essential to the course and these are best developed in a directed musical activity through our extra-curricular clubs such as choir, orchestra, band, etc. For example, our senior choir provides essential musical learning, ear training, and valuable performance opportunities for all our students.
- There are opportunities to attend trips to see musicals such as Wicked (one of the set works) and visit the London Symphony Orchestra, as well as other trips and events.

# Physical Education

Examination Board: OCR

Syllabus Code: J587

Tiers of Entry: No

Course Work: Yes

Number of Examinations: 0

The Physical Education department aim to provide an inclusive range of sporting activities giving all students the opportunity to participate in high quality PE. It is our aim for all students to have confidence in a range of different sports and physical activities as they move up through the school. We want students to enjoy PE so that they have a desire to maintain a lifelong involvement in physical activity as we recognise the importance that sport and activity has in maintaining physical, social and mental wellbeing throughout life.

Within GCSE PE theory lessons we aim to offer students a wide range of new and contemporary topics that will help students of all abilities to develop a well-rounded skill set, preparing them for progression to further studies. We look to challenge students by making links between both theory and practical knowledge, using real life sporting examples to develop a willingness to discover more.

## Course Content

The Physical Education GCSE course will include aspects from Sport Psychology, Movement Analysis, Anatomy and Physiology and Socio-Cultural concepts in physical activity. Alongside the theory content, students will also cover practical activities including both team and individual sports.

### Topics include:

- Anatomy and Physiology
- Movement Analysis
- Sports Psychology
- Socio-Cultural Influences
- Physical Training
- Practical Activities
- Sports

## Assessment of the Course

The course will be assessed by examination(s) at the end of the course in Year 11. All aspects of the course will be examined, with the practical aspect being assessed internally alongside a theory examination paper. The 40% NEA will be based on practical performance in physical activity and sport.

Paper 1: The human body and movement in physical activity and sport

- 1 hour
- (30% of the qualification)

Paper 2: Socio-cultural influences and wellbeing in physical activity and sport

- 1 hour
- (30% of the qualification)

## What skills does Physical Education help students to develop?

In Physical Education GCSE, you learn and use a variety of transferable skills throughout the course, including: Numeracy, Literacy, Data Analysis, Communication skills, Leadership skills, Problem solving.

## Next steps

This GCSE course forms the basis for further study in Physical Education, as it gives you the key subject knowledge in Anatomy and Physiology, Skill Acquisition and Contemporary studies to study Physical Education at A Level. It is considered to be the pre-requisite for courses such as Physical Education, Sport and Exercise Science, Physiotherapy, Sport Psychology and Sports Coaching at degree level.

## Additional Information

- You can only be assessed in sports that are included on the GCSE PE specification. Participation in sports outside of school can also count towards your assessment, but you must provide video evidence showing both your performance of the required skills and your involvement in a full competitive context.
- Your practical grade is based entirely on the quality of your skills and your ability to have a positive impact during full-context performance
- Across a two-week timetable, students typically have two GCSE PE practical lessons and two GCSE PE theory lessons. During practical sessions, we offer a range of both individual and team sports. Throughout the course, students will develop their skills and we will assess them in their best three sports.
- We expect all students to take part in sport outside of school and to attend all available extracurricular opportunities in order to maximise progress and performance.

# Product Design

**Examination Board:** Edexcel Pearson

**Syllabus Code:** 1DT0/1C – Polymers

**Tiers of Entry:** No

**Course Work:** Yes

**Number of Examinations:** 1

Design and Technology aims to provide a curriculum that develops self-motivated, confident learners who can work independently and in teams. We focus on building technical and practical skills alongside the soft skills valued by employers. Our priority is to nurture critical thinkers and problem solvers who learn from mistakes, becoming responsible citizens ready to make a positive contribution to society.

## Course Content

Product Design incorporates a combination of Graphics and Resistant Materials into one subject. The course will engage students in

developing their visual communication skills using drawing and modelling techniques that present solutions to design activities. Students also develop their practical making skills during the course using a variety of different tools and equipment including CAD/CAM.

Students can work with a variety of different materials such as plastics, woods and metals to then create their designs. Students can have a free choice of materials to make their final assessed product.

## Assessment of the Course

The course will be assessed by an examination at the end of the course in Year 11 alongside the NEA.

### Component 1: Written Examination

- 1 hour 45 minutes
- (50% of the qualification)

### Component 2: Non-examined Assessment (NEA)

Students will undertake a project based on a contextual challenge released by the examination board. There are four parts to the assessment: investigate, design, make and evaluate

(50% of the qualification)

## What skills does Product Design help students to develop?

Students develop a wide range of design and making skills through the use of the school workshops and CAD/CAM applications such as SolidWorks 3D modelling package, the Laser cutter and the 3D printer. Students can choose to design their work both by hand or on the computer to present their work, with no restrictions, which makes this course suitable for all students.

Other transferable skills include:

- Resilience in your ability to problem solve
- Developing a critical mindset
- Increased imagination in order to create solutions for sustainability
- Understanding the importance of past and present designers
- Building strong collaboration skills
- Awareness of different cultures
- Responsibility in health & safety

## Next steps

Technology is a very popular option at A Level. Skills developed in Product Design are very transferable, and students who gain a grade 6 or higher are encouraged to select the Edexcel Product Design A Level as an option if they aspire to progress into any of the creative or technical professions, or simply enjoy the subject.

Future study and careers include:

- Architecture
- Industrial Design
- Interior Design
- Automotive Design
- Boat Design
- Theatre / Set Design
- CAD Design
- Green Energy Design and Engineering
- Automotive Design
- Construction
- Jewellery Design
- Games Designer

# Textiles

**Examination Board:** Edexcel Pearson

**Syllabus Code:** 1DT0/1E – Textiles

**Tiers of Entry:** No

**Course Work:** Yes

**Number of Examinations:** 1

Design and Technology aims to provide a curriculum that develops self-motivated, confident learners who can work independently and in teams. We focus on building technical and practical skills alongside the soft skills valued by employers. Our priority is to nurture critical thinkers and problem solvers who learn from mistakes, becoming responsible citizens ready to make a positive contribution to society.

## Course Content

Textiles will cover textiles for fashion and interiors. Students will learn through a series of projects where they will design and make textile items. They will produce a portfolio of 2D and 3D work and build the confidence and skills to complete a final practical textiles garment. The course includes:

- **Designing and making assignments** – in which the students put their capability to work to develop a product that meets real needs
- **Focused practical tasks** – in which the students develop their making skills and knowledge of manufacturing processes whilst organising and planning their time effectively
- **Products and application tasks** – in which the students explore existing products and use what they find out to add to their own repertoire of skills, knowledge and understanding
- **Theory** – understanding of the materials, processes, sustainability and products involved with the industry; the course will require students to demonstrate both mathematical and scientific knowledge within their work

## Assessment of the Course

The course will be assessed by an examination at the end of the course in Year 11 alongside the NEA.

### Component 1: Written examination

- 1 hour, 45 minutes
- (50% of the qualification)

### Component 2: Non-examined assessment

- Students will undertake a project based on a contextual challenge released by the examination board. There are four parts to the assessment: investigate, design, make and evaluate.
- (50% of the qualification)

## What skills does Textiles help students to develop?

Project work will involve developing fashion and textile designs, researching artists, designers and different cultures using books, visits and the internet. Students will be creating ideas and learning how to develop work using techniques such as batik, silkscreen printing and embroidery, construction techniques for garments and other products, the correct use of machines and equipment, and industrial processes, including the use of CAD and CAM. Projects include: interior design furnishing and accessories, sportswear, children's, women's and menswear, protective clothing, and scientific wearable technology.

A number of transferable skills will be developed, which include:

- The design process – from problem to manufactured solutions  
Drawing techniques – fashion illustration
- Garment construction and the use of equipment
- New technologies being developed in Textiles – scientific wearable technology
- The use of computer-aided design and manufacture (Photoshop and 2D Design) to create modern, innovative solutions

## Next steps

Technology is a very popular option at A Level and skills developed in Textile Design are very transferable. Students who gain a grade 5 or higher are encouraged to select Edexcel Product Design at A Level as an option if they wish to progress into a creative profession or simply enjoy the subject. Future study and careers include: Fashion Journalist, Footwear Design, Fashion Design, Textiles / Fashion Buyer, Pattern Cutter, Garment Technologist, Costume Designer, Milliner, Interior Designer, Surface Pattern Designer.

# Making Choices

We have provided, within the **Compulsory and Options Subjects** sections of this booklet, a brief summary of the subjects on offer, as well as a broad outline of the course the students will follow. Students should read these carefully with their parents to fully understand the demands of both the course content and the assessment style.

It is important to balance an interest in the subject with choices that will maximise the chance of personal success. Although the curriculum pathways aim to ensure students have a broad range of options available to them for post-16 study, if a student has the intention to study a particular subject at A Level then it is recommended they choose that subject.



## For Further Advice

Your child has already begun the process of considering their Key Stage 4 Options through PSHE and tutorial sessions, as well as guidance assemblies. Should you have any queries, the following people can give advice:

- **Mr Watton** – Assistant Head Teacher
- **Miss Miller** – Head of Year 9
- **Personal Tutor** – To see if a balanced set of subjects have been chosen to suit an individual student
- **Subject teachers** – To discuss the suitability of the subject being chosen



Please email all queries to:

[Year9options@AshmoleAcademy.org](mailto:Year9options@AshmoleAcademy.org)

# Frequently Asked Questions

## A) What do you do if too many students opt for one subject?

The option blocks are built after the students have made their option choices. Therefore we are usually able to give all students the subjects they would like to study at Key Stage 4. In the rare situation that the first choices result in a subject being oversubscribed, places will be allocated on a first come first served basis.

## B) What do you do if too few students opt for one subject?

If demand for a particular subject is small, it may not be possible to run that subject. This is dealt with on a one-to-one basis. Students and their parents/carers will be kept informed at all times.

## D) How can I communicate with my child's teachers about their option choices?

If you would like further assistance with the option choices for your child, please email [Year9options@AshmoleAcademy.org](mailto:Year9options@AshmoleAcademy.org)

For a small number of students with whom we have discussed an alternative curriculum pathway to pathway 1 and 2, we have already contacted you.

## C) Can all the choice combinations be timetabled?

We are generally able to give all our students the subjects they would like to study at Key Stage 4. In exceptional cases it may be impossible to timetable some choice combinations. Individual interviews will take place with students who have chosen subject combinations which cannot be timetabled. Students and their parents will be kept informed at all times.

## E) Which new subjects do you offer at Key Stage 4?

GCSE Business and GCSE Computer Science are offered as new subjects at Key Stage 4.

## F) Which non-GCSE subjects do you offer at A Level?

We currently have the following non-GCSE subjects offered in the Sixth Form that are not taught at Key Stage 4:

- A Level Economics
- A Level Further Mathematics
- A Level Media Studies
- A Level Psychology
- A Level Sociology
- A Level Politics

## G) Do students have to follow a course at GCSE to be able to take it at A Level?

It is generally required and advisable for students to have, where possible, studied the subjects that they choose for A Level at GCSE. However, in some circumstances students of a suitable aptitude may be accepted for some A Level subjects in the Sixth Form even if they have not covered the GCSE course in Years 10 and 11. Students who are interested in this should read through the relevant 'Subject Descriptions' and see the relevant Head of Department. The current subjects and entry criteria for entry into the Sixth Form can be found on the school website: [www.ashmoleacademy.org](http://www.ashmoleacademy.org)

## H) When will the students start their Key Stage 4 courses?

Students at Ashmole Academy will start Key Stage 4 courses in Year 9 after the May half-term break. This is done in order to give more time to cover the content of the course and maximise future success for each student. It also provides students with a better preparation for the linear examinations at the end of Year 11 and provides a better opportunity for a thorough period of revision at the end of the course.



## I) What will happen if I change my mind about my option choices?

For most students, we would hope that they would be able to make informed and appropriate option choices that they remain happy with. However, a smaller number of students may change their mind and want to change option courses before the new timetable has started. Whilst this is generally not advisable, it may be a possibility if the timetable allows and if there is space in the subject they wish to switch to.

The opportunity to move after the start of the Key Stage 4 courses after the summer break is much more complex and may not be possible. It will also be made difficult as the student would need to catch up on any work missed since the start of the course. Any change would need to be made by a letter of request from the parents/carers and then authorised by the Leadership Team member for Year 9 or the curriculum.

## J) What if the government makes further changes?

The school will advise parents/carers of any changes to the proposed curriculum at Ashmole Academy.

## K) Where can I find out more information about University destinations?

For those parents and students interested in looking ahead, a useful guide on a wide variety of courses on offer, current entry requirements as well as the current rankings by subject and institution, can be found at:

- [www.guardian.co.uk/education/universityguide](http://www.guardian.co.uk/education/universityguide)

Other sites which contain useful information on higher education include:

- <http://university.which.co.uk>
- <http://www.thecompleteuniversityguide.co.uk>
- <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/education/universityeducation-and-colleges>
- <http://www.independent.co.uk/student/intouniversity>
- <http://www.timeshighereducation.co.uk>

## L) What careers advice has my child already received?

During their Professional Development and PHSE lessons, Year 9 students are shown how to use the Unifrog platform, an online careers guidance service. By identifying their interests and strengths, students are able to explore the many different career opportunities open to them.

The website will suggest a number of possible career choices to each individual student based on the information provided by them.

## M) What are regarded as the most prestigious Universities?

A group called the 'Russell Group' are widely regarded as the most prestigious universities in the United Kingdom and we would advise our more able students in particular to apply to these institutions.

For more information on the full list of "Russell Group" universities, please visit: [www.russellgroup.ac.uk](http://www.russellgroup.ac.uk)



# Notes

**Ashmole Academy**

Cecil Road, Southgate, London, N14 5RJ

T: 020 8361 2703

E: [office@ashmoleacademy.org](mailto:office@ashmoleacademy.org)

W: [www.ashmoleacademy.org](http://www.ashmoleacademy.org)



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